

## Arizona Swimming and Diving

### March 19, 2003

**What's Happening in the Pool This Week?:** The sixth-ranked Arizona women's swimming and diving team heads to Auburn, Ala., for the 2003 NCAA Championships, which will be taking place at the James E. Martin Aquatic Center on the campus of defending champion and current No. 1-ranked Auburn. Arizona brings 10 swimmers and two divers to NAAs, and the dozen athletes will be participating in a total of 28 individual events as well as four relays. Senior Beth Botsford leads the way for the Wildcats by qualifying for four events. Sophomore Emily Mason, and the freshman trio of Katie Willis, Jenna Gresdal and Marshi Smith are set to swim in three events apiece. Both Wildcat junior divers Claire Febvay and Daniela Bemme qualified for the NAAs in the platform with stellar performances at last weekend's NCAA Zone E Diving Championships. Arizona's roster breaks down by class with two seniors, three juniors, two sophomores and an astounding five freshmen. The 'Cats are looking to finish in the top five at the NCAA Championships for the sixth consecutive year. Last year, Arizona brought 14 athletes to the competition and came away with fifth place (291 points). The Wildcats are coming off a fourth-place finish at the Pac-10 Championships (1,399 points). Botsford once again was the Pac-10 champion in both the 100y and 200y backstroke. Competition begins on Thursday, March 20 and runs until Saturday, March 22 with preliminaries at 9 a.m. MST and the finals follow in the evening at 5 p.m. MST.

#### **Arizona's Official NCAA Roster**

| <b>Name</b>    | <b>Event (s)</b>                     |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Beth Botsford  | 100y fly, 100 and 200y back, 400y IM |
| Jenna Gresdal  | 50y free, 100 and 200y back          |
| Jessica Hayes  | 50 and 200y free, 200y back          |
| Julie Manitt   | 100y back                            |
| Emily Mason    | 500y free, 400y IM, 200y fly         |
| Lisa Pursley   | 100y fly                             |
| Erin Sieper    | 100y breast                          |
| Marshi Smith   | 50 and 100y free, 100y back          |
| Jessica Wagner | 100 and 200y breast                  |
| Katie Willis   | 200 and 500y free, 200y breast       |
| Claire Febvay  | 10-meter platform                    |
| Daniela Bemme  | 10-meter platform                    |

**Finally, Some Respect from the Worldwide Leader in Sports:** Auburn's Media Relations office announced Monday that ESPN will be airing the NCAA women's swimming and diving highlight recap show on their sister network ESPN2 March 26 at 2 p.m. (EST/tape delay). In addition, ESPN will present a feed Saturday night (March 20) of the middle laps of races with the coordinates of KU Band: SBS 6, Transponder 8. Due to the stipulations of the ESPN contract, the satellite feed is prevented to show conclusions of races but will instead feature the middle laps of each event.

**Last Dip in the Water:** In the last three weeks, the Arizona swimmers competed only once, and they placed fourth at the Pac-10 Championships by scoring an astounding 1,399 points. On the other hand, the Arizona divers competed in both the Pac-10 Championships and the Zone E Diving Championships over the course of three weeks. The Wildcat divers qualified three divers for this weekend's NCAA Championships after their performance in the Zone E Championships. Juniors Claire Febvay and Daniela Bemme waited for their last dives to qualify in the platform event while junior Josh Anderson earned his NCAA eligibility with a fourth-place mark in the 1-meter. The following are more detailed recaps of both the Pac-10 Championships and Zone E Diving Championships.

***Zone E Diving Championships:*** Anderson, who finished fourth on Thursday in the 1-meter, qualified as the last out of seven divers to make the cut. On Saturday, Anderson posted his best mark of the weekend en route to a third-place finish in the platform (472.20 pts). Teammate Koenig dictated the pace for the Wildcats in the platform with his second-place score of 477.20 points.

On the women's side, Febvay's superb second-place finish in the platform (428.75 pts) earned her the fourth qualifying spot out of seven. Bemme, who also excelled in the platform with her fourth-place standing (394.90), garnered the last out of seven automatic spots allotted to the women.

*Pac-10 Championships:* The Wildcats were once again led by the former NCAA Champion Botsford who won her second individual title of the weekend in the 200y back when she touched the wall in 1:55.24. Botsford defeated her nearest opponent by nearly three seconds during her swim that automatically qualified for the NCAA Championships later in March.

Arizona's biggest impact was felt in the 100y back event. The 'Cats were paced with a dynamic effort by Botsford, who won the event with a time of 53.21. Following Botsford was Gresdal who finished third (54.67) and Manitt who garnered the fourth position when she touched the wall in 54.83. All three of these times were good enough to qualify for the NCAA Championships automatic standard.

