

Kershaw from page 1B

depends on what your mind thinks your body can do."

Kershaw surprised the competition by winning the 200 freestyle after finishing sixth (1:42.33) in the prelims Friday. He was qualified in third place in the 100 prelims (47.25).

He finished 63 seconds ahead of Redford Catholic Central's James Leslie in the 200, and edged Midland Dow's Kurt Bohmert by .06 in the 100.

"I won the 200 from an outside lane," he said. "I got to look at the crowd, set my own pace and see where everybody was. Some people don't like being on the outside, but I looked at it as an advantage."

"In the 200 free, I knew when I touched I had won, but (in) the 100 I had to look up to see the scoreboard to see if I won. I had an extra long reach at the end and I got him."



Jon Kershaw state champion

New approach works

Kershaw realizes how close he came to being excluded from the championship heat in the 200, but he had a different strategy for the prelims this year.

"Previously, I went 100 percent in the prelims and never went any faster," he said. "So I took the prelims a lot lighter. I just decided they were no big deal. I was going to swim my best and wherever that put me that's where I finished — and it worked out well."

Kershaw hopes to go faster next week (Tuesday through Saturday) in the Junior National meet at U-M.

Swimming is 90 percent mental. It depends on what your mind thinks your body can do.

Jon Kershaw state champion

"The pressure of high school swimming will be gone, and I hope to get into the 1:40 range (in the 200), which is an All-American cut," he said. "A little more rest might be all I need."

"My 200 free time will get me into the finals, but I don't think it will put me in the top two. If I can go a little faster, I might get into the top eight, which would be another wonderful achievement for me. I'm hoping to swim a stress-free meet and do my best."

Kershaw hopes a good showing at that meet will create more interest from college coaches. Oakland University, Eastern Michigan and Wyoming have been actively recruiting him.

"They look at the junior nationals more than state meets," he said. "I can't totally celebrate. I can be happy with that, but I have to keep the edge. I can't say, 'Well, I'm done,' and go dancing in the streets."

contender but finished fifth in the individual medley (1:57.09) and seventh in the 500 freestyle (4:39.05), though he lowered his previous best times of 1:57.12 and 4:41.18.

Sophia captured 12th place in the IM (2:01.31) and the Raiders tied with Plymouth Salem for sixth in the team standings with 70 points.

"Karl didn't have his best meet," Knipper said, adding Kozicki wasn't rested enough. "I felt bad he didn't have a real strong performance in his senior year."

"But the Junior Nationals are coming up, and he's going to be well rested for that and he'll swim well. As far as college, he didn't really blow it at the state meet. He has another chance and he's going to perform then."

Farmington Harrison senior John Hovey was eighth in the Class A diving finals with 39 1/4 points. Teammate Mark Strohmaler also qualified but did not place.

"(Hovey) performed great, probably the best I've ever seen him for 11 dives," Harrison assistant coach Pam Heiden said. "For him to put together 11 dives and not miss a dive was wonderful, and that's what you want to do at the state meet."

Kozicki double placer

Kozicki was a championship

State champs Rice breaks new ground with latest title

BY MARTY BUDNER STAFF WRITER

Brother Rice has a ton of state championship hardware adorning its trophy cases.

Go right down the list. Football and golf in the fall, basketball and hockey in the winter, baseball and tennis in the spring.

But there is a state title that has eluded the Warriors: swimming.

That is, until this year.

The Warriors captured their first swimming/diving championship Saturday at the University of Michigan.

Rice finished with 147 points while second-place Ann Arbor Pioneer was close behind at 140. Birmingham Groves put forth a strong effort and placed third with 129 1/2 points.

But it was Rice's day. Despite not winning an event, the top-ranked Warriors had enough depth and determination to survive a competitive field.

"This is just awesome," said second-year Rice coach Ron Richards. "I'm really proud of them. They were under a lot of pressure to win it since the were ranked No. 1. They handled it real well and they swam out of their heads."

"They wanted to bring home the state championship for their school. We saw a lot of our teams this year (at Rice) ranked No. 1 and they fell. That was

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hard for them and I think (the swimmers) wanted to do something about it.

"I just wanted to take the pressure off of them and make this fun for them," he said. "I wanted them to come here and be relaxed. I didn't want them to think about winning the state championship. I just wanted them to swim fast and they were able to do that."

Brother Rice actually got off to a slow start.

Birmingham Groves won the opening 200-yard medley relay and the Warriors placed fourth. Groves and Pioneer — the meet favorites along with Rice — flip-flopped around first place through the first seven events. The Warriors did not take over the top spot until after the 500 freestyle when Ron Royer and Pat Sugrue placed fifth and 10th, respectively. At that point, Rice enjoyed a one-point lead over Pioneer and a 21-point lead over Groves.

