

Rashid Kabba

D.O.B. 13/10/2005

Coach: Dan Suchy, Hayden Kovacic, Shane Castlereagh (LJ)

Occupation: Student year 10 Westfields Sports

Club: Joined Westfields A.C. 2017/18 season

Honours:

Little A's Australian Record U12 200m

Little A's Australian Meet Record U13 100m

Little A's Australian Meet record U13 80m hurdles

2019 Australian Junior Champion, U15 100m hurdles

2019 Australian Little A's Champion U13 100m, 200m, L.J., 80m hurd.

2019 NSW Junior Champion 100m, 200m, long jump, 100m hurdles

2019 NSW CHS Record 14 years 100m hurdles

2019 Adhemar Ferreira da Silva scholarship

2019 Little A's McDonalds Scholarship

2020 NSW All Schools Record 110m hurdles

2021 Australian U17 200m Champion

2021 Australian U17 110m Hurdles Champion

2021 World U20 selection Australian team 4x100 (100m)

2021 (Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May) World Ranking U17: 100m number 3, 200m number 3, 110m hurdles number 1



Progression

Year (age)	100	200	Long jump	Hurdles
2016 (11 years)	12.59	30.22		
2017 (12 years)	13.48	26.55		
2018 (13 years)	12.32	25.14	5.23	12.79 (90)
2019 (14 years)	11.26	22.74	6.39	13.09 (100)
2020 (15 years)	10.98	22.33	6.86	12.94 (100)
2021 (16 years)	10.72	21.80	6.74	13.97 (110)

International Championships

2021 Oceania Invitation (World U20 Champs cancelled due to Covid 19)

100m 10.81 (1.6) 2nd all age timed final Meet 1

4x100m Oceania select team 2nd 41.59

100m 10.90 (1.2) 8th all aged timed final Meet 2

4x100m Australia U20 DNF

National Championships:

2017 Pacific Schools Games Adelaide

100m 7th 12.57 (heat 12.55)

4x100m Silver 48.96

2019 Australian Junior Championships, SOPAC

100m 4th 11.70 -0.4, (heat 11.86 -0.2)

200m Silver medal 23.60 -1.8 (heat 23.63 -0.5)

100m hurd. Gold 13.88 0.6 (heat 14.20 0.3)

Long Jump Silver 5.95m (-0.6)

4x100m 4th 44.36

4x200m 4th 1.32.84

2019 Australian Little A's teams Championships, Hobart

80m hurd. Gold 11.86 NWI (heat 11.90 NWI)

100m Gold 11.43 NWI (heat 11.78 NWI)

200m Gold 23.79 NWI (heat 23.47 NWI)

4x100 Gold 47.07

Long Jump Gold 6.06 NWI

2019 Australian All Schools Perth

100m Hurdles 5th 13.67 1.6 (heat 13.09 0.6)

2021 Australian Junior Championships

100m U20 Bronze 10.91 (-0.3), heat 10.89 (0.9)

100m U17 Silver 11.03 (-2.2), heat 11.20 (-3.1)

200m U17 Gold 21.80 (-0.9), heat 22.34 (-0.1)

110 Hurd U17 Gold 13.97 (1.4), heat 14.76 (0.8)

4x100 U17 Silver 42.18 (2nd leg)

NSW Championships**2016 Little A's State Championships**

100m U10 Bronze 14.21 NWI (heat 14.21 NWI)

200m U10 heat 31.37 NWI

2016 PSSA State Championships

100m 17th 11yo 13.82 NWI

2017 PSSA State Championships

100m 12yo Bronze 12.39 NWI (heat 12.42 NWI, sf 12.67 NWI)

Long Jump 12yo 7th 4.89

2017 NSW Little A's State Championships

100m U11 Gold 13.27 NWI (heat 13.26 NWI)

200m U11 Gold 26.55 NWI (heat 26.57 NWI)

60m Hurd. U11 Silver 9.65 NWI (heat 9.98 NWI)

Long Jump U11 Silver 4.73 NWI

2018 NSW Little A's State Championships

100m U12 Gold 12.41 NWI (heat 12.45 NWI)

200m U12 Gold 23.47 Australian U12 LA record (heat 25.49 NWI)

60m Hurd. Gold 9.33 NWI (heat 9.39 NWI)

Long Jump U12 Silver 5.23

2018 NSWCHS State Championships

100m 13 4th 11.84 3.9 1.0 (heat 12.19 1.0)

200m 13 4th 24.66 -0.8 (heat 24.94 -0.5)

