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VICTORIAN  
INSTITUTE OF SPORT

# PINNACLE



TOGETHER  
FOR TOKYO



## IN THIS ISSUE

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR SPORT  
 MESSAGE FROM THE CEO  
 TOKYO SUMMER GAMES  
 GAME OF FIRSTS  
 TOKYO TASTER  
 FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER...COOLER!  
 FROM MANSFIELD TO THE WORLD  
 VERTICAL LIFE OCEANA MACKENZIE  
 TEAM BEHIND THE ATHLETE  
 KIM BRENNAN  
 KATE DOUGHTY  
 SINEAD DIVER

3  
 4  
 5  
 6  
 7  
 8  
 10  
 11  
 12  
 13  
 14  
 15



## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR SPORT

MARTIN PAKULA MP

The countdown to the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games is well and truly on and judging by the performances of our athletes, Victoria is on track to deliver an inspiring performance in Tokyo.

The dedicated coaches and support teams who work alongside the competitors similarly deserve our admiration, as does everyone connected with our world-class institute.

Commitment to competition and excellence begins at a young age, and our investment in grassroots sport since 2014 has been the biggest in Victorian history with more than \$850 million flowing directly to our local clubs and communities. Our champions of tomorrow will benefit from this investment as they rise through junior ranks to the elite level.

Kim Brennan was one of those youngsters who graduated through junior ranks in Victoria before joining the VIS and winning rowing gold at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics. Now Kim has been appointed Australia's Deputy Chef de Mission for Tokyo.

There have been many highlights from our athletes in recent months.

Snowboard halfpipe sensation Scotty James had a freakishly good season, winning six out of six events to claim a third consecutive world title.

Dylan Alcott continued to show why he is number one in the world, winning an unprecedented fifth consecutive Australian Open quad wheelchair singles title and then adding the French Open crown in June. With wheelchair tennis set to feature at Tokyo, it will be sensational to watch Dylan take to the court.

Kelland O'Brien and his Australian Team

Pursuit teammates obliterated their own world record on the way to winning the gold medal at the 2019 UCI Track World Championships in Poland in March – with their prospects of gold in Tokyo looking bright.

Para cycling duo Alistair Donohoe and Emily Petricola were crowned world champions in their respective events at the 2019 UCI Para-cycling Track World Championships in the Netherlands.

Oceana Mackenzie made history at the first Bouldering World Cup in Switzerland, becoming the first Australian female to make the final of a Sport Climbing World Cup. With sport climbing making its debut on the Olympic program in Tokyo, she will be one to watch.

More history will be made when Hayley Wilson ramps up her bid for a world-first Olympic skateboarding gold medal.

Sinead Diver qualified for Tokyo after a brilliant seventh place in the London Marathon. Her time of 2:24:11 was a personal best and made her the third-fastest Australian female marathon runner in history.

In table tennis, the legendary Melissa Tapper secured a spot for Australia at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics when she won gold at the Arafura Games earlier this year.

Another highlight in recent months was the VIS Open Day in April, where the Institute opened its doors for the first time in its 30-year history. More than 600 visitors toured the world-class facility to explore, experiment and learn about what it takes to be an elite performer.

I'd like to thank the volunteers who helped out at the event, including champion swimmer Mack Horton and

netball star Liz Watson. I hope this can become a regular highlight on the calendar.

Looking ahead to July 2020, there is a lot to look forward to when the competition commences in Tokyo and our Victorian athletes go up against the best from across the world.

I know that they will do us proud and it will be due in no small part to the industry-leading programs of the VIS.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

ANNE MARIE HARRISON

We all share in the excitement of the build up with One Year to Go to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo and this edition of "The Pinnacle" commences the countdown with the launch of our #Together4Tokyo campaign. We hope to engage the high performance and Victorian community with our athletes and staff as we embark on the journey.

The second half of this year will see World Championships and qualification events across a range of sports and we wish all athletes the best in their endeavours. This year also sees the Netball World Cup being hosted in

Liverpool throughout July and we extend our congratulations to Melbourne Vixens teammates; Jo Weston, Caitlin Thwaites and newly appointed Vice Captain Lizzy Watson on their selection into the Diamonds. To Lisa Alexander and all the team we send our positive energy for a successful outcome #GoDiamonds.

Whilst the immediate and medium term are very important, we are also taking a longer view of the horizon from a management and Board perspective and in conjunction with the AIS and other State Institutes and Academies are already planning for our business post Tokyo.

We will roll our sleeves up to analyse and assess our role and impact with our National and State Sporting Organisation partners with a view to making decisions in March/April next year.

In closing, I extend a warm welcome to our new Minister for Sport the Hon Martin Pakula. Martin is also Minister for Racing, Jobs, Innovation and Trade, Tourism and Major Events. With his busy portfolio, fortunately for all of us, the Minister is a sports fan and enthusiast. We look forward to working with him to continue to inspire all Victorians through our great athletes and their international sporting success.



