

Sports

H.S. SWIMMING: North Penn, Souderton look like teams to beat

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By KEV HUNTER

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The North Penn and Souderton Area swim teams stand out in a conference loaded with talent and experience this winter.

The Knights and Maidens, as well as the Big Red boys and girls squads, return several well-established individuals along with some promising newcomers, and that combination is what's needed to stay afloat in the tough Suburban One League Continental Conference.

Jason Deana, a state qualifier last winter, returns for the defending District One Champion Knights while diver Ozzie Moyer will be in contention for state gold this year leading the Indians.

"Overall, this is the strongest boys team that I have had the privilege to coach," Big Red coach Todd Bauer said. "I look forward to watching them achieve their goals and hopefully improve on our finishes last year at Suburban One Championships and the District One Championships."

The Maidens, queens of the Continental last winter, hope the crown fits once again.

"They are a very young team with a lot of depth and a lot of talent returning in both the swimming and diving events," coach Matt Weiser said of his team.

Pennridge, also plenty familiar with the level of competition in the Continental, aims to continue its climb up the standings.

"This year, Pennridge is taking the next step in carving out its identity as a team," Rams coach Ryan Griffiths said. "With the loss of only two seniors on each side, several members of the team are poised for growth as key performers. The focus of this year's team is to continue the path of success we have started on over the past six seasons."

Improvement is also the theme at Lansdale Catholic.

Said coach Bob Birnbrauer: "By adding several more girls, some close dual meet losses may turn into wins."

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

Boys

CB West

Coach: Rich Reshetar (5th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 4-11

Key returners: Sam Byers, Sr., free/back; Mike Chen, Sr., free/fly; Pat Blaser, So., free/breast

Outlook: The Bucks have some veteran guys who should have strong seasons, but there are a lot of newcomers that will have to develop.

Germantown Academy

Coach: Richard Shoulberg (43rd season)

League: InterAc

Last year's record: 10-0, first in the Interac, second at Easterns

Key performers lost: Jimmy McEldrew (Notre Dame), IM, back and 500 free

Key returners: Arthur Frayler, Sr., (Pan Am team, Olympic Trials Qualifier), any event; Bryan Draganosky, Sr., (OT qualifier), 500 free, 100 breast; Nelson Glendinning, Sr., sprint free events; Adam Sjöholm, Sr., any freestyle event; Justin Tang, Sr., IM and Butterfly; Carl Dowzicky, Sr., IM and Back

Others to watch: Alex Lebed, Fr., any event

Outlook: The Patriots are particularly strong in the distance free and IM events this winter. It will be a real fight between GA and Malvern for the league title and also at Easterns. The clash with The Peddie School in late January should again be one of the best dual meets in the area.

Lansdale Catholic

Coach: Bob Birnbrauer (17th season)

League: Philadelphia Catholic League

Last year: District 12 runner-up

Key performers lost: Steve Douglas; Tim Gillen; Tony Mack; Alex Marshall; Brian Matylewicz

Key returners: Dylan Yurasits, So., diving (state qualifier); Nick Augustine, Sr., 50/500 free (state qualifier); Dang Khoa Tran, breaststroke/IM (All-District 12); Harry Kulik; Conor McCann

Others to watch: Conor Plasha; Brian Lockhart; James Kulik

Outlook: Nick Augustine should earn another trip to states in more than one event and Dylan Yurasits should gain from his freshman year to again earn the trip to states and move up in the rankings. It's a young team — short on numbers — that will set goals on postseason accomplishments.

Methacton

Coach: Dana Hazard (1st season)

League: Pioneer Athletic Conference

Last year's record: 4-3

Key returners: Eric Bai, Sr., fly; Matt Turner, Sr., distance free; Anthony Bucci, Sr., sprint free; Owen Whitman, Sr., sprint free; Connor McAnally, Sr., free; Rick Weber, Jr.; Pat Lebold, Jr.; Colin Mansfield, So.; Henry Chang, So.; Dustin Jen, So.

Others to watch: Matthew Schulz; Leon Lin; Jacob Brycki; Sean Dix; Mitchell Weber

Outlook: The Warriors have a good nucleus of swimmers and should be highly competitive in the conference.

