

NP's Deana a "go" for districts

By **Bill Keen** Staff writer | Posted: Thursday, March 1, 2012 12:00 am

TOWAMENCIN — Jason Deana is breathing again.

His opponents are starting to sweat.

The North Penn senior was the member of the boys swimming team who cut his foot at practice when a section of the wall on the movable bulkhead in the pool at Rick Carroll Natatorium separated early in February. The injury required stitches and forced him to miss the regular-season finales against Central Bucks East and Emmaus and the Suburban One League Continental Conference meet.

He remained under a doctor's care and, until he was given clearance to resume practice and could test the foot, nobody knew for certain if he would be able to compete in the District One Class AAA championships.

Wednesday, Knights coach Bryan Daly revealed Deana will be very ready to compete.

"Jason got back in the water a little over a week ago and has been slowly progressing, testing and building strength in the foot to the point where he feels he can push off and be where he needs to be to be competitive," Daly said.

"The day of the injury, we were not 100 percent sure what was going to happen. All we knew for certain was the doctors checked him and said he was definitely out of the water for at least two weeks.

"Beyond that, it was a matter of how much time was left before districts and whether he would be able to be ready to go."

Despite his own doubts, Deana sounded confident after watching the league meet. It was clear he felt he would not miss his shot at district and possibly state honors.

"The first few days after it happened, I literally wasn't allowed to do anything; all I could do was sit and walk on crutches," said Deana, who was crutchless, but walking with a limp as the Knights still won the Continental title.

"When the team did so well, it just helped me because it showed they can win this meet without me, but it also fired me up for districts because (my frustration) has been building up.

"A lot of swimmers feel a (speed) suit will help them the most, or their taper will help them the most, but I definitely think for me this time around, it will be all that built-up frustration and anger that will help me do the best I can at districts and states."

It means Haverford's Shane Ryan had better be ready in Thursday's eighth and fastest heat of the 50-yard freestyle. Ryan is top seed at 20.73 seconds and will be in Lane 3 at La Salle University's Kirk Pool. With a seeding time of 21.25, Deana will be in Lane 4.

The last of 12 heats in for Friday's 100 free will feature four area swimmers. North Penn's Jack Morris, CB East's Riley Weber and Pennridge's David Zurmuhl will be joined by Upper Dublin's second-seeded Bobby Bantley and Wissahickon's Chris Chiodo Ortiz. All will be gunning for the fastest guy in Lane 3.

Deana's seed time is 46.85, but it's a safe bet adrenaline alone will make him go a lot faster.

He has already conquered his biggest opponent — the fear that he might be watching from the stands.