## TOKYO SUMMER GAMES

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games will not only inspire the world with phenomenal athletic performances, but will bring new audiences to the Games and their values. The exciting new gender-balanced, youth and urban sports will deliver a unique experience to athletes and fans of all ages. Here are some interesting facts about the 2020 Games:

- Japan is no stranger to the Olympics, with the country having already hosted three Games with the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, the 1972 Winter Olympics in Sapporo and the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano. The 2020 Summer Olympics officially known as the Games of the XXXII Olympiad will take place in Tokyo from 24 July to 9 August 2020.
- The Paralympics will be held from 25 August - 6 September 2020 and Tokyo will be the first city ever to host the Paralympic Games on two separate occasions. In 1964, 378 athletes from 21 countries competed in nine sports – the first time a Paralympic Games had been held in Asia.
- Tokyo 2020 will see over 15,000 athletes from 207 nations participate in what will be the most innovative, inclusive and inspiring Olympics yet.
- Tokyo 2020 will be the world's 16th Paralympic Games, and will see over 4,000 athletes compete in the biggest Paralympics yet.
- There are 33 Olympic sports and 22 Paralympic sports which will be held across 43 venues around the country, with athletes eager to get their hands on one (or more) of around 900 gold medals.
- Among Tokyo 2020's 33 Olympic sports will be five events making their debut or return to the games:
  - baseball (men)/softball (women), karate, sport climbing, surfing, and skateboarding. Baseball, being something of a national obsession, and karate, with its origins in the Ryukyu Islands (in modern-day Okinawa Prefecture), are particularly significant additions.
  - There will be a total of 22 Paralympic sports featured in the 2020 Games, including athletics, swimming, table tennis, wheelchair basketball, and wheelchair rugby. The two new sports of badminton and taekwondo will replace sailing and seven-a-side football.
  - The official motto for the 2020 Tokyo Games is "Discover Tomorrow."
  - The Olympic mascot is called Miraitowa, based on the Japanese words "Mirai"(future) and "towa" (eternity) to symbolize the undaunted optimism of the Olympic Games.
  - The Paralympic mascot is named Someity, based on "Someiyoshino", a popular cherry blossom variety, and the phrase "so mighty". Someity has cherry blossom tactile sensors, and can show enormous mental and physical strength. The mascot represents Paralympic athletes who sometimes overcome enormous obstacles to redefine the boundaries of the possible.
- Competition venues will be spread into two themed areas, the "Heritage" and the "Tokyo Bay" zones, and many of the venues used in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics will be put to good use again in 2020 as legacy venues. These include the Nippon Budokan, where judo made its debut as an Olympic sport. The flagship Olympic Stadium will be new but is being built on the same ground as the original 1964 venue.
- With the Games being held at the height of the Tokyo summer, they are expected to be the hottest ever and sweltering conditions could pose a threat to both athletes and spectators. The host city is taking steps to try to keep athletes and spectators safe during the Games, and the heat factor is expected to become one of the key defining planning features of the training preparation cycle for many athletes.



# GAME OF FIRSTS

## THE OLYMPICS HAVE A SPECIAL PLACE IN JAPAN'S HISTORY AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE.

The 1964 Tokyo Games had a transformational effect not just on the capital city but the country at large. The Games marked the country's re-entry into the international community post World War II, as well as the beginning of its high-growth era with the unveiling of the Shinkansen – the bullet train.

Japan will use the 2020 Games to demonstrate its recovery from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that triggered the meltdown at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant and devastated the country. The country will also strive to live up to its reputation for global competitiveness by unveiling a number of firsts at Tokyo 2020:

New youth-friendly, high-octane sports! Athletes from more sports than ever before will be given the chance to compete on the world stage, with Tokyo 2020 adding surfing, sport climbing and skateboarding, as well as national favourites karate and baseball/softball to the Olympic schedule. While badminton and taekwondo will make their Paralympic debuts. The nature of these new sports and events will modernise the

programs and keep the Olympic & Paralympic movements relevant to younger generations.

Exemplifying Japan's advanced technological prowess, facial recognition technology will be used for the first time to accurately identify roughly 300,000 athletes, officials and staff for entry to venues, verifying their identity in less than a third of a second – speeding up the process and bolstering security.

With sustainability one of its main priorities – “be better together – for the planet and the people” - the Organising Committee has been collecting old mobile phones, microwaves and other electronic goods to break down and use in the manufacture of 5000 gold, silver and bronze medals. This initiative is a nod to Japan's recycling culture, which has spawned one of the most complicated but thorough waste collection services in the world.

