

Improvement Leads To Victory!

"Swimmers, take your mark . . . Go!" These were the words that got the blood pumping in every member of the boys' and girls' swim teams before each race. What would happen in that race depended on many things: practice time, coaching, and dedication. Although swimming is an individual sport, the overall success of the team was very important to each member.

As the girls plunged into another season, Coach Fred Cooper watched with amazement at the many goals that were reached. Junior Julie Beerman said, "I feel as if this year's swim team had an extremely large amount of potential, which helped us achieve several successes throughout the year." Added to the excitement of winning, nine girls reached the state meet. These girls were: Leigh Bassler, Julie Beerman, Kerry Bennett, Meagan Ciccarella, Laurie Kerns, Michele Lichtenberger, and Erin Powers. Two divers, Lauren Loberg and Anne Sherman, also competed in this meet.

The girls had many victories including winning the Greater Miami Conference championship, runner-up in the Sycamore Invitational, second in the Sycamore Sectional, and third at the district meet. According to Cooper, "The highlight of the season was finishing fourth in the state meet. Another highlight would be sophomore Leigh Bassler finishing second in both the 200 IM and the 100 back."

Overall, the team finished with a record of 10-2. Cooper commented, "The team's success and belief that they could improve and be stronger, and the desire to finish at a higher level at the state meet, made it possible for the championship." With the 400 free relay setting a new school record of 3:36:87, how can one not be proud?

When the boys' season started, there was some doubt about the capabilities of the team. The majority of the team were underclassmen, with only four seniors. The inexperience of the team made some think that the season would not be very successful.

Junior Terry Hiltner felt, "Dedication is the main idea in swimming; if

you don't want to succeed, you won't. You have to want it to get it."

Coach Mark Sullivan helped the boys in their quest for success. Many members of the team felt that his coaching technique assisted them in pushing themselves to go beyond what they thought they could accomplish.

"The coaches knew us on a one-to-one basis, so they could tell if we were reaching our full potential, and if we weren't, they pushed us so we did," said freshman Mike Farnsworth.

Whatever the reasons were, the fact remains that the boys came out at the end of the season with a 5-4 record, far better than anyone thought they would have. Still, Hiltner said, "There is always room for improvement."

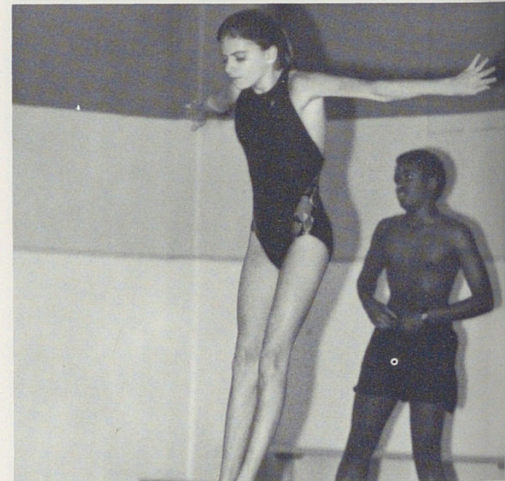
by Courtney Shackelford & Erica Stewart

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-Julie Beerman



Scoop and serve... Varsity swimmer John Sexton practices his breaststroke at the Sycamore High School pool.



Practice makes perfect! Sophomore Michelle Lichtenberger practices her freestyle. Michelle later went on to compete at State.

Perfect form! Junior Piera Giroux concentrates as she bounces off the platform preparing to make a forward dive.

