

Teenager has sights set on Olympic glory

RILEY STUART

TEENAGE BMX sensation Lauren Reynolds is going for gold.

The talented South West resident flew out to compete in Europe on Monday, her sights set on representing Australia at the 2012 London Olympics.

But the next 12 months are crucial, with a multitude of upcoming events all counting towards team selection for the Games, which could be finalised as early as the end of the year. The training may be intense, but there is light at the end of the tunnel.

"It's all for that one day, that one race — the Olympic final," Reynolds said.

"All the preparation so far has gone well, but there's still a lot more to go.

"We've been preparing for this for a while now."

But selection will be particularly tough for the young prodigy — as part of an Olympic team, the top four ranked BMX countries in the world are permitted to take just two female competitors.

Nations outside of this cut-off are allowed only one.

"This year it's pretty critical to get results," Reynolds said.

"I've got a new bike now, I've done a bit of work with my sports psychologist down

here, training has been going really well.

"This next trip is going to be a good one, I'm really looking forward to it."

Reynolds, who is also a South West Academy of Sport scholarship holder, was full of praise for the prestigious organisation.

"The support services like media, psychology, medicine, nutrition and obviously the financial support to allow me to get away to all these events is massive," she said.

"It's allowed me to do a lot more and extend my stay wherever I go."

Despite it being a long road to Olympic selection, Reynolds' path into the sport was not quite as convoluted.

But her instant love affair with the bike aside, the 18-year-old says that the landscape of BMX has changed since she began racing.

"I was following my brother and all of his mates around like a bit of a tomboy," she joked.

"I got invited to compete one night and beat all the boys, I won every race.

"You can't just get on a bike and go and do this any more, it's getting too technical, too skillful."



Lauren Reynolds is racing in Europe but her real goal is the 2012 London Olympic Games.