It will also be the first time renewable energy is used to provide 100 per cent of the power for Games venues. The Olympic Village will be powered by hydrogen, and hydrogen fuel-cell cars will ferry athletes and officials between venues.

Can't make it to the Games, no worries! Japanese broadcaster NHK is planning to go super high-tech for its coverage – all the action will be offered in Super 8K which is 16 times sharper than high definition televisions. Microphones will be able to zoom in on sound anywhere within an event venue, creating an ultra-realistic viewing experience which means watching the Games at home will be almost as good as in person.

Fireworks and the Olympics go hand in hand, but Tokyo are planning to take it to the next level and produce shooting stars at the opening ceremony! In another first, mini-satellites will be launched into space carrying hundreds of pellets that burn up in different colours when they fall through the atmosphere, creating the illusion of shooting stars.

From robotic helpers to driverless taxis and rumours that a flying car will be used to light the Olympic flame! There's no doubt that Tokyo 2020 is set to be the most high tech and innovative Olympics and Paralympics yet!

# TOKYO TASTER

## BY KYLIE ANDREW, VIS SPORTS DIETITIAN & NUTRITION COORDINATOR

With less than 18 months to go until the Paralympics, I set off on an information gathering expedition to Japan with Paralympics Australia's Lead Sports Dietitian, Siobhan Crawshay. Our destination.... Kobe ... a city on Osaka Bay in Central Japan and the site for the 2020 Paralympics Staging Camp.

Our mission: to determine how and what we will feed our Paralympic athletes as they put the finishing touches on their preparations for Tokyo.

To do this we visited several different supermarkets, both local and international, with interpreter in tow. We scanned the aisles, read labels,

took numerous photos, purchased products for sampling, compiled lists and made plans.

To get a better feel for the local cuisine and appreciation for the sorts of foods that would be available to our athletes, we dined out at several Japanese restaurants and tried some typical Japanese dishes, including Japanese hot pot, okonomiyaki (Japanese pancakes) and teppanyaki. Kobe is well known for its wagyu beef, considered a delicacy in Japan and valued for its flavour, tenderness and fatty, well-marbled texture. Quite different to an Aussie eye fillet!

We were also warmly welcomed at Nichii Gakkan, the planned venue for

the Paralympics staging camp, where we met with the chefs to discuss catering for our athletes, to ensure that it would meet not only their nutritional needs, but tastes and personal preferences too. The chefs had kindly prepared a number of dishes for us to try; some traditional meals that they would typically serve to residents, as well as a number of Western dishes for which we had provided recipes.

With very full bellies and a taste of what's to come in 2020, we headed off to the airport and back home to continue the important planning and preparation. I can't wait to get back there next year!!



# FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER...COOLER!

With the summer Olympic Games in Tokyo just 12 months away, now is a good time to explore some of the new sports which have been added to the 2020 program. They are baseball/softball, karate, skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing. The last three sports mentioned can all be classified as extreme sports which is testament to the sporting tastes of the current generation. What do each of these sports entail, and what we can expect to see from them in 2020?

## SURFING

The dreams of Duke Kahanamoku have finally become a reality. As surfing's earliest ambassador, the Hawaiian icon advocated for the sport's inclusion in the pinnacle of competitions, the Olympic Games. And more than 50 years after the Duke's initial push, surfing has officially become an Olympic sport.

### WHERE WILL THE COMPETITION BE HELD?

After the debut of Kelly Slater's wave pool, many believed that surfing would be held in an artificial arena. An objective, unchanging course, like a halfpipe or velodrome. But no - officials have announced that Olympic surfing will take place in the ocean. The contest site for the 2020 Games was decided to be Shidashita Beach, or "Shida," located about 40 miles outside of Tokyo.

### WHAT ARE THE WAVES LIKE AT "SHIDA?"

With a sand bottom, the waves at Shida feature a punchy beach break, which

occasionally barrels. And a series of jetties on the beach help funnel sand movement to create consistent sandbars. The average surf heights at Shida are in the thigh-waist-chest range during the dates of interest (July 24-August 9). In addition, the climatological trend is for surf heights to gradually increase from July 24 to August 9, as the statistical chances of seeing typhoon swells increases.

### HOW MANY SURFERS WILL COMPETE?

There will be 20 men and 20 women, all short boarders, from across the globe, competing in categories separated by sex. In the future - if surfing is included in the Games again - there may be more categories included, which could create more opportunities for athletes to win medals. For now, it is limited to a field of 40 men and women shortboarders.

### HOW WILL QUALIFICATION WORK?

According to organisers, 18 of the 40 competitors will come from the 2019 Championship Tour (10 men, eight women). Then the remaining 22 will come from a mix between the International Surfing Association (as decided at the 2019/2020 ISA World Surfing Games), the winner of the 2019 Pan-Am Games in Lima, and two slots (one man, one woman) will be reserved for the host nation.

