



Bunbury BMX tyro Lauren Reynolds cuts a focused figure at training ahead of this weekend's London 2012 qualifying rides in her hometown. She is aiming to use the events at Hay Park's Perkins BMX Stadium to springboard her Olympic push PICTURE: JON GELLWEILER

Hometown energy

Bunbury meet spurs local Olympic BMX hopeful

RILEY STUART

LONDON 2012 Olympic hopeful Lauren Reynolds is aiming to make herself at home this weekend when world-class BMX racing gets underway in the place where she grew up—Bunbury.

Rounds 5 and 6 of BMX Australia's National ProbiKx/Champhix series hit the Perkins BMX Stadium at Hay Park this Saturday and Sunday and the stakes could not be higher, with Olympic-qualifying points on the line.

Reynolds, 19, enjoyed mixed results in last year's qualifying events but now stands out as one of the favourite in the upcoming meet on her native track.

She said a strong showing in Bunbury had the potential to springboard her Olympic push for the rest of the year.

"Every race we do we compete for more and more (Olympic) points so I've got to be performing at my best," Reynolds said.

"2011 is the most important year of them all, with the (Olympic) Games next year.

"It would be great to be able to get off to a good start. It would help the whole year come together."

A good start to the year will be crucial for Reynolds, whose 2010 campaign faltered in its infancy last March with a poor showing at a World Cup event in Madrid.

HOW BMX WORKS

Individual time trials: Used to seed each competitor for the motos stage.

Motos: Riders divided into groups that complete three races. Best four riders in each proceed.

Quarter and semi-finals: One-off races. Top four proceed to the next stage.

Final: Top eight riders compete in a one-off race to determine the overall round winner.

A South West Academy of Sport scholarship holder, Reynolds will be joined in competition this weekend by a number of elite riders including 2008

Beijing Olympians Luke Madill and Nicole Callisto, 2010 Nationals Champion Alex Cameron, Billy Jolliffe and Caroline Buchanan. In all, more than 100 riders are registered to race in Bunbury this weekend.

For Reynolds, who won the 2009 SWAS Sports Star of the Year award, competing at the top level in her hometown is a dream come true.

"It's something I've always thought of but never believed would happen," she said.

"The club has done a fantastic job in turning the track into a world-class facility. It's going to be unreal."

Racing begins on Saturday afternoon from 3pm and spectator entry is free.