

## **NSW Country Championships 2018**

The 73rd NSW Country Championships were held in Wollongong over the Australia Day long weekend. Nowra had 58 athletes competing across various track and field events with a number of athletes making their Country Champs debut.

The Beresford family did well, bringing home four medals between them. Alissa Beresford threw her way to 5<sup>th</sup> place in both the 40-49 years discus and javelin whilst husband Paul medalled in the 40-49 years triple jump with a jump of 8.13 metres to finish 2<sup>nd</sup>. Paul also placed 8<sup>th</sup> in javelin, 6<sup>th</sup> in long jump and 5<sup>th</sup> in discus. On the track Paul ran 13.80 seconds in the 100m and was part of the 30+ relay team. Jayla Beresford spent her competition in the field, earning a bronze medal in the under 14 shot put as well as placing 4<sup>th</sup> in both triple jump and javelin. Meanwhile Mason Beresford added two more medals to the family tally with a silver in the under 16 triple jump and a bronze in discus as well as a 4<sup>th</sup> place in javelin and 5<sup>th</sup> in long jump.

Emerson and Hannah Brian both chalked up some personal bests at the meet. Emerson ran 11.36 in the Under 20 100m heat then improved on this in the final finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in 11.28 seconds. Emerson also ran a PB in the 200m with 23.25 seconds placing 4<sup>th</sup>. Hannah Brian, who has only recently returned to athletic competition, was on fire. Hannah started the competition on Friday night with a PB in the Under 14 80m hurdles, placing 5<sup>th</sup> in 16.01 seconds. She then returned on Saturday to win her 100m heat, qualifying with the second fastest time of 13.59 seconds. Hannah went on to better this time in the final, finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in 13.53 seconds. Hannah also placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200m final. In long jump Hannah finished 5<sup>th</sup> but her medal winning performance came in javelin, spearing 19.06 metres for a silver.

Jesse Buckingham competed in three events and won three medals! Jesses took home silver in the Under 18 1500m and 800m, clocking PB's as he went; and claimed bronze in the steeplechase. Brother Max Buckingham also medalled with silver in the Under 16 steeplechase and placed 6<sup>th</sup> in the 800m.

Young Reilly Caswell earned himself two silver medals. At just 9 years of age Reilly ran in 2nd in the Under 12 200m and cleared 1.10metres for silver in the high jump. He also competed in the 800m, finishing 4<sup>th</sup>. Seven year old Tynan Caswell won silver in the Under 10 800m and finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200m, which was a tough job in the pouring rain!

Asher Chapman who is also a member of St Georges Basin Little Athletics Club and ran in his Little A's uniform scooped the pool at his first Country Championships; taking home gold in all three of the events he competed in - the Under 10 100m, shot put and long jump.

Alexis Charalambous; also at her first Country Championships, won a bronze medal for her gutsy effort in the Under 16 steeplechase and finished 6<sup>th</sup> in the competitive 800m.

Lara Check proved that her high jump training is certainly paying off with a gold medal jump in the Under 16 high jump. Lara cleared 1.58m for the win, in front of fellow Nowra athlete Lily Wheeler who placed 2<sup>nd</sup> with her jump of 1.55m. Lara also finished 8<sup>th</sup> in the 100m final and 5<sup>th</sup> in long jump. Mikayla Check took home silver for her 2<sup>nd</sup> place run in the Under 18 400metres hurdles – a champion effort in only her second time competing in this event! Mikayla also finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the 200m sprint. Mum Janie Hamilton, a fierce supporter and competitor of athletics, claimed three silver medals for her performances in 40-49 years high jump, discus and long jump. Janie also finished 5<sup>th</sup> in shot put and 5<sup>th</sup> in the 100m sprint as well as bringing home the final leg of the women's 30+ relay with a massive smile.

