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Champ praises centre

REECE HOMFRAY

OLYMPIC swimmer Sophie Edington expects Adelaide's new \$100 million Aquatic Centre to help stop the state's emerging stars leaving in search of better training facilities and coaches.

Edington grew up in Loxton but left Adelaide when she was 18 to further her swimming career in New South Wales.

She went on to become a world champion and Commonwealth Games gold medallist.

"Having a facility like this is only going to bring people towards the sport," the 26-year-old said. "A lot of people move out of the state to train elsewhere so hopefully a lot will stay in South Australia and they have a couple of great squads training out of here.

"And hopefully that will bring all the extras - sports science to come to South Australia to set up a good program."

Currently based in Melbourne, Edington, who is in Adelaide as ambassador of the Oakbank Easter Racing Carnival, hasn't ruled out a return to Adelaide after the London Olympics.

"I'm happy in Melbourne for the next 12 months. I'd like to stay still for a little bit, but you never know," she said.

Edington was given a tour of the new pool yesterday during the Australian Age Championships. "Sitting up in the stands and seeing two 50m pools next to each other is incredible" Edington said.



IMPRESSED: Sophie Edington at the new aquatic centre at Marion yesterday