



water polo anyone?

Highland Freshman Named
to USA Cadet Team

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Last year was full of firsts for Kolby Krystofik; first day of high school, first state tournament, first trip to Canada and first time to represent his country at an international competition. Krystofik recently joined USA Water Polo Men's Cadet National Team in Calgary for the North American Championships.

Arizona Water Polo club team. One of the few in the Valley, the club team was established in 2002 under the name East Valley Aquatics to promote the sport of water polo among pre-high school youth. With AWP, Krystofik practices year-round four to five days a week at the ASU Student Recreation Center in Tempe. Twice a week, the young athlete scrimmages against the collegiate club team at ASU.

months to hear who made the final cut. The USA Water Polo Men's Cadet National Team will head to Canada on Christmas for the international weeklong tournament.

Although Canada will be a first for Krystofik, the incredible athlete is no stranger to traveling. He travels eight to 10 times a year, mostly to California, for competitions. Krystofik's dedication to water polo has enabled him to become one of the

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In May, the top water polo players born in 1991 and 1992 from each zone were invited to try out for Team USA in Dallas. There were 160 athletes representing 11 zones across the nation competing for 40 spots on the USA Cadet Team's training roster. Krystofik was thrilled to make the cut—an unlikely feat considering the minimal opportunities for water polo athletes in Arizona.

"I believe it is because of the lack of exposure," says Krystofik, 14, of his reasoning why Arizona is so far behind on the water polo scene. "No one really knows it out here, and how much fun it is."

Krystofik began playing water polo at age 10 when a friend invited him to play for the

Two players from AWP's club team, Krystofik and Paul Miernicki, 15, of Ahwatukee, were named to the USA Cadet final travel team in October. In July, the original 40 athletes named to the USA Cadet Team's training roster attended a week-long camp/tournament in California; at that time, the team was reduced to two teams of 10. Shortly after, the squad was cut down to 15.

Twenty young men, including Krystofik and Miernicki, anxiously waited more than two

top players in the state. Not only does he practice weekly with AWP, the athlete began swimming competitively two years ago and practices five times a week with that. Generally, Krystofik can be found at a pool seven days a week.

The Highland High freshman had been looking forward to joining the high school swim team since beginning to swim competitively. Krystofik attended state this fall in the 500M freestyle and placed 16th. 