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Zeeland, Holland hold own at swim invitational

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Zeeland swimmer Josh Geschwendt competes in the 200-yard freestyle. - (Press Photo/Katy Batdorff)

ZEELAND -- If a team is not state-ranked it does not get invited to the Zeeland New Year's Invitational.

Seven of the state's best boys swimming and diving teams took to the pool at Zeeland West on Friday afternoon, and while No. 1-ranked Zeeland and No. 4 Holland won all of the swimming events, Saline, which is ranked second in Division 1, won the meet with 535.5 points.

Zeeland, the state's top-ranked Division 2 team, finished second with 479.5 points and Holland, ranked fourth in Division 2, finished third with 317.5.

Next were: Hamilton, ranked third in Division 3 (294.5), Bloomfield Hills Brother Rice, ranked ninth in Division 1 (262.5), Jenison, ranked seventh in Division 2 (226.5), and University of Detroit Jesuit (209), which was honorable mention in the most recent Division 2 state poll.

"This was a fantastic meet," Zeeland coach Mike Torrey said. "Considering the teams that came, this was a great meet. We learned a lot more about ourselves today. We learned that I don't have the relays figured out yet. The problem with this team is that we have a lot of pieces of the puzzle, so we are doing a lot of mixing and matching."

Zeeland, comprised of swimmers from Zeeland East and Zeeland West high schools, mixed and matched well enough Friday to win the two freestyle relays.

Zeeland's Josh Geschwendt, Jason Vander Plaats, Gregg Elhart and Drew Coffin won the 200 freestyle relay in 1 minute, 27.73 seconds, and Zeeland's Geschwendt, Vander Plaats, Zac Kraai and Coffin won the 400 freestyle relay in 3:13.92.

Geschwendt, a senior, also won the 200-yard freestyle in 1:44.66 and the 100-yard butterfly in 52.53 seconds. Coffin, also is a senior, won the 50 freestyle in 21.85 seconds and the 100 freestyle in 48.11. Kraai won the 500 freestyle in 4:50.54.

Team depth prevailed Friday as Saline won the meet without winning an event.

"We really appreciate the invitation to this meet," Saline coach Todd Brunty said. "We love to come to this facility. This is a nice meet for us. We know there are good teams in this meet, and it helps everyone prepare for the end of the year. We didn't win a race today, so there are some things we have to work on. We have to improve our overall team speed if we are going to keep up with the teams on the west side of the state. We're getting there, though."

Holland's Eric Solis, David Moore, Kyle Taylor and Jordan Campbell won the 200 medley relay with a time of 1:41.51. Solis, a junior, won the 200 individual medley in 1:56.28 and the 100 backstroke in 54.23. Moore won the 100 breaststroke in 1:01.69.

"This is a pretty tough meet," Holland coach Don Kimble said. "After Christmas break, the first thing you want to do is survive this meet, and then you want to see if you got any faster. We are still trying to fill some holes and to see who wants it more."

University of Detroit Jesuit junior John Santieu won the diving competition with 473.20 points. Zeeland sophomore Tyler Keelean finished second, and earned All-America consideration with a score of 392.25.