

Edwardsville's girls swim team shoots for top 10 state finish this year

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - The expectations for the Edwardsville girls swim team are high going into 2015.

The girls have several returnees, including four seniors – **Kate May, Jane Russo, Elizabeth McPherson and Caroline Caton.**

Junior **Bailey Grinter** is also a key returnee. Grinter was a qualifier for the **2016 Olympic Trials** in the 100 backstroke over the summer and hopes to also qualify in the 50 free before the meet.

Edwardsville head swimming coach Christian Rhoten said he sees no limit to what Grinter can accomplish in the swimming world.

“Bailey has put the work in since she was a little girl,” he added. “I think she can get another qualifying time in the 50 free. Once she gets to Omaha, Nebraska, where the Olympic Trials are next year, anything can happen. She is only going to get better. She could be in the top three in the state in a couple events and play a key role in some relays.”

“I am super excited about our numbers,” Rhoten said. “We had 28 girls turn out for the team which is very exciting. We have a lot of new faces.”

May is also a top national level swimmer, capturing first place in the 200 butterfly. She also will possibly qualify for the Olympic Trials in butterfly by next summer.

“Kate is a good team leader and has been a great swimmer since she was a little girl,” he said. McPherson, Russo and Caton should all be big contributors throughout the season and in the post season for the state bid.

Rhoten praised his senior girls as a whole and said each is special to the team.

Junior Victoria Brady is another swimmer back who should excel this season, along with sophomore Sahar Rabiei. Brady started the season out on Thursday with a pair of individual wins in the 200 and 500 races. Rabiei continues to improve in the sprints and her events.

“Sahar made the state team and has grown up a lot,” Rhoten said. “I expect big things from Victoria Brady this season, too.”

Divers Lydia Henning, Taylor Seilheimer and Kaley Wallace offer a diving trio that will add points throughout the season. Rhoten said having an excellent diver is like having a pole vaulter in track and it gives you an edge over other teams that don't have someone in that role.

Rhoten is also pleased with his freshmen class, which includes several top-notch girls. Emily Webb and Maggie Heinrich are two new girls who have moved into the district. Freshman Sierra Brannan should also be a new entry in the 100 butterfly behind May, Rhoten said.

“Last year, we ended up 13th in the state,” Rhoten said. “We definitely have a chance to make the top 10 at state and we would like to go for the top five.”

