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# Foothill boys, Crean Lutheran girls win CIF swimming titles in dramatic fashion

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Elise Garcia reacts after swimming the final leg and winning the 200 yard medley relay during the CIF-SS Div 2 swimming finals at the Riverside Aquatic Complex in Riverside, Calif., on Saturday, May 13, 2017. (Photo by Keith Birmingham, Pasadena Star-News/SCNG)



Elise Garcia, second from left, wins the 50 freestyle during the CIF-SS Div 2 swimming finals at the Riverside Aquatic Complex in Riverside, Calif., on Saturday, May 13, 2017. (Photo by Keith Birmingham, Pasadena Star-News/SCNG)



Eva Merrell wins the 100 yard butterfly during the CIF-SS Division 2 swimming finals at the Riverside Aquatic Complex in Riverside, Calif., on Saturday, May 13, 2017. (Photo by Keith Birmingham, Pasadena Star-News/SCNG)



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 RIVERSIDE >> Crean Lutheran's girls swimming team wrapped up its feat before the meet-ending, 400-yard freestyle relay but after a spectator stepped on star Eva Merrell's ankle. Foothill's boys historic quest Saturday came down to the 400 relay and featured just as much drama.

The Knights clinched their first CIF-Southern Section title since 1989 by capturing the 400 relay, punctuating a thrilling Division 2 final for Orange County's fleet at Riverside City College.

"How sweet it is," said Foothill girls coach Tom De Long, the school's legendary, former boys coach who guided the Knights to five titles and helped create the school's aquatics legacy.

Foothill tallied 213 points to edge Damien at 209 and pre-finals favorite Redlands at 198.5.

Crean Lutheran secured its fifth consecutive section title overall (third straight in Division 2) by scoring 247 points to hold off Redlands East Valley at 233.

Foothill's boys sealed their title in the same fashion as they did in 1989, by winning the 400 relay. Almost 30 years ago in Long Beach, the Knights out-dueled Mission Viejo with a school-record time of 3 minutes, 6.88 seconds.

But on Saturday, Foothill's 400 relay of leadoff Hunter Ingram (lifetime-best 46.00), Chris Mykkanen (46.32), Sam Harrison (47.39) and anchor Zane Scott (44.54) blazed past runner-up Damien to touch first in a school-record 3:04.25. Damien took second in 3:06.10.

"That 4×100 is just the bear," Harrison said. "It shows the competition was really great."

Coach Jim Brumm's Foothill boys also picked up a critical victory in the 200 free relay. Colin Stovner, Ingram, Ryan Griswold and Scott (20.77 anchor) touched first in a school-record 1:25.35, half-a-second ahead of Damien.

Merrell provided the Saints a boost by out-dueling Mira Costa's Alexandra Crisera in the 100 backstroke with a Division 2 record 53.12. Just before the race, a passer-by accidentally stepped on Merrell's ankle as she was on the ground stretching.

"It hurt pretty bad," said Merrell, whose ankle was bright red after outdistancing previous record-holder Crisera at 53.54.

"(You) got to roll with the punches. You never know what's going to happen."

Crean Lutheran kept its composure all season, which began with the sudden departure of Coach Craig Brown, who was replaced by assistant Todd Brinker.

"None of us expected to win (this season)," senior captain Rachel Taylor said.

But Crean Lutheran started to believe after a strong prelims and the Saints stayed hot in finals. Merrell, Jimena Martinez, Mandy Brenner and Elise Garcia opened Saturday by capturing the 200 medley relay in an Orange County and Division 2 record 1:40.77, just off the national private school record.

Garcia and Merrell set Division 2 records in the 50 free (22.66) and butterfly (52.51), respectively. The juniors also joined forces with Brenner and Journey Werner to claim the 200 free relay in a meet-record 1:34.60.

In other races, senior Taylor Ault of Sonora swept the 200 (1:46.83) and 500 (4:43.09) freestyles while juniors Andrew Koustik of Calvary Chapel (200 free, 1:38.02) and Dash Farr of Villa Park (breast, 55.24) won titles in lifetime-best times.