

Swimmers post best results heading into Districts

CHRISTOPHER ERBIN

Staff Reporter

With another new coach this year and the continued struggle to find pool space, the Swim Team has been working to find consistency. Although the no cut policy allows swimmers of all talent levels to participate, it also causes greater challenges such as how to put over 60 swimmers in the water during the team's limited pool time.

"The swim program has had six different coaches in the ten years that I have been the Athletic Director," Rob Holstrom, Athletic Director, said. "Job and career conflicts have been the main reason we have had the turnover in coaching positions with

regards to the swim program."

But the biggest obstacle the team has faced this year is the lack of pool time according to new Head Coach Phoebe Skinner. The no cut policy resulted in as many as 75 swimmers at the beginning of the season having to share one pool. This forces swimmers into crowded lanes as swimmers circle swim (swim clockwise around the lane) with up to 12 swimmers in a lane.

"It is difficult that we have no pool in West Linn. Therefore we have to travel for each and every practice and meet," Holstrom said. "Pool time is very difficult to get, which also means that the time of day for practice has

been in the evenings, which has created another hardship for both coaches and athletes."

This year the team was able to secure time at Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus, in the afternoons two days a week, and hold a few Saturday morning practices at Lewis & Clark College.

In addition, the arrival of a new coach with policies that differ from those in the past, has at times led to disagreement between the coaching staff and some swimmers as the team tries to find a new balance, according to Skinner.

A lot of the issues can be attributed to a first-year coach and the transition of a coaching staff and their coaching styles," Holstrom said. "Programs typically experience growing pains as this happens as coaches attempt to change habits from past programs and athletes get used to new styles and demands."

While the season started out with mixed results, the team appears to be peaking at the right time heading into the District Meet which will be held at Lake Oswego High School Swim Center. The competition begins today with prelims at 2 p.m. and continues tomorrow with finals at 2 p.m.

The boys head into Districts having recorded extremely close meets with their two toughest rivals—an 86-80 loss to Lake Oswego on Jan. 20 and a 73-69 victory over Lakeridge on Jan. 29.

At the Lakeridge meet, the 200 Medley Relay team of Gunnar Wolfe, freshman, Arthur To, sophomore, Kevin Sellers, junior, and Brian Laderoute, senior, won the meet's first event and set the tone for what would be one of the boys' most impressive performances to date. Sellers and Laderoute came back to win races later in the meet,

with Sellers taking the 200 Individual Medley with a time of 2:17.08, while Laderoute won the 100 breaststroke in 1:15.33.

Many races came down to the last second, as many Lion swimmers were beat by less than a second. The team of To, Sellers, Hans Farnbach, senior, and Donevan Karr, sophomore, capped off the day for the Lions, recording a first place finish in the 400 Freestyle Relay. The boys' season ended with a league record of 4-2.

The girls' team finished the season with an even 3-3 split, also turning some standout performances against Lakeridge. Against the Pacers, Jessica Broberg, sophomore, placed first in the 100 Butterfly with a time of 1:09.37. She later came back to place third in the 100 Backstroke, as the Lions dominated the event with Josie Sells, senior, taking first and McCrae, junior, completing the sweep by finishing second. Sells also recorded her best time of the season in the 200 Individual Medley, claiming second place.

"I believe it's performances like these that show this team is growing. I think we will have a very strong showing at District with the potential of qualifying swimmers for the State Championship," Skinner said.

Skinner, who swam at Lewis & Clark College and has been teaching swim for 16 years, joined the team this fall with a respectable reputation for coaching at various clubs throughout the Portland area for the past seven years. It is her first experience coaching at a high school.

"I have worked to explain to swimmers the reasoning behind the strokes—why certain swimming techniques work, and why others do not. In the pool I expect my swimmers to demonstrate a

positive attitude and work hard every length they swim; this may mean physical exertion, mental focus, or a combination of the two," Skinner said.

Pool time isn't the only challenge the team has faced this season. Swimmers have missed practices and violated team policies, resulting in Varsity competitors sitting out of events. Some swimmers have not always been put into their strongest events which has caused some frustration on the team.

"It is no small task with 64 swimmers and only 34 events per meet to place swimmers. I do my best to place each in his or her desired event. I had all of the swimmers turn in a list ranking their favorite races, and I use this to help determine who swims what," Skinner said. "Junior Varsity swimmers occasionally race in Varsity events. This happens most often when I have an open lane in a Varsity event due to illness."

"She just has a very different approach to coaching, one that we are not used to," Hayley McCrae, junior, said. "She believes in enjoying swimming more than the competition aspect, but we also want to win."

"I find that there are some swimmers who have been able to discover strengths they did not know they had as a result of this system," Skinner said. "As we hone in on the District Meet swimmers will be swimming their best events at almost every meet."

Although the season is not over yet, Skinner is also looking ahead to next year.

"I hope the team starts off with a strong sense of discipline and builds on the skills they have learned this year," Skinner said. "I believe we will have a large number of returners to provide a strong base for next season."

Snow teams hit slopes

JACKIE STEEH

Staff Reporter

The Memorial Cato Race marked a fun way to start the season for the Ski Team. The race, which does not count for any points, gave racers the opportunity to warm up for the season—while dressed in

costumes. "I dressed up as Minnie Mouse. It was super fun,"

Emily McNabb, freshman, said.

As the season begins, it is clear that it will not be entirely fun, however. The Boys' Varsity Team took a blow when David Hinton, the Slalom state champion, made the decision not to race this year.

"I am taking time off to free ski and take more of a relaxed winter this year. It is hard to travel and do well in school at the same time," Hinton, senior, said.

Although Hinton was a key competitor for the team, returners include Alexander Otey, senior, Sean Campbell, junior, and Alec Ramsey, sophomore.

