

Wave washes over Bunnell

BY JEN COSTA

Layout Editor

The 98 match winning streak of the girls' Darien High School volleyball team nearly came to an end the night of Friday, November 15. The team that attempted to claim the life of the streak was Bunnell. With an imposing record of 24-1, Bunnell came into the match prepared to defeat the Wave. Fortunately, they could not overcome the Wave, who came crashing down on Bunnell's hopes for an upset right from the start.

Things looked grim for Darien as the first two sets, 13-15 and 3-15, went to Bunnell. Bunnell's star player, Sarah Katinger, dominated the Bunnell team in the match. Katinger totaled 43 kills and 26 service points in the match. In the third set, the Wave was down 10-3, and things were not looking too good for the team, so a time out was called. Immediately following the hiatus, an announcement was made telling fans to stay in their seats for the awards ceremony. This seemed to be a bad harbinger for the Wave. "I was so angry! They had just given up on us," said sophomore Josie Weymann in response to the announcement. Despite this announcement, the

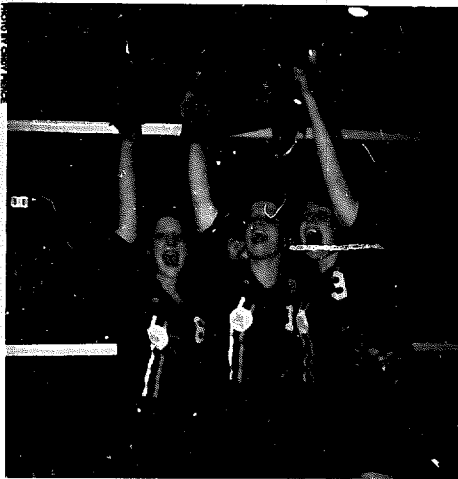
team fought back to win the set 15-13.

The fourth set was much of the same. The Wave began the set slowly dragging themselves out of a 6-0 deficit, but they quickly jumped to take the lead. Weymann contributed seven service points to give the Wave the lead. The ball rallied back and forth for several minutes. With the set tied at 13, sophomore Christie Smirnoff made two spectacular serves to end the set at 15-13. Junior tri-captain Julie Schoknecht had these thoughts about the game, "This was a culmination of our work throughout the year. We couldn't let it slip."

Having come back from two sets down, momentum was on the Wave's side entering the decisive fifth set. As in the previous two sets, the Wave started out trailing, this time 4-0. This set was another nail-biter for the Wave as Darien then came back with 12 points to gain a lead of 12-5. Senior tri-captain Alex Bisset served three quick points to end game and crush Bunnell's dreams of the 1996 state title.

The Wave faced Bunnell last year in the State Fi-

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Tri-Captains Julie Schoknecht, Alex Bisset, and Jenny Beuhr celebrate after capturing the Wave's fourth consecutive Class M State title with a rousing comeback win over a tough Bunnell team.

Swimmers capture 3rd in States

By NOREEN GILLESPIE

Associate Editor

It wasn't meant to be.

In a fight that took the girls Class S Swimming and Diving Championship into a bitter duel between three teams to the final relay of the meet, the only thing that the Darien High School girls could do was hope. The meet was separated by nine points from first to third; the winner of the relay to be crowned the Class S Champion. With Wilton in first, New Canaan in second, and Darien in third, Darien swimmers and parents held their breaths in the hopes of clinching their first state championship in three years.

GIRLS' SWIMMING

"I think that we were nervous," said sophomore standout Whitney Hooper. "But we were excited to see the whole team standing behind our lane, letting us know that they were behind us no matter what happened." The relay ended up in third, with members Hooper, Lizzy Boyle, Lauren Dudley, and Michelle Zarilli all splitting lifetime bests in the relay.

Although the loss of the meet was a heartbreak, the fact that the team was actually competitive was a pleasant surprise. Darien was seeded third by a margin of nearly one hundred points. Among competitors such as Wilton and New Canaan, duel meet and FCIAC losses for the Blue Wave, the team was not considered to even be a force at the highly competitive Class S meet.

"Considering that we weren't even expected to be in the running, missing first by only a few points is a huge accomplishment," said Senior Tri-Captain Susan Shepard.

