

Local lifters finally get their chance



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FIVE Boorondara weightlifters will strive for gold at next month's Commonwealth Games after the Australian contingent was finally named last week.

Hawthorn club members Alex Karapetyn, Yourik Sarkisian and Belinda van Tienen were named in the team of eight men and seven women.

Simon Heffernan and Jacquie White, both Kew residents and members of the Oakleigh-based Phoenix Weightlifting Club, are also on the team.

White and van Tienen will be making their Commonwealth Games debuts, while Karapetyn and Sarkisian will be defending their Commonwealth Games gold medals won in Manchester.

Heffernan, 30, won bronze at the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Games in the 94kg division, but was not selected for Manchester.

Heffernan and his coach, Robert Kabbas, recently threatened the Australian Weightlifting Federation with

legal action for altering the selection criteria when a provisional Games team was named in December.

At the time, Kabbas said Heffernan had qualified at the December 17 trials and should have been selected.

But the team was delayed when Sergo Chakhoyan and Corran Hocking tested positive to the amphetamine benzylpiperazine last October and, after being banned indefinitely, appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The pair then postponed their appeals and ruled themselves out of the Games.