90m Hurd. 13 Gold 12.79 NWI (heat 13.74 0.8)

4x100 13 7th 51.11

2018 NSW All Schools

100m 13 Bronze 12.30 -1.0 (heat 12.31 -2.5)

200m 13 4th 24.16 0.4 (heat 24.11 2.1)

90m Hurd. 13 Bronze 12.93 1.5 (heat 12.67 (-0.3))

Long Jump 13 6th 5.10 1.8

2019 NSW Junior Championships

100m U15 Gold 11.55 2.4 (heat 11.83 2.1)

200m U15 Gold 23.72 -0.4 (heat 24.49 -1.6)

100m Hurd. U15 Gold 13.90 2.5

Long Jump U15 Gold 5.77 (0.1)

2019 NSWCHS State Championships

100m 14 Silver 11.42 -0.1(heat 11.36 0.5)

200m 14 Bronze 23.15 0.1 (heat 23.51 1.5)

100m 14 Hurd. Gold 13.38 1.6 CHS record (heat 13.66 1.0) CHS record

Long Jump 14 Gold 6.36 -1.2

4x100 14 Gold 45.96 (heat 45.42 CHS record)

2019 NSW All Schools

100m 14 DQ, (heat 11.72 -1.3)

200m 14 Bronze 22.74 -1.3 (heat 23.57 2.1)

100m Hurd Gold 13.43 -1.2, (heat (13.52 0.9))

Long Jump Bronze 6.17 3.9

2020 NSW Junior Championships

100m U16 Gold 11.40 (0.5), heat 11.28 (-1.3)

200m U16 Bronze 22.69 (2.0), (heat 23.63 0.0)

100m Hurd Gold 13.19 (-2.0)

Long Jump Gold 6.33 (0.0)

2020 NSW All Schools

100m 15 Bronze 10.98 (1.1), heat 11.08 (1.3)

200m 15 Silver 22.33 (-0.1), heat 22.90 (-0.6)

100m Hurd 15 Gold 12.94 (1.9) NSW All Schools record, heat 13.51 (-0.4)

Long Jump 15 Gold 6.50 (NWI)

2021 ACT Championships

100m U17 Gold 10.05 (0.8), heat 11.17 (0.8)

110m Hurd U17 Gold 14.04 (0.8)

Long Jump U17 Silver 6.35 (0.0)

2021 NSW Junior Championships

100m U17 Gold 10.72 (1.2), U17 heat 10.92 (1.8)

200m U17 Gold 22.49 (-1.3), heat 23.22 (-1.7)

110m Hurd U17 Gold 14.01 (1.2)

Long Jump U17 Silver 6.26 (0.8)

Brief History

There was a lot of 'buzz' amongst our athletes when it was discovered Rashid Kabba had applied for Westfields. It was during the 2017 Little A's Region and State Championships. It was apparent from observing his performances that even though the times and distances were impressive nevertheless he was extremely raw. His hurdling technique was non-existent as he awkwardly 'jumped' over the hurdles, however his recovery speed between the obstacles was outstanding. In the sprints his start was also awkward. Despite this there was no denying his incredible natural speed that would overcome all the errors in his style.

Rashid would shortly after breeze through the testing day at Westfields and was accepted into the program. Unlike Aleks Stoilova who was also accepted at the same time he was not asked to start training right away and contest the 2018 NSW Juniors. No-one would know if Rashid would have been successful being thrown into the Juniors unprepared, but as it turned out we probably made the right decision to wait.

His first opportunity to compete wearing the Westfields colours came at the 2018 Nitro which was an exhibition event held alongside the Australian Championships. He displayed his unbelievable enthusiasm to win at all costs and won every event he contested. However the rest of 2018 would become a learning curve for Rashid. He had just won the NSW Little A's State titles in 100m, 200m and hurdles however upon arriving at high school he found himself having to compete for the first time against athletes his actual age. This is an anomaly that unfortunately exists with Little A's where often athletes are categorised one or two years younger than they actually are. Combining this with Rashid's desire to 'win at all costs' it would indeed be a difficult year that required much patience. For the remainder of 2018 Rashid would only manage to win one State title when he tied for the Gold medal at the NSW CHS in 90m hurdles.

