



THE FORUM®

## media statement

# First motor sport athlete named sportsperson of the year

Kyle Middleton has been named winner of the Sports Person of the Year by the University of Newcastle.

Kyle is currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Business degree and his performances in 2017 include winning the NSW state championship, winning his fifth consecutive Australian Open Championship title and the Australian X-Trial Championship. He represented Australia at the 2017 Trial des Nations, leading Australia to its first gold medal. Kyle is considered the equal most successful trial rider of all time following his successes in 2017.

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The Sports Club of the Year was awarded to the Tennis Club for its attainment of high standards in sports administration and the Team of the Year was awarded to the Women's Basketball team for its outstanding result in 2017.

Alanna Patison (rugby union), Matthew George (tennis), William Brown (athletics) and Guy Walters (athletics) joined more than 237 of Australia's greatest athletes, academics and business people when they were awarded the prestigious *University Blue* for demonstrating outstanding sporting ability when representing the University of Newcastle.

For making an outstanding contribution to the administration and organisation of University sport, University Colours were awarded to Conrad Bond (rowing), James Richardson (cricket), Jason Buffier (rugby union) and Jordan Johnson (scuba diving).

The University and Friends of the University presented eight sport scholarships to students with demonstrated potential currently balancing their academic and sporting pursuits. The Friends of the University Scholarship was awarded to Julia Barton in water polo. The University Sport Scholarships were awarded to Alexander Davies (shooting - target rifle), Cherub Lum (basketball), Alexandra Rees (swimming), Jemma Smith (surf lifesaving), Keenan Derry (barefoot waterski), Jessica Potts (touch football) and Joshua Marshall (hockey).

Rugby Scholarships were presented, recognising the sport as a strong pillar in the University's wider community landscape. The recipients were Kane Murray, Charles Mortimer, Thomas Badger, Hone Edwards, Joseph Kingham and Rylan Gibson.

The inaugural 'Col Whitehead Cricket Scholarship' was named after academic and sportsperson Col in honour to support a student who displays similar characteristics and a commitment to University Cricket. The scholarship was awarded to Colby Gallagher.

The University of Newcastle Sports Awards recognise exceptional sporting achievement and are managed and presented by Newcastle University Sport (NUsport), which manages the health and fitness facilities, The Forum University and The Forum Harbourside.

The event this year also served to celebrate the work behind the scenes of sport. Master of Ceremonies and well known sports commentator, Gerry Collins led a panel discussion with Lawrie McKinna (Newcastle Jets), Helene O'Neill (Sports Commentator), Warren Smith (Surfest), Jane Moran (Water Polo Australia and Olympic Medalist) and Chris Hicks (NUsport) who spoke about the significant role of business in sport.

NUsport CEO, Mr Chris Hicks, congratulated the University of Newcastle's 28 students, five clubs and five teams.

...more

### UNIVERSITY | HARBOURSIDE

Newcastle University Sport (NUsport)

Head Office: The Forum Sports & Aquatic Centre

University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308

P 02 4921 7001 F 02 4921 7005

[www.theforum.org.au](http://www.theforum.org.au) ABN 67 096 090 372 ACN 096 090 372



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'Each one adds great value to our university and its community by matching a healthy mind in a healthy body here and on the world stage,' he said.

'Importantly, we also pay tribute to the role of people who work behind the scenes to ensure that sport is accessible at the University and within the wider community,' Mr Hicks said.

### Award details

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### University of Newcastle Sports Person of the Year

#### **Kyle Middleton – motorcycling**

Kyle is enrolled in a Bachelor of Business degree. Kyle participates in the motorcycle discipline of trials and has represented Australia on an international level.

- NSW State Championship 2017
- Australian X-Trial Championship
- Crowned Australian Open Champion five years running
- Selected for the Australian team for the world cup of trials: Trial des Nations 2017. Kyle lead the team first gold medal of the event, winning the international trophy.
- Equal most successful trial rider of all time following his successes in 2017.

### University of Newcastle Sports Club of the Year

The University of Newcastle Tennis Club

### University of Newcastle Team of the Year

The University of Newcastle Women's Basketball Team

### University of Newcastle Blues

#### **Alanna Patison – rugby union – Bachelor of Teaching (Health & Physical Education)**

Alanna is a two-time medal winner at Australian University Games, leading the UON Women's Rugby Sevens team to Silver in 2015 and Bronze in 2017. She was selected in the 2015 Australian University Games Green & Gold merit team for Rugby Sevens. Alanna has competed internationally in the 15s and 7s. In 2016, she played for the Australian Wallaroos in a two-test series against New Zealand and for the Australian Unirooms at the World University Rugby Sevens Championship in Wales. She was also named coach of the Australian Deaf Rugby Sevens Team that competed in April this year.

