

GIRLS SWIMMING CAPSULES

By: BILL KEEN The Intelligencer

Archbishop Wood

Coach: Charlie Stillwell (14th year)

Last year: 8-1 (7-0, PCL champions)

Key performers: Sr. Taylor Kane (distance free, breaststroke); Sr. Grace Cochrane (butterfly, individual medley); Jr. Orla Cole (backstroke); Jr. Alexandra Fitzgerald (sprint free, backstroke); Jr. Bridget McGrath (breaststroke, sprint free); Jr. Kristina Halner (distance free); So. Renata Rios (distance free, individual medley); So. Jennifer McGrath (butterfly)

The season: The Vikings have two things going for them as they prepare for the upcoming season. First, they have quality experience returning and second, they drop from class AAA to class AA. While that means a very small field of competitors in District 12, it improves the chances of sending a lot of girls to states.

Central Bucks East

Coach: Tom Kane (34th year)

Last year: 7-4 (third SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Taylor Berry (butterfly); Sr. Kati Dempster (breaststroke, individual medley); Sr. Mackenzie Hubing (backstroke, individual medley); Sr. Deven Iatarola (backstroke, sprint free); Jr. Kendall Kirsteier (butterfly); Jr. Sarah Richards (butterfly, sprint free); So. Ally Briegel (breaststroke); So. Nicole Guss (butterfly, sprint free); So. Ellie O'Brien (distance free, breaststroke); Sr. Adele Foley (diving); Jr. Kelly Kater (diving)

The season: Going into the season, the Patriots are one of the area's question mark teams. They have a nucleus of talented returning swimmers and what looks to be a promising group of new faces to provide depth, but the big unknown is whether they have quality depth. The new faces will have to step up and fill several big holes left by graduation.

Central Bucks South

Coach: Kevin Murray (sixth year)

Last year: 8-5 (fifth SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Lauren Ahrens (individual medley, sprint free, distance free); Jr. Lindsay Schmidt (diving); Jr. Kelsey Schmidt (sprint free, 200 free, butterfly); Jr. Samantha Evangelista (individual medley, butterfly, distance free); Jr. Elicia Yoffee (butterfly, sprint free); So. Stephanie Nickerson (individual medley, distance free, backstroke); So. Sydney Mrozinski (individual medley, sprint free, breaststroke)

The season: The Titans lost a lot to graduation, but the good news is they have a lot coming back. The problem will be finding the swimmers who can step in for the graduated standouts and provide valuable team points. If they can, South may be able to better last season's school record eight dual-meet wins.

Central Bucks West

Coach: Vibeke Swanson (20th year)

Last year: 8-4 (fourth SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Liz Muller (breaststroke, individual medley); Sr. Molly Fitz (backstroke); Sr. Erica Peters (backstroke, butterfly, distance free); Sr. Sarah Staudenmeier (backstroke); Jr. Abby Mowen (backstroke, butterfly, individual medley); Jr. Andie Blaser (utility); So. Jen Strohmeier (backstroke, distance free); So. Rachel Sauders (diving); So. Kylie McCool (diving)

The season: Backstroke and sprint freestyle were team strengths last season and should be again. Much of the pre-season was spent looking for individuals who can excel in the 200 free and the individual medley. Overall, the Bucks have excellent senior leadership together with a group of freshman who are eager to make an immediate impact.

Germantown Academy

Coach: Dick Shoulberg (43rd year)

Last year: 7-1 (tied 1st Inter-Academic League)

Key performers: Sr. Kacie Ciampoli (distance free, individual medley); Sr. Taylor Sneed (butterfly, backstroke); Sr. Bridget Casey (butterfly, backstroke); Sr. Sarah Aemisegger (sprint free); Sr. Angie Sawick (distance free); Sr. Rebecca Dugan (sprint free); Jr. Madeline Maher (individual medley, breaststroke)

The season: The last time the Patriots had a group of girls this talented was the 2005-2006 season, when they were the finest team in the nation. The senior class is easily the area's best and could probably win most meets by themselves. However, they should get immediate help from a strong freshman class.

Gwynedd-Mercy Academy

Coach: Heather Norman (seventh year)

Last year: 4-7

Key performers: Jr. Annalise Zaengle (breaststroke, individual medley); Jr. Rachel Tumolo (backstroke, distance free); So. Jen Lehman (sprint free); So. Emily Fesnak (butterfly); Jr. Meg Curley (distance free); So. Katie Dunphy (sprint free)

The season: You won't find many seniors on the roster, but you will find a lot of talent. Once again, sprint freestyle, the individual medley and breaststroke will be strength, as will all three relays. Last season's freshmen have a year under their belts and will be joined by a group of ninth-graders that might be just as good and could make this a team to watch.

Hatboro-Horsham

Coach: Kip Emig (20th year)

Last year: 4-9 (2-5 SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Nicole Rudnisky (backstroke); Sr. Julia Connell (backstroke, distance free); Jr. Rachel Riemenschneider (butterfly); Jr. Rachel Englehardt (sprint free); So. Liz Schmele (distance free); Jr. Abby Hitchens (breaststroke); So. Tory Adlam (breaststroke, sprint free); So. Megan Pellecchia (backstroke, sprint free)

The season: Where some teams have to struggle to find quality breaststrokers, the Hatters have an abundance of quality individuals, making this the deepest team in the area in that event. Last season's team struggled to find wins in the SOL Continental, but hopes are high that this season will be a different story.

