

Sports



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

Hot summer Knights

Summer came to an abrupt end last week for diocesan grid players and coaches, who began twice-a-day football practices. At McQuaid Jesuit High School, Jamal Dunbar (above) shows good eye contact with the ball moments before making a reception. Coach Frank Noce (right) explains blocking techniques to several linemen for the Knights, who begin their season September 10.



Choppy water, confusion mark Hamlin Beach Triathlon

By Richard A. Kiley

Our Lady of Mercy graduate Michelle Kriesen was able to conquer a fierce wind and four-foot waves during the ninth annual Hamlin Beach Triathlon last Sunday, August 21, but confusion on behalf of race organizers during the swimming portion of the race may have cost her a chance at finishing nearer to the top — and more.

The choppy Lake Ontario water wreaked havoc on racers and lifeguards, who made a group of swimmers — including Kriesen — swim part of the .93-mile distance twice. "There was a misunderstanding with the lifeguards. We couldn't see all the buoys because of the rough water, and they (the lifeguards) told us we didn't clear all of them. We had to go back and clear the buoys again, and it probably added 10 or 15 minutes to my time."

That may prove costly to Kriesen, 19, of

Webster who was hoping to place among the top 10 female finishers in the annual triathlon to earn an automatic berth in the National Triathlon Championships in Hilton Head, South Carolina, this November. Instead, she finished 14th with a time of 2:36.35.

Maria Kramer, 22, of Ithaca led all women triathletes with a time of 2:14:55.

"I talked with one of the race organizers after the triathlon and, because some of the women who finished ahead of me have already qualified for the nationals, I might have a chance to qualify but I'm not sure," Kriesen said.

Kriesen claimed the ocean-like conditions — not uncommon for Lake Ontario in these latter days of August — didn't pose any problems for her during the race. "I've got a lot of experience swimming in rough water ... It was just like swimming in the ocean," she said. "And I was swimming in Hawaii earlier this

spring."

She did, however, emerge from the water with a bad taste in her mouth because of the way race organizers handled the swimming portion of the race.

"It wouldn't have bothered me — and other people I'm sure — if everyone had to go back (and swim around the buoys); everything else (the 23.6 mile bike and 6.2 mile-run) went fine," Kriesen added.

The overall championship went to another Webster resident, Dennis Moriarty. The 31-year-old Moriarty became the first person to win the Hamlin Beach Triathlon twice when he completed the course in 1:56.08. He won in 1986 and finished second last year.

Kriesen has been leaving much of her competition in the dust while touring New York and Pennsylvania this summer.

She placed first in her age group and second overall — behind a fellow Rochester Area

Triathlete (RAT) at the Silver Lake Triathlon in late July. Earlier this month, she went to Massena where she finished second in her age category and sixth overall, racing against top triathletes from Canada.

Two weeks ago, Kriesen placed fourth overall and first in her age group at a triathlon in Tioga, Pennsylvania. Her performance qualified her for the National Biathlon Championships in New York City later this fall.

Kriesen has also shattered her personal best time trials this summer, slicing more than seven seconds off of her previous best. Last week, she was in Lake Placid to train with other future Olympic hopefuls at the Olympic training center with her coach, Roger Weston of Fairport. "We did a lot of mountain climbing, and, of course, swimming and running," Kriesen said. "This has been a very busy summer for me."

She's hoping for a busy fall as well.

Edmonton fans still in shock over trade of 'The Great One'

By Frank Dolphin

Edmonton, Alberta (NC) — Fans in this hockey-mad city still feel intense pain over the sudden loss of hockey superstar Wayne Gretzky to the Los Angeles Kings.

The August 9 trade of Gretzky — considered by many to be the greatest hockey player in history — by Peter Pocklington, owner of the Edmonton Oilers, still dominates radio talk shows, TV newscasts and the front pages of the city's two daily newspapers.

The highly controversial deal even got a mention in homilies by Archbishop Joseph MacNeil of Edmonton at two celebrations near the close of the Marian Year August 15.

He told crowds of about 1,500 each at two Marian shrines near Edmonton that Gretzky was a hero to Edmontonians.

"Young people need heroes. We call them saints in the church," he said.

The archbishop told the *Western Catholic Reporter*, Edmonton archdiocesan newspaper, that "Wayne has given (an) enormous example to young people."

"He had credibility and integrity," the archbishop said. "He seems a top-notch young man."

Archbishop MacNeil praised the 27-year-old hockey player's dedication to less fortunate people in the community.

"He visited the sick and the handicapped. He is a model for young people," he said.

However, one thing bothered the archbishop about the story told by Gretzky at the

press conference announcing the trade.

Gretzky said he had requested the trade to be in Los Angeles with his wife, Hollywood actress Janet Jones, and their expected child. Gretzky, an Anglican, and Jones, a Methodist, made headlines in Canada in July when they were married in a Catholic Church in Edmonton.

However, news reports since the press conference have made it apparent that Pocklington had been shopping around other National Hockey League teams in an effort to sell Gretzky's million-dollar-a-year contract.

"It bothers me that he felt not able to tell the whole truth," the archbishop said.

"Do young people feel let down that Wayne was not telling the whole truth?" the archbishop asked.

One person feeling the loss of Gretzky's companionship is Joey Moss, 25, a mentally handicapped man who — through Gretzky — got a job keeping the Oilers' dressing room tidy during the season. Joey is the brother of Vicki Moss, a singer who was Gretzky's girlfriend for seven years, until they ended their relationship a year ago.

"Joey is hurting," said Sophie Moss, Joey's mother. "Wayne treated Joey like a pal. He used to stay at Wayne's apartment sometimes, and (Gretzky) would take Joey to the rink."

She said Gretzky's friendship with her son



SUPERSTAR SMILE — Hockey superstar Wayne Gretzky is all smiles as he is introduced as the newest member of the Los Angeles Kings hockey team.

prompted the hockey superstar to organize an annual celebrity golf tournament to assist the mentally handicapped. The two appeared in a TV commercial for the handicapped.

Mrs. Moss has handled Gretzky's fan mail for the past eight years. She described him as "caring" and said he never turned down a request for a photograph, sweater, or a hockey stick from admirers of all ages. He would write personal notes, often signing them to young fans, "Your pal"

Mrs. Moss, a Catholic widow and mother

of 13 children, said Gretzky was one of the family for most of his stay in Edmonton. He would go to the Moss house, "make himself a peanut butter sandwich and curl up in a blanket to watch TV, just like anyone else."

Gretzky and the other Moss children often played hockey on the street, which always drew a crowd of neighborhood children, she said.

"Later, the doorbell would ring, as mothers appeared to get his autograph. We'll miss Wayne," Mrs. Moss said.