

Regional Championship Press Release

Last weekend the Austin High School Maroon Swim Team headed down to San Antonio for the UIL Region VII Championships swim meet and made a little history in the process.

“Districts was a tough meet for us,” said head coach Ryan Goodwyn. “We had a lot of 7th place finishes at a meet where only the top 6 advance to regionals. We also had a disappointing relay disqualification. We knew that not having those six to eight swims to score at regionals would hurt us in the team scores at this meet.”

However, the Maroons decided to use that as a motivation instead of a drawback. “We knew that we weren’t going to be in the hunt for a high team finish at this meet,” Goodwyn said, “but in a way that freed us up. We had nothing to lose, so the pressure was off.”

The Maroons set a goal heading into the meet of being faster than they were at districts in every race, and breaking at least one school record in the process. They achieved nearly all of that. In preliminaries on Friday, the Maroons were faster in every race but one compared to their districts times. Along the way the boys 200 freestyle relay of Evan Smith, Kelly Murphy, Kole Esselstyn, and Liam Taylor-Montero broke the school record set in 2021 with a time of 1:30.82.

The Maroons had two swimmers qualified for Regionals in their individual events. Sophomore Megan O’Leary qualified in her 100 butterfly, and her fellow sophomore Mia Corbin qualified in her 200 individual medley. Both girls finished 17th in the prelims, narrowly missing the top 16 cutoff for finals. O’Leary was just slightly behind her time from districts, while Corbin went a new personal best time in her IM. “I’m really proud of both those girls,” Goodwyn said. “It’s a lot of pressure swimming in an individual event at a meet this big, with stakes this high. I think in the next few years they’ll both be fighting for spots in the finals and this meet, possibly even becoming contenders for the state meet by their junior and senior years. This was a great learning experience for them both.”

Goodwyn said that Friday’s performance freed up the team even more on Saturday. “The prelims was such an overwhelmingly positive day for us overall that we were able to come into the finals on Saturday and know that we could already leave happy no matter what,” Goodwyn said. “We’d already done everything we hoped for on Friday, so Saturday’s goal was to just find a way to ride the energy of the meet and be even faster in finals.”

Again, the Maroons managed to reach their goals by coming back even faster in all their races on Saturday, which meant that Evans, Murphy, Esselstyn and Taylor-Montero broke their own school record from the day before, lowering the new mark to 1:30.63.

“I could not be prouder of our kids,” Goodwyn said after. “They swam so hard this week, supported each other well the whole time, and finished our season on a very high note. The good news is, we only graduate three of the 15 kids that we brought to the meet. We’re a young team, and these kids laid the groundwork for the next few years to be a lot of fun.”