



It gives me incredible pleasure congratulating our first Christ Church Water Polo Olympian, George Ford on his selection in the Rio Olympic Games. Amongst his many School accolades including winning the PSA title two years in a row, Captain of Water Polo in 2010 and Best and Fairest, the most ardent supporter of his talent six years ago could not foresee his meteoric rise culminate in the sports' highest honour.

In many ways, George's role in the National Team remains very similar to his role in the Christ Church First VII from 2008 to 2010. He was, and still is, the ultimate team man. Whilst possessing the ability to dominate games, George knew that in order to win a competition he needed to bring his teammates together. It was his attitude from the start, it was how he played, how he spoke, he never wavered from this philosophy.

Earlier in the year, on the back of leading his National League Club to a historic first title, he visited the School to speak to the Year 9 water polo boys. When asked about his role in the National Team he said,

**"my position is as a centre back, but my job is to take out the best players in the opposition team, and to create opportunities for our shooters to score goals."**

It was this attitude that won the School two titles in 2009 and 2010 and if you ask George, he will tell you it is this attitude that has booked him a ticket to Rio. It has never been about George and it never will be.

Do not expect him to top the scoring in Rio and don't expect him to make headlines. He didn't when he was at School and he won't in Rio. He will be wrestling players 30 to 40kgs heavier than him, using his mobility and intelligence to outsmart them and he will be using his elite swimming skills to swim them as far and as fast as possible to the other end of the pool. He will do it over and over again, game after game, and rarely will he find his name on the scoresheet. It's not about George Ford and he doesn't want it be.

As a School we will watch him proudly in Rio, from Nicholas O'Halloran his Year 8 and 9 coach to Bill Kirby his swimming coach and the many past students who had the honour of playing alongside him. We know it's not your style George, but for this moment, we hope you soak up all the glory you deserve.