

U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Swimming

Saturday, June 19, 2021
Omaha, Nebraska, USA
CHI Health Center

Lydia Jacoby

100 Meter Breaststroke
100 Meter Breaststroke



U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS



LYDIA JACOBY: No, it's at Bartlett high school, in Anchorage, about two hours from my house, so I rarely get to practice there.

Q. Have you met any of the Winter Olympic medalists from Alaska? Do you swim all winter, or are you doing some of the traditional outdoor winter sports in Alaska?

LYDIA JACOBY: My therapist is actually Holly Brooks, who is a Winter Olympian. I don't know any of the others personally, but that's one neat thing about Alaska is that we are all just -- everybody knows each other, so you really know every Olympian from Alaska just because we get so much publicity, being so small.

Q. Lydia, you got to have two moments where you found out you were an Olympian; first when you turned to look, and then when you found out, no, this is for real, for real. What were the emotions the first time and also the second time that you had?

LYDIA JACOBY: Yeah, well, when I finished my race I couldn't read the board. I could see the 2 and my name, but I couldn't tell if they lined up. So it wasn't until Willie gave me a hug and it reshuffled the board that I really realized, and it was definitely a huge moment. It was actually kind of nice having two times to kind of process that, just so that I could take it in more slowly. It's been great.

Q. Lydia, what do you attribute your improvement this year to? Obviously you've come a long way; you weren't on the scene before a couple months ago, so what has been the difference this year bursting on to the scene?

LYDIA JACOBY: Well, I think during COVID everything shutdown, and I was out of the pool for about two months. Then when things started opening back up, the only pools open were in Anchorage, so I moved up there with my family, and just because that's not where I live normally, that meant all my friends were on the swim team, all my activities were with the swim team, so it became a bigger part of my life than it ever had been before, and through this fall I carried that on, and of course this spring leading

THE MODERATOR: Welcome, everyone.

Q. Lydia, congratulations. I had a chance to talk to your mom and dad and your coaches yesterday. Are you as fascinated by our fascination with the fact that there is a swimmer from Alaska on the team?

LYDIA JACOBY: It's been really cool to be able to represent my state, and especially the swim community within my state because we are all so close. There are people I have grown up with my whole life, so it's been neat to be able to do this not only for myself but for them.

Q. Lydia, I know you said that your club team is not very young at Seward; it's around 50 swimmers with younger kids. What are you looking forward to over the next five to six weeks of being around 50 or so of the best swimmers in the United States?

LYDIA JACOBY: I'm so excited. I think it will be a great opportunity to get to know younger swimmers my age that are going through the same things as well as getting to know and be mentored by people who I have looked up to for my whole life and through my swimming career and just being with everyone and getting to know them. I'm so excited.

Q. Lydia, congratulations.

LYDIA JACOBY: Thank you.

Q. I love Alaska. I have a lot of little questions. Is there a 50 yard or 50 meter pool in Seward?

LYDIA JACOBY: No, there is one 50 meter pool in Alaska and they keep it at 25 yards, so this training camp coming up will be my first training meters other than several swim camps I've done.

Q. Is that pool at a Seward's high school?

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into Trials more than ever, for sure.

Q. Were you as surprised as other people were that you made the team, or did you figure this was going to happen?

LYDIA JACOBY: It was definitely exciting, but I did feel pretty confident that I could make it, but I also felt confident that other people could make it, if that makes sense. I was really prepared for either outcome. It was exciting for sure.

Q. Do you think you would have made it if there had not been a pandemic?

LYDIA JACOBY: No, I don't. I think this extra year of training I've grown physically and mentally. I don't think I would have been prepared last year at all.

Q. And in the 200, what happened? We certainly thought you would have made the semifinals.

LYDIA JACOBY: After my 100, I only got three hours of sleep that night, and then the next night I only got about five hours of sleep. There was just a lot of things to think about. I was pretty tired mentally. I think -- yeah, and physically coming off that. So I think I was just tired. I'm not too worried about it, though. I was ready to be done.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about how you got into swimming, being in a state like Alaska? What led you in that direction?

LYDIA JACOBY: Yeah, well, actually in my town I mentioned a lot of the kids are younger. We definitely do have a very young team, being a maritime community. My family is a boating family; we have a sailboat. So my parents put me in to the swim club when I was six, so I could learn to swim and to be more safe, living where I do and doing what our family does, and then it just kept going from there.

Q. Lydia, you mentioned being able to be around to swimmers you have looked up to through your whole career. Having Lilly and Annie on the team with you, when did you start following them? When did you think you were getting to that level? What is it going to be like being able to just absorb everything they've got to give for the next few months?

LYDIA JACOBY: Yeah, I don't remember when I first started following them and what they were doing, but for as long as I can remember I can definitely say I've looked up to them. I think it will be interesting to train with them, just since each of us has such a different stroke. It will be cool to see what we can learn from each other. I'm very

excited.

Q. What else do you do in Alaska besides swim? Are you outside in the winter doing other stuff?

LYDIA JACOBY: Yeah. Our family lives a little ways out of town so we have cross-country ski trails that leave from our house. I have a dog. We go skiing together and hiking in the summer. Like I mentioned before, our family has a sailboat, so when I was little we spent a lot of time on our sailboat. Not quite as much anymore just with swimming but we got in two weeks last summer and hope to do more this year.

Q. You were talking about getting little sleep. Was that because of your mind racing, because you'd made the team? Was there text messages? Phone calls from friends? Could you give us detail of what that was like those 48 hours?

LYDIA JACOBY: My phone was absolutely blowing up. I actually had to turn it off for a while; it was just kind of overwhelming. It was so amazing to see how much support I was getting, but definitely a little overwhelming. Then just so much to think about, with nerves and excitement. I just had trouble calming down, for sure.

Q. You said you moved to Anchorage to train. Could you talk more, did you move, move? Did you get an Airbnb?

LYDIA JACOBY: My Grandpa lived in Anchorage, my mom's dad, and he passed away fairly recently, so my mom and I were up there a lot getting the house ready to sell, so we lived in his house last summer with one of my close friends and her mom, and now that we sold that house we are renting an Airbnb from another swim family on my team up there, and going about week on, week off, with both teams.

Q. I understand you are quite a musician, according to my sources, but I cannot reveal my sources!

LYDIA JACOBY: Okay.

Q. Could you talk about playing the bass, blue grass, piano? That's a passion of yours; correct?

LYDIA JACOBY: Yeah. Unfortunately I haven't had as much time to do that just with not being home all the time and not having access to my instruments. Growing up that was a huge part of my life. My dad plays Flamingo guitar, and my Grandpa actually builds guitars, so we are definitely a musical family. I play guitar, piano, upright bass, and I sing.

Growing up we had a blue grass camp for kids in my town, and a group of us were really into it, so our parents got us together when we were little and started a little band. We actually played for five or six years. It was very fun, and I hope to continue doing that moving forward.

Q. Lydia, were you aware that no athlete, no swimmer had ever made it from Alaska prior to coming here? Was that common knowledge to you?

LYDIA JACOBY: I believe only 11 athletes from Alaska have been to Olympic Trials in swimming, so, yeah, it's definitely been a big deal am coming here. There is one other Alaskan here with me, too. It's been great to represent our state in that way and incredible to take that next step.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, everyone.

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