Going into the finals, Coach Jeff Allen encouraged the girls not to look to the other teams. "They have everything to lose and we have everything to gain," he said to his squad of finalists. "We have the advantage." Entering the finals, the girls were favored by a 40-point margin based on the results from the Saturday, November 9 trials.

Despite the loss of the meet, Coach Allen was not disillusioned. "I'm proud of how the team went after this meet," he said. "No one ever expected us to be in a position to win the meet going into the last relay. It is a tribute to the girls' determination, pride, and will."

There were several key standout performances that led to the competitiveness of the Wave at the championship, most notably the first

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Volume 58 Sports Update

Darien High School

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Wave rolls; Rams up next

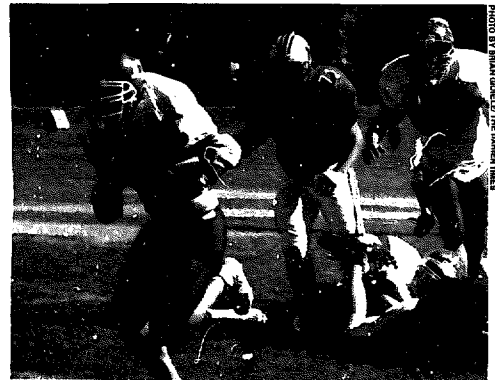
By SCOTT GOODWIN

Sports Editor

The Darien High School Blue Wave football team currently stands at 9-1 and is ranked #2 in Class S. The Blue Wave has annihilated most of its opponents with ease and, has posted four consecutive blowout

FOOTBALL

wins: 42-7 over Wilton, 20-0 against Fairfield, 40-0 versus Central, and 35-6 in its most recent game against Ridgefield. The squad has overcome injuries to Senior full-back/linebacker Mark Okrent and defensive backs Junior Chris Pintauro and Senior Tim O'Connor to dominate its opponents. Leading the high-octane offense have been Junior quarterback Tom DiMenna, Senior tailback Ryan Damon, Okrent, Senior receivers Matt Wilkens and Brian Valentine, Junior receiver Tom Knechtel, and All-State tackle and captain Todd Mossa. Damon has surpassed the 1,000 yard mark for the season and on the all-time Darien High School single season rushing record. DiMenna passing has opened up the offense and led to some outstanding games from the receivers who



Mark Okrent rumbles for big yardage in a recent DHS victory.

each have caught at least three touchdown passes. Wilkens, a tall, fast, Herman Moore-type of receiver has used his superior height to outjump defensive backs and has become DiMenna's favorite target.

The defense has been the backbone of the Blue Wave the whole season. Even when the offense has faltered the defense has always stood strong and kept opponents at bay. Leading the imposing defensive line

have been Mossa, Junior Justin Finnegan, Senior John Miceli, and Senior Brendan Malone. This fearsome foursome has allowed opposing running backs minimal if any yardage throughout the season. Right behind the line and ready to crush any ballcarrier to their way are Darien's linebackers. Okrent and Juniors Jason Allen and Danny

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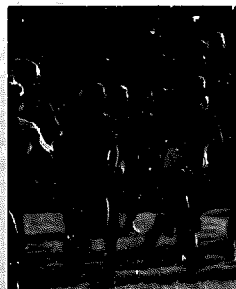
BOYS' SOCCER

Bealer, Maupin, Chiavaroli receive post season honors.

GIRLS' SOCCER

Merrit named to All-State team.

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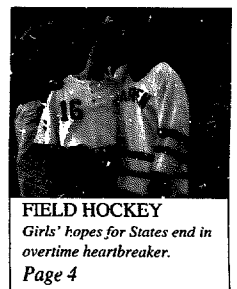
GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

Basich vows 'em at Wickham.

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

Boys gallup to an impressive final record of 12-4.

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Girls' hopes for States end in overtime heartbreaker.