### WHO'S INTERESTED IN COMPETING AT TOKYO 2020?

Many of the world's best professional surfers, including Adriano de Souza and Kelly Slater, are interested in representing their homeland at the Olympics. VIS athlete, Nikki Van Dijk, is hoping to fly under the radar this season as she seeks to secure a spot in the Olympic team by being either the first or second ranked Australian woman in the world tour top eight.

## SKATEBOARDING

The Ariake Urban Sports Park in Tokyo will host the very first Olympic skateboarding contest. There will be two disciplines on the program: Street and Park. The competition will include both men's and women's events, with athletes demonstrating spectacular tricks in a festival atmosphere.

### WHAT IS STREET SKATEBOARDING?

This competition is held on a straight 'street-like' course featuring stairs, handrails, curbs, benches, walls and slopes. Each competitor performs individually and utilises each section to demonstrate a range of tricks. Judging takes into account the degree of difficulty, height, speed, originality, execution and the composition of moves.

### WHAT IS PARK SKATEBOARDING?

Park competitions take place on a hollowed-out course featuring a series of complicated curves. From the bottom of the cavity, the curved surfaces rise steeply, with the upper part of the incline is almost vertical. Among the attractions of park competitions are the immense heights achieved by climbing the curves at speed and performing mid-air tricks.

### HOW MANY SKATERS WILL QUALIFY?

In total, 80 skaters will compete in Tokyo - 40 spots for women across the two categories and a further 40 for men. There will be 20 skaters in both the street and park competitions for each gender and VIS athletes Shane O'Neill, Hayley Wilson, Brad Saunders (street) and Shenae Collins (park) are all in the mix to represent Australia.

As Olympic hosts, Japan gains one automatic entry per event and the top three male and top three female skaters at the World Skateboarding Championships in 2020 will also qualify. The remaining spots will be determined over the course of the 2019-20 qualifying period, based on the top-16 rankings.

## BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

The general consensus asserts that baseball derives from another bat and ball sport called Rounders, popular in Great Britain and Ireland in the 18th century.

A game of baseball is played between two teams, each composed of nine players, which take turns playing offense and defence. The team playing offense bats and the team playing defence pitches and fields. A standard game consists of nine innings and the goal is to score more points in the form of runs than the other team.

A run is constituted by literally running from base to base, with the objective being to complete a run by reaching all four bases. A player may only run when the ball is hit in front of the foul lines which sits at 45 degree angles to the batters home plate.

Softball is a variant of baseball and will be played by women in Tokyo. The main differences between the two is that in softball the ball is larger, the parameters of the field are smaller, and the ball is pitched underhand instead of overhand.

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## SPORT CLIMBING

Sport climbing is a discipline within rock climbing. When the sport makes its Olympic debut next year, three separate disciplines

— speed, lead and bouldering — will be combined into one event, with average results determining who gets the gold, silver and bronze.

Bouldering is a more technical discipline, which involves free climbing up short sections of rock or climbing walls without the use of ropes. Athletes secure victory by achieving the set challenge in the shortest number of attempts in a timed period.

Lead involves climbing a designated route on a climbing wall while attached to ropes. Athletes will achieve a podium spot either by climbing to the top of the course in the fastest time or by reaching a higher point than their opponents before falling.

Speed sees athletes go head-to-head in a knock-out format where they attempt to climb a 15m wall faster than their opponents.

## KARATE

It is surprising that karate is only making its debut in the Olympics in 2020, considering that many other martial arts such as boxing, wrestling and taekwondo have been in the Olympics for decades.

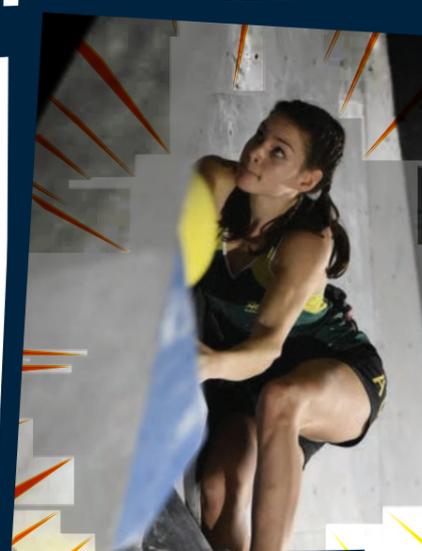
Karate is a mixed martial art as it includes a multitude of moves such as punching, kicking, knee strikes, elbow strikes and open-hand techniques such as knife-hands, spear-hands and palm-heel strikes.

Two disciplines of karate will feature at the 2020 Olympics. Kumite is the sparring discipline and will have three weight classes each for men and women. Kata is the form discipline and will have one event each for men and women. There will only be three weight categories as opposed to the usual five used by the World Karate Federation.

