

Melissa Foster

# Flying to new heights



MELISSA Foster is a 'local' girl, born and raised in Perth's Swan Area. CPA qualified, she currently works as the Financial Controller for Auswest Timbers (part of the Brickworks Building Products Group). Some readers will remember her son, Zachary, who recently turned thirteen, competing occasionally as a visitor at club track and field meetings.

As a youngster, Melissa competed with Little Athletics and was good enough at the triple jump to be selected to represent WA in Singapore in 1993. She "*did a little bit of open athletics in 95 and 97*" but much of her time, from the age of four, was spent horse-riding.

After joining MAWA in the 2009/2010 season she says she has never looked back. Her performances have certainly improved remarkably. Although horizontal jumps are her speciality she is willing to have a go at almost everything as



## In focus

With Christine Oldfield

demonstrated by her state records in three consecutive years in the pentathlon. Having started with 1788 points in early 2010 she had raised this to 2389 by 2013.

At Club level she regularly features in the W30 Club Tops for 60m, 100m, long jump and triple jump. Further afield, she has attended all the Nationals since Perth 2010, the Pan Pacific Masters Games twice and the Oceania Championships in Tauranga in 2012. She has accumulated a bundle of medals, most of them gold, over her five events. And for two consecutive years her pentathlon performances in the Nationals were Championship records.

She also holds state records in the triple jump, having broken

Katrina Spilsbury's 1999 mark by 8cm in 2011. This she improved three times and reached a PB of 11.29m at the Nationals in Melbourne in 2012 – a "*stand out*" performance for her. In Melbourne she also equalled her personal best in the long jump with a jump of 5.41m.

By late January this year she had gradually improved this to 5.66m, well above Eileen Hindle's W30 state record of 5.55m from 1982. It is also 1cm more than the current Australian record. Unfortunately it was wind assisted so Melissa can't claim either record. But that surely won't be long in coming.

Melissa has the coming year mapped out with plans to compete in the Masters State Championships, the Nationals in Canberra, the Open State Championships and the World Masters Championships in Porto Alegre, Brasil in October.

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# Enjoyment motivates



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**HER** aim is to extend her personal bests and the ultimate goal would be to achieve close to 6m in the long jump and 12m in the triple jump. She says she would love to complete a heptathlon one day and, and with that in mind, she is currently working on the hurdles. After that she'll have a crack at the high jump. Amazingly, she still finds time for things other than athletics and competes in eventing and mounted games with her horse and pony.

Melissa likes to give something back to her sport and

when her son was doing Little Athletics she was treasurer for Eastern Hills, Greenmount and Ellenbrook LACs. She also assisted at training and was one of the key jump officials at Eastern Hills. Currently she is the treasurer for the WA branch of the Mounted Games Association and she helps with timekeeping and recording at MAWA Tuesday night meetings.

Melissa is motivated by the sheer enjoyment she feels from doing athletics and she says *"I love the friends you make and the camaraderie you experience when competing at nationals and other events."*