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BOYS SWIMMING: North Penn ties for 4th at Wilson Relays

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For The Reporter

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SPRING TOWNSHIP — With the exception of the PIAA Class AAA Swim Championships, it's hard to imagine any other boys meet in the state having a more talent-laden lineup than Saturday's Wilson Relays.

Five of the 12 teams competing are favorites to win district titles this season — Hershey (District 3), La Salle (District 12), Emmaus (District 11), Wyoming Valley West (District 2) and Upper Dublin (District 1). The lineup also features perennially strong programs such as State College, York Suburban, North Penn, Cedar Crest and host Wilson.

Upper Dublin and La Salle had strong performances at Saturday's 38th annual staging of the event at Wilson West Lawn High — but not strong enough to finish ahead of powerful Hershey High. The Trojans placed first with 284 followed by La Salle (252), Upper Dublin (224). North Penn and Emmaus tied for fourth place with 204 points apiece.

One of Upper Dublin's best showings came in the 800-yard (4x200) freestyle relay. The team of Michael Jensen, Chris Devlin, Eric Jensen and Bobby Bantley took first with a meet record time of 7:03.39. The old record was 7:08.77 set by Emmaus in 2012.

“With the Jensen brothers and Chris Devlin, we're really deep in the 200 free,” said Bantley, a senior. “We want to make an impression at this meet. La Salle and Hershey are two of the best teams in the state and we want to show we belong right up there with them.

“We want to make a name for ourselves today. In the 800 free relay, we didn't really look at the record. We just wanted to do what we had to do to win. But, I'm not surprised we got the record because we've been doing a lot of hard training.”

The Cardinals also were second in the 200 backstroke relay when Joe Starosta, Eric Jensen, Devlin and Bantley hooked up for a time of 1:38.82 and second in the 400 free relay with Eric Jensen, Devlin, Flynn and Bantley at 3:12.98.

Upper Dublin's showed its depth by placing third in the 200 medley relay at 1:38.98 with the foursome of Cooper Tollen, Arthur Yang and Ian Flynn, third in the 400 IM relay at 3:45.11 with the unit of Flynn, Devlin, Jensen and Jensen and third in the 200 butterfly relay with the team of Jake Easton, Mike Jensen, Yang and Tollen.

La Salle also made some changes to the list of meet records. The Little Explorers set a new standard in the 200 medley relay when Joe Maginnis, Mike McBryan, Greg Rogers and Brendan Koch clocked a 1:36.06. The old meet record was 1:35.37 set by Wilson in 2010.

In the 200 butterfly relay, the La Salle boys erased the previous record of 1:33.12 — a record they set a year ago. The new record time of 1:31.67 was logged by Maginnis, Rogers, Greg Bracato and Sean Regan.

“We had our eye on the meet record,” said Maginnis. “All of us have been regularly doing 52’s in season (in the 100-yard butterfly). So, it was a pretty good race for us today.”

The Little Explorers also won the 400 IM relay at 3:36.77 with the quartet of Evan Holder, Vince Everman, Regan and McBryan and the 200 breaststroke relay at 1:52.40 with the team of Koch, McPeak, Nick Stachel and McBryan.

“That was a great time in the 400 IM relay,” said Regan. “We’ve been looking to do really well at this meet. In the IM relay, we were just looking for the win.”

LaSalle took second in the 200 freestyle relay at 1:27.84 with the foursome of Brocato, Stachel, Kyle McElwee and Koch, second in the 800 free relay at 7:09.15 with the team of Colin Happ, Holder, Egan and McElwee and second in the Grade 9-10 200 free relay at 1:34.84 with the quartet of Harrison Schultz, Joe Vizza, Luke Chadwick and Tom Rogers.

North Penn’s best finishes were second in the Grade 9-10 200 medley relay (1:42.85), third in the 200 free relay (1:30.25), third in the Grade 9-10 200 free relay (1:36.51) and third in the 800 free relay (7:13.67).

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