

## Wagner ignores pain, wins MVC diving title

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 13 October 2011 22:04 - Last Updated Friday, 14 October 2011 00:01

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Linn-Mar senior Sam Wagner settled into a routine Thursday night at the Mississippi Valley Conference diving meet.

She'd stretch, perform her dive, cover herself with towels, slip into her ankle-length Linn-Mar cape and apply a heating pad to the lower part of her back.

Stretch, dive, bundle up, heating pad. Stretch, dive, bundle up, heating pad.

It worked.

Wagner won the MVC title with a season-high score of 388.35 points for 11 dives, nudging Betsy Osterberger of Dubuque Wahlert by 11.15 points in a slight upset at the Jefferson pool.

Osterberger was ranked second in the state in 11-dive competition when the night began and Wagner was ranked fifth. Both girls showed why they are considered two of the premier divers in Iowa.

Wagner had two opponents Thursday: Her sore back and Osterberger. She defeated both.

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"My back flares up every once in awhile, but it's nothing I can't handle," she said.

The back injury is a remnant of her years in gymnastics. She doesn't know the exact nature of the injury, but thinks it's a strain from over-use. She quit gymnastics about a year ago, but has the back ailment as a painful reminder.

Diving puts pressure on her back, but somehow Wagner is able to ignore the discomfort when she's performing. "All those years of gymnastics taught me to block out the pain pretty well," she said.

"It's not that bad," she insisted.

Wagner scored 384.30 points in a major meet at Kennedy High School Sept. 24, so her 388.35 Thursday night was a move in the right direction and helped her climb from No. 5 to No. 4 in the state rankings.

"It was a decent meet," she said. "It was my highest score this season, so it was good. But I hope I can keep improving and getting higher."

Wagner got good elevation off the diving board and made clean entries into the water, for the most part. "My back one-and-a-half pike was probably my best dive tonight," she said.

Any bad dives? "Yeah, there were a couple," she said.

The swimming portion of the Mississippi Valley Conference meet will be held at Jefferson this Saturday at noon.

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### MVC DIVING RESULTS

1. Sam Wagner, Linn-Mar	388.35
2. Betsy Osterberger, Wahlert	377.20
3. Hannah Brummel, Cedar Falls	364.55
4. Katie Mason, Cedar Falls	327.45
5. Clarie Baumgartner, Cedar Falls	316.35
6. Jindalae Suh, IC High	311.35
7. Adelia Clark, Linn-Mar	294.65
8. Rachael Schafer, Wahlert	291.30
9. Alex Aaberg, IC West	287.60
10. Amy Parker, Washington	283.45
11. Alyssa Deuso, Linn-Mar	278.90
12. Megan Broadbent, Hempstead	274.90
13. Tori Spaulding, Kennedy	270.70
14. Mo Groe, Jefferson	253.50
15. Jacintha Thomas, IC West	250.20
16. Jocelyn Nelson, Kennedy	242.35
17. Justine Wieser, Jefferson	181.80
18. Riley Finer, IC West	181.30
19. Caroline Ott, Wahlert	165.10
20. Carolyn Simon, Kennedy	158.30