

# NEWS



AUSTRALIAN  
INSTITUTE OF SPORT

## AIS Awards 2002

The AIS announced the winners of its Athlete and Coach Awards for 2002 at a ceremony held at the AIS in Canberra on 5 March 2003.

Swimmer Petria Thomas was named AIS Athlete of the Year for the second year in a row and tennis player Todd Reid was announced as AIS Junior Athlete of the Year. In a new award, track cycling coach Martin Barras was voted 2002 AIS Coach of the Year, while sailors Darren Bundock and John Forbes were named AIS Team of the Year.

Four Education and Vocation Achievement Awards and four memorial scholarship winners were also announced at the ceremony.

### AIS Athlete of the Year

Petria Thomas became one of a select group of three AIS athletes who have won the AIS Athlete of the Year Award in consecutive years, having shared the 2001 award with gymnast Philippe Rizzo, an AIS Achievement Award winner in 2002. She is Australia's leading female swimmer and a true superstar of the sport internationally.

Petria fought back from injury to complete a magnificent year of achievement:

- She won one gold and four silver medals at the FINA World Short Course Swimming Championships in Moscow in April.
- She dominated her opposition at the Manchester Commonwealth Games in July to win five gold medals, one silver and one bronze.
- Less than three weeks later, she won three gold and two silver medals at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Japan.
- During 2002 she also set several national, Commonwealth and championship records.
- To top off her achievements, she was named one of the 21 AIS Best of the Best athletes of all time during the AIS 21st birthday celebrations in October.

### AIS Junior Athlete of the Year

The winner of this award was Todd Reid from the Tennis program. Todd was last year crowned Wimbledon Junior singles champion and was also a finalist in the Australian Open Junior singles tournament.

### AIS Coach of the Year

This is a new award that recognises that athletes do not achieve success in elite sport without the support of their coaches. The AIS has been blessed with high-quality coaches it has been able to attract both from Australia and overseas. The AIS is also confident that it has been able to contribute to the careers of many of these coaches, some of whom have gone on to coach successfully elsewhere.



Petria Thomas — 2002 AIS Athlete of the Year

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The winner of the 2002 AIS Coach of the Year Award was Martin Barras from Track Cycling.

The results Martin achieved working alongside AIS Cycling head coach Shayne Bannan have been remarkable. Martin's riders came away from the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester with four gold, one silver and two bronze medals.

Despite the step up in competition, he and his riders achieved even more impressive results at the 2002 World Track Cycling Championships in Copenhagen, with a record haul of 13 medals — nine of which went to AIS athletes. These results saw Australia ranked number one track cycling team in the world.

### AIS Team of the Year

There was some pretty stiff competition in this category as the AIS produced teams that performed exceptionally both at home and internationally in many sports, including cycling, rowing, men's basketball and sprint canoeing.

The winners of the award were sailors Darren Bundock and John Forbes who won the very competitive Tornado Class at the World Sailing Championships for the second consecutive year.

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# AIS Sport Achievement Awards



Martin Barras — 2002 AIS Coach of the Year



Darren Bundock and John Forbes — 2002 AIS Team of the Year



■ Skier **Michael Milton** won a record four gold medals at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Paralympics. Michael was also announced last year as one of the 21 AIS Best of the Best athletes.

■ **Richard Moir** from Golf finished as the leading amateur at the 2002 Holden Australian Open. This result placed him fifteenth overall in a tournament dominated by world-class professional golfers.

## The major award winners were selected from a group of 22 scholarship athletes who received Sport Achievement Awards. They were:

