

Big jump for former Hawks

Howell earns spot in swimming finals

A rags-to-riches story culminated last week for Farmington's Bruce Howell, a swimming standout at Eastern Michigan University.

Howell, who almost failed to make his high school swimming team, qualified for the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships at Cleveland State University last week.

The 5-11, 156-pound Howell qualified for the nationals when he won the 200-yard breaststroke in 2:10.8 and the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:09.4 at the Mid-American Conference meet in Mt. Pleasant. His first-place in the 200 was overshadowed by his record time of 2:10.8 in the meet preliminaries. That time bettered the previous MAC mark of 2:10.8 held by EMU assistant Bill Briskman.

A graduate of Farmington Harrison High School, the blond-haired Howell has been swimming competitively for only four years.

"I tried out for the swimming team in the 10th grade, and the only reason I made it was because we didn't have a very good squad," Howell said.

EMU coach Mike Jones points out that Howell's accomplishments are even more surprising considering the Huron freshman has been swimming the breaststroke for only three years.

"As Bruce gets more experienced, he's bound to get even better," Jones said.

Howell admitted that at the beginning of the season one of his goals was to qualify for the NCAA meet. But he entered the MAC meet with standards just above the national standard.

"I shaved off a lot of my body hair and really psyched myself up for the league meet," Howell said. "And I guess it paid off."

Howell, a biology major, could place at the NCAA meet, but he would have to match last year's place-winning times of 2:09.9 in the 200 and 1:07.7 in the 100. "Bruce may not come home a champion, but I think he'll place higher than any MAC swimmer in the meet," Jones said.

While Howell hopes to live up to his coaches' expectations, he is looking forward to the opportunity to gain experience at the national level. "It will be a thrill just to be there," he said.



BRUCE HOWELL
Rags to riches story

Local talent could spark Oakland U baseball squad

The Oakland University pre-season baseball schedule got under way this week when the Pioneers headed south to play one of the nation's top college teams the University of South Alabama at Mobile.

South Alabama is managed by former major-league manager Eddie Stanky, who has turned the Jaguars into one of the nation's finest college teams since taking the job several years ago. The Jaguars have already accumulated a 100 record so far this season.

Oakland's third year manager Bill Hall has twice-a-day workouts scheduled for the remainder of the week down south in preparation for the team's regular season opener at Kent State on Friday, April 4.

THIS YEAR'S team is led by senior co-captain Herm Toles from Detroit Murray-Wright High School, who was last year's Great Lakes Conference All-League selection at short-stop. He led the team in games played, at bats, hits, runs, doubles, triples, total bases and stolen bases batting from the lead-off position. Toles stands only 5'3" and weighs 130 pounds but his power as witnessed by his four

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