

## **PATRICK SCHIRK AT A GLANCE**

By Michael J. Stott

Sophomore Patrick Schirk epitomizes the heart and desire of the Penn State men's swimming team. He finished second in the 200 yard back at the Big Ten Championships in a career-best 1:42.74, leading the Nittany Lion men to qualify eight swimmers for the 2007 NCAA meet.

Schirk is a prime example of the homegrown talent Coach Bill Dorenkott attracts. Offered a scholarship during his sophomore season, Schirk arrived on campus after his senior year as a Pennsylvania state high school champion, YMCA nationals record holder (2:01.69), U.S. national junior team member and a need to ramp up his training volume and begin concerted weight training.

He did not have a good season as a freshman. Dorenkott was also disappointed in his men's team performance in 2005-06 and set about creating a more challenging environment.

"First, we spent more time in separate gender workouts. When it was men alone, we challenged them and put them racing head-to-head constantly. Secondly, we created a training group in fall 2006 for our less-aerobically-driven, 200-and-under men."

After preseason work as a team, Dorenkott separated the squad into four training groups, adding a men's sprint group of 12 men who specialized in the 50 through the 200. Borrowing from Rocco Aceto and Auburn's mid-1990s training plan, the coach gave the sprint group Wednesdays and Sundays off from early October through NCAAs.

To find out how Coach Dorenkott trains Schirk and others in his training group, check out the August issue of *Swimming World Magazine*.