

# Creek, the champs, now overflowing

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Dear Class 5A field, Cherry Creek is loaded.

The defending Class 5A girls swimming and diving champions are as deep as they've been in years and are the overwhelming favorite to win the team title in February.

"Right now, practice is so much fun, it's almost like a meet," Bruins coach Eric Craven said. "They are itching to get into a real meet."

As if the Bruins didn't have enough talent, a brilliant freshman class — led by Bonnie Brandon — adds to the mystique.

"She's amazing to watch," said Craven of Brandon, who made it all the way to the semifinals of the 200 backstroke at the Olympic Trials this summer as a 14-year-old. "She's as good as they get."

The Bruins were a full 80 points better than second-place Fairview in February and may increase that.

The team chase does become more intriguing with the addition of reigning 4A champion Ralston Valley to the mix. The Mustangs, who may or may not have the services of Katie Johnson and Rachel Snyder, still have Arianne Lujan and will be in the mix, along with annual powers Regis, Fairview and Arapahoe.

The move to 5A by Ralston Valley opens the door even wider for Rock Canyon, last year's 4A runner-up.

"I'm really going to miss having them, it leaves a big hole in our division," said Rock Canyon coach Ruthie Milberg. "It would've been a great rivalry, but it gives a lot more teams a great opportunity."

Rock Canyon already has three swimmers who have signed to swim Division I — Kirsten Milberg (Denver), Tia Totoro (Denver) and Taylor Curado (Rutgers) — and with 54 kids on the roster, including everyone who went to state last season, the Jaguars have distanced themselves drastically.