



North Shore Amateur Swimming Club Inc

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## NZ SWIMMERS COMPLETE BEST WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS



10th April 2006

New Zealand's most successful campaign ended on a high note at the 8<sup>th</sup> Fina world swim championships in China last night (local time).

Commonwealth Games gold medalist Moss Burmester won a silver medal in the same event, breaking the great Danyon Loader's 13-year-old record in the process at Shanghai.

The men's medley relay team also broke the New Zealand record they set in the morning heats to complete an outstanding meet.

Burmester's medal brought the Kiwi tally to two medals, following the bronze for Hannah McLean, which is the first time ever that New Zealand has won two individual medals at a world short course swimming championship.

The team qualified for 17 finals and recorded 22 New Zealand records at the five-day championship, far exceeding any previous Kiwi performances. It compares with one medal and five finals in 2004 at Indianapolis and two finals to Dean Kent in 2002 at Moscow.

New Zealand has won only four medals previously at the world short course championships – three silvers to Trent Bray and a medley relay gold in 1995.

McLean (pictured) was the star of the show bagging a bronze medal in the 200m backstroke and finishing fifth in the final of both the 50m and 100m backstroke.

The 24-year-old broke seven national records in the process as well as anchoring the women's 100m freestyle relay team in their record swim.

"Hannah has had a great three weeks with the Commonwealth Games and the world championships," her coach Jan Cameron said. "She is extremely talented to be a world class backstroker over all the distances.

"It is a real testament to her work ethic and mental aptitude after she suffered an injury that kept her out of the New Zealand trials and hampered her build-up.

"She has moved up the world rankings. There's more improvement left in her and she could be a serious contender in Beijing."

Burmester only just qualified for the 200m butterfly final, but started powerfully from the outside lane to lead at the 50m mark. China's Peng Wu edged in front at the 100m mark and worked clear to win in a new championship record of 1:52.36. The Kiwi swimmer kept his pace consistent with a 29.20s for his second 50, 29.26 for the third and came home in 29.80 for a 1:53.94 which was 3/10ths of a second under Loader's 1993 record.

"It was a terrific swim from Moss. In Melbourne he was first up on the opening night but here he has had to keep his form up and wait for the last night," head coach Trevor Nicholls said. "He was well rested and really nailed an outstanding performance which has really capped a wonderful performance by the team."

Helen Norfolk completed a standout championship with her second appearance in a final, finishing eighth in the 200m freestyle, lowering her personal best for the second time to 1:59.29.

Burmester had to run from his medal presentation to produce a strong performance to help the men's 4x100m medley relay team to seventh place and a further national record. The quartet of Scott Talbot-Cameron, Dean Kent, Burmester and Cameron Gibson clocked 3:35.28 to edge under the New Zealand record they set in the morning heats.

Of the 17 finals from the New Zealand team, McLean qualified in three individual events with Dean Kent, Liz Coster and Helen Norfolk making two each. Melissa Ingram, Zoe Baker and Moss Burmester made one final each with the team qualifying for all five relays they entered.

"I was delighted with the development of our relay teams. Really until the last two years we have not been able to mount a competitive relay," Cameron said. "If you are successful in relays it shows that you are developing depth in the sport. It is a crucial platform to grow and improve our sport on an international level."

McLean also led the way with seven national records during the meet, with Baker grabbing two, one each to Georgina Toomey, Coster and Burmester with 10 coming in the relays to illustrate the improvement in this discipline.

McLean was unable to add further glitter to her dazzling world championship in the 50m backstroke final. She demonstrated her remarkable versatility to finish fifth in 27.76, only 1/100<sup>th</sup> outside the New Zealand record she set in the previous night's semifinal. Clubmate Coster finished eighth in her second final of the championship which also netted her a New Zealand record.

The squad fly out tomorrow directly to Christchurch where they will compete in the New Zealand Youth and Open Championships that begin on Wednesday.

"It's the way the calendar worked out this year, but the squad is absolutely shattered right now. For most of them it has been a long campaign with final camp in Geelong, two weeks of the Commonwealth Games and now competing at the highest level here in China.

"It's going to be a great opportunity for swimmers, supporters and the general public in Canterbury to see our Commonwealth Games medalists and this world class squad.

"But don't expect world class performances. They will do the best they can before they enjoy a well deserved break."

New Zealand results, day 5 finals:

50m backstroke: Hannah McLean 27.76, 5<sup>th</sup>; Liz Coster 28.17, 8<sup>th</sup>.

200m butterfly: Peng Wu (China) 1:52.36, 1; Moss Burmester (NZL) 1:53.94, 2 (NZ Record); Niko Nikolay Skvortsov (Russia) 1:54.09, 3.

200m freestyle: Helen Norfolk 1:58.29, 3.

Men's 4x100m medley relay: New Zealand 3:35.28, 7<sup>th</sup> NZ Record (S Talbot-Cameron 54.48, D Kent 1:00.46, M Burmester 51.47, C Gibson 48.87)