



Sydney Uni 1st Grade celebrate after winning the Shute Shield.

# the year in review

BY GRAHAM CROKER

Sydney University provided six Australian captains during 2007 – a remarkable achievement from one sporting body.

Thomas Whalan captained the Australian men's water polo team and, when absent, the captaincy rested with Sydney University Lions teammate Trent Franklin. Phil Waugh captained the Wallabies in a one-off Test, Luke Inman captained the Australian sevens team; Lisa Sthalekar captained the Australian women's cricket team in three of the five Rose Bowl matches against New Zealand; and Olympic swimming representative Michelle Englesman was the female captain of the Australian team at the World University Games in Thailand.

Lisa also captained NSW to a 9th interstate title and was named International Women's Cricketer of the Year for 2006-07, an award she was to win again in 2007-08. She was joined in the Australian side by Universities' teammates Alex and

Kate Blackwell. Another teammate, Sara Hungerford, captained NSW A.

Meanwhile, Sydney University Boat Club's Bronwen Watson justified her decision to come out of retirement when she won a gold medal in the women's lightweight quad at the 2007 World Rowing Championships held in Munich.

Watson teamed with Tara Kelly of Queensland, Alice McNamara of Victoria and Miranda Bennett of NSW to win the lightweight quad scull. The Australians led from start to finish in recording a time of 6:35.85 to edge out Germany for the silver medal and Italy for the bronze.

The University was also represented by six other rowers at Senior World Cup regattas in Austria, The Netherlands and Switzerland, and the World Championships in Germany. They were Matt Ryan, Jeremy Stevenson and

Marty Rabjohns (coxswain) in the Men's Eight; Fergus Pragnall and Rabjohns in the Men's Coxed Pair; and Francis Hegarty in the Men's Coxless Four. The five rowers are based at the Australian Institute of Sport. Also selected in the Senior team was AIS-based Brooke Pratley in the Women's Quad Scull.

Sydney University was also represented by 10 rowers and two coaches at the World Under-23 Rowing Championships, held at Strathclyde Park, Scotland, and they returned home with two silver and seven bronze medals.

On a bumpy and windy course near Glasgow, Renee Kirby and Charlotte Walters won silver in the Women's Quad, which was won by the US, with Germany finishing third.

In the Men's Eight, Sydney University was represented by six oarsmen in Terrence Alfred, Mitch Estens, Richard Allsop, Edward

Boyce, Andrew Conolly, James Goswell and coxswain Toby Lister. And the boat was coached by Boat Club Director of Rowing, Phil Bourguignon and Development Coach, Mark Prater. At the line Estonia held on for gold from Germany by just 0.39sec, with Australia getting bronze 0.44sec behind Germany.

Sydney University's other representative at Strathclyde Park was Cameron Girdleston in the Men's Lightweight Coxless Four.

Still on the international front, Sydney University cricketers Stuart MacGill and Stuart Clark retained their places in the Australian team after coming into the side in the First Test against Bangladesh at Fallujah in April, 2006. That was the first time two Sydney University Cricket Club members have played for Australia in the same Test since Tom Garrett and Sam Jones stepped onto the Sydney Cricket Ground to take on England in January 1887.



Kyla Bremner, Wrestling for Australia in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

The Sydney University Football Club continued to provide Australian representatives, with Phil Waugh, Dan Vickerman, David Lyons and Julian Huxley earning Wallaby caps during 2007, and Nathan Trist and Luke Inman representing Australia at Sevens.

Sydney University's Thomas Whalan, Trent Franklin, Rob Maitland and Grant Richardson earned bronze medals when Australia defeated Germany 7-6 in the play-off for third at the men's FINA Water Polo World League Super Finals in Berlin. The win emulated the 1993 team, who won bronze at the World Cup in Greece, and took the Australians one place better than 2006 when the Sharks lost the bronze-medal play-off to Greece.

