

Proud Cougars take 9th at state swim

Written by Jim Ecker

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MARSHALLTOWN - The Cedar Rapids Kennedy girls swimming team did not have any superstars or state champions on the squad this year, but the Cougars featured a talented pool of athletes who epitomize the team concept of the sport.

It showed Saturday.

Kennedy scored points in 11 out of 12 events and finished a gratifying ninth at the 50th annual state meet at the Marshalltown YMCA.

"I'm very proud of the team effort that we had," said Coach John Ross. "Getting top 10, that was one of our goals. I'm really pleased with that. And to see kids on the podium, that was another aspect that we wanted.

"It's been a long time since we've had somebody up on the podium.

Individuals and relay teams have to finish in the top-6 of their event to climb the podium for the awards ceremony. The Cougars did that three times Saturday with big smiles.

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Maddie Bagby placed fourth in the 100 freestyle. Jessica Williams finished fifth in the 100 backstroke. And Williams, Mackinzee Macho, Taylor Golden and Kirsten Siebenga took sixth in the 200 medley relay.

The Cougars used their depth to score 128 points for ninth place in a talented field.

"It feels great. It really does," said Macho. "Our team competed so well this season. It was awesome.

"We're pretty well-round, so I'm proud of our team. We just love each other so much," she said. "And the positivity we have is overwhelming, so that's what helps us out in our events."

Ames ran away with the team championship with 355 points. Pleasant Valley finished second, followed by Johnston, Waukee, Ankeny, West Des Moines Valley, Cedar Falls, Southeast Polk, Kennedy and Bettendorf in the top 10.



The Washington Warriors finished 15th and Jefferson was 32nd. The Linn-Mar Lions did not score.

The Cougars barely missed several other trips to the podium for awards. Macho placed seventh in the 200 individual medley and ninth in the 100 breaststroke in a strong overall performance. Kennedy also placed seventh in the 200 freestyle relay and ninth in the 400 freestyle relay.

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Darby Manternach, Bagby, Kassidy Lovig and Siebenga swam on the 200 freestyle relay. Manternach, Bagby, Lovig and Lydia Yang formed the 400 freestyle relay.

"I'm really proud of us today," said Bagby. "It was a really great experience to be able to do this well with this group of girls at state.

"We're a strong team and we're very strong-minded," she said, "and when we put our mind to doing something we expect to have an outcome the way we want it."

Bagby jumped from 16th in the 100 free last year to fourth this season.

"I think that was a really good accomplishment for myself," she said. "I have a lot of really good teammates pushing me this year and I had lots of good competition to help me get where I wanted to be."

The top-16 individuals and top-16 relays in each event scored points for their teams. Kennedy nearly scored points in all 12 events, but Williams finished 17th in the 100 butterfly by two-hundredths of a second.

"I'm blessed with the depth of talent that we have," said Ross. "They unite together as a group toward each other. It's very satisfying. They're great to be around."

Lauren Havertape had a good day for the Washington Warriors. She finished ninth in the 100 butterfly, 15th in the 50 freestyle and helped her team place eighth in the medley relay with Kaitlyn Nemickas, Caitlyn Sievers and Logan Eckhardt. Jenny Hughes placed ninth in the 500 free for Washington.

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Josie Thompson finished 14th in the 100 butterfly for Jefferson.

Allyssa Fluit of Southeast Polk, Lexi Horner of Johnston and Sarah Schemmel of Muscatine won two individual events Saturday.

TEAM STANDINGS

1. Ames 355, 2. Pleasant Valley 197.5, 3. Johnston 188, 4. Waukee 185, 5. Ankeny 155, 6. West Des Moines Valley 148, 7. Cedar Falls 143, 8. Southeast Polk 139, 9. Kennedy 128, 10. Bettendorf 80.5, 15. Washington 46, 32. Jefferson 3.

CHAMPIONS

Diving - Claire Park, Pleasant Valley, 517.95
200 medley relay - Ames 1:45.65
200 free - Allyssa Fluit, Southeast Polk, 1:47.53
200 IM - Lexi Horner, Johnston, 2:05.04
50 free - Sarah Schemmel, Muscatine, 23.24
100 fly - Samantha Hedrick, Newton, 55.01
100 free - Sarah Schemmel, Muscatine, 50.51
500 free - Allyssa Fluit, Southeast Polk, 4:54.78
200 free relay - Ames 1:35.57
100 back - Sophie Sorenson, Ames, 54.61 (record)
100 breast - Lexi Horner, Johnston, 1:05.04
400 free relay - Ames 3:29.15 (record)

KENNEDY PLACEWINNERS

4. Maddie Bagby, 100 free, 53.05

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5. Jessica Williams, 100 back, 58.54
6. 200 medley relay (Jessica Williams, Mackinzee Macho, Taylor Golden, Kirsten Siebenga) 1:48.56
7. Mackinzee Macho, 200 IM, 2:10.74
7. 200 free relay (Darby Manternach, Maddie Bagby, Kassidy Lovig, Kirsten Siebenga) 1:38.18
9. Mackinzee Macho, 100 breast, 1:07.95
9. 400 free relay (Darby Manternach, Maddie Bagby, Kassidy Lovig, Lydia Yang) 3:37.43
11. Kassidy Lovig, 500 free, 5:16.37
16. Jayden Lovell, diving, 383.70
16. Kassidy Lovig, 200 free, 1:57.74
16. Kirsten Siebenga, 50 free, 24.89
16. Darby Manternach, 50 free, 24.89
16. Darby Manternach, 100 free, 54.47

WASHINGTON PLACEWINNERS

8. Medley relay (Kaitlyn Nemickas, Caitlyn Sievers, Lauren Havertape, Logan Eckhardt) 1:50.22
9. Lauren Havertape, 100 fly, 58.80
9. Jenny Hughes, 500 free, 5:10.26
14. Logan Eckhardt, 100 breast, 1:08.84
15. Lauren Havertape, 50 free, 24.88
16. Caitlyn Sievers, 100 breast, 1:09.40

JEFFERSON PLACEWINNERS

14. Josie Thompson, 100 fly, 1:00.38

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