



Senior Swimmer Eleni Kotzamanis Is Auto Butler Female Athlete Of Month For Alton High School

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Alton senior swimmer Eleni Kotzamanis ended her high school career in a big way at the Illinois High School Association Girls Sectional Meet at the conclusion of the fall swim season at the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center, finishing second in the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 1:53.53, second in the 500-yard freestyle at 5:07.01, and winning the 100-yard backstroke in 57.57 seconds.

For her efforts, Kotzamanis is the Riverbender.com Female Athlete of the Month for Alton High School.

Considering it was only the Redbirds' second meet since coming back from the COVID-19 Pandemic that limited training time and not having meets until near the end of the season, Kotzamanis was very happy with her results and times.

"I was super excited," Kotzamanis said about her sectional performance and finish to her high school career.

All things considered, Kotzamanis was very happy to be able to compete after such a long layoff between meets.

"I've been training club since June, but I haven't really had a meet," she added. "I was happy with how things went, like considering the circumstances for sure."

As with all other swimmers and IHSA fall athletes, Kotzamanis was grateful to have the opportunity for the season.

"Even though there were a lot of restrictions that may or may not make sense, we are very fortunate to have a season," Kotzamanis said, "and even though they wouldn't have relays, it was nice that they (the IHSA) added those two extra events to have as a choice, even though I only did three, not four," she said with a laugh and smile.

Now that her high school career has concluded, there's plenty more that lies ahead in Kotzamanis' future, including college.

"I'm committed to swimming at the University of Kansas next year, so I'm looking forward to that," Kotzamanis said.

The swimmer said she hopes for a summer season with the Summers Port Swim Club in Godfrey.

Kotzamanis is very optimistic about her future in swimming as well.

"Especially with today, I didn't have any expectations, even though I'm normally pretty hard on myself mentally with swimming, because it is a very big mental sport," she said. "Today, I was just excited to be here and race. Just to have that opportunity. I know that a lot of my friends that live in St. Louis, so they're Missouri, they were like so jealous, so jealous," she said with a laugh and smile. "But they'll get that chance in February, whenever they have their high school season."

Kotzamanis had a lot of praise for her teammates as well, although they don't get to see each other much in the fall.

"The team was really great at the sectional," Kotzamanis said, "even though we don't get to see each other that much, being that school is online. I don't get to see a lot of the younger girls on the team at school, but swimming with them at the sectional was really exciting."