

swimming

WESTERN LAKES GIRLS SWIMMING/DIVING RELAYS (Saturday at Plymouth-Salem)

Team scores: 1. Plymouth Canton, 242.2; 2. Livonia Churchill, 211.3; 3. North Farmington, 218.4; 4. Plymouth Salem, 210.5; 5. Northville, 208.6; 6. Livonia Stevenson, 192.7; 7. Farmington, 149.4; 8. Walled Lake Central, 137.9; 9. Westland John Glenn, 64.10; 10. Farmington Livonia, 52.12; 11. Livonia Franklin, 48.12; 12. Walled Lake Western, 43.

400-yard medley: 1. N. Farmington (Julianne Markey, Kerry Doran, Christine Dulbe and Laurie Oswald), 4:16.97; 2. Churchill, 4:27.3; 3. Canton, 4:31.71; 4. Salem, 4:32.5; 5. Northville, 4:50.17; 6. Franklin, 5:02.09; 7. Farmington, 5:26.27; 8. Stevenson, 5:28.59; 9. Western, 5:44.10; 10. Central, 6:39.12.

400 freestyle: 1. Northville (Michelle Stephens, Debbie Burt, Kristen Storm and Megan Holmberg), 2:49.7; 2. Canton, 3:17.4; 3. Salem, 4:05.25; 4. N. Farmington, 4:50.2; 5. Farmington, 4:56.66; 6. Churchill, 4:59.77; 7. John Glenn, 4:11.53; 8. Stevenson, 4:59.77; 9. Central, 5:13.16; 10. Franklin, 5:25.34; 11. Western, 5:35.77.

200 breaststroke: 1. Stevenson (Jennifer Knapp, Jane Whittier, Juli Mathison and Paul Shavari), 2:23.94; 2. Canton, 2:30.76; 3. Farmington, 2:37.4; 4. Churchill, 2:37.77; 5. Salem, 2:33.39; 6. Farmington, 2:37.95; 7. Northville, 2:43.39; 8. John Glenn, 2:51.36; 9. Central, 3:08.82; 10. Western, 3:21.56.

200 backstroke: Farmington (Hilchell Sauter, Lauren Wray, Katie Loran and Jill Hawkins), 2:19.29; 2. Canton, 2:40.21; 3. Churchill, 2:46.6; 4. Salem, 2:48.22; 5. N. Farmington, 2:47.47; 6. Stevenson, 2:41.01; 7. Northville, 2:22.28; 8. Central, 2:43.47; 9. John Glenn, 2:46.62; 10. Franklin, 3:17.79.

200 butterfly: 1. Northville (Megan Holmberg, Julie Hollinger, Becky Frayne and Pam Holmberg), meet record 1:56.86; 2. Canton and Churchill, 2:02.53; 3. Salem, 2:04.07; 4. N. Farmington, 2:08.66; 6. Franklin, 2:14.17; 7. Stevenson, 2:17.0; 8. Farmington, meet record 2:02.75; 9. Northville, meet record 2:02.75; 10. Central, 2:17.0.

100 freestyle: 1. Canton (Kathy Truog, Jean McLanaghan, Janet Roberts and Cassie Cummins), 1:31.86; 2. Salem, 1:41.92; 3. Northville, 1:41.92; 4. Farmington, 1:42.02; 5. Churchill, 1:42.02; 6. N. Farmington, 1:43.42; 7. Farmington, 1:50.74; 8. Stevenson, 1:52.58; 9. Western, 1:53.04; 10. Central, 1:52.01.

300 freestyle: 1. N. Farmington (Amy Hulse, Christine Dulbe, Kerry Doran and Laurie Oswald), meet record 4:31.8; 2. Old record 4:34.73 by Stevenson in 1986; 3. Farmington, 4:51.39; 4. Canton, 5:03.33; 5. Churchill, 5:11.5; 6. John Glenn, 5:15.4; 7. Salem, 5:19.21; 8. Stevenson, 5:32.66; 9. Northville, 5:38.93; 10. Central, 5:42.12; 11. Western, 5:51.61.

200 medley: 1. Northville (Debbie Burt, Kristen Storm, Pam Holmberg and Michelle Stephens), meet record 1:57.12; 2. Old record 1:57.66 by Churchill in 1986; 3. Stevenson, 2:02.34; 4. N. Farmington, 2:05.43; 5. Canton, 2:10.43; 6. Churchill, 2:10.07; 7. Salem, 2:12.18; 8. John Glenn, 2:23.04; 9. Central, 2:29.08; 10. Harrison, 2:32.03; 11. Western, 2:39.99.

200 freestyle: 1. Churchill (Barb Turner, Michelle Galindo, Ellen Lessig and Jennifer Tanner), meet record 1:49.89; 2. Old record 1:50.34 by Churchill in 1986; 3. Salem, 1:50.93; 4. Canton, 1:50.93; 5. N. Farmington, 1:54.68; 6. Harrison, 2:01.75; 7. Farmington, 2:02.16; 8. Northville, 2:03.47; 9. Central, 2:17.9; 10. Stevenson, 2:19.21.

