

Vollmer in need of big conclusion

(Monday, April 04, 2005)

Olympic gold medal swimmer Dana Vollmer's hopes of earning a spot on the U.S. Team in this summer's World Championships has come down to one final event. Vollmer has yet to qualify for a final in any of the three events in which she has competed at the World Championship Trials in Indianapolis. Today (Tuesday) she will compete in the 100-meter freestyle.

Vollmer needs a top-two finish to earn an automatic spot on the 26-member team. A top-six finish and she could still be selected for a relay.

Vollmer won a gold medal in the Olympics in Greece this summer as part of the world record-setting 800 relay. That quartet swam a time of 7:53.42.

Vollmer did reach the finals in the 100 butterfly, her first event in Indianapolis. She originally placed ninth in the preliminaries with a time of 1:00.85 but was moved into the top eight when another swimmer scratched.

Vollmer improved to a 1:00.12, good enough for seventh. That could earn her a spot on the U.S. Team for the World University Games in Izmir, Turkey, Aug. 11-21.

In her specialty, though, Vollmer finished 16th in the 200 free after entering as the top seed. She tied for 10th in the prelims with a time of 2:02.10 and slipped to a 2:03.43 in the B consolation competition.

In Sunday's 50 free, Vollmer also tied for 10th in the prelims with a 26.44 time. She finished 10th overall after improving to a 26.19 in the B consolation division.

But Vollmer had said before the meet in Indianapolis currently being held that perhaps it was too soon after the Olympics for such a prestigious competition. While many swimmers took some downtime, she competed for Granbury High School.

Vollmer was named the Class 5A Swimmer of the Year at the State Meet, setting three records. She won state championships in the 100-yard butterfly (52.70) and the 200 freestyle (1:45.64), along with setting a state record with her leadoff-lap time of 22.93 seconds over 50 yards.

Vollmer also followed her Olympic performance by competing in the World Short Course Championships, also in Indianapolis, in October. She won two gold medals and a bronze in that competition.