

High school entry #19: Lambton High School



Lambton Nexus

LIGHT THE WAY



CORRIDORS OF POWER: Leah Serafim with the Governor of NSW Marie Bashir.

Youth take ideas on to floor of power

By ALEXANDRA BRADNEY

LAMBTON High School students Leah Serafim and Declan Clausen recently attended the YMCA Youth Parliament at Olympic Park in Sydney.

Students were selected from across the state to represent young people and debate issues that concern them.

They met and talked with state politicians and saw how the government and parliament works in presenting bills that if passed become law.

The students had to prepare mock bills to be debated. Mentors gave training in definitions, interpretations and explanatory notes and serving ministers chaired the debates.

Leah was assigned the education portfolio.

"As part of the education team, our bill aimed to provide a compulsory level of minimum standards in schools, including lighting, toilets, textbooks, general maintenance and information technology," Leah said.

Leah was named best speaker of the opposition.

Declan debated an infrastructure and planning bill on environmental issues to raise the standard of energy and water efficiency in new buildings by 20 per cent over five years.

Both bills were passed by the youth parliament and sent to ministers.

Learning ropes at games

By ALEXANDRA BRADNEY

FORMER Lambton High School students Jaimie Coburn and Meredith Young were two of 40 local university students chosen to travel to Beijing to work as flash-quote reporters during August as part of the Olympic News Service.

The girls survived a long process of interviews with a panel of university professors and members of the Beijing Organising Committee of the Olympic Games.

Those selected were tested on journalism skills such as interviewing techniques, note-taking and question formulation.

Jaimie and Meredith watched the spectacular opening ceremony at their accommodation at the Beijing Foreign Studies University before their work began.

They interviewed athletes in the press mixed zone after their events and entered short quotes into the Info 2008 news system, designed to help other experienced journalists write their stories.

They were also given the opportunity to attend press conferences but the real excitement came when both were awarded quote of the day and found their quotes published by a Chinese news agency.

While staying at the university, Jaimie and Meredith had to balance their journalism work with their university study commitments



THE BIG STAGE: Meredith Young and Jaimie Coburn enjoy the atmosphere inside the Beijing Olympic Stadium.

and the intense training program needed to work on the Olympic coverage.

Jaimie and Meredith experienced their own brushes with fame.

Jaimie's highlight was watching German heavyweight weightlifter Matthias Steiner win his gold medal, an extraordinary achievement after the loss of his wife in a car crash last year.

"When Steiner kissed a photo of his wife after his winning lift, I was embarrassed to be crying but as I looked around the broadcasting zone there was not one person in the place with dry eyes," Jaimie said.

Meredith interviewed the glamour names in swimming - Australia's Stephanie Rice and the United States' Michael Phelps -

and the head of world body FINA. The experience taught them that a journalist works long hours, needs patience and persistence, especially with non-English speaking athletes whose quotes had to be translated.

Jaimie and Meredith want to pursue careers in journalism and feel the Olympics were an invaluable experience.



BRIGHTSPARK: Callen Dick with his wind turbine. - Picture by David Payne

Budding inventor aiming to patent idea

By EDIE-LOUISE DIEMAR

WHEN 16-year-old Lambton High School student Callen Dick began a wind energy project as part of the school's gifted and talented program he never expected to lodge a provisional patent for his invention.

Callen invented a turbine to generate electricity from the movement of air around tall buildings.

In 2007 Callen submitted his

idea to Questacon Science Centre in Canberra, where 20 student inventors were selected to attend workshops with scientists and engineers.

He was spotted by ABC TV's *New Inventors* program and appeared in its Bright Sparks segment.

Callen won first prize in the 2007 National Sustainable Living Challenge and is negotiating with patent lawyers.

"I haven't got anywhere near

enough money for an international patent so I'm just settling for an Australian patent," Callen said.

"Even then it doesn't mean I'll get the patent. What I've learnt is that there are smart, rich business people looking to pounce on the ideas of others.

"I have approached government agencies to help but they want a patent first."

Callen has washed trucks to save money for his patent.



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Mixed message of the games' power

Editorial

By CAITLYN READ

A FEW weeks ago one may have felt more pride waving a tea towel than waving the Olympic flag. It seemed ironic that the Olympic Games, which represent freedom and co-operation, were being hosted by a country with a long list of human rights abuses.

It didn't seem right to bestow such an honour on a country facing worldwide condemnation for its stand on Tibet. What were we to expect from this somewhat repressed country? Grim faces? Very secret police?

But that was a few weeks ago, before the games. Now, after days of watching the Olympic Games, many have been surprised, very pleasantly.

