

NORTH SHORE GIRLS SWIMMING



Photo by Mark Justesen/Conley Media

Becky Passeri dives off the block as teammate Payton Jankowski comes into the finish during Hartford's 200-yard freestyle relay.

West Bend finishes relay in second place

Hartford/ Slinger co-op finishes in eighth place at meet

By Aaron Carlson
Conley Media

CEDARBURG – West Bend girls swimming and diving co-op coach Dave Bloomier believes that the talent in the North Shore Conference is spread fairly evenly among the teams, and that was apparent Thursday at the annual relay meet.

Host Cedarburg took first place with 82 points, followed by West Bend (71), Whitefish Bay (69) and Homestead (62) in a battle for the top spots in the team scoring, which

remained close throughout the evening. The Hartford/Slinger co-op finished eighth out of eight teams with 29 points.

“The conference is very well balanced. The best balance there’s been,” Bloomier said, noting his team is in its fourth year in the North Shore. “I can’t say enough about the quality of athletes that are in this conference. It’s very solid.”

To prove that point, six of the eight North Shore programs won at least one event during the meet, with West Bend, Homestead and Whitefish Bay each taking first-place medals in three events while team champion Cedarburg won two events.

“Relay scoring kind of keep everybody in it. You can’t make any mistakes. You don’t want to be disqualified in any relays,” Bloomier said about the key

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to success in the team standings. "You've just got to stay in the game, stay in the scoring and swim as fast as you can and have fun."

Every point was important, whether it came from finishing first or by beating an opponent to the wall to add a tally to the team score.

West Bend got a strong performance early on from the 400-yard medley relay entry of Lily Inkmann, Chloe Rummel, Nicole Walters and Maren McDonnell. They won the race with a time of 4 minutes, 19.29 seconds, which was five seconds faster than the second-place effort by Cedarburg.

"We led off with freshmen. We actually had two freshmen, Lily and Chloe," Bloomier said. "We love that race."

"That's kind of the important thing of trying to win a relay meet. You've got to stay in that top three," he added about a group that accomplished considerably more than that. "They just swam really well."

Another early highlight for West Bend came in diving, as the pairing of Madison Rummel and Mallory Spaeth placed third with a score of 208.65 points. Homestead won a competitive battle off the 1-meter board with a score of 242.80, while Whitefish Bay took second (211.45) and Grafton placed fourth (197.30).

"Our divers did outstand-

ing. They got third place. Homestead is loaded with their diving," Bloomier said, "and I told the girls that being third is outstanding, because Grafton is tough, Whitefish Bay is good."

West Bend also took first place in the 800 freestyle relay thanks to the efforts of Ashley Jankowski, Madison Nikkinen, Audrianna Rocker and Inkmann. They finished in 8:34.77.

"They are our best 200 girls," Bloomier stated after the quartet lived up to that billing.

West Bend was also the winner of the 400 free relay, as McDonnell, Roecker, Majewski and Nikkinen pooled their talents to clock in at 4:00.35.

"Maren led off. She started off with a 57," Bloomier said about the split by McDonnell that put the team in a good spot after the opening leg. "Outstanding swim."

West Bend fared well in a handful of other events as well. Roecker, Brynn Bauer, Maya Majewski and Walters claimed second in the 400 individual medley relay (4:39.54) and Katie Frey, McDonnell, Jankowski and Inkmann took second in the 500 free (5:00.48). The 300 breaststroke relay of Rummel, Bauer, Chloe Keyser and Walter added third-place points to the team total with a time of 3:24.02.

The highlight of the evening for Hartford/Slinger team came in the 200 free relay, as Helen Wilson, Payton Jankowski, Becky Passeri and Lucie



Photo by Mark Justesen/Conley Media

West Bend's Nicole Walters takes off for the final leg of the 400-yard individual medley relay as Maya Majewski finishes her leg of the relay.

Smith took third place in 1:48.98.

The best news of all, according to Bloomier, is that everyone in the conference was back together again to enjoy the relay meet after the competition was split between two locations last year as a COVID-19

precaution. "No question about it. It's great to see everybody together and actually hear people cheering other than coaches cheering for their own kids," the veteran West Bend coach said. "We talked about that at the beginning of the meet."