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[Intelligencer Swimming Notebook: CB South's McLaughlin aims for first berth at state meet](#)

By Bill Keen
Staff Writer

It's not completely unheard of to find a college athlete who has a scholarship in one sport but participates in a different sport in the offseason. It's in high school where three-sport standouts like **Central Bucks South** senior Kyle McLaughlin are the norm.

He plays football in the fall, baseball in the spring and, in the winter, is a sprint freestyle specialist on the Titans' swimming team, serving as team captain along with diver Mike Frank.

"Kyle has a great personality; he's awesome," South coach Jeff Lake said. "It just fits his personality to be a leader, and that's why his teammates voted him captain. He's loose in practice, very self-motivated, but he wants to do well, so he's not afraid to ask what he can do to be better and he'll follow your advice."

McLaughlin made it to the District One Class AAA meet last year in the 50- and 100-yard freestyles and has already qualified for this year's championships. However, he's aiming way beyond a dip in the pool at La Salle.

"Kyle set his goal to make it to states at the start of preseason," Lake said. "He got himself in excellent shape, worked extra hard and right now he's flying. He really looks like he's ready."

A name to remember

Bob Israel knows a thing or two about swimming, but the former boys and girls head coach at **Upper Moreland** was a student of diving as well, and now serves as the program's diving coach.

Listen to what he has to say about freshman Natalie Szopo, as talented a diver as anyone the veteran coach has seen in a long time.

"Natalie is going to be a good one - a very good one," he said. "She has a gymnastics background and has been competing with both Centennial Aquatics and at La Salle, where she gets to work on 3-meter as well as 1-meter boards. It's been a joy to coach her."

Israel said Szopo has a special combination of talent and an almost instant grasp of what she might have done wrong on a dive. In fact, the coach could think of only one negative thing to say about the talented ninth-grader.

"She's very enthusiastic and just wants to keep practicing; she really is like that pink rabbit," he said with a chuckle. "I'm serious. Sometimes she goes so long I have to tell her to sit down and relax."

She's her own person

One of the worst things a coach can do is to compare an athlete to an older sibling. That's why **Germantown Academy's** Dick Shoulberg made it clear three years ago that Sarah Aemisegger is not her sister - scholastic All-American, current Princeton University standout and budding national star, Alicia.

"In seventh grade, Sarah was afraid we would compare her to Alicia, and when she realized we never did, she relaxed and just let her natural talent take over," the veteran coach said. "It's real enjoyment for me to watch her grow and mature into the athlete she has become."

The younger Aemisegger swims the events that are important to college coaches: the 50-, 100- and 200-yard freestyle.

“She really enjoys the swimming as much for the social aspect of being with the other girls,” Shoulberg said. “However, she is looked upon as a leader on the team despite the fact she’s only a sophomore. The kids gravitate towards her, and she has already become one of our key performers.”

Just the facts

Keen's Top 5:

Girls

1. Souderton (8-1)
- 2 North Penn (6-1)
3. Germantown Academy (7-1)
4. Central Bucks West (5-3)
5. Central Bucks East (5-3)

Boys

1. North Penn (6-1)
2. Souderton (7-2)
3. Central Bucks East (7-1)
4. Germantown Academy (4-2)
5. Lansdale Catholic (4-6)

Meet to watch:

Can anybody make a serious run at the North Penn boys? Central Bucks East will take a shot 3:45 p.m. Friday in a double dual meet with the girls' teams.

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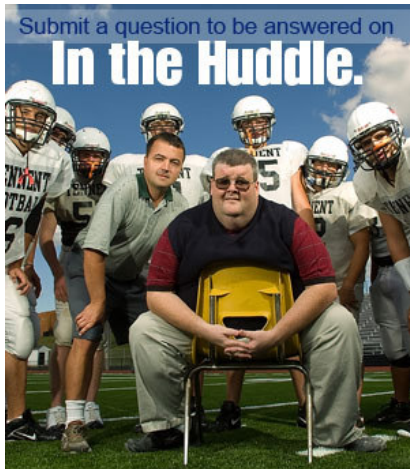
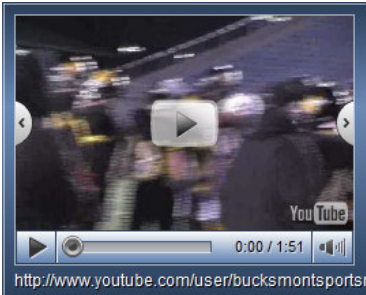
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