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Boys finish tough season, Bealer honored

By SCOTT GOODWIN

Sports Editor

As their season ended with a 7-1 loss to Wilton, the DHS boys' soccer team left the field knowing that they had given 100% for all eighty minutes of the game despite the score. Unfortunately for the Wave, finding eighty consecutive minutes of hard, consistent play was a challenge that Coach Jim Quigley's squad was unable to master. For the Wave, this was a season marred by missed scoring opportunities, defensive let-downs, slow starts, key-injuries, and bad calls. From a season opening 1-0 loss to Stamford in which Darien directed the lone goal into its own net to a 3-2 loss to an inferior Norwalk team that eliminated the Wave from State Tournament qualification, victories and ties turned into losses with an astounding regularity as the Wave consistently squandered games in late in the second half of play. This year, the Wave was a team of individuals and lacked the cohesiveness that could have turned its 5-8-2

record into a 9-5-1 mark. Also hindering its quest for victory were key injuries to players including Jeff Jones, Jay Maupin, Kristian Linnett, and Keegan Willemson.

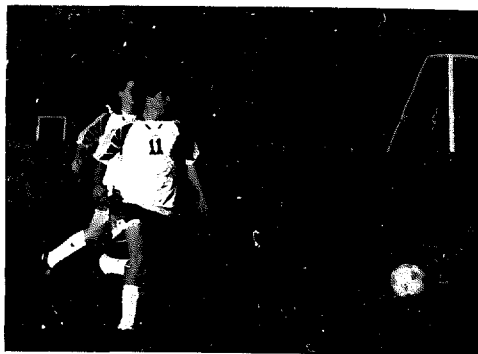
BOYS' SOCCER

Despite its subpar overall record the Wave did have a number of pleasant surprises this season. Junior marking-back Carter Sainz stepped his play up a notch and displayed blazing speed and fiery intensity that made him a force to be reckoned with by Darien's opponents. Another pleasant surprise for Darien was the play of Senior forward Pierre Kreamer who moved to Darien from Paris, France, just prior to the season. Sophomores Leigh Parsons and James Bealer also made significant improvements over last season and played key roles on offense and defense respectively.

The leader of this team though, over the last two years has been Senior midfielder and captain Tim Bealer. Definitely the team's most talented player Tim controlled the

game brilliantly from his midfield position throughout the entire season; it was when other teams were able to shut him down that Darien had trouble scoring goals. For his efforts, Bealer was elected to the All-FCIAC East team along with sophomore goalie Jay Maupin and sweeper Matt Chiavarelli. Bealer and Maupin were also selected to the Coaches' All-State Team and Bealer was also selected to the Hartford Courant State Team. Adding to his already impressive résumé, Bealer has been asked to play in the Senior Bowl, a game involving the best seniors from all across the State. Undoubtedly the most talented player to come through Darien High School in a long time, Bealer will be only the second Blue Wave ever to participate in the game.

"The season had its up and downs, but I think everyone learned a valuable lesson; this season was a learning experience for all the players involved," commented Bealer of the team's roller coaster season. Hopefully, the eight returning start-



Leonard Linnett moves upfield on the right wing in a recent match.

ers including, Maupin, James Bealer, Chiavarelli, Sainz, Parsons, Jones, sophomore Ryan Parker, and Junior Charlie Chacos, can learn from this year's mistakes and show that they have gained the experience needed to be competitive on the FCIAC level when the Wave faces up its cleats next fall. For the Blue

Wave, the bad luck of this season can only be followed by a change in fortune. Who knows, if the ball bounces their way, an FCIAC championship could be within the grasp of the 1997 Blue Wave boys' soccer team.

VOLLEYBALL

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nals. The Wave took this game from Bunnell with a score of 3-1. This year's match was a little harder for the Wave. "I thought we didn't play our best match," said Weymann. The Wave had a tough time with Bunnell's offense, but Bunnell did not expect the Wave's attack in the last three sets.

Throughout the game, fans of each team showed their school spirit. This "Battle of the Fans" went on through time outs and ev-



Even Coach LaRusso was smiling after the Wave's dramatic five game victory over Bunnell.

ery time a team scored a point. Large numbers of fans stood throughout the game waiting for the perfect opportunity to give a cheer for their team. Blue Wave Pride ran deep, within the crowd.

The team is looking forward to next season. With three returning starters, the Wave is looking for a good season. "A lot of players are going to play during the winter in JO's [Junior Olympics]. This will provide depth for the team," said Schoknecht. If the Wave wins the first game of the season, the streak will have reached the century mark.

