Island Sports

Jamestown swimmers excel at New England Championships

By Stephanie Heelan Cotsonas

Jamestown was well represented on the Newport Wahoos swim team this season, including several islanders who advanced to the New England Swimming Championships held on March 21 and 22 at Boston University and Harvard University. The Wahoos placed 46 out of 71 teams and Jamestown represented one-third of the 37 swimmers who qualified and competed from the team.

Jamestown had four individual qualifiers including Madison Tregenza, Andrew Bauer, Noah Simmons, and Sam Avayzian-Hancock. Those competing on at least one relay included Gavin Wagner, Theo Simmons, Jack Westall, Charley Simmons, Katy Brayman, Eliza Kallfelz, Lexi Brayman, Emily Kallfelz and Libby LaMantia. Other islanders on the team included Caleb Wagner, Nellie Tamboe and Collette Baker.

Head coach Heather Markman said the Jamestown presence was definitely felt this year.

In the 8 and under age group, Tregenza placed 12th in the 25-yard butterfly and 13th in the 25-yard freestyle. Andrew Bauer placed 14th in the 25-yard breaststroke and 23rd in the 25-yard backstroke. "Andrew will have his name up on the record board this year, breaking the 50-yard breaststroke record for the 8 and under boys. Madison shared her time between swimming and hockey, but excelled being our best all-around swimmer in the 8 and under age group. Whatever event we had her in, we knew we were scoring points," Markman said

As a first year swimmer, Bauer was more than happy to qualify for New England's. He said, "Getting to the New England's in your first year is a big thing and it was fun. I'm glad I didn't have to get up a 6 o'clock like the older kids. Swimming is fun, I love the water. My parents always say I'm a fish. "

Strong swimmers
Thirteen island swimmers competed for the Newport Wahoos in the New England meet last Saturday. Not pictured is Andrew Bauer.
Photo by Caitlin Downing

Also in the 8 and under age group**,** the 100-yard freestyle relay team of Theo Simmons, Jack Westall, Gavin Wagner, and Jake Steen placed ninth with a time of 1:12.50. The medley relay team of Gavin Wagner, Andrew Bauer, Jake Steen and Theo Simmons placed 12th with a time of 1:24.17. The 9- and 10-year-old boys' medley relay team including Berk Tural, Noah Simmons, Gregory Gordon and Ben Steen placed seventh and broke their own team record set in the last home meet of the season on Feb. 28 versus the Cape Cod Makos. Noah Simmons swam the breaststroke leg of this relay, which broke the team record set back in 1993. "Noah has excelled as a 10-year old this year and was a big part of the record-breaking relay team," Markman said

Noah placed 17th in the 100-yard breaststroke while breaking his own team record in the event. He also placed 21st in the 50 breast and 24th in the 100 IM. Sam Avayzian-Hancock placed 13th in the 100 butterfly, 21st in the 100 IM and 34th in the 50 free. Markman said Avayzian-Hancock is one of the nominees for the Leadership or "spirit award" to be handed out at the awards banquet on Friday, April 3.

The Wahoos wrapped up their regular season at the SENECY championships held at the Westerly YMCA on March 7 and 8. Competing against 14 teams from around Southeastern New England, the Wahoos finished sixth overall. The 8 and under age-group took first place and the 9- and 10-year-olds finished second in their respective age groups. Sam Avayzian-Hancock won the 50-yard butterfly and took second place in the 100-yard IM. Other notable performances are included below.

In the 8 and under age group Bauer placed third in the 25-yard breaststroke and sixth in the 25-yard backstroke. Gavin Wagner placed fifth in the 100 IM and 10th in the 25-free. Theo Simmons placed sixth in the 100 IM and seventh in the 25-yard free. Derek Allen placed eighth in the 25 butterfly. The 100-yard medley relay team of Gavin Wagner, Bauer, Jake Steen and Theo Simmons took second. The freestyle relay team of Jake Steen, Gavin Wagner, Westall and Theo Simmons also took second place.

Tregenza took fourth in the 25-yard free and the 25-yard butterfly. Charley Simmons placed 11th in the 25-yard free. The relay team of Charley Simmons, Noelle Brown, Tregenza and Simone Johnson took seventh in the medley relay and fourth in the free relay. Katy Brayman and Ani Avayzian-Hancock were on the 10th place freestyle relay.

In the 9- and 10-year-old age group Noah Simmons placed second in the 50-yard breaststroke and third in the 100 IM. The relay team of Tural, Noah Simmons, Gordon and Ben Steen placed third in the medley and second in the freestyle relays.

Eliza Kallfelz placed fifth in the 50-yard backstroke and sixth in the 50-yard breaststroke. Lexi Brayman placed ninth in the 50-yard breaststroke. The medley relay team of Eliza Kallfelz, Lexi Brayman, Sam Avayzian-Hancock and Bella Back took third.

The 11- and 12-year-old girls' 200-yard medley relay team of Megan Steen, Emily Kallfelz, LaMantia and Jordan Glenning placed ninth. The free relay team of Emily Kallfelz, Glenning, Kathryn Stack, Megan Steen took seventh place. Emily Kallfelz placed eighth in the 100-yard freestyle and seventh in the 50-yard breaststroke. LaMantia placed 12th in the 200-yard freestyle. The 11- and 12-year-old boys' 200-yard medley relay team of Rex Leonard, Ben Rudman, Stephen Tart and Ben Amundson took sixth.

Eight-year-old Gavin Wagner competed in his first New England's and said competing at Harvard "was kind of scary and fun at the same time." He was surprised by how many teams there were and how big the pool was. Younger brother Caleb asked Gavin how it felt "swimming in front of millions of people."

Markman said, "I couldn't be happier with this season. My initial goal of building back up the team unity and spirit was well accomplished as well as seeing personal bests from almost every single one of my swimmers throughout the season. We are in a rebuilding phase as 80-percent of the team is 10 and under, but with such a young team we did fantastic when paired up with much larger teams with a giant older program. We brought twice as many swimmers to the New England Championships as last year, and the most in the last 10 years."

Seven-year-old Caleb Wagner completed his second year swimming for the Wahoos and said, "I liked the meets and the races were exciting. My favorite event is the breaststroke because I was good at it."

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