

# Horseheads' Klugo, Ithaca's Nicholson have big days at Beecher Invitational

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ELMIRA — Records fell and tickets were punched to the state meet at the 31st annual John Beecher Invitational on Saturday at Elmira Free Academy's Thomas Natatorium.

Ithaca junior Ryan Nicholson won two races in record time and set two more records in helping the Little Red to two relay victories, earning him the top swimmer award for the boys swimming and diving meet.

Elmira-area kids also had big days, with Horseheads senior Mike Klugo qualifying for the New York state championship meet in the 100 freestyle with his win. He also took first in the 200 freestyle in a time that topped the state standard.

Elmira senior Dominic Parfianowicz qualified for the state meet with his win in the 50 freestyle, which preceded his victory in the 100 backstroke.

Winners in eight of the 12 events topped the standards for the state meet.

The efforts of Nicholson and Klugo also helped produce team titles. Ithaca repeated as the meet's Class A champion, Horseheads won in Class B and Watkins Glen finished first in Class C. Each class had four complete teams.

Nicholson, the New York state runner-up in the 100 butterfly last season, set meet and pool records in his victories in the 200 individual medley (1:54.70) and 100 butterfly (50.60). His leadoff time of 46.49 seconds on Ithaca's victorious 400 freestyle relay (3:15.35) gave him the school record in the 100 freestyle and he helped the Little Red win the 200 medley relay (1:40.35). Ithaca broke meet and pool records in the freestyle relay.

The two Ithaca relays qualified for the state meet with Saturday's times. Nicholson also topped the state standard in both individual victories, though he had already qualified in those events.

"I'm happy about my swims," he said. "At this point of the season we're working pretty hard in practice. We had winter break and we had a lot of hard practices there, so I'm happy."

Nicholson pointed to his win in the 200 IM as the highlight of his day, with his time 2 1/2 seconds better than his previous best.

"That was a really good swim for me," he said.

Klugo competed at states in the 200 freestyle the last two seasons and had already swam fast enough in that event this season for a third trip. However, it wasn't until he won the 100 freestyle in 48.75 seconds Saturday that he qualified in that event. The state standard is 48.94.

"I was disappointed because last year I was so close and I knew that I wanted to make it this year," Klugo said. "But I wanted to make it before sectionals, so I was really happy that I got to come in here and do that."

“My first 50 I had a pretty bad turn. I used that as motivation to push me through for the rest of that. I just pulled through.”

Klugo’s winning time in the 200 freestyle was 1:46.59, well ahead of the state time of 1:47.60.

Klugo and his teammates were also excited about edging Vestal for second place in the 400 freestyle relay in 3:26.39. Vestal took third in 4:26.43.

“We had just swam against Vestal this week and lost to them in that relay,” Klugo said. “We really wanted to get at least second place. I saw (Vestal’s) Sam Yoon at the other side of the pool and I just dug my head down. It was really exciting.”

Parfianowicz competed at states in the 100 backstroke the previous two years, so he was excited to earn a berth in the 50 freestyle with his winning time of 22.21. The state standard is 22.27.

“I was sick with a fever (Friday) night,” Parfianowicz said. “So I’m pretty happy with state qualifying for the 50 freestyle. And the backstroke was close.”

Parfianowicz won the backstroke in 55.51, coming up shy of the state time of 54.82. He said he was a bit worn out by the time that event came along, though he’ll get plenty more chances this season to earn a state berth in that event.

“I’ve just got to work on that back half of the backstroke and I should be good,” he said.

Also strong Saturday was Corning junior Devin Li, who won the 100 breaststroke in 1:02.06, helped the Hawks finish first in the 200 freestyle relay in 1:31.11 and placed fourth in the 200 individual medley in 2:04.55.

Binghamton senior Deyon Godbay won the 1-meter diving with a score of 448.95, which easily eclipsed the state standard of 420.35.

The meet’s other winner was Ithaca freshman Kevin Miller, who took the 500 freestyle in 4:57.80.