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Everything's 'Peachey' for Souderton Indians dominate SOL Continental Championships

By KEV HUNTER

Staff Writer

TOWAMENCIN — By the time Souderton Area's Lauren Peachey swam her fastest time of the year to win the closest race of the day — the 100 breaststroke, Saturday's Suburban One League Continental Conference Championships had turned into a party for the Indians.

"I can't remember the last time I had this much fun at a swim meet," said their coach, Todd Bauer.

There was plenty for the Big Red to celebrate, as the Indians won a whopping 10 of 11 events at North Penn's Rick Carroll Natatorium to win the conference title by a surprisingly-comfortable 45 points. Souderton's 344 points topped second-place North Penn's 299, and gave the Indians their fourth conference title in a row.

For seniors on the Souderton team, none of them had ever lost a conference championship, and they weren't ready for that to change. Souderton had a much bigger challenge this year due to realignment throwing them into the same conference as North Penn, but the Indians, like they had done in the dual meet with the Maidens, defeated their arch rival.

"If you scored the program coming into this meet, we would beat North Penn by three," Bauer said. "So we were anticipating a really close meet, and I felt like our girls stepped up and just performed today."

No one typified the Indians' performance better than Peachey, who won the breaststroke with a time of 1 minute, 9.46 seconds, touching a split second before CB East's Kathryn Viola (1:10.22).

"(Coach Bauer) talked about how he wanted me to win it, but I wasn't sure if I actually could, because there was quicker competition for me - all of our times were within the same second," Peachey said.

The senior got it done, win

ning the race as the Souderton side of the pool erupted in celebration.

"Lauren Peachey is a girl who, last year, she wasn't sure if she was going to swim," Bauer said. "She's a water polo player, and we sat down and talked, and she said 'Okay I'll give it a try.' And I think this year, Lauren has dropped nine seconds in her 100 breaststroke. She has just continued to progress the last two years. It's unbelievable."

Peachey is one of 16 district qualifiers for the Indians, and she's hoping to make states for the first time. Souderton has dropped only one meet all year, to state rival Parkland, and has been impressive down the stretch.

"Once we swam North Penn, we were more confident," Peachey said of the dual meet win.

The Indians' confidence built right from the first event on Saturday, as Mariel Kush, Angela Severn, Paige Whitmire and Chloe Thomas won the 200 medley relay by over five seconds, swimming a time of 1:49.51.

"Swimming fast is contagious," Bauer said. "When you start off the meet the way we did with a couple fast swims, it just kind of steamrolled from there."

Kush placed second in the very next event, the 200 freestyle, as North Penn's Nicole DiBonaventura was the only swimmer not in a Souderton suit to take first — the senior swam a nice time of 1:56.95.

After that, it was all Souderton, and a lot of Severn and Whitmire. The two seniors each won two events — Severn in the 200 IM and the 100 free, and Whitmire in the 100 fly and 100 back.

Souderton also got wins from a couple juniors - Missy Doll in the 50 free and Kush in the 500 free, and the Indians also swept the relays. Mariel Kush, Severn, Whitmire, Chloe Thomas and Missy Doll were all double winners in the relays, and Katie Curzon and Ashley Kichline — two more seniors, each contributed on a relay win.

"This is definitely the best team we've had in 15 years, and we have a lot of seniors," Bauer said. "We really wanted to get it done this year."

DiBonaventura had a solid day for the Maidens — she won the 200 free and also anchored the second-place 200 free and 400 free relays, and CB West's Colleen MacMillan took three thirds — individually in the 200 free, and as the anchor leg on the 200 free and 400 free relays.

The Bucks had a tough transition this year moving into a conference with both Souderton and North Penn, but they performed well, going 9-4 in dual meets and placed fourth in the conference championships.

"With North Penn and Souderton, it's a totally different conference — the competition is way more fierce, and it's a really cut-throat meet," MacMillan said. "But I think we did really well considering the circumstances."

Girls Swimming

Suburban One League

Continental Conference Championships

at North Penn's Rick Carroll Natatorium

Team Scoring: 1. Souderton (S) 344; 2. North Penn (NP) 299; 3. Hatboro-Horsham (HH) 181; 4. CB West (CBW) 144; 5. CB East (CBE) 142.5; 6. CB South (CBS) 129.5; 7. Pennridge (Penn) 54; 8. Quakertown (Q) 41.

200 medley relay: 1. Souderton (Mariel Kush, Angela Severn, Paige Whitmire, Chloe Thomas), 1:49.51; 2. North Penn, 1:54.68; 3. Hatboro-Horsham, 1:55.69.

200 free: 1. Nicole DiBonaventura (NP) 1:56.95; 2. Mariel Kush (S) 1:59.45; 3. Colleen MacMillan (CBW) 1:59.50.

200 IM: 1. Angela Severn (S) 2:05.84; 2. Lauren Ahrens (CBS) 2:11.90; 3. Ali Roth (CBW) 2:17.24.

50 free: 1. Missy Doll (S) 24.68; 2. Chloe Thomas (S) 25.08; 3. Sam Deana (NP) 25.33.