- **Nathan Baggaley** from the Sprint Canoe program became K1 500 world champion at Seville, Spain, in August 2002.
- **David Barnes** from Archery won a gold medal with fellow AIS scholarship holder Tim Cuddihy in the teams event at the 7th Junior Outdoor Archery World Championships and a silver medal in the individual event.
- **Darren Bundock** from Sailing teamed with fellow scholarship holder John Forbes to win the Tornado Class World Championship for the second consecutive year.
- **Alisa Camplin** from Winter Sports won a historic gold medal in the women's aerial skiing at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics. Alisa was also announced last year as one of the 21 AIS Best of the Best athletes.
- Triathlete **Mirinda Carfrae** placed second in the U23 division of the Triathlon World Championships in Cancun, Mexico.
- Archer **Tim Cuddihy** won the individual gold medal at the 7th Junior Outdoor Archery World Championships and teamed with fellow scholarship holder and Sport Achievement Award winner David Barnes to win the teams event.
- **Jobie Dajka** from Track Cycling won the men's sprint gold medal at the Manchester Commonwealth Games and was also keirin world champion at the 2002 World Track Cycling Championships.
- **Nathan Deakes** from Athletics won gold medals in both the 20km and 50km road walks at the Manchester Commonwealth Games, with just 36 hours between the two events; this is the first time this feat has been achieved at a Commonwealth Games.
- Track cyclist **Sean Eadie** won the gold medal in the men's sprint and a silver medal in the team sprint at the World Track Cycling Championships. Sean reversed these results from the Manchester Commonwealth Games where he took gold in the team sprint and silver in the men's sprint.
- **John Forbes** from Sailing teamed with fellow scholarship holder Darren Bundock to win the Tornado Class World Championship for the second consecutive year.
- Boxer **Daniel Geale** won a gold medal in the welterweight division at the Manchester Commonwealth Games. Australian boxers won a record haul of three gold medals at the Commonwealth Games, all of them by AIS boxers.
- **Hollie Grima** from Basketball was, at the age of 18, in the Australian Opals senior women's basketball team that won a bronze medal at the World Championships.
- **Brad Kahlefeldt** from Triathlon was U23 division world champion at Cancun, Mexico.
- Swimmer **Justin Norris** won gold medals in the 200m and 400m individual medley and the 200m butterfly at the Manchester Commonwealth Games.
- At the Manchester Commonwealth Games **Jana Pittman** from Athletics won the 400m hurdles gold medal and was a member of the winning women's 4 x 400m relay team.
- **Todd Reid** from Tennis was 2002 Wimbledon Junior singles champion and was also a finalist in the Australian Open Junior singles.
- **Philippe Rizzo** from Gymnastics won three gold medals, one silver and one bronze at the Manchester Commonwealth Games. In the final of the Gymnastics World Cup, to which only the top 8 qualifiers are invited, Philippe placed second on horizontal bars.
- **Victoria Roberts** was a member of crews that won the gold medal in the women's four and the silver medal in the women's eight at the 2002 World Rowing Championships.
- **Rebecca Sattin** was a member of crews that won the gold medal in the women's four and the silver medal in the women's eight at the 2002 World Rowing Championships.
- Swimmer **Petria Thomas** won five gold medals at last year's Manchester Commonwealth Games and three gold medals at the Pan Pacific Swimming Championships in Japan. Petria was also announced last year as one of the 21 AIS Best of the Best athletes.

## AIS Vocation Achievement Awards

Two athletes received awards in recognition of their achievement in developing a career while still maintaining the level of training and competition demanded in elite sport.

**Gill Foster** from Women's Soccer has undertaken a full-time electrical apprenticeship with Canberra firm ActewAGL. She was also nominated for a 2002 ACT Apprentice of the Year award. Had it not been for her national commitments with the Matildas at the time, Gill would have been on the job restoring electricity to Canberra suburbs ravaged by bushfires on 18 January this year.

**Melissa Mills** from Women's Water Polo works full time as a Sports Programs Officer for the Queensland Academy of Sport where she has successfully juggled training and competition with the requirements of her job.

## AIS Education Achievement Awards

**Sam McGregor** from Men's Water Polo completed Year 12 in Canberra with the highest university admissions index score of any AIS Canberra-based school athlete and was runner-up in his college's Caltex All-Rounder Award that recognises students who perform outstandingly in both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

**Robert Newbery** from Diving is enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree at Griffith University in Brisbane and achieved some outstanding results in 2002, including five distinctions from six subjects, while competing and training full time. Robert won a silver and a bronze medal in the 10m and 3m synchronised events, respectively, at the World Cup in Seville. Recently, in an outstanding performance in China, he combined with Matt Helm to defeat the Chinese team ranked number one in the world.

## AIS Memorial Awards

There are four awards made annually, in memory of three AIS athletes and a coach who have died.

### **Ross Herbert Memorial Scholarship Award for Golf**

Ross Herbert (1959–2001) was the inaugural head coach of the AIS Golf program. A PGA member for 20 years, Ross pursued the highest ideals of personal integrity as a tour player, coach, friend, colleague, father and husband. Ross had an infectious passion and enthusiasm for the game of golf and for life. His professionalism, work ethic, innovation and commitment to both his own family and his family of athletes was not lost with his passing. In particular, his achievements and example will be reflected in those who receive this prestigious scholarship award.

The award was presented to **Luke Hickmott** and was accepted on his behalf by Ross Herbert's wife Donna.

