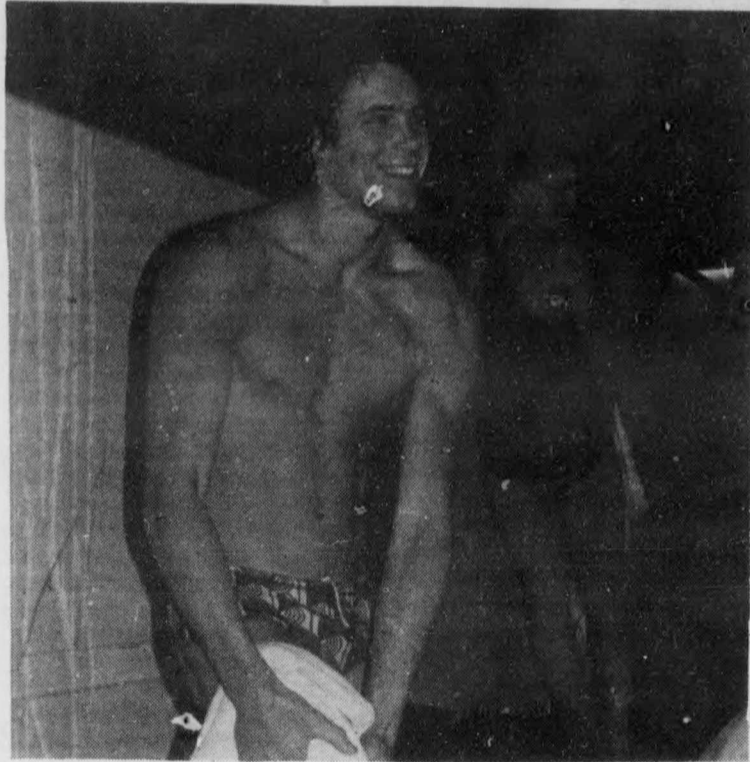


MacLeans wins bronze

Swimmers and divers perform well at Nationals



Bruce Williams smiles after finishing fourth in the 100 backstroke and qualifying for the Commonwealth Games Trials.

By TOM BEST

UNB head swimming coach Barry Roberts feels that the swimming program at the university needs more financial assistance in order to remain competitive on a national scale. He also feels that the amount of money provided for the team's food when they travel is insufficient to provide the type of nourishment necessary for good athletic performances.

Roberts, who coached the team which recently returned from the Canadian intercollegiate championships, said that the amount of food money provided for UNB's athletes was the lowest in the country compared to the other schools which attended the meet. He pointed out that "the other teams had either double or triple the amount we had. The team had to eat breakfast in their hotel rooms." He added that he took a toaster along so that team members could buy groceries and prepare breakfasts in the hotel.

"We can't eat good quality food on \$7.50 a day in restaurants in cities. It's hard for swimmers to psych up for a meet of that calibre when they have to worry about how much they have to spend on their meals," he said, adding that "at that level, athletes shouldn't

have anything extra to worry about."

This year, nine members of the swim team were able to make standards in order to qualify for the intercollegiate nationals, or CIAU's as they are more commonly known. This number included three men and six women. The diving team, which is a part of the swim team, was able to send three men and two women. In team standings, in which the first twelve finishers count for points, and the diving and swimming points are combined, the men finished tenth and the women finished seventh.

Roberts said that the performances at the meet this year were better than last year. "The level of competition is almost equal to national standards. The records that were broken at the meet were an indication of that. A lot of the swimmers came from the age groups up through. They have national experience."

Three national open records were broken at the meet. Gary MacDonald, from York University broke his own 50 and 100 meter freestyle records and Neil Harvey broke the record in the 200 meter backstroke. MacDonald, who became the first Canadian to swim the 50 and 100 in under 51 seconds, was a member of the

medal winning relay team at the 1976 Olympics. Several women from the 1976 Olympic team were also competing in the meet.

