

Deana swims to gold

By Karen Sangillo Staff writer | Posted: Thursday, March 15, 2012 10:30 pm

LEWISBURG — Jason Deana ended his high school career the way most athletes can only hope to. With a state championship.

The North Penn senior won the 100-yard freestyle with his time of 45.17 at Thursday's PIAA Class AAA championships, held at Bucknell University's Kinney Natatorium.

He was seeded second after the preliminaries to Lucas Bureau of Greater Latrobe. Bureau swam a 45.26 in the morning to Deana's 45.29.

"I know everyone was going to drop time at finals so I knew I had to drop time, too," said Deana, who will swim at North Carolina State next year. "The last lap I was feeling tired and I thought I saw (Bureau) pass me so I just put my head down and went for it.

"I couldn't ask for a better way to finish my high school career. It was a great meet for our team. Everyone swam well."

The Knights finished sixth in team scoring with 107 points. La Salle won the team title with 323.50.

Riley Weber of Central Bucks East took third in the 100 freestyle (45.62).

"I was hoping for a top three finish but whether I'd get it or not was debatable," said Weber, a senior who will swim next year at Navy. "It was a really tight race the entire time and knowing that it would be going into it was really exciting.

"It's pretty emotional that it's over now but at the same time I'm really excited to finish this way. Taking fourth in the 50 and going faster than I expected to in that gave me confidence and this is my best-ever finish at states."

William Tennent senior Connor Forlini's time of 4:34.99 earned him sixth place in the 500 freestyle.

"Getting a state medal was a goal of mine for a long time," said the West Chester-bound Forlini, who lowered his own school record with the time. "Over the last three years and even Wednesday I've made consolations but I never got to the finals.

"To make the finals in my best event in high school is great. It's a great accomplishment for me. It's all I could ask for and it's a great way for me to finish."

Souderton's 400 freestyle relay of Michael Hay, Elliott Miller, Triston Loux and Kevin Mustersait finished 10th (3:10.89).

For the girls, North Penn's 400 freestyle relay of Brooke Else, Olivia DiStefano, Eve Kosten and Tara Rogers took fifth (3:32.89). The Maidens were 12th in team scoring with 61 points. Wilson won the team competition (231).

Souderton's 400 freestyle relay of Alyssa Santangelo, Ann Fadden, Erica Witoslawski and Laureana Zrada won the consolation final, ending up ninth overall (3:33.57).

Zrada was 12th in the 500 freestyle (5:06.15) and Santangelo was 15th in the 100 backstroke (58.22).

Andie Blaser of Central Bucks West was 11th in the 100 freestyle (52.65).

Hannah Wittman of Central Bucks East took 11th in the 100 breaststroke (1:05.91).

Thursday's action concluded the Class AAA competition. The meet continues with Class AA on Friday and Saturday.