Deb Clark's experience and determination won her two medals in the throwing arena. On Deb's final throw in the 50-59 years shot put she got 'angry' and hurled the shot into 3<sup>rd</sup> place with a throw of 6.93 metres. Deb also speared silver in the javelin and placed 4<sup>th</sup> in discus as well as running 2<sup>nd</sup> leg in the 30+ relay.

Another veteran athlete to do well was Geoff Crook who won bronze in both the 50-59 years javelin and 1500m; and as has become tradition, Geoff also competed in the 30+relay with trademark smile and enthusiasm.

Still in the veteran category Peter Dooley, a true gentleman and athlete, added two gold medals to his collection with a win in the 60-69 years 1500m and steeplechase.

Sarah deVries bagged two silver medals in the field, placing 2<sup>nd</sup> in both the Opens Triple Jump and long jump demonstrating that the consistent Wednesday night competition in the pit is certainly worthwhile! Sarah ran strongly to qualify for the finals in both the 100m and 200m where she placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the 100m and 6<sup>th</sup> in the 200m.

The Dyball family made their Country Championships debut in fine style. Youngest family member Noah Dyball took home a bronze medal in the Under 9 800m and placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200m. Toby Dyball who injured his ankle on the previous Wednesday night competition courageously ran the Under 12 800 metres and for his efforts claimed

a bronze medal. Will Dyball added to the family medal count with a bronze medal in the Under 14 800m as well as a 4<sup>th</sup> place in the 1500m. Ella Dyball placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the Under 15 1500m and 7<sup>th</sup> in the 800m. Meanwhile dad Gavin was busy on the track, competing in both sprints and middle distance events. Gavin placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the 40-49 years 1500m, 11<sup>th</sup> in the 400m, 6<sup>th</sup> in the 800m and 6<sup>th</sup> in his 200m heat. Gavin also featured in the men's relay challenge.

Dakota Farn competed well in the Under 13 group, finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in the 1500m and 6<sup>th</sup> in the 800m.

Through a mane of hair, sprinter Blake Hartnett won a bronze medal in the Under 18 400m as well as placing 4<sup>th</sup> in the 400m hurdles and 5<sup>th</sup> in the 200m.

Although Andrew Havadjia was missing from this year's relay challenge he still managed to compete in the 50-59 years 800m where he snared a bronze medal and he speared 6<sup>th</sup> place in the javelin. Ethan Havadjia was impressive on the track in the Under 17 group with his consistent improvement and of course his Havadjia humour. Ethan placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the 100m, 200m and 400m, and 6<sup>th</sup> in the 800m.

Charlie Heidke bagged three medals from three events, with a silver in the Under 13 long jump and bronze in the 100m and 200m.

Also competing in the Under 13 group young Matthew Higham proved he is certainly the quiet achiever. Matthew had a busy program of events winning gold in the high jump with an impressive jump of 1.40metres. Matthew claimed silver in the 200m and 800m and bronze in the 1500m. Matthew also placed 4<sup>th</sup> in both the long jump and 100m sprint.

Club president Scott Johnson was the winner of the 40-49 years steeplechase event and took bronze in the 5000m. Scott also placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the 1500m before stepping up to run in the infamous 30+ relay challenge.

Veteran thrower Kerrie Jones did exceptionally well to win bronze in the 60-69 years shot put, hammer throw and javelin and placed 4<sup>th</sup> in discus.

Teenager Lachlan Kaszonyi started the competition with a silver medal in the Under 18 400m hurdles before going on to win bronze in the 100m. He also placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200m and long jump.

Victoria Kennedy showed off her abilities in the Under 18 steeplechase with a gold medal run in 8.07.62 minutes. Alex O'Brien also competed in the steeplechase and finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the Under 16 event. In the shorter 800m Alex placed 5<sup>th</sup>.

In the Maher family it was the youngest athlete who took home the medals. Ben Maher won bronze in both the Under 9 100m and 200m. Zac Maher finished 6<sup>th</sup> in the Under 13 200m and 9<sup>th</sup> in the 100m whilst Sam Maher finished 5<sup>th</sup> in both the under 16 steeplechase and the under 15 800m. In the field Will Maher placed 7<sup>th</sup> in Under 17 shot put and 9<sup>th</sup> in discus.

