

Aurora student is queen of the water at OFSAA



By Jake Courtepatte

Brooklyn Wodehouse entered the 2016 OFSAA swimming competition looking to improve on her breaststroke bronze medal the previous year, and promptly upgraded to gold.

She is only in Grade 10.

The Pickering College sophomore from Aurora was one of only two students to represent the school at the provincial high school championships in Windsor last week, pairing her gold in the 50m breaststroke with a silver in the 100m individual medley.

To qualify for OFSAA, a swimmer has to finish their CISAA competition under the qualifying time.

Not only did Wodehouse accomplish that task, she had the lowest time to do so.

It comes as no surprise that Wodehouse finds her strongest suit to be the breaststroke.

'I guess it's just something I was naturally good at,' said Wodehouse. 'I enjoy it the most.'

On the other end of the scale, she admits the backstroke to being her weak point, if any.

'In my medley, it was the one stroke that I fell behind on.'

But medaling twice in one event remains quite an accomplishment for the athlete that spent eleven years doing synchronized swimming.

'I got most of my swimming experience through synchro,' said Wodehouse, who gave it up in Grade 8. 'I had never swam competitively in speed swimming before.'

How does one get into synchronized swimming? Wodehouse started at the ripe age of four, after a suggestion from her older sister's coach.

'My mom said, 'she can't even swim yet,' but I started when I was four, wearing my life jacket.'

A hip injury forced her to make the switch to speed swimming on doctor's advice.

Entering last week's competition, Wodehouse said it was a lot more serious the second time around.

?This year's even felt a lot larger than last years, like I had something to accomplish. Compared to CISAA, it was a lot more intense, and everyone just felt a lot more serious.?

Outside of competitive swimming, Wodehouse remains in the water. She is also a competitive kayaker, and left on Sunday for an international competition and training camp in Florida.

?It's something I love to do on the side, and I hope I'll always be able to swim.?

Matthew McGill, a Grade 11 student, placed fifth in his 200m individual medley and eleventh in his 200m freestyle event at OFSAA, as he went up against swimmers going to Olympic trials.