



# How to succeed by really trying

## Carmel girls working to attain 20th straight high school swimming title

BY STEVE HERMAN  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Swimming championships at Carmel High School are like a family heirloom, handed down from class to class for nearly two decades.

"I think we'd be devastated if we ever lost," said Katie McRoberts, a junior who started competing with the Carmel Swim Club feeder program at age 5 and now swims on the high school's varsity team.

In February, the Greyhounds will try for their 20th consecutive girls state championship.

That's the longest current streak in any sport, boys or girls, in the nation, and it's more than double the next-longest streak in Indiana: Muncie Burris' nine volleyball titles.

Only seven sports programs nationally have had longer championship streaks, with Honolulu Punahou's boys swim teams of 1958-86 with 29 titles. Punahou also had the longest girls swim streak with 22 titles from 1974-95. The Pine Crest girls swimmers in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., had 21



Championship trophies line the wall as the Carmel Greyhounds swim team practices at their facility in Carmel on Dec. 14.

from 1956-76, and Salt Lake City Brighton had 20 from 1982-2001.

Carmel's winning tradition spans four coaches and hundreds of swimmers and divers. And girls aren't the only ones making a splash in this affluent suburb of about 58,000 just north of Indianapolis.

Carmel girls have won 74 individual and relay championships in

the state meet; no other Indiana school has won more than 20. The Carmel boys have won state championships 11 of the past 15 years and have 43 individual titles.

"You can't ignore it. When the kids go out, step out of the doorway, people are talking about it. We're known for that," said third-year coach Tom Burchill, who coaches both the swim club and

the high school teams. "This can't go on forever. That's just an impossibility. But maybe it can go on for a long time."

The Carmel girls are ranked No. 1 in Indiana, led by a group of swimmers who accounted for 222 of the team's 269 points in the 2005 state meet. Runner-up Hamilton Southeastern had 200 points.

Ray Lawrence, now principal at Speedway, was the first coach to bring a swimming championship to Carmel. Lawrence won five boys titles and six girls championships, including his first in 1982 five years before the girls' current streak began.

Tony Young won two boys championships and nine straight girls titles in 1992-2000, and Ken Stokotte won boys and girls championships each of the three years he was the coach. Burchill became the coach in 2003.

"The real key is that the coaches that followed have all maintained that culture," Lawrence said. "A lot of schools have the work ethic, but you get a tradition set in ... and there's also the expectation. Once you've established it, people who

want to be a part of that are attracted to it, too."

Once there, they work hard. The teams' Web site outlines practice schedules and includes attendance rules. Practices in holiday weeks are mandatory unless an absence is excused. Family emergencies count, but "not feeling well" doesn't.

Out-of-town trips are excusable, but only with advance notice that includes the destination, departure date and the next practice the swimmer will attend. Swimmers are told to train with a USA Swimming team or high school team while away and have to provide a signed note from a coach to prove they practiced.

The swimmers generally are in the water by 5:30 a.m. most days before classes and again each afternoon at 3:25.

On Saturdays, they can sleep in — practice doesn't begin until 6 a.m. — and there are no afternoon sessions.

"There is no substitute for training, no matter how you slice it," said Burchill, who has a staff of four other coaches.

## Semifinal loss doesn't hurt return

The Associated Press

### GOLD COAST, Australia

Martina Hingis looks across the net and sees opponents with rippling muscles. Not that she's worried. She suspects her game has enough savvy to make her comeback a success.

Savvy was not enough, however, to carry her through Friday's semifinal, a 1-6, 7-6 (2), 6-2 loss to Italy's Flavia Pennetta. After three victories, this was the 25-year-old Swiss star's first defeat since beginning a new chapter in her tennis life.

"I'm very proud and happy about it," she said of her play at the Australian women's hard-court tournament. "In the 10 days I think I've made some great progress. Every match I faced a faster, fitter and stronger opponent so, I was able to come out with better tennis."

Hingis, a former No. 1 player with five Grand Slam singles titles, left the tour three years ago because of foot, heel and ankle injuries. Now there's a new ailment: a hip strain from Friday's match.

