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MARTY KEATING
PITTSFORD COACH



Pittsford's Lindsay Stone during the 500-yard freestyle at the Hilton Invitational in September.

ADRIAN KRAUS/@AKOPHOTO1, PHOTOGRAPHER

SUPER SWIMMING TEAM IN PITTSFORD

Seeking 14th consecutive sectional Class A
team championship tonight

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Lindsay Stone, an All-Greater Rochester swimmer in Pittsford, remembers that Marty Keating declared the 2014 Panthers as the best girls team Keating has coached. ¶ But Keating, who has received national recognition during his 42 years as a swimming coach, changed his mind last August. ¶ “We just won states as a team, we had 14 girls qualify to go to states,” Stone said. “Then we walked through the doors this year and he was like, ‘Oh my gosh, I was mistaken, this is it.’ ¶ “You know, I can’t speak on all the way back into the 1980s,

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LINDSAY STONE
PITTSFORD

Swim

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when he was coaching, I don't know what those teams were like, but I definitely have to agree though. We have a pretty killer team this year."

Call it the best team in Section V.

"It's weird, but they are the biggest secret in Section V," Keating said.

Pittsford is likely to win the sectional Class A team championship for the 14th consecutive year tonight, outside of some massive eligibility issue no one seen coming or a unprecedented collapse in performance at Webster Aquatic Center.

"They are the best in the country, not just the state," Victor coach Stephanie Gunesch said. "Pittsford has an amazing team.

"There are some Olympic Trial(-caliber) swimmers on it."

Back among the leaders of this year's surge to a sectional title are senior Katie Smith and Stone, who earned six All-America slots between them last year. They have teamed again with sophomore Becca Evans and junior Emma Corby after they won last year's 400- and in record-fashion, the 200-yard freestyle relays state titles.

"I don't think anyone else in in New York State has a team with six All-Americans," Keating said. "They set a pool record (in the 200 free relay). Ithaca College has had it's conference meet at that pool."



ADRIAN KRAUS/@AKOPHOTO1DRIAN KRAUS

Pittsford swimmers celebrate their sectional championship, the schools' 13th straight win, following the 2014 Section V Class A meet at the Webster Aquatic Center.

There's more.

"We're solid," Keating said. "This team has four girls under two minutes in the 200 free (Molly Brennan, Annie Birmingham, Kelly Knickerbocker and Stone). This team has four girls under 2:20 in the 200 individual medley (Stephie Riley, Sarah Minnigh, Anna Dawson and Evans). This team has two returning flyers under a minute in the 100. (Anne Marie Mozrall and Corby, plus Megan Deuel)."

Bianca Lopez, a senior, swam the 100 fly in 1:00.04 during the preliminaries of the Section V Class A Championships on Wednesday to also advance.

"One of our goals is for all of us (18) to make states," Stone said. "So far we've got all but two girls going into finals, which is huge, plus three of our divers. It's really great, everyone is really positive this year, and I think that speaks for itself.

"It really helps everyone get going. We're all

really excited to see finals, and hopefully get all 18 there."

Pittsford had the fastest medley, 200 and 400 free relays in the state before this week. No one was faster than Stone, a junior who appears to be team captain-material next fall, in the 200 free (1:52.29) and 500 free (4:55.01). Smith, who will sign a letter of intent to swim at University of Notre Dame next week, was No. 2 statewide in the 50 (23.60) and 100 free (51.83).

Brennan and Deuel have put their names among notable performances this fall, as eighth-graders.

"They are great, super hard-working," Smith said. "Coming in as young, they can see our traditions, see that we are a serious, intense team and they have to decide whether or not they are willing to do it, and both have worked super-hard.

"Both made states today, so that's great."

The words "hard" and

"work" certainly come up in high school swimming. Watch one of your favorite team's practice sessions, either the morning or the late afternoon workout. Maybe because of the results, "hard" and "work" seem to be a part of the suit uniform when the Pittsford team swims for practice at Mendon High.

"People think kids come out of the womb in Pittsford and swim," Keating said.

Not true, Keating added. There is the PACK Swim Team of Pittsford, a club team he created and a tool of sorts, swimmers can use to improve. There are the Southeast YMCA Sharks, a group swimmers in high school down to 6-year olds can get their feet wet in the sport or different levels of competition.

"It's a whole effort, a community with a culture of excellence," Keating said. "You see it in the board of education, in support by parents."

Norm Schueckler, the Section V girls swimming coordinator, met Keating years ago, as a meet official.

"It's always been top-shelf," Shueckler said. "The kids excelling, winning state championships. Look at the number of (Section V) Hall of Famers he has up there (at Webster Aquatic Center). He's just done it over and over.

"You can talk about the two schools and one team (Pittsford's team includes students at Sutherland and Mendon), but so is Webster. How about Greece? It's three schools (and one team) in that district. He's created a system that works."

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