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Relay win casts Canton as favorite

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

As an aspiring champion in girls swimming, Plymouth Canton has been more than just talent going for it. The Chiefs also have history on their side after winning the annual Western Lakes Activities Association Swimming and Diving Relays Saturday.

Since the league was organized in the early '80s, the winner of this early-season meet has never failed to capture the WLAA crown in November.

"I'd like it if it works out that way," said Canton coach Hooker Wellman, who obviously was thrilled to win the relays but not ready to assume anything else.

"Northville was fifth, and they have as good a shot at the league meet as anybody. You look at Churchill's lineup, and you don't see how they can lose the league meet."

THE CHIEFS, placing no lower than fourth in any event, rolled up 242 points to hold off Churchill, which made an impressive showing with a 221 total.

Defending champion North Farmington was third (210), Plymouth Salem, which was eighth in the final tally last year, looks like a true challenger with its fourth-place finish (210).

Northville, rated No. 9 in the state, followed with 208 points, and perennial power Livonia Stevenson was sixth (152).

"I was surprised with some of our swimmers," said Churchill coach Lawrence Hein after watching the Chargers set a meet record in the 200-yard freestyle. "Our goal was to get into the top four."

"I thought Northville would finish higher, but Plymouth Canton rolled away with it."

The Chiefs won only one event but relied on depth and balance to achieve their first victory in the relays.

Canton's lone first came in the 400 individual medley, with Kristy Brugar, Jean McLanaghan, Janet Roberts and Cassie Cummins finishing 10 seconds ahead of Salem's team at 4:31.86.

EVEN BEFORE that, the Chiefs were well on their way. They opened with a third in the 400 medley and with remarkable consistency, had five straight seconds in the 400 freestyle, 200 backstroke, 200 butterfly and diving.

"I wanted to make the relays fast, but I wanted to make all of them fast," Wellman said. "I didn't want to have one weak relay."

"This is my eighth year of coaching, and it's taken this long to learn how to set up a lineup for that kind of meet."

After winning the 1M, the Chiefs finished strong with third place in the 500 freestyle — a combination of various freestyle lengths — fourth in the 200 medley and third in the 200 freestyle.

Wellman added it helps to have the personnel to be able to do what Canton did. With 40 girls on the team as opposed to 23 last year, he had more people from which to select his relay lineups.

The Chiefs used 22 athletes, including a handful of the team's 15 freshmen, and nobody competed in more than two events.

"When I got there and looked at the times, I saw we were sitting in the best position, because we were seeded no lower than fifth," Wellman said.

swimming

Mercy has 2 qualifiers in Class A

Farmington Hills Mercy's girls swimming team defeated host Birmingham Seaholm 96-70 in a dual meet last Thursday.

The Marlins won only four of the 11 events but recorded two state-qualifying times.

Individually, Becky Wigult qualified in the 500-yard freestyle, winning the event in 5:24.05. The 200 medley relay team of Katie Westhoff, Katie Knipper, Liz DeMatta and Mary Quinn was outdone by Seaholm's foursome, but its time of 1:58.17 was good enough to qualify for the state meet.

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Among the key contributors were Lori Engelhuber, Brugar and junior standouts Nicole Drake and Cummins. Engelhuber swam a 25-second split in the 200 free and also was on the 400 free relay.

"She doesn't always think she can do it," Wellman said. "But, after that, she came up to me and said 'I'm going to qualify for state.'"

"That made her real confident. If the kids can be positive about what they're doing, we'll go a long way this season."

Brugar also was part of the breaststroke foursome, Cummins the 400 medley team. Drake's contributions were made in the 400 free and crescendo.

"(Brugar) has come into her own, and she's become more versatile than I ever thought she would," Wellman said. "When we need a depth person, I can count on her to be there."

"I can count on (Cummins and Drake) to do anything, and it's nice to have people like that on the team."

SENIOR CAPTAINS Sarah Schmitz and McLanaghan swam two events as did Kelly Riecke, Val Ollchus, Renee DeBell, Cheri Woodward, Kristin Moore, Nichole Montrosor, Roberts, Erica Carson, Beth Yack and Tami Santomaro.

"It's taken time to build a good swimming program," Wellman said. "And it's starting to come through. I thought the kids handled the pressure well."

Ah, the pressure. That was something the coach, often vocal and emotional at important meets, also had to deal with when the Chiefs assumed the role of frontrunners.

"Half way through I was my usual, nervous self," Wellman said. "After the diving I let them down."

"I told one of the coaches I liked it before when we were the underdog

and were challenging the guys up front. I could let loose, run around, get the kids going and upset people. We've been in positions before. We do good things, and I was afraid something might go wrong," he added. "But I realized that was ridiculous. Once I calmed down and let myself enjoy it, it was a real thrill."

Despite winning four events, Northville couldn't match Canton's balance. North won two events, the 400 medley and crescendo, Stevenson and Farmington one each.

Five meet records fell, Northville setting three in the butterfly, diving and 200 medley. Churchill's Barb Turner, Michelle Galindo, Ellen Lessig and Jennifer Danner swam 1:49.89 in the 200 free, and North's Amy Dulbe, Christine Dulbe, Kerry Doran and Laurie Oswald set the new standard of 4:51.8 in the crescendo.

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