Women qualify 10 for nationals

Bulldogs finish invite second against three Div. I opponents

BY SONDRA LANGLEY
Staff Reporter

The Iowa Invitational in Iowa City Nov. 20 to 22 gave the women's swim team more than a second-place finish. It rewarded them with 10 A cuts to nationals.

"It felt really great especially since you work hard all season," senior Kate Aherne said. "Its just so nice to see it pay off. To get 10 girls right now is really a good place to be."

Aherne led the women with A cuts in 100 and 200-yard freestyle, 200-yard individual medley, 100-yard backstroke and two relays: the 200-yard medley and the 800- yard freestyle.

The NSISC Conference meet in Cleveland, Miss., Feb. 10 to 13 will be the next taper meet for the Bulldogs for those who did not qualify.

"We definitely want to get the relay cuts at conference, and it's a great way to get more people qualified for nationals," Aherne said.

Other individual qualifiers were juniors Julia Jones in the 400-yard IM, Anna Grinter in the 200-yard butterfly, Emily Buss in the 200-yard breaststroke and freshman Stacey Wymer in the 200-yard backstroke.

Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Freshman Stacey Wymer received one of 10 A cuts during the 'Dogs' fall taper meet in Iowa City, Iowa.

"I was very excited since not a lot of freshmen get it individually," Wymer said.

Junior Tanya Sylvester, senior Kendra Brunkow, sophomore Krista Tippin, sophomore Jessica Jenkot and freshman Lexi Hauser each qualified through relays. For Wymer and Hauser, this is their first A cut in college swimming.

"It's going to be very positive for them, since they will be strictly focused on training for nationals," head coach Mark Gole said of the 10 qualifiers.

Gole said there were a few narrow misses for A cuts. Junior Stephanie Myers was close in the 1,650-yard freestyle. Freshman Taylor Birsa was also close in the 400-yard IM and the 200-yard backstroke. This season the women have one more qualifier for nationals than they had last year at this time.

"Three months of training may seem like a lot to some people, but we know that it takes more a lot of times to get that perfect taper and that A cut, so three more months of training behind us makes a huge difference so at conference we will see a couple more qualify," Aherne said.

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>
> **Stacey Wymer**
> Freshman,
> on getting an A-cut time at the Iowa Invitational

Truman was the only Div. II school at the meet. The Bulldogs faced Div. I schools University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa and Western Illinois University. The women finished less than 100 points behind powerhouse University of Iowa.

"I feel that second place was great," Wymer said. "All the teams we were versing were Div. I schools."

The next meet for the women will be Jan. 8 and 9 in the Pershing Natatorium. The dual meet is against Lewis University and will be Senior Day for the men and women. During the month and a half of training, the team plans to focus on nationals.

"This is kind of when we get to floor the accelerator on the training," Gole said. "Its really big for the team building. They are going through something they have never done before together."

Both men and women teams will take a training trip to San Diego, Calif., during Winter Break.

"During the school year, we are forced to live by the NCAA rules of hours a day and per week," Gole said. "But during break, there is no 20-hour rule so we floor them and go two full two-hour workouts in the pool."

Not only is the trip a chance to work harder than during the school year, but the teams bond and become more intense in training for nationals.

"It's a little daunting since we know won't get a break for awhile, but I am really excited about it," Aherne said. "Training trip is the hardest nine days of just practice. It is so great to see what everyone can do after those nine days at the dual meets."

Men get no A cuts at Iowa Invitational

Bulldogs record nine B cuts and a second-place team finish

BY BRENDAN O'BRIEN
Staff Reporter

Despite no qualifications for nationals at the University of Iowa Invite Nov. 20 to 22, the men's swim team remained in high spirits after its final fall meet.

"We always go into [the fall taper meet] trying to get a couple people qualified for nationals, so we kind of fell short of that but, at the same [time] ... our other expectation is to go season-best times hands-down by every guy," head coach Mark Gole said.

The team missed its A cuts, but each of the 14 swimmers who competed improved their season best times.

Many shattered personal bests. Freshman Matt Flectcher dropped more than a second per length and earned a B cut in the 200-yard backstroke and freshman walk-on Jonathan Temple who cut 19 seconds from his previous best in the 500-yard freestyle.

