

# Misfortune follows Taormina

By G.J. Nink  
staff writer

Bad luck isn't a constant companion of Sheila Taormina's. It just seems that way.

The reason is timing. When bad luck visits Taormina, it picks the worst time possible to do it.

Taormina, a junior at Georgia and former swimming standout at Livonia Stevenson, has been among the NCAA's top half-dozen in the 400-yard individual medley since her freshman season as a Lady Bulldog. But in that race at the NCAA championship meet, Taormina has:

• Been disqualified as a freshman;

• Had her arms tighten up during the 400 IM final in her sophomore year after swimming a sprint in the 200-yard freestyle relay 10 minutes earlier;

• And, this year, been dragged into the worst performance of the season.

It should be understood, first and foremost, that unless it's an Olympic year, the one event collegiate swimmers focus on during training is the NCAA meet. So, essentially, Taormina had been working since last summer with the 400 IM race in the NCAA finals, which were last week at the University of Texas in Austin, as her focal point.

"I JUST wish I could take that day back," Taormina said. "I was having a great meet until I did something really, really stupid."

"If I could, I would take it all back." What Taormina did was take a non-prescription drug after experi-

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— Sheila Taormina  
U. Georgia swimmer



## swimming

three individual events that day, and the other two are both freestyles, so everyone else enters the 200 IM."

HER OTHER events were the 200 free relay and the 400 medley relay, both of which finished 11th Georgia placed 13th in the team standings.

Her misfortune at the NCAA meet hasn't discouraged Taormina. She plans to spend this summer in Fort Lauderdale training with former Olympic coach Jack Nelson, whom she worked with prior to her senior year at Stevenson.

"He's real good on technique," said Taormina. "He really helped me with my breaststroke before, and now I need to work on my backstroke. It's my worst stroke."

She has no plans to continue swimming after her senior season at Georgia. A two-time academic All-American who is certain to make it three after this year (a management major, she had a 4.0 grade point the first semester of her junior year), Taormina said she has "other interests in life" she wants to pursue.

But that doesn't mean she won't attack her senior season with a vengeance — and also a bit of wariness. "I'm just waiting to see what will go wrong next year," she said.

encing stomach cramps in her Friday morning preliminary swim in the 400 IM. She finished her prelim race in 4:19.06, her best time of the season. "My goal was 4:17," she said. "I was happy with that for a morning swim. I thought I could drop two or three seconds in the finals that night."

Team trainers told Taormina what drug to take to alleviate the cramps, that it was allowable under NCAA drug guidelines and that it wouldn't make her drowsy.

So she did. Only she fell into the worst — but most often violated — trap involving drugs: If one pill helps, two will help more.

DIRECTIONS CALLED for one pill every 12 hours. "I took six in a five-hour period," Taormina said.

By the time she stroked through the first 100 yards, the butterfly leg, of her 400 IM, Taormina had little feeling left in her arms. "I was so

dragged out, I was just trying to finish the race," she said.

She laughs about it now, for a reason. "I have to laugh or I'd go crazy every time I think about it," she said. "I'm really bummed out because my best time would have gotten fifth."

Instead, Taormina finished eighth (last in the championship heat) in 4:26.22 — way off her usual pace and not even close to the NCAA qualifying standard of 4:23.39.

It was a tragic turn of events for Taormina, but she was still Georgia's highest finisher, and she earned All-American honors. On Thursday she swam the 200 IM, placing 18th in 2:03.17.

"I think that's the toughest event to final in in the NCAA's," Taormina said of the 200 IM. "There's only

## Top players honored

Continued from Page 1

we put the ball in her hands and let her see what she could work out," coach Cynthia Jones said. "We tried to focus things around her and let her skills come forth in the competition."

"She's a good leader and a very smart player. She knows the game very well. She knows how to lead her team in the clutch."

Sara Brorby, senior, Walled Lake Central; Brorby was a three-year choice for all-league honors in the WLA and was twice named to the Rochester Kiwanis all-tournament team.

She had 447 kills and a kill percentage of .268 last season, and her spiking percentage was .780 with 714 good spikes and 915 total attacks. Brorby also had 396 blocks and 83 aces. Her serving percentage was .920.

"She was the strongest middle blocker we've ever had in terms of hitting and blocking," coach Mike Lindstrom said. "The physical force she had was incredible."

She understood her position better than most kids. She's a real student of the game. Her playing AAU volleyball in the spring and going to camps had a lot to do with that."

Tim DeBeliso, coach of the year, Mercy. In his fourth year at Mercy, DeBeliso took the Marlins to their most successful season.

