

# Swim club head coach retires

*Ian Legaree bows out of role with Yk Polar Bear Swim Club after 10 years*

by James McCarthy  
Northern News Services

The torch has officially been passed at the Yk Polar Bear Swim Club.

Ian Legaree has called it a career after 10 years at the helm. His last official assignment was the Canada Summer Games in Charlottetown, making his last day Aug. 29.

Legaree said there were some proverbial lumps in the throat after the last race concluded.

"After the last relay ended, some of the kids told me to go and console some of the kids who were going off to university," he said. "One of the kids, Courtney Northrup, was crying, or so I thought. It was all one big set-up and I was given a couple of bucket showers after it was all over."

Legaree began his tenure as head coach in 1999 after working with the club for a couple of years as a volunteer. He said the club wasn't in the best of shape when he assumed the role.

"There was a little bit of turmoil when I began," he said. "It took a couple of years to iron out the kinks and get things back on track. It was also the end of the Jeremy Jaud era, one of our national team swimmers, and he was one of our best ever. A lot of the kids back then looked up to him."

**Memories**

During his time as coach, Legaree said there were plenty of memories, but one in particular stood out for him during the 2001 Canada Summer Games in London, Ont.

"We had one swimmer who was having a tough time all year and was really struggling," he said. "After the meet was over, he came up to me and gave me a personal heartfelt thanks for helping him through the tough days. It caught me off guard, but I'll always remember it."

The new person at the helm of the club is Jane Mooney, formerly the development pro-

gram coach with the club. Legaree said she was the natural choice to succeed him.

"Jane has a lot of experience from her days coaching in South Africa," he said. "She has a different style than I do, but we have pretty much the same philosophy for what has to be done. It's always about giving the kids the maximum chance to succeed and develop, not just as swimmers, but as people. We want to help the kids grow and become better in life. You can go as fast as you want in the swimming pool, but much more can be done out of the water."

Legaree's fellow coaches are also full of praise for him. Daryl Dolynny, who worked with Legaree for eight years, said you won't find anyone better.

"He is an absolute icon of swimming, not just in Yellowknife, but the NWT," he said. "He has been a great mentor for the kids and he's a magnet to the sport. Every time he worked with the kids, you could see them flourish and I think the community will miss that."