Although only three men from the team were able to go under the standards for the meet, Roberts was satisfied with their performances. He said that the drop in the standards was a mistake and that the CIAU committee didn't realise how fast they were. Last year the meet was run in yards while this year it was run in meters. The committee decided to keep the same times for meters as for yards and as a result, the swimmers had to swim a greater distance in a shorter period of time. So few swimmers qualified that by the end of the year, the committee raised the standards by one per cent in order to get a proper quota of competitors at the meet.

"They were short by a few swimmers," Roberts indicated "and they could only run two or three heats per event. That meant that almost everyone who swam could make it into the finals or the consolations. They need to have more heats so that the swimmers will push to make the finals and consolations."

Roberts went on to say that he feels that the meet needs greater subsidisation from the CIAU. "There should be 250 swimmers at the meet: 125 male and 125 female instead of the 200 that go now. The 25 percent increase would give the meet more depth," he said.

Roberts feels that the programs that are available in the Atlantic universities can't compare to the depth of the programs in the larger universities. He said that the universities here were smaller and did not have the program

available to students who wished to go to school in Canada and to provide a competitive meet schedule that would appear attractive to the serious swimmer.

Concerning the program offered at UNB, Roberts said that he felt "that the program I have to offer is better than most in the Maritimes. I coach the age group club and offer a 12 month training program. This will reflect in the competitiveness that we have to offer. The swimmers get the CASA meets in the summer and stay in shape for the whole year. Most university swimmers finish in March and come back in September out of shape. You have to maintain a certain level if you are going to be competitive nationally and you need to train at least 10 months a year." He pointed out that only Dalhousie University in this conference offered a similar type of program. Nigel Kemp, the Dalhousie coach also runs the age group program that produce Nancy Garapick, one of Canada's premier performers in international swimming in the past few years.

time and energy to put into the program," he said. Roberts is also responsible for the UNB Intramural program.

"We possess the qualities to make it. We have a good system with control from age group to university. What we need is a good meet schedule and better financing. UNB offers a good coaching program and we can offer experience in the field," he said.

Roberts said that he was very pleased with the performances of



JOHN THOMPSON

the swimmers who went to the nationals. Of the three men who went, Bruce Williams probably had the best meet and was able to qualify for the Commonwealth Games Trials, which is the top qualifying meet in Canada. He finished fourth in the event. He was the only male swimmer out of the AUA conference who was able to make the standard.

Rob Davis qualified for the 400 individual medley, and the 100 and 200 breaststroke events. Roberts said that Davis swam his best times in the breast stroke events and finished eighth in the 400 IM.

Iain Sinclair was the other member of the men's team to qualify for the CIAU's. It was his first trip to the nationals and he finished 13 in the 50 free and 14 in the 100 free while swimming his fastest times.

Of the women, Roberts expressed his opinion that they swam overall good performances. All six made finals or consolations in at least one event. Julie Johnson possibly had the strongest performance taking a fourth in the 100 back and sixth in the 200 back.

In the 50 meter freestyle, Kathy Gaul finished fourth while in the 100 free she ended up in tenth position. Debbie Whittemore took



DALE MACLEAN

He said that all six of the women who went to the CIAU's this year were former age group swimmers and that two of the three men were. He stated that more age group swimmers were on the way up the ranks and that because of their past experience, it did not take as much time to work on them.

Nationally, Roberts said that UNB was quite respectable. He said that the facilities were good but the equipment was "a bit lacking". He stated that one of the biggest obstacles for the coaches in this area was that they usually had other responsibilities as well. "Coaches in Ontario are coaches only. Coaches here don't have the

