

# MANNING RIVER Times

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GOING INTERNATIONAL: Zach Dun has accepted a 10-month contract with the Alberta Ballet company in Canada.

# Bound for Canada

BY LAUREN GREEN

NINE years after he stepped foot into his first dance class, Taree's Zach Dun is off to begin his international career.

The 22-year-old this week flew out to Canada where he has accepted a 10-month contract with the Alberta Ballet company, based in Calgary.

He will spend the next few weeks acclimatising to the

high-altitude location before rehearsals get underway on September 4.

"It's a phenomenal company that has really good repertoire. It was what I was looking for," he said.

Zach had travelled to Canada and Europe during January and February to audition for a number of ballet companies and was delighted to receive four offers overall.

It was the first time he has

auditioned internationally and said he "loved it" and that it was an "eye opener".

"I wanted to see what was out there and give it a try.

"I met hundreds of other dancers and you learn a lot about the different companies. It's quite tough as there are a lot of people.

"In Berlin there were 600 dancers in the room and you have to be able to stand out."

He sees his position with

the Alberta Ballet as a chance to grow as a person and to develop into a more rounded dancer.

"I'll definitely push myself and my technique. There is always something to gain.

"This company, actually all of Canada, is American technique, which is very fast, and I've had a lot of Russian training which is very turned out and slow.

"American technique has

a lot of turns and whips, which will be more of a challenge for me, especially as I'm so tall."

Zach said his days will include ballet classes and rehearsals. "A show rehearses for four or five weeks."

He estimates about seven seasons of shows during his contract, with tours around Calgary and Edmonton.

With ballet companies only signing dancers year to

year he plans to make the most of it.

"I've never had a long-term goal. I've wanted to dance and I do it. I'm taking it one day at a time and one contract at a time.

"Sometimes to get a job you have to be in the right place at the right time. Thousands want to make it as a dancer and only a lucky few will.

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