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DIVING: North Penn's Yacopino, Mitchell lead North Penn's dominance of SOL Continental Championships

By KEV HUNTER
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TOWAMENCIN — The postseason is definitely here. Marie Yacopino and Quinton Mitchell are already setting records.

"I'm excited. This is my favorite part of the season, the most exciting part of the season," Yacopino said after Wednesday night's Suburban One League Continental Conference Championships.

"I think this boosts our confidence," Mitchell said following the meet. "A lot of people that were competitors here will be competitors at districts, and this gives us a preview of what it's gonna be like."

With that in mind, the immediate future looks very promising for both Yacopino and Mitchell, who each won gold at their home pool, setting meet records in the process, as both the North Penn boys and girls got off to a tremendous start in defending their conference crowns.



North Penn diver Quinn Mitchell spins through the air competing in the SOL Continental Conference Diving Championships at North Penn High School on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2015. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)



Yacopino won her second straight conference gold with a score of 511.50, smashing her own 2014 record of 468.15 and Mitchell surpassed his second-place finish of a year ago, as the senior scored a 498, topping the previous meet record of 497.25, set by Souderton Area's Ozzie Moyer back in 2011.

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The Maidens placed three divers in the top six, as Madison Tanis earned silver and Rachael Fisher earned a sixth-place finish, to give NP 50 points

in the event. The Knights left the Rick Carroll Natatorium Wednesday evening with 65 points, as Bryce Hoch, Ian Boland Bintner and Mason Smalls took places three through five.

Central Bucks South's Nash Nickerson surged to a silver-medal finish with a 497.20, but Mitchell was able to gain a decent-sized lead and hold Nickerson off for top honors.

"He's a great competitor. I've known Nash since I was

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nine years old,' Mitchell said. "I know how great of a diver he is and he's always a threat. I'm just glad I could beat him by that little bit."

Key for Mitchell was his reverse one and a half in the semifinals, which earned him multiple 7.5's, pushing him further in front.

"At Parkland, I hit my hands on the board doing that dive so it's been a fear lately," he said, "so I was thankful to get it done."

For both gold medalists, Wednesday was a tremendous start to the postseason, but that's how they see it — just a start.

Despite a whopping score of 511.50, Yacopino sees room for improvement.

"I didn't really think that any of my dives were that on point," the junior said. "I still have a lot more work to do before the season ends."

Suburban One League Continental Conference Diving Championships

Girls

1. Marie Yacopino (NP) 511.50 (meet record; previous: 468.15, Yacopino, 2014);
2. Madison Tanis (NP) 468.60; 3. Taylor Bennett (Quakertown) 461.15; 4. Sarah Stim (CBW) 435.15; 5. Kelly Magri (CBW) 419.80; 6. Rachael Fisher (NP) 417.90;
7. Tori Rest (Souderton) 373.05; 8. Kayla Elliott (Souderton) 355.30; 9. Amber McElreth (HH) 345.50; 10. Kyleene Gillick (CBE) 338.95; 11. Holly Files (Penn) 291.55; 12. Kayla Czaplicki (HH) 250.55

Boys

1. Quinton Mitchell (NP) 498.0 (meet record; previous: 497.25, Ozzie Moyer, Souderton, 2011); 2. Nash Nickerson (CBS) 497.20; 3. Bryce Hoch (NP) 483.25;
4. Ian Boland Bintner (NP) 472.90; 5. Mason Smalls (NP) 463.25; 6. Ezekiel Flandro (Souderton) 445.45; 7. Nick Zumpino (HH) 436.60; 8. Wesley Ahart (Souderton) 382.80; 9. Aaron Lloyd (Pennridge) 332.85; 10. Jakob Aigeldiger (Pennridge) 319.80; 11. Jack Malcolm (Pennridge) 292.05; 12. Andrew Gordon (Souderton) 289.75; 13. Dylan Friederman (CBW) 281.35; 14. Cole Baugh (Souderton) 273.45; 15. Dave McReynolds (CBS) 234.55

Follow Kev Hunter on Twitter @khunter10.



North Penn diver Marie Yacopino arcs into the pool competing in the SOL Continental Conference Diving Championships at North Penn High School on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2015. (Mark C Psoras/The Reporter)

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