Rashid would now work on his form and technique and patiently wait for his next opportunity to excel which would come early in 2019. Rashid's main technique issue was relatively low hips and exaggerated forward lean when he was at full speed. In hurdling he would learn to negotiate the hurdles correctly. However all this was done by limited training sessions. Rashid was not accustomed to a regular training regime and most of 2019 would see only two track sessions per week to prevent injury. Accordingly, Rashid contested the 2019 NSW Junior Championships with only 6 hurdle training sessions and only a few more in long jump. He had worked more on his running technique and this would become his secret weapon at the State titles. Rashid went on to win 4 Gold from 4 events (100, 200, hurdles & LJ) and was especially impressive in the 100m hurdles where his still-raw technique recorded the fastest time in Australia that season.

Finally, Rashid was competing against athletes his age and was winning. The 4 wins at the NSW Juniors were all P.B.'s and now the decision had to be made would he be able to do all 4 events at the Australian Juniors. The decision was made to contest all 4 events and that would mean 9 events in 4 days; a tall order indeed. Rashid would finish in 4th place with a P.B. only a tenth from victory in one of the most exiting national 100m finals ever where the Gold was shared in a dead heat. The Hurdles would be Rashid's best performance when he won the 100m hurdles in a dominant victory and a new P.B time of 13.88. A silver medal then followed in the Long Jump with another personal best leap of 5.96m. Then, after 8 events he would run his last race the final of the 200m. It was a courageous effort and the extremely fatigued Rashid took Silver with a fourth P.B.

The 2018-19 season ended with one of the most convincing displays ever witnessed when Rashid was chosen to represent NSW at the Australian Little A's U13 Championships. Once again Rashid would be competing against younger athletes but this time it wouldn't really matter. Even though he won 4 out of 4 events repeating his NSW Junior performances they would all be personal best times. Rashid set a new Australian Best Performance in the 100m and 80m hurdles. He was clearly the outstanding athlete of the meet.

After a rest at the end of the 2018-19 season Rashid did the impossible and scored another 4 P.B.'s at the 2019 Westfields Sports School Carnival, just 3 months after his 4 P.B.'s in Hobart. In conditions that were less than reasonable with rain and slight head winds Rashid bettered his best in 100m, 200m, 100m hurdles and Long Jump. From a coaching point of view this can be a worry

when an athlete is performing so well so early in the season with the fear of peaking too soon. So, it was even more worrying when Rashid in August did another 4 personal bests at the SSW Region Championships. Including the relay Rashid broke all 5 SSW Regional records with the most impressive being 11.26 in the 100m (old record 11.74) and 22.97 in the 200m (old record 23.74) The 2019 NSWCHS State Championships one month later would see both outstanding performances and personal disappointments. In his 5 events (100, 200, 100 hurdles, long jump and 4x100) Rashid would come home with 3 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze medals and 3 NSWCHS State records. The 100m hurdles was one of the most outstanding performances ever witnessed as he broke the State Record in the heats and then again in the final; 13.66 in the heat and a sizzling 13.38 in the final despite having knocked down two hurdles in the process. Another convincing victory in the long jump with a new P.B. of 6.39 into a slight headwind. However a slight mishap in the 200m where he stumbled on his 3rd and 4th strides resulted in a Bronze medal and an average time. The 100m was looking to become a 4th victory with Rashid leading from the starting blocks until a slight lapse in concentration with 20 metres to go and he had to settle for the Silver medal. The 5th event was a bonus when the well-trained boys 14 relay team broke the State record in the heats and won the final by a 30 metres margin.

The 2019 NSW All Schools would have its share of ups and downs, Rashid would be responsible for his first ever false start (disqualification) in the 100m final. He would redeem himself with a personal best performance in the 200m and taking home Gold in hurdles and Bronze in 200m and long jump. The good news would be with selection only available for the top two in each event, Rashid would travel to Perth for the Australian All Schools in one event only, giving him the advantage of not having to contest 9 events as he did at his last Nationals. It certainly worked when in the heat of the 100m hurdles Rashid ran the fastest time in Australia in almost 20 years by a 14 year-old. However, the final would see nerves take over and Rashid hesitated his striding pattern to the first hurdle and forcing him to hurdle the entire race on the wrong lead leg. He finished 5th in the final. The only consolation was that his 13.09 in the heat would have easily won the final even though the final had stronger tail winds. Rashid (14) had competed up an age group in the U16 event, and despite the misjudgement in the final he nevertheless finished 2019 as the number one athlete on the National Rankings.

