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Alysha Burnett takes home silver to join classmate Cranston's gold

Australian Uniroo Alysha Burnett has joined her Australian Catholic University classmate and fellow multi-eventer Kyle Cranston as a Taipei 2017 medallist by taking the silver in the heptathlon at the Summer Universiade (also known as the World University Games).

With both athletes studying a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science degree, Burnett is in her third year of study, while Cranston is in his fourth.

In wet but humid conditions, Burnett closed out her most successful heptathlon campaign ever setting a new personal best of 5835 points. Austria's Verena Preiner took a commanding win with 6224 points.

In her final event, the 800m, Burnett was at the tail of the field with 200m to go. After digging deep Burnett regained much of her lost ground on her competitors to place 6th a PB of 2:27.45, scoring 725 points and secure the silver as her own.

With a potent mix of elation and exhaustion Burnett collapsed to the track as she learned of her placing.

"That was probably one of the toughest but definitely the most rewarding 800s in my career," Burnett said.

"Very tired, very sore, a bit stiff but did the job so couldn't ask for anything more."

In winning silver, Burnett becomes the fifth Australian Uniroo to medal in the event at the Summer Universiade following in the footsteps of Jane Flemming (Bronze - 1989 Duisburg), Jane Jamieson (Gold – 1995 Fukuoka and Gold 2001 Beijing), Clare Thompson (Bronze – 1999 Palma de Mallorca) and Kylie Wheeler (Gold – 2000 Daegu).

Opening her seven-event account with a 14.60 (-1.4) run in the 100m hurdles, Burnett then produced a scintillating personal best in the high jump with 1.86m - a Commonwealth Games 'B' qualifier. Remarkably, that jump would have won gold by 2cm at the 2015 Summer Universiade.

"That [jump] was a long time coming. I knew I could jump higher and today I finally overcame it with a 3cm PB," Burnett said of the jump.

Finishing with a 25.92 (-0.2) run in the 200m, Burnett took a second-place position after her first day of competition.

Burnett then followed with a 6.09m long jump, a 42.26m throw in the javelin before closing out her campaign in the 800m.

At just 20-years-of-age, Burnett became Australia's youngest ever heptathlon national champion in April when she took the title with 5817 points.

Coached by Sydney 2000 Olympic pole vaulter Zsuzsanna Olgay-Szabo for the past five years, Burnett says she was probably destined to be a heptathlete since her days at Little Athletics.

"I was good at most of the events – I was always doing as many individual events through the season and I finally put it all together one day."

"It's been a very long season. My body has been on it's last legs – literally – for a while. I'm definitely not going to do another hep next week... or for the next few months."

What Burnett will be doing is taking her two dogs Lucy (Poodle cross Border-Collie) and Nina (King Charles Cavalier cross Poodle) for a much needed walk.

"They're good training partners, but I need to get them ready for the off-season," Burnett laughed.

Elsewhere at the athletics, Nick Hough (The University of Sydney) would be excused for feeling hard done by in the men's 110m hurdles. The recent IAAF World Championships representative ran solidly through his semi-final, crossing the line in fourth place with 13.70 (0.9) to advance to the final on time, but was soon disqualified under IAAF Rule 168.7a (Hurdles - Trails foot/leg below horizontal plane of the top of the hurdle).

A protest followed, and after watching the video replay, the decision was reversed, but it left the 23-year-old just 30 minutes to prepare for the final. Despite the interruption, Hough soldiered on to finish sixth in 13.73 (-0.5).

In the final of the men's pole vault, the slippery conditions made it very difficult for the 12 athletes which included Australia's Angus Armstrong (The University of Sydney).

With singular failed attempts at 5.10m, 5.20m and 5.30m, Armstrong failed to clear 5.40m to finish in equal fifth place overall. Portugal's Diogo Ferreira won gold with 5.55m.

In the men's long jump, national champion, Chris Mitrevski (RMIT) needed a clutch final jump 7.66m to make it through to Monday night's final after a foul and 7.49m. He finished 2nd in his pool with the 7th best overall leap.

Liam Adcock (The University of Queensland) opened with 7.45m and wasn't able to improve on that, finishing 11th in his group and 20th overall. The leading qualifier, Radek Juska (POL) jumped a huge 8.30m – a personal best, just as he did at the world championships in London last month before missing the top eight in the final.

RMIT's Steve Knuckey has snuck his way through to the final of the men's 800m after coming from the rear of the field in his semi-final to place a tight third in 1:48.39. A nervous wait followed, but the Victorian was successful as the fastest non-automatic qualifier to ensure his start in the medal round on Monday night.

Sending a full contingent of relay teams to Taipei, Australia qualified through to the 4x100m women's final as well as the men's 4x400m final, where the combination of Dan Mowen (The University of Queensland), Taylor Burns (Queensland University of Technology), Harrison Roubin (Deakin University) & Tristan Robinson (The University of Melbourne) had a nervous wait for times, before learning of their confirmation to start in Monday night's final.

The penultimate day of the six-day athletics program commenced on the roads, in typically hot and steamy conditions, with the University of Tasmania's Dylan Evans finish