

Blue blood Emma swims off to Youth Olympics

By ADRIAN WARREN

SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD Emma McKeon has already beaten her well-performed mum's best time and now she's aiming to continue her famous family's swimming exploits at the inaugural Youth Olympic Games.

Wollongong schoolgirl Emma is the daughter of dual Olympian Ron McKeon and Susie Woodhouse, who competed at the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games.

As if those swimming bloodlines weren't impressive enough, her uncle Robert Woodhouse represented Australia at two Olympics and three Commonwealth Games, winning a 400m individual medley bronze medal at the 1984 Olympics.

Emma was named yesterday in the Australian swim squad for the Youth Olympics (YOG) in Singapore in August, with more than half the total Australian team of 100 now announced.

With her parents running a swim school, Emma needed no encouragement to pursue the sport.



Hot talent: Emma McKeon (second from left) with father Ron McKeon, Olympic champion Leisel Jones and mum Susie Woodhouse. Emma attends The Illawarra Grammar School.

national swimming in the 1970s was on a much smaller scale than that which his daughter will shortly experience.

"Just three of us went to the Canada Cup in Calgary before we went to Edmonton to the Commonwealth Games in 1978, so really there was no structured youth development or anything like that," McKeon recalled.

"As soon as you made it (into the Australian team) you were on and away you went. I was certainly very naive going into the national teams at the time."

Both McKeon and present Olympic 100m breastroke champion Leisel Jones urged the talented teenager to try to enjoy the experience of competing at the YOG.

Other youngsters named in the team yesterday also come from strong sporting families.

Among them are hockey player Andrew Butturini, whose older sibling Matthew plays for the Kookaburras, and K1 1000m canoeist Scott Smith, the younger brother of 2008 K4 1000m Olympic representative David.

to achieve my goals like they did," Emma said.

In one sense, The Illawarra Grammar School student has already surpassed her mum.

"She (Emma) wanted to ensure that she could knock off Susie's

100m butterfly time, which she just did at the recent national championships, that was probably one of the great milestones of Emma's swimming career already," Ron McKeon said.

McKeon's introduction to inter-