

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Eastin sets record in the 200 medley as Crean Lutheran girls win CIF crown

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The CIF Division 2 swimming finals dished out the rarest of treats for aquatics fans Saturday.

There was a national record courtesy of Crean Lutheran's Ella Eastin in the 200 individual medley. A drag-out duel for the championship plaque for Crean Lutheran's girls. A rare double for Laguna Beach's boys. And even a tie for first in the 500-yard freestyle, the longest event on the card.

"It's been a great day for water lovers," Laguna Beach senior Jack Dodson said after the pool finally settled at Riverside City College.

Crean Lutheran's girls and Laguna Beach's boys led the parade of accomplishments. The Saints outdueled defending champion Glendora, 319.5-296, for its third consecutive section title overall while Laguna Beach's boys powered past runner-up Murrieta Valley, 219-181, to claim the Breakers' first swimming title. Both county champions won after racing in Division 3 last May. Crean Lutheran captured its first two titles by large margins in Division 3 and celebrated with "Crean Sweep 3-Peat" shirts Saturday.

Laguna Beach also grabbed the CIF Division 3 title in boys water polo in the fall, giving the Breakers a rare double. The 400-yard freestyle relay of Cameron Karkoska, Max Morgan, Cade Baldrige and Erik Juliusson capped the title by winning in a school-record 3 minutes, 5.75 seconds. Baldrige donned a balloon hat in the post-meet celebration.

Eastin had a phenomenal final CIF meet. The Stanford-bound senior smashed her national private school record in the 200-yard individual medley and narrowly missed the overall standard with a best time of 1 minute, 53.90 seconds. After touching just .08 of a second off Dagny Knutson's 2009 overall high school record, Eastin splashed the water and flashed a bright smile, a reaction to a long-sought personal-best. She broke her record of 1:55.15 from her sophomore year and got a giant hug from Saints coach Craig Brown.

"I've been waiting a long time to go a best-time in that event," said Eastin, who will race this week at the state meet. "It's just relieving, waiting so long and having all your hard work pay off."

Eastin later captured the breaststroke in an Orange County-record 1:00.39. She also helped the Saints capture the medley (1:43.43) and 400 (3:22.67) relays in meet records. Her sister, Emily Eastin, took titles in the butterfly (54.24) and backstroke (53.81); freshman Elise Garcia won the 50 free (23.08). Teammate Colten Young captured the six-dive state qualifier.

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