

Jonkers lends helping hand

Deserving athletes receive grants

By STEELE TAYLOR

AWARDS: Maroochydore Paralympian swimmer Marayke Jonkers has awarded grants to 16 athletes at a presentation ceremony for her foundation, Sporting Dreams.

The function, held on Friday night at the University of the Sunshine Coast, acknowledged the efforts of athletes in a variety of sports including swimming, athletics, shooting and lawn bowls.

"This year's Sporting Dreams grant recipients are very talented athletes who have demonstrated a commitment to training and have achieved remarkable success in their sporting careers so far," Jonkers said.

Patrick Cotter (lawn bowls), Joshua Crean (swimming), Thomas Holland (athletics), Brighde Judge Mears (athletics), Jason Lettice (javelin and shot put), Jarrod Moncur (handcycling), Steve

Osbourne (powerlifting) and Christine Woolf (wheelchair basketball) received introductory awards.

Robbie Christie (football), Kobie Donovan (athletics), Claire Keefer (athletics), Fiona Lyons (Boccia), Bradley Mark (shooting), Jacob McCarthy (tennis), Susan Seipel (equestrian) and Sarah Tait (wheelchair basketball) received development awards.

"This grant will allow them to focus on training and competing as they work towards their goal of competing at the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Paralympic Games," Jonkers said.

Jonkers competed at the Paralympic World Swimming Championships in the Netherlands this year, winning bronze in the 50m breaststroke.

She also made history in becoming Australia's first female paratriathlete and medalist at the ITU World

Triathlon Championships in Budapest, where she won bronze.

A triple Paralympian who has won a silver and two bronze medals, Jonkers founded Sporting Dreams in 2008, aiming to help athletes with disabilities to achieve fun, fitness and personal development through sport.

"Athletes with disabilities train just as hard as other athletes and experience the same thrill of winning, yet they face additional expenses. A pushbike costs \$100, whereas a handcycle costs at least \$1500," she said.

"Athletes with disabilities are also great role models, encouraging all Queenslanders to live a fit and healthy lifestyle."

Marayke is seeking sponsors to assist with providing grants to athletes next year and is available for motivational speaking engagements in return for a donation to Sporting Dreams.



ALL SMILES: Paralympian Marayke Jonkers, centre, rubs shoulders with grant recipients Claire Keefer and Kobie Donovan

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