



LUTTE NEW BRUNSWICK WRESTLING

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Four on the Road to Rio – Senior Athletes Win Canadian Wrestling Team Trials

Fredericton – December 7, 2015

Four of New Brunswick's Senior Athletes took one step closer to representing Canada at the 2016 Olympic Games this weekend. Samantha Stewart, Shawn Daye-Finley, Alex Brown-Theriault, and Alex Thoms, all of whom train at the Black Bears Wrestling Club in Fredericton, each captured their division at the 2015 Canadian Wrestling Team Trials this past weekend in Strathcona County, Alberta.

Stewart completed the tournament on Saturday with a perfect 4-0 record. She captured the Women's 53kg weight class in Freestyle by defeating Jade Parsons of Brock Wrestling Club 4-0, pinning Brittane Laverdure of the Dino Wrestling Club after delivering a suplex, and beat Team Impact's Brianne Barry 7-6 and 10-0 in the best-of-three final.

Stewart will now face Jill Gallays of Saskatoon Wrestling Club in a wrestle-off for the Olympic Team spot. Gallays, a 2014 World Bronze Medalist in the weight class, missed the event due to an injury. Stewart will have a 1-0 advantage going into the best-of-three wrestle-off, which will occur sometime in 2016.

Three other athletes, all competing in Men's Freestyle, dropped their individual matches to finish with 0-1 records. Both Ilya Abelev and Shawn Daye-Finley, competing in Men's 74kg Freestyle, were bested by Montreal's Cleo Ncube. Alex Brown-Theriault, competing in Men's 86kg Freestyle, dropped his match to Jordon Steen of Montreal, also eliminating him from the tournament.

The Men had a strong showing in the Greco-Roman tournament on Sunday, as all five members of the Black Bears earned spots in the ladder stage of the event.

Grayson St-Laurent, Men's 85kg, defeated Jacob Luczak of Cattown Wrestling Club, 8-2, to advance from the pool to the ladder against Brown-Theriault. St-Laurent dropped his match to Brown-Theriault, who then advance to face Thomas Barriero of Tristar Gym in the final. Brown-Theriault beat Barriero in the best-of-three final: 3-2, 0-4, and 5-3.

Daye-Finley captured his event, Men's 75kg, by beating Riel Parisien of Cattown Wrestling Club, 8-0, Brock Munro of Wesman Wrestling Club, 8-0, and Phillip Barriero of Tristar Gym in the best-of-three final: 5-2 and 7-0.

Alex Thoms swept Ioannis Naridis of Team Impact in the best-of-three final to earn his spot on the team. Thoms beat Naridis 7-0 and 5-3.

Cj Thoms, Men's 130kg, was defeated by Kyle Nguyen of Wesman Wrestling Club by pin in his lone match of the trials, and did not advance.

Next up for the four – The Pan-American Olympic Qualifying Event in Frisco, Texas on March 4-6, 2016. They will need to place in the top two at the event to punch their ticket to the 2016 Olympics as none of their weights were qualified at the 2015 World Championships by Canada, which required a Canadian to place in the top five.

If the four fail to qualify the weights in United States, they may have two other opportunities to do so in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in April, or Istanbul, Turkey in May.

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(Photos by 49 North Wrestling, 2015)

