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Alger tests skills at Junior Olympics

Conor Tekautz

Enterprise staff writer

After competing against the same divers for Davis High School in the Sac-Joaquin Section, Mark Alger was looking to test his skills against athletes from out of the area.
So when he found out that the 2007 Amateur Athletics Union West Coast **Junior Olympic Games** were being hosted by UC Davis, he jumped at the opportunity to participate in the event at Schaal Aquatics Center.

"It was a good chance for me to see more competition because there are divers from farther out rather than just the local area," Alger said. "I didn't know about it until after the high school season ended and saw it was (in Davis) and decided to do it."

On Saturday, Alger competed for the Capital Divers team and took eighth place out of 25 divers in the boys elite 16- to 18-year-old 3-meter event.

On Sunday, he finished 10th out of 30 divers in the boys elite 16-18 1-meter event. He scored 248.2 points off the 3-meter board and 270.6 points off the 1-meter board.

The biggest difference for Alger was that he was unfamiliar with his competition. In high school, he had a pretty good idea of how the opposition was going to perform but that wasn't the case in the **Junior** Olympics.

"I wasn't really worried about how I placed and just wanted to make sure I did the best I could," Alger said.

While he was satisfied with his results in both events, Alger was especially pleased with his performance off the 3-meter board due to his inexperience diving from that height.

He said the 3-meter event was definitely the harder of the two events because of this.

Additionally, he didn't spend much time on his 1-meter dives since he worked on those all year long while diving for the Blue Devils.

"We dive off the 1-meter board in high school so I had only been working on my dives from 3 meters for a couple weeks," Alger said. "I didn't really have any expectations in the 3- meter because I had such little time to practice."

Alger easily won the Delta Valley Conference championship in the varsity boys division in the spring. He finished with a score of 291.15 and didn't have to take his final dive as he had already secured the title.

Kristin Taniguchi, who graduated from DHS in the spring, finished 13th in the girls 16-18 1-meter event.

Notes: The **AAU Junior** Olympics featured an off day Wednesday with baseball competition returning today at Davis High and Playfields Park. Jump rope registration is today and competition begins on Friday.