100 fly: 1. Paige Whitmire (S) 56.85; 2. Jan Ikeda (NP) 59.40; 3. Melissa Ross (CBS) 1:00.76.

200 free relay: 1. Souderton (Doll, Thomas, Katie Curzon, Whitmire), 1:38.98; 2. North Penn, 1:40.76; 3. CB West, 1:44.54.

100 free: 1. Severn (S) 52.50; 2. Doll (S) 53.71; 3. DiBonaventura (NP) 53.98.

500 free: 1. Kush (S) 5:17.33; 2. Melissa Ross (CBS) 5:21.68; 3. Colleen Stiles (NP) 5:22.89.

100 back: 1. Whitmire (S) 58.98; 2. Ashley Kichline (S) 1:01.98; 3. Lauren Ahrens (CBS) 1:02.31.

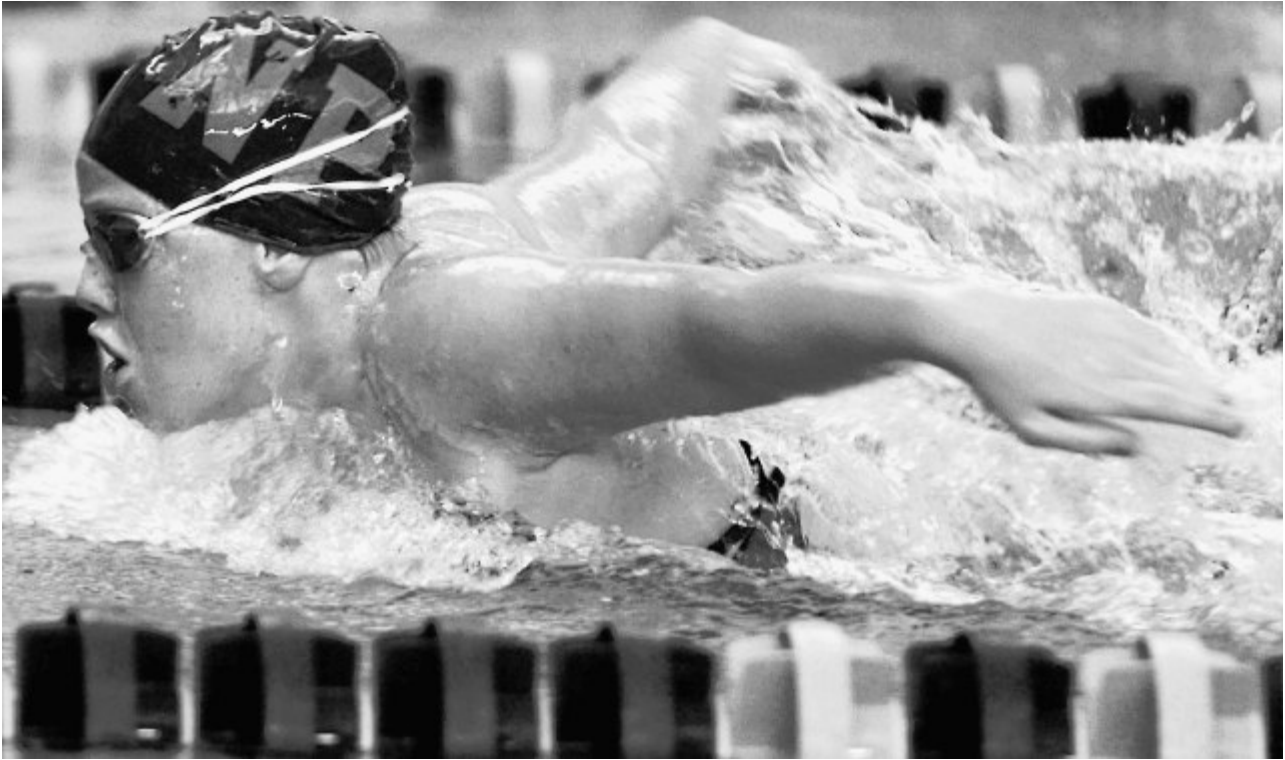
100 breast: 1. Lauren Peachey (S) 1:09.46; 2. Kathryn Viola (CBE) 1:10.22; 3. Katie Dempster (CBE) 1:10.23.

400 free relay: 1. Souderton (Doll, Kichline, Kush, Severn), 3:40.66; 2. North Penn, 3:44.15; 3. CB West, 3:46.51.



MARK C PSORAS/THE REPORTER

Souderton head coach Todd Bauer(center,leaping)along with other coaches and team members cheer on their competitors in the 500 freestyle event during the Suburban 1 League Continental Conference Swimming Championships at North Penn High School.



MARK C PSORAS/THE REPORTER

North Penn's Katie Patterson competes in the 100 yard butterfly event during the Suburban 1 League Continental Conference Swimming Championships at North Penn High School



MARK C PSORAS/THE REPORTER

Souderton's Paige Whitmire(L,1st place)and North Penn's Jan Ikeda(2nd place) recieve their medals for the 100 yard butterfly event at Saturday's SOL Continental Championships.

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