



KEES
tae kwon do

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Press Release

Autumn Ashcroft secures National Team invite with fantastic performance.

Team Saskatchewan was represented by a lone athlete from the KEES Yorkton Taekwondo club at the 2008 Senior Nationals. That lone athlete was Autumn Ashcroft supported by her coach, Graeme Mitchell. The Nationals were held in Montreal March 8-9th at the Centre Claude Robillard. There were 225 black belts in 8 weight categories for men and women. This event is the final step in deciding the top 4 ranked athletes in Canada for each weight division. The top 4 will then advance to the National Team Trials round robin event scheduled for Ottawa May 24th. The Team trials is the finals step to determine Team Canada for the Pan-Am Championships in Puerto Rico.

Autumn had managed to catch a flu bug the weekend before this important event. They discovered that she had difficulty breathing in her first match. This became a source of concern. In spite of this concern she easily won her first match against a tough opponent, JANIE LAGACÉ, from Quebec.

Her next match was against the 2007 National Team member, Natalie Simon, from Ontario. Last year Autumn lost to Natalie with a 7 to 0 score. Autumn used great discipline to stick with Graeme's game plan. From the beginning to the end of the game Autumn never lost the lead and found final victory with a 5 to 2 score. This was a great vindication for her 2007 performance and this rematch was another great confidence builder. This win advanced Autumn to the gold medal match.

Getting to the gold medal match secured a post for Autumn at the 2008 Taekwondo Canada Team Trials. The final game was more of a feeling out process to validate their game plan to win at the more important team trials. The opponent was Michelle Ge of Vancouver. Graeme's comment on her gold medal match was "We tested how Michelle reacted to our attacks and confirmed that our strategy will be able to defeat Michelle at the team trials." Autumn's training is still in the General Preparation stage and she will be a much faster stronger competitor in late May during our Competition phase of her Annual Planification. Look what we did today with her still being quite sick! How much more will she do when she is healthy. Yorkton has a strong valid contender for a National Team spot. We can hardly wait for May.

Autumn's National ranking has moved from 72nd on December 31, to 12th on Feb 5th to top 4 following the Senior Nationals. This is Autumn's first year out of the Junior ranking to senior only competition.

Susanne Mitchell was a ring manager for the referee team at the Senior National Championships. She continues to perform as one of the top referees in Canada.

Meanwhile the Kees Yorkton Juniors are preparing for the under 17 National Team trials to be held in Calgary April 4 to 6. The National Junior games participants will be represented in the "A" division by Rae Ashcroft, Kira Schaab as well as Derek Barr and Francis Bazin in the "B" division. Only the "A" division will be selected for the Junior World Championships in Izmir, Turkey. The Yorkton club is looking for great results here also and a couple of team berths to come their way.

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