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Sports

## H.S. SWIMMING PREVIEW: North Penn, Souderton lead area teams

Thursday, December 9, 2010

By KEV HUNTER  
Staff Writer

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Local swim teams begin their seasons this weekend, and it's another winter in which both boys and girls squads will be chasing North Penn.

The Knights and Maidens are each coming off undefeated seasons in the Suburban One League Continental Conference, and both teams — although they lost some quality individuals — are bolstered by outstanding individuals and relay squads.

The Knights were only a swim or two away from taking the district title back last year, so moving up one spot from their second-place finish from a year ago is a long-term goal for this year's team.

The Maidens would also like to build towards having a strong postseason run, and they are strengthened by some promising freshmen who should make things interesting.

Souderton Area is always a team to watch on the boys and girls side, and will challenge North Penn in the Continental. The Big Red girls should once again have some outstanding relays, and have a good sophomore class to build around. The Indians' boys squad has a state title hopeful in diver Ozzie Moyer.

Following is a team-by-team look at the area.

Lansdale Catholic

Coach: Bob Birnbrauer (16th season)

Last year's record: 1-9 overall; 1-6 in the Philadelphia Catholic League; District 12 2A Champions

Key Losses: Pat Augustine, breaststroke; Tim Mc Cann, distance freestyle; Kevin McGuriman, sprint freestyle, butterfly. Augustine and Mc Cann were District 12 champions and state qualifiers. Augustine achieved All-American recognition.

Key returners: Seniors—Steven Douglas, Tim Gillen, Tony Mack, Alex Marshall, Brian Matylewicz; Juniors— Harry Kulik and Junior, Nick Augustine.

Others to watch: Conor McCann, Dang Khoa, Tran Dylan Yurasits.

Strengths: Tony Mack (freestyle) and Alex Marshall (backstroke) were first in District 12 AA competition. Dylan Yurasits will

compete in the diving competition.

Question marks: The LC boys are small in numbers and will have to rely on the freshman to add depth and round out all important relay events.

Outlook: "The boys team goal will be to repeat as District 12 champions," Birnbrauer said.

North Penn

Coach: Brian Daly (6th season)

Assistant coaches: Sue McDonald; Beth McConnell; Todd Gibson

Last year's record: 9-2 overall; 7-0 in the Suburban One League Continental Conference (First place); Second place at the District One Championships; 11th place in Class 3A at PIAA Championships.

Key losses: Nathan Chesmar (freestyle/relays), Jack Else (freestyle/relays), Craig Hennessey (freestyle/relays), Michael Kohler (diving), Sean McDonald (freestyle/relays), Frankie Murray (diving)

Key returners: Josh Hoch (diving), Peter Kolokithias (freestyle/relays), Jacob Sisko (backstroke/freestyle/relays), Jason Deana (freestyle/ butterfly/ relays), Patrick Dunigan (Individual Medley/distance freestyle), Tomas Gimenez (freestyle, breaststroke, relays), AJ Russo (diving)

Others to watch: Eugene Feeley (freestyle), Matt Ortlieb (butterfly), Kevin Dunigan (freestyle/butterfly), Jack Morris (freestyle), Colin Kelly (freestyle), Jonathan Krail (to be determined)

Strengths: "We have a very large team which hopefully will translate to depth on our roster in all events. The guys are very enthusiastic and have been working very hard hoping to fill the voids left by last year's graduating class," Daly said.

Question marks: "With large numbers in the freshman and sophomore classes, many guys will need to learn from their experiences in December and January in order to be able contribute points when it counts most in February and March," Daly said.

Outlook: "There are some very lofty goals both individually and as a team. The Continental Conference is very tough with multiple teams vying for the top spot...It will take a total team effort to be successful," Daly said.

First Meet: Today, at home, vs. Methacton

Pennridge

Coach: Ryan Griffiths (fifth season)

Last year's record: 5-7 overall, 2-5 in the SOL Continental

Key losses: Kyle Van Leer, R.J. Phiambolis

Key returners: Charles Brawner, Jr.; Chris Bashaar, Jr.; David Zurmhul, So.; John Spehar, So.

Others to watch: Drew Hendricks, So.

Strengths: The offseason program continues to improve performance.

Question marks: Depth and some openings in certain events.

Outlook: The Rams should be a pretty competitive team in a very tough conference, and should be well represented at districts.

