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trials, but nobody would have known," said Nicholls, a teacher at Georgetown District High School, where Cieplucha went to school. "You would ask her how a meet went and she'd say, 'Good.' And then you'd find out she won gold or set a record."

While there were no records at the Canadian trials this year, Cieplucha did show her diverse talent by recording personal bests in four events, the 200- and 400-m medleys, the 200 m freestyle and the 200 m breaststroke.

That versatility has made her one of Canada's best medley swimmers, but it also serves to give her an endless source of things to strive for.

"That's the fun part for me," said Cieplucha, who now swims with the Oakville Aquatic Club. "The thing I like about training for the IM is that you train with four different groups



Scott Grant/Swimming Canada photo
Tessa Cieplucha will compete for Canada at the Pan Am Games in Lima, Peru.

to work on each of the strokes. There is always someone there to push you."

Last month at the Santa Clara International, one of the final tune-ups for the Pan Am Games, Cieplucha won the 800 m freestyle and the 400 m medley. She also finished on the podium in two other races.

With the swimming competition at the Pan Am

Games a month away (Aug. 6-10), Cieplucha is focused on performing her best in Peru, but she can't help but think of what the experience might lead to.

"Making the Olympics is the big goal and it's always in the back of my mind," she said. "That helps me get my smaller goals and hopefully it will ultimately help me reach the big goal."

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