



Basketball Australia Annual Report

2008





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Photo: Getty Images



Published by Basketball Australia
 PO Box 7141, Alexandria NSW 2015
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 Mascot NSW 2020
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 Design & Print Production: Southern Design & Print Group
 Tel: (02) 9587 7722 - www.southerndesign.com.au
 Compiled and edited by Bill Baxter, Basketball Australia Media & PR Manager.
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Chairman's Message

I congratulate the Basketball Australia team on a very successful 2008. Basketball Australia began to tackle the big issues of the sport in 2007 when it commissioned a number of strategic reviews to ensure the sport's successful future by reconsidering the governance and management of the National Basketball League and Basketball Australia.

This became reality in November 2008 when the existing BA and NBL entities unanimously voted to dissolve themselves to make way for a single, unified national governing body. It was the most significant shift the sport has made in its long history in Australia.

The formation of the single governance and management body strengthens the focus on building the sport across all levels and provides stronger links between the national and state bodies. This will enable the development of sound commercial strategies, strong financial management, a sustainable business model and measurable outcomes to establish basketball's place as a major mainstream sport in Australia.

What we are undertaking is no 'quick fix', and significant changes will take place within the organisation. These changes will all be made for the betterment of the sport's governance and, ultimately, the sport itself. Basketball has a bright future in Australia, and with renewed focus, commitment and support we are determined to ensure the right foundations are set for the next decade.

In 2008, we also neared the end of a significant rebranding exercise that will bring unification in a graphic sense to all levels of our sport. The new branding was developed over many months and when we launch the new brand in 2009 we hope that you will embrace our new direction.

In August 2008 the Federal Government appointed an Independent Expert Sport Panel to investigate and report on Australia's sporting system encompassing both the elite and community levels as part of the Crawford Inquiry into Sport. BA prepared a detailed submission and will meet with the panel in 2009 to ensure basketball's rightful place in Australia's sporting landscape.



I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise the enormous amount of work done by both the paid workforce within our sport and the huge volunteer network that, with passion and commitment, provides access to the sport through a range of basketball activities and competitions. Your efforts are a key component in making basketball one of the greatest sports in this country.

On behalf of the Board and the Basketball community I would like to congratulate and acknowledge the outstanding contribution of our Chief Executive Scott Derwin. While I know Scott will be quick to acknowledge the support of his team, Basketball Australia owes a debt of gratitude to Scott for his tireless application, passion and dedication in leading Basketball reform and success on the international stage. We all wish Scott the very best for the future.

I am pleased about the new direction our sport has taken in 2008 and excited and energised by the potential opportunities offered by reform. I look forward with optimism to 2009 and again, thank you for your support and commitment.

Chief Executive's Message

Thank you for taking the time to peruse the 2008 Basketball Australia Annual Report. 2008 was an extremely busy year for Basketball Australia with the organisation registering significant achievements on and off the court in what was a pivotal year for Basketball.

The 8th of November 2008 marked a momentous and historic occasion for basketball with the NBL clubs and state and territory associations passing a unanimous vote for basketball's reform and the unification of basketball at all levels under the governance of Basketball Australia. Bringing this reform to fruition was, at times, an arduous task and it was with positivity, excitement and a sense of purpose that the stakeholders of the sport decided unanimously to come together as a single, unified body under a revised governance and management structure. This structure and reform will build a sustainable national business model which in concert with the States will deliver viable commercial and community benefits, and ultimately a stronger and more robust national elite men's and women's competition. 2008 also marked the culmination of a Review of our High Performance programs. The consideration of recommendations and subsequent implementation will begin to take full effect in the later stages of 2009.

At the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing our athletes earned a swag of medals, including a Gold Medal for our men's wheelchair team, the Rollers, a Silver Medal for our senior women's team, the Opals, and a Bronze Medal for our women's wheelchair team, the Gliders, while our senior men's team, the Boomers, were knocked out in the Quarter Finals by eventual Gold medalists, the United States. In addition, our two Under-19 teams, the Emus and Gems, qualified for the 2009 FIBA U19 World Championships by winning the 2008 FIBA U19 Oceania Championships in Adelaide.

Despite a sell out crowd at the Sydney Entertainment Centre for the fifth game of the 2007/08 National Basketball League Grand Final series our national men's league endured some difficult times throughout the year. The ownership and governance structure of the League was clearly unsustainable and in need of review which as part of the reform agenda culminated in the announcement that the 2008/09 season would be the last under the existing model. A new, commercially sustainable and robust national men's competition will be launched in October 2009 based on the successful application for NBL licenses requiring adherence to benchmark



financial, commercial and operational requirements. The WNBL enjoyed another great season in 2007/08, welcoming two new teams to the competition and culminating in a thrilling Grand Final on 8 March when the Adelaide Lightning defeated the Sydney Uni Flames at Wollongong.