With emotions overflowing, the awards were presented to the team. Weymann was named MVP of States as well as FCIACs. "It feels really good," said Weymann. "Sometimes they don't realize that you can't have just one MVP. You can't win without the whole team." Darien now holds four State titles. 1996 Division Champions, 1996 FCIAC Champions, and 1996 State Champions will now be added to the banner in the gym.

Girls struggle to break .500

At the conclusion of the 1996 girls soccer season, one must examine the season through aspects other than the disappointing record which the team posted. A seemingly disappointing 5-9-0, the wave fell in close match-ups to teams like Trumbull and rival New Canaan, a game that

GIRLS' SOCCER

was decided in the first five minutes on a fluke goal. Danbury, as well, fell into the streak of disappointments facing the wave. Tied at the end of regulation play, Danbury scored with thirty-one seconds left in sudden death overtime, ending the game and securing a victory. This pattern plagued the Wave during the '96 season.

"We fell short in many of our match-ups with teams that we could have, should have, beaten. That, basically, sums up our season. But, overall, I had more fun and made more memories than any other season here at the high school," said Senior co-captain Allison McKittrick.

In contrast, the Wave's season was highlighted by wins over McMahon, Westhill, Stamford, St. Joes, and especially Greenwich. For the first time in the Wave's history, Darien drowned the Cardinals, 1-0, with Christy Huntley's miraculous header that found the back of the net, breaking a 0-0 tie late in the game.

At the conclusion of the season, Seniors Liz Merritt and Lesley Roxe were selected for All-FCIAC / All-East first and second team recognition. These teams are comprised of



Kerry Lyden fights for the ball in a recent match.

the top 30 players in the area, and are selected by the coaches based on the season's play. This news came as an honor to those Seniors, topping off a memorable season.

"The Wave's record doesn't display how well the team really played. We learned this season how to play as a team, an improvement over every other season that I've coached. With all of the effort that we put into every practice, and the overwhelming spirit that the team demonstrated, the season can be summarized as a success," commented Coach Shaun Fletcher on the '96 squad.

"The fact that every senior was crying at the final game showed how strongly bonded our team was this year. I know that we will never forget this season just because of all of the strong friendships that we have made," added Senior co-captain Elizabeth Merritt.

At the final dinner, after four years of coaching, Shaun Fletcher announced his resignation as girls' head varsity coach. "I'll be leaving for a position as an admissions director at a school in Boston," he said with a tone of hesitation. "The hardest part about my decision was leaving the soccer team. It's been a great four years and I'll really miss the spirit and energy of this team."

Not only does girls' soccer lose their coach next year, but seven seniors will be graduating as well. Merritt, Allison McKittrick, Emily Stevens, Roxe, Kate McGuire, Annie Howard, and goalie Cindy Evans will all be graduating at the conclusion of this year, leaving the team with many openings for next year's varsity squad. The team is going to be forced to rebuild and restructure to fill the void that this year's Seniors will leave.

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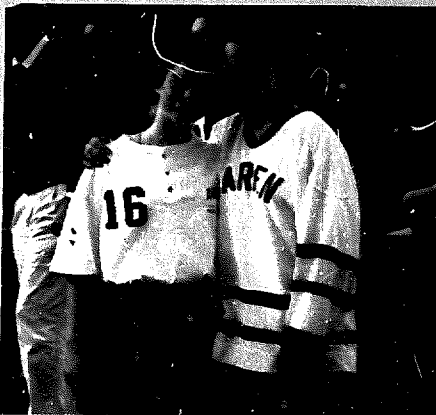
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Watertown downs Wave's State run



By LIZ RIVERS

Contributing Writer

The Darien High School field hockey season as a whole was satisfying for all who participated. The beginning of the season was a little rough for the Wave, but in the end the team figured out what they had to fix to become the team they wanted to be. With a final record of 5-6-4, the

FIELD HOCKEY

team definitely had nothing that would cause shame. All of the games that were played by the DHS Blue Wave were played with enough heart to blow any teams' spirit away.

