

# Swimmers prepare for Toronto

North American Indigenous Games squad set for big show in July

by James McCarthy  
Northern News Services  
NWT

As the 2017 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) approach, the territory's teams are finalizing their rosters.

When it comes to swimming, it's a case of making sure everyone is in good shape when the start comes around in July.

A total of 10 swimmers from Yellowknife, Hay River, Inuvik and Fort Smith will represent the territory at the games and youth is the name of the game this time around.

Kelvin Yee of Hay River is the team's coach and while it's a young team on paper, there are some anchors in terms of experience.

"Allie Buhler and Julienne Chipesia have been to big competitions before so they know what to expect," he said. "The atmosphere won't intimidate them."

The swimming venue is the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre, the same venue used for the 2015 Pan American Games. It's an Olympic-sized 50-metre pool, twice the size of the pool that swimmers anywhere in the NWT would compete in.

Yee said his expectations for what he wants to see varies depending on the experience

of the swimmers.

"For the younger kids, this will be their first time at a major event like this," he said. "I'm expecting them to get personal bests and swim to the best of their ability. The important thing for them to do is try to keep the emotions and nerves in check because it can get away from them quickly if they get caught up in it all."

When it comes to the experienced swimmers, Yee is expecting them to be challenging for spots in event finals.

"They've done this sort of thing before so there's no

reason why they shouldn't be racing for finals," he said.

Unlike the Canada Summer Games squad, the NAIG squad was selected in February during a camp as part of the NWT Swimming Championships

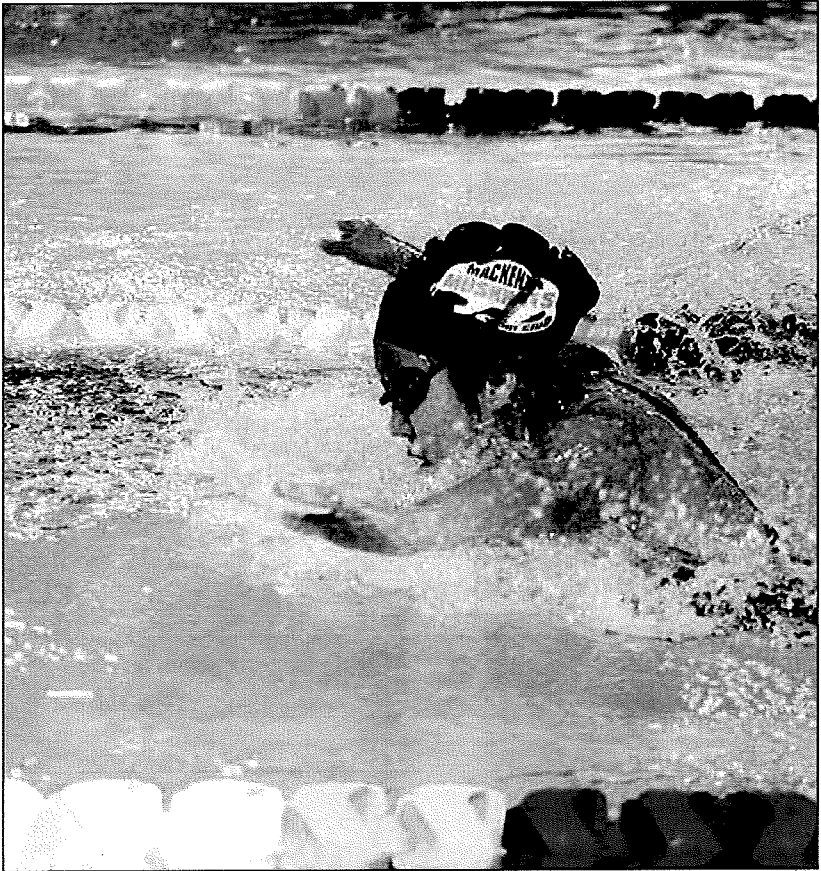
in Yellowknife.

"There wasn't a qualifying time the kids had to meet, which is what the Canada Summer Games kids had to do," said Yee. "The kids signed up and took part in the camp and were chosen during that camp."

