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Locals hope to dive into states

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Central Bucks West diver Rachel Saunders twists through the air as she competes during the SOL Continental Conference Diving Championships at Central Bucks South High School on Wednesday February 13, 2013. Photo by Mark C Psoras\The Reporter

Central Bucks West's Rachel Saunders aims for her fourth trip to states while North Penn junior **Geoffroy Gagnon** is hungry for his first, as the two locals get set for the District One Diving Championships Friday and Saturday at Upper Dublin High School.

The Class 2A and 3A boys event will be held this evening at 5:30 p.m. and then the girls 2A and 3A competition gets started at 10:30 Saturday morning.

Saunders, a senior, has distinguished herself every year at the district championships, placing fifth as a freshman, seventh as a sophomore and then last year she took home the silver medal. She will get a rematch with Lower Merion's Carolyn Howard, who earned the gold medal last winter as a freshman.

Saunders is coming off her first Suburban One League Continental Conference title, as she set a pool record last week at Central Bucks South with an impressive score of 444.80. Her closest competition was North Penn's **Madison Tanis**, who will also be taking the board tonight at Upper Dublin.

Others to watch include the Maidens' **Marie Yacopino**, Saunders' teammate at West, Kelly Magri, Hatboro-Horsham's Gabrielle Rudnitsky, and Pennridge's Katie Green and Nicky Laderer.

Gagnon, like Saunders, is looking to build upon the success he had at the conference championships, as the Knights' junior earned the Continental crown last week at South by compiling a score of 434.85.

It should be a tough battle between he and Souderton Area's Matt Evers. At SOL's, Gagnon edged Evers by 10 points to take top honors. Evers is hoping for a second consecutive trip to Bucknell.

The local pair will also have the two-time defending champion to contend with, as William Tennent's Ian Forlini returns after capturing the district gold as a freshman and as a sophomore.

Other standouts in the boys event should include Matt McCool of CB West, Zeke Flandro of Souderton, **Josh Stearsman** of North Penn and Jess Gross of Pennridge.

Along with individual success, all of the divers hope to give their respective squads a head start in the team scoring. The swimming portion of districts will be held Thursday and Friday down at La Salle University.

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