

MORE THAN A PRETTY FACE



Name: Madeline Heiner
Date of Birth: 15/5/87
Place of Birth: Shellharbour, NSW
Sponsors: None...my parents!
Currently living: Sydney
Occupation: Student 1ST year Pharmacy
Height: 174cm
Weight: 52kg

Shoe size: 10
Favourite shoe colour: White and red
Most loved pair of runners: Nike Milers

PB's:
800m: 2:10
1500m: 4:18
3000m: 9:29

When talking about junior athletes you often hear people throwing around the term 'Talented.' Over the years it seems to have lost its value, but when it comes to Madeline's rapid rise to the top of junior athletics in Australia, the word 'Talent' takes on a whole new meaning. R4YL sat down with Madeline for coffee and a chat in between her busy schedule of study and training.

You've done well in various track and cross country distances, but what's your favorite event?

It might sound strange but I like every event equally, but for different reasons. I enjoy track running, 1500m in particular, because you can easily measure your improvement and the races are so intense. But I also really like road and cross country because you can relax and times become almost irrelevant...sometimes it seems as though you can push yourself harder because you don't have a clock constantly reminding you how you're going.

I know you've had a lot of success in the short time you've been in the sport, but what would you consider to be the highlights?

It's difficult to say because there have been so many amazing things happen over the past couple of years and everything is new to me! I would have to say the top three experiences so far would be – Winning the National Under 18 cross country title, competing in the 2004 World Junior Athletics Championships (Grosseto, Italy) and competing in the 2005 World Junior Cross Country Championships. I've learnt a lot from each competition and have met so many great people along the way.

Is it the travel and social side of the sport that keeps you motivated?

I would have to say the social aspect has a major bearing! I do love the travel, but it's the people you meet and become good friends with along the way that makes it such a fantastic sport. Sharing experiences with friends is pretty special...there's also the challenge of pushing yourself...

I knew there was more to it!

Yeah...I'm pretty competitive too! More so against myself than others. I like trying to find where my limit is and the satisfaction

of training and knowing I've achieved something. It definitely beats sitting in front of TV!

What was it that originally got you interested in running?

I played around a bit in primary school, as most kids do, but it wasn't until 2002 when I had a great run at state schools championships and made it to nationals that I realized I could run and that the sport was so much fun. After that I joined a group in Wollongong for casual training and one night David Chisholm saw me running around and said "You can run!" So for the past 18 months he's been coaching me.



It's pretty amazing how far you've come in such a short time! What do you attribute your success to?

I guess hard work and having fun. Also, Dave is so supportive, not just of me, but he likes to see everybody go well. He really understands there's more to life than just running, but he also has a way of keeping me focused without putting any pressure on me. Plus he has gradually increased my workload and kept me injury free ... I guess the main thing is getting the training done consistently and focusing on the long term plan.

What is an average training week for you?

At the moment:
Monday: Rest day.
Tuesday: Light session. 15min warm up, 20min threshold, 15min warm down.
Wednesday: Morning gym session.
Afternoon 40min easy run.
Thursday: 5 x 1km repetitions off 3min recovery.
Friday: Morning gym session. Afternoon 30min easy run.
Saturday: Hills
Sunday: 60min easy run.

So what are you training towards at the moment?

Well, the focus is on improving my strength through the winter and then running well at National Cross. If I run well enough there, and then can manage to run under 9:15 for 3k in summer, I will hopefully be selected in the open women's World Cross Country short course team. Also I want to make World Junior track champs in the 1500m and 3000m.

They're some tough goals you've set yourself!

Yeah, but I believe I can achieve them. You have to set high standards if you want to achieve big things...but as long as I keep improving I'll be happy.

Do you find it hard to maintain your commitment?

Not that much...I have variety in where I train and what I do, plus I'm surrounded by supportive people. The only distraction is Uni...especially at the moment with exams, but training gives me a chance to think about something else and is a bit of a release, so after a days study it's great to get out and have a run. Plus I have fun with the people I run with.

Do you think you are a shot at making the Melbourne Commonwealth Games team?

The chances are pretty slim, but I'd like to think that if training goes well and I maintain my improvement that I could be in the mix come the trials.

Well if your rate of improvement to date is any reflection on the coming season, I'm sure you'll be a chance!

Thanks!

R4YL
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