



AUSTRALIA'S GOLDEN GIRL: Sarah Keenahan of Leonay cleaned up in the medals at the World Dwarf Games in Canada recently.

BY B.C. LEWIS

SARAH Keenahan is a small person with a big future.

She has just returned from the World Dwarf Games with six gold and two silver medals in three different sports. And now she's eyeing off the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

The Leonay athlete, 16, set personal best records in the pool, including in her 200 metre freestyle event where

she shaved 11 seconds off her previous best effort.

"I think I took two breaths in the last 25 metres ... that was definitely my favourite race."

The 117 cm (3ft, 9") tall athlete finished with gold in the 100 fly, 50 and 100m backstroke, 200 freestyle, 4 x 25

freestyle open women's relay and 4 x 50m relay, as well as silver in the soccer and a track and field relay event.

The 7th World Dwarf Games was held in Guelph, Canada from August 4-12 and open to athletes aged four to 99. Sarah said she had plenty of highlights.

"We were the first debut team to make it into a gold medal match [in soccer]," the midfielder said of her soccer

silver medal, a game played in thunder and lightning. "I couldn't see the goals," she added laughing.

The teen who attends Korowal High in the Blue Mountains, has only been swimming competitively for four years but has already smashed records in backstroke, fly and breaststroke 50 metre events for her classification of S6 - short stature athlete (below 130cm).

The Year 12 student is completing her HSC through Pathways and fits in studies with an intensive training re-

gime involving 4.30am wake-up calls for the pool. She is trained by Nepean Aquatic Centre head coach and former Paralympic swim coach, Jackie Barck.

Australia came fourth overall in the medal tally with 57 medals (behind the United States, Great Brit-

ain and Canada). Australia won 34 gold and Sarah was Australia's golden girl with the best results.

Not surprisingly, her mother Debra is proud of her daughter's efforts.

"She's an all round athlete. She's just very confident in her body and has good control and a good sense of balance. She's always had good hand eye co-ordination."

Sarah said she was particularly pleased that her gold medal haul had garnered her a sponsor - the Amanzi swimwear company.