Lansdale Catholic

Coach: Bob Birnbrauer (16th year)

Last year: 4-6 (3-4 PCL)

Key performers: Sr. Victoria Gawel (sprint free); Sr. Jessica Gidzinski (individual medley, sprint free); Jr. Katie Murphy (sprint free, backstroke); Jr. Maura Conley (breaststroke); Jr. Dana Salanik (sprint free); Jr. Julia Young (distance free); Celine Boland Bitner (individual medley, distance free, diving); Ji Hye Lee (sprint free); Nicole Marshall (sprint free, backstroke); Amanda Matylewicz (sprint free, butterfly); Mary Murphy (breaststroke, distance free)

The season: Most teams start a season just hoping to be able to fill the holes in the lineup. The Crusaders also have to worry about a new face in the District 12 AA field, as Archbishop Wood drops down from AAA. While LC hopes to contend in districts, its best hope may be maximizing the number of individuals that qualify for states.

North Penn

Coach: Matt Weiss (third year)

Last year: 10-1 (7-0, 1st SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Jan Ikeda (butterfly, individual medley); Sr. Mary Morris (sprint free); Sr. Katie Patterson (backstroke, butterfly); Sr. Lindsay Musoleno (free); Sr. Kelly Rogers (distance free); Sr. Jenn Barrett (individual medley, butterfly); Sr. Christina Dachowski (free); Sr. Mary Kate Meingossner (backstroke)

The season: Most teams eventually reach a point when they have to find a way to rebuild. The Maidens have such a quality feeder system that they simply reload. Without question, several multi-talented individuals graduated, but the freshman class looks to be just as strong as ever. The key will be how quickly they mature and start providing quality depth.

Pennridge

Coach: Ryan Griffiths (fifth year)

Last year: 5-7 (1-6 SOL Continental)

Key performers: So. Michelle Blanca (individual medley, butterfly); Jr. Alexis Detweiler (individual medley, butterfly); Sr. Megan Hahn (distance free); So. Julia Nadovich (breaststroke); So. Keni Poirier (sprint free, butterfly, distance free); Jr. Gabi Rinaldi (sprint free); So. Chelsea Weiss (sprint free)

The season: The girls on this season's team have all benefited from having their own pool in which to train and that means depth will not be a problem for this year's Rams. However, much of it will be provided by freshmen and sophomores who will have to mature quickly if the team is to find much success in the rugged SOL Continental.

Quakertown

Coach: Wendy Yons (third year)

Last year: 1-7 (0-7 SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Sarah Renn (butterfly, sprint free); Jr. Megan Renn (sprint free); Jr. Cheyenne Kressley (utility)

The season: Numbers are down this season - way down. While the girls have accepted the fact they'll all probably be swimming the maximum four events every meet, it will make it difficult, if not impossible, to improve in the rugged SOL Continental. However, it means the girls can concentrate on dropping time and qualifying for districts.

Souderton

Coach: Todd Bauer (fifth year)

Last year: 12-2 (6-1 SOL Continental)

Key performers: Sr. Chloe Thomas (sprint free); Jr. Sarah Kesack (breaststroke, individual medley); Jr. Jill Whitmire (backstroke); Jr. Ann Fadden (sprint free); So. Alyssa Santangelo (backstroke, sprint free); So. Erica Witoslawski (distance free, butterfly); So. Megan Furey (butterfly); So. Laureana Zrada (distance free); So. Bronwyn Smith (distance free)

The season: The face of the team has changed. The last three or four seasons, several multi-talented individuals provided a ton of points by excelling in several events each. This season there is strength in numbers, which means more girls will be contributing to the total each meet. The team goal is to contend in the league and districts and to be a factor at states.

Upper Moreland

Coach: Melanie Rowland (seventh year)

Last year: 1-6

Key performers: Sr. Deanna Schwartz (sprint free, butterfly); Jr. Natalee Szopo (diving); Jr. Erin Meade (breaststroke); So. Anna Hakes (individual medley); So. Paige Wenik (sprint free); Fr. Bridget Meade (utility); Fr. Amber St. Clair (utility); Fr. Sydney Szopo (diving)

The season: The Golden Bears start the season with one of the finest divers in the state in Natalee Szopo, who will be joined by little sister Sydney. However, an overall lack of depth could mean empty lanes early in the schedule. That explains why the biggest goal the team has is dropping time and qualifying individuals for districts.

William Tennent

Coach: Lisa Forlini (21st year)

Last year: 9-2 (4-2 SOL National)

Key performers: Sr. Melanie Busch (utility); So. Deanna Battis (utility); So. BJ Clune (butterfly, individual medley); Jr. Shannon Connors (freestyle); So. Amanda Crawford (diving); Jr. Bridget Dooling (backstroke, freestyle); Sr. Laura Ferry (freestyle, individual medley); Jr. Staci Schaffling (butterfly, freestyle)

The season: Every individual on the team is working hard and is looking forward to seeing whether they can match or improve on last season's record. This team will have a lot of opportunities to step up and some good swims at key moments could boost the Panthers in the standings.

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