



2017-08-26

Pickett joins Whittaker on swim podium on final night in pool

Competition in the pool at Taiwan Sport University Arena wrapped up with the Uniroos swim team finishing with two golds and silver medal after the seven-day meet.

Deakin University's Sian Whittaker, who won the 100m/200m backstroke double, was joined on the medallists list by dual Commonwealth Games gold medallist Leiston Pickett (Griffith University) who had to wait until the final night to race in her pet 50m breaststroke event.

Pickett has won the short sprint at the past two Commonwealth Games, and will head to the Gold Coast looking for a three-peat. After finishing 6th in the 100m breaststroke, she entered the final as second fastest qualify and left as the silver medallist.

American Andrea Cottrell won the gold in 30.77, with Pickett just 0.05 seconds behind in 30.82. Jessica Ericson (SWE) and Maria Liver (UKR) shared the bronze after both finishing in 31.50.

Pickett said the level of competition in Taipei has been a lot higher than she thought it would be and has been the perfect lead in to her bid for three consecutive Commonwealth Games titles.

"It's a good reminder of where we're at at this point and to get this international experience is a real bonus," Pickett said.

After two fourth place finishes in the 800m and 1500m freestyle, Kiah Melverton (Griffith University) has a final crack at the podium in the 400m freestyle. Winning her heat in 4:12.33 for fifth fastest overall she clocked 4:12.42 for 6th spot in the final.

Laura Taylor (Bond University) rounded out her meet, finishing 8th in the final of the 200m butterfly in 2:12.74

In the 4x100m medley relay, the Uniroos team of Sian Whittaker (backstroke) Leiston Pickett (breaststroke), Gemma Coney (butterfly) and Abbey Harkin (freestyle) took out their heat in 4:05.10 to qualify third fastest for the final. In a hot race the team Whittaker and Pickett had the team in second place at half way, but up against some quality opponents ended up in fourth place in 4:03.58.. 1.18secs behind Italy. Japan won gold in 4:00.24

In the morning heats, the men's 4x100m medley outfit of Ben Treffers (Australian National University), Alex Milligan (The University of Western Australia), Brayden McCarthy (Brisbane TAFE) and Will Stockwell (The University of Queensland) easily won their heat in 3:39.78.

The Uniroos also had a number of close shaves, with Kiah Melverton producing two fourth place finishes in the 800m and 1500m and Ben Treffers a fifth in the 100m backstroke and 7th in the 50m backstroke. Pickett finished 6th in the 50m breaststroke as did Whittaker in the 50m backstroke.

All eyes for swimmers is now on the trials for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in February with hopes of a spot on the senior Dolphins team for the home championship.