North Penn

Coach: Brian Daly (7th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 11-0

Key returners: Jason Deana, Sr., sprint free; Tomas Gimenez, Sr., IM/ breast; Kevin Dunigan, Sr., IM/fly; Patrick Dunigan, Sr., distance free/IM; Brandon Anders, Jr., sprint free/ back; Jack Morris, Jr., free/fly; Jon Krail, breast/free; Geoffroy Gagnon, diving

Outlook: The Knights have a solid group of swimmers and divers with postseason experience, which should enable NP to once again defend its conference crown and possibly repeat as district champs.

Pennridge

Coach: Ryan Griffiths (6th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 3-9 overall and 1-6 in the conference

Key performers lost: Robbie Grasmeyer; Lucas Rogers

Key returners: Chris Bashaar, Sr.; David Zurmuhl, Jr.; Jon Spehar, Jr.

Others to watch: Andrew Koch, Jr.; D.J. Maurone, Fr.; Kyle Frerichs, Fr.

Outlook: The Rams' strength is the returning swimmers and divers. The senior and junior classes have the ability to provide strong team leadership that will define the heights of where this program can go.

The biggest question mark of the season is if the Rams have the mental and physical discipline to follow through on their six values that promote successes and turn them into tangible achievements. With a new-look roster that has several additions and subtractions from previous years, it will be interesting to see how this team comes together and raises the bar.

Souderton Area

Coach: Todd Bauer (6th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 11-3 overall and 5-2 in the conference

Key performers lost: Kody Veit, Greg Smith

Key returners: Ozzie Moyer, Sr., diving; Tyler Wenzel, Sr., diving; Alex Paparella, Sr., free/breast; Michael Hay, Sr., free; Elliott Miller, Sr., free/back; Jake Mertz, Sr. free; Nick Wieder, Jr. free/IM; Jesse Rush, Jr, fly/IM; Scott Jorgenson, Jr., free; Matt Evers, Jr., diving; Triston Loux, So., fly/IM; Kevin Musteraid, So., free

Others to watch: Cordell Armstrong, Fr., free/fly; Tim Gilbride, Sr., free; Kevin Callaghan, Jr., back/free)

Outlook: The Indians have a great mix of youth and experience and will look to the senior class for strong leadership. The diving team is without question the strongest it has ever been and will help to carry Big Red through the season. With no returning state-qualifying swimmers on the roster this year, however, the Indians will look to have several guys make their first trip up to Bucknell in March.

Wissahickon

Coach: John High (4th season)

League: Suburban One League American Conference

Last year's record: 6-6

Key performers lost: Josh An, Carl Krause, Tommy Ruser

Key returners: Chris Ortiz, Sr., 50/100 free; Adam Smith, Sr.; Greg Beyer, Jr.; John Jefferson, So.

Outlook: The Trojans have returning senior Chris Ortiz and Adam Smith leading them as captains. Ortiz has hopes of returning to the district and state championships to improve his standings from last year in the 50 and 100 free.

Returning junior Greg Beyer and sophomore John Jefferson are also hopeful in returning to the district meet and working hard to earn a spot for their relays in the state meet. The Trojans are currently preparing for their first competition at the Upper Merion Relay Carnival, an event they placed second at last season.

Girls

CB West

Coach: Vikye Swanson (21st season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 8-5

Key performers lost: Sarah Staudemeier, free/back; Molly Fitz, free/back; Erica Peters, back/distance free; Elizabeth Muller, free/breast/fly/IM; Christine Prouty, free; Michelle DiBattiste, free/breast; Jen Psculkowski, fly/free; Taylor Nolan, breast/IM

Key returners: Andie Blaser, Sr., 100 fly/sprint free; Quinn Mac Millan, So., free; Rachel Saunders, Jr., diving; Jen Strohmeier, Jr., IM/back/free; Katherine Baltes, Jr., fly/distance free; Beth Hutchings, Jr., breast; Crystal Kim, Sr., utility

Outlook: The Bucks are in a tough conference but could have some young standouts.

Germantown Academy

Coach: Richard Shoulberg (43rd year)

League: InterAc

Last year's record: 10-0, first in Interac, first at Easterns

Key performers lost: Bridget Casey (Notre Dame), fly/500 free; Kacie Ciampoli, (University of Maryland), 200/500 free, IM; Taylor Sneed (University of Pennsylvania) fly/back; Sarah Aemisegger (Villanova University), sprint freestyle

Key returners: Rachel Zilinskas, Jr. (National Junior team and OT qualifier), any event; Madeline Maher, Sr. (OT qualifier), breaststroke/IM; Meg Dollard, So., any freestyle event; Emily Erwin, So., backstroke/IM; Natalie Dowzicky, So., any event

Others to watch: Ally Acker, Fr., breaststroke/ middle distance/IM; Madison Visco, Fr., any event

Outlook: The Pats graduated six Division 1 female swimmers but the younger swimmers should be very good this winter. The meet with the The Peddie School should be one of the most exciting of the season.