## COULD ALL THESE NEW SPORTS BE DROPPED FROM THE OLYMPIC PROGRAM?

Yes. Many sports have been featured in the Olympics, only to be discontinued in future years. Some former Olympic sports include Tug of War (1900-1920), Hot Air Ballooning (1900), or Pankration (648 BC) - the original mixed martial arts with scarcely any restrictions. Almost no rules meant fighters could fight to the death!

All the new sports are only approved for Tokyo 2020. They are aimed at increasing interest in the Games with a younger audience. And if they don't - or if they fail in some way - they could be discontinued.



# FROM MANSFIELD TO THE WORLD

Mansfield local Hayley Wilson bought her first skateboard from The Reject Shop when she was eight years old, armed with a handful of pocket money from Mum, Catriona Wilson.

"It was all supposed to be a joke," she recalls, "my brother and I were looking around for something to buy when he said 'oh, why don't you get yourself a board'."

So guess what? She did, and even though the wheels hardly rolled, it was enough to get her hooked.

Fast forward nine years and Wilson is now the undisputed "next big thing" of Australian skate sports.

She made history when she won the silver medal at the first ever Olympic Qualifier for Women's Street Skateboarding at the World Skate/SLS Pro Tour Stop 1 in London in May 2019.

The 17-year-old was one of more than 70 elite women competing from across the globe chasing valuable ranking points for next year's Games.

Wilson finished in second place just 0.1 point off Brazil's Pamela Rosa at the Copper Box Arena. Although the narrow margin, Wilson put together the highest scoring trick (8.1) with a big spin frontside, board slide done quite perfectly at the third attempt.

The skateboarding prodigy backed up her historic podium finish in London to finish second in a highly competitive street final at the Shanghai X Games just a week later.

Among the youngest competitors on the international skate scene, this diminutive rider is already sponsored by Nike, medalled at major international events and now has her sights set on the big one – the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. We caught up with Hayley when she was training in the gym at the VIS,

**YOU MADE HISTORY RECENTLY BY BECOMING THE FIRST AUSSIE TO COMPETE IN AN OLYMPIC SKATEBOARDING QUALIFICATION EVENT, AND YOU FINISHED ON THE PODIUM! TELL US A BIT ABOUT THAT EXPERIENCE...**

It was so much fun! There were seven Aussies at that event and I loved skating with them all. My goal since I was young was to podium at an X Games or a Street League, and when it actually happened I didn't know what to think. I went into both events with the mindset of "I would be happy to just get 4 scores above 5" – but to finish second was just an added bonus!

**HOW DO YOU SETTLE YOUR NERVES BEFORE BIG COMPETITIONS?**

When I started doing big contests my legs would be so jelly and I wouldn't be breathing properly. But now I've started to pick up when I'm freaking out and I start taking deep breaths to help me calm down. These last two contests I was so much more relaxed and focused than previous events.

**WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT COMPETITIVE SPORT?**

I love when there's good energy at contests. The energy at the World Skate/SLS Pro Tour and the X Games was insane, and I totally vibed off that.

**WHAT'S YOUR BEST / SIGNATURE TRICK? AND ARE YOU WORKING ON ANY NEW ONES?**

My favourite trick at the moment is big spin front board. But I'm always working on new tricks!!

**HOW HAS THE VIS SUPPORTED YOU OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS?**

The VIS have been amazing with supporting me this past year. Jono

(Wallace Smith) has been an amazing strength & conditioning coach, helping me get into the best physical shape possible to compete internationally.

**SKATEBOARDING IS MAKING ITS OLYMPIC DEBUT IN 2020 - HOW EXCITED ARE YOU AND WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS?**

If I make the team that would be huge. To able to say you are an Olympian would be amazing. I'm also excited to see what skateboarding becomes after the Olympics, the sport is already huge but I think after Tokyo it will be even bigger, especially for female skating, and it will be great to see a lot more girls getting into it and giving it a go.

**WHEN YOU'RE NOT TRAINING, WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?**

When I'm not skating or in the gym. I love just chilling, listening to music and hanging out with friends.



# VERTICAL LIFE OCEANA MACKENZIE

VIS athlete Oceana Mackenzie has been hooked on Sport Climbing since she was eight years old, and now at 16 years young she is well on her way to becoming one of Australia's greatest sport climbers.

She is a VIS Future Talent scholarship holder and a member of the Australian Team for Bouldering, Lead and Speed Climbing.

