

## SPORT

## Gymnast takes on Aussies

Adyn Ogle  
Sport reporter

DYLAN Biggs is on the right path to the top level.

The 17-year-old gymnast is part of the New Zealand team to compete in the Australian Gymnastics Championships next month. He will be a part of the level eight team for the competition.

He said it was important to focus on your own thing when competing at the top level. Dylan said the event would be his biggest so far.

"You are in a team, but really it is just about what you are doing. You have to concentrate on your own routine."

He said although the team score was ultimately what decided success, how his teammates, and opponents, did was out of his control.

Dylan is coached by his brother Jordan and they said they had forged a good coach-athlete relationship, devoid of the usual brotherly bouts.

"We are both into gymnastics and grew up together at the gym," Jordan said.

"Dylan lives with us and we talk about it a lot and watch clips of gymnastics – my partner gets a bit sick of it."

Dylan said he would compete on all six apparatus at the Australian event and felt he had improved on the high bar the most in the past year.

Aside from the hours of training, Dylan also has to raise funds to get to the competition. In a challenging fundraising effort he and Jordan will walk 40 kilometres from Waiotaha to Whakatane carrying 20-kilogram packs on April 14.

He said some people had sponsored them per kilometre while others had made a donation. They will also hold the ever-reliable sausage sizzle at the Eastern Bay Gymnastics Club at the end of the walk. All money raised will be used to help Dylan to travel to the competition as well as his training costs.



**HANGING TOUGH:** Dylan Biggs is supported by coach, and brother, Jordan in preparation for the Australian Gymnastics Championships next month.

Photo Adyn Ogle D6775-13

He needs to do some of his training in Tauranga, where he can make use of a landing pit. To train for the vault, he needs more than 20 metres of runway and a large landing area – those facilities are not available in

Whakatane.

While Jordan will not coach Dylan at the Australian champs, the combination will be in action at the Maroochy Beach Invitational on the Sunshine Coast in July.

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1 DAY

ALL eyes will be on Gold Coast's Carrara Stadium tomorrow for the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games.

The event will include the Parade of Nations, the competitors' oath and the finale of the Queen's Baton Relay. It has been reported that tonnes of sand have been dumped in the stadium and the spectacular will feature around 400 surf lifesavers. Musical talent includes Delta Goodrem and Dami Im.

The opening ceremony begins at 10pm tomorrow and Scotland, as previous hosts, will enter the stadium first.

The European nations follow before the remaining teams enter in alphabetical order of their geographical area.

New Zealand will enter in 62nd place.

## Season opens with step up

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Sport reporter

FOOTBALL season is set to kick off and for the Kawerau men's team, 2018 is shaping up as a big year.

They dominated the Bay of Plenty first division last year to claim the title and also won the Bay Sport Centre Cup. This year they will play in the Waikato Bay of Plenty championship and captain Teimana Awhimate said preparation had gone well.

"We started training in early February and we have a mix of new and returning players so that has given us plenty of time to get to know one another."

The step up to championship will have the team travelling to the Waikato as well as playing games in the Bay of Plenty.

"The biggest draw card is the exposure for our young ones to a higher calibre of football. This will help them with their game but also give them a chance to be spotted as there is a lot of talent here."

"The expectation is to grow as a club through playing good football and to try and make it into the premier division, but growing our players is our top priority."

"We have such a competitive bunch of boys and no one person is guaranteed a position in the first team."

Kawerau are also in the nationwide Chatham Cup knockout competition this year.

Other Eastern Bay clubs, Whakatane and Plains Rangers, will compete in Bay of Plenty competitions this season.

On Sunday, the women's competition kicks off and Whakatane are looking to continue their form of recent seasons. They placed second in the Waikato Bay of Plenty premier league last year. Team spokeswoman Susi Petersen said the team had largely retained the same players from last season.

"It makes for good continuity in the team and our expectation is to win the league this year. Because we had pretty much the same team, we should gel together quickly."

"It has been a bit hard as young mums have a lot to juggle, so it can make it difficult to get numbers at training. But everyone has those struggles."

The team won the Cambridge sevens title last month and Petersen said it showed they had the players to do well.



**ON THE BALL:** Kawerau will play in the Waikato Bay of Plenty championship division this year. Pictured is Jordan Hoete in a game last season.

File photo D5842-079