



Will And Edward Roberts Part Of National Championship Water Skiing Team, Look Ahead To Future In Sport

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
September 29 2019 2:52 PM



DOW – Brothers Will and Edward Roberts, along with teammates Brendan Schultz and Brett Stackpole, recently brought home honors at the National Water Skiing Championships held Aug. 6-7 at Okeeheelee Park in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Dow's Boys of Lake Richard, as the team is called, did well in the championships, with Schultz winning the jumping crown in the B2 division, Will Roberts finishing second behind his close friend John Leutz of Jacksonville in the B3 jumping division, with Edward Roberts finishing fourth and Stackpole coming in fifth. Will's second place finish in the B3 group goes along with three straight B2 championships that he won from 2014-2016.

And Edward finished fifth in the B3 category's all-around competition, which consists of tricks, slalom and jumping. Will didn't compete in this year's all-around.

The Roberts brothers were introduced to water skiing by their dad, Jeff, at an early age, and quickly excelled in the sport. Will credits his dad with their early success.

"My dad skied for the Alton Water Skiing Club, and he taught us and our sister Nellie when we were little," Will Roberts said in a recent interview. "I think we all learned the right way, which makes it a lot easier than what most people have. It was a lot easier learning from my dad."

Will and Edward started out like most other kids while they were being taught to ski, just having fun around their home, and eventually graduated to competitive skiing. Their dad started out skiing when he was eight, and joined the Alton Water Skiing Club at 16. The club's best known for their annual New Year's Day ski outing on the Mississippi River for charity.

"We did show skiing, which is radically different from competitive skiing," Jeff Roberts said.

Jeff started skiing competitively when he turned 19, and competed until he retired at the age of 50. Today, Jeff enjoys watching his sons ski in the various competitions, and also enjoys their success, but also knows that competitive skiing does also have its share of disappointments as well.

"It's a fun sport, and it's always great to see your kids have success," Jeff Roberts said, "but it's also fraught with disappointments, where weather can play a factor, and there's also a lot of bumps and bruises as well."

Nevertheless, both Will and Edward have enjoyed much success in their competitions, and have also enjoyed great achievements as well. Will still holds the national under-14 record for the longest jump at 144 feet, as well as his championships.

And for those who may not understand the sport of water skiing, Edward knows the hard work it takes to enjoy success.

“It’s a question we get a lot,” Edward said, “and the best way I can explain it is just that you work for it, and we’ve had success in our own ways, just like in any other sport.”

And skiing for and doing well in the national events have been a great thing for both the Roberts brothers as well, and like any other sport, they’re always looking for ways to improve.

“It’s been great,” Edward said. “It makes it that much more fun, and then, it gives us such a sense of competitiveness that it motivates us to improve.”

Will and Stackpole also throw ideas off of each other, and all four teammates are a very close-knit group as well.

“Oh yeah, for sure,” Will said with a laugh. “Brett is awesome to have around, because we can throw ideas off of each other, and it just helps us, and see what we need to do better. That’s something not a lot of people have.”

Will and Edward have also been ranked in their sport also, Currently, Will is ranked number one in the nation and number two in the world in his age group, while Edward is currently number three nationally and number six worldwide. At one time, Will was the top skier in the world in his age group for 16 consecutive months.

As far as college goes, Will, who’s a senior at Jersey Community, and also plays football for the Panthers, isn’t yet sure where he’ll go, but most of the schools he’s looking at do have skiing teams

“Most of the schools I’m looking at do have a ski team,” Will said, “and just being with a college team would be an awesome experience, and that would be a cool thing to do.”

Will is currently looking at Clemson, where his and Edward’s sister is currently a member of their skiing team. He’s also considering both Texas A&M and Louisiana-Lafayette, while Edward is currently a sophomore at Jersey, and hasn’t yet made any college plans.

“I don’t have any definite plans; I’m a sophomore at Jersey,” Edward said, “but it seems like something I’d want to do.”

Past college, the brothers haven't yet made up their mind if they would like to ski professionally, but the potential is there for future success.

"I think they both understand that there's not a lot of money in the sport," Jeff Roberts said, "but they can ski until they're 90, and I think both can ski in college, and possibly jump professionally."

Both Will and Edward are open to any and all possibilities after college.

"I don't know; it all depends on how healthy I stay," Will said. "I hope to ski in the future, and maintain the success I've had so far."

Edward had similar thoughts on his future in the sport.

"I think I'm going to take it year by year, as I have been doing," Edward said, "and if I continue to enjoy it, I'll keep doing it for as long as I can."