She made history at the first Bouldering World Cup in Switzerland in April by becoming the first ever Australian female to make the final of a Sport Climbing World Cup. She placed sixth in the final in only her second ever senior event, and now has her eyes well and truly set on the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. She spoke to Communications and Marketing Coordinator, Ashley Gillespie;

**HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INVOLVED IN SPORT CLIMBING?**

My Mum used to climb when she was younger and she took me and one of my sisters, and we started climbing and loved it. I now climb five days a week and practice all three disciplines - speed climbing (a race to the top), lead climbing (increasing difficulty for increased points) and bouldering (a series of routes requiring analytical thinking as well as athleticism).

**WHY DO YOU LOVE IT?**

I love everything about it! I'm a really competitive person, and I love competing against the wall – assessing it and then trying to figure out how to do the climb and complete it – it takes smarts, speed, strength and flexibility. I also love how it always

pushes me to get better. The community in sport climbing is also really great and it's so fun to climb with lots of people.

**WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT TRAINING AND COMPETITION?**

I'm very determined and physically quite flexible. I definitely try to work on everything and particularly love training my weaknesses and getting better, which I think is a big strength for me as an athlete. I'm also VERY competitive! When I competed last year (when I was 15) I was technically too young to compete with the adults, but I'd often beat them as a wildcard competitor and I loved the thrill of winning!

**HOW DO YOU SETTLE YOUR NERVES BEFORE BIG COMPETITIONS?**

I have only been competing for two years internationally – 2019 has been my biggest season so far. I just try to be in the moment, know that I have prepared for the competition well and I've done all that I can – and then to just enjoy it. I'm quite an introvert, so my Sports Psych has helped me get some strategies in place to help prepare for big comps.

**SPORT CLIMBING IS MAKING IT'S OLYMPIC DEBUT IN TOKYO 2020 - HOW EXCITED ARE YOU?**

It's so exciting that Sport Climbing is at the Olympics! When I first started, you wouldn't even know that there were competitions, it was super small and only a few people tried it out. Now that it's in the Olympics, heaps more people are trying it and loving it. It's going to be awesome to see how everyone goes in the three disciplines in Tokyo, and to see new athletes from different countries. It's really cool!

**HOW HAS THE VIS SUPPORTED YOU?**

I've been on scholarship now for 18 months and it has been awesome. I have access to the Sport Psych, Nutritionist and my Strength and Conditioning Coach, Jono. I do two strength sessions a week plus two sprint sessions at the VIS – I used to run like a baby Giraffe but I have got much better! I love coming into the VIS to do my workouts, rather than having to do them after my climbing sessions, which used to make for a really long day and late night!

**TELL US SOMETHING PEOPLE MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU!**

I've got a few! I'm vegan, I have five sisters, I'm home-schooled and I was home birthed!

If there is any up and coming athlete you should be keeping your eye on, it's Oceana!





## TEAM BEHIND THE ATHLETE

JONO WALLACE SMITH

VIS Coach Jono Wallace Smith is responsible for providing Physical Preparation training to the athletes in our Individual Athlete Scholarship Program, which includes athletes from the new Olympic sports. Not only has he had to educate himself in skate lingo and surf slang, he has also upskilled his knowledge to apply to the demands of the untraditional disciplines. He spoke to Pinnacle about some of his key focus areas and learnings;

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING EXERCISES FOR ELITE SKATEBOARDERS?

Landings are probably one for the biggest ones for us. Teaching the skaters to efficiently absorb force on landings has a big part to play both in reducing injury risk and improving performance as it has a large transfer across to the board. We practice them off high boxes (up to 1m high), landing after jumping sideways or rotating, landings with added weight (different things at different times of the year) to help prepare their bodies for the variability of their landings on the board.

Calf Strength would be another big focus area – once again helping with the absorbing of force when landing off big heights – we usually start with single-leg calf raises with added weight then progress from there.

After that, and them gaining the basics in strength & mobility, the focus shifts depending on their skateboarding discipline. While they will all have qualities of both in their program, Street Skaters (Hayley Wilson & Brad Saunders) will have more of a lower body power focus (jumps etc.) and Park (Shanae Collins) will have more of a lower body strength focus (squats, leg press etc.).

### SKATEBOARDING IS AN EXTREME SPORT - HOW DO YOU PREVENT AND/OR TREAT INJURIES?

Skateboarding is a skill dominant sport – so time on the board is always king. Our main aim is to help spend more hours on the board per day/week/month and have them off the board for less time when they do get hurt. With that said, these

guys are hurling themselves into concrete daily – so we can't prevent everything.

Each program has elements to help this based off the common injuries in skating and unique ways the athletes present themselves when they joined us (anthropometry, previous injury history, previous training history etc.)

- ankle/calf strength & proprioception (balance) work to help with ankle sprains
- quad/glute/eccentric hamstring work to be able to handle the high impacts when they land poorly or need to 'bail' off the board.
- Or even rolling work to help them fall a bit safer when they do stack it.

