

Swimming Meet At Sandusky

Ross, Findlay Picked In Buckeye

Fremont and Findlay high schools will be the teams to beat when the seventh annual Buckeye Conference swimming meet gets underway at Sandusky Saturday at 1 p.m.

Coaches throughout the conference are predicting a Ross

run away, but Little Giant mentor Jack Balsizer cautions against it.

"To win it we must out score Findlay, no doubt about it," Balsizer says. "A meet like this is different than a dual meet.

"You might remember that during the season we scored a lot of points by picking up second and thirds. Now, in a conference meet our kids will be in trouble.

"Number one swimmers from other schools will be dropping down and getting those seconds and thirds we're used to. In order for us to win our kids must score in every event. We can't finish less than fifth in an event.

"Every team has the capability of scoring a couple of firsts. You can be positive Paul Gilbert will

win two events for Sandusky and Jerry Lisawa of Findlay should win two.

"I'm not under rating our kids. We should be the highest we've been all season for this one. Early in the year they asked me to peak them for the Buckeye and that's what we've been working for. The kids really want it.

"Last year we lost out by six points. But they got lots of experience. We're a lot more mature this year than we were last."

Balsizer hasn't released his lineup but indicated there would be several minor changes but nothing drastic.

"I'd be stupid to change our whole lineup around just because this is the Buckeye," Balsizer said. "We have to go with what got us through the 8-1 season."

The veteran coach lists the 200 and 50 yard freestyles and the 100 backstroke as being key events. Top notch swimmers will probably be entered in each event.

Mansfield's Jeff Boals has the top time in the 200, 157.8, Joe Strathman leads the way in the 50 and Gilbert has the best backstroke time, 56.4.

Balsizer believes, however, that the meet won't be decided until the final event—the 400 yard freestyle relay. Among the participating teams, Ross has turned in the best time, a sparkling 3:41.4.

Dick Hooser, Mark Semer, Randy Hottinger and Al Stephenson swam that time against Findlay at the junior high pool.

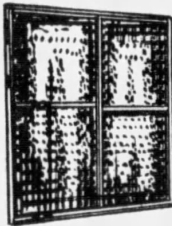
Joining Ross, Sandusky and Findlay are Mansfield Senior and Marion Harding. Each team is allowed to enter two contestants per event. No contestant may swim in more than two events.

Scoring for the individual races will be done on a six, four, three, two and one basis. In the relays, scoring will be 12, eight, six, four and two.

Preliminaries in the diving events are slated to get underway at 10:30 a.m.

The Little Giants complete their dual meet season Tuesday at home against Findlay. Ross will participate in the sectional at Bowling Green University next weekend.

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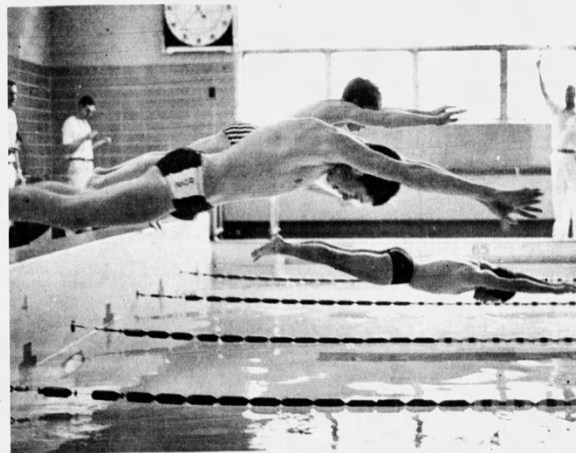
Little Giants End Four Year Drought

Monday, Feb. 16, 1970 Fremont News-Messenger 11

Ross Swimmers Take Buckeye Championship



Felix Robles
Second Place Finisher



Eric Bristley
Finished Third In 100 Freestyle



Anxious Moment
Two Ross Cheerleaders

By MARK CARLSON
News-Messenger Sports Editor

SANDUSKY — Ross high school swimming mentor Jack Balsizer and his assistant Gary Shelt might go a long way in the coaching field but they'll never make it as prognosticators.

Last Thursday afternoon they were worried about the outcome of Saturday's Seventh Annual Buckeye Conference meet.

"I've got the score tied at 61 between us and Findlay," Shelt said. "But I don't see how either team can get a point to win it."

Balsizer was predicting a Findlay victory.

"Findlay should finish with 58 points and we'll have 55," Balsizer said. "they will win it."

