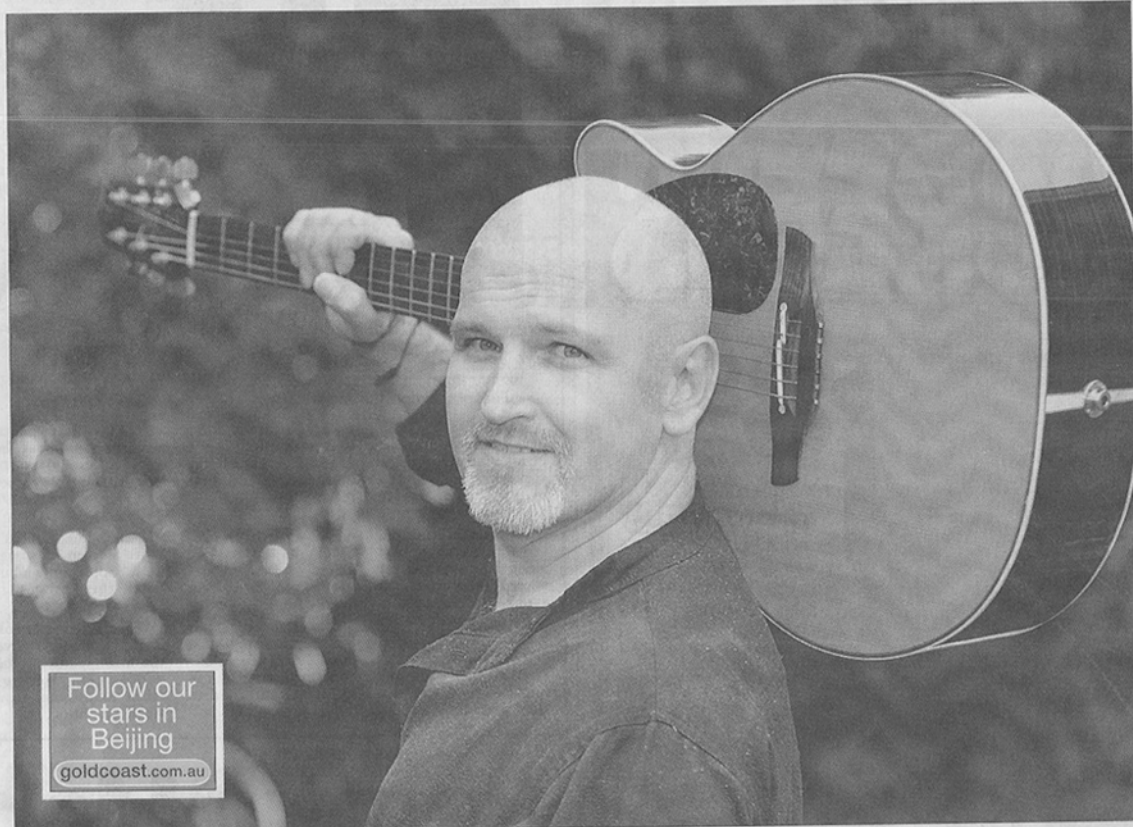


Games gig could be singer's great leap forward



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John Harley Weston will be jumping for joy when his songs are played during Channel 7's Olympic Games coverage

● Picture: Kate Czerny

John made it to Beijing in the long run

by Steve Spinks

YOU could call John Harley Weston the latest Gold Coast Olympian but there's only one problem - he won't be competing at Beijing.

Instead, two of Weston's songs will be used by Channel 7 during its coverage of the Games, which start next week.

It is a massive coup for the 41-year-old singer-songwriter, who has been steadily working as a professional musician for 25 years with the aim of becoming an 'overnight success'.

"I'm not naive enough to think this would get me over the high jump," said Weston.

"Hopefully it means there would be more radio stations that would play my music. I'm so happy that Channel 7 will play the two songs."

One song that will be used during the broadcast is an anthem-esque original called *Believe in Yourself*, while the other is an intimate cover version of *Waltzing Matilda*. Both are from his new album *Welcome Back To Reality*, which Weston describes as an acoustic guitar-based rock-folk record.

