



TUESDAY OCTOBER 25, 2005 Last modified: *Friday, October 21, 2005 9:53 AM EDT*

Chiefs swim into record books

By Dan Friedell / Special to The Citizen

POPLAR RIDGE - Heading into the girls' swimming season's last few weeks, Southern Cayuga coach Cathy Murray can check her stopwatch to see if her team is in shape. But she has another fitness barometer, too.

If her team is strong enough to push her into the pool at the end of the last home meet of the season, she knows they're ready for the league championship meet.

Sopping wet on the pool deck, her red T-shirt and jeans clinging to her body, Murray had received her answer.

"That was so not cool," Murray said while wringing out her shirt after Thursday's meet against Dryden. "This hasn't happened in years."

Senior Nicole Reid turned a group hug into a group push and Murray wound up getting soaked.

"That was something we wanted to do for years, but every year we only have a couple of girls, and she fights back," Reid said. "She's strong. Today it took five of us to get her in."

Reid showed her strength in the pool as well as on the pool deck in her final meet at Southern Cayuga. While the Chiefs fell to the Lions 50-44, Reid and junior Bethany Ortquist led the 200-yard medley relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay teams to wins and new school records in each event.

The medley relay team, made up of Reid (freestyle), Ortquist (butterfly), Laura Heslop (breaststroke) and Carol Ryerson (backstroke), opened up the meet with a time of 2:04.94, breaking the old record of 2:06.09. The swimmers each had written "Relay" and the old record time on their backs and upper arms in an effort to psych themselves up for the event.

"That's been our goal all year long," Heslop said.

The swimmers were especially happy to break the record at home on senior recognition day.

"We really wanted to do it for Nicole," Ryerson said.

After Reid, Elizabeth Shaw and Hannah Elwyn were honored with a long ceremony midway through the meet, Dryden established a lead from which the Chiefs couldn't recover. The Lions took first and third in the 500-yard freestyle to take a 30-28 lead and followed that with a first and third in the 200-yard freestyle relay to go ahead 37-31.

But Southern Cayuga wasn't concerned about losing the meet.

"Last time, at Dryden, they beat us by 30," Murray said. "So to come this close was pretty incredible."

The Chiefs put their best freestylers into the meet's final event, hoping to end the day with a victory. Thea Rejman and Rebekah Ortquist started off the relay and couldn't stay with Dryden's first two swimmers, Nicole Ramos and Brenna O'Brien. But Reid gained significant time in the third leg to finish just ahead of Katherine Ard. Bethany Ortquist then finished three seconds ahead of Estelle Waterman to secure the win at 4:06.87, shaving nearly two seconds off the old school record.

In spite of the record-setting day, there's a little bad news for the Southern Cayuga swimmers. Murray said they will pay for pushing her



Mark Genito / The Citizen

Southern Cayuga senior Nicole Reid swims to a first-place finish in the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 59.62 during a dual meet at Southern Cayuga High School.

into the pool.

“I’m thinking about some hypoxic zeroes,” Murray said, referring to the practice of having the swimmers cover the 25-yard pool without coming up for air.

“Yeah, I think it might be underwater, fly kick only,” she said with a laugh.

[Close Window](#)