Still, she is encouraged. She received a wild card for this tournament at Royal Pines, and the anxiety she felt before starting play was gone once she was stroking the ball again.

"You just have general doubts about yourself when you see those big strong girls, and here I come," she said. "I'm probably half the size of most of them. ... They're all much more muscular, but I've got the skills and the game, and I showed that this week."

Next stop is the Sydney International.

Then, beginning Jan. 16, comes the Australian Open, a major she won three times.

On the Gold Coast, Hingis beat Maria Vento-Kabchi of Venezuela, Klara Koukalova of the Czech Republic and Nuria Llagostera Vives of Spain.

After easily winning the first set Friday, Hingis looked ready to advance to the final against Lucie Safarova of the Czech Republic before the hip injury, a left flexor strain, did her in.

She pulled out of her semifinal doubles match with Tatiana Golovin of Russia because of the injury.

"I've got a couple of days' rest now, so I'll just try to flush it out before next week," Hingis said. "I've got some time."

Hingis said she tried to get through the singles semifinal.

"As a player and a competitor you try to overcome things like that and still play until the end of the match," she said.

# Warm weather alters fishing experience

The warming trend that Santa brought in has played a hob with ice fishing in most of Hoosierland, but that only turned the damper a notch toward closed in the flue of winter angling. There still is plenty of fishing out there.

Yes, the warm spell (I once had a journalistic boss who hated those words) has rendered ice unsafe on most standing waters from one end of the state to the other, although some northerner diehards still are catching some fish.

But with other angling opportunities that the unseasonably warm weather is creating, it is a shame not to pick up other types of angling gear and head for the water. Catch fish and be patient; we will have more ice.

In the interim, you can almost name your species and have a shot at catching the prime ingredient for a great fish dinner.

Din-din, naturally, is the magic word by which I measure the value of outdoor activities, including fishing.

So what kind of fish do you



'Bayou' Bill Scifres  
OUTDOORS

want to catch? It could be any one, or all, of the so-called sunfish species (this includes the black basses). But suckers start thinking of spawning at this time of year, and that translates into feeding (biting).

Then there are the big catfish (notably channel cats) and steelhead on Indiana's four streams connected to Lake Michigan.

So there is no dearth of angling opportunity when there is open water.

Open-water fishing during the cold months for bass, bluegill and other members of the sunfish tribe seems to be better on smaller standing waters (say farm ponds or small watershed lakes) than on larger bodies of

standing water. I am always a bit leery at saying anything will not happen when prognosticating on Mother Nature's children because they reserve the right to prove me wrong.

Generally, though, for open-water fishing at this time of year I prefer smaller waters and slow moving baits, either natural or artificial. The metabolism of fish slows when water temperatures dive in the fall, and for this reason slow-moving, deep-running baits tend to be best.

The jigging Rapala lure (with or without hook dressing) is a good bet. As for live or natural baits, the leftover ice-fishing bait will be just fine.

On a warmish winter day a few years back I went to my favorite farm pond for some open-water bassin'. There was some open water on the shallow end of the pond, but the deep part still was covered with skim ice.

I fished the shallow end without success, and the more I looked at the ice-covered deep water, the more I wanted to wind an artificial across the ice and

see what happened when it dropped into the water.

I started tossing a purple quarter-ounce Gapen's Hairy Worm onto the ice over the deep water and skidding it slowly across the thin, clear ice.

Soon I missed a taker but nailed one on the next cast and landed several bass before hooking one deep (had to keep it) and quitting.

Generally I favor standing waters for the sunfish tribe, but there is no law of nature that prohibits angling success on streams and rivers during the cold months.

You don't hear a lot about it, but the big cats, including channels, tend to hole up (a bit like deer) during the cold months. Like other fish species, channels are slow, but they still will take live and natural baits. Frozen soft craws are a good bet.

Then, of course, there is the white sucker. I like garden worms best for suckers (gobbed well on the hook), but leftover ice bait will take old pucker-mouth, too.

