

Grinter, Osborn Win Twice As Tigers Win Season Swim Opener 109-67 Over O'Fallon

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EDWARDSVILLE - Evan Grinter and Cohen Osborn both won two events each, while the relay teams won two of the three races as the Edwardsville boys swimming team won its season opening meet over O'Fallon 109-67 Tuesday evening at the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center.

The Tigers won eight of the 11 races on the program, and generally swam well in their long-delayed season opener, with many of the swimmers having very good opening races.

"Across the board, pretty well," said Edwardsville head swimming coach Christian Rhoten in his post-meet interview. "Was just kind of didn't know what to expect today, with the crazy season, and all the time off and things like that. But we had some really solid swims from a lot of guys."

Rhoten named many of his swimmers for having outstanding meets on the day.

"Really, Evan Grinter had a nice meet," Rhoten said. "Owen Gruben, Cohen Osborn. Daniel Sanchez kind of had a good meet as a freshman, diver Hunter Schlueter, first time diving, did really well. Jacob Grandone had a nice 500 freestyle, came in third for us on that one, and then our relays were able to put together some close wins, and one close second."



The Tiger relay teams have been a source of strength in the past for the team, and this year, there's plenty of depth to choose from in forming the relay teams.

"It's nice we can kind of play around with different guys, and put them in different relays," Rhoten said. "We kind of put our strongest relay at the medley in the 400, so we'll play around with the 200, and see if we can get that one a little faster."

But the most important thing is that the Tigers and Panthers were able to get a meet in after so much uncertainty over whether there would be a season or not, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"Yeah, all the guys were super excited to be able to have a swim meet against O'Fallon," Rhoten said, "which has been a really great rival for us, really, since we started the team here. They're the only team in the area for us, and we swim against them every year multiple times, and they have a really solid crew. So it's always fun to swim against them."

The Tigers' team of Logan Oertle, Osborn, Gruben and Grinter got things started off right with a win in the 200-yard medley relay, winning with a time of 1:47.53, while O'Fallon's team of Aiden Thornburg, Brady Gotter, Camden Kimmel and Alex Hattan was second with a time of 1:56.06, and a Tiger team of Trent Sholl, Canon Adams, Javier DeLaCruz and Max Brandmeyer was third at 2:01.62. In the 200-yard freestyle, the Panthers' Jack Peterson was the winner, with a time of 1:58.65, while a trio of Tigers --- Jake DeConcini, Oertle and Grandone -- were second, third and fourth respectively, with times of 2:06.96, 2:11.17 and 2:17.69, and Joe Kinsella of O'Fallon was fifth, having a time of 2:32.46. Osborn won his first event by taking the 200-yard individual medley, coming in at 2:05.88, while Gotter was second at 2:14.67, Kimmel third at 2:20.93, Sanchez came in fourth at 2:25.59, and Adams came in fifth at 2:33.20.

In the 50-yard freestyle race, Grinter got his first win of the season, coming in with a time of 23.15 seconds, while Gruben came in second at 23.84 seconds, O'Fallon's Ethan Stein was third at 24 seconds flat, Taylor Lehman of the Panthers was fourth with a time of 24.82 seconds, and Brandmeyer came in fifth at 27.16 seconds. Schlueter was the only diver entered in the meet, and he performed solidly, coming in with a score of 149 points, while in the 100-yard butterfly, Gruben took the win with a time of 59.61 seconds, with Peterson coming in second at 1:01.21, Kimmel third at 1:01.86, DeLaCruz fourth at 1:11.20, and the Tigers' Sam Borden fifth with a time of 1:11.96.

Grinter got his second individual win of the evening in the 100-yard freestyle, coming in with a time of 52.30 seconds, with Stein placing second at 54.57 seconds, DeConcini was third at 55.80 seconds, fourth place went to Lehman at 55.91 seconds, and O'Fallon's Nico Parker was fifth with a time of 1:03.29. Thornburg won the 500-yard

freestyle, coming in at 5:34.43, with Gotter second at 5:35.52, third place went to Grandone at 6:07.06, Edwardsville's Shawn Slemer was fourth at 6:16.80, and Sholl was fifth at 6:18.95. In the 200-yard freestyle relay, O'Fallon's team of Lehman, Kimmel, Stein and Peterson won the race with a time of 1:39.82, with Edwardsville's team of Brandmeyer, DeConcini, Sanchez and Grinter second at 1:42.83, and a second Tiger team of Ryan Schlechte, Adam Koester, Slemer and Peyton LeVasseur was third with a time of 1:53.04.

Osborn won his second race of the night in the 100-yard backstroke, winning with a time of 55.38 seconds, while Oertle was second at 1:03.89, third place went to Thornburg at 1:04.45, Brandmeyer was fourth with a time of 1:11.37, and the Panthers' Cale Gundlach was fifth with a time of 1:18.01. In the 100-yard breaststroke, the winner was Sanchez, with a time of 1:11.75, with Adams second at 1:13.24, Hattan third at 1:13.27, DeLaCruz fourth at 1:15.89, and O'Fallon's Jack Lloyd was fifth at 1:20.85. In the night's final race, the 400-yard freestyle relay, Edwardsville's team of Gruben, Oertle, DeConcini and Osborn won with a time of 3:40.59, with the Panthers' team of Thornburg, Gotter, Stein and Peterson second at 3:44.69, and the Tigers' team of Sholl, DeLaCruz, Grandone and Adams placed third at 4:14.21.

Now that the Tigers have their first meet under their belts, Rhoten has some high and good expectations for the team in their upcoming meets.

"I mean, we're just going to take what we had tonight, and try and learn from it," Rhoten said, "clean up some things. They should be getting more conditioned; we've really only been in the water for three weeks, now. So they're still kind of out of shape. But as we move through, we should be getting in better shape, and see some more time drops."

The main goal in this shortened season is to swim as fast as the Tigers can, and hope for the best.

"That's right," Rhoten said with a smile. "That's the name of the game."



