

Intelligencer swimming notebook: SOL championships will be decided this weekend

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Let the postseason begin.

The Suburban One League Continental Conference swimming championships are set for this weekend at two different high schools. The boys meet will be held Friday at Central Bucks South, starting at 6 p.m., while the girls will need an early wakeup call Saturday. Their meet at North Penn starts at 9 a.m.

All eight teams in the Continental are from area schools, which is why we're going to take a stab at a little prognosticating in a moment.

Unlike the split venues for the Continental, William Tennent and the National Conference boys and girls will compete at Council Rock North, while Upper Moreland's boys and girls join the rest of the American Conference schools at Upper Dublin. In each case, the girls meets will be Friday at 6 p.m., while the boys wait until Saturday — National at 9 a.m., American an hour later at 10.

The nice thing about the schedule is that all teams will have two weeks to get ready for the District One championships at La Salle University, March 4 and 5. Individuals from SOL schools who have tried all season but still not made district qualifying times after this weekend will have one last chance to try to join the field. The appropriately named "Last Chance Meet" will be held at Hatboro-Horsham's Simmons Elementary School pool at 6 p.m. Wednesday.

The winners?

Trying to guess who will win the various individual events will be a lot easier leading up to the PIAA District One championships, because the field will be set and locked in.

In the league championships, coaches frequently move their more versatile swimmers to events they don't swim at districts as they shoot for team points.

Still, my father used to say, "The Lord hates a coward," so I will bravely venture forth and offer the following predictions, hedging my bets all the way, for the Continental Conference meet.

The times are taken from various meets to illustrate what others must equal or better to win.

Ladies first

The 50 and 100-yard freestyle should be a battle between **North Penn** freshman Tara Rogers and **Souderton's** latest speed queen, senior Chloe Thomas. In the dual meet, age won out in the 50, where Thomas edged Rogers, 24.96 to 25.06. However, in the 100, Rogers won in 54.24 to a 54.60 for Thomas.

In the distance free events, North Penn's Brooke Else has a 1:58.60 in the 200, while Souderton's Emily Lyons went 5:18.14 in the 500. Don't overlook **Central Bucks South's** Lauren Ahrens in both, although she looks to be a prohibitive favorite in the individual medley, where she is the defending district champion. The question is, which ones will she swim?

In the backstroke and butterfly, Souderton's Alyssa Santangelo is my pick in the back (1:00.13) and North Penn's Jan Ikeda in the fly (57.74).

The most competitive event might be the breaststroke. Souderton's April Kichline (1:11.00), North Penn's Mary Morris (1:11.68), Julie Krout (1:11.68) and Eve Koston (1:11.96) and **Central Bucks East's** Katie Dempster (1:12.81 early season) are all in the hunt.

Gentlemen, start your engines

You think the girls were tough to scope?

In the 50 free, Riley Weber was second at districts and also second in the 100 free where **Hatboro-Horsham's** Mike Schaeffer was third. But Jason Deana of North Penn (22.22), and David Zurmuhl of **Pennridge** (22.55) are there at 50, while Peter Kolokithias of North Penn did 49.33 in the 100 and teammate Nick Poulin surprised with a 47.86 against Emmaus.

Kolokithias and Hatboro-Horsham's Ricky Sutton should battle it out in the 200 free, while the 500 is wide open; Sutton (4:54.38), North Penn's Patrick Dunigan (4:52.89) and Souderton's Kody Veit (4:51 last season at districts) are possible, along with East's Kerry Thompson (4:53.91).

East's Kevin Magee and North Penn's Matt Ortlieb are within tenths-of-a-second of each other in the fly, North Penn's Tomas Gimenez is favored in the breaststroke, but East's Kerry Thompson would be hot on his trail, Magee and CB South's Tim Ware plus Souderton's Jason Moyer are the front runners in the backstroke, while North Penn's Dunigan is my pick in the IM.

I think.

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February 16, 2011