### **Brent Harding Memorial Scholarship Award for Swimming**

Brent Harding (1969–96), international swimmer, pursued the highest ideals of personal integrity, loyalty, academic achievement and elite swimming. A wonderful role model, he committed himself enthusiastically to his fellow athletes, coaches and the AIS and earned the respect of all who knew him. Brent's dedication was such that he performed beyond his ability. This scholarship is awarded annually to the AIS swimmer who best embodies the ideals that Brent espoused.

The recipient of the award was **Josh Taylor**.

### **Nathan Meade Memorial Scholarship Award for Diving**

Nathan Meade (1966–87) was one of Australia's most promising divers. His dream of representing Australia at the Olympics was cut short when, in 1987, he died in a training accident. This scholarship is awarded annually to the AIS diver who best embodies Nathan's commitment to the pursuit of excellence in the sport of diving.

This year's recipient was **Steven Barnett**.

### **Darren Smith Memorial Scholarship Award for Road Cycling**

Darren Smith (1972–92), Olympian, was one of Australia's most promising road cyclists. He died in a training accident in 1992. This scholarship is awarded annually to the best-performed cyclist (under 21) in national and international events from the previous calendar year.

The award this year was presented to **Peter Dawson**.

# Alex Croak: Growing up with gymnastics

**Gymnastics was one of the AIS foundation sports in 1981. Women's gymnastics is probably unique in elite sport because of the age at which athletes begin their preparation for international competition and the early age at which most of them retire.**

Alex Croak started gymnastics as a four-year-old at the Coffs Harbour Gymnastics Club and left home, aged ten, to take up an AIS scholarship in 1994. She had been offered a scholarship when she was eight, but her parents said no. However when they saw how much she wanted to go to the AIS they relented. She says it was entirely her choice to leave home to pursue her sport and all she wanted was to do her family proud.

Alex lived at the AIS in Canberra until the end of 2002 and it is believed she may be the longest resident athlete in the history of the AIS Residence. She went to local primary and high schools and this year after four years of distance education she will complete Years 11 and 12. She hopes to do university study in a sport-related area, perhaps sports journalism or sports media and promotion.

What was it like leaving home when she was only ten? Alex says the first six months were hard and she rang home every night and sometimes in the morning as well. However she got used to it and made some good friends among the other 'gymies'. The house parents, Robin Allen, Danica Mladenovic and

## Coaching changes

**Pierre Lafontaine** has been appointed head coach of AIS Swimming following the resignation of **Mark Regan**. Pierre joined the AIS last year from the Phoenix Swim Club in the USA where he was head coach. Phoenix swimmers won eight medals at the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

The AIS has appointed Alumni member **Marty Clarke**, assistant coach of the men's



BETTY IMAGES

Left: Alex Croak in action on the beam at the 2002 Australian Gymnastics Championships Right: Alex Croak celebrates her silver medal in the women's vault at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester

later Jodie Keevers were kind and caring but '...never too forceful or tried to replace athletes' parents.'

Alex says she was '...just lucky I guess...' and never needed to follow a very strict diet. She has not really changed her eating habits since leaving the AIS and tries to keep in shape by running and going to the gym.

She says her most memorable competitions were the Sydney 2000 Olympics, the 2001 World Gymnastics Championships, the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games and the 2002 Australian Gymnastics Championships. Australia won the team gold medal in Manchester and Alex won the silver medal in the vault and was fourth on the uneven bars. Australia was seventh both in Sydney and at the 2001 world championships. She was national all-around champion in 2002 and won the beam gold medal and silver medals on the vault and floor.

And don't be fooled as you watch the tiny, graceful gymnasts on the various apparatus — it's a tough and demanding sport. From 1996 Alex suffered a series of injuries that

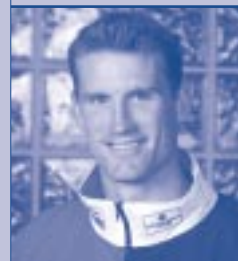
would have defeated many other athletes. First she was diagnosed with osteo chondritis, when the cartilage wore away in her left elbow, and she was out of her sport for eight months. A heel injury followed in 1998 and the elbow problem flared up again late in the year and required surgery in 1999.

In 2001 Alex suffered an injury to the growth plate in her foot. She also had shin and back problems. However she says the support and encouragement only found in teams gave her the confidence to keep going. She also owes a lot to her personal coaches Xiao Li and Mr Yang and head coach Tian Ju Ping.

