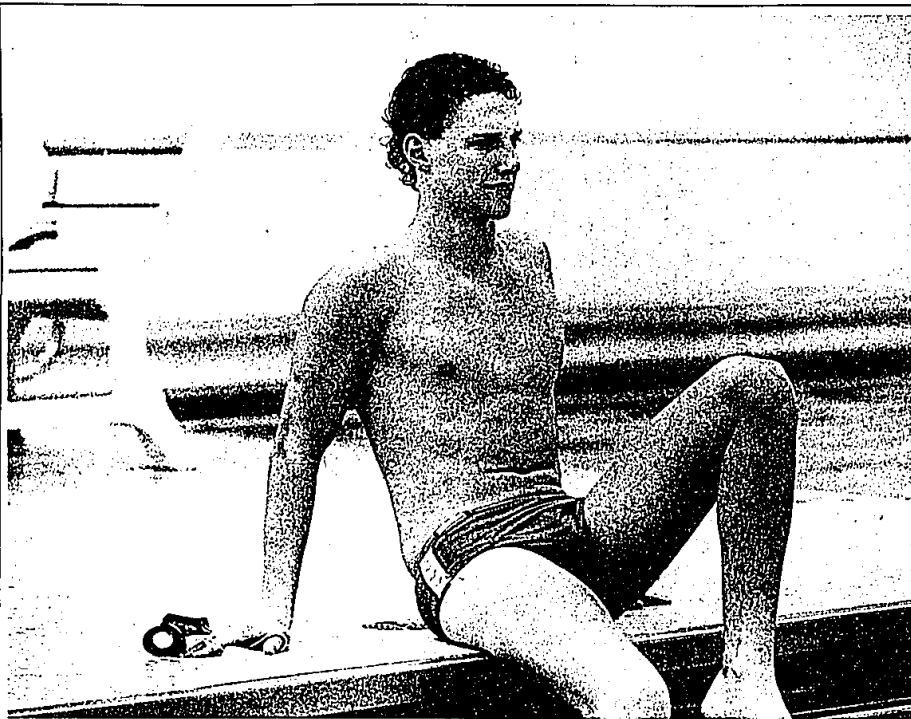


Sports

Chris McCosky, Brad Emons editors/591-2312



(F1B)



photos by RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

A quality quartet: North Farmington's chances of winning the Western Lakes conference swim meet this week rest largely on the shoulders of Craig Burland (top), Dan Mannisto (left), Mike Buatti (middle) and Mike Tumey (right).



Can it be done?

North looks to shoot down league powers

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Livonia Stevenson is 12-1 in dual swim meets and champion of the Western Lakes Activities Association's Lakes Division, the most grueling of the two WLA divisions.

The team is ranked No. 1 in Observerland and is the league's defending champion.

So it's settled: Stevenson will win the Western Lakes conference meet, which takes place Wednesday through Friday at Plymouth Salem.

Hold on a minute. The Spartans are going to have to swim their best to repeat as champions — perhaps even better than their best.

There are two things that stand in the way of Stevenson's bid for a second league crown: Plymouth Salem and a wealth of talented individual swimmers throughout the league.

"CHUCK OLSON (Salem coach) has enough depth on his team to win the league meet," said Stevenson coach Doug Buckler. "We have had some key injuries and a boy drop out of our program. We've done well in the dual meets because of our front-line strength. But in big meets it could be another story."

The Spartans have three swimmers out of action (Jeff Murphy, Doug Coderre and Chris Morasky) and several others who are getting back into the water after injuries or illnesses (Greg Jubenille, Jeff Albert and Steve Taormina).

But the Spartans also have some of the fastest swimmers in Observerland waters: D.J. Ward, Joe Saunders, Roger Coderre, Taormina and Albert.

"Livonia Stevenson ought to win it," said Olson. "But we have a shot. I'll tell you what, though, if we

WHAT: Western Lakes Activities Association boys swim meet.
WHERE: Swimming preliminaries, 2 p.m. Wednesday; diving prelims 3 p.m. Thursday; finals 7 p.m. Friday.
WHERE: Plymouth Salem High School, Joy Road west of Canton Center.
WHO: Twelve Western Lakes teams: Livonia Stevenson (defending champs), Plymouth Salem, Plymouth Canton, North Farmington, Farmington, Farmington Harrison, Northville, Westland, John Glenn, Livonia Franklin, Livonia Churchill, Walled Lake Westland and Walled Lake Central.
HOW MUCH: \$1.50 for preliminaries, \$2 for finals.

don't swim well North Farmington and Northville could pass us."

