

# Freedom Valley Synchro team returns following strong showing

## THE PHOENIX STAFF REPORT

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PHOENIXVILLE — Members of the Freedom Valley Synchronized Swim Team, based at the Phoenixville Area **YMCA**, have returned from the East Zone Senior Championships held March 14 and 15 in Buffalo, N.Y., where they had a strong showing among teams from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Coach Jennifer Hatt said she was pleased with the girls' performance, which was up more than five points from previous showings. Competitors at this round included returning team members and assistant coaches, Jessie Adamiak of Paoli, and Heather Johnson of Phoenixville, along with

Sarah Ferris and Haley Richter of Berwyn, Natalia Mujica of Chester Springs, and Isabelle Lammers, a Swedish exchange student attending Great Valley High School this school year.

The team is now gearing up to host the Mid-Atlantic Association Championships to be held later this month (April 25 and 26) at the Phoenixville Area YMCA on Pothouse Road in Phoenixville. Participating teams will include girls from Phoenixville's Freedom Valley Synchronized Swimming, the York Synchro-ettes, the Pennsbury Falconettes of Fairless Hills, and the Cumberland Valley Synchronized Swim Team of Mechanicsburg.

Saturday's competition will feature the Intermediate division of younger and less experienced swimmers begin-

ning at noon with figures competition, the performance of mandatory positions that each swimmer must execute before panels of judges. The duet, trio and team routines will follow.

On Sunday, the competition will feature the older and more experienced swimmers in the Age Group Division beginning with the figures competition at 8 a.m., followed by the routines.

Winners of this competition will move on to the Regional Championship to be held in May in New Jersey, which is a qualifying meet for Age Group Nationals to be held in June in Gainesville, Fla.

Swimmers have been preparing for their official competitions through

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participation in various invitational meets.

The newest members of the team performed well at the East Zone Invitational, held March 21 in Hamden, Conn. against teams from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Hampshire, and elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

Lily Cremers of Pottstown, Marissa Olalde of Phoenixville, and Alexandria Poteet of Chester Springs took fifth place for their trio in the 11-12 year old Intermediate division. Erin Boring and Kathryn Sewick of Phoenixville, along with Tess Cremers of Pottstown, took fourth place in the 13-15 year old Intermediate division.

In addition, Poteet and Lily Cremers took seventh for their duet in the 11-12 year old age group; Boring and Tess Cremers took a Gold Medal for their first place duet in the 13-15 year old age group.

The Intermediate Team, which included the two trios combined for a group of six, took fifth place for its routine.

This is the third year for the growing team, which this year has expanded to 20 members, and includes members from ages 7 to 18.

Synchronized swimming involves the performance of dance, gymnastics and swimming movements, choreographed to music. It can include lifts, spins, throws and various underwater positions, some of which are done upside down, many in the deep water and all without the swimmer touching the bottom of the pool. Swimmers compete in various categories including team, a routine with four to eight swimmers, duet, trio and solo. They are divided by ability/experience level into Intermediate (newer swimmers) and Age Group (more experienced swimmers), and by age, based on the age of the oldest swimmer in the group, into ages 10 and under, 11-12, 16-17 and 18-19.

The Freedom Valley Synchronized Swim Team also garnered numerous awards at the annual Have-a-Heart competition in Laurel, Md. last month.

In the team division, the 13-15 Age Group Team of Renee Johnson, Andrea Stock, and Erin Weber, all of Phoenixville, along with Mujica, took a silver medal for their routine to music from the movie "Beetle Juice." The 10 and under Intermediate Team of Elise Alexander of Collegetown, Hannah and Heidi Atlas of Malvern, and Marissa Olalde of Phoenixville, also took Silver. The 13-15 Intermediate team of Erin Boring and Kathryn Sewick of Phoenixville, along with Tess and Lily Cremers of Pottstown, took fourth.

In the Trios, Emily Boring of Phoenixville, along with Weber



and Mujica, took the Gold Medal in the 13-15 Age Group division, Erin Boring, Sewick and Tess Cremers also took gold in the 13-15 Intermediate division. Alexander, Olalde and Heidi Atlas took fourth in the 10 and under Intermediate.

In the duets, Emily Boring and Weber took a Gold Medal in the 13-15 Age Group, as did Stock and Johnson in the 11-12 Age Group divisions. Olalde and Alexander garnered a Silver Medal in the 10 and under Intermediate division. Erin Boring and Tess Cremers took fourth in the 13-15 Intermediate division and Hannah Atlas and Lily Cremers took eighth in the 11-12 Intermediate Division.

Hatt said she was very pleased to see the girls perform so well since many are in their first year of competition. Many of the newest team members joined after taking beginner synchronized swimming lessons at the Phoenixville Area YMCA. She said many of the girls took the lessons, competed at a developmental meet in November, and found they really liked the sport, so joined the full team.

A new round of lessons gets under way at the Phoenixville Area YMCA on March 24.

Beginner Synchronized Swimming lessons begin March 24 and continue on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 7 to 8 p.m. through May.

For more information, or to sign up, contact the Phoenixville Area YMCA at 610-933-5861.

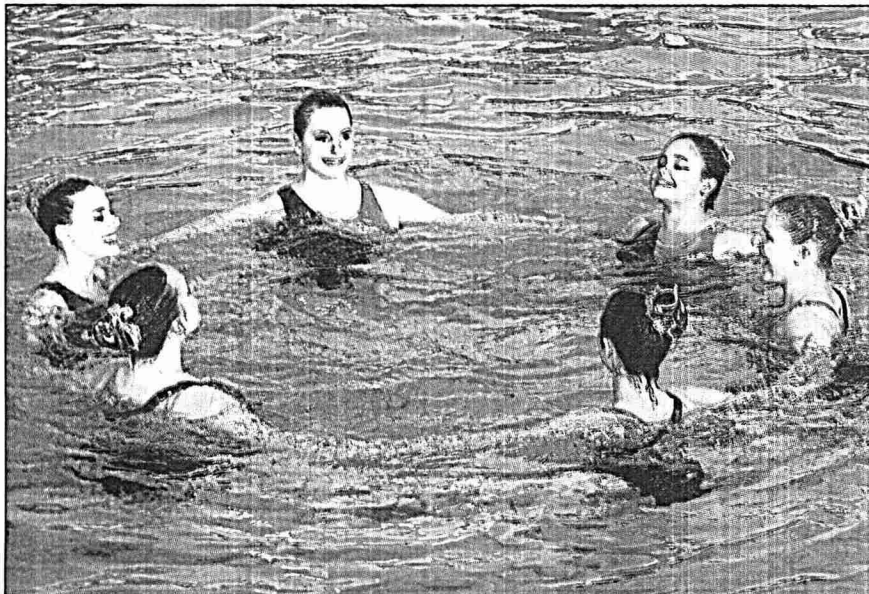


Photo provided

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