

What does it mean to be a Knight?

By Bill Keen Staff writer | Posted: Thursday, December 29, 2011 12:00 am

When I was lad attending Hulmeville Elementary School in the Neshaminy School District, I dreamed of one day playing for the high school football team because the Redskins were, hands down, the best in the area and one of the best in the state.

I wasn't good enough but, if I had been, it would have taken an act of Congress to get me to willingly take a seat on the bench after cracking the starting lineup.

That's exactly what it's like today for boys in the **North Penn** School District who aspire to one day be a member of the Knights' swimming team. North Penn's aquatic dynasty has lasted longer than some of those in ancient China, so imagine what goes through the mind of a freshman when head coach Brian Daly tells him he's going to swim a given event in a dual meet.

It means all his hard work and dedication to his sport has paid off. He has earned the right to follow in the wake of countless others who made the program's dynasty status possible.

When you look at it that way, it's easy to see why one North Penn freshman wasn't going to let a possible broken hand keep him out of the lineup one week ago today for the Knights' key nonleague meet against Upper Dublin.

"We had a guy hurt his hand during warmups and we just sent him for X-rays," said Daly *after* the Knights' 102-84 win over the Flying Cardinals. "Liam Kelly has lot of talent and a lot of potential, and we said we had to pull him out of the meet because it's not worth it.

"He said, 'No, there's no way you're taking me out of the meet; I earned the spots,' so we taped (his hand) and he iced between events. He swam all four events and that kind of tenacity, that kind of toughness, was just awesome to see."

Kelly, whose older brother, Colin, qualified for districts in the 100 yard breaststroke when he knocked about three seconds off his previous best time, helped the Knights' "B" team finish third in both the medley and 200-yard freestyle relays.

He also swam the 100 free and the backstroke and only then did he agree to go with his parents to the hospital.

Several days later, the verdict was in. The luck of the Irish was with the ninth-grader, whose injury was diagnosed as a sprain. Daly said the hand was wrapped in an elastic bandage and, after a few days of dry land training on the stationary bike, Kelly would be able to get back in the pool.

That's what it means to be a member of North Penn's boys' swimming team.

Happy New Year

OK, so the wish for good tidings in the new year is a few days early but, when next we meet, the Mummers will have strutted up Broad Street, the ball will have dropped in Times Square and the meat of the 2011-2012 season will be upon us.

One of the features of our annual preseason preview was five meets fans should mark on their calendars. To that list you can add another boys meet; on Friday the 13th, **Hatboro-Horsham** will visit Upper Dublin.

In fact, don't just mark it on the calendar, circle it in red, because all the signs point to a battle that could go right down to the final event.

Both teams have already met North Penn, and the results were amazingly similar. While the Knights beat Upper Dublin, 102-84, they topped Hatboro-Horsham, 100-84.

Oh yes. Mark it down and don't miss it. It says here it's going to be a first-class donnybrook.

Meet to watch

Before Hatboro-Horsham can think about Upper Dublin, it has to contend with Central Bucks East. The Hatters and Patriots will get together for their Suburban One League Continental Conference meet Wednesday at East starting at 3:30 p.m.