



# “Chemistry”

Closeness of team leads them to win second at state

Seniors Grant Fuhr and Alex Overton and juniors Grant and Scott Lair have been in the water almost their whole lives which has shaped them into state championship swimmers and friends so close they finish each other's sentences.

### Why do you think you are so successful as a team?

**Grant Lair:** Chemistry.

**Grant Fuhr:** Chemistry.\*All laugh\*

**Grant Fuhr:** We were all thinking the same thing. We are all very, very close. I doubt there is any other relay in the state that is at our level of friendship. We spend too much time together and worked very, very hard.

**Grant Lair:** It's the friendship that we have that the other teams don't have. So they're focused individually on the race and how they're going to perform in that relay and all of us know we're swimming for each other.

### What was it like to win both the 200 and 400 freestyle relay at state?

**Fuhr:** We were all kind of doing mediocre before that and then we all got focused and came back and won. We were all upset with our individual performances before that, but then we came together and swam well together.

**Grant Lair:** It was relieving and kind of relaxing,

and even more confidence boosting after we won that first relay because we had all been doing poorly individually, but once we got that win it was pretty awesome.

**Scott Lair:** For the 400 free relay we felt the pressure more than the 200 free because we had to beat Bettendorf in that (event) in order to get second at state (team). If they had beat us they would've gotten second. We did feel the pressure going into that but we were still confident.

**Alex Overton:** We didn't act like the fastest relay behind the blocks. None of us were super serious and focused. We were all kind of hype. If you were in the stands looking down at the relays I don't think you'd say 'they're the fastest relay here.'

### What was it like going from high school to USA state on back-to-back weekends? How did tapering affect your performances?

At important end-of-the-season meets swimmers "taper" off and decrease the intensity of practices to give their bodies time to catch up and recover. Distance swimmers taper less, in terms of yards, than sprinting swimmers do given the nature of their races. This, if done correctly, usually helps the boys decrease their times.

**Grant Fuhr:** Right after high school state we had to get back in the pool; go up in yardage. We had to go hard for a few days and then come back down

again. That's a little tough to compete well, but we all did. We swam better.

**Alex Overton:** Your times at the beginning of the season will never be as good as the end because in the end taper is giving your body time to recover.

**Scott Lair:** The day before state I did almost three times as many yards as they do (because he does the 500 as an individual event and the others are sprinters).

**Grant Fuhr:** Three times...?

### Why were you all upset with your individual events?

**Alex Overton:** None of us did our PR's- (personal record).

**Grant Fuhr:** Yeah, we didn't improve our times and that's really tough when you put in over 20 hours-a-week.

**Scott Lair:** We all felt that we could have gone faster than we did and it was upsetting.

**Grant Fuhr:** I was very upset with myself because then I came back at USA State and the time I swam would've won high school state by half a second. And I did that with an injured back so I was pissed.

**Alex Overton:** And a two-week taper.

**Grant Fuhr:** Yeah, an irritated disk and a crappy taper. So it happens.

**Alex Overton:** That's the art of sprinting.

### What are your thoughts on the season



### overall?

**Grant Fuhr:** I'm very proud of what we accomplished as a team together. It was a very exciting season and a lot of fun.

**Scott Lair:** I think it was a successful season in terms of everything. We all had a lot of fun as a team together; swimming and practicing and just hanging out together. And overall second place at state is not bad.

**Alex Overton:** Very good.

**Grant Fuhr:** Excellent actually.

**Alex Overton:** It felt nice.

**Grant Fuhr:** It felt good and nice.

### What makes these boys so successful?

**Coach Shari Walling:** They have grown up together and had a common goal and common mission which was to improve. They practice hard. I am very lucky I've known them, some of them their whole lives. This year they really devoted to swimming year round and getting ready because they got a glimpse of how fun and how strong they could be at state last year and then they had new goals.

### What were you feeling after they won both the 200 and 400 freestyle relay?

**Shari Walling:** I was really proud of them. Just excited for them because those are goals and they all four did better on the relay than they did individually and that just shows the strength of a team.

### The boys were unhappy with their individual placements. What did you think about that?

**Shari Walling:** I just don't think that you can have

that black cloud when you did this great. But it is there because you always want more. I think that the black cloud should pop because they swam their hearts out and you have to take the good and the bad and they got second place and first in their relays and they raced.

### Although 10 boys went to state, only the four relay boys earned points toward the overall score. How did that work?

**Shari Walling:** I don't think about it as only four, I know that they scored all the points, I made mention of that at their banquet. I had out all the awards that they received and they all kind of funneled towards the same four guys for that. But it takes our whole team to really earn that. It takes those people that camp out and wait in line to go to the meet because they're doing that because they want to see them and they're part of their team. I think you do things more when you've got that. Yes, it was only four, but it was our whole team.

### What are your thoughts on the boys' relationship?

**Shari Walling:** Their chemistry is that they kind of play off each other. They're just always bouncing behind the blocks. When they look nervous or stressed, they're not going to swim fast. They have to be having fun. They have to have that energy that is positive, flowing, if they get nervous about something then it's just a negative energy and it doesn't work well with that group of boys. Those four have to be, \*laughs\* I don't even know how to explain them. They have to be having fun. And that's good. This isn't a job, this is an opportunity.

## Friendly Rivalry

### Alex Overton

100 Free: 46.26

100 Fly: 51.37

100 Back: 52.63

### Grant Fuhr

100 Free: 45.44

100 Fly: 51.73

100 Back: 54.04

*"The only thing there is to say about it is that we pushed each other."*

-Alex Overton

*"It wasn't like rivalries with other people. It was to our benefit."*

-Grant Fuhr

1. After placing first in the 100 yard freestyle, senior Grant Fuhr stretches his arms out at the Johnston Invitational. Fuhr's record this year was a 45.96. (Photo by Ashton Streit)

2. Sophomore Dawson Craig's goggles slip off his face during the 100 yard

butterfly. This happened many times throughout the season to multiple swimmers. (Photo by Kati Anderson)

3. Brothers sophomore Michael Schmitz and freshman Samuel Schmitz pass each other during the 500 yard freestyle. This is the only event the

brothers swam together.

4. Taking a breath, junior Ryan Warrick swims the 200 yard freestyle at districts. "I just think about going fast," Warrick said. "I know that all my training will get me through my race." (Photo by Ashton Streit)

5. Senior Alex Overton and junior Grant Lair pick their USA swim team coach out of the crowd. The state meet was hosted at the Marshalltown YMCA and had a large turnout. (Photo by Ashton Streit)

6. Junior Scott Lair raises his arms

excitedly during warm ups. "This was right when the parents walked in and I was excited to see all of them," Lair said. (Photo by Ashton Streit)

7. Jumping off the starting blocks, junior Grant Lair swims in the 200 yard freestyle relay. Lair placed eighth

overall at state in the event with a time of 1:58.05. (Photo by Ashton Streit)

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