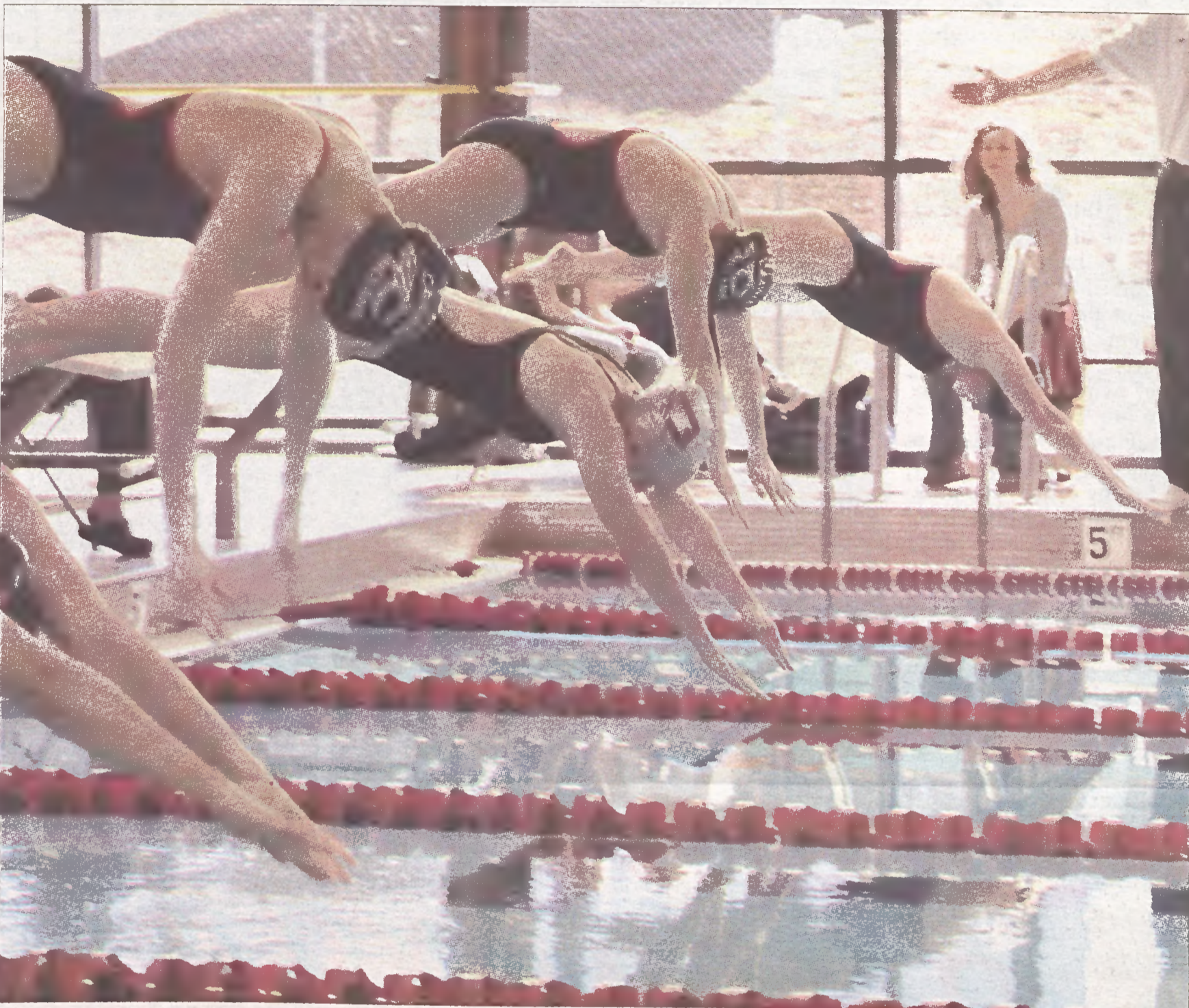


## Women's Swimming approaches end of season; spectator turnout disappoints



CARL FARLOW | STAFF WRITER

At the mark of the shrill whistle, three women dove from the starting block into the 80-degree water of the Guilford College Athletic Center's pool. The waters churned as they competed for victory in the freestyle-stroke event.

Onlookers watched and cheered on their friends and relatives in each event.

"Turnout has been like this pretty much all season," Coach Steve Kaczmarek said. "There's not a lot of space, but we fill up each time. We've had a full house all season."

In the tri-meet on Jan. 27, Guilford competed against two rival teams, Catawba and Sweet Briar. Both teams are ranked, Catawba at 20 in NCAA Division II rankings, and Sweet Briar at three in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference. Guilford lost both to Catawba 120-62 and to Sweet Briar 117-63.

"I've been pleasantly surprised by the support," said team captain Kate Talbot, a senior. "Swimming isn't one of those sports that's necessarily spectator-friendly."

Sophomore Maddie Winters echoed Talbot's

sentiments about the nature of the competitiveness at swim meets.

"I wish there was a little more turnout, but I understand that because swimmers don't heckle each other, it's hard to get fired up (like in other competitive sports)," Winters said. "We could shout on the starting block, but then we'd probably get in trouble."

Each meet is divided into separate events based on the stroke involved and distance to be swum. Many of the Quakers set personal records. Emmalee Morris set a personal best in the butterfly; Molly Cashion and Amanda Oehlert did the same in their breaststroke events; and Justine Morris recorded her best in the individual medley.

"I feel our team is real solid and we've got good potential," Winters said. "I'm looking forward to next season and the ODAC."

"I've really enjoyed the last three years I've been on the team," Talbot said. "I wish them luck next year."

The Quakers' final meet before the ODAC championships will be at home against Salem College on Feb. 9 at 6 p.m.



COUNTERCLOCKWISE, FROM TOP:

AMANDA OEHLERT LEAPS INTO ACTION AGAINST CATAWBA AND SWEET BRIAR AT THE START OF THE 100-METER BREASTSTROKE.

BEFUZZLED SPECTATORS FIND THAT THE ONLY PATH TO THE POOL FROM THE INSIDE OF RAGAN-BROWN FIELDHOUSE IS DOWN AN INCONSPICUOUS STAIRCASE AND THROUGH THE BASKETBALL LOCKER ROOMS AND SHOWERS.

THE SPECTATORS WHO ATTEND WOMEN'S SWIM MEETS ARE USUALLY RECRUITED TO TIME THE EVENTS; THE TEAM OFTEN STRUGGLES TO GET JUST THE SIX VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR TIMING.

EMMALEE MORRIS (BELOW RIGHT) SWAM THE 100-METER BUTTERFLY IN 1:44.29, HER PERSONAL BEST.

KATE TALBOT (ABOVE RIGHT) SWAM THE 100-METER BUTTERFLY IN 1:27.40.

PHOTOS BY JEREMY BANTE/GUILFORDIAN

