

Andover Overcomes Defending New England Champions

Today, the winners of the last seven New England Championships met at Deerfield for their annual dual meet. Because Andover did not attend last year's Championships, this was the first meeting between the two full squads in a year. Despite the great mid-season performances of Deerfield--which won seven of nine individual events and two of three relays--Andover came away with a convincing victory, outscoring Deerfield in eight of twelve events and tying in another.

The meet began with the relay of Darren Ty '16 (26.1), Scott Simpson '14 (27.2), Alex Li '15 (23.7), and David Cao '14 (22.2) winning the 200 Medley Relay in 1:39.35, the third fastest squad in New England this year. Charlee Van Eijk '14 (26.5), Aaron Teo '15 (27.7), Chris Li '15 (24.8), and Christian Alberga '17 (21.9) placed second in 1:41.18, the fifth fastest squad. Particularly impressive were Simpson's and Alberga's splits. Team score: 12-2.

The top two 200 freestylers in New England so far this year faced off in the meet's second event: Deerfield's Matt Hrabchak '15 and Andover's co-captain, Joe Faller '14. At the 50, Hrabchak led 24.3 to 24.5 and at the 100, 51.1 to 51.2. The swimmers were even at the 150, 1:18.0, but Hrabchak managed to pull away at the end to win 1:44.14 to 1:44.77. Marcello Rossi '16 was third in a personal best of 1:48.39, and Travis Bouscaren '14 was fourth in 1:50.18. Swimming non-scoring exhibition, Richard Zhong '17 swam 1:54.22. Team score: 21-9.

In the 200 IM, Deerfield's Miles Smachlo '16, brother of Andover's Alex Smachlo '11, won in a quick 1:56.36, followed by Deerfield's Alan Lam '15 in 1:59.86. Andover got on the board with third, fourth, and fifth: Simpson (2:02.73), Andrew Yang '14 (2:05.14), and Alex Li (2:05.59). Team score: 27-19.

Competing in the first 50 Freestyle of his career, co-captain Tim Wynter '14 placed second in an impressive 21.85, just following Deerfield's versatile Quinn Smith '14, who swam 21.48. Alberga was third in 22.77 and Cao was fifth in 23.12. In non-scoring exhibition, Thomas Choi '16 swam 24.34, and Elliot Sagay '15 swam 24.42. Team score going into the diving: 35-27.

The Andover diving trio of Jack Belluche '16 (185.35 points), Kade Call '14 (161.45), and Graham Johns '14 (161.40) continue to improve under the tutelage of Coach Belinda Canavan and swept the event. Team score: 48-29.

The swimming portion of the competition resumed with Andover continuing to build on its lead. In the 100 Butterfly, Smachlo swam a blistering 51.13, but Andover again outscored Deerfield in an event. Alex Li was second (54.03), Ty was third (54.74), and Chris Li was fourth (55.43). Team score: 57-36.

Faller returned to action in the 100 Freestyle, and this time, he faced Smith. In another great race, Faller was just out-touched, 48.20 to 47.80. Simpson switched events at the last minute and was third in a strong 49.83, and Cao was fourth in 50.02. Jonathan Xue '17 swam 52.19 in non-scoring exhibition. Team score: 66-43.

In the 500 Freestyle, Andover again placed second (Rossi, 4:59.82), third (Teo, 5:00.58), and fourth (Bouscaren, 5:06.65), behind Hrabchak, who won in 4:47.81. Choi swam 5:12.83 in exhibition. Team score: 75-50.

With star sprinter Michael Camarda '14 not swimming in the meet, Andover's 200 Freestyle Relays had to perform particularly well. The squad of Faller (22.4), Wynter (21.0), Cao (22.3), and Alberga (21.9) swam 1:27.87--less than one-half second off the new school record established last Saturday--for second, while Alex Li (23.3), Sagay (23.4), Xue (23.6), and Yang (22.9) swam 1:33.33 for third. Team score: 81-58.

Appropriately, Andover secured the team win in the 100 Backstroke. Wynter cruised to victory in 54.24, with Ty third in 56.81, and Van Eijk fourth in 57.50. Team score: 92-63.

In the 100 Breaststroke, Teo swam 1:01.05 for second; Yang swam 1:04.96 for third; and Xue swam 1:06.81 for fourth. Team score: 101-70.

Faller (48.3), Bouscaren (49.7), Simpson (49.0), and Wynter (47.8) went 3:14.96 in the 400 Freestyle Relay for second, and Alberga (49.4), Ty (51.8), Chris Li (52.0), and Rossi (49.1) went 3:22.52 for third. Final team score: 107-78.

Given the difficulty of the week just completed, in the pool and in the classroom, the Andover Boys were pleased with their performance--24 season-best times--against such strong competition, and they look forward to two more weeks of heavy training before they begin resting for the championship season.