

AU men's swimming and diving team falls short in bid for state title

2/27/05

SYRACUSE, NY -- The Alfred University men's swimming and diving team placed second at the Upper New York State Collegiate Swimming Association (UNYSCSA) championship meet, which concluded Saturday night at Nottingham High School in Syracuse. The difference was the meet's final event: the 400-yard freestyle relay. Going into the relay, Alfred clung to a narrow points lead of 1,044.5 to 1041 over Union College. The Union squad defeated Alfred's team of seniors Kevin Martin (Conesus, NY/Livonia) and Bill Brown (Chaffee, NY/Pioneer), sophomore Brandon Striker (Caledonia, NY/York) and junior Alex Crowell (Wayland, MA/Wayland) by a mere 1.22 seconds. The victory gave Union 1,115 points, just ahead of runner-up AU's 1,100.5. It marks the second straight year Alfred has finished as runner-up at the state meet. The Saxons won the title in 2003, Brian Striker's first season as the Saxons' head coach. AU began Saturday in the lead, just ahead of Hartwick, and had several swimmers perform well on the meet's final day. Junior Brian Gotham (Syracuse, NY/Nottingham) won his second state title of the meet when he claimed first in the 200-yard breaststroke (2:08.71). Gotham had won the 100-yard breaststroke on Friday. Martin won a title in the 200-yard butterfly Saturday with a time of 1:55.63. Other top performers for Alfred Saturday included freshman Page Beecher (Scarborough, ME/Scarborough), sixth in the 1,650-yard freestyle (16:51.93); Crowell, sixth in the 100-yard freestyle (48.02); Brown, seventh in the 100-yard freestyle (48.19); Striker, ninth in the 200-yard butterfly (2:00.48); and freshman Denis Egan (Maplewood, NJ/St. Peter's), 10th in the 1,650-yard relay (17:21.31). Several AU swimmers will now wait to see if provisional times they turned in over the weekend will be fast enough to qualify them for the NCAA Division III championship meet March 17-19 in Holland, MI.