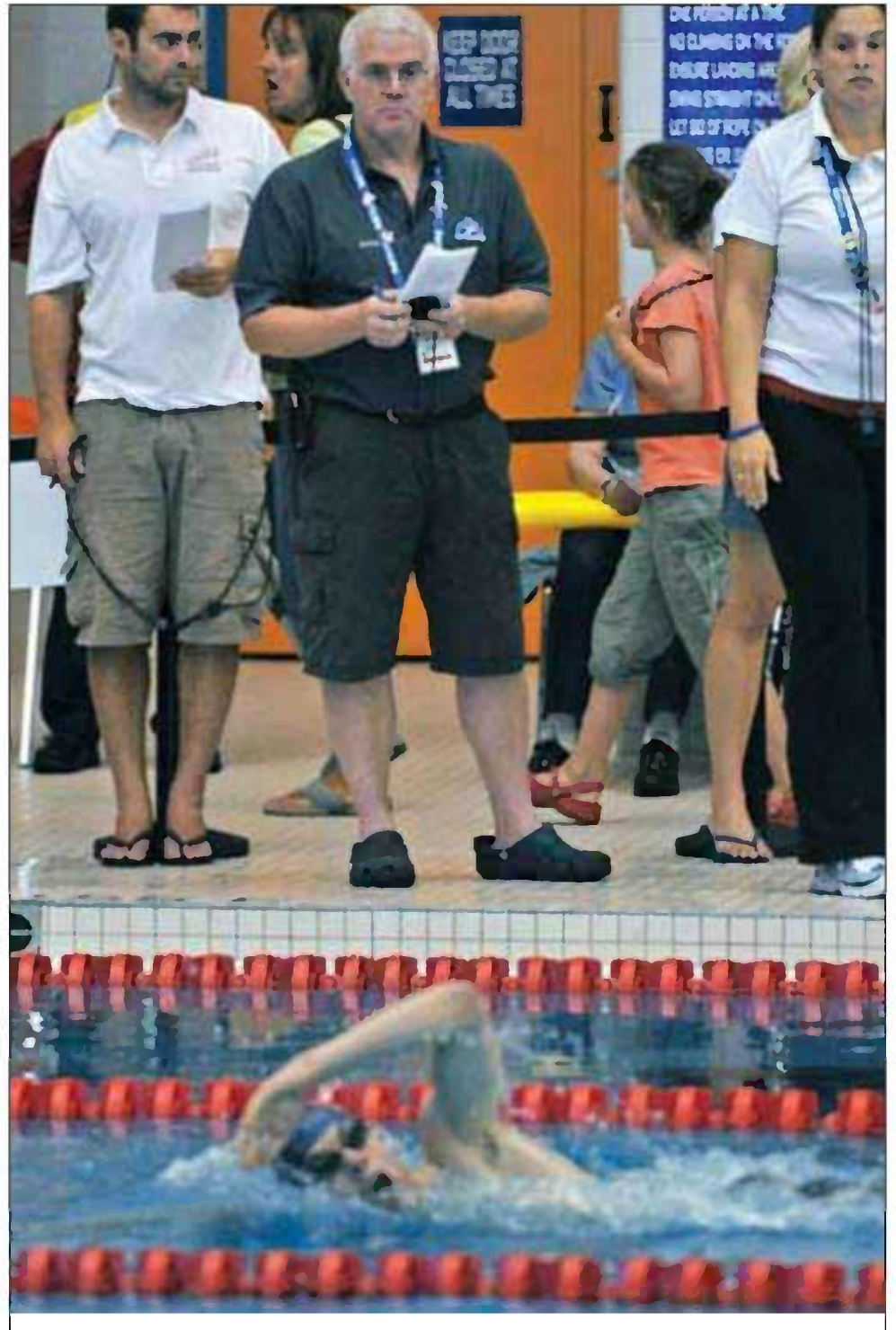
Legaree isn't completely leaving the swimming scene altogether. He will be staying to work with Swim Canada and Swim Alberta to help train new coaches, something he said is important, especially for the smaller clubs in the NWT.

When asked if he would miss it, Legaree said absolutely.

"You remember all those cold winter mornings, getting up to go to practice," he said. "It will take a while to break the habit."

**Ian Legaree watches over the action during a race in Prince Edward Island. Legaree officially retired as head coach of the Yk Polar Bear Swim Club following the completion of the Canada Summer Games in Charlottetown on Aug. 29.**

photo courtesy of Daryl Dolynny



# 'I guess the stars were aligned for me'

**Yk Golf**, from page 22

who can pull away quickly if she has the chance."

Lafond's ascension to the top came in almost the same fashion as Johnson. Lafond, who also won the Midnight Classic earlier this year, entered day two of the tour-

namment trailing round one leader, John Nahanni, by four shots. Lafond also felt the sting of an impending playoff but his nearest competitor, Rick O'Brien, missed a five-foot putt on the 18th hole to force the sudden-death extra hole. Lafond said the goal was to shoot par and stay as

consistent as possible.

"I ended up shooting 75 and I didn't think I would have it," he said. "I guess the stars were aligned for me."

Lafond's appearance in the tournament was miraculous when you consider he spent four days leading up to the tournament in the hospital

with pneumonia. He said he was starting to feel the effects near the end.

"I was absolutely exhausted, but I managed to get the job done," he said.

Both players said they would be back to defend their titles in 2010.




James McCarthy/NNSL photo

**Ron Lafond, right, watches his putt** trickle toward the hole as Pat Crozier reads the line during play at the 8th hole at the Yellowknife Golf Club Championships on Aug. 30.

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