

# Mount Isa Athletics

## PRESS RELEASE

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It's been a long road for 10 year old Denzil Perkins but it has all been worth it. Denzil is one of the Mount Isa Athletics Club's star sprinters and has recently returned from Penguin in Tasmania where he competed at the Australian Primary Schools National Track and Field Championships and has emerged the 6<sup>th</sup> fastest 10 year old in the Nation.

"Competing at Nationals was an Awesome experience" Denzil said, "I got to compete against the best athletes of my age in Australia"

Even before the first race had started Denzil was making an impact. Every elite primary school athlete in Australia now know about Denzil Perkins from Mount Isa as he was mentioned in the opening ceremony speech noting the dedication and distances travelled by some athletes in their endeavour to compete on the National stage. In a news article published in the Tasmanian Advocate Denzil's mum Vanessa made note that the Perkins family had travelled in the vicinity of 18,500 kilometres in the past twelve months in preparation for this event.

Originally selected to attend the Championships in the 200m and 4 x 100m relay a vacancy opened up for Denzil to also represent Queensland in the 100m. Making the most of the extra opportunity he made a statement by winning his heat and qualifying 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest overall and then qualified 5<sup>th</sup> fastest in the semi finals. His lead up to the 200m finals was very similar. To top off his preparation for the finals he helped Queensland take out 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 10yr boys 4 x 100m relay final giving Denzil what will undoubtedly be the first of many National medals. Denzil's mum could only describe his efforts in the relay as a "Pearla" of a second leg.

Both the 100m and 200m finals saw Denzil get magnificent starts which saw him running in third place in the early stages of both races demonstrating that he was in fact one of the quickest in the field. But as also one of the shortest in the field the longer strides from some of the taller athletes wound him in by race end. Denzil finished both the 100m and 200m in 6<sup>th</sup> place cementing him firmly as the nation's 6<sup>th</sup> fastest 10 year old boy.

"I have been working on my block starts at training here in Mount Isa and the coaches said I'd picked it up really well so I was happy with that" Denzil said. "It's great to have seen what sort of competition I am up against and I am now even more determined to train even harder to do better next year but best of all I got to make some new friends and meet new competitors."

"I was a bit disappointed that I didn't achieve any PB's while I was away but am really pleased with my results"

Not knowing what to expect at Nationals the young star nicknamed "Lightning" at the Mount Isa Club had set himself the goal of making the finals in this his first year of being able to compete on the national stage, a goal that has now been reached. "Next step is top three then hopefully one day, National Champion" the future champion said.

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### CLUB VENUE

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As an added benefit at the end of competition the event organizers conducted some 'not so common' relay races such as mixed (boys and girls) 4 x 200m and 8 x 100m which Denzil was again a proud part of the Queensland teams. Adding to his list of achievements he returned home with a 1<sup>st</sup> place pennant for the 4 x 200m and a 2<sup>nd</sup> for the 8 x 100m.

The athletes at the Championships even got to rub shoulders with some of Australia's best athletes in Steve Hooker, Nova Perris and Brendan Cole when they attended 'Camp Clayton' on the day after the competition finished. The ex-Olympians spoke to the kids on what it's like to be an Olympian and on how they can achieve their goals.

The Perkins family would also like to thank the Mount Isa Businesses and community for the tremendous support and assistance given to them over the past months in Denzil's lead up to Nationals. In Particular they would like to thank Hilton Training, Downer, Fast Scaff, MAS Mechanical, Mount Isa Athletics Club, Sav's Plumbing, MISprints, Robbie Katter MP and Sportspower.

Denzil is already back into training with the Athletics Club's 'Isa A Squad' in preparation for what will undoubtedly be another bumper year for the youngster.