Rice remained in the lead through the final four events, although Pioneer never let up. In fact, Pioneer still had a chance to win heading into the final event — the 400 freestyle relay. Rice finished second to wrap up the title.

The best individual showing

for Rice was Mike Sugrue's second-place finish in the butterfly. But it was freshman Mario Seussel, swimming in that same event, whom Richards credited with turning the meet in Rice's favor.

Seussel was the 12th and last seed in the butterfly, but he won the consolation final to hand Rice some important points, not to mention some much-needed momentum.

"(To that point) the guys weren't down, but they weren't up either. When Mario finished seventh, the whole team went to another level," said Richards, whose team was fourth overall last year.

"For a freshman to do that, that meant a lot. It just seemed like everything started going our way after that. The only way they got from that swim was just enormous."

Brian Najarian and Andrew Riggert were Rice's other point scorers.

Groves coach Darin Abbasse was elated with his team's performance. The Falcons equaled last year's third-place finish, and have now placed among the state's top four Class A teams for five consecutive years.

The winning Groves medley relay team included John Scharf, Eric Rowan, Doug Cash and Dan Hafner. Rowan also placed in the breaststroke (third) and IM (seventh), and

Hafner placed in the 100 (fourth) and 200 freestyles (sixth). Scharf was fourth in the backstroke.

"I'm extremely satisfied with our performance," said Abbasse. "The kids did everything they were supposed to do to give themselves every opportunity to run for a state title. We just didn't have enough numbers in the end to compete with Rice and Pioneer."

"The time drops we had and courage they showed throughout the weekend proved us once again to be a top-three team," he said. "Not very many teams have that type of record, and we've been able to do it for the last five years."

The Eccentric area's lone individual champion was P.J. Olson of Rochester Adams, who won the backstroke. Olson entered the finals as the top seed and won with a time of 50.98. He also placed third in the butterfly.

Lahser's Adam Pawlick tied for fourth in the 100 freestyle and placed fifth in the 200. Troy's medley and 200 freestyle relays teams were fifth.

The meet's double winners were Cameron Mull of East Lansing (IM and butterfly) and North Farmington's Jon Kershaw (200 and 100 freestyles). Mull set the meet's only state record with a time of 49.43 in the butterfly.

Foursome leads CC to 4th-place finish

BY CHRIS MCCOSKY STAFF WRITER

Unranked, undermanned and unnoticed, Catholic Central shocked the prep swim world, and probably itself, with its fourth-place finish in the Class A swim championships Friday and Saturday at the University of Michigan's Canham Natatorium.

"I studied the thing real hard and I knew we had a chance to do something," said first-year CC coach Jeff Shoemaker. "But it was a case where everyone had to swim perfectly. And that's exactly what happened. Everyone swam perfectly."

Shoemaker's "team" at the finals consisted of four swimmers:

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James Leslie, Pat Magoulik, Steve Reinke and John Zarow. The fearless foursome scored 88 points in seven events, less than powerhouses Birmingham Brother Rice (147), Ann Arbor Pioneer (140), and Birmingham Groves (129).

"It was a phenomenal day," Shoemaker said. "All four swam the best times of their lives."

Leslie placed second in both the 200-yard freestyle (1:41.70) and the 500 freestyle (school record 4:34.42).

Magoulik placed fifth in the 50 free with a school record 21.81.

Reinke placed sixth in the 100 butterfly (51.67) and 12th in the 100 backstroke (55.30).

The foursome combined to place fourth in the 200 free relay (school record 1:27.37) and fifth in the 400 free relay (3:13.90).

"It was quite a feat," Shoemaker said. "We weren't ranked by anybody. I mean, nobody even knew we were there."

They do now.

All in all, it was another proud day for Observerland swimming.

North Farmington and Plymouth Salem tied for sixth place (70 points) and Plymouth Canton finished 12th (37). There were also three individual state champions and a relay champion.

North's Jon Kershaw won the 200 free (1:41.09) and the 100 free (40.74).

Salem's Fred Locke won the 50 free (21:18). The Rocks won the 200 freestyle relay with Locke, Joe Ervin, Eric Seidelman and Dave Bruch combining on a 1:26.47. Locke also took third in the 100 free (47.07).

Other top performances:

North's Karl Kozicki took fifth in 200 individual medley (1:57.06) and seventh in the 500 free (4:39.05). Plymouth Canton's Jeff Clark took third in the 50 free (21.35) and sixth in the 100 free (47.38).

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