

## Martin goes the distance in the water

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Chelmsford High senior three-time All-Scholastic swimmer Katelyn Martin, a three-time reigning state champion in the 500-yard freestyle for the Lions, will be trying to punch herself a ticket to Europe and then possibly book a trip China beginning in late October.

Distance specialist Martin, 17, recently qualified for the Olympic Trials in the 10,000 meter Open Water Swim, a new Olympic Games event in 2008.

She qualified in May, placing top 15 in a race held in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Fort Myers, Fla.

Next month's Trials will be held inland at Lake Mirmar, a manmade body of water also in Fort Myers.

If Katelyn does well again she will head for Seville, Spain for one more competition, and a strong showing there puts her in the Summer Games in China beginning Aug. 8 of next year.

The 10,000 meter distance is 6.2 miles, and it takes the top competitors about two hours to complete the swim. Katelyn finished the Gulf of Mexico Trials in 1 hour, 54 minutes.

Martin is currently ranked 10th in the country at the 10,000 meter distance.

Undefeated throughout her high school career in the 500, Katelyn also won the state 200 free once and has been a member of two state-champion relay teams.

Martin, who is being heavily recruited, made a visit to the University of Tennessee last week and is headed to the University of North Carolina this weekend for a look-see. Both are NCAA Division 1 powers. She also lists Notre Dame among her top choices.

Martin entered the inaugural Open Water/Olympic Trials qualifying event at the urging of her club coach, Mike Spring, who directs the Magnus Aquatic team out of Greater Lawrence Vo-Tech in Andover.

"Her success is remarkable because she had never swam the 10,000 distance before," said her high school coach, Harriet Kinnett. "It's funny now, but along the way she saw a dolphin (in the Gulf) and for a short time thought it was a shark."

To help prepare for the Gulf Trials, Martin attended a week-long Open Water Swim Camp in Florida last spring.

"At first I was very hesitant to do it," Martin said. "Open water events are actually one of my biggest fears -- and when I saw what I thought was a shark it didn't help.

"Swimming that far is boring, obviously," she added, "and for awhile after the swim I couldn't lift my arms over my head."

She persevered, however, and is looking forward to Oct. 20-21.

In the meantime, Martin is busy with the college visits and helping keep Chelmsford High (3-0) undefeated.

She does not play any other sport.

"No time," she explained.

Her daily regimen during the school season is gruelling, including between 5-6 hours in the water.

She has "triples" (three practices) twice a week, a 90-minute workout before school and two more similar sessions after school. Every other day it's double sessions.

It's been quite a September for Acton-Boxboro High girls varsity athletic teams.

Among others, the A-B swimmers and divers are 3-0 and coming off a huge 101.5 to 84.5 win over an Andover program which has won eight straight State Division 1, North Sectional and MVC titles and had captured 99 dual

meets in a row since a 1999 loss to Chelmsford. Coach Jeff Johnson calls this edition his strongest and deepest.

The girls volleyball team edged perennial Eastern Mass. power Chelmsford, 3-2, on Monday and field hockey is 6-1 and scratching for the top spot in the Dual County League.

Girls soccer, however, has them all beat.

Currently ranked No. 2 in the nation, per the USA Today poll, the Colonials entered Wednesday's game against Lincoln-Sudbury undefeated and unscored-upon with a 5-0 record (2-0 DCL Large) and 23-0 goal edge on the opposition. They were finally scored upon, but still won, 2-1.

Opposing coaches are saying unanimously that -- provided the team stays healthy -- it will be a major upset if A-B does not win the Division 1 North and State titles.

"Honestly, they look like a college team," said Tyngsboro High head coach Doug Clare. "If they don't win the Division 1 championship this fall I'll be amazed. They're big, they're skilled and they never put the ball out of bounds. I scouted them against Westford (5-0 win) a few nights before our game and it's just incredible how dominant they are."

Tyngsboro played A-B last Friday and was also dominated, 6-0.

The team has only five seniors, three of whom start, and the offense is being led by sophomore halfback Hayley Brock (10 goals in 5 games) and junior Cassie Wagner.

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