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## SWIMMING: North Penn boys, girls should be fast off the blocks

By [KEV HUNTER](#)  
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Area swimming and diving teams are back in the water, and for several individuals as well as teams, momentum from last year's success is carrying them right into the pool.

"Coming off a season that was the most successful in school history," Pennridge coach Ryan Griffiths said, "with several dozen school and pool records broken, our first ever district champion, and our largest state championship qualifying contingent ever, this year's team looks to continue that progression towards consistent excellence."

Led by sophomore Hannah Zurmuhl, the reigning District One champion in the 50 freestyle, the Rams will be a team striving for more postseason success. Pennridge will once again compete in the tough Suburban One League Continental Conference, along with Central Bucks West.



Souderton's Triston Loux competes in the 200 Individual Medley event against Central Bucks West during their meet at Souderton Area High School on Jan. 10, 2013. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

"Last year, we were a small but mighty team and this will again carry over," Bucks girls coach Vikye Swanson said. "We are small in numbers but have a lot of heart and desire to do well."

The North Penn boys and girls squads are out to defend their Continental crowns and will take on West, Pennridge and Souderton Area as they try to do so.

The Maidens return the bulk of their roster that powered them to a third-place finish in the state last March.

"We're still a deep team in the SOL and look to compete for another league and District One title," coach Matt Weiser said. "After a strong showing at PIAA's last year, we're looking to continue to improve."



North Penn swimmers Tara Rogers (top) congratulates teammate Eve Kosten after their finish in a Class AAA Girls 200 Yard Medley Relay event during the PIAA District 1 Swimming Championships at La Salle University on Feb. 28, 2013. Photo by Mark C Psoras/The Reporter (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

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Lansdale Catholic returns a roster loaded with District 12 championship experience while Gwynedd Mercy Academy should be a force in the Catholic Academies League.

"We have a really positive feeling going into the season," Monarchs coach Heather Norman said. "We have dedicated girls and we should be stronger league-wise. Villa Maria, Nazareth and Mount St. Joe's are all very strong teams in our league."

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

### Boys

#### Central Bucks West

**Coach:** Rich Reshetar (7th season)

**Last year's record:** 3-11

**Key performers lost:** Jackson Butkus

**Key returners:** Pat Blaser, Sr., breast; Henry Mackensen, Jr., fly; Andrew Evans, Jr., utility

**Others to watch:** Aaron Place, Sr., utility; Winston Colburn, Sr., free; Andrew Bailey, Sr., fly; Matt Schnell, Sr., free

**Strengths:** Experience

**Question marks:** Looking for the freshmen to make a large impact quickly to add to the team's depth

**Coach Reshetar says:** "It's the same team as last year, only larger, faster and stronger."



Gwynedd Mercy swimmer Allie Szekeley outdistances competitors in a Class AA Girls 200 Yard Individual Medley event during the PIAA District 1 Swimming Championships at La Salle University on Feb. 28, 2013. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

## Lansdale Catholic

**Coach:** Bob Bimbrauer (18th season)

**Last year's record:** 0-9 overall and 0-6 in the Philadelphia Catholic League

**Key performers lost:** Conor Plasha

**Key returners:** Conor McCann, Sr., distance free; Dang Khoa Tran, Sr., breast/IM/sprint/free; Dylan Yurasits, Sr., diving/sprint/sprint free; Steve Bedrossian, Jr., back/sprint free; Brian Lockhart, Jr., Jr., fly/back/sprint free; James Kulik, Jr., distance free; Christian Poulsen, Jr., sprint free; Garhett Moore, So., middle free



North Penn diver Marie Yacopino arcs in the air during the Maidens' meet against Hatboro-Horsham at North Penn High School on Jan. 29, 2013. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

**Strengths:** All returners are district qualifiers from last year

**Question marks:** Overall depth and thin in some events

## North Penn

**Coach:** Jeff Faikish (2nd season)

**Last year's record:** 10-1 overall, 7-0 in the SOL Continental, District One Class AAA Runner-up

**Key returners:** Greg Neidlinger, Sr., back; Aaron Sisko, Sr., free; Kevin Killion, Sr., back; Geoffroy Gagnon, Sr., diving; Jacob Schellinger, Sr., free; Jon Krail, Sr., free; Thanas Kountroubis, Jr., free/IM; Liam Kelly, Jr., free; Brett Else, Jr., free

**Outlook:** The Knights are an extremely deep and large team looking to repeat as conference champs. With few weaknesses, NP is poised to be strong contenders at the District One Class AAA Championships.



North Penn diver Geoffrey Gagnon twists through the air as he competes against Pennridge during the teams' meet at North Penn High School on Jan. 3, 2013. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

## Pennridge

**Coach:** Ryan Griffiths (8th season)

**Last season's record:** 1-6 in the SOL Continental

**Key performers lost:** David Zurmuhi (Cornell University); Jon Spehar (Washington & Jefferson University)

**Key returners:** Max Coulter, Jr., breast/IM; Kyle Frerichs, Jr., diving/middle distance; D.J. Maurone, Jr., back/IM; Eric Jordan, So., fly

**Coach Griffiths says:** "With a combined roster size of 50 athletes, we only have six seniors - all female. We will be expecting our underclassmen to carry the load this season. Our freshman and sophomore learning curve is steep, but look for leaders to emerge from these ranks. With an influx of bodies from our varsity water polo programs, we will be spending time learning how to fit these athletes into the swimming and diving line up puzzle."

