

Monday, February 25, 2008

Swimming and Diving brings home ninth league title

Oakland University's men's and women's swimming and diving teams had a total team effort in winning their ninth straight Summit League Championships. Sophomore Marcin Unold swam his second NCAA Automatic qualifying time of the meet, clocking a Summit League and school record mark of 1:43.57 in the 200-yard backstroke, and senior Zoltan Horvath continued to add to his league-record with his 11th individual title, claiming the 200 breaststroke with a NCAA 'B' cut, Summit League and school record time of 1:59.50, to lead the Oakland University men's swimming and diving team to its ninth consecutive league championship. The women won 18 of 20 events en route to scoring 1,023 points, winning by 455. OU swept all of the individual awards as well. Freshman Chelsea Oates was Diver of the Year, sophomore Agnes Solan was Newcomer of the Year, junior Sophia Gustafsson was Swimmer of the Year and Pete Hovland was named Coach of the Year.

The Oakland men broke the Summit League meet record with 1,050, a record previously set by OU of 1,042 set back in 2000. Following the Grizzlies in the standings was Centenary (556), Western Illinois (461), Eastern Illinois (443), IUPUI (359) and South Dakota State (278).

"Needless to say we're pretty elated about our performance," said Hovland. "Not often in our sport do you have so many outstanding performances, swim in and swim out."

Horvath and Unold both led the championship meet with 60 individual points for the Golden Grizzlies. Unold was tabbed The Summit League Swimmer of the Year, finishing the meet with two NCAA 'A' cut times, and multiple school and league records.

Freshman John Ledda was tabbed Newcomer of the Year, after earning 39 points for the Grizzlies. He tallied top-eight finishes in the 400 individual medley (4th/4:13.63) and 1650 freestyle (6th/17:00.21).

Junior Aaron Holdsworth clocked a Summit League and school record time of 1:47.54 in the 200 butterfly to claim his third consecutive crown in that event.

Senior Anthony Serio opened the night in fine fashion for the Golden Grizzlies, winning the 1650 freestyle with a lifetime-best time of 16:00.23 to capture his first league championship in the mile. Junior Andy Kellogg found the winner's circle for the second time, posting a career-best time of 44.99 in the 100 free, to edge out senior Chris Tansel's mark of 45.43.

Freshman Sam Megli clocked a lifetime-best time of 2:10.12 to finish runner-up to Horvath in the 100 breast, earning second team all-Summit League honors. Joining Megli on the second team was sophomore Patrick Downing, finishing the 200 back with a time of 1:51.05, just missing his career-best mark of 1:51.03, to earn all-league honors.

Junior Jason Manasseri clocked a lifetime-best time of 1:51.34 in the 200 fly to earn second team all-Summit League honors. The 200 free relay team of Unold, Tansel, junior Nick Bonucchi and Kellogg posted a NCAA 'B' cut and Summit League record time of 2:58.16. Unold also broke the Summit League record with a 100 free split time of 43.89.

On the women's side, Oates was never challenged as she ran away with both the one and three-meter springboard titles. Solan won the 200-yard individual medley (2:05.52), 100 backstroke (54.74), 200 backstroke where she set a meet record with a time of 1:58.95 and earned the NCAA "B" cut. Solan also swam on the championship 200 medley (1:45.00), 400 medley (3:47.51), and 400 freestyle (3:27.99) relays, where she set meet records in all races. In the 400 medley, she broke her own school record in the 100 backstroke with an NCAA "B" cut time of 54.65. Gustafsson won the 500 freestyle (4:59.91) and 400 individual medley (4:26.18) and was runner-up in the 1,650 freestyle.

On the final day of competition, the Golden Grizzlies picked up five victories. Individual wins came from Solan in the 200 backstroke, sophomore Sarah Ludema in the 100 free, Oates in the three-meter springboard and freshman Emily Wike in the 200 breaststroke. The record breaking 400 freestyle relay squad was Ludema, freshman Lauren Patterson, senior Riley Rigoli and Solan.

"I'm very pleased with our performance," said Hovland. "From top to bottom, we swam exceptionally well. It is very, very rewarding when you have a team performance as well as they had. It is a credit not only to our student athletes but to the coaching staff as well. It goes to show, when you work hard, good things happen."

Golden Grizzlies Kelli Dewey, Gustafsson, Chrissy Hager, Kristen Hamilton, Ludema, Oates, Patterson, Rigoli, Solan and Wike were named to the First Team All-Summit League. Julie Hintermeister was named to the Second Team All-Summit League.

For more information, on OU's swimming and diving teams, visit the [OU Athletics](#) Web site.

SUMMARY

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