

Cougars win title; Drake sets record

Written by Mike Condon

Saturday, 01 November 2014 19:35 -



Not even a state-record performance from Linn-Mar's Kelsey Drake could overshadow a dominant team effort from Cedar Rapids Kennedy.

Drake, the Lions' super sophomore, set an all-time Iowa best in winning the 100-yard butterfly in Saturday's district meet at the Linn-Mar Aquatics Center. While Drake was the individual star, Kennedy was the team turning in good swim after good swim.

For one of the few times this season, veteran Cougars Coach John Ross was able to look on the deck and see his team at full strength. They responded by winning five events and had at least three top-six finishers in four events to take the team title.

Kennedy finished with 485 points to outdistance Metro rivals Linn-Mar (430) and Cedar Rapids Washington (307). All champions from the six districts around the state along with the next-best 18 finishers qualified for the state meet next Saturday at the Marshalltown YMCA.

"I can't tell you how happy I am with the way we swam today," Ross said. "This is what swimming is about to me. We swam as a team and we had so many people swim so well today.

"We have battled health issues all season," he continued. "This was the meet for us this year. Winning this was our goal."

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Drake's shining moment came in the 100-yard butterfly. She touched in a remarkable 54.51 seconds, eclipsing the previous mark of 54.57 set in 2007 by West Des Moines Valley's Alexa Mehesan.

"It meant so much to break it (in her home pool), because I wasn't expecting it," Drake said. "To have gone that fast, words can't express. I was overwhelmed. I couldn't believe it when I saw the time."

The fact Drake was not tapered for the meet made the accomplishment more amazing.

"I (was) not tapered today," she said. "I didn't have any expectations, like I said. I wanted to come in and swim fast to have a good placing at state, but I never saw this coming. Next week is where it really counts."

Drake also won the 200 individual medley and was on the winning 400 freestyle relay for the Lions. Linn-Mar sophomore Jennifer Jenks was the only other individual double-winner, taking the 100 and 200 freestyles.



While not boasting any individual stars, Kennedy's depth showed from the beginning. The Cougars did win five events, but it was their ability to score large amounts of points in the individual events that proved to be the difference.

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"We knew we had the kind of team built for a meet like this," Ross said. "We have a lot of talented girls and in a meet like this, that can lead to a lot of points."

Ross said all his swimmers performed well, but had special praise for senior captain Sam Jacobsen, who won the 100 backstroke and was on two winning relays.

"I can't ask for a better group of leaders on the team and Sam has been a great leader to the younger kids," Ross said. "She has been a part of this from the beginning and has really helped shape the character of this team."

Jacobsen spoke loudly and proudly about her Cougar mates.

"I could not be more proud of my teammates," she said. "I am truly honored to be a captain of this team."

"It's an amazing feeling to come (to Linn-Mar) and win," Jacobsen continued. "We have been healthy rivals with Linn-Mar since day one when I came on this team. It just feels really good to come in here and leave with a win."

Asked to come up with a turning point in the meet, Jacobsen pointed to the opening event.

"Honestly, I think it was the (200) medley relay," she said. "After out-touching Linn-Mar, I kind of had the feeling that it was going to be our day."

Drake was impressed by the effort put forth by the Cougars.

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"They were incredibly fast. Good for them," she said. "We were a little shocked by that."

This meet was one for the Cougars, but Ross knows the state meet could be Linn-Mar's time to shine.

"They have some great individuals," he said. "We had a lot of girls tapered for today so we have to hope it carries over. Linn-Mar is capable of having a great state meet."

Drake is banking on that.

"Today was the day we got into position," she said. "Next week is what we have been shooting for. Now we just have to get ready for that challenge."

DISTRICT SWIM MEET
At Linn-Mar Aquatic Center

TEAM STANDINGS

1. Kennedy 485, 2. Linn-Mar 430, 3. Washington 307, 4. Dubuque Senior 264, 5. Decorah 202, 6. Dubuque Wahlert 164, 7. Dubuque Hempstead 133, 8. Cedar Rapids Jefferson 98, 9. Keokuk 53, 10. Tipton 46.

