

PLAYER PROFILES



UNIVERSITY BLUE

SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR - FINALIST

ROBERT PRESTON
ORIENTEERING

You've competed at national and international levels. What's been the highlight for you recently?

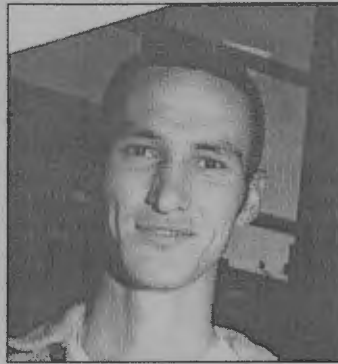
My highlight at national level was finishing 9th in the Elite class at the Australian 3-day championships (my first year in senior class) held in Tasmania in April. My international highlight was running for the open Australian team (while still a junior) at World Cup events last year in Estonia and Finland. It was against the world's best and although my results were not brilliant, the experience was great.

Orienteering is a far more recognised sport in the northern hemisphere. How competitive a sport is it in Australia?

The number of orienteers at elite level in Australia has been growing larger in the last few years, and our best are getting very close to the standard of European runners.

What about training?

My training is similar to a 10 K or half-marathon athlete, but with less speed work and more strength training, because this is more important for running through terrain. I have been training 9-13 hrs of running per week since last year.



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MARTIN PHILLIPS
KARATE

What would you rate as the highlights of your involvement in karate?

The opportunity to compete in 4 successive Soke Cups - that's the world championships for karate which are held every 3 years. I won my first gold medal in 1989 in Canada, and have since been to the Soke in 1992, Japan in 1995, and Canadian 1998.

How are you involved in training at the moment?

I teach two classes each week at the University, and I also train a class at Warners Bay once a week. Obviously training increases as we get closer to tournaments - anything up to 5 days a week.

What are your goals or plans for the future?

My aim is to become an instructor with my own dojo.

You went to New Zealand in May for the Uni Games. How did it go?

We were very happy with the result. We came home with 8 golds and I placed 3rd in the heavy-weight.



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DAMON SMALLMAN
KARATE

What would you rate as your greatest achievement or highlight to date?

Sport karate and karate as an art are completely different. I think my greatest achievement has been in being able to bring the two together. For me, Karate's all about having fun.

In 1995 I entered a white belt tournament having only trained for two months. I only entered because I happened to be driving through Armidale where the tournament was being held. That was a lot of fun.

How have you been affected by injury?

I've been quite lucky. I had a ruptured eardrum back in 1996, but I haven't really had any serious injuries.

You compete in kyu grade. How do the grades work?

Basically there are 10 steps on the way to black belt. Kyu grade is one of those steps. You don't necessarily have to compete each step to make black belt though. If you're good enough, it's possible to go up a couple of steps in one go.

What's your next big competition?

The Soke Cup, karate world titles, are on in Japan in 2001 - that should - be fun too.





UNIVERSITY COLOUR

**LEON BERGHOUT
MOUNTAINEERING**

How competitive a sport is mountaineering in Australia?

I wouldn't say that outdoors activities are particularly competitive in Australia. I for one prefer individual challenge to competition, and I think the non-competitive nature of many outdoors activities is one of the things that attracts a lot of people to the mountaineering club. One of the most competitive areas is probably rock climbing, with the club boasting a number of climbers who have achieved impressive results in climbing comps. The growth of the Uni Club over the past few years shows how popular the sport is.

Did you expect that sort of growth when you first became involved?

When I first became involved in the mountaineering club in 1994, the club was significantly smaller than it is now, but it was really powering along thanks to a very keen core of mountaineers. I have to say I'm not surprised at the growth we've experienced given that amount of enthusiasm.

What's your favourite mountaineering location?

That's a hard question. One of my personal favourite areas is the Carabolla topographic map which covers areas between Gresford and the Barrington Tops. This map contains Mt Royal which is my absolute favourite single day bush walk anywhere - with great views of the Barrington Tops.



UNIVERSITY COLOUR

**PETER SWEENEY
MEN'S HOCKEY CLUB**

What changes have you observed over your years of involvement in the sport?

A profound change in the quality of the club, both on and off the field. Prior to 1986 the club had been an average performer, even though it had been successful in some of the lower grades. Since 1986 the club has been a force in all grades, particularly first grade, winning the minor premierships several times plus a hat-trick of first grade major premierships 93-94-95.

Another important change was the introduction of the astro-turf playing surfaces at Broadmeadow. This change has been responsible for improving the speed and skill level of hockey.

What position do you play?

I play left wing in first grade, however, I have a preference for playing inside right - I learned most of my hockey at the inside forward and enjoy the challenge of the workload and the playmaker aspect of that position.

Any personal goals or plans for your future in the sport?

Maintenance of the highest level of fitness possible in order to remain competitive in whatever grade I am playing and to keep playing for as long as possible with the university club.