Whalan captained the Australian team at the World Championships in Melbourne, with Sydney University teammates Trent Franklin, Rob Maitland and Sam McGregor in the 13-man squad and Grant Richardson one of four reserves.

Meanwhile, three Sydney University Sport Scholarship holders became part of sporting history when Australia won the 2007 FINA World Junior Women's Water Polo Championship, played at Porto in Portugal. Melissa Hammond, Keesja Gofers and Joanne Whitehorn were members of the Australian squad that went through the tournament undefeated, culminating with an 8-6 win over China in the gold medal final.

Dual Olympian and Sydney University Scholarship holder Robin Bell won bronze at the Canoe Slalom World Championships in Brazil and qualified for the Beijing Olympics. Bell competed at the Sydney and Athens Games, where he placed ninth and fourth respectively. The bronze medal caps off a fantastic international season that saw him win two medals from four appearances.

In netball, Sydney University Sports Scholarship holder Susan Pratley was a member of the Australian team that won 2007 World Netball Championship, held in Auckland. She was also nominated for

the Most Outstanding Sporting Achievement award at the AUS Sports Awards.

Sydney University cross-country runner Lara Tamsett won the junior women's division at the 2007 WRMA World Mountain Running Championships in Ovornaz, Switzerland. Tamsett won the event in 20:48.6, from Hulya Bastug of Turkey (21:01.1) and Veronica Wallington of Australia (21:06.2). The Sports Scholarship holder and Australian Cross-Country champion also collected a team gold when fellow Australian Veronica Wallington recovered from a fall to finish third in the event.

Wheelchair athlete Angela Ballard bettered the qualifying times in four events for the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games. Racing in wet conditions at the Swiss National Championships in Ibach, the 24-year-old Sydney University Sport Scholarship holder set a personal best of 61.26sec in the 400m. She also bettered qualifying times by winning the 200m in 32.05sec, finishing second in the 100m (18.07sec) and fourth in the 800m (2:01.16).

Another Sydney University Sport Scholarship holder, Aimee Watson, was named Australian Junior Athlete of the Year for 2006-07 at the Ski and Snowboard Australia awards. The 20-year-old cross country skier earned the award after representing Australia at the 2007 World Junior and Under-23 Cross Country Skiing Championships held at Tarvisio in Italy, and the 2007 Winter Universiade (World University Winter Games) in Turin, Italy.

Sydney University was represented by 10 athletes in five sporting disciplines at the 24th Universiade (World University Games) in Bangkok. As well as Englesman, swimmers Tim Laforest and Jonathon Newton, middle-distance runner Lachlan Renshaw and hurdler Justin Merlino, divers Alex Croak and Thomas Rickards, golfer Julia Boland, and women's basketballers Eva Afeaki, Melissa Smith and Georgia Woodyard

represented Australia at the Games. All are Sydney University Sport scholarship holders.

Smith, Woodyard and Afeaki earned gold as members of the all-conquering women's basketball team and Newton won silver in the men's 50m freestyle. The Australian women's basketball team saved their best for last in defeating Russia 85-65 in the gold medal decider. Newton posted a career highlight in finishing second to Brazilian Nicholas Araujo Dias Dos Santos in the 50m freestyle. Coached at the Sydney University Sports and Aquatic Centre pool by Australian coach Steve Alderman, Newton was pipped for the gold medal by only .11sec.

Cris Penn, a personal trainer and fitness trainer for seniors at Sydney University Sports and Aquatic Centre, won a silver medal at the 17th World Masters Track and Field Championships, held at Riccione, Italy. Penn was a member of the Australian 4X100m relay team that finished second in the Women's 40 (W40) final. The Australians ran the final in 52.70sec, to finish just behind the Italian team, who won the gold medal in a time of 50.58sec.

