

Talented Riley's no stranger to winning

By SIMON EDWARDS

Riley Dick's ambition is a career as an actor or singer – or maybe even both, like Hugh Jackman. He's off to a solid start.

At the Hutt Valley Performing Arts Competitions this month, the Totara Park 13-year-old was presented with the cup for being the "Best young performer under 16".

The Upper Hutt College student sang the Beatles' number *Blackbird* to win the 12 to 14-year-olds' vocal solo and his Arts a Go Go! tutor Rachel Main's favourite religious song *All Good Gifts*, from the musical *Godspell*, to win the Sacred Solo. Riley also placed first in restricted solo and third in popular song.

He is no newcomer to the stage – nor to winning.

Since switching his attention from rugby to singing four years ago, Riley has appeared in a number of local stage productions, including as Frederik von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* and in Upstage's *Broadway to Hollywood*.

In his final year at Maidstone Intermediate, the school named him their best young performer, which came with a prize that was right up his alley – tickets to see a performance of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at St James Theatre.

Riley has enjoyed past success at the Hutt Valley Performing Arts Competitions and was also named best all-round performer in the 2013 Intermediate Battle of the Bands, in which he was drummer and vocalist for Maidstone's Rush Hour.

He enjoys performing all sorts of



Winning talent: Riley Dick, 13, who was named the Hutt Valley Performing Arts Competitions' best young performer under 16.

► STAR LINE-UP

The pick of talent in dance, singing, speech and instrumental from this year's competitions festival takes the stage at Lower Hutt's Little Theatre tomorrow, starting 7pm. Tickets are \$5 adults, \$3 children, at the door.

music. He did a mean version of Deep Purple's *Smoke on the Water* at this year's Teddy Bears' Picnic. Just don't ask him to sing country and western.

Riley says his love of music stems from family. The household listens to the radio more than television and his mum, Mel, was once in a band.

Riley wants to study theatre at university or Toi Whakaari/The NZ School of Drama.