Other notables for the Wildcats included the 200y medley relay quartet of Botsford, Gresdal, freshman Lisa Pursley and junior Jessica Wagner who garnered third place with a NCAA consideration swim of 1:40.92. The effort by these four also was the best swim of the season so far for the 'Cats.

Elsewhere, sophomore Jessica Hayes finished eighth in the 50y free when she completed the race in a time of 23.55. Arizona's 200y free relay squad earned a fifth-place finish with a time of 1:32.53.

**Arizona Men's Qualifiers Announced:** The Arizona men's team will bring seven swimmers and one diver to the NCAA Championships later in March in Austin, Texas. The eight Wildcats will compete in a total of 18 events, with junior Juan Veloz dictating the pace as the top-seeded swimmer in the 200y fly. He also is scheduled to compete in the 200y and 400y IM. Wildcat senior Jeff Dash has also qualified for a trio of events – the 200y IM and the 100y and 200y fly. Elsewhere, freshman Luis Rojas and junior Eric la Fleur are each eligible in two different events. Rojas has made the grade in the 50y free, and as the No. 13 seed in the 100y fly while la Fleur garnered the requisite times to compete in the 50y and 100y free. Rounding the Wildcat NCAA roster are three swimmers and a diver who have qualified in one event – freshmen Lyndon Ferns and Simon Burnett and juniors Greg Owen and Josh Anderson. Senior captain Scott Koenig will serve as the first alternate for the Wildcats, meaning he will be eligible to compete if one of the competitors in the top nine is unable to participate. Finally, the Cats will field squads at the NCAAs in four relays – the 200 and 800y free relays and the 200 and 400y medley relays.

**Last Time at the NCAAs:** At the 2002 NCAA Championships in Austin, Texas, the Wildcats extended their streak of top-five finishes to sixth straight years by placing fifth with a total score of 292 points. Arizona continued its streak of 11 consecutive years with an individual champion when then Arizona senior Sarah Tolar won the 200y free in the time of 1:44.66. The 'Cats 800y free relay quartet of current Arizona sophomores Jessica Hayes and Emily Mason and alumnus Jenny Vanker and Tolar won the event in a school record mark of 7:05.10.

In other action, 2001 NCAA Champion Beth Botsford placed third in the 100y back when she touched the wall in 53.45. Botsford also finished fifth in the 200y back (1:55.06). Hayes finished eighth in that very same event in a time of 1:57.80. Mason, in her first NCAA Championship meet, placed ninth in both the 200y fly (1:56.21) and the 400y IM (4:11.77).

The Auburn Tigers were named the 2002 NCAA Champions, scoring 474 points. Georgia took home second place (386) followed by Stanford (301) and Southern California (300.05). The meet was held at the Lee and Joe Jamail Texas Swimming Center in Austin.

**Do Your Best... Literally:** As the Wildcats piled up victories and ascended up the rankings as the season progressed, a total of 11 individual bests were achieved by six different swimmers. Freshmen Jenna Gresdal and Marshi Smith led Arizona with three new personal bests, and sophomore Jessica Hayes was close behind with two new standards. Gresdal bettered her previous apogee in the 50y, 100y and 200y free, and Smith did the same in the 100y and 200y free as well as the 200y back. Hayes broke her 100y free personal best at the 2002 Texas Invitational and the 200y free benchmark time at the Pac-10 Championships. Sophomore Emily Mason and freshman Lisa Pursley both improved their standards in the 100y fly, and senior Julie Manitt rounded out the group by swimming her best time ever in the 200y back at Pac-10s.

**Coach Busch's Latest Accomplishment:** Arizona's head coach Frank Busch has been selected to help coach the United States team at the 2003 Fina World Swimming Championships in Barcelona, Spain. This year's

championships will take place from July 13-27. Busch will serve as an assistant coach for the women's squad. Busch, who was honored as the NCAA Coach of the Year in 1993, last coached at the World Championships in 1998. In his career, he has made numerous coaching appearances at the international level, six at the World Championships alone.

Busch is no stranger to other international competition. In fact, Busch helmed the 1997 Pan-Pacific Games squad, and he also has been named the 1998 US Olympic Committee National Coach of the Year, among many other honors.

"It's a very prestigious honor. Outside of the Olympics, the World Championships are the most important event in the sport," said Busch.

Coaches for the World Championships are chosen by vote by the athletes who are slated to participate in the games.

**International Competitors:** Joining Busch at the World Championships is a multitude of Arizona swimmers. Current Arizona swimmer Juan Veloz, a champion at the 2002 Central American Games, will be swimming for Mexico. Sophomore Emily Mason, who earned valuable international experience at the 2002 Pan-Pacific Games, will represent the United States.