The final regular season field hockey game was played on October 25, against the Brien McMahon Senators. This game was the final decisive point in Darien's season to decide if the team would be going to the State tournament in November. The Blue Wave proved that they deserved to participate in the competition in defeating the Senators 3-0. The goals were scored by seniors to make their last game memorable for them. The goals were scored by Tory Holdt, Courtney Calabrese, and Tiffany Scholtz. The entire team played with a confidence that the girls from McMahon could not match. The defense was strong because of Seniors Ashley Brown and Natasha Turlinski. Two new midfielders were added to the line up that came up from defense and they fit their new position well. Seniors Liz Rivers and Kristin Murphy helped the mids out and played up to their potential. The strong forward line that scored goals to win the game included Calabrese, Holdt, and Katie Medwar. The victory over Brien McMahon put Darien in the State Competition.

The first round State tournament game played by the Wave was a thriller. The Blue Wave battled Daniel Hand and defeated them 2-1 in double overtime. The goals were scored by Holdt and Medwar, with Medwar tallying the final, and decisive, goal in the game with two minutes left in overtime. The defense was once again superb; Natasha Turlinski and Ashley Brown built a wall against the Hand offense. A new member to the defensive position that played for the state tournament was, Genna Blackman, who also helped the 2-1 victory become possible. The victory was not only winning a game for the Wave, but it also let the girls go on to the second round of States.

The second round game was played against Watertown at Watertown for the Darien High School field hockey team. The weather conditions made it hard for both teams to compete to their fullest ability, and the weather hurt both of the teams. It was raining and windy and the temperatures were 20 to 30 degrees below normal for the November day. The DHS team started things off right by scoring the first goal with Calabrese's help. From that point on, the scoring went back and forth with each team scoring one goal after each other to match up to their competitors' challenge. The Wavers were disappointed, however, because of lack of time. The game was all tied up for almost all of the second half at 3-3, but in the last remaining seconds of the game, Watertown stepped up, and scored on the Blue Wave, making the score 4-3. The game was an excellent one, but a heartbreaker for the Darien Blue Wave. The team's final record for the season of regular games was 4-4-4, and the girls made it to the second round of states with two great games under their belt. All in all, the season was pleasing for all of the players who participated, especially at the end.

Calabrese was named to the All-State team. She had been heavily recruited by Division I schools until choosing to play her college field hockey at Notre Dame.

Girls sprint past competition

By AUDREY DROESCH

Opinion Editor

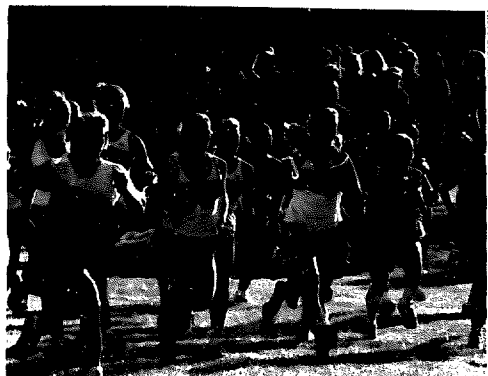
The Darien 1st High School Girls' Cross-Country Team ended its season on Saturday, October 26 with a disappointing 9th place team finish

GIRLS' X-COUNTRY

at the Class M State Meet at Wickham Park in East Hartford. Due to the injuries of Junior Nina Henderson, whose knee had been bothering her all season, and sophomore Kate Crowley, who was recovering from a sprained ankle, the squad was not in top form. Despite a valiant 14th place finish by Junior co-captain Jen Bosich, who qualified in the individual competition, the team did not qualify for advancement into the State Open meet.

"Although, of course, I was disappointed because [our failure to make State Opens] meant that this was my last meet, I truly believe that each person did the best she could," commented Senior co-captain Marisa Saur. "In my opinion, we were successful, because we made this race a real team effort."

"This was my first cross-country state meet," said sophomore sensation Jess Calvey, "and I'm just glad that I got the experience of running in it. When it comes time for States



Darien runners break out of the pack on their way to an impressive finish.

next year, I can use my experience today to serve as a guide for my master strategy."

Sophomore Kate Crowley waxed philosophical about the events of the day, and of the entire season as well. "I have been said that a team is nothing but the sum of its parts," she began. "But it has been my experience that a team is much more than that. A team is what a group of people becomes when they cease to be separate entities and begin to act as one. That is what cross-country has meant to me."

