

Aurora's Samantha Sendel takes home trampoline gold, bronze in Canada Cup

By Jake Courtepatte

Aurora-born Samantha Sendel topped the podium and picked up a bronze in trampoline last weekend at the Canada Cup in Newmarket.

On Saturday, Sendel teamed up with Olympic gold medal-winning Rosie MacLennan for the synchro competition, where the duo topped the field with a score of 133.700.

Sendel began training heavily with MacLennan about a year ago, after MacLennan's partner, Karen Cockburn, took time away from the sport to be with her family. Having worked with MacLennan since the two were kids, Sendel told The Auroran that training together is a cinch.

"It's amazing working with Rosie. We have done synchro together before, so getting to do it again with her is a great experience, especially coming off her Olympic win. It's really inspiring working with her, and I couldn't ask for a better teammate." MacLennan echoed Sendel's remarks.

"We're very comfortable with each other. I know how she jumps, she's a very consistent jumper." MacLennan and Sendel both train at Skyriders in Richmond Hill.

Both athletes competed the next day in the individual category, where a personal-best compulsory routine vaulted Sendel into third place with a score of 152.780.

"I was very happy with it," said Sendel. "I had a good routine, placing third was just a huge bonus."

MacLennan took home the gold with a score of 159.505, over six points higher than second place and ex-synchro partner Cockburn.

Sendel has been on the podium a number of times on both the national and world stages, including a first-place finish at the 2011 Pan Am Games in Mexico. Most recently, she finished second in the individual category at the Canadian Championships in Ottawa. The duo now head to China next week to prepare for the 2015 Pan Am Games qualifiers.

"We've got a good strong team this year," said Sendel. "Karen (Cockburn)'s back on the team, which is awesome to have. We missed her, so we're heading in strong."

"We're planning to push ourselves a little more with the logistical side," said MacLennan. "We're trying to do a little more than what the other girls are doing internationally."

Qualifications run from Aug. 23-25, at the Hershey Centre in Mississauga.

"It's really exciting," said MacLennan. "It's an opportunity for us to host international competition in Toronto and our backyard. It'll give us a little bit of a taste of what it will be like next summer."