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AIR TIME: Whakatane gymnast Dylan Biggs competes at the Australian National Championships in Melbourne last week.
Photo WinkipopMedia



Biggs shines in first outing

WHAKATANE gymnast Dylan Biggs was happy with his first competition as a New Zealand representative.

The Eastern Bay Gymnastics Club member placed fourth in level eight at the Australian National Championships in Melbourne last week. The two-week event was held at Hisense Arena and as well as his first time as a national representative, it was 18-year-old Biggs' first time competing overseas.

Competing on six apparatus, his best result was on vault and after sitting in second place for five rotations

he was surpassed by 0.267 of a mark on the last rotation to finish in fourth place.

Biggs said the trip was a great experience and opened his eyes to other competitions, and motivated him to train harder and smarter. He said he wanted to thank all those who sponsored him and helped him to get there.

His coach, and brother, Jordan was happy with his progress over the last year and a half.

"Coming from a little club in a little town it's hard to get to the level he's

now on. He wouldn't be where he is now without the hard work that he puts into his training so full credit to him."

Biggs is working towards the competitive season, representing his club in Rotorua, Tauranga, Hamilton, Christchurch and Maroochy Beach in Australia.

He will also trial to represent the Bay of Plenty at the New Zealand champs in Tauranga in October.

Biggs and the rest of the club's competitive gymnasts will continue their season this weekend in Rotorua.

Godzone location revealed

CANTERBURY has been named as the host location for next year's Godzone Adventure race.

The seven-day race, which has frequently included some of the Eastern Bay's top athletes, will be held in March and race director Warren Bates said the scale and scope of the Canterbury region offered adventure racers an opportunity to experience something big and unique.

"I have been lucky enough to spend a fair bit of time exploring the region over the past few months as we prepared for launch.

"The word 'big' just kept coming back to me. Big skies, big mountains, big rivers, big glaciers, big coastlines and big views, all beautifully juxtaposed next to the South Island's biggest city.

"Christchurch has been the source of so many multisporters over the past 30 years, and now they're going to get Godzone on their doorstep."

"It is a wonderfully diverse region with incredibly vast contrasts from big, technical mountain ranges and classic and iconic rivers, to large water catchments and a stunning coastline.

"There is plenty to work with to create a stand out course. Given the size of the region, we intend to run a linear course that will start from a far-flung, mystery location.

"Godzone is New Zealand's biggest and most influential adventure racing event, attracting teams from around the world to compete each year," said Bates.

"Last time we had nine countries represented in the field including Australia, the UK, South Africa, USA, Poland, France, and Scandinavia."

The seaside town of Akaroa on the Banks Peninsula will be the race hub for the 2019 event.

Week one brings big rugby scores

OPOTIKI made an emphatic statement as the second half of the Bay of Plenty rugby season began on Saturday.

The top four teams from each of the three Bay divisions will meet in semi-finals in six weeks, making the battle for the play-offs a short sprint.

But the journey to the play-offs comes on the back of, for some, a tough 11 weeks that essentially graded the teams.

Opotiki belted Paroa 67-5 at Princess Street Reserve to start their premier two campaign in near-perfect fashion.

Paroa were outplayed by an Opotiki side on the upswing and the result hinted at the kind of form that had Opotiki reach consecutive premier division semi-finals in 2012 and 2013.

It was also a turnaround from

Eastern Bay rugby scores

Premier two:

- Te Teko 25-15 Waikite
- Arataki 65-26 Whk Marist
- Opotiki 67-5 Paroa
- Rangiuru 41-40 Ngongotaha

Premier two development

- Te Teko 55-14 Waikite
- Arataki 26-17 Whk Marist
- Opotiki 40-24 Paroa

Division one:

- Kahukura 25-21 Murupara
- Ruatoki 30-17 Papamoa
- Marist St Michael's 45-21 Poroporo
- Judea 17-5 Waimana

fixtures between the two sides in recent seasons, where Paroa had been victorious.

Te Teko also made a solid start to the season after beating Waikite 25-15 to sit in third place.

Arataki secured second place on the table after beating Whakatane Marist 65-26.

Rangiuru rounded out the top four after a 41-40 win over Ngongotaha.

Ruatoki are in the top four of the first division after week one with a 30-17 win over Papamoa at Tuhoe Park.

The second division, which includes Edgecumbe and Matata, begins this Saturday.



PASS IT ON: Paroa's Hami Smith off-loads in the tackle against Opotiki at Princess Street Reserve on Saturday.

Photo Louis Klaassen D7069-077