

## **Successful Summer Season for PNS Swimmers with a Disability**

PNS was represented by 3 swimmers at the 2009 Summer CAN-AM Paralympics Championships in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada July 30-August 1, 2009. Ira Kaplan, PRO Swimming, Sierra Landholm, KING, and Kayla Wheeler, Shadow Seals competed in a variety of events with tremendous success competing against elite swimmers with a disability from Canada, Mexico and Australia.

Swimming to multiple personal bests and at least 1 medal each, these PNS swimmers continue to make their way onto the National and International stage.

Sierra Landholm, who learned to swim less than 2 years ago, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in her classification, S9, in the 200 meter backstroke with a time of 3:27.89. Her prelim time was 3:23.02. She is coached at KING's Fife facility by Dave Kienlen.

Ira Kaplan placed first in the 50 meter back for her classification (S6). Her time was 52.56 (prelim) and 53.17 (final). Ira's performances earned her an alternate spot on the U.S. Paralympics team that was selected to compete in Bogota, Colombia at the upcoming Youth Para Pan American Games in October 2009. While she won't be making the trip, the fact that she is an alternate puts her on U.S. Paralympic Swimming's radar for the 2010 IPC Long Course World Championships and beyond...London, 2012?

Ira is coached by Maudry Speight.

Kayla Wheeler, swam personal bests in all of her events and placed first in the 50 meter Butterfly. Dropping her best time 12 seconds since May, Kayla swam 1:41.40 in the finals, earning her a slot on the U.S. Paralympics team selected to compete in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil at the IPC Short Course World Championships, Nov 27-Dec 5, 2009. Kayla is coached by Kiko Van Zandt and Amy and Libby Rust.

Kiko Van Zandt, Shadow Seals Swimming has also been selected to the U.S. Paralympics coaching staff for the IPC Short Course World Championship team travelling to Brazil.

Congratulations to these area athletes on these accomplishments! Good luck to Kayla and Kiko!

On another note: 2 PNS swimmers travelled to St. Charles, Missouri, July 27-28, 2009 to compete in the Junior National Disability Championships. Kayla Wheeler and Christopher Junk, Shadow Seals, swam well at this competition placing in multiple events and garnering several medals. Congratulations Kayla and Chris!