

Citation for Anna Maree Devenish Meares OAM

Tuesday 1 October, 2019 at 3:00pm

Officiator: Ms Pauline Carr, Chancellor

Award recipient: Ms Anna Meares OAM

Award being conferred: Honorary Doctor of the University of South Australia (DUniv)

Citation delivered by: Professor Joanne Cys BA, BA (Int Des), MArch, PhD, LFDIA
Pro Vice Chancellor Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences

Chancellor, the University of South Australia awards the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the university to a person of eminence who has made a distinguished contribution to public service, or a field of academic endeavour or artistic pursuit. It is my pleasure to present Anna Maree Devenish Meares OAM for the honorary degree of Doctor of the University, in recognition of her distinguished service to the community.

At the age of 20 Anna Meares became the youngest ever track cyclist to win a gold medal when she made her debut at the Olympic Games in Atlanta in 2004. By her retirement after the Rio games in 2016 her career had encompassed two gold Olympic medals, 1 silver and 3 bronze medals; she has 5 gold medals from Commonwealth Games, 2 silvers and one bronze and has been the 500 metre track time trial champion on four occasions. The bronze medal she won in the keirin saw her become the only Australian athlete in history to win an individual medal at four consecutive Games.

One of her most remarkable achievements was her silver medal in the sprint at the Beijing Olympics in 2008 - Australia's only cycling medal of the Games - just seven months after she experienced a career-stopping heavy fall on the hard wooden velodrome floor at a speed of 65 kilometres per hour during a time trial at the World Cup in Los Angeles.

She suffered a fractured neck, a dislocated shoulder and torn ligaments. She was millimetres away from permanent injury. Her spirit of sportsmanship, her never say quit attitude, her passion and focus on the goal and her dedication and hard work - are the hallmarks that define her as a champion and a winner.

Ms Meares has chosen to be a strong contributor to the community, serving as an ambassador for the Little Heroes foundation for children with serious illness, helping to raise funds for a worthy cause and put a smile on the faces of children fighting seemingly undefeatable disease and providing inspiration to their families.

She is also an ambassador for the National Breast Cancer Foundation, for Fight Motor Neurone Disease and the Tour Down Under. She participates in the Port Adelaide Community Youth Program and is also a worldwide Ambassador for the Port Adelaide Football Club.

She is also an author having written her autobiography *The Anna Meares Story - The fighting spirit of a champion* and she is an accomplished speaker having given numerous talks about sportsmanship, success and the power of mind over body.

Chancellor, on behalf of the University of South Australia, I am pleased to present Anna Maree Devenish Meares OAM for the honorary degree of Doctor of the University, in recognition of her distinguished service to the community.