Twelve swimmers had originally made the final cut but that number was reduced to the current number of 10 after two swimmers had hit their Canada Summer Games qualifying times at the Konge

**"The atmosphere won't intimidate them."**

Kelvin Yee



Inuvik's Julienne Chipesia, seen during a swim meet in 2016, will be one of 10 swimmers from the NWT heading to the North American Indigenous Games in Toronto this coming July.

Construction Spring Meet in Yellowknife earlier this month.

As to how the swimmers have been doing since the

camp, Yee said all he can do is go by what the coaches are telling him.

"I see the kids at meets and

those are the only times I can see them," he said. "I've been in contact with Vince (Brown, head coach in Inuvik) through

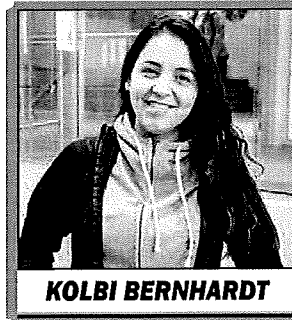
e-mail to get updates on how they're doing. I'm confident, though, that they'll be ready once it's time."

## fact FILE TEAM NWT SWIM SQUAD FOR NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS GAMES

Allie Buhler, Hay River  
Julienne Chipesia, Inuvik  
Marshall Brown, Inuvik  
Tatum Mistakenchief, Inuvik  
Kyra Buckle, Inuvik

Hannah Rogers, Inuvik  
Alicia Hancock, Hay River  
Dade Conlin, Hay River  
Jacob Mitchener, Yellowknife  
Fergus Rutherford-Simon, Fort Smith

Source: NWT Swimming

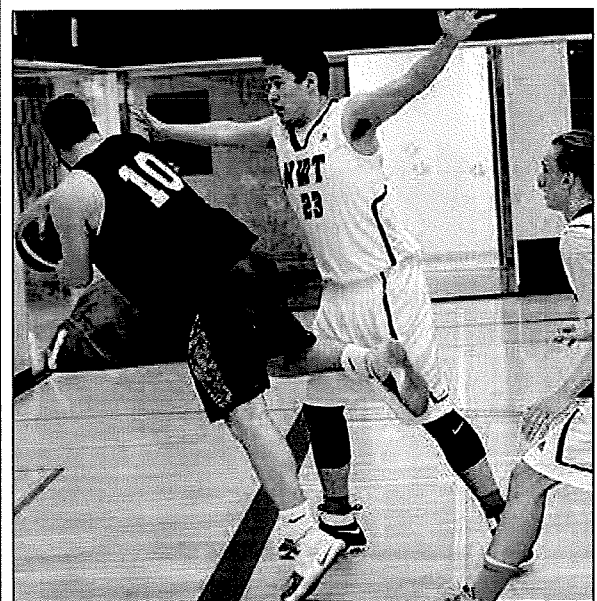


**KOLBI BERNHARDT**

### SPORTS CARD SOCCER

AGE: 17 GRADE: 12

Grade 12 student Kolbi Bernhardt, 17, will be trying out for the Canada Summer Games soccer team in Edmonton this weekend. She grew up playing the sport and admitted she is a little bit nervous for the tryout, which will determine the team's final cut.



Source: NWT Shooting

### YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE

Inuvik's Liam Laroque spreads out to block an opposing player during men's action at the Arctic Shootout basketball tournament in Yellowknife on May 14.

**KidSport Golf Tournament** - Petersen & Auger are joining forces with KidSport NWT to host the 65th Annual Petersen & Auger Golf Tournament Fundraiser on July 7th. SNF & ASCNWT invite you to join them as they raise awareness and funds to support KidSport NWT on their pursuit to provide kids with the opportunity to be involved in sports. Let's ensure that no child is left on the sideline. Sign your team up for the 65th Annual Petersen & Auger Golf Tournament Fundraiser today! Visit our website at [www.sportnorth.com](http://www.sportnorth.com) for more details.

**KidSport ... So all kids can play.**

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