

Jan. 26 Boys Swimming



Despite swimming with a torn ACL in his left knee this winter, Kyle Gulsby continues to produce points for Steinert (Photo by Dennis Symons Jr./purchase photos at www.dennissymons.com).

Kyle Gulsby continues to progress as Steinert takes care of business

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Jan. 26: For Steinert boys' swim coach Jen Smith, who grew up in Hamilton, any meet against another township team is special, regardless of the records.

So despite the fact her team was expected to beat Nottingham easily today, Smith and her troops were still excited to compete against their neighbors from up the road. Just like they were Tuesday against Hamilton.

"Usually we're off this week because it's exam week," Smith said. "Luckily we had our crosstown rivals this week, so it kind of worked out.

"It's neat swimming Hamilton West and Nottingham in the same week because we get that 'Back into our township' type of thing. That pride of Hamilton is going on. It's nice for the kids. They enjoy it, they have fun with."

The Spartans really had fun today, rolling to a 130-39 victory over the Northstars to complete the regular season at 8-4.

Steinert now has its eyes on doing well in the county meet, both as a team and individually. That being the case, the Spartans went with their full lineup today to see where they stand heading into next week.

"This was the last official team meet that we know of for the seniors, unless we make it to states," Smith said. "Before the meet I told the kids this is our last meet, we have to make this special for the seniors but we still want to post good times. We're going into counties

"We kind of took this meet as it was our crosstown rival, let's go out and have a good time but let's get the job done. That's what they did."

Senior Kyle Gulsby, who won the 100 fly (1:13.88), took second in the 200 free and was on the winning 200 and 400 free relay teams (2:11.07, 4:13.52), said Steinert was definitely on a mission to

do more than just win the meet.

“We knew it was our last final competition before counties and states,” he said. “A lot of our swimmers are still trying to qualify for counties and state finals so we tried to push ourselves and push the team as a whole to see what we can do.”

The fact Gulsby is swimming at all is a tribute to his toughness.

Playing football for Steinert against Notre Dame on Halloween, Gulsby had an opponent roll onto his leg and knock him out of the game with a left knee injury.

“The day after, I felt fine,” Gulsby said. “I thought it was a minor injury. It turned out it was catastrophic.”

It sure was. Gulsby suffered a torn ACL in his left knee, meaning his football season was over. Because there is not the same pounding in swimming, he put surgery on hold for the winter, and also hopes to play lacrosse in the spring before having the knee repaired.

“I probably won’t be 100 percent until a month after the surgery,” Gulsby said. “I was very worried about whether I could swim. I was definitely done football, there was no doubt about that.

“After that, I just sat down and was so determined to finish my other two sports for the rest of my senior career. I really pushed myself to strengthen my knee and get it back to competitive levels.”

Smith has high praise for what Gulsby has done, noting that he never sits out a full practice even when the knee is hurting. It also hurts during meets, but he still guts it out.

Gulsby was expected to be one of Steinert’s big guns this year, but as the coach noted “We didn’t give him a full load right away, but he’s slowly working back into it.”

Zach Mabin, Kevin Diefenbach, Tommy Wright and Kevin’s younger brother, Tyler Gulsby, have helped carry the load.

Tyler has been sympathetic to big bro’s problems. . . kind of.

“He’s a good brother,” Kyle said. “He’s definitely the goofball, he always sees the lighter side of things.

“He’d go ‘Oh you can’t catch me anymore,’ He’d flick me in the head and then he’d run and he’d be like ‘Ha, catch me gimp.’”

A little comic relief, eh?

“Yeah,” Kyle said dryly. “He’s funny like that.”

Tyler is no joke in the pool, of course. Today he won the 200 IM (2:31.83), 100 back (1:09.95), 200 medley relay (2:05.71) and 400 FR.

Wright also won four times in the 200 and 500 free (2:18.39/4:53.19), the 200 MR and 400 FR.

Diefenbach was a three-time winner in the 50 and 100 free (26.55/1:00.29) and the 200 MR, while Mabin was in the 200 MR and FR and also won the 100 breast (1:11.61).

Matt Jensen, Frank Sun, Steve Chranowski and Billy Maloney were all part of a winning relay team.

Second-place finishers included Maloney (200 IM), Chranowski (50 free), Stephen Huie (100 fly), Jensen (100 free, 100 back) and Gary Liedtka-Bizuga (500 free, 100 breast). Finishing third were Sun (200 free, 1:22.54), Hunter Dalton (500 free) and Maloney (100 back).

The Spartans will now gear up for the counties, and Kyle Gulsby is not looking for miracles

from himself, just a strong effort.

“I don’t know about placing,” he said. “There’s a lot of really good competition especially with some of the schools that have established teams. But I definitely feel I can do well. Probably better than last year.”

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Nottingham got two third-place finishes from Joe Oliver in the 50 and 100 free, while Michael John was third in the 200 IM and Jeremy Oiler took third in the 100 fly.

Hutton stars again in Hamilton’s loss to WWPB

Hamilton dropped a 124-46 decision to West Windsor-Plainsboro North but Griffin Hutton will enter the counties on a high note.

The freshman won the 100 fly in 1:05.47 and took the 500 free in 4:25.10. It was another big day and sets Hutton up as one of the newcomers to watch in next week’s meet.

Second-place finishers for the Hornets included Jacob Torres (100 free) and Aleks Henson (100 breast).