

## **GOOD SIGNS FOR AUSTRALIAN LIFTERS AT WEIGHTLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Veteran Damon Kelly and two of the future stars of Australian weightlifting have won gold on day two of the Australian Weightlifting Championships in Hobart.

Kelly, a two-time Olympian and a Commonwealth Games gold medallist, easily won the men's super heavyweight title, despite a limited preparation because of injury and the birth of his third son.

Kelly lifted 155 in the snatch and 190 in the clean and jerk, for a total of 345kg.

"I'm just coming back from a quad strain which I did earlier in the year, so I've just been loading up slowly, bit-by-bit," Kelly said.

"My wife gave birth to little baby Jonathon, our third boy, a couple of weeks ago so it's been pretty hectic getting it all.

"Now that the baby is here hopefully we'll get a good routine going and I'll get back to work and back into training. It's pretty busy, but there's nothing I can do to not make it busy so I'll have to do my best to keep training and keep pushing forward.

"I know there will be some stiff competition out there now, some good young super heavyweights in the Commonwealth, but it is still the challenge for me to get back up to my best after injury and personal changes."

World Junior bronze medallist, Kiana Elliott, and Pacific Games gold medallist, Philippa Malone won the 63 and 69kg women's titles respectively.

Elliott needed to set a personal best to see off a challenge by 2012 Olympian, Seen Lee, and said she is focussed on qualifying for her first Commonwealth Games next year.

"I'm pretty happy with my performance," she said.

"It's not my absolute best, but I made a PB in my clean and jerk which is pretty sweet.

"It will be huge. It's definitely the goal, so all my resources this year will be going towards that.

"I have ideas of what I'm capable of. I'm definitely trying to get the best out of myself for the rest of the year."

Malone is settling into weightlifting after moving from cross-fit, but believes it was a different sport that has equipped her best for her current endeavours.

"I'm really happy, the training has really paid off and I've finally found a competition ritual that works for me," Malone said.

“I was a gymnast for 20 years, so weightlifting training is a lot like my gymnastics days, where there is a lot of repetition and trying to perfect it.

“Getting to the Gold Coast would mean everything, that’s my goal, that’s what we are working towards, so I’m looking towards December and the trials now and putting everything into it to make that spot.”

The 2017 Australian Weightlifting Championships conclude tomorrow.