Both coaches were basing their prediction from times turned in previously by swimmers from the other participating schools. They weren't measuring the emotional impact of the meet.

And, emotion is what brought the Little Giants their third conference swim title here Saturday afternoon.

"Our kids were positive they were going to win this thing," Balsizer said after the Little Giants out-distanced the field.

"Our kids didn't think of anything else but winning."

"It was a case of our being able to swim under pressure better than anyone else. Our kids have matured a lot in the last year and learned how to swim under pressure. Our maturity and desire are what got us those 67 points."

"It was a team victory. There are certain times that stand out but this was a complete effort on the part of our kids."

The Little Giants, who were so 'high' for the meet that one observer felt they could "walk on water" out-distanced the entire field. Findlay took second place but was far back with 48 points. Host Sandusky finished third, Mansfield was fourth and Marion fifth.

Difference in the meet was the Little Giants' overall depth. Ross had at least one place winner in each of the 11 events. No other school can claim that.

Findlay didn't place in two events and Sandusky missed out in one.

Findlay took the most first places — four. Ross and Sandusky had three apiece.

Winning for the Little Giants were the team co-captains Alan Stephenson and Mike Aten and the 400 yard freestyle relay team.

"The victories by Aten and Stephenson were the keys," Balsizer said. "The rest of the team looks up to those two for the leadership they need."

Aten's victory was expected. But Stephenson's wasn't. He really inspired our kids. He turned in the best time of his career. After that they became more determined."

The Little Giants trailed in the team race 31-27 when Aten stepped to the starting block for the 100 yard butterfly. He out-distanced a Marion swimmer by seven tenths of a second and Findlay's best time was good for only fourth.

Aten's victory gave Ross six points in the team race and Findlay received two for its fourth. That tied the team race at 33.

Stephenson then turned in a 53.2 in the 100 free and Ross was rolling.

The Little Giants took third and fourth in the next two events and then got a second and fourth in the next-to-last event to assure a tie.

In the final event, Findlay needed to take first and Ross needed to finish last. But, the Little Giants weren't to be denied.

Dick Hooser, Mark Semer, Stephenson and Keeler went out and erased the previous Buckeye Conference record with a 3:38.4 to win the event.

All together, six Buckeye marks were washed off the boards. The Sandusky 200 yard medley team paced by smooth Paul Gilbert shaved 1.5 seconds off the previous mark held by Findlay.

Gilbert clipped nearly six seconds off the old mark in the 200 individual medley. In diving, Findlay's Jim Kennedy scored 340.25 points to better the old mark of 273 set by Ross' Dan Linder in 1969.

The record of another Little Giant tanker fell in the 400 yard freestyle when Jeff Lishawa won the event with a 4:19.1. The old mark was set by Larry Sloan in 1965.

Sandusky's Bill Coyle bettered his own record in capturing

the 100 breaststroke. He won it with a 1:06.4 shedding five tenths of a second from the previous mark.

Ross took four second place medals. Cecil Miller, Scott Nahn, Mike Aten and Mike Frey finished second in the 200 medley relay. Pat Aten was second to Gilbert in the individual medley. Felix Robles was second to Kennedy in diving and Pat Aten took a second in the 100 breaststroke.

Semer (200 individual medley), Frey (50 yard freestyle), Andy Christensen (diving), Bob Roosen (100 yard backstroke) and Erick Bristley (400 yard freestyle) earned third place medals.

Other point winners in individual events were Pat Collins, Miller and Nahn.

200 yard medley relay—1. Sandusky (Gilbert, Coyle, Baehnis, Swander); 2. Ross (Miller, Nahn, Aten, Frey); 3. Findlay (Swales, Wittenmyer, Kennedy, Title); 4. Mansfield (Finerty, Chitt, Purcum, Adams); 5. Marion (Perringer, Baber, Edging, Gorenflo); 1:48.4.

100 yard freestyle—1. Lishawa, Findlay; 2. Roos, Mansfield; 3. Roach, Sandusky; 4. Collins, Ross; 5. Jones, Marion; 1:54.2.

200 yard individual medley—1. Gilbert, Sandusky; 2. P. Aten, Ross; 3. Semer, Ross; 4. Green, Marion; 5. Bullington, Findlay; 2:48.9.

400 yard freestyle—1. Strathman, Findlay; 2. Mathias, Findlay; 3. Frey, Ross; 4. Felt, Marion; 5. Bear, Sandusky; 2:15.

Diving—1. Kennedy, Findlay; 2. Robles, Ross; 3. Christensen, Ross; 4. Majors, Findlay; 5. Newton, Sandusky; 340.25.

