



Photo submitted by Tim Barcus  
Junior Jason Stokes leaps into the pool for the 400-yard relay finals during the NCAA Division II Swimming & Diving Championships. The men finished 13th in the race. Stokes broke the oldest school record in men's swimming, in the 50-yards freestyle race with a time of 20.64, breaking Dan Bollini's 1991 record.

# Men set two school records, take 20th

BY COREY JAROS  
Staff Reporter

The crowd was intense and the times were fast in Columbia last week at the men's NCAA Div. II Swimming Championships.

"That was the fastest Div. II championships in history, for both the men and the women," head coach Mark Gole said.

To only take into consideration the 20th-place finish for the Truman men's swim team would be to ignore the actual story.

The team got off to a promising start on the first day, setting two new school records and scoring 20 points to put it in 15th place out of 27 schools.

Junior Jason Stokes broke the team's

oldest school record in the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 20.64, eclipsing Dan Bollini's 1991 mark. Stokes' time was good for an 11th-place finish and one of two All-American honors in an individual event for the Bulldogs.

"He went a time that would get him top-eight every year for the last, I can't even tell you how many years," Gole said. "He beat his personal best by .2, which is a lot in the 50."

The men's 200-yard medley relay team, composed of Stokes, sophomore Peter McCall, senior Adam Pruess and senior Alex Totura, advanced to the B-Finals and finished in 10th place with a school record time of 1:32.23.

McCall said the crowd's support at the Mizzou Aquatic Center encouraged him in his first appearance at nationals.

"It was pretty amazing," McCall said. "It can be stressful because it is a high-pressure situation, but I loved it. It was great to see a lot of people out there rooting for us."

The second day of competition yielded 19 more points for the 'Dogs, but they fell three places in the standings to 18th. The men found themselves in a tough spot when they tied Ouachita Baptist for eighth place in the 200-meter free relay preliminary race.

"We had to do a swim-off to see who got into the championship heat," Gole said. "Our guys had to swim a 400 medley relay, take a 20-minute break and then do the swim-off. And Ouachita got to put four fresh guys in for that race, and we actually dropped time from our preliminary, but we still got beat."

The 400-yard medley relay team, made up of Totura, Stokes, Pruess and sophomore Andrew McCall, earned points for the team on the second day with a time of 3:28:98, good for a 15th-place finish.

"We had realized how fast the meet was after the first day, so we had to sit back and re-think how we were going to try and make top eight in our relays," Stokes said. "I underestimated how fast the meet was going to be."

That same relay combination was good for a 13th-place finish the third day in the 800-meter freestyle relay, providing the sole source of points for the Bulldogs as they slipped to 20th place.

They finished the meet on Saturday with 48 points and a 20th-place finish.

In Gole's first two years of coaching the men's team, it had 11th- and 15th-place finishes at the national meet.

Graduating seniors Totura and Pruess ended their careers on a high note. Totura earned his first All-American honor for an individual event with a time of 51.26 in the 100-yard butterfly, and Pruess scored a new personal best time in every race that he swam.

"It was a pleasure swimming with them for three years," Stokes said. "It's going to be hard to replace them. We're losing two great national swimmers and a bunch more other seniors also."

Stokes and Totura earned six All-American titles each, leading the way for the Bulldogs. Pruess scored five titles, Peter McCall earned three and Andrew McCall earned two.

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