Souderton

Coach: Todd Bauer (5th Season)

Assistant coaches: Trisha Swanson, Bill Hence, Caity Fisher, Carleen Caldwell

Last year's record: 11-3, 2nd in Suburban

Key losses: Lee Stiles, Michael Trout, Sean Corcoran, Chris Hink, Kevin Wu, Dan Yocum, Marcus Dare

Key returners: Returning District Qualifiers are: Kody Veit (Sr. Freestyle), Greg Smith (Sr. Freestyle, Breaststroke), Michael Hay (Jr., Freestyle, Butterfly), Elliott Miller (Jr., Freestyle, Backstroke), Alex Paparella (Jr., Freestyle, Breaststroke), Ozzie Moyer (Jr., Dive), Tyler Wenzel (Jr., Dive), Matt Evers (So., Dive), Nick Wieder (So., Freestyle, Backstroke)

Others to watch: Jake Mertz (Jr., Freestyle), Stephen Hink (So. Backstroke/Freestyle), Triston Loux (Fr., Butterfly/IM), Kevin Musteraid (Fr., Freestyle), Holden Kudla (So. Dive), Scott Jorgenson (So., Freestyle), Jesse Rush (So., Butterfly), Drew Nice (Fr., Breaststroke)

Strengths: "This team should be very strong in the distance freestyle events and has strong leadership in the junior and senior classes," Bauer said.

Question marks: "The freshmen and sophomore classes are very talented yet unrefined. If they develop and continue to improve, this season could be full of excitement," Bauer said.

Outlook: "Once again we will look to be competitive in our league, qualify more people for districts, and qualify a relay and several individuals for PIAA Championships," Bauer said.

First Meet: Tuesday vs. CB East

Wissahickon

Coach: John High (first season)

Last year's record: 4-5-3

Key returners: Carl Krause, Sr.; Brandon Oruch, Sr.; Chris Chido Ortiz, Jr.

Others to watch: Tommy Ruser, Sr.; Billy McFarland, So.; Doug Bauer, So.

Strengths: A good returning nucleus.

Question marks: With a new coach sometimes comes a period of transition.

Outlook: The Trojans look to feed off their momentum from water polo season and seem to have the work ethic necessary to improve in the pool. They should be a team to watch in the SOL American.

## GIRLS

Central Bucks West

Coach: Vikye Swanson (20th season)

Last Year's Record: 8-4

Key Performers lost: Ali Roth, state swimmer, Angela Stoehr, district swimmer

Key returners: Liz Muller, Sr., breast/free/IM; Molly Fitz, Sr., back/free; Erica Peters, Sr., back/fly/distance free; Sarah Staudenmeier, Sr., back/free; Abby Mowen, Jr., back/fly/IM; Andie Blaser, Jr., utility; Jen Strohmeier, So., back/distance/free; Rachel Sauders, So., diver; Kylie McCool, So., diver.

Strengths: Backstroke and sprint freestyle.

Questions marks: 200 free and 200 IM.

Outlook: "We have a strong senior group and a lot of excited freshman who are working hard so we look for lots of time improvement through out the season," Swanson said.

Gwynedd Mercy

Coach: Heather Norman (7th season)

Assistant coach: Jill Clark

Last Year's Record: 4-7 (Fourth in the Catholic Academies League)

Key performers lost: Katie Hee, sprints; great leaders

Key returners: Annalise Zaengle, Jr., breast/200 IM; Rachel Tumolo, Jr., back/200 free; Jen Lehman, So., 100 free and 50 free; Emily Fesnak, So., 200 fly/100 fly

Others to watch: Meg Curley, Jr., distance; Katie Dunphy, So., sprint freestyle

Strengths: The Monarchs are looking good in the breast and the sprint freestyle.

Question marks: The medley relay needs to be built up a bit.

Outlook for the season: "We're real excited. We have a lot of depth this year — 10 or 12 girls that are really hard workers. I'm just excited to see where this team goes," Norman said.

First Meet: Relay Carnival at Upper Merion on Saturday

Lansdale Catholic

Coach: Bob Birnbrauer (16th season)

Last year's record: 4-6 overall; 3-4 in the Philadelphia Catholic League; second in District 12 2A.

Key Losses: Carolyn Rahmlow, freestyle.

Key returnees: Seniors: Victoria Gawel and Jessica Gidzinski. Juniors: Maura Conley, Katie Murphy, Dana Salanik and Julia Young.

Others to watch: Celine Boland Bitner, Ji Hye Lee, Nicole Marshall, Amanda Matylewicz, Mary Murphy.

