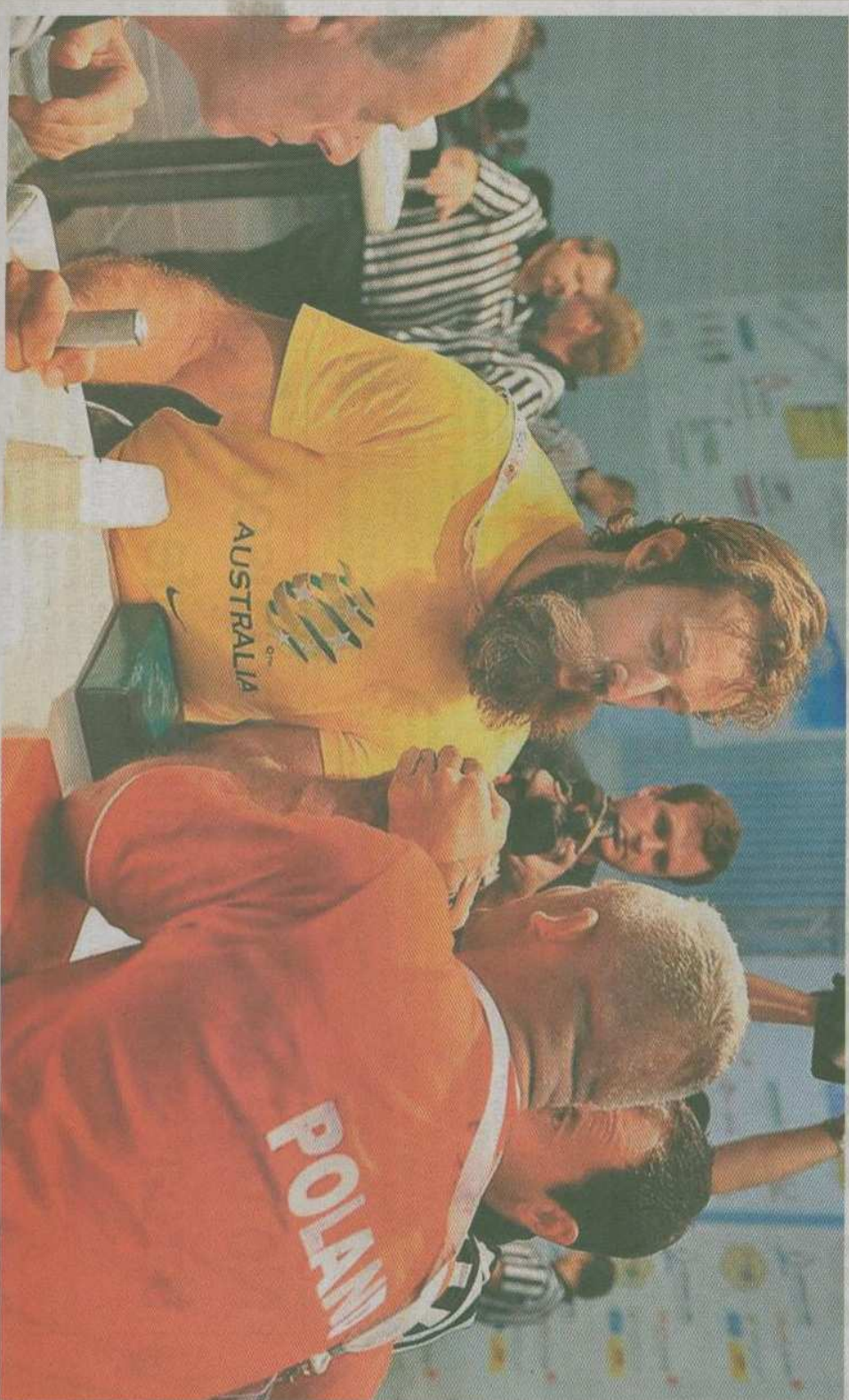


# FRASER COAST Chronicle

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2009

[www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au](http://www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au)

\$1.20



## Sam puts his best bicep forward

MORE than 3000 bulky forearmers, almost 50 different nationalities and ultimately a place in the world's elite top 10.

Hervey Bay's Sam Sathuri got to grips with the competition when he represented Australia at the World Arm-Wrestling Championships in Italy.

The Fraser Coast property developer felt bound to make a good fist of it when he realised his country was not represented at the Olympics of arm-wrestling.

He wants the event to be staged on the Fraser Coast in 2011 after Las Vegas next year.



NO ARM IN HAVING A GO: Hervey Bay property developer Sam Saffuri gave the World Arm-Wrestling Championships a go and his arms are now ranked 10th and 11th in the world.

# Sam's guns dangerous enough for world top 10



**PETER CHAPMAN**

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WHEN you go overseas it's usually to give yourself a break and discover new parts of the world.

Hervey Bay property developer Sam Saffuri had his break recently in Rosolina, Italy, but what he got up to was not what you would class as a holiday.

Sam went to Italy to be Australia's sole representative at the biggest ever World Arm-Wrestling Championships.

And he certainly did Australia proud in a competition involving more than 1600 representatives from 47 countries.

Despite only having four months training for the event Sam beat arm-wrestlers from the USA, Canada, South Africa and Poland, to name a few. His perfor-

mance now sees him ranked 10th in the world for his right arm and 11th for his left arm in the Master Men's 80kg category, a fantastic effort in anyone's books.

"Although this was the first arm-wrestling competition that I have ever attended let alone competed in, I always thought that I had the ability to do well in the sport," Sam said.

"I felt it was my duty to put my hand up to represent my country. The competitors from the other countries were selected through months of national competitions, with the best athlete qualifying to represent their country on the world stage. I was delighted to compete amongst athletes of such a calibre."

Sam heard about the competition in May this year and started training straight away.

With thanks to the perfect climate in Hervey Bay, making conditions ideal, he had four months of daily training.

"This trip has illustrated to me

how much the international world likes and welcomes Australians," he said.

"I have been treated like a celebrity, with people taking photos of me wearing my Australian uniform. I was also interviewed by international media and, to top it off, I found pictures of myself arm wrestling in the Italian newspapers.

"Prior to going to Italy I thought I would be able to sweep first place. My opinion soon changed after arriving at the competition and seeing and talking to these dedicated athletes, with their amazing arms. It became apparent to me that I had quite a job in front of me to win any matches at all.

"My amateur approach was hard to hide. I received warnings and fouls from the referees, due to fundamental mistakes that these professionals would laugh at. Not reaching first place has been a disappointment in the eyes of my children but it has

amazed the arm-wrestling community knowing that this is my first competition with no experience prior to this; I had never before this seen an arm-wrestling table."

Sam said the highlight of his trip was when each country had to hold a sign with the country name on it and march across the stage like in the Olympic Games.

"The average team had 35 competitors and here I was, alone, holding the Australian sign as high as I could - what an honour."

Sam has also done his bit to try to foster a tourism opportunity for the Fraser Coast by suggesting to the President of the World Arm-Wrestling Federation, Fred Roy, that the Coast would be a great location for future events.

"The 2010 World Arm-Wrestling Championships will be held in Las Vegas USA, but we can put Hervey Bay on the world stage in 2011 if our community likes the idea."