Alex effectively retired after the 2002 Commonwealth Games. Does she miss gymnastics? She says she misses being at the AIS and the routine of early rising, training and the camaraderie of her teammates because, she says, 'I grew up with that.' She keeps in touch with her friends still in the program and recently watched them compete at the NSW state championships. She enjoys what she's doing now and sleeps in as often as possible. At present she's living in Kiama on the NSW coast south of

Wollongong and is coaching a group of seven-year-old gymnasts at the Kiama Leisure Centre.

Alex admits that gymnastics is a tough sport for young girls but says if athletes can't cope with an elite program they have the choice of leaving. She commented, 'Girls that make allegations about the program are not tough enough to stick it out and are looking for someone to blame.'



### Alumni member to head Australian University Sport

Daniel Marsden, dual Olympian and former captain of the Australian men's water polo team, has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of Australian University Sport (AUS). He won the position from applicants from around Australia and overseas, and from a variety of sporting and business backgrounds.

Daniel, 32, was a Water Polo scholarship holder at the AIS for 14 years and competed at the 1992 Barcelona and 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. He captained the team in Sydney. He has also competed at university events and was vice-captain of the men's water polo team that won the bronze medal at the 1995 World University Summer Games in Fukuoka, Japan.

Daniel joins AUS after seven years with the Australian Sports Commission, the last five as a senior sports consultant.

Basketball program for the past five years, as head coach following the resignation of **Frank Arsego**. Marty was an AIS scholarship holder from 1985 to 1987, Australian captain at the 1987 World Junior Basketball Championships, and won an NBL championship with the North Melbourne Giants. Also in Basketball, **Debbie Cook** has been re-appointed as assistant coach in the women's program.

Other recent appointments are **Brenda Scherian**, 2002 scholarship coach, as

assistant coach in the Netball program, **Mathew Lee** as assistant coach in Archery, **Iryna Dvoskina** as coach of Athletes with a Disability in the Track and Field program, and **John Fitzgerald** from Canada as road walks coach. **Ben Whitaker** has been appointed AIS Rugby Union coach.

The AIS Alumni Association thanks Mark Regan and Frank Arsego for their commitment to their AIS athletes and wishes them every success for the future.

# Sport Snippets

## Athletics

- Patrick Johnson became the first Australian to break 10 seconds for the 100m when he ran 9.88 seconds with wind assisted during the Telstra A Series. He followed up by winning the 100m and 200m sprint double at the Australian Championships in March. Then in Japan in May Patrick ran 100m in 9.93 seconds with a legal wind speed. He is the first athlete in the world to break 10 seconds this year and is now the seventeenth fastest man of all time over 100m.
- Vision impaired marathon runner Roy Daniell, coached by Dick Telford, finished second in the Lake Kasumigaura Blind Marathon in Japan in April in a time of 2:38:20, only one second outside his personal best.
- Ten AIS athletes won titles at the National Athletics Championships. After the championships eight AIS athletes were selected for the IAAF World Championships in Paris in August and a further five for the FISU World University Games in Korea, also in August.

## Basketball

AIS Basketball coach Phil Brown has been awarded life membership of the Women's National Basketball League (WNBL) for his contributions to the league. Phil has been at the helm of the AIS Women's program for the past 12 years and has had a direct hand in developing many of Australia's leading women basketballers. He coached the AIS to a WNBL title in 1998-99.

## Cycling

- At the Australian Sports Awards in March AIS Cycling and national head coach Shayne Bannan was named Coach of the Year.
- At the first 2003 Track Cycling World Cup in Moscow, Katherine Bates (AIS/NSWIS) won the gold medal in the women's 3000m individual pursuit.

- At the second 2003 Track Cycling World Cup in Mexico, Mark French (AIS/VIS) won the men's sprint gold medal.
- AIS riders had some excellent results at the third 2003 Track Cycling World Cup in Cape Town, South Africa.  
Luke Roberts (AIS/SASI) won the men's individual pursuit and Mark Renshaw (AIS/NSWIS) won the men's 30km points race.  
Australia also won bronze medals in five events:
  - Shane Kelly (AIS/VIS); men's 1km time trial
  - Luke Roberts (AIS/SASI), Peter Dawson (AIS/WAIS), Mark Jamieson (AIS/TIS), and Ashley Hutchinson (AIS/QAS); men's team pursuit
  - Alison Wright (AIS/ACTAS); women's 10km scratch race
  - Ryan Bayley (AIS/WAIS), Shane Kelly (AIS/VIS), Mark French (AIS/VIS); men's team sprint
  - Kerrie Meares (AIS/QAS), Anna Meares (QAS), Rochelle Gilmore (former AIS/NSWIS); women's team sprint.
- Reigning Australian road champion Olivia Gollan (AIS/NSWIS) led the main bunch home to finish second in the fourth round of the UCI Women's Road Cycling World Cup in the Netherlands. She gave credit for the result to great teamwork with fellow AIS riders Emma James, Naomi Williams, Natalie Bates and Oenone Wood.

