



KEES
tae kwon do

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Press Release

The KEES Yorkton Taekwondo club had 4 athletes, 1 referees and 1 coach, **Graeme Mitchell**, participate at the 2007 Junior National Black Belt Championships in Saint John New Brunswick on June 30 to July 1, 2007. There were 500 black belts registered for the junior national. This was the largest junior nationals yet for Canada. The winners of this event will represent Canada at the 2007 Pan-Am Taekwondo Championships in Daytona Beach.

Saturday June 3rd was the Black Belt "B" Division (11 to 13 y.o.) and "C" Division (10 and under) competition day. All of the Yorkton athletes competed on Sunday in the "A" Division (14 to 17 y.o.). There were 240 matches for the Sunday games. Yorkton's **Kira Schaab** had a very good match. Her first year in participating at the "A" Division saw her lose her game with a 10 to 8 score. This was an impressive performance for this young competitor.

Jessica McLaren had a good match. Jessica was behind in points and tried some high risk attacks to make up ground. Her opponent was unfortunately ready for these attacks and countered for points. Jessica lost her match and was unable to advance through the day in this single elimination event.

Autumn Ashcroft had an extremely tough draw. The two toughest and most experienced fighters that she could face in her division were her first opponents. Her first match was against Quebec's Michaud, who was the favorite to take the whole event. Autumn won this exciting match with a score of 12 to 11. Her next match was against the eventual gold medalist Ontario's Prevost. Carolyne Prevost was the 2005 Junior Pan-Am silver medalist. Autumn had difficulty focusing on her game plan and lost this match finishing out of the medals. We feel that Autumn has the talent to best Carolyne and will prove this in the near future.

Rae Ashcroft had the best performance of the day for the Saskatchewan Team capturing Saskatchewan's only medal in the "A" Division. She had 5 matches on her way to the gold medal match. She defeated some very experienced competitors. Her first game was stopped early with a 12 to 6 score. Her second match was against BC's Samantha Ling. Samantha had finished in the top 8 in the 2005 Pan-Am Championships and has in the past beaten Ontario's Prevost, this year's gold medalist in Light Middle weight division. Rae stayed very close to their practiced game plan and found herself in a sudden death game. Rae came out victorious and advanced.

Rae's third match was an easier game that once again was stopped early because of reaching the point ceiling and ended with a 12 to 6 score. This advanced her into the medal rounds.

Rae's next challenge was with Quebec's Holly Patterson. Holly was National Champion from 2006. It was a nail biting game with the score keeping close but going back and forth. In the dying seconds Rae tied the game at 6 to 6. Holly looked like she was thinking it will be sudden death round. Rae performed an explosive attack with 2 seconds left and scored for a 7 to 6 win to advance to the gold medal match.

The gold medal match was against Christine Trieu. Ontario's Trieu was the 2005 Pan-Am Championships silver medalist. This match proved too much for Rae and she lost the game with the scoreboard showing 3 to 1. Rae had an unbelievable day to gain the silver medal in a division saturated with experienced and highly talented athletes. A Great accomplishment.

We are all very proud of Rae's performance and know that she will eventually win the National gold for Saskatchewan. She was very much in control of her mental focus and strategy. Truly a great showing for this young competitor with two more years yet left at the junior ranks.

Susanne Mitchell was awarded the Most Valuable Referee Award. This was selected by the referees assigned as ring managers. We are also very proud of her performance. Susanne is waiting on pins and needles to hear if she has been selected to participate in the International Referee training camp for the Olympic referees in Seoul Korea at the end of July.

For further information contact Wayne Mitchell at the above phone numbers.