



MEDIA INFORMER

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Erin Triumphs Against Odds

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Roseville College Year 6 athlete, Erin Masters, will represent NSW at the Pan Pacific Championships after a successful S7 multi-class meet in the 2017 PSSA Swimming Championships in Homebush.

Erin swam personal best times at the PSSA Championship to place 3rd in 50m Freestyle and 100m Freestyle respectively. She also placed 2nd in 50m Backstroke and 50m Breaststroke (all 11-13 years).

Even beyond the pool, Erin seems to relish the opportunities placed before her; not because they are easy for her, but precisely because they should be *too* hard.



"I have already overcome so much opposition before I enter the pool," she explains, describing how a stroke at 13-months resulted in hemiplegia that limits the physicality of her left-hand-side. "On the surface, it might appear that multi-class competitions are somehow less competitive. But it's not true. In spite of the visible 'disabilities', I know the other swimmers in the pool aren't only focused on competing against me. We are all competing with our own thoughts: the things doctors have said to us, our feelings, our pain and the wrong-belief that, 'I shouldn't even try'."

"When you've had to overcome these things before you even get in the pool, you understand the true strength of your competitors. They are courageous, determined, resilient, compassionate, brave and inspirational. These things actually make multi-class competitions even more competitive – and achievement at this level more significant – once you scratch below the surface," Erin says.

Erin is evidently wise beyond her 11-years and is noticeably considerate towards her peers at Roseville College and in her competitions. She credits both her School and her family for nurturing her when life could otherwise have hardened her, and for establishing in her a broad, positive outlook for the future.

"I am really interested in health and medicine, and I know I can find a niche where I can inspire and help others," adds Erin, who lists obstetrics and competing at the Paralympics among future aspirations. "I have learnt that no one should be made to feel embarrassed for, or ashamed of, who they are. Everyone is equal and has value, and everyone can make a difference."

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Caption: Roseville College Year 6 student, Erin Masters, will compete at the 2017 Pan Pacific Championships.

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