

Austin brothers creating legacy on swimming team

By Sean O'Connor
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

John Austin has faced stiff swimming competition during his four years at Penn State. Now his biggest rival may come from within his own family.

The newest talent on the men's swimming team is none other than Austin's younger brother, Shane.

John, a senior co-captain, readily admits his brother has slowly been taking him down over the last couple years.

"I can already tell you that, coming in as a freshman this year, he's already probably going to have more success than I will this year and build on that the next three years," John said. "I can't wait to see where it goes."

The Austin brothers have been training together for years, but first competed on the same squad when Shane was a freshman and John was a senior at Unionville High School. In 2006-07, they raced together in the 200-meter medley relay and won the state title.

Training together has allowed the Austins to build a healthy competition between them.

"If you look at his times as a freshman, he's already faster than I am. He was faster as a junior in high school than me when I was a

sophomore in college," John said. "But I hang in there. I can still whoop his butt in practice. When it comes to the end of the year and the meets, he can step it up."

Austin's ability to speak candidly about his brother reflects his attitude as a captain. When asked if he might play favorites, John quickly dispelled the idea by speaking about the team as a whole and how there is a definite sense of teamwork this year. The idea that he would treat his brother differently runs completely against the team dynamic.

Penn State coach John Hargis is also excited about the possibilities of the younger Austin.

"Phenomenal talent," is how Hargis describes Shane. "I think by the time he leaves here he'll probably leave as one of the best swimmers Penn State has ever had."

Coach Hargis is very hopeful that Shane can take this year with him from John. He hopes the entire team can match John's work ethic, and noted the elder Austin was a "role model" for the squad.

Perhaps John has been teaching his little brother too well. Shane has already started to make a name for himself in varsity events. The big time college atmosphere hasn't scared him.

"I can still whoop [Shane's] butt in practice."

John Austin
senior swimmer

although he admits to butterflies during competition.

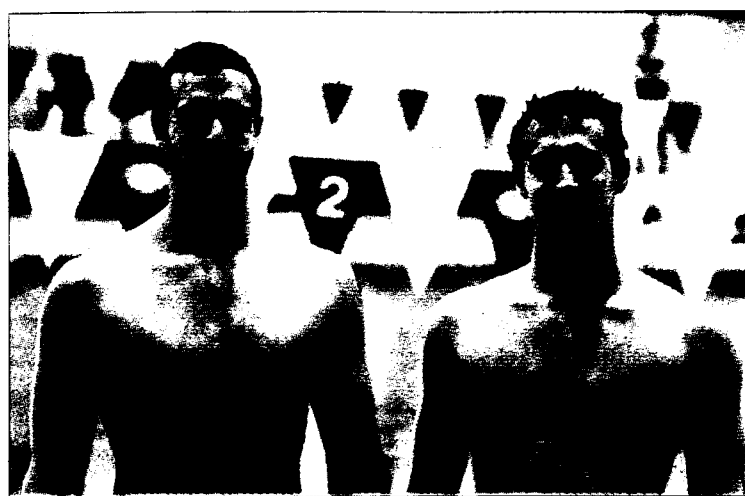
"We've had two meets so far, and I was really nervous for those," the freshman said.

"It was a lot more competition than I'm used to, but I'm really excited for the rest of it, and to start swimming really fast at the end."

In his two meets he placed third in an individual sprint and second in the 400-meter medley and freestyle relays. His early success leaves much to hope for over the next four years.

Then again, this is no surprise when considering his success in high school. Just like his brother, Shane was a four-year varsity swimmer at Unionville and in that time captured seven All-American honors and won a PIAA state championship in the 100-meter freestyle his junior year.

In coming to Penn State, Shane was following in his brother's footsteps, but insists that the family competition was not his only rea-



Kelley King/Colegian

John Austin (left) and his brother, Shane Austin pose at practice.

son for choosing the school.

"I really liked the people here a lot more than anywhere else," Shane said.

"It just seemed like the right choice."

John admits that he wanted to have his brother on the team.

"I was definitely pushing him this way a lot last year, but I mean I think he came here for the whole package," the elder Austin said.

No matter if it was Shane or his brother who made the most convincing argument for Penn State, the team is lucky to have them.

With only one year of varsity competition to share, the Austin brothers plan on making it special.

"The fact that they're together one year as brothers, as brothers. I think it's great," said Mary Austin, the boys mother.

"When they swim together in a relay it really is a neat feeling. I'm very proud. Penn State proud."



The women's swimming team ends its four-week hiatus this weekend:
psucollegian.com

Freshman sprinter Gehret looking to provide spark

By Stephen Pianovich
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

One of the nation's top sprint recruits from last year will be joining Penn State's track and field team this season.

It's easy to see why Brady Gehret was heavily recruited out of high school.

He ran a 46.39 in the 400-meter in 2010, the best time in Pennsylvania last season.

He also ran 33.51 in the 300-meter, which was the best in the nation last year and sixth best in high school track history.

Gehret received many offers

from schools, including Baylor and Arizona State, but the Altoona native decided to stay close to home and run at Penn State.

Coaching was a big factor in Gehret's decision to come to State College.

"I definitely like the coaches here, and I thought that they would make me the best out of all the coaches that I saw," Gehret said.

Being close to home and knowing someone on the team also played a role in Gehret's selection of Penn State.



Gehret

Current Penn State sprinter and Gehret's former teammate at Altoona Area High School, red shirt freshman Aaron Nadolsky said, "when I was a senior in high school and I had already made my decision, I was always pushing him to come here."

Gehret will be joining a group of Nittany Lion sprinters that return every runner from last year.

