

An ability to shine

GEMMA BLAIR

WHILE our paralympians are doing us proud in Beijing, back home, three young men are also proving that having a disability does not affect their ability to succeed.

Dennis Dabicic, Matthew Prieditis and Thomas Mahon all have disabilities, but they are also some of the best employees at The Reject Shop in the Logan Hyperdome.

All three were helped into their positions by Job Placement Limited and their work includes customer service, nightfill, off-loading stock and re-stocking shelves. Not an easy task considering the Loganholme store has some of the biggest sales figures and highest product turnover among The Reject Shop stores in Queensland.

Mr Dabicic, who has an intellectual disability and has been working at the Loganholme shop for more than a year, said the thing he liked most about the job was the people – both staff and customers.

"My life started when I got this job," he said.

"It's a good experience."

He also said that Job Placement Limited had been a great help to him.

"It's been brilliant so far, I wouldn't have got this opportunity without them," he said.

Mr Prieditis, who has been working at The Reject Shop for a couple of months, has not let a speech disability affect his work ethic.

"It's my first job. I feel happy



Matthew Prieditis and Dennis Dabicic have risen above their disabilities to show their talent in the workplace.

when I help customers," he said.

The 18-year-old finished school last year and said someday he would like to do an apprenticeship in motor mechanics.

Mr Mahon, who has a learning disability, is the newest recruit to the Loganholme store.

The Reject Shop store manager, Jay Wardman, said he was approached by Job Placement to give the three young men jobs.

"You have to have a little bit more patience but they are reliable and always ready to work. As an employer, that's all I could ask for," he said.

"I think people seem to think they can't do things, but they are more than capable."

Mr Wardman said Dennis, Matthew and Thomas brought to the job a great attention to detail and a constant desire to learn.

"They are more motivated because I gave them a chance," he said.

Job Placement Limited employment consultant, Tri Pham, said he visited the store once a week to check how Dennis, Matthew and Thomas were going and to give them any help or advice they needed.

Mr Pham said all three were reliable – a characteristic loved by employers.

"They are really keen workers," he said.

"They don't mind working extra hours because they love their job."

■ Job Placement Limited is a free service which helps people with disabilities into the workforce. For more information call 1800 804 236.