

Loyola defends title for the 15th consecutive time

It has been a banner year for the Aqua Dons of Loyola Blakefield.

Starting with a 100-mile swim in honor of the late Staff Sgt. Joseph F. Curreri, a 1998 graduate of the Towson school and founder of the charity swim, the Dons unfolded an undefeated regular league season in the MIAA A Conference. Continuing on, the Dons landed top honors at the National Catholics in late January and most recently, secured their 15th consecutive MIAA/MSA Swimming Championship on Feb. 9 at McDonogh School.

But for Head Coach Keith Schertle, there's one more thing to do before the year comes to a close and that is to win the upcoming Eastern Preps.

Schertle can taste it. He thinks this team can make their mark at the 108th-annual Eastern Interscholastic Swimming and Diving Championships on Feb. 22-23 at LaSalle University.

To many, the Easterns is one of the most prestigious and competitive high school meets in the country. It is the largest prep school aquatic event in the United States for both men's and women's swimming and diving competitions. More national and prep-school swimming records are set during this competition than any other meet in the nation.

"I think we will be in the top three at Easterns," said Schertle.

As tune-up for Feb. 22-23, the Dons wasted no time taking charge of the local championship meet, held at McDonogh School, as the Dons accumulated 365 points. McDonogh School placed a distant second with 248, followed by Calvert Hall College High School, Towson, with 244 and Mount St. Joseph High School, Irvington, with 151.

The Dons rolled in the 200-yard medley with another Automatic All-American time set by Greg Pelton, Sean Roddy, Evan Danz and Hugh Davidson. Pelton also took a

first in the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 47.58. The team finished off the evening placing first in the 400-freestyle relay as well, led by Hugh Davison, Evan Danz, Oliver Bennett and anchored by Greg Pelton.

They're on a roll, but it remains to be seen if they can complete the perfect season.