UNIVERSITY COLOUR

**LEON BURWELL
BASKETBALL CLUB**

You've served the cause of campus basketball for many years, going back to the Teachers College days. How has the sport changed and grown in that time?

The melding of the College and the University in sport as well as academia provided advantages for both sides as it gave the Uni elite players a chance to play for the University and not have to go to other teams for the standard they required.

You're no longer playing, but how are you involved in basketball these days?

At present I am active in coaching at most levels. I coach continually players with an Intellectual Disability at the basic beginner level, at Association Level, and at the State level. The Men's NSW Team for Players with a Disability took the National Title in 1998 and were runners-up in 1999.

What's the state of basketball today, particularly in Newcastle?

Basketball in Australia is peaking with the largest number of junior players of any code. This brings with it the problem of where do these players progress. We need more top level competition. With the loss of the Falcons in Newcastle, where do our juniors and senior elite players go?



UNIVERSITY COLOUR

**MICHAEL EWIN
WATER SKI**

You were tournament director for the 98 AUC Championships. How was that experience?

It was a great experience - friends from all over Australia enjoying the activities that you've just spent 12 months planning. The whole week of events is run at burnout level. Serving as Tournament Director was the icing on the cake. There was a lot of extra work required but all the hours and stress were well worth it.

What was the highlight for you?

The most rewarding experience has been teaching 'Skiing 101' to beginners. The grin they get the first time they realise they are skiing is terrific.

Is competition important to the sport or is it more about personal achievement?

The principle competition in water skiing is yourself against your previous best achievement and your next goal. For this reason the sport is more social. Competitors often help others, giving tips, coaching and lending gear to each other.

To beat your opponents is only to perform better than them on the day. But to win is to improve on your own best performance which everyone is happy with.

What 's your next goal then?

I have a personal ambition to be able to ski into shortenings at Carnegie Cup.



UNIVERSITY COLOUR

**ANDREW BAKER
CRICKET**

You've been very involved for a number of seasons. Has the Club seen much change in that time?

My playing career with the club started in fifth grade playing a few games before having to return home to Kempsey over the Christmas break. In later seasons I was able to find some work in Newcastle which allowed me to play a full season and was able to progress to first grade. Changes within the Club is perennial due to new and graduating students, it is perhaps one of the reasons that the club has not been that successful on the field in their performances of late. Change within the structuring of the wicket curating has also seen the club and Sports Union have to develop strategies to keep the cost of playing the game within the reach of students and it is one area that is a real challenge and yet to be fully tested. I sincerely hope that it is not one that changes the Club for the worse.

What have been the highlights for you?

Playing your favourite sport at a top level does provide many highlights. As a bowler any time you get to sneak one through a top order batsman is remembered but perhaps one of my favourite memories was when I was batting and scored 49no in a first grade match which, given my lack of batting prowess and batting at No.10, speaks wonders for the opposition team....



SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR - FINALIST

**MARTIN KELLY
JUDO**

Last year your highlights were winning the nationals, and bronze in the US Open. What's been happening for you since then?

After being selected onto the Olympic Athlete Program, I travelled quite extensively last year. Two training camps in Korea and Japan, and 3 major tournaments. Nationals again, with a disappointing 2nd, then a close loss to the eventual winner of the Oceania Championships to finish 3rd. Capped off the year with the US Open where I finished 5th, which was a solid follow up to the previous year's performance. Unfortunately I also sustained a cartilage tear, so I finished 1998 on the operating table.

What's your training schedule like? How often? How tough?

I'm spending time in Korea to increase my training hours and intensity 2-3 sessions a day, starting with a 6am run/exercises, which is very tough, then 2 hours judo later in the day, and finally a weights session. All this tends to wear down the body a bit, so Sundays is rest day.

In Australia I travel twice per week to Sydney, Mondays is training on the Central Coast at Kido Mingara, and Tuesday nights here at the Uni. Fill in the gaps with runs and weights, all my favourite things.



**SPORTSPERSON OF
THE YEAR - FINALIST**

**SUEANNE TRINDALL
ATHLETICS**

Did you compete at the EAU Games this year?

No. My competition year doesn't start until October and finishes in February so my coach thought it would be best for me not to attend.

What's your training program like?

At the moment I'm in pre-competition phase so my training schedule is pretty hectic and tough. I have 12 sessions a week - some are on the track and some in the gym.

What have been the highlights over the last year or so?

At the world championships I performed a personal best of 12.95 in the 100 metres and a PB of 27.51 in the 200 metres.

In March, I competed in the Grand Prix series in Sydney, Brisbane and Hobart. This was a wonderful experience where we got to meet and watch Kathy Freeman, Matt Shirvington, Kyle Vanderkyp and many others. The biggest highlight this year was the announcement of the Paralympic 2000 training squad. I am on the squad as a medal potential athlete.

What about goals for the future?

My personal goal is to win a medal at the Paralympics in both 100m and 200m.