



Media Release
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SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPORTS INSTITUTE (SASI) AWARDS - 2009

The South Australian Sports Institute (SASI) has celebrated a year of world-class achievements and honoured South Australia's best athletes and coaches at an event at the National Wine Centre.

In 2009, more than 100 SASI athletes had the honour of being selected to represent their country in elite international competition.

Throughout its 27 years, the South Australian Sports Institute has gone from strength to strength. Part of this success has grown from the expectations and demands SASI has for its athletes, requiring them to perform not only as sportspeople but also as responsible young men and women.

Senior female athlete of the year

Becchara Palmer (Beach Volleyball) age 21, of West Lakes Shore

Identified as a potential champion through the SASI Talent ID program, Becchara Palmer proved herself this year, with silver medal success at the 2009 SWATCH FIVG World Tour Women's Open in Poland along with playing partner Louise Bawden. Becchara was also named most outstanding player of the Mazury Open.

Senior male athlete of the year

Jack Bobridge (Track Endurance/Road Cycling) age 20, of Evanston Gardens

Jack Bobridge had a stellar year in 2009, winning the Oceania and Australian Individual Pursuit and claiming two silver medals at the Track World Championships. He created history by becoming the first Australian to claim the 23-and-under world time trial title at the UCI Road World Championships in Mendrisio, Switzerland. Jack has recently been signed to the professional team Garmin-Slipstream.

Junior female athlete(s) of the year

Jessica Molsher Jones (Rowing) age 18, of Largs Bay

Peta White (Rowing) 18, of Terringie

High school students Peta White and Jessica Molsher-Jones had an exciting year bringing home a gold medal from the Junior World Championships in France. The medal winning women's four team with Jessica in stroke, included two crew members from Queensland and was coached by SASI Scholarship Coach Anna Tree.

Junior male athlete of the year

Sam Willoughby (BMX) age 18, of Trott Park

Sam Willoughby became the first elite junior male to win back-to-back titles after he successfully defended his crown at the UCI BMX World Championships held in Adelaide this year. Racing since the age of six, balance has obviously always come naturally for Sam. In 2009 he has been living part-time in the United States and has balanced training and race meetings with completing his year 12 SACE certificate through Brighton Secondary School and the Open Access College.

Athlete with a disability

Matthew Cowdrey (Swimming) age 20, of Salisbury Heights

Matthew Cowdrey was recently awarded the prestigious international best male athlete award by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). After an outstanding performance at the Beijing Olympics, he has continued his success in 2009. He achieved multiple records at the Australian Short Course Championships, and is currently in Brazil, competing in the IPC World Short Course Championships, where he has already won two gold and two silver medals.

Program of the year

Canoe Sprint

The SASI Canoe Sprint program has established itself as one of Australia's most successful elite pathways. The program provides critical leadership and support to a very successful talent identification and development program and has proven its capacity to bring athletes through to the senior national and Olympic team.

Canoe Sprint achieved impressive results in 2009:

- 51 medals (24 gold) at 2009 national championships
- Qualified for five finals at the ICF Canoe Sprint Championships, Canada
- Nine medals at the Australian Youth Olympic Festival
- Five senior Australian team members and 13 junior Australian team members

Coach of the year

David Foureux (Canoe Sprint)

David Foureux was the national senior team coach for Canoe Sprint in 2009. The Australian team's results are testament to his skill and commitment to supporting his athletes to achieve success.

Service to Sport

Margaret Angove OAM (Netball)

Marg Angove is an Australian Netball icon. She has coached in the Australian Netball National program, has been Head Netball Coach at the South Australian Sports Institute since 1989 and has more coaching distinctions than most in the game - including Australian Female Coach of the Year in 2000. Marg will complete her time as SASI Coach in January. She has played a key role in developing many talented young SA players and in providing leadership to coaches in the SA Netball community.

Amy Gillet-Safe Memorial Award

Sam Offord (Gymnastics) age 23, of Eden Hills

Sam has been in the sport of gymnastics since he started in kindergym over 21 years ago and has progressed through the ranks to the very top. He retained his title as the senior men's National Champion in 2009, and represented Australia at World Championships, having competed recently in London. His sport is one of the most demanding, placing great strains and stresses on the body and mind. The many injuries and challenges faced over the years have been handled with determination and persistence. His courage and commitment to his sport is admired and respected by all and he is an outstanding role model to all in his sport and to all aspiring athletes.

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