"It was an unfortunate loss. Hopefully the boys' team can pull together so we can make State like last year," Ramsey said.

The team's first league event was a Giant Slalom race at Ski Bowl on Jan. 10 where Madeleine Martus took sixth for the girls and Sean Campbell, junior, took tenth for the boys.

Quickly following was a Slalom race at Meadows on Jan. 17, when the weather was quite exceptional in ski season terms—it was 50 degrees and very sunny. Often, days like this means extra work from the coaches and gate judges, no have to smooth around the gates and salt the snow. But

instead, the snow stayed cold and solid. Martus took fourth place overall and McNabb was sixth for the girls while Ramsey placed second for the boys.

"It was beautiful weather. We were able to have lunch outside. It was so unexpected for the middle of January," Martus said.

During the Jan. 24 Slalom competition, Martus once again lead the girls' team by taking fourth place, and Ramsey lead the boys with a third place finish.

Martus took home her first victory of the season for the girls during the Jan. 31 Slalom race, and Ramsey finished second once again for the boys.

The Snowboarding Team's first meet was Jan. 17 with the Men's Individual Banked Slalom competitors sweeping the field. Jordan Reyes, senior, placed first, Tanner Kewley, senior, placed second, Joseph McMillan, junior, placed third and Zakary Gertlar, senior, placed fourth.

The Women's Individual Banked Slalom also saw strong performances from Gabrielle Estey, freshman, who placed third, and Hayley Shafer, senior, who placed fourth.

The mens' team did very well in the competition with Reyes, Kewley, McMillan and Gertlar placing first in the team race.

In the Jan. 24 slopestyle competition, strong performances were turned in by Gertlar, who placed fifth, and Kewley, who finished in sixth place. Shafer placed third for the girls.

The Half Pipe competition on Jan. 31 went well for the Lions, with McMillan and Kewley finishing fourth and fifth, respectively, for the boys and Shafer and Estey placing second and third, respectively, for the girls.

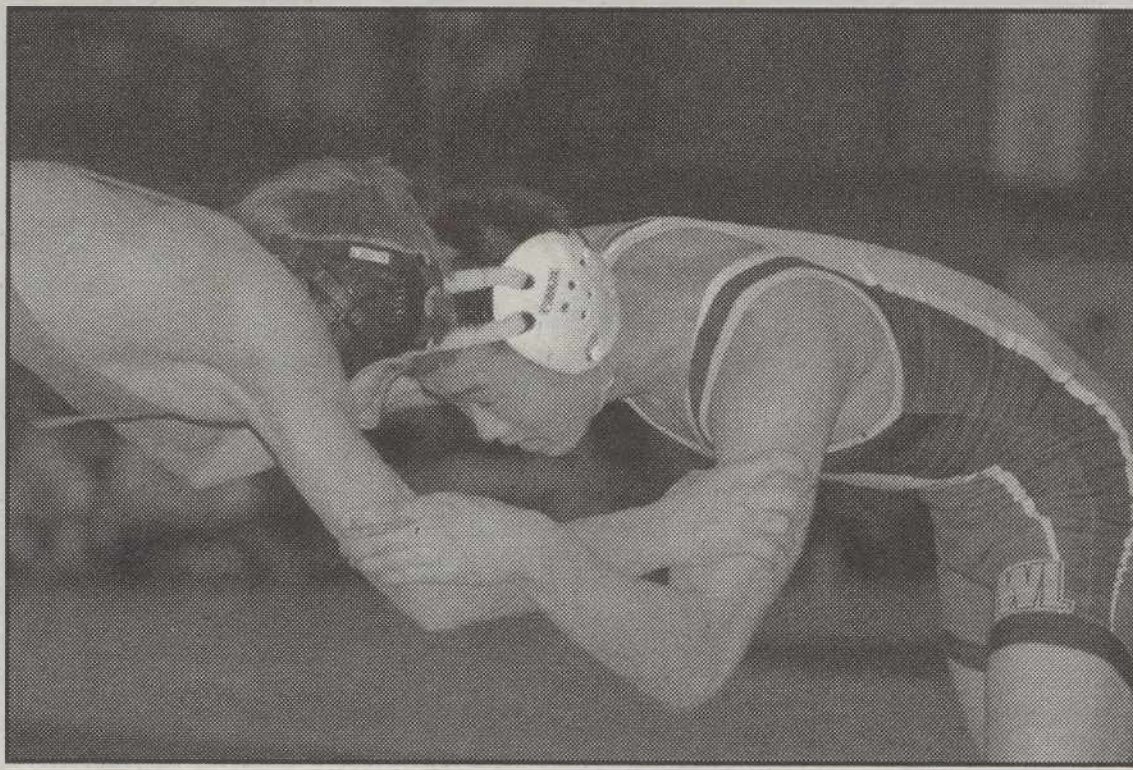
Wrestlers prosper despite setbacks

AUSTIN CUMMINS

Staff Reporter

With the Wrestling Team entering the final half of the season, recent weather has left the Lions at a disadvantage. The snow storm forced cancelation of school followed by Winter Break which resulted in postponing the first dual meet against Oregon City and cancelling the tournament in Canby. These setbacks put the Lions three weeks behind schedule.

In the Pac's Coast championship held on Jan. 2 at Hudson Bay High School, the Lions were not only up against tough competition but were also behind in practice and conditioning. While the wrestlers had



Andrew Kim, senior, looks for the takedown against Roseburg's Chayse Jackson in the 119 lbs. weight class at the Crater Classic. Both Kim and the team took third in the tourney.

Photo by Tracie Krellwitz

competed in three matches, their opponents had competed in 16. Despite this, the Lions held strong and managed to win at least

one match against every opponent.

Wrestling

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