



gwinnettdaily.com

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Fast start

By Will Hammock
Sports Editor

Tuesday, July 14, 2009



Staff Photo: Jonathan Phillips Spalding
Corners' Maxwell Linder, center, dives into the pool at Georgia Tech on Saturday during the 100-yard freestyle relay for the Gwinnett County Swim League Championship.

Rick and Heidi Creed, the Gwinnett Swim League's successful husband-wife coaching tandem, spent years building up the Eastside swim team in Snellville.

Their efforts were culminated with a county championship in 2005, but the Creeds moved their home and children to the northern part of Gwinnett County after that victory. Unsure what to expect with a new team, they have produced results astonishingly fast.

Chateau Elan won its first GSL championship Sunday at Georgia Tech, scoring 1,725 points for a victory over the surging Thunderbolts, who took second with 1,317 points. Evergreen Lakes (1,251) was third.

It was just the second GSL title for the Creeds, but is one of many for Mill Creek High coach Rick Creed, who won eight state championships (six boys and two girls) as Parkview High's head coach.

"We're thrilled to win in only our fourth season (at Chateau Elan)," Rick Creed said. "We've moved up each year. We went from fifth to fourth, fourth to second and now second to first. The kids are delighted. They worked really hard all year. It was a very enthusiastic bunch."

The bulk of Chateau Elan's swimmers come from the Mill Creek cluster, part of an ever-growing area of Gwinnett. It's also an area that is booming in terms of swimming talent.

The Creeds' roster has been part of the growth, going from roughly 100 swimmers that first season to 165 this season. They rely on four assistant coaches - Maggie Shay, Jared Coury, Savannah Miller and Seth Engleman - to run such a large team.

"Swimming when we first came out here, there were only two teams in this area, Apalachee (Aquatics) and Hamilton Mill," Rick Creed said. "Since then, and it's got nothing to do with us, Chateau Elan has a team, Hidden Falls started a team. Timber Ridge moved to Daniel Park. You're seeing a lot of growth out this way in swimming.

"SwimAtlanta built a pool up here at Dacula Road and Auburn Road because of that. You're seeing tremendous growth in swimming in this area."

Depth and balance were keys in Chateau Elan's title run.

The team won just four individual events - Rachael Dudley in the 15- to 18-year-old 100-meter individual medley, Drew Hayes in the 13-14 50 backstroke and two 15-18 relays.

Chris Powell (13-14), Sommers Creed (15-18), Zach Tillman (15-18), Kevin Doran (15-18), Bailey Minor (9-10) and Owen Pendley (8-and-under) also had standout meets for Chateau Elan.

"We had a bunch of kids who scored points and we didn't really have a weak age group," Rick Creed said.

The runner-up Thunderbolts were in seventh place after Saturday's events. But they made a surge on Sunday, led by a strong 11-12 group.

The charge didn't come close to Chateau Elan, but pushed the Duluth-based team ahead of a pack of teams that were tightly packed between second and 10th.

"I'm extremely proud of our kids, the way we swam all meet," Thunderbolts coach Jim Reason said. "I'm proud of my coaches and I continue to have wonderful parental support. That makes us contenders every year."

Gwinnett's summer league, founded in 1973, had more 6,500 youth swimmers on 45 teams this season.

[Click here for complete results](#)

Gwinnett County Swim League Championships