NORTH FARMINGTON is a team that has both Olson and Buckler worried. The Raiders had won 12 Northwest Suburban League swim titles in the last 13 years prior to joining the WLA this year. They have four front-line swimmers that could amass some serious points.

Mike Tumey will be among the leaders in the 200-yard freestyle (1:47.0) and the 500 freestyle (4:49.9) — he owns the area's fastest time in both events. Craig Burland will score in the 200 free (1:52.2) and 100 free (50.8). Dan Mannisto and Mike Buatti will score in the 50 and 100 freestyle events.

And the four of them team up to form the area's best 400 freestyle relay team (3:21.0).

Still, Raider coach Pat Duhlie isn't expecting his team to win the meet.

"No, we don't have the numbers to overtake Stevenson," he said. "It might be a real interesting meet, though. Stevenson has the faster kids but Salem has an awful lot of depth. To be completely honest, I think we could finish anywhere from third to fifth."

SALEM'S SUCCESS this season has been somewhat of a surprise. The team is very young and was hard-pressed to field enough freestylers to fill out the events at the start of the season.

But Olson took Rick Cummings and Phil Bocketti from individual medley and backstroke events and made them freestylers; plus, Kevin Zarow emerged as a strong sprinter and the Rocks began to roll.

Olson has also got superb seasons out of Tony Atwell, Jamie Dunn, David Miller and diver Bob Longridge.

Salem and Stevenson have a lot more to worry about than North Farmington and each other. Virtually every team in the league has strong individual swimmers.

Northville has Doug Buell and Jeff Bainbridge; Livonia Franklin has Bryan Madigan; Westland John Glenn has John Jensen; Harrison has Jeff Bolla, Tom Sayles and Phil Auzas; Farmington has Jim Vik and Chris Inch; Livonia Churchill has Mark Pa-plerski; and Plymouth Canton has the area's best diver in Andy Flower — all of these swimmers can extract points from the leaders.

"HEY, FUNNY things can happen at a league meet," said Olson.

"You know, you can have the best time in the 50 freestyle all year and get beat at the league meet," said Buckler.

"Everybody can hurt everybody else. But I'll bet on Livonia Stevenson, even though Salem is awfully tough, too. I just don't know," said Duhlie.

Translation: The Western Lakes swim meet is going to be a shootout.

The preliminary heats will begin at 2 p.m. Wednesday, the diving prelims at 3 p.m. Thursday and the finals at 7 p.m. Friday. Admission is \$1.50 for the prelims and \$2 Friday.

Backing into good health

By C.J. Rieck
staff writer

Ron Austin describes himself as a non-conformist. Which seems perfect, considering Austin is promoting a different angle on an old form of exercise. He calls it retrorunning. Sounds nifty, but it's actually nothing more than running backward.

Is this the new craze of the '80s? Can this replace aerobic dancing in the hearts and legs of millions of Americans?

Austin hopes so. He is convinced retrorunning can cure many of the pains and injuries suffered by joggers.

Of course, the 28-year-old Garden City native faces a major battle in convincing a cynical public that running backwards can cure leg ailments.

"Initially, they laugh," said Austin of his attempts to spread the word. "I've gotten so much criticism, if I don't get it I'm suspicious. But I'm not afraid to get out there and take on the critics, to give it my best shot."

Austin graduated from Garden City West in 1978. After a stint in the army, he returned home and worked for the Wayne-Westland YMCA, while attending Eastern Michigan University.

FORMAL EDUCATION didn't fit in with Austin's non-conformist style. "I knew what I wanted, but they want you to do so many other things first that don't apply," he explained.

Austin has always been interested in exercise and fitness. In 1979, he went outside for a run at home and ended up with a pulled hamstring muscle.

"The typical line was to rest," he recalled. "Telling me to rest is like telling the snow to stop."

Not long after, he was running laps at EMU's Bowen Fieldhouse track with his wife. Even with his leg injury she wasn't able to keep up, Austin said, so on a lark he decided to turn around and run backward.

The pain in his leg lessened, he noticed. He decided to ask some questions around the EMU training room about it.

