

## Joan Byron wins a bundle of gold

By LEN KRYESKI  
Sports Writer

"I just love to compete," said Joan Byron. "It's great fun and I get a charge out of it."

Joan Byron, M.D., a resident of Dallas, competes in the sport of swimming and she's quite familiar with leading the charge to the finish line.

Swimming in the 45-49 year old masters division at the Keystone State Games recently, Byron took home the gold medals in the 50 meters fly, the 50 meter free, 5-meter breast, 100 meter breast, and the 200 meter free. In the process she set five state records in her division. Byron would have gladly swum in a few of the other categories but competitors are limited to five events.

Her performance at Keystone was the culmination of some very serious training that began last October. At that time Byron set a goal to not only make a big "splash" at the Keystone State Games, but also at the national meet at the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on May 18th.

"I trained as hard as any high school kid," Byron said. "I changed my diet, my mental attitude - I became even more intense."

The well-known pediatrician is extremely intent in the pool, part of which can be attributed to the fact that she is forced to train alone. The masters swimmers locally meet at the YMCA early in the morning when Byron is getting her children ready for school.

She returned home with a good showing in Florida. Byron finished in the top 10 in six events and her relay team set a new national record.

Byron swims with the 1776 Colonials relay team. The Philadelphia-based group is over 600 members strong, but very few of them actually have the opportunity to train and practice together.

Attending and swimming well at the national meet has been the highlight of Byron's career thus far, but she's far from finished.

*"Getting faster is a goal. I hope to stay healthy and keep improving."*

Joan Byron

Gold medal master swimmer

"Getting faster is a goal," Byron said. "I hope to stay healthy and keep improving. I also want to go to the world championships one of these days."

Making the journey to the world tournament in the masters swimming division is based upon qualifying times at the national meet. With thousands of people competing, Byron freely admits the times are becoming more and more difficult each year.

She has a preference for beautiful, scenic pools as well as the city of Barcelona, Spain. Byron is positive that the world meet will be held in Barcelona in the very near future and will make a serious attempt at qualifying when that occurs.

Although she's one tough competitor in the pool, she also views swimming as mentally relaxing and a real stress reliever.

"When I was in college and medical school, I would swim just to relieve the tension," Byron explained.

At that time, competitive swimming was offered at very few colleges, especially for women. After college she concentrated on her career. Not long after, she married Dr. Thomas Byron and decided to have a family. Byron's competitive swimming career really didn't start until she attended the Keystone State Games in 1989.

The wait was worth it, she set a couple of records in the 35-39 age division. Along the way she set four records at a long course meet in Allentown.

Her occupation and her children, Tom, age 13; Elizabeth, 11 and Caroline, 8, still come first, so she attends as many zone meets as possible, but most of the national meets are too far



POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK

Joan Byron shows off her five Keystone Games gold medals standing in the pool at Valley Tennis & Swim Club.

away to put the rest of her life on hold for a week. The next national meet is scheduled for Mount Hood, Oregon this fall.

Her favorite events are the 50 meter free, the 100 meter free and the 100 meter fly, but for Byron the trophies and the medals are secondary the real turn on is the sense of accom-

plishment. She continues to get better every year, although it hasn't gotten any easier.

"It's hard to maintain peak swimming year after year," Byron said. As you get older, you realize you can't continue to do what you used to. You can't

See GOLD, pg 11

## A good day for BMT triathletes

By LEN KRYESKI  
Sports Writer

**LEHMAN TOWNSHIP** - Patrice Persico got her wish — with nearly 10 minutes to spare.

The Trucksville resident competed in the 14th annual Wilkes-Barre Triathlon on Sunday. Previously she had participated in the swimming portion as one-third of a relay team, but this was her first full triathlon.

"I was thrilled," said Persico. "I wanted to get in under three hours and I beat that by almost 10 minutes."

Persico's effort of 2:50:48 was third best among local amateur females and the second best time among girls from the Back Mountain. Colleen Tomalis of Dallas was slightly better at 2:48:37.

Persico is quite the swimmer and has participated in a few biking events, but found the triathlon's seven-mile run to be a challenge.

"For me the running was really tough," Persico said, "and I got dehydrated."

About two years ago, Patrice started jogging at a slow clip and eventually worked her way up to eight miles. In order to get ready for the annual Back Mountain event she began running six miles a day, three to four times a week this past spring. Her husband Joseph, also participated in the event and posted the 10th best time among males from the Back Mountain. Joe completed the course in 2:40:53.

Trucksville's William Sprau took the Back Mountain crown with an effort of 2:18:48.

The race got underway at 8:15 Sunday morning when competitors took to the waters of Harveys Lake for an open water swim that measured nine-tenths of a mile.

After the swim it was on to the bikes for a 24-mile race to the Penn State University Wilkes-Barre campus. Athletes then completed the event via foot with a seven mile run in the vicinity of the Lehman campus.

A total of 510 individual athletes from around the United States and overseas competed in all three stages while another 174 participated as part of relay teams. Despite drawing the highest number of athletes in its 14-year

*"I was thrilled. I wanted to get in under three hours and I beat that by almost 10 minutes."*

Patrice Persico  
Triathlete

history, organizers had one gray cloud to deal with. Only 19 professional athletes made the trek to the Back Mountain.

The triathlon usually draws double that amount. Many pros attended the Cleveland Triathlon, scheduled on the same day this year, because of a higher payoff.

