

Estevan athletes lead at Special Olympics

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Twenty-one athletes combined to win 44 medals — 17 of them gold — to help the Zone 1 team to a fifth place finish at the Provincial Special Olympics Developmental Games held Saturday in Yorkton.

Adele Beaulieu of Estevan led all southeast competitors by winning five gold and one bronze medal in the swimming competition.

In track and field competition, Mary Styre and Sherry Morden also of Estevan each won three gold medals, while Carol Humby of Estevan won gold in two events.

Other gold medal winners were Wendal Baniulis, Alan Crawford and Murray Shauf all of Estevan and Tyler McKinnon of Moosomin.

"This team was largely put together of athletes from Estevan," said track and field coach Wes Kreklewich.

"Of the 21 athletes, 17 were from Estevan, and we finished fifth in team points out of all the zones which is pretty good considering we only had 21 athletes. There is a very strong Special Olympics program in Estevan.

"The developmental games are held every second year," Kreklewich said. "There are four different levels of Special Olympics, with Levels 1 and 2 going one year, and every other year you have Levels 3 and 4 like this year."

Track and field competitors had been preparing for the Games since beginning their track program after Easter, while Beaulieu and Crawford — the only two swimmers of the 21-member team — swim year-round.

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"We have some athletes who have been involved in Special Olympics for as many as 15 or 20 years, and others who are just in their first year of competition," Kreklewich said.

Other multiple medal winners in track and field competition at the Games included Billy Matlock with a pair of bronze, Grant Waldorf with a silver and a bronze and

Pauline Tuchscherer with two bronze. All three are from Estevan.

Individual medal recipients were: Gary Godman, Dorothy Johner, Heather Watson, Candace Mack, Michelle Chrest and Bradley Bolton all of Estevan, Curtis Potter of Moosomin, and Kelly Mulvena and Lee Moore both from Oxbow.

Also attending the meet was Ronnie Ror of Estevan.

"One thing about these Games is they seed the athletes against people of the same ability or skill level so everybody enjoys a little bit of success. That's the great thing about these Games," Kreklewich said.

Although competition was restricted to Saturday, the Games began with the opening ceremonies Friday night. A dance Saturday night and breakfast before departure Sunday morning gave the athletes a chance to meet.

"It was an excellent time for the athletes," Kreklewich said. "They loved the fellowship of the other athletes from around the province and renewing old friendships and making new ones.

"You get the athletes involved and have them feel good about themselves, having them try to reach level of success to help them build their self-esteem," he said.

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