100 yard butterfly—1. Aten, Ross; 2. Green, Marion; 3. Felt, Marion; 4. Mathias, Findlay; 5. Purcum, Mansfield.

100 yard freestyle—1. Stephenson, Ross; 2. Bookwalter, Mansfield; 3. Bristley, Sandusky; 4. Shawer, Mansfield; 5. Scott, Findlay; 53.2.

100 yard backstroke—1. Jones, Marion; 2. Finerty, Mansfield; 3. Roosen, Ross; 4. Miller, Ross; 5. Perry, Sandusky; 1:02.

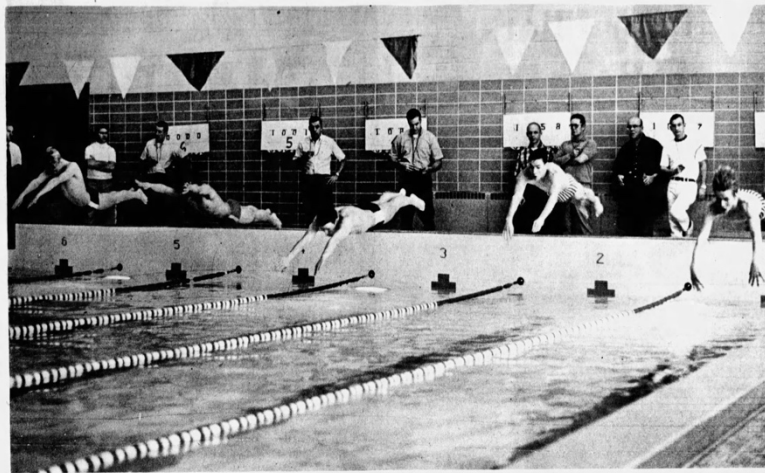
400 yard freestyle—1. Lishawa, Findlay; 2. Roach, Sandusky; 3. Bristley, Ross; 4. Collins, Ross; 5. Pfeiffer, Sandusky; 4:19.1.

100 yard breaststroke—1. Coyle, Sandusky; 2. P. Aten, Ross; 3. Wittenmyer, Findlay; 4. Nahn, Ross; 5. Davis, Findlay; 1:06.4.

200 yard freestyle relay—1. Ross (Hooser, Semer, Stephenson, Keeler); 2. Mansfield (Bookwalter, Baah, Shawer, Adams); 3. Sandusky (Swander, Miller, Felt, Harper); 4. Findlay (Strathman, Title, Scott, Worthington); 5. Marion (Green, Perringer, Gorenflo, Edging); 3:38.4.

