

## Robinson shatters 12 records at Ryan Downing swim meet

Despite battling a cold, 12-year-old Adrian Robinson swam the meet of his life this weekend in Whitehorse.

By [Marcel Vander Wier](#) on October 22, 2012 at 1:57 pm



STAR POWER – MacKenzie Downing, a member of the national swim team, flew up from Victoria B.C. to participate in the meet held in honour of her brother. Photo by VINCE FEDOROFF

Despite battling a cold, 12-year-old Adrian Robinson swam the meet of his life this weekend in Whitehorse.

The young swimmer broke eight meet records and four club records at the Ryan Downing Memorial Swim Meet in a dominating performance that included six personal bests.

"I wasn't really expecting all these good times because I've been sick all this past week," Robinson told the Star yesterday. "But it feels really good. I've never broken this many records before in such a short period of time."

The new records are as follows: 50 Free – 29.54 seconds (meet and club); 100 Free – 1:07.94 (meet); 50 Back – 34.7 seconds (meet and club); 100 Back – 1:18.11 (meet); 50 Breast – 38.55 (meet and club); 200 Individual

Medley – 2:48.96 (meet); 100 Breast – 1:24.59 (meet and club); and 200 Back – 2:50.60 (meet).

Most satisfying for Robinson was swimming the 50-metre freestyle final in 29.54 seconds – giving him the top national ranking for his age in that swim.

“I’ve been trying to break 30 seconds for the past year,” Robinson admitted. “And then I broke it by half a second in the finals.”

Born in South Africa, Robinson spent nine years living in Botswana with his parents – Adrian Sr. and Riana – before the family moved to Whitehorse three years ago.

An only child, Robinson started swimming at three, and his goals with the sport have expanded as he continues to excel.

“I hope to go to the Olympics one day,” said the Holy Family Elementary School student.

Glacier Bears head coach Stephanie Dixon said Robinson’s meet was “really something special,” adding she’s never seen that many records broken in one meet.

“Adrian is a very talented swimmer,” Dixon said. “He has a lot of potential, so I always expect top performances from him because he’s just that calibre of an athlete.”

Robinson made a splash in last year’s provincial championships in B.C., winning gold in the 50 Free.

Dixon said it’s exciting to see a male swimmer excelling in the Glacier Bears program, a system that has seen its share of star female athletes.

The return of 18-year-old star swimmer Josh Kelly to the program will provide “someone to look up to,” the coach added.

Robinson wasn’t the only one breaking records at the meet.

Fifteen-year-old Haley Braga set new meet records in her age category for both the 200 Fly and 50 Back, while 12-year-old Cassis Lindsay set new meet bests in the 50- and 200 Back. Not to be outdone, Rennes Lindsay, 10, set new best meet times in the 200 Fly and 200 Back.

Twelve-year-old Matthew Blakesley also set a new meet standard in the 200 Free.

Dixon was impressed by her club's effort during the two-day memorial tournament, and also lauded the volunteer parents who made it happen.

"It was one of the most well-run meets that I've ever seen," she said.

Former Glacier Bear swimmer MacKenzie Downing provided the star power at the meet, making the trek up from Victoria B.C. to participate in the event hosted in honour of her late brother Ryan.

Ryan Downing's legacy with the Glacier Bears has continued long after his untimely death in 1996 due to heart complications. He was only 13.

"It means so much to me," the 26-year-old Downing said of the swim meet named in her brother's honour. "It's really important to remember. None of these kids knew my brother. They don't know who he is, so I think it's important to keep his memory alive and remember what swimming is about."

Downing is a butterfly specialist and member of the national swim team. She missed out on qualifying for the London Olympics by a tenth of a second.

"He was my hero," she said of her brother, before admitting her national accolades were achieved for both of them.