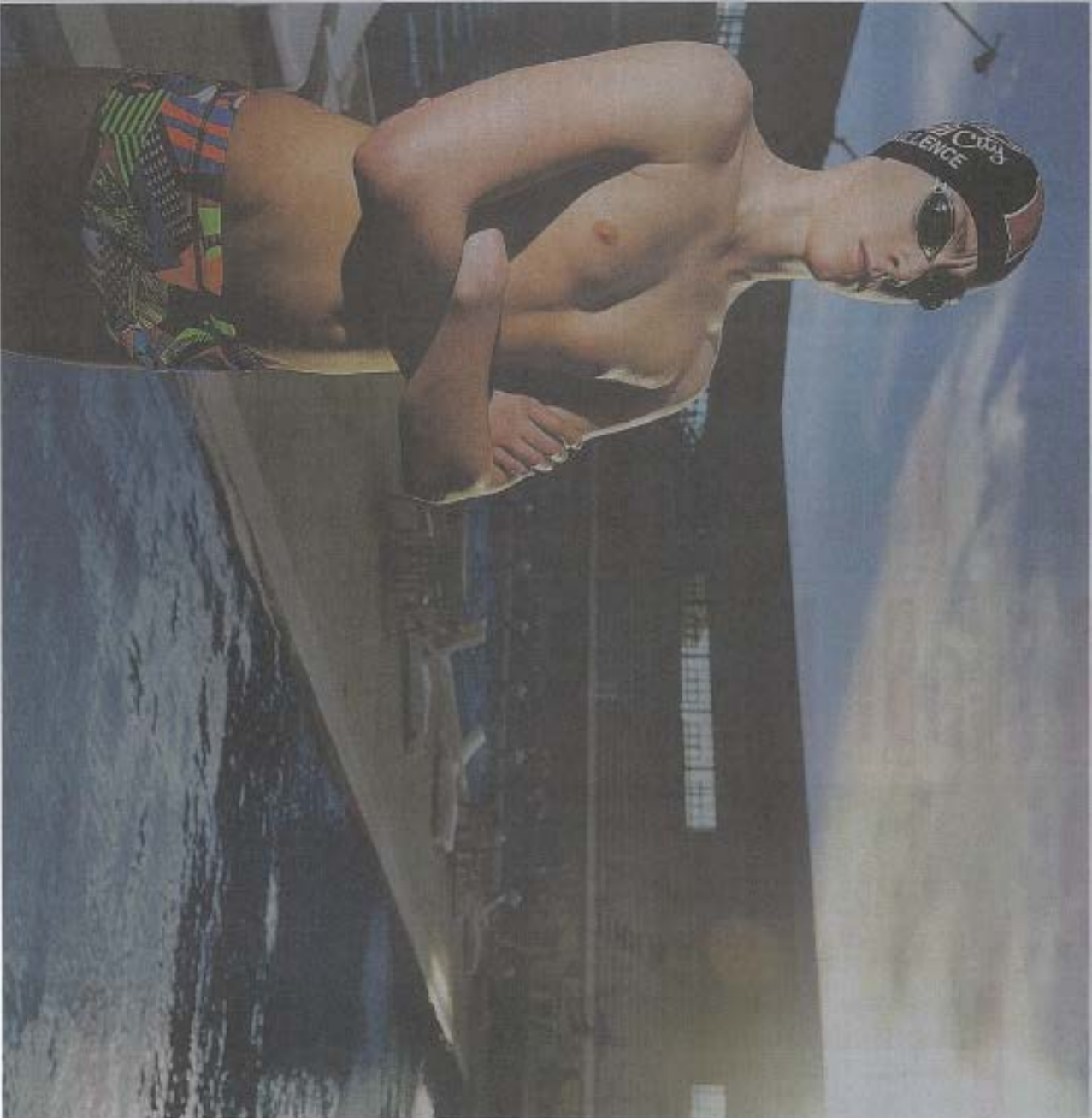


Silence the swimming sensation



FOR years, Raife Silence has been in the fast lane, but this month the swimming sensation took it to another level when he was announced Swimming WA's Junior Swimmer of the Year.

The award is given to a swimmer, 12 years or under, who has performed well at state or national level over the past year.

The 12-year-old Murdoch College student has done exactly that, winning a haul of medals at each swimming meet, breaking state records and competing in his first national competition this year.

"In January, I competed in the 13-year-old section at the Swim WA State Open and Age Long Course Championships winning six gold medals, one silver and achieved three national qualifying times and broke two state records," he said.

Raife said he had his first swim lesson at the age of five when his parents moved to the country.

"The only reason my parents got me lessons was because we were emigrating from the UK to Australia and they knew that my sister and I would need to be good swimmers if we wanted to enjoy the beaches in Perth and keep safe," he said.

In the pool up to eight times a week, Raife is now focusing on the Swim WA State Open and Age Championships in July.

"My ultimate goal is to win a medal at an Olympic Games," he said.

"I know that this will take a lot of commitment but you have to have a dream so that you can keep crawling out of bed at 1.30am, especially in the winter when it's dark and cold."

Read more about Raife Silence on pages 5

SOME OF RAIFE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

- Started swimming at the age 5. Won first state title at the age of 9.
- Named 2013 WA Junior Swimmer of the Year.
- Competed in first National Competition in 2013 and broke two state records.
- Competed in the 13-year-old section at the Swim WA State Open & Age Long Course Championships winning 6 gold and 1 silver.
- January 2013 broke a 30-year-old state record in the 400m freestyle.