

# Blystone inherits young Oriole squad

By **MATT JACKSON**  
Staff writer

This may be his first head coaching gig, but new Rocky Grove coach Andy Blystone isn't out of his element.

It wasn't all that long ago that Blystone himself was a part of a budding program as a freshman on a newly formed Union City swim program.

He is a 2008 graduate of Asbury College in Kentucky, but can better relate to the nine swimmers on the Oriole team from his four years in high school competing on the Bears' team.

"My freshman year was the first year they had a high school team. I swam four years there, enjoyed it and learned a lot," Blystone said. "I had a lot of different positive learning experiences and saw that team grow."

Like many of his swimmers, Blystone knows what it's like to swim competitively for one team as a youth swimmer, but then compete for a different team as a high-schooler. He honed his skills at the Corry YMCA under the tutelage of Jack McIntyre, who boasts 30-plus years of coaching experience, before joining the Union City team.

The path seems to have worked. Blystone was an NAIA national qualifier at Asbury and has now landed his first head coaching position after gathering experience as an assistant coach for a USA club team, High Bridge Academy, while in Kentucky.

At Asbury he learned something he hopes to pass on to the Oriole swimmers this year, that being the benefits of working as a team.

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