

■ SPORTS

Stingrays place in state championships

"Tahlequah USA swim team, the Stingrays, is alive and well," Coach Gregg Woitte said.

It didn't look that way several months ago. In January of 2007, the team was without a pool. Qualifying meets were coming up and practice time was crucial.

The Tahlequah Boys and Girls Club stepped in to help by finding another pool, this one is Stilwell, for the swimmers to use.

Thanks to the Boys and Girls Club, and Stingrays coaches and parents, eleven swimmers were able to prepare for the State Championship qualifier meet. They were: Isaac Burk, Timothy Bradshaw, Rebecca Hanson, Abby Hanson, Eliza Hanson, Kherissa Taylor, Allison Moore, Katherine Pendergraft, Emma Hunsaker, Ruby Hunsaker, and Kristin Berry.

Of these swimmers, six qualified to compete at the State Championships, held in Oklahoma City.

The six qualifiers were: Rebecca Hanson, Abby Hanson, Eliza Hanson, Kherissa Taylor, Katherine Pendergraft, and Kristin Berry.

This is the largest group ever sent to State by the Stingrays team. Abby Hanson and Kristin Berry placed 12th in their individual events. While

Rebecca and Eliza Hanson, and Katherine Pendergraft did not place, they made great showing in their individual events.

Kherissa Taylor, who entered four events, placed third, fourth and sixth in three of them. Overall, Kherissa earned enough points to put her in eighth place in the state, in the 9-10 year-old girls category.

The Stingrays swim team is open to all interested youth, age 4-19, regardless of experience. For some youth, swim lessons are the first step.

The team will be offering swim lessons starting the first week of May, 2007. Lessons run for two weeks, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

They will be at the NSU Fitness Center pool. Lessons will continue throughout the year and are on a first come, first serve basis.

Youths who complete lessons are encouraged, but not obligated, to join the team. Also, Coach Dawson Davis will offer classes in Life Saving, CPR, First Aid and Coaches' Safety Certifications. For more information on any of these lessons, contact the Tahlequah Boys and Girls Club, or Head Coach Bradshaw of the Tahlequah Stingrays.