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Grizzly swimmers move to Spokane to battle Washington State, Gonzaga splashers

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MISSOULA---

Coach Fred Stetson and his University of Montana swimmers will be in Spokane Saturday for an afternoon swim meet against Gonzaga University and Washington State University.

Stetson's squad, defending Big Sky Conference swim champs, started the season one week ago by defeating Northern Montana College, 69-34 in Havre.

Washington State figures to be the toughest team in this weekend's event, but Gonzaga should also be stronger compared to last year.

"I think we can beat Gonzaga, but Washington State may be a different story," Stetson said. "The Cougars could beat us with depth, if nothing else."

The veteran Grizzly coach, twice conference swimming coach of the year, says he has swimmers whose times in various events are comparable to Washington State time, "but they have more of them."

Stetson's travelling squad will be the same as last week's, including Don Keffler, Willard Anderson, Terry Stegner, Wade Roloson and Kurt von Tagen in freestyle events; Jerry Honstad and John Williamson in the butterflies; Dustan Bradley and Allen Bope in the backstroke events; Phil Foley, Rick Stephens, and Steve White in the breaststroke, Alan Turner in the individual medleys, and Horst Tenske and Dennis Dorr in diving events.

Keffler set a new 1100-yard freestyle record for UM with a time of 12:02.2, but the most outstanding performance was von Tagen's record-shattering output in the 500-yard freestyle. His time of 5:23.4 easily broke the school record, but more important was the fact that he clipped 11.9 seconds off the current Big Sky record in the event.

The Grizzlies will return to Missoula to compete in the Montana Senior AAU championships Jan. 27-28 in the University Pool.