The friendliness of the Chinese locals and their spontaneous interaction with visitors was overwhelming. There was the feeling of a world united through sport. The Olympic Games made us forget politics for a little while.

The camera moments that captured success and struggle in the games were so powerful. Who could forget when Emma Snowsill had enough time at the end of her triathlon to stop, grab an Australian flag and cross the finishing line to win gold for not only herself but for her country. Or when German weightlifter Matthias Steiner won gold and

stood weeping on the podium holding a photo of his wife who had passed away in a car crash.

Those moments are special and the faces of the participants and the spectators show our collective humanity. But, on the other hand, the cameras and spectators did not capture the moments of complete anguish after a good fight was lost, and that's not referring to the competitors who did not secure a medal.

The Tibetans, in a desperate bid for freedom, were not successful. They fought a good fight but they lost badly. This dark shadow cast over the 2008 Olympics makes it difficult to feel the full effect of people's joy because, at any one time, one person is on top of the world while another is fighting for the right to be on it.

This isn't the athletes' fault. This isn't the volunteers' fault. Nor is it that of the spectators. These people aren't participating in the Olympics because they support the abuse of human rights. They participate because the bad in the world should never stop the good. To strive for the best is uplifting for everyone.

Many did not support the decision to hold the 2008 Olympics in Beijing but more now can appreciate everything it managed to achieve. Uniting the world, for however long, is no mean feat and the courage of those athletes who put themselves on the line for what they want most is one of the most inspiring things we're likely to witness.



Illustration by Callum Borwell



RISING STARS: Ben Kantarovski and Joel Witherdin. — Picture by David Payne

Jet-propelled stars on rise

By CAITLYN READ

LAMBTON High School students Ben Kantarovski and Joel Witherdin are eagerly awaiting two international football competitions.

Ben, 16, is contracted to the Jets' A-league first team, and Joel, 17, to the Jets' youth team.

Ben was scouted from the NSW Institute of Sport and Joel while playing in schoolboy competitions.

Midfielder Ben made his senior A-league debut in August against Central Coast Mariners.

He will play for the Australian Joelys in the Asian Football Confederation under-16s championships in Uzbekistan from October 4 to 18 as they attempt to qualify for the under-17 World Cup in Nigeria in 2009.

Joel hopes to play in the Aus-

tralian Schoolboys' tour of Japan and Korea in November.

Both boys balance school with their hectic training schedules of five days per week at Newcastle University.

They appreciate the acceptance and support they have had from older Jets players.

"Just because they play for their country, they don't have big egos," Joel said.

Like Joel, Ben would one day like to play overseas but is happy playing football at home.

"The best thing about playing football is the atmosphere in the Newcastle games," Ben said. "It's great playing for the town you grew up in."

Both have their eyes on being part of the Jets' Asian Champions League campaign next year.

Football tradition is growing

By CHARLIE BLAND

LAMBTON High School's open boys football squad made the final of this year's Combined High Schools state knockout in Sydney.

The team, captained by Nic Jovanovic, defeated several strong opponents in the early stages including the favourites Homebush High.

Lambton won its semifinal against Oatley High 4-0 with an excellent passing game.

Lambton dominated the first half of the final against Epping Boys High but could not convert and Epping scored two goals after half-time.

"Epping was a solid side and outmuscled Lambton in the first part of the second half," team manager Dave Morris said. "During this time they scored the vital first goal. The lads did well to fight back."

"This was an outstanding season for Lambton. The squad represented Newcastle with distinction."

"Excellent team play was complemented by memorable individual performances."

"Yuto Hott, Dayne McCaull, Nic Jovanovic, Kevin Davidson, Joel Witherdin and Peter Asvestas have developed into talented senior footballers."

Brent Cullen was the most improved player, Morgan Shiels man of the match in the final and Joel Witherdin the player of the finals series.

Learning about the science of girl power

By EDIE-LOUISE DIEMAR, ANGELIA GORDON and ZARA BANKS

ENGINEERING was once thought to be a man's job but girls at Lambton High School are keen to become more involved with hands-on science.

In the 2008 series of the regional and state science and engineering challenges, a University of Newcastle initiative, at least half of the group was female. The school's co-ordinator

for the challenge Steve Smith said the number of girls at the challenge showed that not only are they becoming more involved with engineering and science but are also doing well at it.

The all-girl team won a sailboat construction activity earlier in the year in the regional competition which Lambton High won overall.

The recent state challenge included construction of a bridge, a hovercraft and a helium-balloon escape device.



CREATIVE THINKERS: Students Meiying Li and Victoria Novak working on one of the challenge projects.

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