



## SWIMMING

## League of Winners

Swimming and diving continue their run of league championships.

By Scott Sabocheck

DURING HIS SIX-AND-A-HALF SEASONS leading the swimming and diving programs, coach Pete Thompson has stuck by his plan to build his teams so they can compete with some of the best schools in the nation.

Over the past few seasons, the Yellowjackets have demonstrated that they are on the right track with a string of impressive Liberty League performances. Claiming both the men's and women's league titles in December, the men have won back-to-back championships and three of the last four, while the women have won four consecutive league titles.

The Yellowjackets have been ranked in the College Swimming Coaches Association of America's top 20 in each of the last two years. At the end of December, the women were ranked No. 13 in the poll.

During Thompson's time, the team has set 49 new school records and has 37 Liberty League event champions.

"We have been noticeably improving as a team since my freshman year, and now as a senior, I can tell that we are ready to take a big step forward," says Adam Bossert '12, who was 2011-12 Liberty League Male



Swimmer of the Year.

Karen Meess '12 says the success of the past few years adds to the team's confidence going into each new challenge in the pool.

"It is a well-known fact on this team that you are to leave it better than you found it by

**MAJOR LEAGUE :** At this winter's Liberty League championships, diver Sara Spielman '12 (above) qualified for the three-meter regional NCAA championships, while Brian Wong '15 was named Swimmer of the Year.

swimming your fastest and recruiting swimmers faster and more intelligent than you," she says. "We're a strong team in ability and spirit, and with this attitude more is yet to come."

For Thompson's part, he prides himself on getting athletes with three key characteristics: being a student first, having a passion for the sport, and contributing to a positive team atmosphere. "[Recruits] see how our program works and realize that this is something they want to be a part of."

Rochester's reputation also works in the team's favor, he says. "The University of Rochester sells itself with its name recognition and research opportunities, along with the great history and tradition of the entire university, including athletics." He credits former coach Bill Boomer, who in the 1980s put a stamp on Yellowjacket swimming and diving as a nationally recognized program.

As Thompson looks to the rest of the winter season, including the UAA championships in February, and beyond, the outlook is bright.

"I want this team to get better over the course of the rest of the season, and the results will take care of themselves," he says. "We not only want to make it to nationals, we want to make an impact there." **R**

*Scott Sabocheck is assistant director of Athletics Communications.*