



Akash Deeshana of Cyclone Swimming Academy, Dubai, competes in the Under-15 boys' 200m Breaststroke in which he set a new junior national record.



Jaden de Silva of Stafford International School who won two gold medals in the Junior National 50m Butterfly and 100m Butterfly events.



Hiruki de Silva swims in her pet freestyle event to win the gold



Boys' Junior National Champions St. Joseph's College receiving the trophy from Major General Manada Yahampath the president of the Sri Lanka Aquatic Sports Union (SLASU). From left: Mario Hirimuthugoda, Deethiya Weerasinghe, Akalanka Nisal, Shakib Shiraz, Rehan Jayasooriya, Sinura Wijesinghe, Joel Dharshana and Mark de Silva. Kneeling- Aaron de Saram (left) and Sakindu Pigera



Swimming followers thank Matthew Abeysinghe

BY SAJEEWA JAYAKODY

It was a day on which the action in the pool was high octane and the feeling in the spectator stands reached fever pitched as one of Sri Lanka's most illustrious swimmers Matthew Abeysinghe called it a day swimming his last race at home and his club Killer Whale Aquatics (KWA) won both the Senior Men's and Women's titles at the Long Course National Swimming Championship at the Sugathadasa Stadium Swimming Pool Complex last Sunday.

St Joseph's College and Lyceum International School Gampaha claimed the Junior Boys' and Girls' National Championships, respectively.

Abeysinghe, a double Olympian and South Asia's

most decorated swimmer, secured five gold medals in his farewell national championship, becoming the Joint Senior Men's National Champion alongside MF Muhammad of Zahira College, who also won five gold medals.

In the Women's Senior category, Hiruki de Silva of KWA was the National Champion and AIM Haathim of St Peter's College was crowned the Junior Boys' National Champion. Haathim won four gold medals and one silver medal, setting two new Junior National records. He narrowly edged out Derwin Malawara Arachchi of S. Thomas' College, who also won four gold medals and one silver medal.

Haathim's record-breaking performances gave him an additional four points,



AIM Haathim

finishing with 27 points to Arachchi's 25.

Julie Hope of Cyclone Swimming Academy in Dubai dominated the Junior Girls' category, winning five gold medals and setting one new Junior National record in the 100m Freestyle.



MF Muhammad

Haathim broke two new Junior National records in 100m Breaststroke and 400m IM and bettered the previous record in 200m IM. Akash Deeshana of CSA set a new Junior National record in the boys' 200m Breaststroke, Rushalee Dissanayake of

Musaeus College in the girls' 1500m freestyle and Julie Hope in the girls' 100m freestyle also set new Junior National records.

Lyceum girls and St Joseph's boys also broke two relay records. The Joes' junior 4x100m Medley relay team set a new record, as did the Lyceum girls' team in the 4x100m Medley Relay.

In the Senior category, Ramudi Samarakoon of KWA set the only Senior National record in the Women's 100m Breaststroke final.

The championship not only highlighted the end of an era with Abeysinghe's retirement from local championships but also the emergence of new talents in 15-year-old MF Muhammad, Haathim, Hope and Dissanayake.



Matthew Abeysinghe shakes hands with a fan



Matthew Abeysinghe for the last time at a domestic meet



Lyceum International School Gampaha with 485 points, became the Overall Junior National Champions for the second consecutive year. Their 4x100m Medley Relay team set a new junior national record. Here the team (from right): Pavani Galagedara, Thilanka Karunarathne (Principal), Yunaya Perera, Keyara Ranepura, A.N. Sathsarani, Hasali Senevirathne, Govindi Dharmawardena, Induwary Wickramaratne, Anuththara Jayasundara pose for a ceremonial picture



Mighty splash at a girls' event



Matthew Abeysinghe (centre) is surrounded by his fellow swimmers of Killer Whale Aquatics at his farewell meet at home paying him the ideal champions' tribute fit for a king