



VIVEK PRAKASH / REUTERS

GOLDEN GIRL: Oakville's Tera Van Beilen (left) hugs teammate Rachel Nicol on the podium after winning the gold medal in the women's 100m breaststroke at the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore Wednesday. Van Beilen and Nicol teamed up Thursday to earn a bronze medal in the freestyle relay.

Van Beilen strikes gold at Youth Olympic Games

By Herb Garbutt
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

Tera Van Beilen has always considered herself a strong finisher, so when she hit the turn in the women's 100-metre breaststroke at the Youth Olympic Games, she knew a gold medal was within her reach.

"I knew that it was a very close at the first 50 when I turned and saw the other swimmers to my right," the 17 year old said by e-mail from Singapore Wednesday. "For the finish I knew that I needed to keep my form and not rush my stroke in order to pick up my speed and pass the other girls."

Van Beilen did just that. Second at the turn, she passed Canadian teammate Rachel Nicol down the stretch and held off Australia's Emily Selig to win Canada's third gold medal at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games. Van Beilen's time of one minute, 8.95 seconds got her to the wall 11 one-hundredths of a second ahead of Selig while Nicol took the bronze, finishing less than a quarter of a second off the pace.

"Winning gold is an amazing experience," Van Beilen said "When I touched the wall I was really pleased to see that I won and I was extremely happy with my time. It wasn't a best time, but it was the fastest time I've done all year."

Less than 24 hours later, Van Beilen earned a second medal, helping Canada take a bronze in the women's 4x100m freestyle relay. China won the gold in 3:48.84, Germany was second in 3:49.02 and the Canadian team, which

included Nicol, Lindsay Delmar and Lauren Earp, was third, one-tenth of a second behind the silver medalists.

Nicol was the favourite heading into the breaststroke final. The Lethbridge, Alta. native posted the fastest time of 1:09.22 in the semifinals while Van Beilen was third in 1:09.93. But she had a good feeling about the butterfly final.

"I really wanted to medal going into the final," said the King's Christian Collegiate student. "I felt really confident and fast in my warm-up."

That confidence paid off as she passed Nicol, who led by seven-one hundredths at the halfway mark.

"On the second length I got a bit tired and my stroke shortened a bit," Nicol said on the Swim Canada website. "Still I'm not disappointed especially that Tera also got on the podium. It was a really close race and exciting for all of us."

Van Beilen was hoping to make her first trip to the podium after the 4x100m medley relay team missed out on a medal by eight-one hundredths of a second on Monday. The Oakville Aquatics Club member didn't let her second chance pass her by.

"To stand on the top of the podium and see my flag being raised as the anthem is played is one of the best feelings and I am extremely proud," said Van Beilen, who praised organizers for a well-run event. "This experience at the Youth Olympic Games has been incredible and has definitely been a highlight of my career."

Late charge comes up short, but Shepley confident heading to Open

By Herb Garbutt
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

Jessica Shepley didn't let go of her Canadian PGA Women's Championship title without a fight.

Starting the day seven shots off the pace, Shepley ran off three straight birdies to open the back nine at the Burlington Golf and Country Club Wednesday. That stretch — coupled with an early double bogey by first-round leader Laura Bavaird — gave Shepley a share of the lead, along with Seema Sadekar.

Though Shepley turned in the low round of the day Wednesday, a three-under par 68, Bavaird would recover from her early troubles to win the two-day tournament by finishing at six-under par. That gave her a one-stroke victory over Lisa Ferrero, who originally asked her friend to join her at the tour-

nament to caddy for her, before Bavaird decided to play herself.

Shepley finished the tournament at two-under par, good for third place and a share of top Canadian honours with Sadekar and newly-turned pro Sue Kim.

That continued an outstanding year for Shepley on Canadian soil. She won the first stop on CN



MICHELLE SIU / OAKVILLE BEAVER

ON LINE: Jessica Shepley lines up a putt in the first round of the Canadian PGA Women's Championship in Burlington.

Canadian Women's Tour in Richmond, B.C. and then finished second — but earned top prize money when she finished behind amateur Candace Schepperle — at the tour's third event in Gatineau, Quebec.

"Whenever you come home to play and represent your country, it's always a little more special," said Shepley,

who had the biggest contingent of followers during Wednesday's final round.

This week's performance should help going into Shepley biggest event of the season, the CN Canadian Women's Open at the St. Charles Country Club in Winnipeg Aug. 23-29.

"I feel good going in," Shepley said. "I want to go out and enjoy myself and try not to think too much about it. It is our national championship and my first LPGA event this year but I have to stay in the moment and not get ahead of myself."

That worked well for Shepley Wednesday. Coming off a one-over 72 in which she bogeyed the final two holes, she came back to vault herself into contention.

"I just hung in there (in Tuesday's opening round). It was nothing special so it was