

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES

TOP 10 YOUNG STARS' OLYMPIC CASH BONUS

Lachlan Onions

Sports Gold Coast has unveiled its 10 up-and-coming athletes who will receive the sponsorships of a lifetime in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic Games.

More than 150 rising Gold Coast sports stars applied, with the final 10 winners set to be provided \$10,000 per year for the seven years leading up to the Brisbane Games.

Sports Gold Coast CEO Geoff Bower was delighted by the support from the Gold Coast community since launching the initiative in June.

"This is a movement powered by belief," he said.

"Grow for Gold has a united community rallying behind our own – giving these athletes the opportunity to chase their Olympic or Paralympic dream, regardless of their financial circumstances."

"And when the world is watching in 2032, we will know the Gold Coast helped get them there."

Sports Gold Coast teamed up with the Aussie Athlete Fund and the City of Gold Coast to help turn this dream into a reality.

"What a time to be part of Gold Coast history with the 10 recipients of Grow for Gold sponsorship announced today," Mayor Tom Tate said.

"This program aligns with our Gold Coast 2032 Legacy Strategy and I am delighted the city is a founding sponsor.

"I also applaud the businesses who have stood up to financially support these wonderful young athletes on their pathway towards 2032."

ASHLEY BRYDEN

Sport: Para Triathlon

Age: 20

Hometown: Biggera Waters

Bryden is an exciting talent who has shown incredible growth in the PTVI (vision impaired) classification over the past 18 months. Her physical and mental strength have helped her become an elite talent and earned high praise from coaches. She has embraced every challenge with a strong mindset as she is always willing to learn, adapt and grow as an athlete. Her dedication to her craft and strength to show up day after day is the embodiment of inclusion, perseverance and passion.

MAGUIRE REID

Sport: Canoe Sprint/Kayak

Age: 21

Hometown: Robina

A rising star who is determined to continue Australia's



Natalia Drobot

Clockwise from main:
Amelie Sanders, Ashley Bryden, Luca Free, Maddie Kelton (centre), Thewbelle Philp and Sarah Nicki.



strong canoe/kayak legacy, Reid has been recognised by the Australian Institute of Sport as a podium potential athlete. He trains at Paddle Australia's National Centre of Excellence at Pizzey Park, which has produced world-class athletes and Olympic champions. Maguire has already experienced competing on the world stage when he has represented Australia at junior and under-23 level and more recently earned selection to compete for the senior Australia team at the ICF World Cups in

Hungary and Poland. The Gold Coaster has all the tools and capability to

make the city and country proud in the LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032 Games.

AMELIE SANDERS

Sport: Cycling

Age: 18

Hometown: Burleigh Waters

The teenage sensation has already made her mark in the track and road cycling scene and is one of the most promising cyclists in the country. She is a fierce competitor who brings unrivalled speed, strength and determination. It has been a breakthrough year for Sanders. The 18-year-old won five Oceania and four national titles to assert herself as a star to watch. Her resilience is unmatched as she has overcome significant health setbacks in the last 18 months to perform as strongly as ever.

XAVIER GILBEE

Sport: Freestyle BMX

Age: 19

Hometown: Worongary

Gilbee is an extreme talent who brings unrivalled courage. He has shown his class in the BMX freestyle world and capped off his meteoric rise to earn his spot in the elite

division. He has represented Australia on the international stage, making finals at various major events. By training alongside Olympic gold medallist Logan Martin, he has every chance of reaching the 2028 Olympics.

ASPEN ANDERSON

Sport: Triathlon

Age: 19

Hometown: Currumbin

Anderson is a highly-touted triathlon star in the making. Her determination, intelligence and competitive nature give her all the key ingredients to make her mark on the world stage. She has developed in the AusTriathlon Ascent Academy and has impressed her coaches with her tactical maturity and precision. She has put in several strong performances for her age that match those of Olympic medallists and is in good stead to make her mark at the 2032 Games.

LUCA FREE

Sport: Rowing

Age: 19

Hometown: Robina

Free's rowing journey began at the age of 14 and he has

quickly captured attention. He is the son of four-time Olympian and Beijing 2008 gold medallist Duncan Free and is determined to follow in the footsteps of his dad. Free is a star at national level having represented the Australian under-19 team at the 2024 World Championships, where he won a bronze medal all while unknowingly competing with a fractured vertebra.

Standing at 6'6" and weighing 98kg, Free is an imposing figure with impressive power.

NATALIA DROBOT

Sport: Canoe sprint/kayak

Age: 20

Hometown: Palm Beach

Another paddle sport star, Drobot has taken the world by storm in her career. She was recognised by the Australian Institute of Sport as a podium potential athlete and has

represented Australia at junior, under-23 and senior levels, taking home World Championship medals at every stage. She trains daily at Pizzey Park alongside Australian greats like Tom Green, Jake Clear and Ken Wallace.

SARAH NICKI

Sport: BMX Freestyle

Age: 18

Hometown: Nerang

Nicki is already a BMX superstar and at just 18 years old is still years away from reaching her prime. She is a multiple-time World Championship finalist, Oceania champion and was the youngest female on the national team. Her technical skills and fearlessness have earned her plenty of plaudits already. Nicki is set to benefit from the Grow For Gold sponsorship as she is balancing multiple jobs all while training at an elite level to fund her international competition schedule.

THEWBELLE PHILP

Sport: Athletics (sprints and relays)

Age: 17

Hometown: Nerang

Australia is set to be a force to be reckoned with at the 2032 Games on the track and field scene with several athletics stars rising through the ranks. Philp is one of the nation's fastest rising sprinters and is the embodiment of raw speed and competitive focus. In last year's Australian All Schools Athletics Championships, she set a stunning time of 11.38 seconds in the under-17 100m to become the third-fastest Australian under-18 female sprinter of all time, behind only superstars Raelene Boyle (11.2) and Torrie Lewis (11.33). Her professionalism and maturity are standout qualities as she continues to work on herself to ensure she is in peak condition to perform at a high level.

MADDIE KELTON

Sport: Wheelchair basketball

Age: 19

Hometown: Pimpama

A Paralympian in the making, Kelton was a star in the inaugural Gold Coast Rollers Women's National Wheelchair Basketball League side in 2025. She has represented Queensland at several Junior National Championships and earned invitations to join the under-25 Australian Devils and the Australian Gliders open-age squads. Kelton has taken every challenge she has faced in her stride and will be one to watch as a rising star.



Xavier Gilbee

Gold Coast Bulletin

SPORT

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SPORTS GOLD
COAST NAMES
ELITE STARS
READY TO

GROW FOR GOLD

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Gold Coast rising star
Maguire Reid. Pic:
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