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Stingrays win big on long course

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The Foothills Stingrays are unofficially the best small swim club in the province.

One thing for sure, the Stingrays are sending the most swimmers to the national age-



Holly Johnson of the Foothills Stingrays competes in the 12-year-old girls 400m individual medley at the age group provincial long course swim meet June 30 in Calgary.
photo by Bruce Campbell

group championships in the club's 12-year history. Stingrays coach Todd Melton believes the Stingrays surpassed the Red Deer Swim Club in the small swim club standings during the Alberta Age Group Long Course (50m pool) provincial championships in Calgary June 27-30.

"I added up the points and I think we passed Red Deer for the championship," Melton said after the long course provincials. "It's a combination of short course in March and the long course in June. We were 200 points behind Red Deer coming into this, and if my math is right we won by 15 points."

There are approximately 35 small club teams in Alberta, which is defined by 75 competitive swimmers or fewer. The Stingrays earned a lot of points from 13-year-old Christyna Dashko, who won gold in the 13-14-year-old girls 50m breaststroke.

"Her 50m breaststroke was extremely fast, she's now ranked fourth in the country," Melton said.

Dashko qualified for nationals which will be July 16 in Montreal in the 100m breaststroke by finishing third in Calgary in a time of 1:20.64.

"I knew she would make it in the 100," Melton said. "She was really close in the past, she had just missed it."

Ryan Jackson had already qualified for nationals in the 14-year-old 100m and 200m butterfly. He will go into nationals on a high note after winning gold in the 50m butterfly and silver medals in the 100m and 200m butterfly in Calgary.

He had a personal best time of 1:04.52 in the 100m fly.

"This will give me confidence," Jackson said. "If I can swim another personal best time, I should be able to make it to the finals at nationals."

Andy Osborne, who has qualified for nationals in the 14-year-old boys 1,500m freestyle and the 100m and 200m breaststroke, picked up a bronze medal in the 200m breaststroke at the long course provincials on June 30.

"I was trying to get first in the 200m (breaststroke), but I was able to take off time from my personal best — whenever you can take time off it is always good," Osborne said. "I want to

improve more for nationals.”

Holly Johnson, 12, and Osborne were honoured by Swim Alberta for achieving a top 25 age group ranking in Canada; Johnson in the 800m freestyle and Osborne in the 200m breaststroke.

Ryan Jackson was honoured for making the top 10 in Canada in the 200m butterfly.

Also qualifying for the age group nationals for the Stingrays are Cole Midtdal, 13-year-old boys 200m backstroke; Holly Johnson, 12-year-old girls 800m and 1,500m freestyle; and Keeley Greenfield, 1,500m freestyle.

The six swimmers advancing to nationals are the most in the club’s history. The only other swimmer to qualify for nationals was Annalise Posein, who qualified in the backstroke in 2006.

Young swimmer

Just wait until Finlay Knox gets to pick on kids his own size.

The eight-year-old Knox was the youngest swimmer at the long course provincials.

Knox, a student at Dr. Morris Gibson School in Okotoks, had to compete in the 10 and under boys division.

He more than held his own. Knox finished fifth in the 200m individual medley and was eighth in the 100m butterfly.

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