

## Comets streak into new season

Posted By [Jeremy Nolais](#) On October 28, 2009 @ 10:26 am In [Sports](#) | [No Comments](#)

It might have been the opening meet of the season, but members of the Cochrane Comets have already made an impact on the local swim scene.

Comets swimmer Connor Mattheizing placed first in both the 50-metre butterfly and 50-metre backstroke for boys aged 12 and under at the Fall Start Up shortcourse meet, held at the University of Calgary Oct. 25. He also added a third-place finish to his day's work in the 100-metre individual medley.



**Seventeen-year-old Jon Wilkins with the Cochrane Comets pours all of his energy into the final strokes of his 200-metre freestyle. (Photo by Jeremy Nolais)**

"I am just hoping to get faster and faster and meet all of my goals," Mattheizing, 12, said of the season ahead.

"Swimming's really fun, it's really useful in life in many ways."

Another solid performance for the Comets came from Michael Audia, also 12, who swam personal best times in all six events he competed in, including knocking 16 seconds off his time in the 200-metre freestyle. The performances from Audia, Mattheizing and other members of the Comets impressed first-year coach Randi Willisko.

"I think (Audia) has learned a lot over the last year and that's helping him," Willisko said.

"I have watched (Mattheizing) swim for the last few years and watched him develop. I would like to see him get to the national level," she added, noting that reaching the shortcourse podium at provincials in March is also possible.

Willisko, who took the reigns of the Comets club in September, said the meet served as an important starting point for her intentions to build up her team of young racers.

"It's the first meet of the year, so for me coming in it's about seeing them race, seeing how they race and what we need to work on for future meets," Willisko said. "They have only been in the water for about a month, so it's just about setting that base for each of them."

Mattheizing, who has been swimming for six years, admitted that his new coach is a little intense, but has enjoyed working with her so far.

"She has been good, lots of different workouts, which have helped. She really pushes us and I like that because I get faster and faster," Mattheizing said.

As for a possible run to the provincial podium or even nationals, Mattheizing said he plans to take this season one race at a time. "If I go to every practice and keep working it could be possible," he said.

Mattheizing isn't the only one impressed with Willisko's initial efforts at the helm of the Comets, as four-year member Amanda Dawe has already seen her stroke improve this season as a result of work done in training.

"I love her," exclaimed the exhausted 16-year-old after giving her all in the 50-metre backstroke. "She works on technique a lot and stuff which has really helped."

"I think we (the team) have done pretty well here, obviously not the best because it's the first meet but we will keep improving."

Other Comets taking part in the Fall Start Up meet were Katie Vanderkley, Jesse Boutin, Stefan Daniel, Christian Daniel and Jon Wilkins.



**Katie Vanderkley, near, and Amanda Dawe line up next to each other for a heat in the girls 15 and over 50-metre backstroke at the Fall Start Up meet at the U of C. (Photo by Jeremy Nolais)**

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