

Local athletes make a splash

BY MURRAY MCCORMICK, LEADER-POST MAY 4, 2011

Seven products of the Regina water polo community made a splash on the weekend at the 104th annual senior men's Canadian club championship.

Six players and a coach with ties to the Regina Squids and Rebels water polo teams shared in a national title won by the Calgary-based Bowness Monster in Langley, B.C. The Monster beat the Montreal-based CAMO 8-7 in the goldmedal match to win the Canadian senior men's title in just the Monster's second year of existence.

"It just feels good that half of our team represents Regina and that's where our roots are," Noah Miller, the organizer of the Monster, said Tuesday from his Calgary home. "We're proud Saskatchewanians and we're still connected to the city and to the province."

The Regina contingent of the team consists of Miller, Pat McGinn, Will Tunison, Kent Hardisty, Andrew Wallace, Rob Barber and coach Chris Holden. All six players live in Calgary. Holden still resides in the Queen City.

Miller formed the team last year as a way of bringing former players back to the game.

"We all just play water polo for fun," said the 30-year-old Miller, who was a member of the Canadian senior men's water polo team from 1998 to 2007. "We don't take it too seriously. It's a statement to the rest of the country that these guys are back in the picture and are involved in water polo. You also don't have to train 10 times a week. You just have to make some sort of commitment and enjoy the sport. If you have good tactics and strategies, anything can happen. I think our desire really showed through."

The other members of the Monster were Chris Baradoy, Mikael Sabo, Nathaniel Miller, Con Kudaba, Nic Youngblud, Guy LeBlanc, Andrew Wallace and David Allan. They all live in Calgary. Kudaba was named the championship's most valuable player. Noah Miller was an all-star.

The season isn't over for Miller's team. On July 8-10, the Canadian masters championship is in Calgary. The 24-year-old Kudaba is the lone Monster not eligible for the master championship, which is open to players 30 and over. Miller said his squad averages 35 years of age

"We were the oldest team in terms of average age to ever win nationals," Miller stated with pride.

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