Another Sydney University Sports Scholarship holder, Sarah Stewart, was a member of the Australian Women's Wheelchair Basketball team that qualified for the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games. The 11-strong Australian women's team, known as the Gliders, booked a berth to the Beijing Paralympics when they defeated Japan and New Zealand in a double round-robin Asia Oceania Qualification Tournament played at the Bankstown Basketball Stadium

Others competing on the international scene were Rachel Herrick and Mikaela Dombkins, who won silver medals at the World Under-21 Women's Basketball

Championships, and Natalie Porter and Alicia Poto, who represented with the Australian Opals. Fiona Hammond represented with the Australian Women's water polo team.

Bianca Chidrawi played on the International satellite tennis circuit in the US; Evan Walker competed at the World Sailing Championships in Portugal; and Paralympic alpine skier Toby Kane won silver and bronze medals competing in the LW2 (single below knee amputee) classification in giant slaloms at World Cup events.

On the local front, rower Elizabeth Kell was named Sydney University Female Blue of the Year, and gymnast Prashanth Sellathurai, was named Male Blue of the Year at the 2007 Blues Dinner held in the Great Hall. Kell and Sellathurai were among 41 Blues awarded for sporting achievements during 2007, and 12 Golds, awarded for services to sport.

Another sports scholarship holder, hurdler Justin Merlino, was nominated for the Male Athlete of the Year at the NSW Sports Awards after winning the 110m hurdles title at the 85th Australian Athletics Championships at QEII Stadium, Brisbane. Merlino set a personal best time of 13.55sec to become the second fastest Australian over the 110m hurdles, behind 1996 Atlanta Olympic finalist, Kyle Vander-Kuyp, who set the Australian benchmark of 13.29sec at the 1995 World Championships.

Sydney University Boat Club was nominated for Team of the Year at the NSW Sports Awards and Mick Somers (Soccer) for the Coach of the Year Award, while University of Technology, Sydney, student, Georgia Woodyard, who plays for the ACUVUE Sydney Uni Flames, was the joint winner of Female Athlete of the Year award.

Robin Bell on the canoe to represent Australia at the Beijing Olympics.



The Boat Club once again dominated at the NSW Championships, winning a 9th State title.

After a five-year drought the Sydney University Women's AFL team won the 2007 Sydney Women's Australian Football League Championship, defeating the Newtown Breakaways 7.4.(46) to 2.5.(17). And, as a result, Sydney University players dominated the NSW Women's AFL team which contested the Australian Championships, supplying 14 of the 25-strong NSW squad, along with the NSW coach and team manager. Players to gain NSW selection from Sydney University were Shelley Bates, Amelia Dever, Meredith Grey, Claire O'Neill, Christine McDonald, Corinne Quarantino and Belinda Michalk, Emma Yuen, Jemma Still, Heidi Wiedner, Kim Rielly, Keran Durston and Jane Leysdon along with team manager Kellie Nolan and coach Jason King.

Sydney Uni Flames started the 2007-08 Women's National League Basketball season with renewed confidence, safe in the knowledge that they had a new naming rights sponsor. The WNBL team is now known as the ACUVUE Sydney Uni Flames.

Selection in the Australian team for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games became a definite possibility for Sydney University Sport Scholarship holder Kaarle McCulloch with her double gold effort at the 2007 Oceania Cycling Championships held at Invercargill's ILT Velodrome. McCulloch won her first gold medal in Open company when she took out the Elite Women's Keirin and backed that up with a gold medal

in the Elite Women's 500m Time Trial.

Sydney University's Greg Clune tumbled his way to the World Gymnastic titles after a dominant performance at the 2007 National Club Championships in Adelaide. Clune's first placing earned him a trip to Quebec, Canada, to compete at his first open World Championships as the only Australian representative in the tumbling event.

Sydney University's Third Grade women's hockey team broke a 100-year drought when they became the first team in the club to win the minor and major premierships double. Having headed the competition ladder at the end of the season proper, the Thirds completed the task in the grand final with a 6-4 win over Moorebank to take the title and set the standard for other grades. Sydney University Sixth Grade also won their premiership, defeating minor premiers University of Technology, Sydney 1-0.