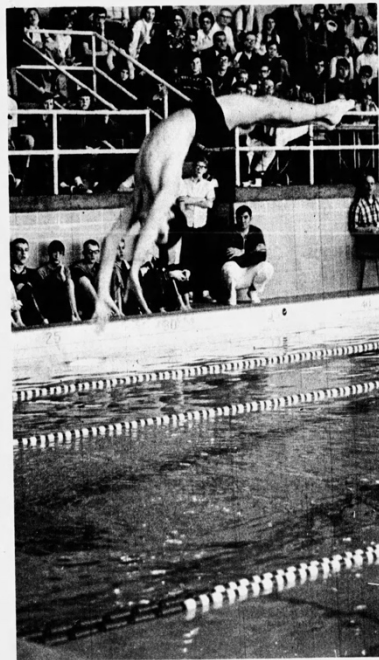
News-Messenger
SPORTS

N-M Camera At Buckeye Swim Meet



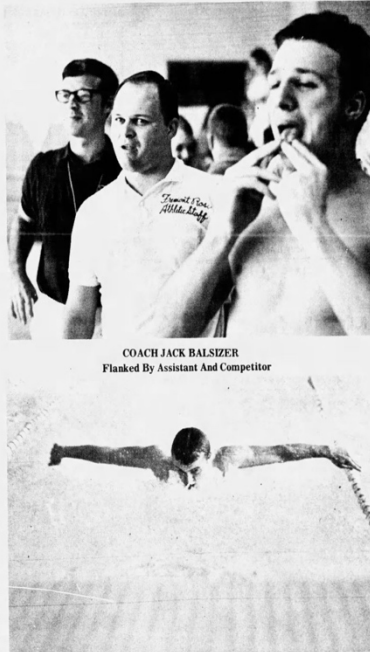
MIKE ATEN

Little Giant Swimmer Swam In Lane Three In Winning 100 Butterfly



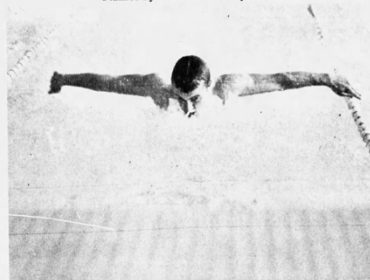
FELIX ROBLES

Took Second In Diving Competition



COACH JACK BALSIZER

Flanked By Assistant And Competitor



JEFF KEEFER

Finishing 100 Yard Butterfly



ROSS HIGH CHEERLEADERS

They Helped Make Sandusky Pool 'Giant Country'

Mark My Words

An Extended Four Years

By MARK CARLSON
New-Messenger Sports Editor

It has been a long four years for Ross high school swimming coach Jack Balsizer. "I waited four years to get thrown in that pool over at Sandusky," Balsizer said Sunday afternoon. "It was a great feeling hitting that water."

Members of the Ross swimming squad gave Balsizer and his assistant coach Gary Shell a not-so-unexpected swim after the Little Giants won the Buckeye Conference title in a run away Saturday.

It was in that same pool in 1964 that the Little Giants had won the coveted crown only to see it taken away when an excited team member jumped in the pool after the medley relay team had finished.

Since then, Ross had come close, but never managed to take the top honors. Last year at Mansfield they placed second, six points behind Findlay.

But, this was the year for Ross. The Little Giant tankers weren't to be denied. Balsizer, at the request of the team, began preparing his squad for last Saturday way back in November.

This writer recalls talking with Balsizer two nights before the opening meet with Sandusky Perkins and hearing the veteran mentor say "the kids have asked me to peak them for the Buckeye meet. They don't care what else happens this year but they want to win the Buckeye."

The Little Giants reached their peak Saturday. It wasn't a meet won by individuals, it was a TEAM championship.

"Every one of those kids had something to do with it," Balsizer said. "It was a team victory. It has to be in a meet of this nature."

It had to be a team effort when Ross captured only three first places compared four for runner-up Findlay. Winning first place medals for the Little Giants were Mike Aten (100 yard butterfly), Al Stephenson (100 yard freestyle) and the 400 yard freestyle team composed of Dick Houser, Stephenson, Jeff Keefer and Mark Semer. Just as important as the individual victories were the second, third and fourth place finishers. Ross had at least a fourth place finisher in every event. The Little Findlay didn't let points in two events and Sandusky, the third place finisher, didn't score in one.

Last Thursday Balsizer was worried about his squad's depth. But it was that depth which brought the vital 67 points.

What was the key to Ross winning its third Buckeye championship in seven years?

"When you analyze this it is really a case of our kids maturity and the way they were able to swim under pressure," Balsizer said.

"Our maturity and desire got us those 67 points. I've purposely put the kids under all sorts of pressure this season to they would be ready for the Buckeye."

The kids were positive they were going to win. Prior to the meet we had a little talk. I told them to make sure of their starts and turns. After this was completed I started to tell them one more thing, but Stephenson said it for me - win.

That's all they thought about."

Ross actually had the meet sewed up prior to the final event. Balsizer, however, isn't sure if the team knew it. "I imagine they did," Balsizer said, "but they didn't show it. I told the relay team to go out and swim the best way possible. They went out, won the event and out two-tenths of a second off the conference record. That's the kind of a desire they had."

The big win for Ross came with Stephenson in the butterfly. Up to that point, the Little Giants trailed Findlay in the team race. But the senior co-captain upset Mansfield's Chuck Bookwalter to take a first. He did it with the best time of his career.

Prior to Stephenson's win, the other co-captain Mike Aten had won his specialty.

"Our two co-captains gave the rest of the team the inspiration," Balsizer said. "If we lacked just a little incentive before those two events we didn't afterwards."

"The rest of the team really look up to those two. Stephenson's performance was the key. He wasn't supposed to win. When the kids saw him take charge they knew they had to keep it going."

It's gratifying to work with a group of kids like these. It makes me believe a lot more in our kids of today. It makes a coach feel like he has really accomplished something."

From this corner a big Tip of the Hat to Balsizer, Shell and the members of the 1970 Buckeye Conference swimming championship squad.



Wednesday, Feb. 18, 1970 Fremont News-Messenger 17



ASSISTANT COACH GARY SELLT

Only Time Will Tell

Picture Page Photos
By Larry Sollazzo