#### **Matthew George – tennis – Bachelor of Psychology (Class II, Division I Honours)**

Matthew has consistently contributed to the success of the University's Men's Tennis Team. In 2014 he played as number 2 in the UON team winning Gold in Division 2 at the Australian University Games, securing UON a Division 1 placing for 2015. The following year he was awarded a Sport Scholarship and played number 1 at both the Eastern and Australian University Games, winning a Silver Medal at the EUG. In 2016 and 2017 Matthew again played number 1 at the Australian University Games. On both occasions he

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was selected in the Australian University Games Green & Gold Merit Team. Matthew has won the UON Open singles and doubles club championships for the last 2 years.

### **William Brown – athletics – Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) / Bachelor of Engineering (Mechatronics)**

William has performed exceptionally in his chosen athletic discipline of Hammer Throw. In 2016 he placed 2nd at the NSW Athletics Championships and 9th at the Australian Athletics Championships. In 2017 he placed 6th at the Australian Championships and again went one better in 2018, placing 5th. In 2017 he won AUG Gold, throwing a personal best and Commonwealth Games 'B' Qualifier of 65.30m. He also won Bronze in the shot put and placed 5th in the discus at the same event. His commitment to the UON team was highlighted when he stepped in for the Men's 4x100m relay, helping the team record an 8th-place finish. William's throw at the Australian University Games ranked him as the fourth-best Australian hammer thrower in 2017.

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### **Guy Walters – athletics – Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) (Honours)**

Guy has performed outstandingly in cross country and distance running having won more medals in the Australian University Distance Running Championships than any other University of Newcastle student. He has medalled at the Australian University Distance Running Championships on five occasions. Guy was a Gold Medallist in the 10km event in 2013 and in the half-marathon in 2014. He won Bronze in the 10km in 2014, 2015 and 2016 at the Gold Coast Marathon Festival leg of the University Championships.

## University of Newcastle Colours

### **Conrad Bond – rowing – Bachelor of Business / Bachelor of Commerce**

Conrad joined the Newcastle University Boat Club in 2011 as a talented junior rower. A strong competitor with a thorough knowledge of the sport, he quickly took on administrative roles with the club, serving in various capacities over a period of five years. In 2012 he was elected as Treasurer and has since held office in positions of Boat Captain (2013), President (2014 and 2015) and Secretary (2016). His commitment to service was recognised when he was awarded the club's 'Godfrey Tanner Medal' in 2012 for his efforts on the committee, fleet maintenance work, coaching and trailer towing.

### **James Richardson – cricket – Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) / Master of Business Administration**

James' involvement with University Cricket began when he was an undergraduate student in 1989. He served on the Club's committee from 2001-2007. James developed the club's electronic and printed newsletter, improving communication, raising player profiles, sharing statistics and news. James held a number of roles including club captain, information, disciplinary committee member and logistics and equipment officer.

### **Jason Buffier – rugby union - Bachelor of Commerce**

Jason played for University Rugby as a student in the early '90's before graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce in 1992. He returned to the Hunter years later and was quick to offer his service to the club in an administrative role at a time when the club was facing a number of challenges. He was nominated for the position of Vice-President, which he held from 2013-2015 and integrated a renewed focus on governance and communication. His diligence and professionalism contributed to Rugby being named Club of the Year in 2015. He remained on the Club Committee in 2016 and 2017 in the establishment of the University Rugby Foundation and development of the University Rugby Scholarship scheme.

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### **Jordan Johnson – scuba diving – Bachelor of Computer Science (Distinction) / Bachelor of Engineering (Computer) (Honours Class I)**

After joining the Diving Club in 2012 as an Advanced Open Water Diver, Jordan was elected Vice-President in the following year where he served for two years before taking on the Club's Presidency in 2015. He held the Presidency until relocating to Canberra in early 2018. He had significant input into the production of 'Generation Governance' club training module and led the club's transition to better management solutions through the adoption of 'Tidy HQ'. The professionalism in his communication and documentation is first class and was significant in the club being awarded UON Club of the Year in 2014. Jordan continues to support the club, despite the distance, in his current role of Treasurer.

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**For information: Roxana Olivares – Director Programs, NU sport 4921 7004 or 0418 257 978**

The University of Newcastle Sports Awards are proudly supported by



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