

PCL seeks to join PIAA

By Ryan C. Harkins
Sportswriter

Monumental.

That is really the only word to describe the announcement that will change Philadelphia High School sports as we know it.

On Monday, at the School District of Philadelphia building located right in the heart of North Broad Street, officials from the Philadelphia Catholic League (PCL), Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, (PIAA), and state representative Gene DiGirolamo gathered to announce a decision people have been awaiting for some time now.

The PCL effective July 1, 2008, will officially join District 12, becoming a member of the PIAA. The decision was made by a joint committee consisting of Rev. Joseph McFadden (Auxiliary Bishop of the PCL), Bradley Cashman (PIAA executive director), Paul Vallas (School District of Philadelphia CEO), and Martin Bednarek (Commissioner of the School Reform Commission).

The move will allow Catholic League teams to compete in state run tournaments, whereas, before in the past, seasons would end after a league championship game.

Marjorie Weustner, executive director of the Office of Health, Safety, Physical Education and Sports Administration at the School District of Philadelphia, coordinated the press conference.

McFadden, Cashman, DiGirolamo, and Bednarek all spoke with enthusiasm over the groundbreaking news.

"The Philadelphia Catholic League has an 86 year tradition of excellence on and off the field of play," McFadden said. "We believe that this partnership advances those years of tradition and will positively affect the students of the Philadelphia region. This is a historic partnership."

Bednarek spoke of unity.

"Now we have the city coming together," he said. "I think District 12 will now be one of the toughest districts in the state. Wouldn't it be great to say 'not

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only are we the Philadelphia champion, but the state champion as well."

DiGirolamo, a 1968 graduate of Bishop Egan (now Conwell-Egan Catholic) called the decision a "win-win situation for everyone involved," and turned to a group of students in attendance saying, "You will be making history."

District 12 is comprised of 58 schools, 45 public high schools and 13 charter schools. The addition of the PCL will bring the total to 75, with St. Joseph's Prep and La Salle's futures still up in the air. The idea has been floated around that those schools may join the Inter-Ac League, but no decision as of right now has been made. The two schools could also compete as independents, but what is certain is that La Salle and The Prep have to file admission to the PIAA separate of the Archdiocese. Some have even hinted the Inter-Ac league may follow in the PCL's footsteps, and as Cashman pointed out, "the PIAA is about including everyone, and excluding no

one."

The members of the committee all acknowledge this will be a work in progress over the next couple of years, but feel in the grand scheme of things, the decision will not only benefit the individuals and schools, but the city as well.

Here's a list of the 17 PCL schools that will join the PIAA in 2008: Archbishop Wood, Archbishop Ryan, Cardinal O'Hara, Roman Catholic, Archbishop Carroll, Bishop McDevitt, Cardinal Dougherty, Conwell-Egan, Kennedy-Kenrick, Neumann-Goretti, West Catholic, Archbishop Prendergast (girls only), West Catholic (boys only), Monsignor Bonner, Father Judge (boys only), North Catholic (boys only), Little Flower (girls only), John W. Hallahan (girls only), St. Hubert (girls only).

La Salle and St. Joe's Prep will not go in with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and will have to apply separately. La Salle expects to make a decision before the week is out, as to which route they will take.