Elsewhere, senior Beth Botsford will participate in the forthcoming Pan-American Games. Arizona alumna and former NCAA and Olympic Champion Amanda Beard also intends to swim for the United States in Barcelona. Beard has been training with the Wildcats for the Championships for the balance of the year.

**Wildcat Swimmers Nationally:** Major swimming websites post a list of the best times accrued nationally in virtually every event, which analyze what teams and individuals have dominated the scene that particular season. Similarly, every year many Arizona swimmers and divers populate this list, and this year is no exception. Leading the way for the Wildcat men is junior Juan Veloz. Veloz's swim at the Texas Invitational in December in the 200y fly (1:42.78) ranks first among any other time posted this season. The All-American junior also has posted the 16th best time in the 400y IM (3:53.04). Elsewhere, senior Jeff Dash and junior Luis Rojas both find themselves in the top 75 times in the 100y fly. Dash sits in the 27th position (49.04) while Rojas currently occupies the 39th slot (49.26). Lastly, junior Eric la Fleur's performance in the 100y free at the Texas Invitational accrued him a slot on the list of best times; la Fleur touched the wall in 44.21, good enough for 13th overall.

Senior Beth Botsford leads a multitude of swimmers for the women's squad on this prestigious index. Botsford currently stands fourth in the 200y back (1:54.67), and she ranks second only to National Swimmer of the Year Natalie Coughlin in the 100y back with her time of 53.21. However, Botsford's prowess is not limited to only the backstroke as evidenced by her 17<sup>th</sup> best time in the 100y fly and her 41<sup>st</sup> rank in the 200y fly with times of 53.94 and 2:00.10, respectively. Joining Botsford on the list of best times in the 200y fly is junior Emily Mason who occupies the 14<sup>th</sup> position (1:57.85). Mason also ranks 27th in the 200y IM (2:01.48) and 13th in the 400y IM (4:14.17). In the end though, Mason's best placement comes in the 500y freestyle. Her time of 4:39.07 ranks her third only to the aforementioned Natalie Coughlin and SMU star Flavia Rigamonti.

**All-Time Wildcat Greats:** USA Swimming recently released an updated list of both the top 15 performers and top 15 performances ever registered on yards courses. Not surprisingly, current Arizona swimmers, as well as numerous alumni, appear quite frequently on both lists. All in all, of the top 15 all time, Arizona women have six of the best performances and 12 of the best performers. Topping the list for the Wildcat women is alumna Christy Ahmann-Leighton who ranks as the fifth best performer ever in the 100y fly. Ahmann-Leighton's record setting swim came at the 1992 NCAA Championships in Austin, Texas, when she touched the wall in 51.75. Dotting the index among current Wildcats are senior Beth Botsford and sophomore Emily Mason. Botsford ranks as the sixth best all-time performer in the 200y back with her swim at the 2001 Texas Invitational (1:53.76) and 12th in the 100y back when she touched the wall in 53.25 at the 2002 Texas Invitational. Wildcat Women like alumna Sarah Tolar, Olympic Champion Amanda Beard and Trina Jackson among others are included in this prestigious register.

The Arizona men's swimmers exhibit the same level of prowess on a historical level as well. On the current index, the Wildcat men have lodged 13 of the top performances and 10 of the best performers all time. Topping

the list is Arizona alumnus Roland Schoeman and Chad Carvin, who are both former NCAA Champions. Schoeman's championship winning swim at the 2002 NAAs ranks as the third fastest ever (19.06). Schoeman also currently occupies three slots on the top 15 for the 50y free. Similar to Schoeman, alumni Chad Carvin's swim of 4:11.59 at the 1994 NCAA Championships in Minneapolis, Minn., is good enough for second all time. In total, the Wildcats occupy five slots on this prestigious list, with Carvin owning three spots and former NCAA Champions Ryk Neethling and Mariusz Podkoscieiny each taking up one slot.

**Arizona Media Information:** For any information regarding either of the Arizona swimming and diving teams, contact Elliot Magruder in the Arizona Media Relations Office at (480) 227-4311. Starting Thursday, a release accompanied by complete results of the 2003 women's NCAA Championships will be posted online at the official Arizona athletic website immediately following completion of the day's proceedings. Furthermore, those interested in obtaining full copies of releases or statistics may do so at [www.arizonaathletics.com](http://www.arizonaathletics.com). For those interested in receiving each Arizona release via e-mail, contact Elliot Magruder at [bosox@email.arizona.edu](mailto:bosox@email.arizona.edu), in addition to the e-mail list, one would receive each and every publication dispatched regarding Wildcat swimming upon its initial release

**Wildcats on the Web:** For any of the latest news, notes or results on not only the swimming and diving squads, but also the 17 other collegiate sports offered at the University of Arizona, log on to the official athletic website at <http://www.arizonaathletics.com>.

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