## Golf

- Sarah Kemp won the prestigious Riversdale Cup, shooting three sub-par rounds for a total score of 211, 8 under par. Remarkably, she had a hole in one on the same hole in two successive days. Sarah was the only amateur in the field to make the 36-hole cut at the Australian Open.
- Australia was undefeated in winning the biennial men's Four Teams Golf Championship against Canada, Japan and New Zealand. There were three current and two former AIS golfers in the team.
- 2003 scholarship holder James Nitties won the New Zealand Amateur Championship.

## Netball

AIS Netball has returned to national league competition in the Commonwealth Bank Trophy, as the AIS Canberra Darters. The squad includes AIS scholarship holders and three ACT players. The AIS last competed nationally some years ago in the Netball Super League.

## Skiing

- Alisa Camplin followed up her 2002 Olympic gold medal in freestyle aerials when she won the 2003 Freestyle Aerials World Championship in February. Alisa also had back-to-back World Cup wins in Mont Tremblant, Canada, and Lake Placid, USA in January.
- Michael Milton was named World Sportsman of the Year with a Disability at the Laureus World Sports Awards held in Monaco in May. The Laureus Awards are acknowledged as the world's premier international sporting achievement awards. Michael was recognised for his record-breaking achievements at the 2002 Winter Paralympics where he became the first skier in his amputee category to win gold medals in all four alpine events — downhill, giant slalom, slalom and super G.

## Soccer

- The Australian/AIS Matildas qualified for the women's World Cup in September when they won the Oceania Qualifying Tournament, defeating New Zealand 2-0 in the final.
- The AIS men's soccer team lost the final of the National Youth League Northern Division, going down 3-2 under the 'golden goal' rule to Parramatta Power, through a controversial penalty. The AIS had finished on top of the table at the end of the season and won the major semi-final.

## Softball

The Australian women's softball team qualified for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games after defeating New Zealand and Korea in the play-off series at Blacktown Olympic Park.

## Swimming

- AIS swimmers won six gold, eight silver and seven bronze medals at the Australian Swimming Championships.
- After the completion of the championships nine AIS swimmers were selected to represent Australia at the FINA World Swimming Championships in Barcelona in July. Petria Thomas was not available for selection due to impending shoulder surgery. Glenn Beringen was selected as a team coach.





## Revised *Excellence* book released

The Australian Sports Commission has recently released a revised edition of *Excellence*, which was first published in 1998.

The book covers the development of the AIS from the planning stage, through its opening in 1981, up to the present. It features all the AIS sport programs, and includes dozens of colour photographs, the majority of which are from the Sports Commission's own collection. *Excellence* also contains a list of AIS scholarship holders from 1981 to 2002.

Alumni members can purchase *Excellence* for \$26.95, a 10% discount. To order your copy, contact:

Distribution Officer  
Australian Sports Commission  
PO Box 176  
Belconnen ACT 2616  
Tel: (02) 6214 1915  
Fax: (02) 6214 1995  
Email: [pubs@ausport.gov.au](mailto:pubs@ausport.gov.au)

## Athlete search

If you know the postal address, email address, telephone number or any other contact details (such as a club the athlete is connected with) for any former AIS athletes, you could help us by asking them to send their contact information to:

Danielle Fornasiero  
AIS Alumni  
PO Box 176  
Belconnen ACT 2616

or

complete a registration form at [www.ausport.gov.au/ais/alumni](http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/alumni)

If you are still receiving your newsletter by mail, but have an email address, we would appreciate you sending it to us by the above means as well.

If we have managed to reach you through your club, we would like to update our address listings with your personal mailing address. Why not send it to us? And please include your email address if you have one.

## Life after the AIS

What are you doing now? As a feature of *Alumni News*, we would like to profile some of our Alumni members. Why not write or email to the address below, telling us in a few lines what you're up to?

Danielle Fornasiero  
AIS Alumni  
PO Box 176  
Belconnen ACT 2616

or

[mick.fogarty@ausport.gov.au](mailto:mick.fogarty@ausport.gov.au)

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We may have added you to our database since the last edition of *Alumni News* was sent out. You can read previous copies of the newsletter on our web site, at

[www.ausport.gov.au/ais/alumni/newsletter.htm](http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/alumni/newsletter.htm)

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