EVENT RESULTS
(*Designates state qualifier)

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Winners and Top 6 Metro finishers

Diving (held Thursday): *1. Mikaela Lengwin (LM), 457.50, *2. Alyssa Deusso (LM) 438.10, *3. Georgia Sanderson (LM) 408.80, *4. Carolyn Simon (K) 376.55, *5. Jayden Lovell (K) 362.90, *6. Courtney Fisher (K) 358.55, *7. Amara Taylor (W) 345.05.

200 Medley Relay: *1. Kennedy (Sam Jacobsen, Brooke Timmerman, Taylor Golden, Kristen Siebenga) 1:49.72; *2. Linn-Mar (Lizzie Adams, Paige Broghammer, Kelsey Drake, Hailey Harms) 1:50.17, *3. Washington (Kaitlyn Nemickas, Caitlin Sievers, Lauren Havertape, Logan Eckhardt) 1:53.27.

200 Freestyle: *1. Jennifer Jenks (LM) 1:53.46, *2. Maddie Bagby (K) 1:56.56; 4. Stephanie Jenks (LM) 1:59.69, 5. Emily Nelson (W) 1:59.84.

200 Individual Medley: *1. Kelsey Drake (LM) 2:04.51; *3. Mackinzee Macho (K) 2:15.44, *4. Brooke Timmerman (K) 2:15.72, 5. Paige Broghammer (LM) 2:17.84, 6. Taylor Golden (K) 2:19.20.

50 Freestyle: *1. Kristen Siebenga (K) 24.36, *2. Darby Manternach (K) 24.72, *3. Lauren Havertape (W) 24.82, *4. Lizzie Adams (LM) 24.86, 6. Hailey Harms (LM) 25.45.

100 Butterfly: *1. Kelsey Drake (LM) 54.51, *3. Mackinzee Macho (K) 1:01.05, *4. Lauren Havertape (W) 1:01.62, 5. Taylor Golden (K) 1:01.94, 6. Josie Thompson (J) 1:02.14.

100 Freestyle: *1. Jennifer Jenks (LM) 52.04, *3. Maddie Bagby (K) 53.49, *4. Kristen Siebenga (K) 55.07, 5. Darby Manternach (K) 55.09.

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500 Freestyle: *1. Emily Nelson (W) 5:17.51, *2. Stephanie Jenks (LM) 5:19.49, *4. Sarah Gannon (K) 5:25.98, 5. Delaney Thoma (W) 5:28.43, 6. Kelly Wingerson (LM) 5:35.04.

200 Freestyle Relay: *1. Kennedy (Kristin Siebenga, Maddie Bagby, Lydia Lang, Sam Jacobsen) 1:38.25, *2. Linn-Mar (Jennifer Jenks, Stephanie Jenks, Paige Broghammer, Kelly Wingerson) 1:40.71.

100 Backstroke: *1. Sam Jacobsen (K) 58.55, *2. Jessica Williams (K) 1:00.85, *3. Lizzie Adams (LM) 1:01.92, *4. Kaitlyn Nemickas (W) 1:01.96, 6. Kennedy Smith (K) 1:04.87.

100 Breaststroke: *1. Brooke Timmerman (K) 1:08.76, *2. Logan Eckhardt (W) 1:09.07, 3. Paige Broghammer (LM) 1:10.56, 4. Caitlin Sievers (W) 1:11.36, 5. Raquel Green (K) 1:12.59, 6. Larkyn Aldrich (K) 1:13.06.

400 Freestyle Relay: *1. Linn-Mar (Lizzie Adams, Stephanie Jenks, Jenn Jenks, Kelsey Drake) 3:35.17, *2. Kennedy (Darby Manternach, Maddie Bagby, Sam Jacobsen, Lydia Yang) 3:37.25; 6. Washington (Lucy Ernst, Delaney Thoma, Alyssa Harris, Emily Nelson) 3:51.50.