

Men's Swimming: Big Red send 15 to nationals

Date March 13, 2009

Location GRANVILLE



David Curtis is looking to add to his seven national championships at this year's 2009 NCAA Swimming & Diving Championship from Minnesota.

After capturing their first North Coast Athletic Conference championship since 1997 the Denison men's swimmers will send 15 representatives to the 2009 NCAA Division III Championships next week at The University of Minnesota.

Denison's 15 qualifiers are the third most in the nation, trailing only Kenyon (18) and Emory (17). After back-to-back second place finishes in 2006 and 2007 and a third place finish in 2008 the Big Red look primed to make a run in 2009.

Seniors **David Curtis (Ann Arbor, Mich./Pioneer)** and **John Geissinger (Darien, Conn./Lawrenceville School)** lead deep group of DU swimmers into the four-day championship meet. Curtis, a seven-time national champion and a two-time defending champ in the 200 freestyle, enters this year's meet with the top-time in the 500 freestyle.

Geissinger is coming off one of a stellar conference championship which saw him post a 19.98 in the 50 free and a 43.96 in the 100 free. Geissinger has the nation's fastest times in the 50, 100 and 200 freestyles. He has won three previous NCAA titles as a member of various Big Red relay teams and is in search of his first individual national championship.

Senior **Chris Sellon (Lawrence, Kan./Free State)** is making his third trip to nationals and was a part of last year's winning 800 free relay team. He will be also be a factor in both the 200 and 400 IM's. Other seniors making return trips to nationals are **Jon Behnke (Orinda, Calif./Miramonte)**, **Charlie Baldwin (Evanston, Ill./Evanston Twp.)** and **Charlie Grodecki (Winnetka, Ill./New Trier)**. Behnke has been a relay mainstay since 2006 and has logged five national titles since his rookie season. Grodecki has two All-American performances to his credit. Both Grodecki and Baldwin will compete in backstroke events for DU.

John Nemeth (Pittsburgh, Pa./Central Catholic) is Denison's lone junior representative and the rest of the roster is comprised of a group of talented sophomores and freshmen who are ready to accept the passing of the torch from this decorated senior class.

Sophomore qualifiers are **Chris Bagley (West Bloomfield, Mich./Brother Rice)**, **Kyle Chabot**

(Washington, Mich./Stoney Creek), Jake Lewing (Yardley, Pa./Pennsbury) and Callen Hetterich (Denver, Colo./Regis Jesuit). This is the first appearance at nationals for Bagley, Chabot and Hetterich.

The freshman are led **Dan Thurston (Ann Arbor, Mich./Huron), Robert Barry (Richmond, Va./St. Christopher's), MJ Barczak (Beverly Hills, Mich./Brother Rice) and Austin Vierra (Placerville, Calif./Ponderosa)** and all are names that Big Red fans should get used to seeing over the next three years. Thurston has the third-fastest time in the 400 IM at 3:56.55 while Barry checks in fourth in the 200 backstroke and fifth in the 100 back. Barczak was a part of the conference-record-setting 400 free relay team and will reprise that role in Minnesota. Vierra is the team's distance star after placing fifth in the 500 free and fourth in the mile at the NCAC Championships.

Live Results will be available starting Wednesday at the [NCAA Division III Championship Homepage](#)