

BRUIN SPORTS

SPORTS LINE

GABE WATSON COMMITTS TO USM



Senior Gabe Watson has committed to play basketball at the University of Southern Mississippi. Watson, a guard, has dominated the competition in 2A over the last two year; it's a trend likely to continue this year as he hopes to lead his team to a state title.

More on Bruin basketball inside.

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FOLLOW BRUIN FOOTBALL LIVE



Can't make the game? Follow all the football action LIVE on Bruin Sports Radio. Pre-game is 6:30 p.m., kickoff is 7 p.m.

■ **Radio:** WJXC Jackson, Mississippi Catholic Radio, 107.9
 ■ **Internet:** Tuneln Radio Channel ASOAudio 13.
 ■ **Streaming video:** BruinTV, www.stjoebruins.live

VOLLEYBALL PLAYOFFS



■ **OCT. 19** at Alcorn Central, 5 p.m.

NORTH STATE CHAMPS!



Bruins hope to take it all at state championship meet in Tupelo

from staff reports

If the North State Swim meet is a predictor of the upcoming state championship in Tupelo, the Bruins could be rocking the pool in Elvis' hometown.

Both the Bruin men's and women's swim teams brought home the top honors at the North State Swim Meet held Saturday, Oct. 14, in Cleveland at the Delta State University Natatorium.

Senior Emma Adkins was the Bruin girls' top scorer as she has been throughout the season. Adkins won both her individual events, the 50- and 100-yard freestyle.

Adkins also anchored the winning 400 freestyle relay and the second place 200 medley relay. She is a favorite for winning these events at the state meet.

Teaming with Adkins on the 400 relay were Caleigh Hankins, Anna Chris Nicholas and Elizabeth Weisenberger. Avery Nicholas and Arilyn Thomas swam with Anna Chris

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ABOVE PHOTO: Bruin swimmers celebrate on Saturday, Oct. 14, after the boys and girls teams won at the North State Meet on the Delta State University campus in Cleveland. From left: Emma Adkins, Maren Hrivnak, Jax Rasmussen, Coach Lauri Collins, Avery Nicholas, Andrew Dotson and Emma Dotson. Both teams now head to the state championship meet on Saturday, Oct. 28, in Tupelo. Photo special to *The Bear Facts*.

BOTTOM PHOTO: Reid Smith competes in the breaststroke in this file photo from earlier this year. Photo by Jack Clements/*The Bear Facts*

Tough football schedule pays off for Bruins

By **JOE PEARSON**
The Bear Facts

After a slow start to the season, the Bruin football team enters the final two regular season game with a 6-3 overall record, a 2-0 district record, a four-game winning streak and a possible spot in the state playoffs.

The Bruins' most recent win: a 47-27 Homecoming victory over the Canton Academy Panthers.

Up next: The Bruins will travel Friday to district foe Puckett, 4-5 overall and 0-3 in district play. Puckett is coming of an Oct. 13 road loss to Mize 40-8, a team the Bruins defeated 38-24 at home two weeks ago.

The last time the Bruins and Puckett Wolves met in football was 2016 when the Wolves spoiled the Bruins' Homecoming by winning 27-7. St. Joe opened the season with a

brutal schedule. The Bruins played Newton High School for the season opener, losing handily.

Two weeks later, the Bruins lost in a close game to MAIS powerhouse Jackson Academy. Two weeks after that, the Bruins lost to Jackson Prep, a team that has won its classification state championship five years in a row.

However, these tough losses might be the best thing the team could have experienced. The Bruins then rattled off four straight wins, beating Union High School, Pelahatchie High School, Mize High School and Canton Academy.

"I think the tough schedule early in the season made us improve in every way possible," said Sales de La Barre, a senior offensive and defensive lineman. "It's really going to help us take on the tough teams as we get into the playoffs and hopefully when we're playing in December."



Quarterbacks Reed Collins, left, and Charlie Lott warm up for the Bruins.

Photo by Bailey Miller/*The Bear Facts*

Katie Joseph: Making a comeback after devastating injury

MADISON — Katie Joseph, her cheeks bright red and her breath quickly condensing into fog, was starting for the St. Joe Lady Bruins soccer team.

It was an unusually cold night in November 2016 that felt more like January than late autumn.

Joseph, though, was used to the cold; she played soccer in weather like that before. Her team was 4-1 in district play, had dreams of making

the playoffs and wanted more than anything to knock off powerhouse Brandon High School, a higher-division public high school.

"It was the first half, and this girl and I were kind of pushing," Joseph recalled. "We were shoulder-to-shoulder, nothing too aggressive. But she kind of stepped in front of me a little."

"I turned, and my knee cap popped out of place," she said. "Then I heard something else in my left leg pop."

Joseph fell to the ground, writhing and crying in pain. In one brief move, she tore her anterior cruciate ligament, the ACL — one of the most common

knee injuries in sports and one of the most painful.

"It was probably one of the worst pains I've ever experienced," Joseph said.

Joseph was carted off the field. Without her strong defensive play, the Bruin defense struggled and lost to Brandon 7-1.

Long recovery

Joseph knew immediately she would have a long, difficult recovery. She knew she was out for the rest of the Bruin soccer season. She feared she might also miss volleyball season.

“Not being able to play sports and having to just watch my team is frustrating to me.”

First and foremost on her mind was surgery, set for Dec. 22 right before Christmas. In fact, Joseph opened



KATIE JOSEPH
senior

Christmas presents from her wheel chair at home.

Physical therapy was a long, grueling, intensive ordeal that involved hundreds of hours of exercise using thick bands fore leg lifts and knee-strengthening activities.

Meanwhile, all she could do was watch her teammates from the sideline of the soccer games she attended. She was frustrated and angry.

"One of the hardest parts was just not being able to help my team," she said. "Just sitting there idle was probably the worst part of this all."

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