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An Olympic discussion

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SOMBA K'E/YELLOWKNIFE - It's not every day young athletes have a chance to get pointers from an Olympic athlete, but some young swimmers got that opportunity earlier this week.

Mike Brown, a member of the 2008 Canadian Olympic swim team, was in Yellowknife on May 12 and 13 to talk to kids about his life and to provide some technical training. Brown made his first visit to Yellowknife three years ago during a sports symposium, and that's where he made the first contact with the Yk Polar Bear Swim Club.



"I met Ian Legaree (head coach) during the symposium and we chatted for a bit," he said. "He called about three months ago and invited me up to do some talks with school kids."

Brown has already visited Fort Smith and Hay River and said the size of the communities is familiar to him.

"I come from a small town in southern Ontario (Perth) and I just jumped at the chance to come and talk with the kids," he said. "The gist of my talk revolved around my life growing up in a small town and never giving up on my dreams. The hope is to give the kids some hope

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Mike Brown gives some instruction during an early-morning pool session at Ruth Inch Memorial Pool on May 13. - photo courtesy of Darryl Dolynny

how swimmers can improve various disciplines.

"I've been training for 17 years, and I have a lot of experience nationally and internationally," he said. "I'm surprised at the facilities here in the North. Growing up back home, the pool I began in is nothing like these. The pools are in great shape and there's lots of room."

Legaree said having someone like Brown come and talk about his experiences will serve to better the future of young swimmers.

"He has a great story and he's proof that if you stick to your guns, practise hard and do good, you really can do it," he said. "He's a great inspiration to everyone and it was a great opportunity to have him here."



about what they want to do in their future – never give up on your dreams and always stay positive."

While in Yellowknife, Brown found some time to hit the pool with the Polar Bear club and give some tips on