Sprinter Ruby Marshall ran in 5<sup>th</sup> in the Under 13 100m and whilst she ran well and placed 4<sup>th</sup> in her 200m heat and qualified for the next round she unfortunately missed the call up for the final.

Another young sprinter who has shown marked improvement over time was Akala Miller. Akala ran in 4<sup>th</sup> in her 80m hurdles event and after qualifying for the finals ran in 6<sup>th</sup> in the Under 14 100m and 8<sup>th</sup> in 200m. Sister Talea, preferring the field events, placed 4<sup>th</sup> in both Under 13 discus and shot put.

In the Musgrove family it was Paul Musgrove who claimed bragging rights with silver in the 40-49 years high jump. Paul was a close 4<sup>th</sup> in long jump and finished 7<sup>th</sup> in the 100m final and 6<sup>th</sup> in the 200m. Paul also participated in the relay challenge, bringing home the final leg of Team B this year. Cam Musgrove made his competition return after a lengthy overseas trip and illness to place 7<sup>th</sup> after a gutsy performance in the Opens 800m. Darlene Musgrove sat the competition out this year, only competing in the relay.

Meanwhile in the Mustapic family it was Alisha Mustapic whose neck hung heaviest with medals. Alisha claimed gold in the Under 12 800m, and bronze in the long jump, discus, and 1500m with a 4<sup>th</sup> in 100m. Jade Mustapic made her return to competition after a lengthy absence due to injuries and demonstrated her determination and resilience to win silver in the Under 18 400m (while mum shed a tear or two), and silver in the 800m. Jade also speared bronze in the javelin and finished 5<sup>th</sup> in discus. Tara Mustapic took home a bronze in the Under 17 3000m and placed 4<sup>th</sup> in the 1500m. Mel Mustapic took to the field this year earning a bronze medal in the 40-49 years javelin for her efforts. Mel also competed in the shot put where she finished 8<sup>th</sup> and returned to the relay event, carrying the baton for the 30+ women. Sole male Mustapic, Dad Glen finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the 40-49 years 5000m run and he too participated in the relay fun.

Chelsea Pascoe competed in the 3000m run on Friday night of the competition and finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the Under 16 event whilst Cristine Suffolk won gold in the 40-49 years 3000m run as well as the 2000m steeplechase.

Making her Country Champs debut Erin Smart proved this competition should definitely not be her last as she claimed four silver medals. Erin ran in 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 30-39 years 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m to much cheering and encouragement from her favourite supporters Evie and Tom (who also claimed the medals for themselves!). Dennis Smart was roped into competing in the 30+ relay but reportedly enjoyed the run, so next year we're sure he'll be back!

Sam Taylor managed to snare silver in the Under 18 long jump and place 4<sup>th</sup> in the javelin before having to withdraw from the rest of his program due to a niggling back injury.

Lily Wheeler jumped her way to two silver medals in the Under 16 triple jump and high jump. She also finished 4<sup>th</sup> in long jump and 7<sup>th</sup> in the 100m final.

In the Thomson family young Harry was laden down with medals after taking the win in the Under 9 long jump and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 100m, 200m and 800m. Decathlon athlete Cooper Thomson won gold in the Under 18 pole vault and took silver in the 110m hurdles before claiming bronze medals in the 400m hurdles, javelin and long jump. Cooper also placed 4<sup>th</sup> in shot put and 6<sup>th</sup> in the 200m. Dad Steve Thomson made his competition debut at Country taking a bronze medal in the 40-49 years javelin as well as making a rather reluctant but plucky first appearance in the men's relay team. He almost took out fellow competitor Paul Musgrove at the baton change but made a good recovery to stay upright and send Paul on his way – even if it was with a little push.

Thank you to all those who participated at this year's edition of the 2018 NSW Country Championships!

A full list of results can be found on the website.

Go Nowra!