

Competition breeds friendship

By JOHN BOZZO

One look at swimming statistics and it would appear that Lynne Weir and Joyce Burrell of Lansing are enemies. Saturday and Sunday they finished a season of swimming competition by facing each other in the Masters Swimming State championships at West Bloomfield High School.

Competing in the 35-39 age group, Weir defeated Burrell in the 100-yard freestyle as she won the event with a 1:00.45 time. Burrell holds the National Masters record in that event.

Not to be denied, Burrell nipped Weir for first place in the 50-yard freestyle with a :27.3 time. Weir is the National Masters record holder in that event.

But despite their adversary roles, the two have developed a friendship through Masters Swimming. "We're good friends," Weir said. "She stayed at my house the whole weekend. Swimming is just one part of our life. It's not like high school when swimming was just everything."

Weir had more success at the Michigan Masters tournament, winning three more events. Her other winning events and times were: 50-yard freestyle, 6:14.5; 200-yard freestyle,

1:00.45; and 100-yard individual medley, 1:15.8.

A national record holder in two events, Weir knows that when she swims against her friend from Lansing she has to have a lead and can't rely on a final spurt.

"She's 5-10 and I'm about 5-4," Weir said. "Her arms are longer than mine and when we're even it's bad, because she can usually out-touch me."

They were just two of 153 participants at the state championships. It was the fifth Michigan Masters Swimming Championship and the second one held at West Bloomfield. Masters Swimming is a competitive sport for those 25 and older.

King Yaeger, co-director of the tournament and coach of the West Bloomfield Swim Club, said 10 teams from three states and the District of Columbia participated. Many swimmers swam unattached to a team. He said there was good participation in both the meet and the party afterwards.

Midland won the team trophy with 544 points. Lansing was second with 503 and the Royal Oak Penguins third with 390. In addition to Weir, there were

many other local participants who swam well in the championships. Arne Lagerkvist of Bloomfield Hills and Tom Koenig of Birmingham each had three first-place finishes.

Lagerkvist competed in the 50-54 age group. His first places were: 50-yard breaststroke, :35.4; 100-yard breaststroke, 1:22.3; and the 100-yard freestyle, 1:04.0.

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