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BOYS SWIMMING: North Penn claims SOL Continental title

By KEV HUNTER
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WARRINGTON — The wave began to build in the very first event.

'The first swim of the night was just awesome,' North Penn's Thanas Kountroubis said of the Knights' gold-medal 200-yard medley relay. "The momentum just rises from there."

The Knights began Friday night's Suburban One League Continental Conference Championships with wins in the 200 medley relay, the 200 freestyle and the 200 IM, and the points quickly piled up, as NP defended its conference crown in resounding fashion, scoring a whopping 576.5 points in an impressive showing at Central Bucks South.

'It's certainly not a meet that can ever be overlooked,' said Knights coach Jeff Faikish, as NP continued its string of conference titles dating back to 1973. "The first time you overlook something is when it backfires in your face. We knew the going in.

'The people who were my mentors when I was an athlete and I first started coaching — people like (NP coaching greats) Bill Bartle and my brother, Brian Faikish, and Rick Carroll — it's been instilled into me and the kids that you come into this meet trying to be as competitive as you can.'

Mike Kern swam to victory in the 200 free for the Knights and NP's 200 free relay foursome of Shane Hennessey, Ryan Yocum, David Grove and Kern was first in 1:29.91.

Corey Smith was the gold medal winner in the 100 back for the Knights and Kountroubis set a pool record in the 200 IM, going 1:54.22 to break Michael Thomas' 2013 record of 1:56.55.

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"You just get up on the blocks and you want to do it for your teammates who are standing there cheering for you, Kountroubis said. "It's a pretty cool feeling."

Kountroubis would go on to anchor the Knights to victory in the 400 free relay, in a race that was testament to their resolve.

'The proof of where our team stands mentally and emotionally is how they responded,' Faikish said. "The A relay was definitely not in first, even at the 200 mark — they were in third or fourth. (Mike Kern and Kountroubis) were really able to muster up a fantastic effort, being capped off by Thanas on the final leg."

Hatboro-Horsham scored 320 points to take the runner-up spot, led by Thomas' two record-breaking swims, including his 500 free, where he shattered the previous record by over 20 seconds.

SOL Continental Championships

at CB South

Team Standings: 1. North Penn (NP) 576.5; 2. Hatboro-Horsham (HH) 320; 3. Central Bucks East (CBE) 286.5; 4. Souderton Area (Sou) 280; 5. Central Bucks South (CBS) 195; 6. Central Bucks West (CBW) 186; 7. Pennridge (Penn) 178.5; 8. Quakertown (Q) 79.5

200 medley relay: 1. North Penn (Corey Smith, Thanas Kountroubis, Liam Kelly, Brett Else), 1:36.51; 2. Hatboro-Horsham, 1:39.48; 3. Souderton, 1:40.71

200 free: 1. Mike Kern (NP) 1:46.37; 2. Aidan Daly (NP) 1:47.38; 3. Andy Thomas (HH) 1:48.26

200 IM: 1. Kountroubis (NP) 1:54.22 (pool record; previous: 1:56.55, Michael Thomas, HH, 2013); 2. Kyle Supko (NP) 1:59.17; 3. Collin Villari (CBE) 1:59.33

50 free: 1. Thomas (HH) 21.12 (pool record; previous: Dan Gosick, Holy Ghost, 2011); 2. Andrew Zhugayevich (CBE) 21.43; 3. Kelly (NP) 21.94

100 fly: 1. Henry Mackensen (CBW) 52.66; 2. Eric Jordan (Penn) 53.77; 3. Spencer Nice (Soud) 54.51

200 free relay: 1. North Penn (Shane Hennessey, Ryan Yocum, David Grove, Mike Kern), 1:29.91; 2. CB East, 1:30.03; 3. CB West, 1:30.95

100 free: 1. Andrew Zhugayevich (CBE) 46.92; 2. Kelly (NP) 48.50; 3. Andy Thomas (HH) 49.16

500 free: 1. Michael Thomas (HH) 4:26.58 (pool record; previous: 4:47.81, Jonathan Krail, NP, 2013); 2. Kyle Supko (NP) 4:48.55; 3. Nick Radziul (CBS) 4:48.61

100 back: 1. Corey Smith (NP) 53.63; 2. Collin Villari (CBE) 54.44; 3. Brian Ross (CBS) 54.73

100 breast: 1. Hunter McRee (CBE) 1:02.21; 2. Ryan Witoslawski (Sou) 1:02.23; 3. Alexander Holland (NP) 1:02.31

400 free relay: 1. North Penn (Brett Else, Liam Kelly, Mike Kern, Thanas Kountroubis), 3:14.19; 2. HH, 3:15.25; 3. CB East, 3:16.32

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