



Nick Gavolas

Head Diving Coach

13th Season

A former standout as a member of the Youngstown State men's diving team, Nick Gavolas has built the YSU diving program into one of the top programs in the state and region as he enters his 13th season as an assistant swimming coach and head diving coach.

Gavolas, the 2002-03 and 2003-04 Horizon League Diving Coach of the Year, has helped YSU divers win nine conference titles in the past seven years. He has also coached three NCAA Zone C Championship qualifiers in the past seven years and two YSU Student-Athletes of the Year.

To stay at that elite level, Gavolas brought in three talented divers in the offseason of 2007 that would compete together for the next four years. Sara Weigel, who competed under Gavolas at the club level, finished 10th at the Ohio State High School Championships as a senior. Amanda Carpin was an all-state diver in Pennsylvania, and Caitlin Davis was a state qualifier at Siegel High in Tennessee and a level 10 gymnast.

Weigel both broke into the 1-meter top 10 performers list in their first season. Carpin holds the number eight spot with a score of 216.45 and Weigel holds the number nine spot with a score of 215.20. Weigel also was able to break into the 3-meter top 10 performers list at the number nine spot with a score of 209.62.

Three years ago, Gavolas watched diver Kalyn Leveto cap off her career with her fourth Horizon League crown and the distinction of YSU's Vindicator Female Student-Athlete of the Year. Leveto, who also did her club diving with Gavolas at Timberbrook Diving, was named Horizon League Diver of the Year her sophomore and junior years. As a sophomore she won both diving events, and she claimed the title in the 3-meter and placed second in the 1-meter as a junior.

Prior to Leveto's string of championships, Brandi Goettsch was a mainstay on the diving championship podium for the Penguins. Goettsch was a three-time conference Diver of the Year, earning the mark in 2001-02 in the Horizon League and twice in the Mid-Continent Conference. She won the Horizon League's three-meter competition in 2001-02 and won four conference championships in the Mid-Con.

Mandi Smail also had an accomplished career under Gavolas, placing second in the 1-meter as a senior at the Horizon League Championship in 2003. She was also a four-time Zone C qualifier and finished in the top three twice at the Mid-Con Championship.

In 2007 Gavolas saw the development of Cortney Harless come to a pinnacle when she posted career-high finishes in both the 1-meter and 3-meter events at the Horizon League Championships. The season before, Kelly Reese was named the Horizon League Diver of the Week twice during her freshman campaign and posted scores to rank third in YSU

history in the 3-meter and fourth in the 1-meter.

Gavolas, a YSU Athletics Hall of Fame inductee, competed for the Penguins from 1967-72 and became YSU's first three-time All-American in diving. He earned national runner-up honors at the College National Swimming and Diving Championships in 1969 and was a national qualifier for the AAU Diving team.

Gavolas has spent 23 seasons as a coach and became YSU's first diving coach in 1973 with the men's diving team. He was named Northern Ohio Coach of the Year three times and was awarded a Mentor Scholarship through the United States Diving Association. Gavolas also went through extensive coaching training under Dick Kimball, a six-time Olympic coach and former diving coach at Michigan.

For over a decade, Gavolas has been the owner, director and coach of Timberbrook Diving. He has also earned his coaching certification to be a U.S. Diving coach.