### SURFERS NEED TO BE IN TIP-TOP SHAPE - HOW ARE YOU HELPING NIKKI VAN DIJK PREPARE FOR TOKYO?

Nikki's competitive season is so long and very complex – changing schedules, different locations, different surfing conditions etc. – making it very tough to program and prepare for.

When she is home we focus a lot on reducing the 'imbalances' that her amount of surfing creates – these imbalances are normal for surfing but do create an increased injury risk (quad dominance, restrictions through hips, rotator cuff imbalances in the shoulder etc.). Developing strength through the posterior chain (lower back, glutes & hamstrings) is a major focus as well as building more power through her trunk & lower body to assist with some of her

manoeuvres – actually ends up pretty similar to Park Skateboarders. After that, a lot of pulling chin-up variations to help her paddling. We are also playing around with a lot of gymnastics variations for something different and fun, and to develop bodyweight strength.

When travelling, the focus narrows to maintaining the strength qualities she's developed – to reduce injury risk of a long season and stop a drop in performance – and keep her feeling fit, healthy & happy.

### SPORT CLIMBING IS A NEW SPORT AT THE VIS - HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED ANY CHALLENGES WORKING WITH OCEANA MACKENZIE?

Honestly, no. Oce is, one of many, special athletes we have. Incredibly talented with a work ethic to match. Transitioning to the climbing space has been really easy because Oce's coach, family and climbing community are behind her and know the VIS is trying to help her by playing our part. We have been doing a lot of sprinting work with her to assist with her Speed Climbing – teaching her how to run was interesting because she initially looked like a baby giraffe, but since then it's been smooth sailing.

### WHAT ARE YOU ENJOYING THE MOST ABOUT WORKING WITH THESE NEW SPORTS?

Learning as much as I can about these new sports – these are some seriously impressive athletes doing some seriously impressive things. It's just cool to be a part of it.

### WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES YOU FACE WORKING WITH THESE NEW SPORTS AND ATHLETES?

Working out how 'High Performance' fits into each sport's culture – it's not a carbon copy from what is done/needed in traditional sports to these ones and

there is no formula to success that has been set-up over a long period of time. Taking the time to learn as much as we can about the sports and figuring out where exactly we can help these athletes, instead of just jumping in and smashing them in the gym or try to change their routines has been a big challenge.



## KIM BRENNAN

### SUCCESS IN SPORT AND LIFE

After years of success on the water, VIS rowing alumna Kim Brennan, a qualified solicitor and proud mother, now has the task of inspiring the next generation of Australian sports stars.

The 33-year-old, who competed at the three most recent Summer Olympic Games, winning silver in the Double Sculls and bronze in the Singles Sculls events at London 2012, before claiming gold in the Women's Single Sculls at the 2016 Games, has been appointed as the Australian Deputy Chef de Mission for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Brennan joins dual Olympic gold medalist Susie O'Neill and Olympic fencer Evelyn Halls in the key roles, completing the leadership team of Chef de Mission, Ian Chesterman.

Chesterman claimed the latest appointments show the AOC is putting the athletes first for next year's Olympic Games; "Our three Deputies totally understand the environment of Olympic competition and will be a great support to our athletes and coaches in the team. Each brings something different but each has a fantastic work ethic and great empathy for what's important to athletes."

Brennan says to be contributing to the Team effort so soon after retirement is exciting, "Every Olympian wants to keep contributing in one way or another. We have that bond. To be stepping into this role gives me the chance to make a different type of contribution," Brennan said.

She is hoping the position will also provide a chance for her to continue to grow in terms of leadership, management and learning more about the behind-the-scenes elements of the Olympic Games.

Brennan undertook the role of Chef de Mission for the Australian Youth Olympic team in Buenos Aires in 2018, where she led approximately 95 athletes in more than 30 disciplines in what was the third Summer Youth Olympic Games, following Singapore 2010 and Nanjing 2014.



# KATE DOUGHTY

## JUGGLING ACT

An elite para-triathlete, motivational speaker, mentor, registered psychologist and mum - Kate Doughty knows no limits when it comes to adversity and achievement.

Doughty was born without a right hand, and at the age of 8, was already making her mark receiving awards for violin and equestrian achievements. She represented Australia at several international Para-equestrian events, including the World Equestrian Games, before making a dramatic change to Para-triathlon in 2014.

Her Para-triathlon ambition was born from personal loss, with the tragic death of her Mother spurring her to make a fresh start in a new sport.

She swapped her boots and horse for lycra and a bike, and the results of this transition were rapid and impressive, securing wins at the Australian Championships and the ITU World Para triathlon event in Yokohama, Japan - her first overseas race - and the bronze medal at the World Championships in Chicago, USA.

Then in 2016, Doughty realised her dream of becoming a Paralympian when she represented Australia at the Rio Paralympic Games in the first triathlon in Paralympic history.

