

Dacula working to fill big losses

By WILL HAMMOCK
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Some graduating classes impact a football program more than others, like Dacula's class of 2015. The group was the cornerstone of teams that went 10-2 and 8-5 the past two seasons, Tommy Jones' first two as the Falcons' head coach. They turned things around from 2012 — when Dacula went 1-9 under the previous coaching staff — and now they are off to college.

"We had 19 seniors on last year's team and they were 19 good ones, 12 of the 19 are going to play at the next level," Jones said. "There were some really good ones, guys that have played for the most part of three years. They had a lot of experience and with experience comes confidence. Those guys were great leaders. We're going to miss them a lot. In close games, they believed they were going to win."

It's the next group's turn to keep that going now. Jones stressed that Dacula returned to the successful roots in football, a longtime source of pride in the program, the past two seasons. He thinks the new faces in the lineup are showing the same kind of effort in the offseason.

"One of the things we want to do as much as possible is stress the intangibles, what Dacula football has always been about," Jones said. "The phrase

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Summer part of Carrera's building process

By WILL HAMMOCK
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Summers haven't always been like this one for Meadowcreek's football players.

Their busy schedule included a heavy 7-on-7 passing schedule with trips to Georgia and Kennesaw State, a full camp at Grady and various other local competitions.

"That's a big change with the schedule we've put out for these guys and what we're asking them to do," new Meadowcreek head coach Jason Carrera said. "It's a way to get a lot of reps, maybe get some victories and let the guys see success. The main thing is not necessarily winning, but the guys getting out there and being able to compete this summer."

"You want to see commitment in the summer. You want to see attendance and commitment. You want to see them compete and you want to see them learn how to win and understand how to win. Those are the things you want them to take

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Gwinnett football coaches hit the links

By PAUL THOMAS
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SNELLVILLE — With the start of the high school football season a little less than a month away, Sports Medicine South and the Gwinnett Touchdown Club hosted their sixth-annual Fellowship Golf Tournament Monday at Summit Chase County Club.

The tournament hosted 104 golfers this year made up of foursomes from the high schools and a few of the touchdown club's sponsors. Funds from the event's sponsors go toward

the \$1,000 Linda Jones scholarships handed out to each school in December at the Rivalries of Gwinnett All-Star game, player of the month awards and the year-end banquet.

Fortunately, the coaches' scorecards have no bearing on their athletes' eligibility to receive the scholarship or any Touchdown Club honors. The winner of this year's tournament was a group from Georgia Gwinnett College at 11 under.

In addition to raising funds for the upcoming season, the purpose of the tournament is to give the coaches a chance to be

around each other outside of football.

"It's a lot of fun watching them have fun," Gwinnett Touchdown Club president Chip Gaskill said. "Any time you can get them around (each other), as competitive as they are, they're better guys and better people. So, when they get a chance to fellowship, they respect each other and have a good time, knowing that tomorrow — or some of them are going back to the office this afternoon to start working and to try to figure out how to win on

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Meadowcreek football coach Jason Carrera follows through his swing after hitting a drive on the 15th hole during the Gwinnett Touchdown Club golf tournament at Summit Chase Country Club on Monday. (Staff Photo: David Welker)

Title Twisters



Girls dive in for the 15 to 18-year-old 50-yard butterfly event during the 2015 Gwinnett County Swim League Championships at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center on Saturday. (Photo: Chris Roughgarden)

Daniel Park swimmers win GCSL championship

By KAITLIN LONG
Staff Correspondent

ATLANTA — After winning only one meet during the regular season, the Daniel Park Twisters dominated the Gwinnett County Swim League Championships over the weekend at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center.

The Twisters finished in second place at last year's county meet to the Thunderbolts — by a narrow 22-point difference — but made up for it this year with the league championship. After a rough regular season with one win and one tie, head coach Kathy Janzen was ecstatic about their surprising success at



Daniel Park holds the 1st place trophy at the completion of the 2015 Gwinnett County Swim League Championships at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center on Sunday. (Photo: Chris Roughgarden)

the season-ending showcase.

"I did not expect to finish first, but it's amazing," Janzen said. "You never know

who's going to show up because there's so many really good teams throughout the county. It's anybody's game."

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Daniel Park earned a total of 1,654.5 points to seize the win thanks to 14 event victories and high placers in the majority of the other 68 events. The Twisters even had some swimmers win points that were not expected to based on their seeds, pulling away from runner-up Morning View (1,504.5) and third-place Wild Timber (1,487).

"The swimmers that we had on Sunday were supposed to be less successful than the swimmers

on Saturday," assistant coach Kirby Stanesic said. "We actually were very surprised with how well everything turned out and how well our swimmers did. We had a lot of people score that weren't supposed to, which was very impressive and great."

As a result of their performance, the Twisters returned to the league's peak, a position they held with back-to-back championships in 2012 and 2013. The team started off great and finished in first place as of Saturday evening. However, Sunday morning began with a rough start until the 11- and 12-year-old

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Seven records fall at GCSL season-ending meet

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Seven new Gwinnett County Swim League meet records were toppled over the weekend at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center, including four in the boys 9- and 10-year-old division.

Daniel Park's Benjamin Irwin and Evergreen Lakes' Colin Hoveg took care of those old marks.

Irwin set new county records in the 9-10 25-yard backstroke (14.88 seconds) and the 25 butterfly (13.34), while Houck lowered two other records in the same age group in

the 25 freestyle (12.69) and 50 free (27.74).

Chateau Elan's Katherine Parker broke the other individual county record at the meet with her time of 26.48 in the 50 back for 15- to 18-year-olds.

The other meet records came from relays.

Wild Timber's girls 13-14 200 free relay, which won in 1:38.12. The foursome consisted of Emma Alexander, Courtney Niemann Sarah-Grace Thompson and Chantal Jordan.

Daniel Park's girls 200 medley relay in the 11-12 age group also set a record.

The foursome of Hannah Doglod, Corinne Kuiters, Caroline Irwin and Mia Walters swam a record time of 1:59.52.

Spirit of the League

The GCSL again held its annual Spirit of the League honorary swim, a 25-yard free event that was added in 2002 to recognize boys and girls who must overcome additional challenges because of physical or mental limitations.

Because of the special challenges those swimmers face, meeting the time standards to participate at

the county meet is beyond their grasp, even though their effort often surpasses that of the county qualifiers. The league wanted to honor those youngsters for being a daily inspiration to the swimmers and the coaches on their teams, as well as their opponents.

This year's Spirit of the League swimmers were 14-year-old Grace Caylor of Hanarry Swim and Racquet Club, 12-year-old Katya Vazhenin of Morning View, 8-year-old Che Mafe of Evergreen Lakes, 8-year-old Brantley Forehand of Spalding Corners,

14-year-old Valerie Seagraves of Chateau Elan and 11-year-old Addy Modly of Hamilton Mill.

Coach, team awards handed out

Hanarry West's Mary Tillery was named the Charlene Fletcher Coach of the Year at the season-ending meet, while five teams earned Margaret Gilbert Awards for good sportsmanship.

The Margaret Gilbert honors went to Bright Water, Edgewater, Edinburgh, Jones Bridge River Station and Youth Swimming.