

Swim coach leaves for Collingwood

Ducks grew, improved under Brandon Oates

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

When Brandon Oates took the reins as the Stouffville Ducks Swim Club head coach in 2005 he acknowledged there was plenty of work to be done.

For starters, the club had eight swimmers.

Fast forward three years and there are now 43 members.

And most are improving on their personal best times with some even attaining provincial honours.

While Oates is satisfied, he felt it was time to move on.

The 25-year-old North Bay native's next coaching stint will take him to Collingwood.

"It was a tough decision to leave a team I built from the bottom up," said Oates, a 10-year coach. "I love Stouffville and everybody in the town is so nice. But I miss Northern Ontario and the less busy atmosphere. As hard



BRANDON OATES

as it is to move on, it's the right time in my life for a change."

Collingwood wasn't his first choice. While pursuing a position in eastern Ontario, a friend in Collingwood informed him she was leaving their club.

"It was a blessing in disguise," Oates said. "I didn't really think of Colling-

wood as a possibility. But after speaking to her, the idea really grew on me and the next thing I knew people were pushing me to apply there."

No successor has been named in Stouffville.

In the meantime, Peter Griffin, a recently hired head coach in Aurora, will come to Stouffville to coach a few practices a week. He will work with Oates' assistants, Andrea James and Francesca Turco, for the remainder of the season.

"I enjoyed watching the club grow into a very positive family-like team," Oates said of the Ducks. "All of the athletes have made some friendships that will last for the rest of their lives. Along the way, we've seen steady improvement from each team member."

"This team meant everything to me. These athletes are such wonderful people. Coaching them at every practice was my happiest part of every day. I hope to keep in touch with all of them in the future. Stouffville has been great to me and I will cherish every memory."

Silverthorn, teammates make waves in Buffalo

Jake Silverthorn highlighted a 12-member contingent from the Stouffville Ducks Swim Club at a long course meet last weekend in Buffalo, N.Y., by winning two events, finishing second in two other events and third in one.

The 12-year-old had personal best times in all five races. He also earned a top-10 ranking in Canada in his age group in the 100-metre and 200m butterfly and the 200m and 400m individual medley. He will be in Thunder Bay next weekend for the provincial long course championships.

- Among results posted by other Stouffville competitors:
- Jaime Silverthorn, 11, had two firsts, two seconds, a third, fourth and fifth. She also recorded six personal best times.
 - Alexandria Krawczuk, 12, swam her way to eight personal best times, including a first-place finish in her 200m individual medley. She also finished second in the 50m butterfly, fourth 50m and 200m freestyle and fifth 100m freestyle.
 - Cassie Beach, 12, Gloria Lai, 14, and Mackenzie Moyer, 12, had personal bests. Beach's best performance was in the 100m butterfly where she dropped over six seconds to place 12th overall in a tough female 11 and 12 age group.
 - Lai had some impressive showings, especially in the 50m freestyle where she came in 10th at 30.01. Moyer took off almost nine seconds off in her 200m freestyle and had an impressive 400m individual medley.
 - Victoria Wicks, 11, was fifth in the 50m breaststroke with seven personal best.
 - Bethany Philpott, 17, in her last meet as a Duck had five best times.
 - David Philpott, 13, had four personal bests in his first long course meet.
 - Carter McGhie, had four personal best times including a 14-second reduction in his 200m backstroke.
 - Caleigh Stallybrass, 13, attained six personal best times, including an eight-second reduction in her 200m freestyle.
 - Krista Bradshaw, 14, earned six personal best times and swam her first ever 200m butterfly.

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