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The Intelligencer

Teams trying to build momentum

By: **Bill Keen**
The Intelligencer

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Did you ever notice how swim teams in Pennsylvania are at a major disadvantage when it comes to generating early season momentum?

Most leagues don't even get started until January because of the impending holidays, and the relay events that are quite popular in December rarely give athletes a chance to test themselves in the individual events that could win them gold, silver or bronze at the district and PIAA state meets.

That's why the Germantown Academy boys had a chance to move from No. 2 to No. 1 in our Top 5 when they won two key, early season tests in the Inter-Academic League. The wins over Episcopal Academy and especially Malvern Prep give the Patriots the kind of momentum other teams won't get until next year (think about it).

In the Suburban One League, both the Central Bucks East boys and girls have looked good, not only in their own relays, but in dual meets. Head coaches Ed Walsh of the boys team and Tom Kane of the girls have seen their charges in some key early season meets including a Suburban One League Continental Conference test against intra-district rival Central Bucks South. The Patriots' girls were pushed to the limit before pulling out a 98-88 win, while the boys coasted to a 110-76 victory.

East also had a chance to cross over and meet an SOL American Conference opponent in Wissahickon, and both East teams were victorious - the boys, 113-63, and the girls by a lopsided 124-56.

Meanwhile, Central Bucks South also went out of conference for a meet against SOL National foe Council Rock South. The Titans' boys won, 110-84, while the girls emerged with a 112-74 triumph.

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Incidentally, if anyone needs any further convincing that the SOL Continental is where the power lies this season, North Penn had an opportunity to square off against a team that has given both the Knights and Maidens a major test in the PIAA District One Class AAA championships the last several seasons - especially the Knights.

However, their battle with Upper Dublin this time around was more of a skirmish, as the Knights beat the SOL American Flying Cardinals, 111-73, while the Maidens moved to 3-0 on the young season by downing UD, 111-75.

What does all this mean? It's hard to say because of the holiday break. Yes, CB East looked good, but will the Patriots cool off before they return to the heart of the dual-meet schedule in January?

Likewise, Germantown Academy's boys. Undoubtedly, the wins over Episcopal and Malvern had them on the top of their game, but practice is not the same as competing head-to-head, and nearly two weeks of competitive inactivity takes its toll.

The one team that should benefit big time from the few meets it has had is North Penn. True, the Knights lost to La Salle, but the win over Upper Dublin sent the boys into the break in a great frame of mind, and the Maidens are 3-0 with the heart of the Continental schedule yet to come.

In other words, what happens next year should be incredibly exciting on all fronts.

Enjoy your New Year's celebration, stay safe, and join us back here again in 2010.

By the way - go Fralinger - make it eight in a row in the Mummers Parade!

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