This group is also a tight knit bunch of friends off of the track.

"We hang out all the time," said senior sprinter Jacob Librizzi. "Brady acclimated well to the atmosphere of Penn State, especially our sprint group mentality and how we operate, he fits in real well."

Gehret's speed is benefiting the team by helping to push other sprinters during practice, and his teammates are thankful for his commitment.

"He makes everyone want to work harder," said Nadolsky.

His endurance is another aspect of his running that motivates teammates.

"We might be tired, but Brady is still capable of going, so that motivates everyone else to keep going," Librizzi said.

One thing Gehret is excited about for sprinting collegiately is the higher level of competition he'll face.

"I love having tough competition, so I'm definitely looking for-

"Brady acclimated well to the atmosphere of Penn State."

Jacob Librizzi
senior sprinter

ward to the upcoming season," said Gehret.

Gehret has had a minor setback recently.

A foot injury has kept him from going full speed at practice, but it does not seem to be too serious and Gehret thinks that he will be able to fully practice again after Thanksgiving.

McCoy and Tebow have proven to be irreplaceable

By Jared Shanker

SPORTS columnists gloat when they're right and refuse to acknowledge

when they're wrong. It's the nature of the business (or more aptly put, the nature of the people in the business).

Well today, I'm here to admit that I was wrong. Really, really wrong.

Prior to the start of the college football season, I ranked Florida No. 2 in my preseason poll. I had Texas No. 4.

Eleven weeks later, not only is neither team ranked, but neither even garnered one measly vote in the most recent USA Today or AP polls.

For a point of reference, Delaware received a vote in the AP Top 25. Delaware is part of the Football Championship Division I AA.



MY OPINION

Florida and Texas have a combined record of 10-10, and it's unlikely Texas will make it to a bowl game for the first time since 1997.

Mack Brown has never had a losing record as coach of the Longhorns, who are 4-6 and just 2-5 in the Big 12.

To be honest, I didn't see this coming. I don't think anybody else did either.

Why? Because we all bought into the hype of Florida's John Brantley (I actually thought he could contend for a Heisman) and Texas' Garrett Gilbert, and forgot they were replacing two of college football's most successful quarterbacks of all-time.

As we found out, you can't replace Colt McCoy and Tim Tebow, and how could you? McCoy won 45 games in his four years, the most wins by a starting quarterback in NCAA history.

His 76.7 completion percentage as a junior is also an NCAA record, and he holds just about every passing record in school history.

You can make a case for Tebow

as one of the greatest college football players ever: Tebow won two national championships and won 48 games at Florida, 35 of which came as a starter.

In 2007, Tebow accounted for 55 touchdowns; only 26 Football Bowl Subdivision teams — about one-fifth of the entire FBS population — scored that many touchdowns in 2007.

He also passed Georgia legend Herschel Walker as the SEC's all-time leader in rushing touchdowns.

There is just no way to make up for all those wins, numbers and records.

Players such as McCoy and Tebow only come around every so often.

Florida fans and Texas fans got greedy and saw all the talent their programs were piling up and expected to be immune from six- and seven-win seasons.

Some disillusioned Florida fans even looked forward to the end of the Tebow era and the beginning of Brantley's, pointing to Brantley's prototypical skill set as a welcome relief to Tebow's run-

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first, pass-second, do-whatever-it-takes-to-win mentality. (I wonder if Florida fans wanted Brantley over Cam Newton, too, who began his career in Gainesville?)

We saw the recruiting ranking next to Brantley and Gilbert's name and forgot that recruiting stars don't amount to anything on the field.

Brantley, ranked the 25th best high school player in 2007 by ESPN, has looked unsettled in the pocket all season.

He has eight touchdowns through 10 games; Tebow had eight touchdowns after just six quarters of football his first year as a starter.

Gilbert was No. 11 in 2009 but has just seven touchdowns to 15 interceptions this year as a sophomore; McCoy, who has cast a shadow in Austin larger than Big Tex's, had just 20 interceptions over his final two seasons.

Now, it would be unfair to place all of Florida's and Texas' struggles on the inexperienced Brantley and Gilbert, who both never started a game prior to this season.

Florida didn't allow more than 20 points once in the regular season last year but opponents have topped that number four times against the Gators this year. The Longhorns are ninth in the Big 12 and 75th in the country in rushing.

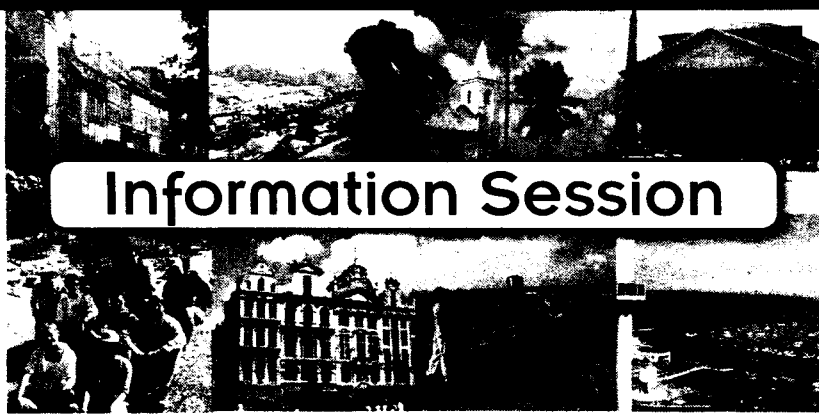
But it all starts with the quarterback.

Brantley and Gilbert haven't been able to fill the size-20 cleats left behind by Tebow and McCoy. Then again, who could?

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The Daily Collegian

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