On Friday, November 1, Jen

Bosich traveled to Wickham Park yet again, this time as the sole representative of the Darien Girls' Cross-Country team, to compete in the State Open meet. Senior Ken Poli, also the sole representative from his team, was present as well. Bosich ran very impressively, beating her States time, but unfortunately failed to qualify for the New England meet, unlike her cohort, Poli. Of her season-ending race, Bosich stated, "I was very pleased with this race. Although I sorely missed competing with the rest of my team, I felt that (beating her time from States) was a formidable accomplishment."

FOOTBALL

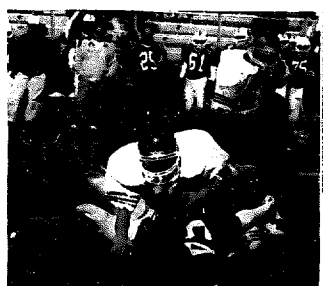
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Kough have racked up tackles by the dozen this season and are the true inspirational leaders on defense. "We have a commitment to excellence," stated Allen of the Blue Wave defenders. The excellence on defense, though, does not end with the front seven. Darien's secondary, although dismantled by injuries has some how managed to completely shut down opposing receivers. In some games, it seems like the Blue Wave defensive backs are intercepting more passes than the opposing quarterback is completing. The secondary-by-committee this year has included Damon, Wilkens, Valentine, Pinturo, O'Connor, Knechtel, Junior Andrew Barnett, and sophomore Andrew Davidson.

One key to the Wave's success has been the play of reserves who have filled in admirably when starters have gone down with injuries. Allen and Kough filled in for Okrent at fullback when he went down with

a knee-injury. Allen even rumbled into the end-zone for the first time in his Blue Wave career on a 30-yard run. At tailback, Junior Jamie Gabriel and sophomore Nick Tarantino have contributed key yardage and have provided a more than adequate option for Coach Mike Sangster to turn to when Damon has needed a rest. On the offensive and defensive lines, Juniors James Srader, Joe DiLella, and Shawn Rycenga have received a lot of playing time spelling starters at a number of different positions.

With its victory over Ridgefield, the Blue Wave clinched a spot in the Class S State Playoffs. Although Darien's upcoming game with arch-rival New Canaan will have few State Play-



The Wave rolls forward over Wilton for another victory.

off implications, the Blue Wave will be not be looking past its Turkey Day matchup with the Rams. Coach Sangster's squad will be looking to avenge last year's blow-out loss to New Canaan. Game time is 10:30 am Saxe Middle School in New Canaan. When asked about the game's significance, DiMenna simply stated, "It's big."

SWIMMING

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place performance of Junior diver Katherine Mattison. Mattison won the event with a score of 430.00, earning individual scores ranging from 8.0, 9.0, and one 10.0. "I started out kind of slow," said Mattison. "I knew that my dives at the end would be the best, so I would be able to pick it up a little. I was thrilled with my performance," she finished. Senior teammate Erin Stinchfield also made her mark at the meet, bringing home valuable seventh place points for the Wave.

The 200 medley relay team of Shepard, Dana Himmel, Katherine Thelin, and Katie Hawes made a de-

but performance for the swimmers with a third place finish. Zarilli, Hooper, Dudley, and Noreen Gillespie competed in the 200 freestyle, earning consecutive third, fourth, fifth, and fifteenth place finishes. Himmel and Christine Rongoe posted eighth and sixteenth places in the 200 individual medley.

Boyle, Katherine Thelin, and Katie Hawes competed in the 50 freestyle for marks of eighth place, eleventh place, and twelfth place. Hooper brought home fourth place points in the 100 fly, as Thelin won eighth. The 100 freestyle saw swimmers from Zarilli (fifth) and Hawes (sixth). Dudley, Shepard, and Gillespie finished in fourth, eighth, and tenth in

the 500 freestyle.

The 200 freestyle relay team of Hawes, Himmel, Hooper, and Zarilli placed third, and Shepard, Boyle, and Rongoe placed third, sixth, and fifteenth in the 100 backstroke. Himmel and Lyn Marie Cocchiaron rounded out the individual events with third and eleventh place finishes in the 100 breaststroke.

The Blue Wave also had three representatives on the Connecticut All State Team: Shepard, Mattison, and Zarilli. Qualifying for the State Open meet at Yale University were Shepard, Himmel, Mattison, Zarilli, Dudley, Hooper, Thelin, Boyle, and Hawes.