2020 Nationals were cancelled due to the COVID 19 shut-down. Rashid was obviously disappointed at not being able to defend his National Title in the 100m hurdles. He had worked hard since the Australian All Schools mishap. At the NSW Juniors, he easily won the hurdles and did P.B.'s in 100m, 200m Long Jump (best official jump – previous P.B. not recognised from School Carnival). The Season restarted in November with limited events after the easing of Covid-19 restrictions. In December at the NSW All Schools Rashid was quick to bounce back medalling in all his four disciplines. Even though he was beaten into 3rd place in the 100m he became the youngest ever Westfields athlete to join the 10 second club with 10.98 seconds. He also easily won the long jump with an impressive 6.50m. However the crowning performance was to finally break the 13 second barrier in the 100m hurdles. He equalled the NSW All Schools record (with now retired Westfields hurdler Paul Stickler) clocking a sizzling 12.94 seconds. The Australian All Schools which were scheduled for Melbourne were cancelled due to Victoria's devastating Covid-19 situation and border closures.

The 2021 NSW Juniors would become probably Rashid's most defining performances when he won the 100m final in an unbelievable time of 10.72 seconds which elevated him to number 2 in the World in U17 and U18 age groupings. He also ran his first ever sub 14 second time in the 110m hurdles (further spaced and higher hurdles) clocking 14.01 and another number 2 World Ranking in U17 and U18. However there was much more to come. At the Australian Junior Championships Rashid would finish the 2021 season on his highest ever note. Qualifying to contest 5 events for a total of 9 heats and finals Rashid was forced to drop the Long Jump due to it clashing with the 200m. Rashid still 15 years old (turning 16 late in the year) he contested the U20 100m for a chance of selection in the World Junior Relay team if he could finish in the top 6. Rashid won the Bronze medal. Everything after that became a bonus. Although fatigue, a sore back and juggling the effects of Ramadan fasting became somewhat of a disadvantage to the remaining 7 races he would have to endure. In his age group (U17) he picked up Silver in the 100m in an event where on current rankings he was expected to win. Nevertheless it was a good run into a stiff headwind. The 110m hurdles was next and in this discipline Rashid has never been beaten on times at any level. In the heats he nearly fell over four times and clumsily made his way into the final. Complaining of back soreness and fatigue whilst warming up for the final only a few hours later, the outlook was looking grim. However like a true champion Rashid picked himself up and got the live feed commentary team focused on him as he danced and sang himself into the moment. The cameras were on Rashid as he put on a show to get himself in the mood. Rashid admitted after the race it was the worst exhibition of hurdling he had probably ever given as his soreness and fatigue caused him to drop at every landing. It was not a pretty sight as his lead leg would slightly give way and subsequently lose balance at every hurdle. His start was one of his best ever and the commentators were amazed how he was at full speed and over the first hurdle well ahead of the rest of the field. The ACT and Victorian Athletes were catching Rashid all the way. Their hurdling was impressive as they got closer and closer. Rashid's only advantage was his amazing sprint between each of the 10 hurdles. He held on and won his fourth National Title in 13.97 seconds. A victory dance once again had the cameras focussed on him. The ensuing interview by Tamsyn (Lewis) Manou was amusing as she introduced him as Rashid "the entertainer" Kabba.

The final event on the last day was the 200m. Rashid said he was not looking forward to it and even talked about not running. The plan would be to test himself out in the heats and if he was okay then contest the final. It was clear that Rashid was not well prepared for the 200m, resulting from the decision to concentrate on the Nationals in the following preferential order; 100, 110 hurdles, long jump and 200m. Accordingly he had minimal training over this distance throughout the season and his best time of 22.33 was way down the rankings. He ran an easy 1st in the heats although his body was generally tight and sore. I suggested he withdraw if he didn't feel comfortable. He replied he was going to run the final, particularly since his friends had turned up to watch him compete. Surprisingly, the final became one of his career highlights. He exploded out of the blocks and was in the lead from

the start to the finish line where he clocked a half second p.b. of 21.80 a mere 7 hundredths of a second outside the meet record and into a headwind! The victory dance was even more impressive than the previous. Athletics Australia's media release of the 8 days of competition, in the first sentence, declared Rashid Kabba as "clearly one of the outstanding performers of the meeting" David Tarbotton indicated that Rashid's selection in the Australian team for the World U20 Championships makes him the 5th youngest male sprinter in history – 15 years and 6 months of age. With the cancellation of the World U20 in Nairobi, an alternate Oceania competition and match against New Zealand was organised. Rashid ran his 2nd best time ever in the first of two meetings conducted by Oceania Athletics. He finished 2nd with 10.81 in his timed final which featured local and International athletes of all ages. However, one day before flying with the team to the Gold Coast Rashid had an accident in P.E. at school damaging his triceps muscle. Unable to fully extend his right arm Rashid was temporarily dropped from the Australian U20 4x100m team and ran in a mixed International team. Ironically his team beat the Australian Under 20 team. Then at the second meeting Rashid was put back into the Australian U20 4x100m team, but unfortunately the baton was dropped at his change. He made up for the mishap with a fast 10.90 in the 100m.

