

## SWIMMING

# Stark takes steps towards Rio reality

Jacob Grams

GENESIS Aquatics swimmer Matt Stark has been identified as a potential athlete for the 2016 Rio Paralympics and the team behind him has also received the tick of approval.

Stark recently experienced a "Rio Ready" camp in

Brisbane, where he learnt about the Brazilian culture and athlete's village he may be part of.

The 15-year-old said it was a great experience, which would help alongside the support of highly-credentialed coach Brendan Keogh.

"It was very exciting. The

whole day just inspired me to keep going with my swimming," he said.

"Brendan has been amazing. We just keep working on my technique and stretching arms so I keep them long and strong."

Keogh said Stark still had plenty of work to do to give himself a chance for Rio, but

if it didn't come off it was a great way to become comfortable with the process with an eye to the 2018 Commonwealth Games and 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, Japan.

Stark and club mates Finlay Donaghey and Kaitlyn Weldon are in action this week at the Australian Age Swimming Championships.

"It's great, hopefully we can improve on that next year," Keogh said.

The three-time Paralympic coach has been in Sydney for the past week as part of his new coaching role with Swimming Australia's Gold Coast Gold program, advising the talent pool ahead of the 2018 Games.



Matt Stark. Picture: JOSH WONG