

Press Release

Training at SAI centre has helped Mondal make big waves in swimming

Pune, January 14: Swadesh Mondal seems to have made a habit of leaving spectators stunned almost every time he dives into the pool. He continued his supreme run of form off late, at the Khelo India Youth Games in Pune.

The Delhi swimmer achieved the phenomenal feat of winning gold medals and breaking national records in each of the five events he participated in at the National Aquatic Championship in 2018. Such statistics speak volumes of his talent.

And here in Pune, he has already won four gold medals, including one in the relay.

Swadesh might easily seem to be a natural at swimming, but he's done his fair share of the hard yards into making himself the champion he is. "I used to travel a distance of almost 70 km daily to get to training back in Bengal. The pool in a nearby village was the only decent one in my district and I had to get there," said Swadesh who very vividly remembers the start of his journey as a swimmer.

Swadesh didn't start off with the aim of being a professional swimmer. He was merely looking for an extra-curricular activity, before his coaches in Bengal spotted something special about his freestyle swimming. He then took up the sport quite seriously and hasn't looked back since. He won three gold medals in his first state-level competition in 2014 and his first national medal in 2015, which he admits was a great confidence booster for him. He has won numerous medals and has broken records in national championships that have followed since.

He had offers flowing in to train at the SAI training centres in Kolkata and Delhi, and he decided to train at the latter given the superior facilities and equipment available there. Talking about the coaches and facilities at the SAI Glenmark training centre in Delhi, Swadesh said, "There has been a big improvement in my performances since I started training in Delhi and I am glad I made the move. I have done well lately and I will train harder to keep up the good work."

The pressure of expectation can be daunting for a young athlete, but Swadesh is not one to back down from a challenge. When asked about his competitors, he added, "The level of competition in swimming in India is rising rapidly, but I focus solely on my performances. I approach every tournament with the goal of bettering my previous timings and that has helped me grow as a swimmer."

He was grateful for the platform provided through the Khelo India Youth Games and stressed on the importance of the financial incentives provided.

Given the confidence he has in his abilities and his performances so far, Swadesh seems to be ready to take the next step as he aims to strike big at the Asian Age Group Championship later this year and begin his journey towards international glory. "I cannot wait to compete internationally and bring laurels to my country," said Swadesh who promises to leave no stone unturned in his efforts towards the same.