Mercy was 55-5, achieved the No. 2 ranking in Class A and won the Catholic League title after being runner-up to Ledywood the last two years. The Marlins also defeated their arch rivals in four of five matches, also winning the Central Division crown.

"It was a fantastic year for us," DeBeliso said. "It was the best year in Mercy history. We had the most wins, fewest losses and most tournament wins. We were league, district and regional champs, and we made our first Final Four appearance."

"It was the kind of year every coach dreams of having. We were fortunate to have the kind of kids to do the kind of things we did."

## Cohoos 9th in state

The Claremoreville Swim Club Cohoos ended their short season March 2-4 by finishing ninth out of 48 teams in the 13-and-under state meet at Fort High School.

The meet attracted 157 swimmers.

Becky Fiechell, competing in the Girls 10 and under division, led Claremoreville with a second in the 200-yard individual medley (2:41.83); fifth, 100 breaststroke (1:23.07); fifth, 100 IM (1:18.84); sixth, 500 freestyle (2:28.78); and seventh, 100 freestyle (1:07.50).

Teammate Jeff Steing, competing in the Boys 11-12 age group, took fourth in the 200 IM (2:25.07) and 50 breaststroke (24.16); sixth, 100 butterfly (1:08.11); eighth, 100 breaststroke (1:15.83); and 11th, 50 butterfly (30.23).

In the 13-15 state championship meet March 16-18 at Michigan State and Lansing Community College, Claremoreville finished 10th out of 48 teams. The meet was hosted by the Capital Area Swim Club.

NANCY WARSON paced Claremoreville with a first in the 100 butterfly (1:06.77); second, 500 freestyle (2:28.44); fourth, 200 butterfly (2:17.5); sixth, 50 breaststroke (26.3); eighth, 200 freestyle (2:02.85); and 11th, 100 freestyle (58.99).

Teammate Jamie Anderson, competing in the Girls 13-15 division, placed in five individual freestyle events — fourth in the 500 (5:14.87); fifth, 200 (1:58.8) and 1,000 (10:43.48); sixth, 1,650 (18:04.84); and 12th, 100 (57.0).

Tina Caranicolas and Karen Kissinger, CSC teammates, though swimming unattached, both scored high in their respective divisions.

Caranicolas, competing in the Girls 11-12, took first in the 100 backstroke (1:05.53) and 500 freestyle (5:24.31); second, 50 backstroke (31.11); third, 200 IM (2:21.15); and sixth, 100 butterfly (1:04.54).

Kissinger, swimming in the Girls 13-14, took second in the 400 IM (4:41.31) and 200 butterfly (2:13.24); third, 200 freestyle (1:57.6) and 200 IM (2:16.73); sixth, 100 butterfly

(1:02.79) and 100 freestyle (58.53).

### OTHER C'VILLE FINISHERS

Boys 10 and under: Craig Steing — 5th, 50-yard backstroke (35.02); seventh, 100 butterfly (1:21.88); 11th, 200 IM (2:58.85); 12th, 50 butterfly (35.78); John Hawkins — 8th, 200 freestyle (2:27.19); seventh, 50 backstroke (38.15); eighth, 100 backstroke (1:18.8); ninth, 200 IM (2:48.64); 12th, 100 freestyle (1:07.28); Karl Pawlewicz — second, 50 breaststroke (37.42); third, 500 freestyle (2:51.1); seventh, 100 IM (1:17.18) and 100 freestyle (1:05.58); David Knapp — fourth, 100 butterfly (1:18.83); eighth, 200 IM (2:48.04); 11th, 100 IM (1:20.48).

Girls 10 and under: Janet Fisher — fourth, 100 breaststroke (1:24.58); fifth, 100 backstroke (1:19.7); eighth, 50 breaststroke (40.26); ninth, 200 freestyle (2:31.96); 10th, 100 freestyle (1:07.85).

Boys 11-12: Greg Tracy — 10th, 200 IM (2:34.73); 11th, 100 butterfly (1:12.38); 12th, 500 freestyle (6:00.31) and 100 backstroke (1:13.86).

Girls 13-14: Mandi Falk — third, 200 breaststroke (2:33.37); fourth, 100 breaststroke (1:10.45); fifth, 400 IM (4:50.08); seventh, 200 IM (2:18.42).

Boys 13-14: Steve Reiter — eighth, 100 backstroke (1:03.31) and 200 backstroke (2:15.9); ninth, 100 butterfly (1:00.5); 11th, 200 freestyle (1:59.29).

Girls 15-18: Teri Juhasz — sixth, 200 IM (2:20.12); seventh, 400 IM (4:52.32); 10th, 100 breaststroke (1:12.03); 10th, 100 butterfly (1:03.51) and 200 butterfly (2:20.76); Megan Holmberg — third, 100 backstroke (1:05.11); sixth, 200 backstroke (2:22.77).