Three female athletes from Sydney University became the inaugural Young Women's Professional Development scholarship holders when the program was launched in July. Jacqueline Bonnticha (sailing), Susan Pratley (netball) and Emma Schiller (soccer) met their mentors, Australian netball captain Liz Ellis, beach volleyball Olympic gold medallist Kerri Pottharst and Olympic swimming silver medallist, Kirsten Thomson, over a game of golf at the Lane Cove Country Club. The one-year scholarships aim to provide elite young sportswomen with the opportunity to equip themselves with the networks and resources necessary to make a

smooth transition from the sporting arena to the workplace.

Sydney University Football Club's domination of premier club rugby union in Sydney continued in 2007 with the club winning five of the seven premierships on offer and making the finals in the other two grades. SUFC wrapped up a third Sydney first grade rugby union premiership in three years with a comprehensive 34-11 win over Eastern Suburbs at Aussie Stadium. With the shortened competition revamped as the Tooheys New Shute Shield, the win earned the Students the Shute Shield and the Tooheys New Cup to add to the Sir Roden Cutler Shield that they claimed earlier in the season. Man-of-the-match, fullback Daniel Halangahu, scored 19 of the Students' points. He named joint runner-up in the Sydney Morning Herald Club Player of the Year and SUFC was named SMH Club of the Year.

It was the club's eighth grand final appearance in the past eight years which have yielded four titles. Al Campbell, who came off the bench for his 101st First Grade game for the club, has played in seven of the eight grand finals, while Tim Davidson celebrated his third successive premiership as captain. The club also contested two other divisions, with Fifth Grade losing 7-5 to Dee Why in the final of the Meldrum Cup, and the women's team losing 36-12 in their final against Parramatta.

On the Super 14 front, David Lyons, Phil Waugh, Daniel Vickerman, Will Caldwell, Daniel Halangahu, Dean Mumm, Jeremy Tilse, David Dennis and Tim Davidson represented the NSW Waratahs; Julian Huxley, Jone Tawake, Al Campbell and

Peter Playford represented the ACT Brumbies; and Gareth Hardy, Angus Scott and Brendan Cannon played with the Western Force.

Our female skiers dominated the slopes when Sydney University took out the overall title at the recent 2007 Australian University Games skiing championships at Perisher. The University won the overall women's pointscore, while the men finished second overall behind the University of Technology, Sydney. Their combined points saw Sydney University win the overall championship by 40 points from the University of Melbourne and UTS.

Having the women's Super League First Grade and Under 21 soccer premiership double for 2007, Sydney University capped a great season by being elevated to the NSW Women's Premier League for the 2008 season. News of the elevation was made official at Football NSW Silver Medal Dinner, where Sydney University's Astrid Larssen was named Super League Player of the Year. Sydney University also won the 2007 Club Championship.

Standout performances from the men's eight and swimmer Matt Jaukovic helped Sydney University to win a record 8th overall points title at the 15th Australian University Games held on the Gold Coast. Rowing on the Hinze Dam, the Sydney University men's eight won the Oxford and Cambridge Cup for a fourth consecutive year, edging out the University of Adelaide and the University of Melbourne. The famous Oxford and Cambridge Trophy was donated in the 1890s and is competed for annually among the Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide universities.

Sydney University Tennis team celebrate victory at the 2007 AUG.





Women's Super League First Grade (soccer)

Meanwhile, on the still water, Jaukovic smashed the Games record for the men's 50m butterfly when he carved out a lap in 24.84sec to beat the 2005 record of 25.37sec. Jaukovic also broke the Games 100m butterfly record, lowering the old mark of 56.11sec to 55.64sec.

Other individual gold medals were won by Justin Merlino in the 110m hurdles, Werna Botha in the 800m, Annabelle Smith in the 400m and Tara Holt in the 110m hurdles. Sydney University dominated the teams events on the final day of the Games, winning gold medals in men's badminton, tennis, touch football and women's hockey, soccer, tennis, rowing, swimming and water polo.

