

B.C.'s Fraser Valley Water Polo Club wins national 18U water polo title

HALIFAX – Alex Vazeos scored two goals including the game winner as B.C.'s Fraser Valley Water Polo Club defeated the Ottawa Titans 4-3 on Sunday to win the gold medal at the boys under-18 national club championships.

The 14-team tournament was the first national club water polo championship held in Atlantic Canada in 25 years.

Fraser Valley built an early 3-0 lead on goals by Nathan Kotylak and Vazeos in the first quarter and Cole Wagner with 28 seconds remaining in second. Rodrigo Rogas put Ottawa on the board early in the third but Vazeos regained the three goal margin for Fraser Valley 1:16 later. Lyle Brooks and Dusan Radojcic closed out the scoring for Ottawa.

In the round robin, Fraser Valley earned a win and a loss then edged Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Que., 7-6 in the quarterfinal and beat the York Mavericks from Toronto 7-3 in the semis.

York won the bronze medal match defeating Montreal's Club CAMO 6-4. Dollard finished fifth, Club de Water Polo Laval sixth, Hamilton seventh and Calgary Torpedoes eighth.

Water Polo Canada executive director Ahmed El-Awadi said the tournament was a huge success.

"They ran the tournament so well that you'd never know they hadn't hosted one for that long," said El-Awadi. "All the infrastructure that goes with running an event such as this was professional right down the line.

"This is an indication that water polo is growing in Atlantic Canada. We have been trying very hard to get back into the Canada Games and this is one of the key indicators to show that we are a coast-to-coast sport."

Fraser Valley's Filip Juristovski was named the tournament's MVP, Ottawa's Ben Bouwer the most valuable goaltender and Justin Mitchell the most valuable coach. The all star team members were Jovan Bakoc of York, Matthew Emory of Dollard, David Lapins of Gatineau, Vincent Bélanger of CAMO, Nathan Kotylak of Fraser Valley and Dusan Radojcic of Ottawa.

Full results on-line at: www.waterpolo.ca.