



New Zealand's Lester Laughton competes in the hammer throw at Marrara

Picture: JUSTIN KENNEDY

# Darwin games a masterly event

## GREY MORRIS

DARWIN'S first staging of the National Masters Athletics Championships was given a big thumbs up from Queensland runner Julie Brims.

The 51-year-old dominated the sprint races in her division yesterday, winning gold in the 60 metres, 100m and 200m events before claiming the champion of champions title by winning the handicap race.

"I was near the two back markers with everybody else in front and managed to finish first," an elated Brims told the NT News.

"I came close to winning last year as a back marker when I lost by 100th of a second, but this year was my time when I ran an 11.09 second time.

A masters athlete for 15 years, Brims wasted no time when signing up for the Darwin nationals when word got

around the Top End would host the event.

"I actually booked my airfare and accommodation a year ago to make sure I got here," she said.

"It's warm but not too hot, unlike our summer in Brisbane where it is quite humid and uncomfortably hot, but here it is very nice."

The championships had an international flavour with Singapore athletes Matthew Lim and Sky Khoo winning medals in the 5000, 1500 and 800m races.

Both made their debut at Arafura Stadium, Lim winning bronze in the 5000m and Khoo claiming both the gold medals in the middle distance races.

Khoo heads to Melbourne tomorrow to train with the Victorian Institute of Sport.

"The air in Darwin is thinner than Singapore, which took some adjusting to, but

otherwise I felt very good out there," he said.

Athletics NT president Kevin Mulvahil said his organisation had shown it was capable of hosting an international event in the form of the Arafura Games.

"We've had 600 athletes competing over three days, so it's certainly been very intense," he said.

"Now we can go away and see how we can do things better for Arafura 2019. We've covered all aspects of athletics, and it's much harder covering multiple age groups as compared to an open, development or junior event.

"There has been a few hiccups, but we can address them and be ready to host the return of the Arafura Games and events like them."

Day 4 continues today with walking, pentathlon and field events until the closing ceremony about 5pm.

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