



# Megan's dream to share medal magic

PORT Macquarie's Megan Kuhn is at the top of her field.

The 22-year-old hairdresser represented Australia at the WorldSkills International Competition in Calgary, Canada, recently – and came back an Aussie champ.

The member of Australia's 26-strong "Skillaroos" was awarded a Medallion of Excellence when she placed ninth in the ladies' and men's hairdressing division at the bi-annual competition.

That placing is the highest achieved by an Australian competitor in that division.

Now that the hair-raising hype has settled, the Port News caught up with the Vanessa's Hair Fashion stylist.

Megan said she was overwhelmed by the scale of the event.

"I couldn't believe how big it was – it was just like the Olympics."

Fifty-one countries were represented at the competition, which attracted enormous spectator interest.

But the big crowds didn't faze the young hairdresser.

"I was very focused on what

I had to do.

"I didn't really think about how many people were watching until after I finished competing."

Megan has completed 12 months' solid training under the guidance of North Coast Institute of TAFE Port Macquarie campus full-time hairdressing teacher Donna Demaria.

Now she hopes to be able to help Australia's next stars.

"I want to help train the regional finalists in the national competition next year, and then work with the winner to help them prepare for the next international event."

WorldSkills International is a not-for-profit association open to agencies or bodies responsible for promoting vocational education and training.

This year was the 40th time the competition had been held.

Australia hosted the international event in 1988.

The next WorldSkills International competition will be held in London in 2011.

Ms Demaria is the "Skillaroos" Australian expert and trainer.

"Megan was extremely dedicated and self-motivated," Ms Demaria said.

"She was very committed to training and was the perfect candidate.

Some of Megan's competitors had been training for up to five years full-time to compete at the event.

And Megan recommends the competition to others.

"Not only has it improved my skills in the salon, it has taken me to some great places."

The competition has taken Megan to Canada, New Zealand, France and Finland.

She travelled to Canberra with her mentor, Ms Demaria, for a welcome home party for the Skillaroos this week.

Deputy Prime Minister and the federal Education and Training Minister, Julia Gillard, hosted the party.

Next week the pair will meet NSW education and training minister, Verity Firth.

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□ **Cut above the rest:** Port Macquarie's Megan Kuhn returned from Canada with some bling.  
Pic: NIGEL McNEIL