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News Release

Swimmer Sycerika McMahon chosen as Texaco Young Sportstar Award winner

World Championship breaststroke semi finalist Sycerika McMahon has been chosen winner of the 2011 Texaco Young Sportstar of the Year award. Although there was no reward for her in the form of medals, the World Championships in Shanghai this year proved an inspiration for the 16-year-old Leander girl.

Mixing with world champions and world record holders, Sycerika spoke after her 50 metres breaststroke semi-final of “being inspired to work harder, because at the end of the day that’s where I want to be. Maybe in a few years I can be up there at the top too”.

Her performance as lead-out swimmer in the 4 x 200 metres freestyle relay, in a squad that also included Melanie Nocher, Clare Dawson and Grainne Muphy, was eye-catching - her split time of 2:00.88 being the fastest of the quartet.

One person who has no doubt that she will achieve greatness is Commonwealth Games coach, Nelson Lindsay. “I believe Sycerika has the potential to be the best Irish swimmer ever”. Backing up this statement is a vast array of outstanding performances this year, guided by her coach Bobby Madine.

Two gold and a silver at the European Junior Championships; three gold and two silver at the Junior Commonwealth Games; eight national senior titles at the Irish Long Course Championships; one senior and five junior titles at the Irish Open and Youth Championships together constitute an impressive medals tally. She is the holder of 15 Irish junior and three senior records. And it would be reasonable to expect that further success awaits this most talented of swimmers at the Irish Short

Course National Championships in late December.

Introduced as part of the annual Texaco Sportstars Awards programme, the Young Sportstar Award is aimed at a younger generation of sports stars of 18-years and under, its purpose being to recognise and applaud success on the part of young people and to encourage them in their efforts to become sport stars of the future.

Alongside the eight senior sports stars chosen to receive Texaco Sportstars Awards and the 2011 Hall of Fame winner, Sycerika will be presented with her specially-commissioned Texaco Young Sportstar trophy at the awards ceremony which takes place in Dublin next week.

Congratulating Sycerika on her success, Enda Riney, Country Chairman, Valero Energy (Ireland) Limited said that 'her performances inspired a generation of young sports people so much so that one can only imagine the success that lies ahead for her in the years to come.'

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