As their mouths suggest, suckers are bottom feeders. Thus the

way to connect with this species is to fish tightline (straight up and down) with just enough weight to take the bait to the bottom and keep it there.

Suckers feed on gravel or sand bars at the edge of channels.

(More on sucker fishing can be found by searching for "sucker fishing" on my Web page, www.bayoubill.com. For more on sucker fishing, check my column of Jan. 20, 2003, on my Web page.)

So how about those steelheads? The action is not fast yet, but Indiana's four streams connected to Lake Michigan are free of ice now, and some steelhead — both Skamania and fall-run fish — are being taken.

These streams are Salt Creek, Little Calumet River and Trail Creek on the west side of the stat (Michigan City) and the St. Joseph River (South Bend and Mishawaka areas).

"Bayou" Bill Scifres' outdoors column appears Saturdays in the Daily Journal. Comments can be sent to P.O. Box 699, Franklin, IN 46131.

## Week of exams, and then big test for Wie

BY DOUG FERGUSON  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### KAPALUA, Hawaii

Michelle Wie is starting to feel the stress.

She has been a professional golfer for three months and already is worth more than some men who have been playing longer than she has been alive, with endorsement deals that could reach \$10 million and more than \$1 million for an appearance fee to play overseas.

She makes news wherever she goes.

In her professional debut at the Samsung World Championship, she was disqualified for taking a bad drop in the third round, an infraction that a magazine writer waited one day to point out to a rules official.

Then at the Casio World Open in Japan, she bogeyed the final two holes to miss the cut by one shot.

But that's not what has her nerves a little frayed.

Like any other 16-year-old, Wie had to get through her semester exams in her junior year of high school.

"Oh my God, don't remind me. I have to take my quarter tests and my semester exams."

Michelle Wie  
on studying for high school tests while practicing before the Samsung World Championship

"Oh my God, don't remind me," Wie said earlier this week from Ko Olina Golf Club, where she took a break from studying to work on her golf game. "I have to take my quarter tests and my semester exams."

It started with a chapter test in Japanese on Tuesday. Chemistry and Japanese midterms, plus her quarterly test in math, came Wednesday. The midterm for math was Thursday.

And then comes another big test. Wie will try for the fourth time to become the first woman since Babe Zaharias in 1945 to make the cut on the PGA Tour when she joins 143 men at the Sony Open. Her legend took root at Waialae Country

Club two years ago at age 14 when she shot 68 in the second round, the lowest score by a female competing on a men's tour, to miss the cut by one shot. Last year brought wind and not nearly as many putts made, and Wie shot 75-74 to miss the cut by seven shots.

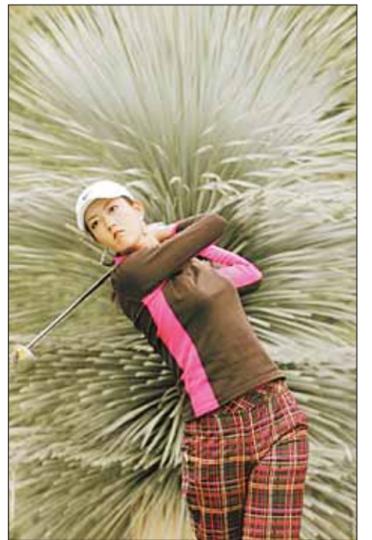
Then came the John Deere Classic, where thousands of boisterous fans thought they would witness history until Wie made double bogey on her 16th hole and again narrowly missed the cut.

There is a sense the novelty is wearing off, and there might come a time when Wie playing on the PGA Tour attracts only passing interest.

But people still talk about it. They still watch.

"I was on the opposite side of the golf course, and there's nobody out there watching us play golf," David Toms said of the John Deere Classic, where he tied for 40th that week.

"You knew where she was the whole time. It was almost like a Tiger-type following. You know where she was on the golf course. That says a lot."



Michelle Wie drives from the fifth tee in the final round of the LPGA Samsung Championship at Bighorn Golf Club in Palm Desert on Oct. 16.

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