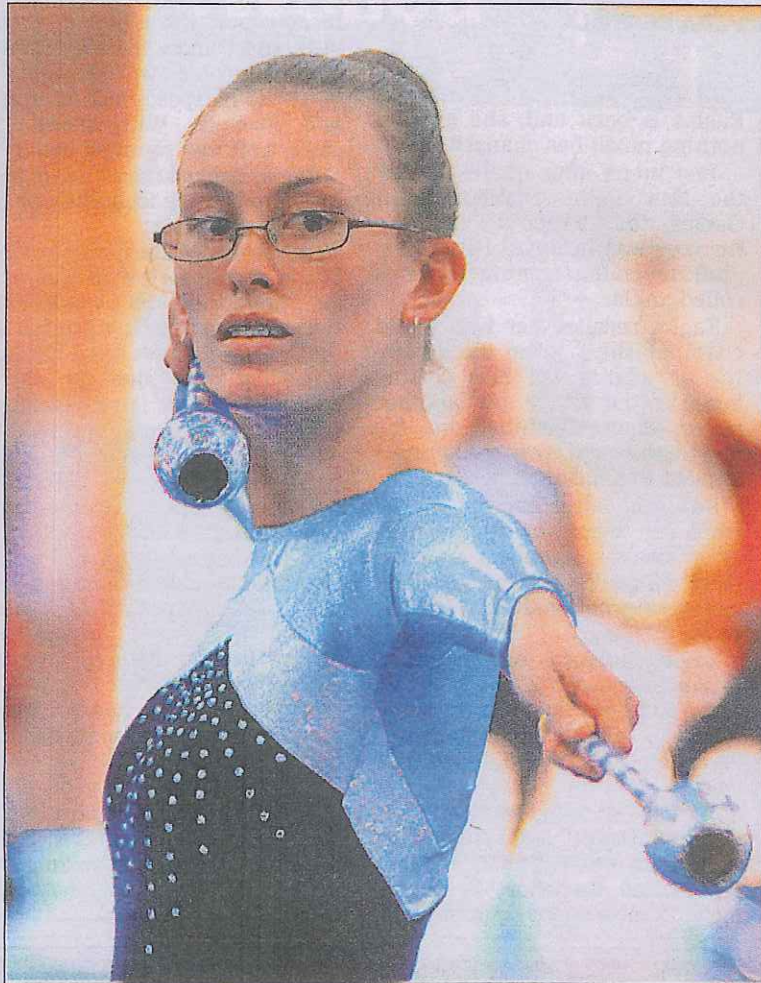


Athletes show that special something



Rebecca Preston (left) snared five gold medals in Adelaide last week. Brooke McGrath won three gold and a bronze.

OUR CHAMPS

Macarthur Special Olympics National Games medallists: Dean Madden, 5 gold, silver, bronze; Rebecca Preston 5 gold; Karlie Brake 4 gold, silver; Brooke McGrath 3 gold, bronze; Daniel Griffin 2 gold, bronze; Jessica Cronje 3 gold, silver; Jason Nelson gold, bronze; Cassie Easter 3 gold; Paul Avery 2 gold, silver; Holly Levers 2 gold; Leica-Maree Williams gold, silver, bronze; Kylie Barefoot 2 gold, bronze; Vilamu Tumaali gold, 2 silver; Joshua Moore gold, silver, bronze; Karyn Rumble 2 bronze; Michael Kelly bronze; Gavin Bily gold, silver, bronze; Peter Rondo gold.

VERA BERTOLA

IF the 2000 Sydney Olympics were the best games ever in terms of organisation, then the 2010 Adelaide National Games were the best ever for spirit and sportsmanship.

Oh, and the Macarthur Special Olympians' contribution to NSW's overall medal count was simply outstanding.

The region's 18 NSW representatives would have copped some excess baggage charges on the flight back from Adelaide on the weekend.

Packed away safely between the athletes' cases were 29 gold medals, eight silver and eight bronze.

NSW claimed 167 gold, 123 silver and 104 bronze medals in 11 sporting disciplines during the five days of competition.

Yotala Gymnastics, at Minto, is planning to celebrate the golden achievements of their three NSW representatives.

Dean Madden, 12, blew away his opposition in the level-one artistic gymnastics competition to win five gold medals, a silver and a bronze.

Bargo's Rebecca Preston, 20, won five gold medals in the level-three rhythmic gymnastics while teammate Karlie Brake took home four gold and a silver in level two.

Rebecca's mother Cathy Preston said her daughter was very proud

of her achievements but also glad to be home.

"She was very nervous leading up to the Games but was very excited about competing," she said. "She wore her medals back into Sydney."

The Special Olympics Macarthur committee was ecstatic with the results and predicted some of its athletes would definitely be in contention to represent Australian at the World Games in Athens in 2011.

"All athletes should be proud of their efforts. Well done," a committee statement said.



MEDAL HAUL: See more pictures of our Special Olympians at macarthurchronicle.com.au

Former students