While some say the performance of *Waltzing Matilda* is cause for cultural cringe, Weston defended the pseudo-Australian national anthem.

"At least it's written by an Australian," he chuckled.

"Advance Australia Fair was written by a Scotsman. It (*Waltzing Matilda*) is one of those songs that has a little bit of magic in it and evokes something in the singer."

Born and raised in Scotland,

Weston has a true affinity with the bush song written by Banjo Paterson because of its Scottish roots.

"The tune is an old Scottish song, *Thou Bonnie Wood of Craigielea*, so there is a real Scottish connection," said Weston.

Weston has been based at the Gold Coast for 14 years and has struggled to break into the mainstream musical consciousness, despite picking up some serious awards.

Songs from his first album *Hope Harbour* helped him win the Australian National Songwriting Contest in 2005. He has 14 entries that have made it to the second round of this year's competition.

With a wife and a six-year-old daughter to support, he is hoping the Olympic exposure will help spread his musical appeal.

"I've always been hard-working but I'm starting to think outside the square a bit more now," he said.

"I sent my album to Channel 7 and kept pestering them until the executive producer of the sports department had the time to listen to it."

"I don't know when the songs will be played but I expect they will be played over some slow motion shots."

It is not the first time Weston has had songs associated with sport.

In 1999, he wrote a song for the Brisbane Lions AFL team called *Road to Victory*.

Unfortunately, that year the Lions lost and Weston is hoping he won't be a jinx for the Australian Olympians.

Weston will perform at the Marina Shopping Centre at Hope Island at noon tomorrow.

● Olympic latest, Page 68-69

Victoria's big secret

A HUGE pair of bloomers that belonged to Queen Victoria sold for nine times their estimate yesterday. The 127cm waist knickers, which date from the 1890s, sold for £4500 (\$A9356) but had been expected to fetch just £500.

"These pants, considering their provenance and pedigree, are very exciting," said auctioneer Charles Hanson, who sold the bloomers at an auction near Derby in central England.

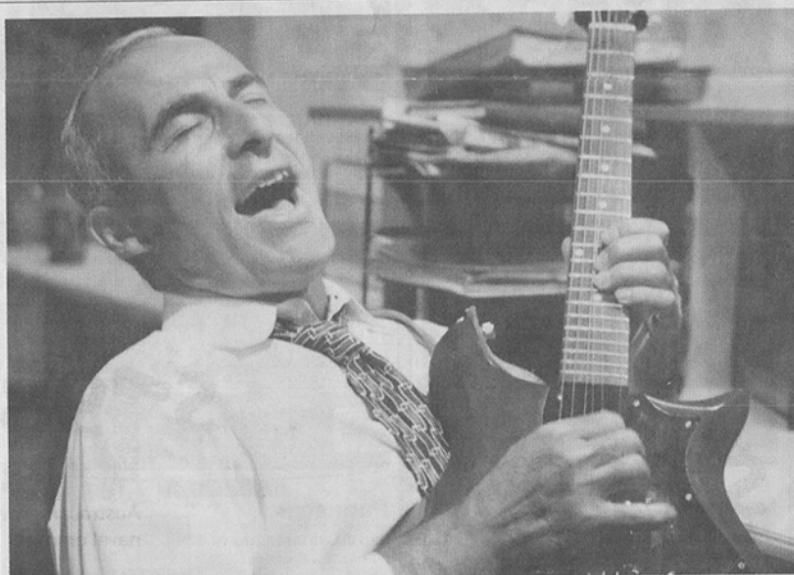
"They're monogrammed and crested. We know they are hers."

A stinker of a deal

GAMBLER Michael Wax did stink - he's the first to admit it. The 200kg New Yorker was playing poker in an Atlantic City casino for 17 hours yesterday and had no time to clean up.

Other gamblers complained about his body odour and he was asked to leave.

Mr Wax has filed a complaint about his treatment with the Casino Control Commission. His complaint will be reviewed to determine whether any state gambling laws or regulations were violated.



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