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BOYS SWIMMING: North Penn begins postseason by winning SOL Continental

By KEV HUNTER

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TOWAMENCIN — It's the most exciting time of the season, the most anticipated time of the season.

And once again, it seems to be North Penn's time of the season.

The Knights' talent and depth stretched across all 11 events Saturday at the Suburban One League Continental Conference Championships, as North Penn swam to a convincing team win to defend its conference crown.

Competing against a stellar field that set four pool records, including two by Souderton Area's Kevin Musteraite, the Knights were able to put together a tremendous collective effort and race to victory at the Rick Carroll Natatorium.



North Penn swimmer Corey Smith competes in a 200-yard individual medley event during the Suburban One League Continental Conference Boys Swimming Championships at North Penn High School on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014 (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)



Souderton's Triston Loux (bottom left) and Hatboro-Horsham's Michael Thomas do the backstroke as they compete in the 200 yard individual medley event during the Suburban One League Continental Conference Boys Swimming Championships at North Penn High School on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014 (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

"It all depends on how hard you work at practice. The kids that put in the effort — those are the ones that have the great end-of-the-season races," said the Knights' Thanas Kountroubis, who praised the performance of his teammates. "The harder you work and the more effort you put into it and the more you want to do great at the end of the season, then the better you're gonna do. This is the best time of the season. You feel great — you don't feel like you're gonna sink."

Well-rested and beginning to peak at just the right time, the Knights placed in the top three in all but one event and in fact went 1-2-3 in the 200-yard freestyle.

Following the Knights' win in the 200 medley relay to get things started, Kountroubis touched first in the 200 free with a time of 1 minute, 44.86 seconds, with teammate Brett Else and Mike Kern earning the silver and bronze.

"They train with me every day and we always try to push each other to our limits," Kountroubis said. "Today was the first opportunity we had to get out there and race in front of a big crowd, and it's a good feeling. You're in the zone and everyone's

cheering you on."

Kountroubis went on to win the 500 free, with Kern earning the silver. The Knights also touched first in the 200 free relay and got a gold from Jonathan Krail in the 100 breast as part of an impressive showing.

"It was awesome. It was a fun time," Knights coach Jeff Faikish said of the meet. "With the way this winter's been with the weather, you don't know what to expect. You want the kids to swim fast at leagues but you don't want to have them swim too fast. We had some kids get some automatic district cuts and consideration times and that's the goal of this meet, so we're pretty happy with how it went down today."

CB West's Henry Mackensen earned bronze in the 100 fly with a district-qualifying time of 54.21 while Pennridge's Eric Jordan swam to a fifth-place finish in the 100 fly, with a district-consideration time of 56.84.



Souderton's Triston Loux (center right), Hatboro-Horsham's Michael Thomas (left) and competitors launch for a 200 yard individual medley event during the Suburban One League Continental Conference Boys Swimming Championships at North Penn High School on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014 (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)



North Penn swimmer Corey Smith competes in a 200 yard individual medley event during the Suburban One League Continental Conference Boys Swimming Championships at North Penn High School on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

Musteraite's name will now keep popping up on the North Penn record board, as his times of 21.13 in the 50 free and 46.48 in the 100 free replaced the previous records set by North Penn grad Jason Deana (North Carolina State).

"I tried to do it last time (when we raced North Penn here) but didn't quite make it, but with more training I definitely got better," Musteraite said. "Definitely looking forward to districts."

The Continental Conference Girls Championship will be at CB South on Sunday, beginning at 1 p.m.

Boys Swimming

Suburban One League Continental Conference

Championships

At The Rick Carroll Natatorium

200 medley relay: 1. North Penn (Greg Neidlinger, Jonathan Krail, Jacob Schellinger, Shane Hennessey), 1:39.49; 2. Souderton, 1:42.19; 3. Central Bucks South, 1:42.32

200 freestyle: 1. Thanas Kountroubis (NP) 1:44.86; 2. Brett Else (NP) 1:46.06; 3. Mike Kern (NP) 1:46.71

200 IM: 1. Michael Thomas (HH) 1:52.69 (pool record; previous: 1:53.60, C. Devlin); 2. Triston Loux (S) 1:59.92; 3. Corey Smith (NP) 2:00.07

50 free: 1. Kevin Musterait (S) 21.13 (pool record; previous: 21.25, Jason Deana, North Penn); 2. Andrew Zhugayevich (CBE) 21.90; 3. Liam Kelly (NP) 22.28

Diving (Wednesday): 1. Geoffroy Gagnon (NP) 464.75; 2. Quinn Mitchell (NP) 429.65; 3. Nash Nickerson (CBS) 414.45

100 butterfly: 1. Triston Loux (S) 52.72; 2. Brendon Loux (S) 54.05; 3. Henry Mackensen (CBW) 54.21

200 free relay: 1. North Penn (Brett Else, Greg Neidlinger, Thanas Kountroubis, Liam Kelly), 1:28.94; 2. Hatboro-Horsham, 1:29.76; 3. Souderton, 1:30.14

100 freestyle: 1. Kevin Musterait (S) 46.48 (pool record; previous: 46.85, Deana, NP, 2012); 2. Andrew Zhugayevich (CBE) 47.98; 3. Brett Else (NP) 49.08

500 freestyle: 1. Kountroubis (NP) 4:46.74; 2. Mike Kern (NP) 4:47.85; 3. Nick Radziul (CBS) 4:48.72

100 backstroke: 1. Michael Thomas (HH) 50.71 (pool record; previous: 51.89, E. Jensen, 2013); 2. Corey Smith (NP) 53.18; 3. Greg Neidlinger (NP) 53.21

100 breaststroke: 1. Jonathan Krail (NP) 1:00.77; 2. Ryan Witoslawski (S) 1:01.23; 3. Nick Dilemma (CBE) 1:01.81

400 free relay: 1. Souderton

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North Penn swimmers (from left) Mike Kern, Thanas Kountroubis, Brett Else and competitors launch for a 200 yard freestyle event during the Suburban One League Continental Conference Boys Swimming Championships at North Penn High School on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

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