



North Shore Amateur Swimming Club Inc
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THREE MORE BEIJING QUALIFIERS IN GREAT NIGHT IN THE POOL



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Three outstanding Beijing qualifying performances including two New Zealand records sparked a brilliant final night of heats at the Absolute Insurance 08 Olympic Trials at Waitakere tonight.

Melissa Ingram, 22, knocked off the 1991 national record of the great Anna Simcic to top qualifier in the heats of the 200m backstroke, becoming the first New Zealander to go under the 2min 10sec barrier.

The Swimming New Zealand High Performance squad member was in brilliant form to clock 2:09.61, taking more than a second off the old record and was more than three seconds inside the Olympic qualifying time.

Her clubmates Moss Burmester and Corney Swanepoel also produced Beijing qualifying performances in the heats of the 100m butterfly.

Burmester, who qualified in the 200m butterfly, laid down the challenge clocking 52.37s in his heat, which broke Swanepoel's national record of 52.45 set in last month's Auckland championships.

Swanepoel, in the same lane in the next heat, could not quite match that effort but his 52.71s effort was also inside the FINA A qualifying of 52.86.

It also means that the men's medley relay team will definitely qualify for Beijing with the make-up finalised after tomorrow's final session.

This brings the total to seven individual qualifiers in 11 swims along with the two relays, which will need to be ratified tomorrow.

Burmester said he was expecting a good time tonight.

"I've been wanting it for a while. Nick Sheeran had it a few years ago and then Corney came on the scene just when I was getting close and he lowered it again," Burmester said. "It's been another few years before I can get my speed fast enough.

"I want to go faster again tomorrow in the final. That felt really good and so the aim will be to get another PB tomorrow."

Swanepoel was delighted to secure his berth after waiting for five days for his swim.

"It's been pretty tough as I have missed most of the sessions trying not to keep involved with what everyone else was doing but at the same time cheering them on," Swanepoel said.

"So it's been really tough just waiting around for my chance. It's a relief. Now I can just concentrate on my build up for Beijing."

But will it be fierce rivalry against Burmester tomorrow?

"It's team camaraderie. He (Moss) has done a great job but at the same time I want my record back.

"He was in the lane in front of me so I was very well aware of it. I was just trying to qualify and now that pressure is off it's a chance to go wild tomorrow morning (in the final)."

Ingram paced herself well going through the halfway in 1:03 before powering home to lower the long standing record.

"It just feels great. I have worked towards this for so long and so to finally crack that 2:10 is just fantastic," Ingram said. "My goal time was 2:10.5 and so I exceeded my expectations which I was really happy with.

"Qualifying in the 100 took all the pressure off the 200 and I just got to go out and enjoy it and give it my hardest. So I am really happy."

Earlier North Shore's Hayley Palmer, 18, set a new national age group record clocking 25.81 to top qualifiers in the women's 50m freestyle. Her time was 38/100ths of a second outside the qualifying time for Beijing.

The championship finishes tomorrow.