Jeff Devlin of Downingtown,

Full page of photos, complete local times on pages 10-11

Pennsylvania went home with \$2,500 for outdistancing the rest of the field with a time of 1:55:50. Paula Newby-Fraser received a similar amount for pacing all female competitors with a time of 2:13:38. Robert Hacker of Kinterville led all amateurs and finished sixth overall in 2:01:23.

For the first time the professional winners of the Wilkes-Barre Triathlon received one of five qualifying entries to the Gatorade Ironman Triathlon Championships. Those will be held in Hawaii on October 7th.

The Octolberman team from Dallas led the mixed division with a time of 2:21:12. Pat O'Connor took care of the swimming chores while Darren Spivey performed the bike race and Leigh Pawling the run.

The top female team also hailed from Dallas. The Tres Tri La Femme featured Andrea Harris, Deb Tarvin and Patty Kupstas. They combined for a time of 2:26:19.

Construction Unlimited of Mehoopany led the male division and also received the overall team crown.

## Hosey's closes out perfect season with rec ball title



Nafy Hage, left, and Jim Jaster left no room for Bill Vigorito's shot in Monday's championship game in the Dallas Rec Basketball League. Hosey's won 40-34, capping off an undefeated season.

Hosey's completed an outstanding undefeated season by nipping the Knights 40-34 for the Dallas Borough Rec Center Summer League championship.

Hosey's led 22-14 at the half and withstood a furious rush by the Knights to win the title. Frank Debona had 16 to pace the champs, including a big three-point play down the stretch.

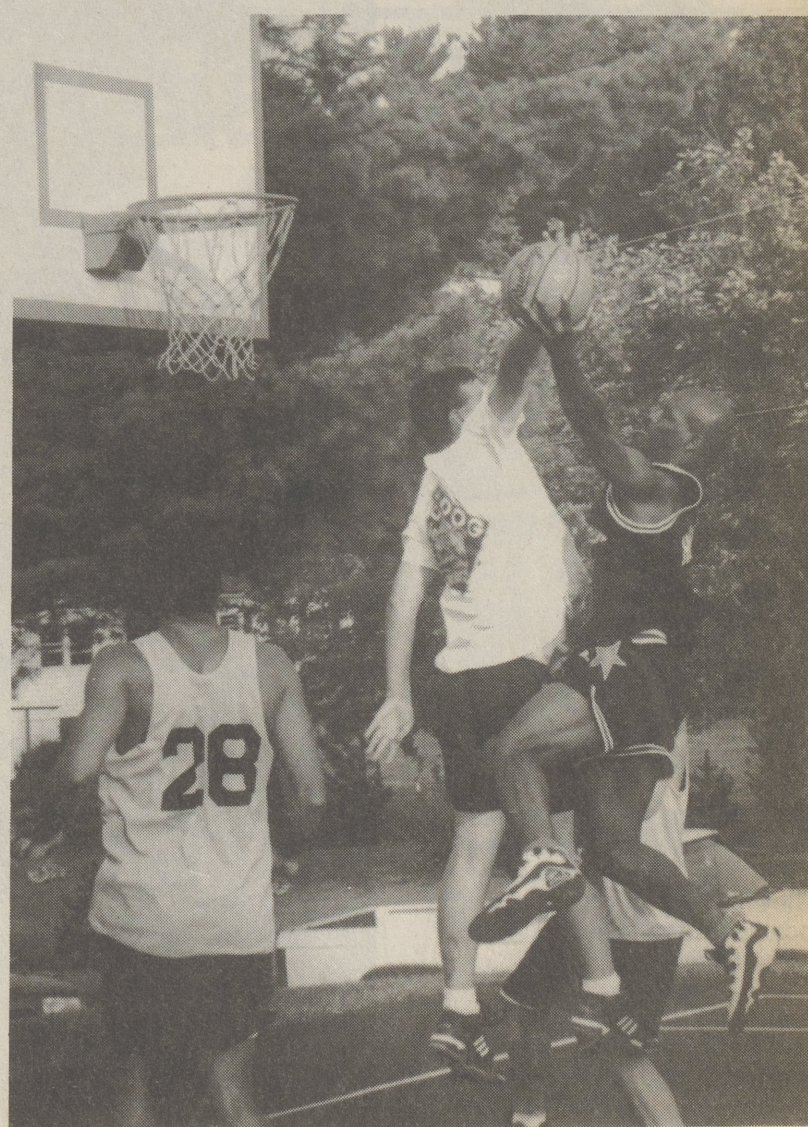
Nafy Hage muscled in 12 points for Hosey's while Rob Wilson had 15 for the Knights.

The Knights had reached the finals by upsetting Woychick Accounting 67-61 behind Rich Davis's 28 points. Hosey's made it to the title game by whipping Cook's 90-54. Jim Jaster had 22 to pace the victors in that game.

CHAMPIONSHIP BOX SCORE			
Hosey's - 40	FG	F	Total
Debona*	6	3	16
Hoover	0	0	0
Jaster	2	0	4
Johnson	2	1	6
Pincofski	0	0	0
Hage	5	2	12
Wilson	1	0	2
Gardner	0	0	0
	16	6	40

Knights - 34			
R. Wilson	FG	F	Total
Ziomek	0	0	0
Panuzka	1	0	2
Davis	4	1	9
Tannenbaum	1	1	3
D. Wilson	0	0	0
Hynick	1	0	2
Vigarito	1	1	3
	14	5	34

\* Denotes 3 point goal



Rob Wilson of the Knights blocked a shot from Hosey's Steve Gardner as Rich Davis came in for the rebound.