



Teen hurdler thrilled to be back on track

SOUTH West Academy of Sport scholarship holder Shenae Peterson has bounced back from injury to become a rising star among Australia's promising hurdlers.

The talented and determined 15-year-old has wasted no time making an impression this season, despite ankle damage keeping her off the track for much of last year.

"It's been good to get back into it again," Shenae said.

After putting in the hard yards over the past few months, Shenae has clocked up the qualifying times necessary to compete at a

national level, and will soon travel to Tasmania as part of Athletics Australia's prestigious Target Talent Program.

The program provides a development pathway for the country's best track and field athletes and will see her fly to Hobart in February for a national training camp.

"I'll have the opportunity to train with National Hurdles Centre coaches, and learn so much in a short amount of time," Shenae said.

While in Tasmania, Shenae will also put herself to the test in

the Briggs Athletics Classic, an annual event which attracts a strong field of entrants.

But the competition won't end there for the champion hurdler. She has the Australian Junior Athletics Championships at Sydney Olympic Park in March to look forward to, after achieving the necessary qualifying times to compete.

This season has been a memorable one for Shenae, who has so far clocked up six Bunbury and Districts Little Athletics records, and three State Country Championships records.

Shenae puts her success down to hard work and thanked local coaches Chris Nicholson and Donelle MacInerney and Perth coach Lyn Foreman for their guidance.

She also credited SWAS with helping her to develop as an athlete off the track when injury prevented her from training or competing.

"This is my second year with SWAS and I have had terrific support through the academy in the form of dieticians, a Pilates program and life balance sessions," she said.



SWAS scholarship holder Creed McTaggart has been honoured with selection for the Australian junior surfing team. PICTURE COURTESY OF SURFING AUSTRALIA

Surfer makes national team

GUN South West surfer Creed McTaggart has earned a spot in the Australian team that will compete in the world junior championships in Peru.

His selection for the national team follows attendance at a selection camp at Surfing Australia's high-performance centre and an outstanding performance during the recent Arnette Australian Junior Surfing Titles.

The South West Academy of Sport scholarship holder won the Under-18 division of the national titles in December after a spectacular last minute in the water.

Coming in second place to Matt Banting and with a minute remaining, McTaggart managed to catch a wave and carry out two dazzling aerial moves, boosting his points enough to claim the national title.

McTaggart was one of a 24-strong field of surfers who were named in the 2011 Travel SIM Australian Junior Surfing Team earlier this month, and will travel to Peru in May to contest the Quiksilver ISA World Surfing Championships and defend Australia's world title.

In other SWAS surfing news, fellow SWAS scholarship holder Mikaela Greene was presented with a \$10,000 cheque to help her become a professional surfer after winning the Madison Elle Bache Live Your Dream competition.



South West Academy of Sport chief executive Bernice Buttion with husband Gary after the couple earned first place in the recent The Doctor World Cup paddling event.

Academy head wins paddling crown

IT is not just South West Academy of Sport athletes who are bringing home gold — academy boss Bernice Buttion is proving to be a champion in her own right.

The chief executive officer and her husband, Gary, won first place in an international paddling event over the weekend.

The talented couple powered through a gruelling 27.5km ocean course between Rottnest Island and Sorrento Beach to win the mixed doubles division of The Doctor World Cup event.

Regarded as the biggest event on the international ocean paddling calendar, the contest attracted more than 275 surfski paddlers, stand-up paddlers and outriggers from around the globe.

Showing their prowess on the water, the Buttions not only won the mixed doubles division, but also placed second overall in the double surfski category.

Notwithstanding their triumphant win, Bernice said the race had its challenges.

"It was downwind conditions,

with the wind and big ocean swells behind you," she said.

"In conditions like that you have to be technically correct. It's not for novice racers, many people drop out."

Experienced competitors, the couple have proved a winning team since they moved from South Africa and began racing in paddling events in Western Australia.

"Over the past year and a half we have been competing in all the surfski races in Perth and Mandurah and we have won every mixed

double category to date," Bernice said.

"We have also had the honour of winning the Capel Descent last year (we were the overall winners of the race) as well as the winners of the Mandurah Classic."

Bernice said she hopes her win inspires SWAS athletes to achieve their sporting goals.

"I hope this demonstrates to our young athletes that the dream of achieving in sport and life is possible," she said.

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