Girls swimming

ARCHBISHOP WOOD 94, GWYNEDD-MERCY 74
200-yard medley relay: 1. Wood (Rios, Davis, Finn, Gannon), 2:01.61; 2. GMA, 2:06.93; 3. Wood, 2:07.10
200 freestyle: 1. Megan Donovan (AW), 2:00.97; 2. Rachael Gniass (AW), 2:14.18; 3. Heather Pavlik (GMA), 2:16.37
200 IM: 1. Alyse Davis (AW), 2:31.91; 2. L. Buckner (GMA), 2:38.45; 3. Emily Smith (AW), 2:41.10
50 freestyle: 1. Christina Rios (AW), 26.82; 2. Jaclyn Smith (CRN), 26.89; 3. Shelly Lawn (GMA), 27.52
100 butterfly: 1. Lawn (GMA), 1:06.12; 2. Amy Finn (AW), 1:07.10; 3. T. Bettinger (GMA), 1:08.44
100 freestyle: 1. Smith (AW), 57.39; 2. Rios (AW), 59.65; 3. K. Hee (GMA), 1:03.13
500 freestyle: 1. Finn, (AW), 6:03.38; 2. Pavlik (GMA), 6:06.35; 3. Gniass (AW), 6:09.56
200 freestyle relay: 1. Wood (Smith, Gannon, Donovan, Rios), 1:47.88; 2. Gwynedd-Mercy, 1:49.01; 3. Gwynedd-Mercy, 2:03.10
100 backstroke: 1. Amanda Horlacher (AW), 1:10.18; 2. C. Nunnari (GMA), 1:16.95; 3. Hee (GMA), 1:19.04
100 breaststroke: 1. Donovan (AW), 1:12.43; 2. M. Kristiniak (GMA), 1:17.87; 3. Megan Paul (GMA), 1:19.43
400 freestyle relay: 1. Gwynedd-Mercy (Lawn, Hee, Greenwood, Siwek), 4:12.00; 2. Gwynedd-Mercy, 4:35.48.

Archbishop Wood 94, Gwynedd Mercy 74—The Vikings swam past Gwynedd Mercy in a non-league meet last Thursday. Megan Donovan won the 200 freestyle and 100 breaststroke and Christina Rios captured the 50 freestyle to pace Wood. The Monarchs' Shelly Lawn won 100 butterfly.

Archbishop Wood 94, Gwynedd Mercy 74
200 medley relay—Archbishop Wood (Rios, Davis, Finn, Gannon), 2:01.61; 200 freestyle—Megan Donovan (AW) 2:00.97; 200 individual medley—Alyse Davis (AW) 2:31.91; 50 freestyle—Christina Rios (AW) 26.82; 100 butterfly—Shelly Lawn (GMA) 1:06.12; 100 freestyle—Emily Smith (AW) 57.39; 500 freestyle relay—Wood (Smith, Gannon, Donovan, Rios), 1:47.88; 100 backstroke—Amanda Horlacher (AW) 1:10.18; 100 breaststroke—Megan Donovan (AW) 1:12.43; 400 freestyle—Gwynedd Mercy (Lawn, Hee, Greenwood, Siwek), 4:12.00.

Boys swimming

LA SALLE 55, ARCHBISHOP WOOD 36
200-yard medley relay: 1. LS (Domanski, Greg Woods, LeTeavage, Ben DeFranco), 1:45.35; 2. LS, 1:58.57; 3. AW, 2:00.73
200 freestyle: 1. Tom O'Neill, LS, 2:00.75; 2. David Keller, AW, 2:01.26; 3. Tom Khab, LS, 2:02.16
200 individual medley: 1. Ed Bonnevie, LS, 2:15.39; 2. Paul McGee, LS, 2:25.83; 3. Michael Montemarano, AW, 2:32.77
50 freestyle: 1. James Mahoney, LS, 23.20; 2. DeFranco, LS, 23.80; 3. John Wright, LS, 25.87
100 butterfly: 1. Joe Houldin, LS, 1:01.82; 2. Michael McGee, LS, 1:02.84; 3. Montemarano, AW, 1:06.16
100 freestyle: 1. Woods, LS, 52.78; 2. Brian Jeffers, LS, 53.43; 3. John Wright, AW, 1:00.0
500 freestyle: 1. John Holt, LS, 5:15.88; 2. Ted Walker, LS, 5:18.22; 3. Andre Delvalle, AW, 7:04.69
200 freestyle relay: 1. LS (Mahoney, P McGee, M. McGee, Houldin), 1:39.48; 2. AW, 1:49.73; 3. AW, 2:09.31
100 backstroke: 1. Keller, AW, 1:06.50; 2. Eric Reuter, AW, 1:17.55
100 breaststroke: 1. Timothy Miller, AW, 1:14.50; 2. Delvalle, AW, 1:36.10
400 freestyle relay: 1. AW (John Wright, Montemarano, McIntire, Keller), 4:09.35; 2. AW, 5:15.58.