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JUNIOR
Sports Star
of the Month



SWIMMING SENSATION: Fourteen-year-old Jack Benson is hoping to one day swim for Australia at the Olympic Games. **Picture: Sports in Focus.**

BY KRYSZYNA POLLARD

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD swimmer Jack Benson is well on his way to realising his dream of representing Australia at the Olympics.

The year eight St Dominic's College student has been swimming all his life, however only started in serious competition after moving to Nepean Aquatic Centre two years ago. Coach

Jackie Barck saw Jack's potential and ramped up his training, and he also started a gym program under James Sweeney at Atmosphere Health and Fitness to complement his time in the pool.

His new regime of eight training sessions a week - including three to four in the gym - has paid off. The talented teenager took out gold and silver in the 50 and 100 metre freestyle events

respectively at the 2016 NSW State Age Championships.

"That was a big step in my swimming career, and I really picked up my swimming from there," the Mulgoa teen said.

His performance in the Australian Age National Championships - a fourth in the 50 metre freestyle and a fifth in the 100 metre event, the highest placed NSW swimmer in both -

gained Jack selection on the NSW Development Squad for 2016.

"I kept going after the age nationals because the school season was coming up, and there was not much time to have a break," he said. "I made it all the way through to the NSW All Schools championships and won silver in the 50 metre freestyle."

Jack has been named Penrith Valley Sports Foun-

dation's (PVSF) junior sports star for September, and now has his sights firmly set on next year's Australian Age National Championships, taking place in April in Brisbane.

"I am hoping to make the Australian team, and from that I will go onto other things," he said. "The Olympics would definitely be my dream."

Jack trains both before and

after school with his goal in mind, and appreciates the support he gets from his coach and parents Francine and Dean.

"It's kind of become a lifestyle," he said. "I wouldn't be able to do this without my swimming coach or mum and dad. They support me, and my coach is like my mum at swimming."

Nominate a sport star at www.pvsf.org.au.