"Of course, it was very comical, everyone laughed," said Austin. "But no one could tell me why this was happening."

Austin left for Williamsport, Pa., shortly afterward for a job as a health fitness director of a YMCA. That job didn't work out — Austin described it as a difference in philosophy — and he moved on to Lexington, Ky.



Ron Austin
retrorunning specialist

AT BOTH PLACES he had been trying to find reasons why running backward seemed less painful. What he found was that research on the subject was just starting.

In November 1984, a national race promoter invited Austin to Chicago to address a panel of well-known athletes, including Joan Benoit, and physicians on retrorunning. Austin maintains that despite the panelists' initial doubtfulness and his own lack of medical expertise to support his claims, by the end of the seminar several were impressed.

Austin has since contacted several doctors conducting research into retrorunning to exchange information. Because, while research was just starting, Austin — excuse the expression — attacked the idea backward.

Instead of waiting to put research into action, Austin used his practical applications to explain research. In short, he's tested what doctors are still researching.

Those tests include a series of 10 runs ranging from one to 15 miles — all backward. And what he's discovered is that his knees and calves did not get as sore.

COLLABORATING WITH doctors like Barry Bates of the University of Oregon and Gary Gray of the Biomechanical Gait Analysis Center in Toledo, Austin claims running backward:

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Grand Valley cagers rip porous Pioneer 'D'

By C.J. Rieck
staff writer

In the final analysis, what Oakland University's men's basketball season boiled down to was defense. Bluntly, it wasn't very good.

The Pioneers haven't been quite quick or big enough to play opponents man-to-man for long stretches. But Thursday against visiting Grand Valley State, OU's zone defense was constantly victimized in a 85-78 Laker triumph.

"We're just not a very good defensive team," admitted OU coach Greg Kampe after the loss, which dropped the Pioneers to 12-14 overall and 5-10 in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC).

Statistics prove Kampe's assessment accurate. OU's opponents average 50.7 percent shooting from the field, worst in the GLIAC. They score 80.9 points per game against the Pioneers, second worst figure in the conference.

GVSC did not let down the league average, hitting 50.7 percent from the field. The Lakers came into the game saddled with a six-game losing streak, but they snapped that by getting 22 points from Andy Kolp (from Birmingham Brother Rice) and Robert Allen and 21 more from Mike Davis (from Bloomfield Hills Laker). GVSC is 13-13 overall and 6-7 in the GLIAC.

THE GAME was tied at 19 with 12:46 left in the opening half when OU went cold. GVSC scored 14 straight points in just over four minutes to open a 33-19 advantage with 6:24 left.

The Lakers' biggest advantage came after a Kolp basket with 2:56 to go, which made it 46-30. But OU mounted a comeback, outscoring GVSC 10-2 the rest of the way to cut the deficit to 47-40 at the half.

It didn't take the Pioneers long to make a name of Davis' effort, but he didn't want him to penetrate into the paint to do it."

OU sports

Sions and OU scored the first six points to make it 47-46 at the 17:50 mark. The Pioneers went ahead 50-49 on a Johnny Johnson jumper with 16 minutes to play, and it was tight after that until the finish.

What swung it for GVSC was the finish. After Rob Skinner bombed one in at the 1:22 mark to make it 79-78 in favor of GVSC, the Lakers scored the game's final six points.

OU was without point guard Scott Bittling, who fouled out with 8:27 left after canning three straight jumpers, the last tying it at 64. Chris Howze also fouled out with 22 seconds left, taking any chance for an OU victory to the bench with him.

HOWZE HAD played inspired basketball in the second half, scoring nine points (he finished with 15) and blocking two shots.

"We had a talk at halftime," said Kampe. "In the second half Chris let the offense get him the shot instead of him creating the offense."

That meant settling Howze up on the baseline 10 to 15 feet from the basket. The strategy worked well, as OU increased its shooting percentage from 38.2 percent in the first half to 51.7 percent in the second.

But what ultimately cost OU was its inability to stop GVSC. Davis, the Laker point guard, particularly hurt the Pioneers by scoring a career-high 21 points. Davis was often left unguarded as the OU defenders sought to cover up scorers Kolp, Allen and Kevin Duney.

"We didn't mind him shooting," said Kampe of Davis' effort, "but we didn't want him to penetrate into the paint to do it."