

Stingray Banquet Recognizes Swimmers

Kids cheering for each other was the order of the day at the annual Stingray Swim Club banquet. An over-sold house saw the Hard Rock Café full of swim families, there to recognize the efforts of their swimmers.

CIASA President, Shane Foster led the blessing of the gathering and the meal. The entertainment began with the first of two power-point presentations; photos of every member set to music. Laughter, cheers, ooohs & aahhs reigned as fun and memorable moments were displayed. The second presentation was a Carifta retrospective, again evoking a chorus of positive sounds.



Janelle Foster proudly shows off badges

Each Stingray swimmer received a certificate of achievement and badges they had earned, meticulously prepared by swim parent, Sarah Booker. Each coming forward individually, 84 members between ages 5-16 were awarded 378 badges for times they'd achieved in their age group in events they'd swum in competition during the past year. Stingray Swim Club uses the internationally recognized ASCA (American Swim Coaches Assoc.) Awards program, in which times and badges are standardized in all four strokes and the individual medley event for ages 8 & Up..

Stingray President Sara Mackay asked for brief recognition of the hard-working Stingray and CIASA volunteer boards for all their efforts. As Cayman swimming's growth has entailed more work and more success, help is wanted and needed.

She called many of the swim programs current problems 'growing pains' in an especially poignant year. The full implications of the coming government pool user fees are yet unknown.

She thanked 'the four incredibly hard-working coaches that go above and beyond the call of duty everyday', recognizing them as 'central to the success of our swimmers' and declared the kids 'gorgeous and lucky'. Besides several invited sponsors and guests, special recognition went to Cayman Airways for their support.

The coaching staff took over for the awards presentations.

Personalized awards in the form of 'magazine covers' in an etched glass frame highlighted the individuality of special award winners.

Swimmers, as well as coaches, know who tries especially hard in the pool. As coach Kelsheimer read the descriptive quotes first, many 'guessed' the name next announced, cheers erupted again.

	<u>Most Improved</u>	<u>Spirit</u>
EAGLERAYS:	Alexandra Stasiuk	Angus Aron
MANTARAYS:	Leslie Anderson	Sean Broderick
NURSE SHARK B:	Joanna Manderson	Abbie Booker
NURSE SHARK A:	Meg Fisher-Wells	Harrison Foster
MAKOs:	Gilfredo Gomez-Cruz	Will McFarland
SENIORS:	Jodie Foster	

No spirit award is given in the senior group, as all are expected to have excellent spirit. In describing the recipient of the coveted Coaches Award, Kelsheimer spoke of growing maturity and a comment made to him after a particularly tough workout. 'I thought you were being a jerk, but I began to realize you were trying to help me', calling forward Andrew Mackay.

Kelsheimer also spoke of the banquet being a celebration of a commitment to excellence that begins with courage. 'The courage it takes for a youngster to step up on the blocks for the first time in competition, in just a bathing suit, is equivalent to asking the adults present to get up on the tables and sing in their underwear!'. And that Cayman has the only swim program that he knows of in the world where you can go all the way in one club from entry level to the Olympics.

Other special recognition went to: Alan Aron as parent volunteer of the year and departing Sports Physio Marcie McCaw.

A free drawing was held for two stuffed animals, 'Frog', the symbol of the recently attended World Champs in Moscow, along with two 'limited edition' autographed photos of Cayman's first swimmers to compete in that event.

The entire swim community looks forward to June, always a busy swim month, featuring the Foster Bros. Invitational meet with some long-awaited overseas competition at the Lions Pool and the Flowers Mile Sea Swim June 15th weekend..