Despite the absence of A cuts, there were nine B cuts during the weekend. In addition to Fletcher, fellow freshman Tony Hernandez picked up two in the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke while another freshman, Jerod Simek, had four of his own in the 500-, 1000- and 1650-yard freestyle and in the 400-yard individual medley. Sophomore Brian Tillis had two B cuts in the 500- and 1650-yard freestyle and his neck-and-neck finish with Simek in the 1650-yard freestyle was less than two seconds behind the time needed for the A cut. Simek said this interteam competition benefits them in training.

"You both have the same training times that you want to hit for the most part, so it's always nice that someone's there training with you," Simek said. "When you have someone there with you it's like, 'OK, OK, at least I'm not doing this all on my own. I have someone here with me that they know what I'm going through.'"

> "We just think about getting those cuts for nationals, and that's all we really need, [to] stay hungry with that."
>
> **Brian Tillis**
> Sophomore

Gole said the interteam competition almost catapulted both Tillis and Simek to nationals qualifications.

"I was extremely pleased with how our men's team swam," Gole said. "It was a heartbreaker. I felt more for Brian [Tillis] and Jerod [Simek] missing that cut in the mile by that little. Just seeing that scoreboard, because we knew for about 600 yards that they were dead on it, but they had to do something to get it, and it was just too little too late on that last 50."

Senior Andrew McCall missed the first two days as he was named a Rhodes Scholar, but the team pulled together and finished in second place behind the Iowa Hawkeyes 1,408-656. The 'Dogs managed to beat out other Div. I schools South Dakota State University by approximately 100 points and Western Illinois University by more than 200. Gole said the team could have expected even more points in sprints and sprint relays had McCall been present throughout.

"It's a young team," assistant coach Tim Sandfort said. "It bodes well for the future, but the fact that we did place so well says a whole lot about the quality and cohesion of the men's team."

With the next meet not until Jan. 2 at the University of California-San Diego, this team chemistry will be more essential as the team's training is kicked into high gear.

"That's our peak yardage, our peak point of breakdown for the whole team." Sandfort said. "That's our goal for the next three [weeks] — to get them to a point where they can physiologically handle the training we're going to put on them, because we hammer them when they get to San Diego."

Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index
Freshman Tony Hernandez recorded one of nine B-cut times for the men during the Iowa Invitational Nov. 20 to 22.

The long stretch will be a test for every swimmer, but Tillis and Simek said they knew they were close to A cuts going into the Iowa Invite, and after they came up just short, their motivation only increased.

"We just think about getting those cuts for nationals, and that's all we really need, [to] stay hungry with that," Tillis said.

The small number of people on the team puts that much more pressure on each individual to do well. Simek said that this helps hold each person accountable and ensures that every athlete pulls his own weight.

"The strength I would say is probably having a positive attitude," Simek said. "Nobody, at least that I can ever tell, slacks off, and if somebody does or tries to, somebody gets on him and is like, 'Hey, don't slack off, you're working towards this goal.'"

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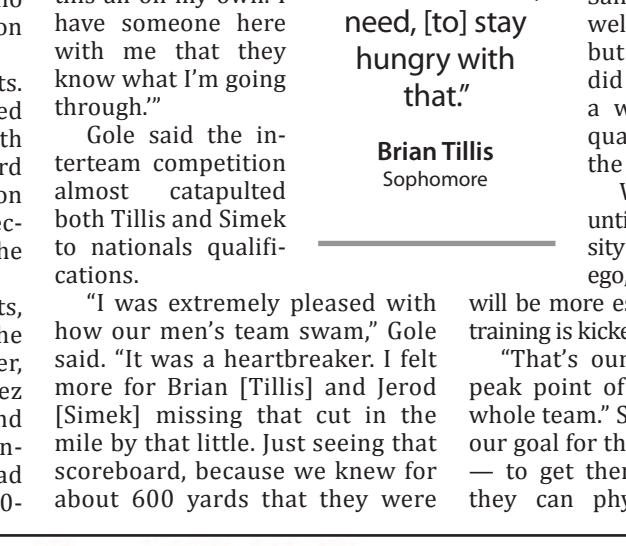

Secondhand smoke contains at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic, including more that 50 that can cause cancer.

Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke increase their heart disease risk by 25-30% and their lung cancer risk by 20-30%.

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Source: CDC
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