



MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday August 21, 2005

AUSTRALIA END'S WORLD UNI GAMES ON POSITIVE NOTE

Australia has finished a successful 2005 World University Summer Games campaign on a positive note after the men's basketball team won their playoff against Canada for seventh spot in Izmir, Turkey.

The basketballers were Australia's last athletes in action ahead of the closing ceremony at the multi-sport event that involved 9,000 competitors from over 180 countries.

Australia finished with four medals after the eleven day competition, including historic first medals in sailing, women's basketball and women's synchro diving.

The best performed Australian however was unheralded distance runner Victoria Mitchell who grabbed the silver medal in the women's 3000m steeplechase.

Mitchell, who attends Butler University in the USA, ran a personal best time and, importantly for Australia's track and field stocks, set an "A" qualifier for next year's Commonwealth Games with her time of 9:47.54.

In women's basketball, the WNBL's Adelaide Lightning captain Jennifer Screen led her team onto the podium with an MVP performance in the bronze medal playoff against Russia.

Screen scored a tournament high 30 points as Australia outran and out shot the Russian's to the tune of 81-71.

The medal was Australia's first basketball medal for a women's or men's team.

At the diving pool Queensland based duo Briony Cole and Amey Moors-Chantry surprised even themselves by winning the bronze medal in the 3M synchro event.

Sitting in fourth place for most of the final, the young duo capitalised on some uncharacteristic mistakes by the Ukrainians to leap ahead on the last dive.

The pair had not trained together since January because Cole was preparing for July's FINA World Championships in Montreal with another partner.

Cole also finished sixth in the individual 3M final, as did Carlie Gidman in the 10M platform final.

Australia's final medal came at the Karisayka Sailing Centre where Victorian Krystal Weir also won bronze.

Competing in the women's Laser Radial, the class where she won the 2004 world championship, Weir was forced into a high pressure final day of match racing after entering the last two races tied for third with Mexican Tania Elias Calles, but out of touch of the gold and silver.

In the first race Elias Calles got the lead and finished fourth, half a boat length in front of Weir who finished fifth.

But in the last race of the event the tables were turned and Weir regrouped to take second place with Elias Calles finishing eighth.

No Australian had ever won a sailing medal in the 46 year history of the World University Summer Games.

In other events, Athens Olympian Natalie Saville finished fifth in the 20km walk, Clay Cross was eighth in the shot put and swimmers Belinda Nevell (50m backstroke) and Jono Newton (50m butterfly) collected seventh placings.

The men's basketball victory today came at a price with inspirational captain Ben Hunt suffering a suspected broken ankle in the final quarter of his team's 81-75 victory over Canada.

Hunt is in from hospital awaiting x-rays to decide his fate after being stretchered off the court with 2:15 remaining in the match.

Australia stayed just ahead of the Canadian's from the very first basket to win an entertaining match at Ataturk Sports Hall.

Top scorer for the Aussies was John Philip with 16 ahead of Daniel Dillon's 15 and Simon Conn's 12.

The next World University Summer Games will be held in Bangkok in 2007.

COMPLETE AUSTRALIAN TEAM RESULTS – DAY 10

Day 10 (Aug 21)

Men's basketball

Australia 81 defeated Canada 75

ends

For further information please contact:

*Kate Robinson
Media Manager
Australian University Games team
+90 543 340 1774*

*Toni Bush
Commercial Manager
Australian University Sport
+90 543 340 1702*