



**JOE WIDUCH**  
**NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**  
**BOYS SWIM PROGRAM**

*The NVHS Athletic Booster Club is proud to present the featured athlete of this week, swimmer JOE WIDUCH. Coach Allen has chosen Joe because of his leadership over the past 4 years. Joe is the team's top swimmer this year and has been on Varsity for all 4 years. His best stroke is backstroke and he has a great chance to be all-state in that event this year. Joe is a leader in practices by working hard and motivating his teammates. He is very competitive and has a drive to compete at the next level. Joe should help the team finish the season as the best team in his 4 years here at Neuqua Valley.*

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What has been your career in swimming?*

**Joe:** I have been in the water since I was about 4 years old. I started swimming with the Bolingbrook Lightning Bolts back in 2001. I have played soccer, basketball, baseball, football, and water polo. I played water polo for 2 years at NVHS, but ultimately decided to focus on swim. I've been with Neuqua swim team since my freshman year.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *You told me your motto is "when you want to succeed as bad as you want to breathe"... Give me a practical example of when you put this into practice.*

**Joe:** I didn't make into varsity right off the bat in my freshman year. I had to push myself in order to get on the team. But I was extremely persistent in making sure Coach Allen knew I was serious about joining the team, and becoming a swimmer who could contribute. I showed up for all the Varsity practices as a freshman, and refused to give up.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What has this experience taught you?*

**Joe:** A lesson reinforced through all of my years in sports: how to step up to a challenge. I have learned it through exhaustion, frustration, and failure. Triumph is measured by how many times you get up, dust yourself off, and keep going. Through sports, I have learned not to quit on myself. There is always something left in the "reserve". Tapping into the reservoir of strength and moving through the disappointment is a life lesson that I believe will serve me well.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Would you recommend joining a team to a student who is currently considering this possibility?*

**Joe:** I would tell anyone who is considering joining a team in high school is to consider your decision carefully. It involves far more than team meetings and events. You have to be ready to balance the demands of the sport with the demands of academics and your personal life. Ultimately, you have to be ready to give up free time and will need to find the support of good friends who understand your commitment.

**Booster Club Reporter:** *What makes it worth the while for you?*

**Joe:** because I love the rush; I love the feeling of going after something using my physical and mental self to potentially win. Competing keeps me hungry and gives me a way to actually achieve my goals. Competing in a sport is my way to learn how to compete and win in the world after my swim career is over. That's when the real competition begins!

**Booster Club Reporter:** *And how do you balance practice and academics?*

**Joe:** I know now how to study efficiently and effectively. I have learned how to take advantage of any bits of time I have to jump ahead on my studies, projects, assignments, etc. My recipe for keeping up with grades while practicing sports is to think ahead with my assignments and work backwards. Even though the teacher has given the class a due date, I get the assignment done ahead of time, as much as possible. It gives me piece of mind to have the project behind me, and it gives me time to change or tweak anything. This is particularly valuable as the swim schedule gets aggressive and I am "wiped out." One more hint: I like studying at local restaurants and coffee spots. My bed is too tempting!

**Booster Club Reporter:** *Who is your role model?*

**Joe:** My role model is my Grandpa Mitchell. He is an incredibly strong and intelligent man whose firm beliefs in life, religion and family inspire me. My grandpa believes in me and encourages me to keep reaching for my dreams.