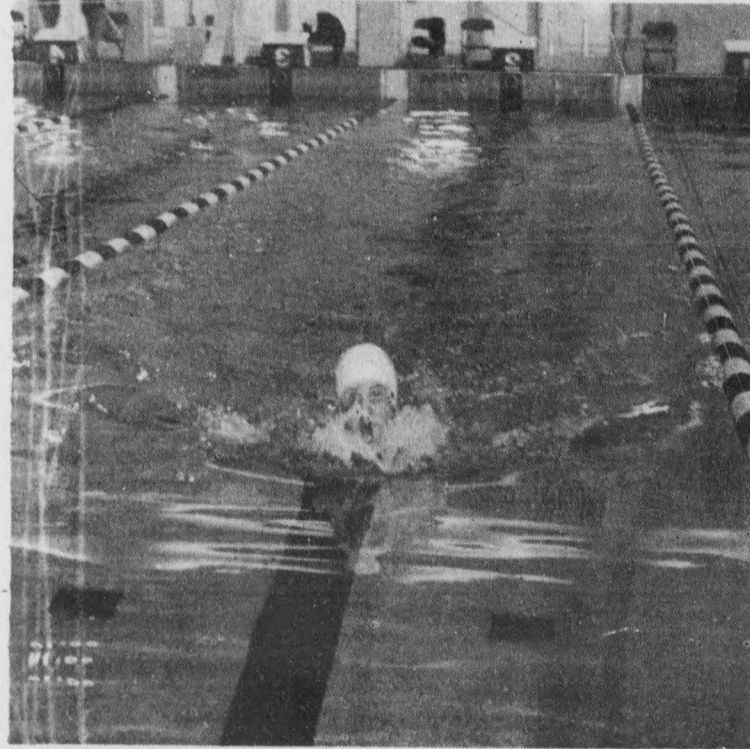


BARRY ROBERTS

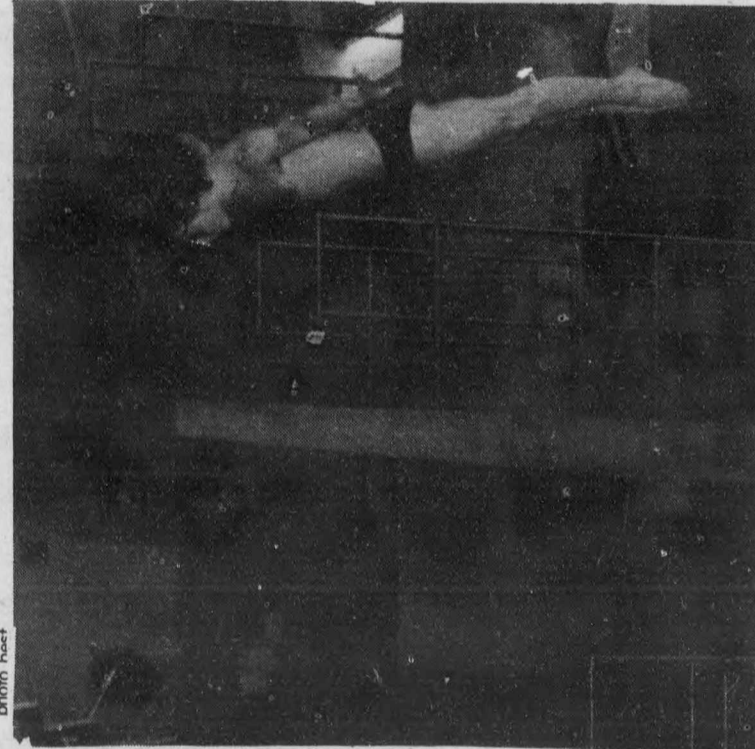
depth to compete at a national level as well as the larger schools. As a conference, he said that the women did very well. The Acadia women were overall winners of the meet. However, he said that the depth and quality of the women's competition was below the standards of the men. "This will change in a few years when the Nancy Garapicks start coming to university. Becky Smith (who was at the meet) is the first international swimmer to get to university and in a few years the times will really drop."

In order to be competitive with the programs offered in the states which are luring away some of the higher calibre university age swimmers, Roberts feels that the Canadian Universities will have to begin to centralise their programs so that the top swimmers will have good programs and atmospheres in which to train. Roberts said that some of the schools in Ontario, such as Lakehead were doing this and that their results at the nationals were proving this.

He also said that the Canadian Amateur Swimming Association (CASA) wanted to make financing



Karen Stangroom on her way to a seventh place finish in the 400 IM event.



Dale MacLean performing a front dive layout on one meter. He finished third in the event.