

Spartans 2nd at state meet

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Livonia Stevenson came away with a state title in the 400-yard freestyle relay, but the Spartans settled for a second place tie with defending champ Bloomfield Hills Lakes at the Class A girls swim meet, won by Ann Arbor Pioneer Saturday at Michigan State University.

It was the fourth time Stevenson had finished second under the coaching of Lois McDonald, who announced her retirement on Monday. (See related story.)

"There was a lot of talent in the state this year, but I always aim for the top," said McDonald, the Spartans' head coach for 20 years. "You do your best and go for broke."

"We knew Ann Arbor Pioneer had both the numbers and the quality swimmers. We just wanted to make them earn everything they wanted. I thought we swam well."

Led by California transplant Jennifer Jackson, a sophomore who captured the 200 and 500 freestyle events, Pioneer scored a 170 points to outdistance Stevenson and Andover, who tallied 132 each.

STEVENSON was among several Western Lakes Conference teams which scored in the meet. Farmington took ninth place with 48 points and Westland John Glenn, Livonia Churchill, Plymouth Canton and Plymouth Salem also scored. Another Oberverland school, Farmington Hills Mercy, also figured in the team standings.

Stevenson's lone first place finish came in the 400 freestyle relay as Ann Bollerger, Sherrie Sudek, Sheila Taormina and Michelle McKenzie were clocked in 3:33.12, breaking the state mark of 3:33.95 held by Andover since 1981.

"The girls knew ahead of time that they'd be there," McDonald said. "But nobody expected us to look that good."

"We've never had a history of being good in the 400 relay. We've been better over the years in the (200) medley (relay)."

Several Stevenson swimmers turned in championship-like performances, including Taormina, a junior who was

swimming

second in the 200 individual medley (2:07.49) and 100 butterfly (57.52).

IN THE 200 IM, Taormina broke the state record, but so did Andover's Amy Charnes, who took first in 2:06.5. Pioneer's Yvonne Grierson edged the Stevenson swimmer by 22-100ths of a second in the butterfly.

Sudek finished third in the 200 IM and Churchill freshman Audra Martin was fifth in the same event, while North's Cindy Cramer took sixth.

A senior, Sudek finished second in the 100 backstroke behind Pioneer's Stephanie Lieberman, who set a state record with a time of 57.44. Sudek's time was 58.67 and teammate Bollinger, a junior, was fourth in 1:01.66. Sullivan took sixth in 1:01.86. Mercy's Roberta Orr and Suzie Knipper took ninth and 10th, respectively.

McKenzie was also impressive, finishing second behind Jackson in the 200 freestyle and fourth behind Jackson in the 500 freestyle.

NORTH'S JENNIFER ROWE, meanwhile, clocked a 5:03.85 in the 500, good enough for third. Also from Oberverland, Mercy's Jennifer Morton placed sixth and Glenn's Karen Taylor finished eighth.

Oberverland was most represented in the 100 breaststroke as Martin took third, Cramer fourth, and Plymouth Canton's Julie Cox 10th.

Other Oberverland swimmers scoring points at the state meet included Bollerger, ninth; Morton, 10th; and Taylor, 14th — 200 freestyle; Sullivan, 11th, 200 IM; Bollinger, 10th, 50 freestyle; and Jamie Roester (Glenn), 11th, diving.

In the 200 medley relay, North Farmington's quartet of Cindy and Marge Cramer, Liz Worthen and Amy Mellicent finished 10th to lead the area. Churchill was 15th.

Area schools trailing Stevenson in the 400 freestyle relay were Glenn, eighth; North, 10th; and Plymouth Salem, 12th.

Lois McDonald quits Spartans swim post

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Marking the end of an era, longtime Livonia Stevenson girls swim coach Lois McDonald announced her retirement this week.

McDonald, who tentatively plans to retire from teaching in June, coached the highly successful Stevenson girls team for 20 years. She led the Spartans to four runner-up finishes in Class A, the latest being Saturday's state finals in East Lansing.

"I don't need first place," McDonald said. "The most important thing to me is get the most potential out of kids. I thought this year we tapered down and improved our times."

McDonald, who also spent seven years coaching the Stevenson boys and the Spartan Aquatic Club, said it was time for a change.

"It's been tough the past couple of years with the parent situation," she said. "I've had it with AAU clubs and parents. I've decided I have other things to do."