Some Interesting Facts:

- Rashid is one of 6 siblings whose family immigrated from Sierra Leone
- Rashid holds three Little A's Australian Best Performances in 100m, 200m and 80m hurdles,
- When Rashid won the NSW CHS 90m hurdles in year 7 and went under the State record (wind assisted), he hurdled the entire race with the wrong lead leg after hesitating his strides to the first hurdle.
- Rashid won all his 4 events at both the NSW Juniors and Australian Little A's Championships in 2019
- Just 3 months after the Australian Little A's Championships Rashid equalled or bettered all his P.B.'s at the Westfields Athletics Carnival. Even though the times were by hand, he ran the 100m and 100m hurdles into rain and headwinds and the 200m into a headwind. His Long Jump P.B. was from 40cm behind the front of the take-off board.
- In 2020 Rashid became the youngest ever student to win the Adhemar Ferreira da Silva Scholarship. The previous youngest was Kurt Jenner 18.
- After being accepted into Westfields, Rashid in 12 months improved his 100m time by 1 second and his 200m time by 2 seconds in just months.
- At six consecutive meets in 2019 (one followed by the next) Rashid Broke 2 Australian Records, 3 NSW Records, 5 SSW Regional records and 12 Westfields School/Club records.
- No Westfields athlete has ever broken 3 NSW CHS records in the one meet.
- Rashid's performance at the Sydney South West Regional Championships in 2019 was probably the most impressive by any Westfields student in history. Contesting 5 events he broke all 5 Regional records; most impressively he took a half a second off the 100m time (11.74 down to 11.26) and almost a full second off the 200m time (23.74 down to 22.97)
- Rashid's heat time at the 2019 Australian All Schools became the fastest time by a 14 year old in almost 20 years; former Westfields athlete Paul Stickler won the 2000 title with the identical time of 13.09.
- Rashid has a habit of performing P.B.'s into head winds (or another way of looking at it; he gets bad conditions when he is ready to pull out big performances). The following impressive performances were done into headwinds (In brackets are the predicted times given maximum legal tailwinds.
2020 NSW Juniors 100m Hurdles 13.19 -2.0 (12.79 possible with a 2.0 tailwind)
2020 NSW Juniors 100m 11.28 (-1.3) (10.96 possible with a 2.0 tailwind)
2021 Australian Juniors 200m 21.80 (-0.9) (21.51 with a 2.0 tailwind)
Rashid's victory in the Australian U17 200m was 0.07 outside the Australian Meet record into a -0.9 headwind.
- Rashid has only once been defeated at State or National level in the hurdles – a total of 12 out of 13 victories (18 out of 19 including Little A's). The one exception being 2019 Australian All Schools in Perth when he missed his approach to the first hurdle and was forced to race to the finish line hurdling the entire race with the wrong lead leg finishing 5th in the final. Although his winning time from the heats (the fastest by a 14 year old in 20 years) would have clearly won the race.
- Rashid's recent dancing before major races (a getting-himself-into-the-moment thing) has become well known when Olympian, World Indoor Silver medallist and athletics commentator Tamsyn (Lewis) Manou introduced him as Rashid "the entertainer" Kabba for his now infamous post 110m hurdles victory at the 2021 Australian Championships.
- In 2021 Rashid became the 5th youngest male athlete in history to be selected in a World U20 team. Rashid was 15 years and 6 months and will compete against athletes who are up to 4 years older. Ironically with Covid 19 postponing the World U20's from 2020 to 2021, Rashid will still be eligible to participate in another two events: 2022 World U20 and 2024 World U20 Championships.
- Most recently at the 2021 Westfields Athletics Carnival Rashid ran the 110m hurdles into a headwind on a wet track. His modest performance of 14.68 after hitting three hurdles was still inside the top 20 times in the World. Rashid also jumped his 2nd best leap in long jump with a 6.74m. His current best of 13.97in the 110m hurdles (U17) which he did back in March is still holding onto the 2nd best time in the World this year after not having run the event in 4 months since then.