Boys 15-18: Gordy Gatewood — 10th, 200 IM (2:04.47); 10th, 400 IM (4:25.84); 11th, 200 butterfly (2:04.01).

### RELAY EVENTS

Girls 10 and under: Janet Fisher, Becky Noechel, Amy Schaner and Karen Mathie — third, 200 medley (2:23.74); fifth, 200 freestyle (2:07.17).

Boys 10 and under: Craig Steing, John Hawkins, David Knapp and Karl Pawlewicz — second, 200 medley (2:14.66) and 200 freestyle (2:01.26).

Boys 11-12: Jeff Steing, Ted Burmeister, Michael Schaner and Greg Tracy — sixth, 200 medley (2:10.19); Burmeister, Steing, Tracy and Jon Reed — seventh, 200 freestyle (1:54.29).

Girls 11-12: Lynn Knapp, Jamie Hillard, Jill Benivenga and Kelly Casella — ninth, 200 medley (2:11.98); 10th, 200 freestyle (1:55.72).

Girls 13-14: Nancy Warson, Mandi Falk, Caris Karoub and Leslie Nichols — fifth, 400 medley (4:22.17); sixth, 400 freestyle (3:57.48).

Girls 15-18: Teri Juhasz, Jamie Anderson, Megan Holmberg and Jennifer Knapp — eighth, 800 freestyle (8:28.14).

Boys 15-18: G.T. Meil, Gordy Gatewood, Bob Holdridge and John Brogan — eighth, 800 freestyle (7:31.38).

butterfly, ninth, 400 IM; 11th, 500 freestyle; 12th, 100 butterfly.

Boys 15-18: Scott Dewolf — second, 400 IM; sixth, 1,650 freestyle; eighth, 200 butterfly and 1,000 freestyle; eighth, 100 butterfly; 12th, 500 freestyle; Eric Bunch — 12th, 1,650 freestyle.

Girls 15-18: Tara Ditchkoff — third, 1,650 freestyle; fourth, 200 freestyle and 200 backstroke; fifth, 400 IM; sixth, 1,000 freestyle; 12th, 100 butterfly; Claire Cryderman — third, 1,000 freestyle; seventh, 1,650 freestyle; ninth, 100 breaststroke; 11th, 400 IM; 200 breaststroke and 500 freestyle.

### RELAY EVENTS

Boys 13-14: Matt Martin, Ryan Freeborn, Alex Goecke and Mike Orris — first, 400 medley and 400 freestyle; Martin, Orris, Freeborn and Drew Sopha — third, 800 freestyle.

Girls 13-14: Holly Palmeri, Shannon O'Brien, Amy Balog and Brandi Gary — fifth, 400 freestyle; seventh, 800 freestyle and 400 medley.

Boys 15-18: Ron Orris, Scott Dewolf, Mike Goecke and Curt Wittthoff — eighth, 400 medley; Orris, Dewolf, Goecke and Eric Bunch — 11th, 400 freestyle; Gary Bergman, Wittthoff, Bunch and Dewolf — 12th, 800 freestyle.

Girls 15-18: Tara Ditchkoff, Claire Cryderman, Pam Pritchard and Elizabeth Sorokac — sixth, 800 freestyle; Ditchkoff, Cryderman, Pritchard and Janet Roberts — seventh, 400 freestyle; Ditchkoff, Cryderman, Pritchard and Sorokac — eighth, 400 medley.

## Martin sets records

Matt Martin of the Livonia-Novii Spartans Aquatic Club set a pair of records last weekend in the 13-and-over State Swimming Championships held at Michigan State University.

Competing in the Boys 13-14 age category, Martin shattered marks in the 100- and 200-meter meter backstrokes with times of 55.49 and 1:54.58, respectively.

He also captured the 400 individual medley, 100 butterfly, 200 and 1,650 freestyles.

Teammate Ryan Freeborn added a win in the 200 IM and finished second in the 400 IM, 100 and 200 backstrokes. He also took third in the 1,000 freestyle and eighth in the 500 freestyle.

### OTHER SPARTAN FINISHERS

Boys 13-14: Alex Goecke — second place, 200 breaststroke; ninth, 100 freestyle; 12th, 50 freestyle; Mike Orris — fourth, 400 individual medley; fifth, 200 IM; seventh, 1,000 freestyle; sixth, 200 backstroke and 200 butterfly; 10th, 500 freestyle; Drew Sopha — ninth, 1,650 freestyle; 10th, 200 butterfly; 11th, 400 IM and 1,000 freestyle.

Girls 13-14: Holly Palmeri — sixth, 400

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