## Souderton Area

**Coach:** Caitlin Warren (2nd season)

**Last year's record:** 6-4 overall, 6-1 in the SOL Continental

**Key performers lost:** Nick Wieder, Jesse Rush, Scott Jorgensen, P.J. Ryan, Adam Kierstan, Matt Evers

**Key returners:** Triston Loux, Sr., utility; Kevin Musterait, Sr., sprint/free; Matt Holcombe, Jr., all-around; Ryan Kierstan, Jr., sprint/free; Lucas Gianinni, Jr., breast; Cordell Armstrong, Jr., sprint/free; Brendon Loux, So., all-around; Danny Trout, So., back; Ryan Witoslawski, So., breast; Zeke Flandro, So., diving

**Others to watch:** Cristian Musterait, Fr.; Andrew Bozek, Fr.; Evan Bozek, Fr.; Nick Scott, Fr.

## Girls

### Central Bucks West

**Coach:** Vikye Swanson (23rd season)

**Last season's record:** 9-4 overall, 3-4 in the SOL Continental

**Key performers lost:** Rachel Saunders, Katherine Baltes, Jen Strohmeyer

**Key returners:** Quinn MacMillan, Sr., freestyle; Cara Mergner, Sr., diving; Kelly Mulligan, Sr., distance free/fly; Isabelle Wingert, Sr., back/IM; Meg Baltes, Jr., distance free/fly; Maddie Seiden, Jr., distance free/back; Kelly Magri, Jr., diving;

Hannah Blaser, So., IM/breast; Collette Strong; So., IM/back; Paige Kramar; So., fly/back/breast

**Coach Swanson says:** "Everyone is striving to improve their times from last season. Hopefully our small numbers will not hurt us too much."

## Gwynedd Mercy Academy

**Coach:** Heather Norman (10th season)

**League:** Catholic Academies League

**Key performers lost:** Emily Fesnak

**Key returners:** Allie Szekely, So.; Kieragh McMenamin, Jr.; Molly Riemenschneider, Jr.; Mary Kate Curley, Jr.; Katie Cassidy, Sr.; Leah Zaengle, Sr.; Claire Lacon, Sr.; Jamie Dalecki, Sr.

**Others to watch:** Emily Gredor, Fr.; Alyssa Gesek, Fr.; Steph Szekely, Fr.

**Strengths:** Distance/IM, added depth

**Question marks:** Sprints

## Lansdale Catholic

**Coach:** Bob Birnbrauer (18th season)

**Last year's record:** 6-6 overall, 3-4 in the PCL

**Key performers lost:** Nicole Marshall

**Key returners:** Amanda Matylewicz, Sr., distance; Mary Murphy, Sr., utility; MaryCate Coyle, Jr., middle free; Maryanne Wietecha, Jr., fly/sprint free; Cassidy Fries, So., breast/IM; Maura Maxwell, So., distance free

**Strengths:** Good combination of returning district medalists along with impressive newcomers that should strengthen the relays

**Question marks:** Depth

## North Penn

**Coach:** Matt Weiser (6th season)

**Last year's record:** 11-0 overall, 7-0 in the SOL Continental, District One Class AAA Champ; Third at PIAA Class AAA States

**Key returners:** Julie Krout, Sr., distance/free; Kelly Fellmeth, Sr., free; Tara Rogers, Sr., free; Kat Perkins, Sr., free/back; Eve Kosten, Sr., free; Emily Dunigan, Sr., back; Olivia DiStefano, Jr., free/back; Marie Yacopino, So., diving; Erin O'Neill, So., breast

## Pennridge

**Coach:** Ryan Griffiths (8th season)

**Last year's record:** 2-5 in the SOL Continental

**Key performers lost:** Chelsea Weiss; Michelle Blanca; Kristen Shema; Katie Green (University of Scranton)

**Key returners:** Hannah Zurmuhl, So., sprint free, District One Class AAA champion in 50 free; Brittany Weiss, So., breast/IM; Nikki Laderer, Sr., diving;

**Coach Griffiths says:** "With a combined roster size of 50 athletes, we only have six seniors - all female. We will be expecting our underclassmen to carry the load this season. Our freshman and sophomore learning curve is steep, but look for leaders to emerge from these ranks. With an influx of bodies from our varsity water polo programs, we will be spending time learning how to fit these athletes into the swimming and diving lineup puzzle."

## Souderton Area

**Coach:** Caitlin Warren (2nd season)

**Last year's record:** 5-5 overall, 4-3 in the SOL Continental

**Key performers lost:** Alyssa Santangelo, Megan Furey, Laureana Zrada, Jess Wimmer, Bronwyn Smith

**Key returners:** Gabriella Pagano, Sr., fly; April Kichline, Sr., sprint/free; Kayla Rush, Sr., utility; Rickilee Hodges, Jr., sprint free/breast; Shannon Paparella, Jr., free; Sarah Hershey, Jr., distance; Michaela Pagano, Jr., sprint free

**Others to watch:** Amber Rogers, So.; Ariana Crossgrove, So.; Lauren Harkins, So.; Emily Hodges, Fr.; Alison Kurlak, Fr.

**Strengths:** An abundance of young swimmers

**Question marks:** With few state qualifiers returning, the goal is to increase numbers

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