She was coming third until the final leg of the women's inaugural PT4 Para triathlon on Rio's Copacabana beach, but couldn't hold on, eventually finishing in fifth -

an achievement nearly 20 years in the making, in an entirely different sport to what Doughty had first envisaged.

Doughty said she had a "ripper swim" but couldn't find her legs until the second lap of the bike phase, before losing ground in the run which is her weakest link.

"Trust me, I had nothing left in the tank," she said, "I've been in the sport less than two years and I'm still not at my full potential. Bring on Tokyo," she said after the race.

She said she wasn't alone on the Fort Copacabana course in Rio, and there was someone with her every step, stroke and pedal - her Mum.

The 35-year-old, who has a tattoo of a dragonfly on her wrist in memory of her Mum said, "I just knew she would be with me the whole time coming into this race. I was emotional before I started so I'm lucky I didn't just melt in the race," Doughty said as tears flowed.

Fast forward two years to 2018, she married the love of her life, Norwegian Jarle Naess, before giving birth to baby son Henrik. She took a break from training and competition to enjoy a "baby gap year" to appreciate and learn all the new challenges in life as a Mum.

"I am loving motherhood, such a joy, and I am so glad to be able to now put the title 'Mother' on my CV."

But now with the support of her husband and family and with a second

Paralympics firmly in her sights, Doughty is back again chasing her dreams under astute coach, Danielle Stefano.

Doughty is based in Melbourne with Coach Stefano and her ELOTIK Pro Triathlon team mates where Henrik has now become the official team mascot being present at most training sessions.

Her return to racing has been emphatic with a hat-trick of wins (just eight months after giving birth!) at the Devonport World Cup event, the Oceania Para Triathlon Championships in Newcastle and the World Para Triathlon Series race in Milan, Italy.

"It's definitely been a different sort of lead up for Kate, now juggling motherhood on top of her training and work, however being the dedicated professional that she is, she's doing a magnificent job of multi-tasking," said Stefano.

Super-mum Doughty is showing that anything is possible and will enjoy the continual build back to peak performance with her goal of getting to the start line in Tokyo 2020.

# "I'M 42, NOT 92."

## SINEAD DIVER

"People seem to think you shouldn't be able to run after you're 40. I think I'm proving them wrong. I'm proud of that."

It's safe to say that Sinead Diver came to athletics late.

Born and raised in Ireland, Diver moved to Melbourne in 2002 and was 32 before she started running as a hobby to "get fit and lose some pregnancy weight" after the birth of her first child.

Approaching 40 she "got serious" about running and her phenomenal natural talent saw things escalate quickly.

She clocked 2:34:15 for the marathon in 2014, and was all set to represent Ireland at the following year's World Championships in Beijing, but Athletics Ireland moved the goalposts, changing the time required to 2:33:30.

Therefore, as a dual citizen, Diver knew the only way to run in Beijing would be in an Australian vest, a decision that proved virtually irreversible given the IAAF now mandates a three-year wait before transferring allegiance.

Diver has now competed at two World Championships for her adopted homeland - finishing 21st in Beijing in 2015 and 20th in London in 2017.

Fast forward to the 2019 London Marathon.

Going into the race, Diver had no intention to be near the front, but that was exactly where she found herself after the opening miles with the leading contenders unwilling to push the pace.

And so she forged ahead, building a lead of more than 200 metres at one point over the Kenyans and Ethiopians, passing halfway over the iconic Tower Bridge in 1:11:22.

"I wasn't expecting to be leading, obviously, and was a little bit freaked out, and didn't want to look behind," said Diver.

With strong headwinds over the second half, Diver fought hard to hold pace and reached the finish on The Mall in 2:24:11, cutting 67 seconds off her previous best. It made her the third fastest Australian in history behind Benita Willis and Lisa Ondieki, and more importantly it qualified her for the Tokyo Olympics next year.

"It was a really, really strong field. I expected the Africans to go to the front and I expected to be two groups behind. But everyone started slowly. It was very windy and nobody wanted to go to the front.

"I was determined to get a good time so I needed to race from the start and not just race from the halfway, which the Africans like to do. They like to get to halfway and then put in a strong second half, but for me it's better to go from the start, so I did."

Diver's two boys, Eddie who is nine and Darragh, five were among the massive Irish support roaring her on in the English Capital.

"I've never experienced anything like that in another marathon. There was only one section of the course that was quiet and that was only for maybe a couple of kilometres. For the rest of it there were people shouting and a lot of them knew my name and were cheering for me! It was great."

What's next for the late blooming Diver? Her target is not just improving her personal best (again), but possibly the Australian record of 2:22:36, set by Willis in 2006, and also the Irish record of 2:22:23, set by Catherina McKiernan in 1998. She'll only be eligible for the former, but that doesn't make them both any less tantalising.

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