Gwynedd Mercy

Coach: Heather Norman (8th season)

League: Catholic Academies League

Last year's record: 5-6

Key returners: Annalise Zaengle, Sr., IM/free/breast; Rachel Tumolo, Sr., back; Emily Fesnak, Jr., middle distance free; Meg Curley, Sr., distance

Others to watch: Kieragh McMenamin, Fr., free; Molly Riemencheider, Fr., IM

Outlook: The Monarchs are in a tough league along with defending state champion (2A) Villa Maria, but they seem to have the people necessary to be competitive in all their meets.

Lansdale Catholic

Coach: Bob Birnbrauer, (17th season)

League: Philadelphia Catholic League

Key performers lost: Jessica Gidzinski (PCL, District 12 and state qualifier for four years at LC); Victoria Gawel (district and state

qualifier)

Key returners: Kathrine Murphy, Sr.; Maura Conley, Sr.; Dana Salanik, Sr.; Julie Young, Sr.; Kate Murphy, relays; Nicole Marshall, Jr., All-District 12; Amanda Matylewicz, So., distance; Mary Murphy, any event

Others to watch: Carly Gill, So., freestyle; Erin Noonan, So., swimming/diving; Sabrini Antoni, Fr.; Mary Cate Coyle, Fr.; Erin Edling, Fr.; Letizia Iervolino, Fr.; Mary Anne Wietecha, Fr.

Outlook: There is senior leadership with district and state experience to lead the younger swimmers. It is a young team that needs to set goals and achieve them.

North Penn

Coach: Matt Weiser (4th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 11-0 overall and 7-0 in the conference

Key performers lost: Jan Ikeda; Mary Morris; Katie Patterson

Key returners: Brooke Else, Sr., freestyle/butterfly; Val Stearns, Sr., freestyle; Anna Janoff, Sr., freestyle; Ashley Liss, Sr., diving; Erica Elias, Sr., diving; Heather Paolone, Sr., diving; Charlee Branson, Sr., diving

Others to watch: Tara Rogers, So., freestyle; Eve Kosten, So.

Pennridge

Coach: Ryan Griffiths (6th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 4-8 overall and 1-6 in the conference

Key performers lost: Keni Poirier; Megan Hahn

Key returners: Alexis Detweiler, Sr.; Chelsea Weiss, Jr.; Julia Nadovich, Jr.; Katie Green, Jr.; Nikki Laderer, Jr.

Others to watch: Kylee Smith, Jr.; Jackie Cios, So.; Jen Grasmeyer, So.; Keri Salanik, Fr.; Carly Files, Jr.; Amanda Crouthamel, Jr.

Souderton

Coach: Todd Bauer (5th season)

League: Suburban One League Continental Conference

Last year's record: 12-2 overall and 6-1 in the conference

Key performers lost: Chloe Thomas, Monica Stiles

Key returners: Sarah Kesack, Sr., breast/IM; Jill Whitmire, Sr. back/free; Ann Fadden, Sr., free; Alyssa Santangelo, Jr., back/free; Megan Furey, Jr., fly/IM; Erica Witoslawski, Jr., free/IM; Laureana Zrada, Jr., free; Bronwyn Smith, Jr., free; April Kichline, So., free/breast; Gabriella Pagano, So., fly

Others to watch: Kaitlyn Roberts, Jr., breast; Jess Wimmer, Jr. breast; Lauren Billy, Fr., diving; Ricki Lee, Hodges, Fr., breast/free

Wissahickon

Coach: Laurie Hug (3rd season)

League: Suburban One League American Conference

Last year's record: 6-5 overall and 5-1 in the conference

Key performers lost: Katie High (free); Lauren Mitchell (back)

Key returners: Liz McKenna, Sr., back/free); Rachel Bohr, Sr., sprint free; Carrie Johnson, Sr., IM/fly; Melissa Rudolph, Sr., distance free/breast/ IM; Ali McClure, Jr., fly/ free; Lindsay Anderson, Jr., fly/distance free; Rose Seabrooke, Jr., free; Jess Quesenberry, Jr., breast; Meg Berardelli, So., diving

Others to watch: Dani Brouse, Jr., sprint free; Jen Xu, Jr., IM

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