

Area's top swimmers honored

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KOVACH WAS THE choice in the 100-yard freestyle. He was timed in 47.57 for fifth place in the state finals after doing a quick 47.66 in the state preliminaries.

Noonan, Rich Kramer, Christie and Kovach formed the first-team 400-yard freestyle relay. It placed second at state with a time of 3:11.37.

Two Rochester seniors, Jim Bruzese and Dan Wery, received first-team honors. Bruzese in the 100-yard butterfly and Wery in the 100-yard backstroke.

Wery, the state breaststroke champion for the second-straight year, was timed in 58.74 at the state meet. His 59.97 was a shade slower, but still good enough for meet and pool records at the Brighton Invitational.

BRUZESE HAD to settle for second place at state in his event, the 100 fly, with

his time of 51.59. He also won Oakland County and Brighton Invitational firsts in the event.

"I think they (Bruzese and Wery) are two of the finest swimmers in the state," said Rochester coach Steve Scheff. "I'm looking forward to seeing them nationally ranked in college."

Brother Rico had two first-team swimmers, senior Robert Papp and junior Dixon Kane. In the longest and shortest freestyle events.

Papp sliced almost nine seconds off his seed time to finish fourth in the 500-yard freestyle with a 4:48.39 clocking in the state finals. "He swam a smart race," said Rico coach George O'Brien. "He paced himself and didn't use it all up at the beginning."

Kane, the pick for the 50-yard freestyle, is "a natural sprinter who rides high in the water," according to O'Brien. Kane finished seventh in the state with a time of 22.02.

A THIRD-PLACE finisher in the 100-yard backstroke at state — and thus an easy first-team choice — was Rochester Adams junior Doug Cleland, who won 54.5 in the finals after turning in a 54.0 in the preliminaries.

"Doug's been chosen our most valuable swimmer the past two years," said Adams coach Dennis Seman, "not only for his outstanding ability, but also for the leadership role he's played."

"He generates enthusiasm and helps the other swimmers as an assistant coach would."

This area's top diver is Matt Clark, a Troy Adams senior. At the state meet, Clark completed 394.85 points for 11 dives and finished fifth. He won the county diving event (425.30) and finished first in the Metro Suburban Activities Association (424.10).

"WE'VE REALLY been spoiled around here with good divers," said Athens coach Dale Rahm. "Before Matt, we had Andy Welsh (Class of 1981), who was fourth and fifth in the state. Andy helped Matt, and Matt's been a big help to our younger divers."

Bloomfield Hills Andover, another state swimming power, was represented on the first team by senior Bill Zeltz, the pick for the 200 individual medley. The Andover captain placed fourth in the state-meet IM with a time of 1:57.41.

"Bill's an extremely hard worker and a very good leader," said Andover coach Mike Lane. "He's a superb job for us."

Rico's O'Brien, who completed his 13th season at the all-boy parochial school, was named the O&E's Coach of the Year.

DESPITE LOSING the Kramers, Rico placed second to Redford Catholic center in the Catholic League meet and finished a surprising seventh in the Class A state meet.

"Nobody expected much from us, but I think we squeaked all we could out of ourselves," O'Brien said. "I appreciate seasons like this one. The kids realize they can't depend on superstars."

"If we're going to win, it's got to be a team effort. The attitude is, 'No one else will do it, so I'll have to.'"

Antoine amazes even the officials

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McCasill, a slam-dunk specialist, got the ball all alone on the lead end of a fast break, and Southfield's faithful sensed a stuff coming. But at the last minute McCasill seemingly couldn't decide — layup or slam. He ended up doing neither and the ball bounced off the rim.

Charlie Hart, Southfield's 6-3 starting forward, fouled out and was whistled for a technical, making it two Ts on one team in the same semifinal game. Hart left without a point in his name.

But for Hart and fellow starter Vince Baldwin, both juniors, there'll be a next year. Silwka believes he'll have the personnel to produce another winning season.

"We're optimistic about the future," the coach said. "We think we have a roll going here for the next three or four years."

Among the substitutes, sophomores Lorenzo McCasill (6-5 and Michael's brother) and Ron Austin (6-2) have shown promise. Silwka said, Austin, who quarterbacked the Jay's football team, looked good late in the semifinal game.

"Lorenzo might not be able to dominate like Michael, but he's a big kid. I'd hate to mess with him in the middle."

Silwka may be counting on help from this season's junior varsity (6-4) and freshman (12-2) teams.

SILWKA, WHO SCHEDULED top-notch teams like Highland Park, Saginaw and Willow Run this past season, has another tough lineup planned for next winter.

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