

Bunbury players compete on international stage

ACADEMY: Five South West Academy of Sport hockey players from the Greater Bunbury region will be on the international stage this week at the 2008 Pacific School Games.

Zac Atkinson, Zara Webb-Martin, Emma Stonard, Elliott Barton and Keagan Schoultz are among more than 5000 athletes from 20 countries selected to compete at the prestigious international event.

Held in the Canberra National Hockey Centre,

the Pacific School Games is an international sporting event for primary and secondary school students aged 10 to 19 at the Canberra Olympic Pool.

Sixteen-year-old Zara Webb-Martin said she was looking forward to the opportunity to compete against promising young athletes of a similar age from Australia, Asia and the Pacific.

"It's going to be an international competition complete with opening and closing ceremonies,

so it should be a great experience," she said.

South West Academy of Sport chief executive Bernice Butlion congratulated all five athletes on their achievements.

"Their selection for the 2008 Pacific School Games is a reflection of their hard work and talent," she said.

The Academy's hockey program began last month after more than 100 players tried out.

South West Hockey Association development officer Megan Pollard

said selected athletes were attached to either an academy or development squad.

"This arrangement has been designed to maximise the number of South West hockey players represented at elite levels of competition," she said.

There were 33 players from Greater Bunbury who made the Academy with most being in or close to selection in State teams or development squads.