

Wood shines at Easterns, looks forward to PCL's

By Nate Oxman
Sportswriter

Archbishop Wood coach Charlie Stillwell wanted to use Easterns as a tune-up for the Catholic League championships.

The Vikings swam well and finished 12th out of 36 teams in the overall standings.

Senior Megen Donovan finished ninth in the 500 freestyle and 11th out of 79 swimmers in the 200 freestyle.

"I felt pretty good. I didn't do what I want to do, but I'm still pleased," said Donovan, an all-Catholic swimmer.

The Vikings will take 10 seniors into the Catholic League championships, but also boast many underclassmen, including three members of the 200 freestyle relay team that made it to the finals and finished 11th.

"I think this was really good for the underclassmen. I think we are all getting pumped up. We're building team spirit," said Donovan.

If Stillwell's swimmers continue to lower their times, he said his team will be just fine.

"We are swimming really

well. I think this is the best we have swam at this meet. It gives us good confidence," said Stillwell.

GA boys, girls second

Germantown Academy arrived at the Eastern Independent School's Swimming and Diving Championships this past weekend amped for an all-out duel in the pool with perennial power, The Peddie School, of Hightstown, N.J.

The schools boast some of the top swimmers in the country and entered Easterns eager to set records and win medals. Both squads surpassed the hype, but in the end it was Peddie that powered its way to boys and girls team titles, matching the feat GA accomplished a year ago.

Peddie (659 points) held off a Saturday night surge from Germantown Academy (613) to capture the boys' title.

GA was led by seniors Reece Chandler and Matt Cox. Chandler won the 500-yard freestyle (4:34.38) on Saturday and placed third in the 200 freestyle on Friday. Cox finished

second to Chandler in the 500 freestyle (4:36.56) and won gold in the 200 individual medley (1:51.74) on Friday. The two also were members of the first-place 200 freestyle relay team (1:25.61).

A third leg of that relay team, senior Ryan Peart, finished first in the 50 freestyle (21.58).

"I'm really happy for our kids, all of them. A kid like Matt Straubel, who never gets the highlights knocked five seconds off his time in the 200 (freestyle). They all swam great," said GA coach Dick Shoulberg.

Senior Tom Henninger took home first place in the one-meter diving competition for the third straight year.

Peddie (413) pulled away from GA (336) during the finals on Saturday, but GA came away with a lot of hardware.

In the first event of the finals on Friday, GA's 200 medley relay team finished second behind Peddie, which set a new national prep school record with a time of 1:43.38.

Junior Katie Riefenstahl set a

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La Salle rises to high level

La Salle coach Frank Lichtner learned a lot about his team after Easterns. He said he wanted to see how his team would perform against top competition. The Explorers finished fifth out of 28 teams in the final standings.

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new national prep school record in the 200 freestyle with a time of 1:47.42, eclipsing the old mark (1:48.16) set by her sister, Katharine, last year.

"1:47 is incredible in high school. She is a terrific swimmer. She has it all: speed, endurance..." said Shoulberg.

The Patriots placed four of the top six swimmers in the event.

"My morning swim wasn't as good. I was in a funk. It felt good to set the record, but getting points for the team is the main goal. It's all about the strength of the team," said Riefenstahl, who also finished second behind Peddie's Amywren Miller, the meet's outstanding female swimmer, in the 100 freestyle.

Riefenstahl's 200 freestyle relay team could not catch Peddie's team, which set another national prep school record, and the Patriots had to settle for second place.

Riefenstahl also won a gold medal as a member of the 400 freestyle relay team, along with Katie Magee and Claire and Teresa Crippen.

The Crippen sisters cashed in for the Patriots. They took the top two spots in the 200 individual medley. Claire set a national prep school record with a time of 2:02.27, but still finished second to her sister, Teresa's record of 2:01.55. Claire also finished second in the 100 butterfly and was a member of the second-place 200 medley relay team.

Teresa set another national prep school record (4:51.41) and won the 500 freestyle. She was also a member of the second-place 200 freestyle relay team.

"This is the biggest meet we can go to and our goal is to get our best times at the best meet," said Lichtner.

La Salle's 200 freestyle relay team finished in third place. One member of that relay team, senior Garrett Gallagher, also took third place in the 50 freestyle. Gallagher was also a member of the 200 medley relay team that finished fifth.

"I think we swam very well. We have a tremendous team. Swimming against the best high schools in the area has got us battle-ready for a meet like this. We are very seasoned," said Lichtner.

Senior Brendan Wills placed sixth in the 100 butterfly and sophomore Ted Walker placed seventh out of 142 swimmers in the 100 freestyle and eighth out of 87 in the 200 freestyle.