



Members of the KMHS boys swim team this season were, front row, left to right, Coach Conrad Martin, Paul Johnsonbaugh, Jay Speight, Darrell Myers and Jason Butler. Second row, Israel Angeles, Rick Clary, Chuck Kaylor, Jeff Taylor and Bergen Hall. Back row, Tim Stroup, Nathan Mayse, Dan Messenger and Sage Fulton. Not pictured, Tim Cresawn, Greg George, Jonah Ingle, Will Mauney, J. Sloan and Allen Ware.

Swimmers give KMHS first back-to-back state crowns

Winning a state championship in your first year as a coach is quite an accomplishment, but Kings Mountain High coach Conrad Martin gave all the credit to his athletes after they won their second straight North Carolina High School Athletic Association crown last week at Koury Natatorium in Chapel Hill.

"I was very lucky to inherit a strong program," says Martin. "A lot of things were already in place when I got here. We were loaded with talent."

The Mountaineers won the event by 3.5 points over Wake Forest Rolesville, the same team it edged last year for its first-ever state title.

Martin, who is in his second year teaching at KMHS, said he did not have a background in competitive swimming but knew former coach Dave Kienlen well and developed a love for the sport through their friendship. He was eager to take the job when it was offered.

"The kids worked real hard all season and did a great job," says Martin. "They deserve all the credit. They made it happen."

Kings Mountain has been in competitive swimming for just five years and the program has consistently improved each year. The Mountaineers went undefeated en route to the title last year, but lost a meet this year to a strong Brevard team during the regular season, and then finished second to those same Blue Devils in the Western Regionals.

Those losses, perhaps, were a blessing in disguise because all of the Mountaineers gave a tremendous effort in the state meet. Even though KMHS did not win a first place in any individual events, eight of the nine team members that qualified scored points and finished high enough in the standings to give the team the points needed to win.

"We had 21 swimmers on our men's team, and that's an excellent number," said Martin. "It's really

Barrett, Hullender duckpin winners

Jack Barrett won three of four games from Mark Midgette and Robert Hullender won three from John Dilling in Mixed Duckpin Bowling League action Tuesday night at Dilling Heating.

Jack Barrett won scoring honors for the night with a 143 line and 391 set. Mark Midgette led his group with a 127-343, Debbie Hullender added a 125-314 and John Clemmer had a 125-306.

Chuck Ruley's 168 line and 362 set led Hullender over Dilling. R.W. Hullender added a 121-323 for the winners and John Dilling had a 129-359 for the losers.



Members of the girls swim team at Kings Mountain High are, front row, left to right, Amy Dixon, Holly Parker, Michelle Fugita and honorary coach Sarah Mayse. Second row, Holly Paul, Wendy Wright, Autumn Edsall and Susan Smith. Back row, Bethany Jimison, Amy Huggins, Christie Hughes and Angela Bunzel. Not pictured Katie Benton, Becky Taylor and Jennifer Yarbrough.

spectacular that we have so many incredible competitors. It's a strong testimony to our balance. Everybody was a strong competitor."

Martin loses only two members of this year's team - seniors Chuck Kaylor and Jeff Taylor - so returning swimmers will have state championship on their mind again.

"As of now everything looks good for next year if everybody returns," said Martin. "Naturally we look for another successful season in the pool. But another thing that has made me proud is that all of these swimmers are excellent students. That makes coaching very rewarding."

While the boys have become the only team in the school's history to win back-to-back state championships, Martin is justly proud of his girls team. The Lady Mountaineers finished 12th in the state out of 63 teams and all members of the teams posted their best times of the year in the state meet.

"The girls were terrific all season," he said. "They gave a great effort and they competed favorably

with a lot of teams that were much bigger than we were. We had only 16 swimmers and to finish 12th in the state was an outstanding accomplishment."

Martin loses only one senior - Holly Paul - and he's hoping more interest will develop and the team will have better numbers next year.

"It would be great for the girls program to move up," he said. "But, again, I'm just as proud of these girls for their academic achievement. They won the Academic Cup for the school for their academic accomplishments. This is a very talented group of students on a lot of different levels."

Martin gave much of the credit for the success of this year's teams to volunteers. Linda Bray worked with the divers, Travis DeMetro trained the swimmers in the Sharks Aquatics program, Sarah Mayse handled all the paper work and public relations, and many parents and other volunteers helped run meets.

"It was a tremendous effort by all of them," said Martin. "I couldn't have done it without them."

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