

Penrith City GAZETTE

Abbey gearing up for Games trials after big year in the pool

- Krystyna Pollard
Local Sport



 Werrington swimmer Abbey Slaughter with one of the medals she won earlier this year.

Werrington swimmer Abbey Slaughter is preparing for some of the biggest races in her career as she looks back at a hugely successful 12 months in the pool.

The Penrith Valley Sports Foundation junior sports star of the month for September is currently in training for the NSW State Championships in December before taking on the Commonwealth Games trials in February next year, and the Australian Age Swimming Championships in April.

Slaughter started under the experienced eye of Nepean Aquatic Centre Swim Club coach, Jackie Barck, in 2016, going on to achieve qualifying times to compete at both the National Age and National Open Championships held in Brisbane in March and April 2017 of this year.

“I always swam from a young age and was training with my local club,” she said. “I knew what my goals were and had watched the Olympics and thought, that would be good.”

“I was serious but I never really understood what it took to get there. I had a conversation with Jackie and set my goals and went from there.”

Slaughter subsequently swam to the B Finals of the 100m butterfly event at the Open Nationals, which placed her in the top 20 competitors in Australia and made her the highest-placed NSW swimmer.

At National Age, Slaughter brought home the silver medal in the 16 years girls 100m butterfly event, a bronze in the 200m butterfly, and came top 10 in the 400 individual medley (fourth) and 200 individual medley (ninth).

“It was a real eye opener,” she said. “I went into the meet thinking I would some PBs [personal bests] and then came away making the final of the 200 butterfly on the first day.”

As a result, she was selected on the National Talent Identification Squad and the Emerging Talent Squad for NSW.

Slaughter also took a swag of medals from the August NSW Short Course championships, taking two gold, two silver and two bronze medals.

Despite a gruelling training regime that sees her complete 10 to 11 weekly sessions in the pool and three or four in the gym, the Year 12 Caroline Chisholm College student wouldn't have it any other way.

“I sit down with Jackie every four to six weeks and talk about where my focus is, my mentality, and make sure I am all good on the Abbey Slaughter stage, as she calls it,” she laughed. “I have had a conversation with my school and they have given me options about doing different things.”

“I am pretty good with my time, I don't have time to procrastinate; I just get out there and do it.”