

# DENISON

## Men's Swimming 08-09

### Men's Swimming & Diving: Denison off to blistering start at NCAC Championship

**Date:** February 12, 2009

**Location:** CANTON, Ohio

In search of their first North Coast Athletic Conference Championship since 1997 it would be hard to script a better start than this. Denison won all six events on Thursday night and set new conference records in four of those resulting in a 227.5 point lead over second-place Kenyon College heading into day two of the 2009 NCAC Swimming & Diving Championships from C.T. Branin Natatorium in Canton, Ohio.

Denison totaled 621 points and did so by winning both relays and piling up 17 top-8 finishes in the night's four individual events. The Big Red's meet record performance in the first event of the night, the 200 free relay, set the tone early. The team of **John Geissinger (Darren, Conn./Lawrenceville School), Chris Bagley (West Bloomfield, Mich./Brother Rice), Mike Barczak (Beverly Hills, Mich./Brother Rice)** and **Jon Behnke (Orinda, Calif./Miramont)** trimmed

nearly two seconds off their NCAA "A" cut time set in December as they touched in 1:20.89. It broke the previous conference mark set by Kenyon in 1998 (1:21.83) and marked Denison's fourth consecutive victory in the 200 free relay at the conference championships.

After swimming a 20.04 split while leading off the 200 free relay, Geissinger returned with an astounding time of 19.98 in the 50 free to break DU alum Aaron Cole's long-standing conference record of 20.01 set in 2000. In all, DU placed five swimmers in the top six and picked up an event-best 147 team points in the 50 free. Bagley followed Geissinger with a time of 20.74 while Behnke and **Andrew Krawchyk (Chapel Hill, N.C./East Chapel Hill)** tied with a time of 20.96 seconds. Barczak trailed by one one-hundredth at 20.97 and **Matt Wright (Cincinnati, Ohio/St. Xavier)** and **Charlie Grodecki (Winnetka, Ill./New Trier)** rounded out the point scorers with 17th and 21st place, respectively.

In the first individual event of the championship, **David Curtis (Ann Arbor, Mich./Pioneer)** won his third consecutive title in the 500 freestyle with a time of 4:25.17 breaking Elliot Rushton of Kenyon's conference mark that had stood since 2005. The win marked Curtis' seventh conference championship of his career. He was followed by freshman **Dan Thurston (Ann Arbor, Mich./Huron)** who took third in 4:27.47. Another rookie, **Austin Vierra (Placerville, Calif./Ponderosa)** placed fifth in 4:35.78 while **Casey Browning (Grosse Pointe, Mich./Grosse**



Denison's 400 medley relay team of (L-R) Robert Barry, Chris Bagley, John Nemeth and John Geissinger shattered the previous NCAC record of 3:23.08 that had stood since 1999. The Big Red lead by 227.5 points after day one.

**Pointe South** took eighth and **Andy Catlin (Oswego, N.Y./Oswego Free Academy)** placed 10th.

In the 3-meter diving competition Denison had three divers entered and the group would make a clean sweep, placing 1-2-3 in the standings. Freshman **Phil Meyer (River Forest, Ill./Oak Park & River Forest)** stepped into the shoes of three-time NCAC Diver of the Year Stephen Julka to win the event with a score of 426.70. Sophomore **Cody Smith (Ardmore, Pa./Haverford)** took second with 417.55 points and senior **Russ Bornschein (Ann Arbor, Mich./Pioneer)** would place third after back-to-back second-place finishes in 2007 and 2008. All three will compete in Saturday's 1-meter competition.

The lone swimming event that did not result in a new meet record was the 200 individual medley which saw senior **Chris Sellon (Lawrence, Kan./Free State)** break through with his first NCAC title. He touched in 1:52.03 and swam a 25.49 split in the freestyle to edge teammate **Jake Lewing (Yardley, Pa./Pennsbury)** who finished in 1:52.31. Sellon, who had logged two consecutive third place finishes in this event led a group of five DU swimmers that placed in the top-7. Following Sellon and Lewing were **Robert Barry (Richmond, Va./St. Christopher's)** in fourth place (1:53.80), **John Nemeth (Pittsburgh, Pa./Central Catholic)** in fifth (1:52.88) and **Andy Brabson (Boonsboro, Md./Boonsboro)** in seventh (1:55.48).

The first day would be closed out on a high note as DU snapped an 8-year winning streak by Kenyon in the 400 medley relay. The team of Barry, Nemeth, Bagley and Geissinger shattered the NCAC record by over four seconds as they posted a time of 3:18.96. The previous record of 3:23.08 was set by Denison in 1999. Barry's lead-off split of 49.88 in the butterfly would get the Big Red off on the right foot. Geissinger's anchor split of 43.19 in the freestyle capped off a brilliant start to the NCAC Championship.

Action will continue tomorrow with preliminaries beginning at 10 a.m. and the finals starting at 6:30 p.m. Friday's events will include the 200 medley relay, 400 IM, 100 butterfly, 200 freestyle, 100 breaststroke, 100 backstroke, women's 3-meter dive and the 800 free relay.

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