McDonald and her husband, John, an English teacher at Churchill Hills School, have four children, three living in California.

"WE LOVE TO TRAVEL and I'll be able to see my children more," she said. "And I'm just tired of part-time pay for full-time work."

"People don't know how really I was engrossed in the sport. Some of the people are unaware of my background. I've read and studied. I've done a lot of research. People don't know I've spent four hours every weekend planning workouts."

A native of Birmingham, McDonald attended Albion College and received her degree in physical education at Western Michigan University. She later earned a master's degree from Eastern Michigan.

In 1955 she started a synchronized swim team for the Garden City Parks and Recreation Department, serving 12 years as coach.

She then became the head swim coach at Stevenson in 1968.

The Spartans dominated area swimming for nearly two decades, capturing numerous Inter-Lakes and Western Lakes league titles. She produced several state individual champions including Carol Eggers, who won eight titles during the late-1970s.

IN 1979, she became the first woman to win the Matt Mann Award, a statewide honor for service. McDonald has also been nominated in 1985 for Coach-of-the-Year by the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, and McDonald is also certified teacher in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and water safety instruction.

"I'm going to teach swimming to adults," she said. "That's what I really enjoy. And I'm going to work with the Red Cross."

"And I'll work out more. I can get over to Vic Tanny now and exercise."

Although the McDonald era has ended, it won't be forgotten.

A successor has not been named, but among the leading candidates mentioned are former Stevenson swimmer Beth Nolan, Stevenson boys coach Doug Buckler and former Clarencetville coach Matt Ferguson coach Greg Phil. Former Bentley coach Keith Wright is also a possibility.

PLYMOUTH CANTON's team captured the 200 freestyle event in a 55-30 setback to Belleville Tuesday in a non-league dual meet.

Andy Flower, who was third in the state last season in diving, took first against the Tigers with a score of 392.15. Canton's other wins were posted by Steve Schwin in the 500-yard freestyle (5:24.93) and Dean Roberts in the 100-yard backstroke (1:01.77).

Redford Catholic Central downed Dearborn Heights Crestwood 59-24 Tuesday in a boys dual swim meet.

The Shamrocks totaled eight first places, including both relays, en route to their second straight dual meet win of the season. Alex Afari was an individual double winner for CC with firsts in the 200-yard freestyle and the 500-yard freestyle. He won the 200 free in 1:56.3 and the 500 free in 5:19.7.

John Kovach netted three wins in the meet but two came in relay action. Kovach, along with Jim Surwicz, Sean McDermott and Jon Teal captured the 200-yard medley event in 2:45.8. In the 400-yard freestyle relay, he teamed with Matt Herpurn, Teal and McDermott for a first-place time of 3:27.1.

Individually, Kovach won the 100-

yard butterfly in 55.0.

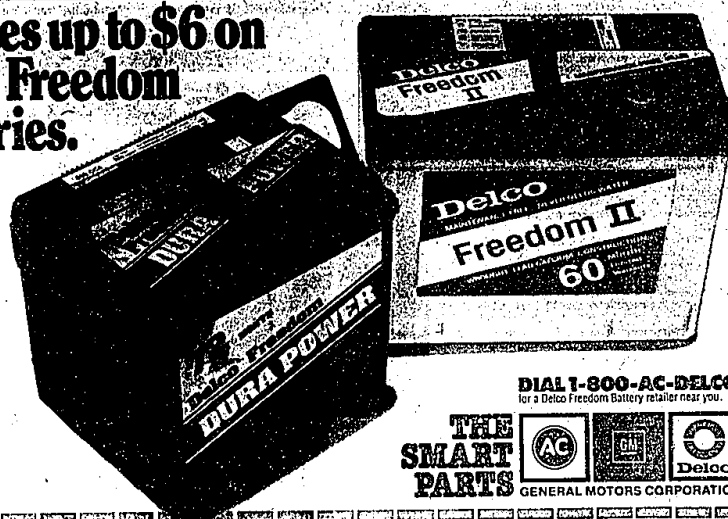
Other individual firsts for the Shamrocks included McDermott, 200-yard individual medley, 2:12.3; Eric Fortson, 50-yard freestyle, 1:33.6; Jim Surwicz, diving, 191.8; Dan O'Brien, 100-yard butterfly, 1:03.4; and Surwicz, 100-yard breaststroke, 1:03.4.

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