Strengths: "Jess Gidzinski won the PCL Championship and District 12 (200 I.M., 100 free) and was All-State in both events. Kate Murphy, Nicole Marshall and Tori Gawel, Jess Gidzinski won the District 12 400 free relay and qualified for the state meet. Each of the foursome and Maura Conley were All-District in their individual events," Birnbrauer said.

Question marks: "The girls team is experienced and with the newcomers, hope to do well in postseason competition," Birnbrauer said.

Outlook: "The girls will be going against tougher District 12 AA competition as Archbishop Wood moves from AAA. The girls are looking to compete for the top District 12 spot as a team goal," Birnbrauer said.

North Penn

Coach: Matt Weiser (third season)

Last year's record: 10-1 overall, 7-0 and first in the SOL Continental

Key losses: Sam Deana, sprint freestyle/backstroke; Colleen Stiles, distance freestyle/backstroke; Casey O'Neill, freestyle/I.M.; Sarah Hannings, freestyle/I.M.; Shauna Hannings, diving

Key returners: Seniors—Jan Ikeda, butterfly/I.M.; Mary Morris, sprint freestyle; Katie Patterson, backstroke/butterfly, Lindsay Musoleno, freestyle; Kelly Rogers, distance freestyle; Jenn Barrett, I.M./butterfly; Christina Dachowski, freestyle; Mary Kate Meingossner, backstroke

Others to watch: Brooke Else, freestyle

Strengths: The Maidens are experienced, have good depth, and a good incoming class of freshmen.

Question marks: While the Maidens have veteran swimmers on the squad, there are also plenty of young, inexperienced freshmen joining the program this season.

Outlook: "North Penn has traditionally been extremely competitive and this season should be no different," Weiser said.

First Meet: Today, at home, vs. Methacton

Pennridge

Coach: Ryan Griffiths (fifth season)

Last year's record: 5-7, 1-6 in the SOL Continental

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

Strengths: Good numbers.

Question marks: A lot of youth and inexperience.

Outlook: The Rams should be as good if not better this winter record wise, but just how competitive they can be in the tough Continental will depend on how quickly a young nucleus of swimmers matures.

Souderton

Coach: Todd Bauer (5th season)

Assistant coaches: Trisha Swanson, Bill Hence, Caity Fisher, Carleen Caldwell

Last year's record: 12-2 overall; Second in Suburban One League Continental Conference; Second in District One Class 3A; Sixth at states, Class 3A

Key losses: Missy Doll, Mariel Kush, Molly Clement, Hannah Cross

Key returnees: Returning District Qualifiers—Chloe Thomas (Sr. Free), Sarah Kesack (Jr., Breaststroke/IM), Jill Whitmire (Jr., Backstroke), Ann Fadden (Jr., Freestyle), Alyssa Santangelo (So., Backstroke, Freestyle), Erica Witoslawski (So., Freestyle, Butterfly), Megan Furey (So. Butterfly), Laureana Zrada (So., Freestyle), Bronwyn Smith (So. Freestyle)

Others to watch: Monica Stiles (Sr., Freestyle), Haley Thomas (So., Freestyle), April Kichline (Fr. IM/Free), Paige Hoehl (Sr., Dive), Steph Grabowski (Jr., Dive)

Strengths: Chloe Thomas had the fastest 50 freestyle split in the State last year and she returns to anchor our relays. The core of this team is in the sophomore class. If they continue to develop and swim their best when their best is needed we should have a great season," Bauer said.

Question marks: "The last few seasons we have been able to rely on our most talented swimmers to win races and score valuable points. This year, we will rely on our depth and versatility to win meets," Bauer said.

Outlook: "Every year I say that no one aims for second place. That being said, we want to compete for the league title, be in the mix for a district title, and be relevant at the PIAA Championships," Bauer said.

First Meet: Tuesday vs. CB East

Wissahickon

Coach: Laurie Hug

Last Year's Record: 8-4

Key Performers lost: Whitney Walsh, Lori Jefferson

Key Returners: District Qualifiers—Juniors Carrie Johnson, Rachel Bohr, Liz McKenna; Sophomores Ali McClure and Lindsay Andersen

Others to Watch: Melissa Rudolph, Jr., breast/free/IM; Meg Berardelli, Fr., diving

Strengths: Returning 10th and 11th graders.

Weaknesses: Will miss last year's seniors who were district qualifiers, and need some current girls to step up their game.

Outlook: "We are hoping to match last year's record, qualify seven or eight girls for districts and possibly qualify a few for states," Hug said.

First Meet: at Cheltenham on Wednesday

*More swim previews will appear in this weekend's editions*

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