The Sydney University Cricket Club reached the semi-finals in First Grade and the final in Second Grade and just missed out on the Club Championship. Ed Cowan, Greg Mail and Mark Cameron represented NSW during the season.

Sydney University had three kayak and canoe representatives in the Australian senior slalom team following selection trials at Brady's Lake in Tasmania and the Penrith course in Sydney. Kate Lawrence was selected in the women's kayak squad, Robin Bell in the men's C1 (canoe) and Lachie Milne in the C2 (two-man canoe).

Sydney University swimmer Jonathon Newton took just 21.81sec to make his mark at the

Australian Short Course Swimming Championships, held in Melbourne. That was the time Newton swam the 50-metre freestyle to finish with the silver medal, just .20sec behind gold medallist Matt Targett (Melbourne Vic Centre). Also among the medals was Michelle Engelsman, who won bronze in the women's 50m freestyle. Engelsman stopped the clock at 24.64sec in finishing third behind Queensland's Libby Lenton and Cate Campbell. Newton and Engelsman were part of a 13-strong squad from the Sydney University Swim Club competing at the Championships.

Sydney University Tennis Club's Blackwell Cup team successfully defended their NSW Men's Hardcourt Tennis Association Slazenger Inter-District Blackwell Cup title in September, before jetting off to the Gold Coast to take part in an historic triple-crown victory at the Australian University Games. As well as sweeping the tennis gold medals, SU picked up five Green and Gold Tennis places at the games: Melissa Anderson, Bianca Chidrawi, Dan Davies, Henry Mortlock and Adrian Somerville.

Joanne Whitehorn led the scoring as Sydney University Women's Water Polo took out the Sydney First Grade Winter competition with a 9-6 win over UNSW, played at the Ryde pool, while Sydney University wrestler and Sports Scholarship holder Daniel Opdam competed at the 2007 Oceania Championships at Hamilton, New Zealand.

Opdam, who competes in the 84kg class, was awarded one of eight nation-wide Team 2010 Commonwealth Games Association Junior Athlete Scholarships at the Australian Wrestling Union Team 2010 Elite Wrestling Training Camp at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. Accompanying Opdam to New Zealand was Sydney University Wrestling Club coach, Leonid Zaslavsky and SUWC member Kyla Bremner.

Off the field, three great supporters of Sydney University sport were honoured for their efforts. Vice-Chancellor Gavin Brown's passion and support for sport, particularly at the University of Sydney, were acknowledged by the institution with a new sporting pavilion to be named in his honour. The three-storey Gavin Brown Pavilion, to be built between No.1 and No.2 ovals, will contain indoor cricket nets, changing rooms, a function centre and under-cover viewing facilities to both grounds.

The announcement was made at the 2007 Blues awards dinner, where Professor Brown and former Chancellor, Justice Kim Santow, were presented with University Golds for their support of sport at the University.

And congratulations go to long-serving Sydney University Boat Club supporter Chris Noel, who was awarded the Service to Sport Award at the 2007 Australian University Sport presentations. The award capped off a memorable year for Chris, who was made an Honorary

Fellow of the University in May for his services to sport, particularly rowing, at the University.

Chris became President of the Sydney University Boat Club in 1987. At the time the club had less than a dozen active rowers, obsolete equipment and was struggling to compete in local competition. His efforts led to the rebuilding of the Club and its facilities for which he received a University Colour award (now Gold award) in 1990.

The Boat Club now boasts one of the best performing and most successful elite rowing programs in the country and is unquestionably the most successful university club in Australia. Sydney University fielded 17 rowers and two coaches at the 2007 Senior World Cup and Under-23 World Championships, the highest ever representation by Sydney University at the international level.

Congratulations also to Sydney University Australian National Football Club president Jason McLennan, who was named Clubman of the Year at the SUANFL awards night and received Life Membership of the club. Jason also celebrated the club's promotion to Sydney's AFL Premier Division, the highest Australian football competition in NSW.

All in all, a remarkable year for sport at Sydney University. ■