On a personal note, I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience and challenges of the role of Chief Executive since 1999 and as such I indicated to the Board in late 2008 that I would not be a candidate for the position of CEO in the new BA. Therefore, as this is my final report as CEO I would like to take this opportunity to publicly record my deep and overwhelming gratitude to the staff that has worked with me, and supported me so well, during that period. I have also been blessed with the support of great Boards, chaired by John Maddock and over recent times by David Thodey. It has been a pleasure and an honour serving BA and I leave very satisfied and pleased with what we have collectively achieved during my tenure. I wish the sport the very best for the future and I leave to be a very interested spectator on the sidelines.



Rollers

The most successful of the Basketball Australia national teams in 2008 was the Paralympic Gold Medal winning Australian men's wheelchair basketball team that reached heights not witnessed since its victory at the 1996 Paralympic Games in Atlanta.

The Rollers began their 2008 campaign at a Paralympics test event in January, where they took home a Silver Medal behind Canada despite victories over Canada, China and the Netherlands in the early stages of the tournament. In June it was to be another second-place when Canada again downed an undermanned Australia, who was without Captain Brad Ness and shooting guard Shaun Norris, at a Four Nations tournament in Osnabruck, Germany, followed by a Bronze Medal at the North America Cup in Birmingham, Alabama, behind Canada and the United States. After a final training camp in Townsville the team departed for Beijing in late August, confident that they could topple the world's best wheelchair basketball nations despite their imperfect 2008 pre-Games campaign.

The Rollers' plans were almost derailed in the opening game when they trailed Brazil for the entire match before a whopping 39 points from Justin Eveson helped keep Australia alive. Ness then scored the winning basket with four seconds remaining to snatch a 73-72 victory. Athens Bronze medallists Great Britain, coached by former Rollers mentor Murray, were up next and, behind 16 points and nine rebounds from Ness, Australia was victorious, 67-48. The host nation China was then dispatched, 79-44, with Ness top-scoring with 31 points, followed by a last-minute 66-59 victory over Israel where Ness was again the dominant force with 30 points and 10 rebounds. After four victories on the trot, Australia then fell to the United States in their final preliminary game, 61-68, with Justin Eveson scoring 23 points.

The preliminary round set up a Quarter Final match against Japan which Australia won 72-52 behind 18 points from Ness, and a Semi Final clash against Great Britain, whom Australia defeated 67-54 with Eveson top scoring with 22 points.

It was then on to the Gold Medal match against arch rivals Canada, the reigning World and Paralympic Champions. They were however no match for Australia, who emphatically won the game by twelve points, 72-60, to take home the Gold Medal.

Troy Sachs stepped up in the Gold Medal match with 19 points while Eveson was Australia's top scorer at the Games with a 19.25 points per game average. The Rollers were subsequently named the 2008 Australian Paralympic Committee Team of the Year while Head Coach Ben Ettridge was nominated for Coach of the Year.

Australia's men's wheelchair basketball team for the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing:

- Dylan Alcott** - VIC
- Brendan Dowler** - NSW
- Justin Eveson** - WA
- Michael Hartnett** - WA
- Adrian King** - QLD
- Tristan Knowles** - NSW
- Grant Mizens** - NSW
- Brad Ness** - WA - CAPTAIN
- Shaun Norris** - WA
- Troy Sachs** - NSW
- Tige Simmons** - QLD
- Brett Stibners** - NSW

Staff: Ben Ettridge (Head Coach), Craig Friday (Asst. Coach), Ian Lowther (Physio), Kelvin Browner (Manager).



Photo: Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee

Photo: Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee

Photo: Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee

Photo: Sonia Healy



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Getty Images

Opals

As the reigning 2006 FIBA World Champions, the Opals gained automatic qualification to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

The team began its campaign proper in April 2008 with a camp in Canberra and two victories over New Zealand. A team of twelve athletes from the broader Opals squad was then selected to contest the 'Good Luck Beijing' test event in China, winning a Bronze Medal with victory over Cuba in the final. The Opals then enjoyed three-game sweeps of Chinese Taipei in Terrigal (NSW), and Russia in Brunico (Italy) before the team for the Olympic Games was announced. After getting down and dirty as part of a team-building exercise at the Australian Defence Force base at Canungra in Queensland, the Opals swept a two-game series against Brazil in Wollongong and Sydney before contesting the prestigious FIBA Diamond Ball Tournament for women in Haining, China. Victories in Haining over the host nation and Mali and a loss to the United States earned the team a Silver Medal and Opals Captain Lauren Jackson the tournament MVP award.

Australia registered its first win at the 2008 Olympic Games with an 83-64 victory over Belarus in the opening game, with Jackson scoring 18 points. An 80-65 victory over Brazil was next, with Laura Summerton top scoring with 18 points, followed by a 90-62 victory over Korea where Penny Taylor and Suzy Batkovic led Australia with 18 points apiece. Australia then overcame European powerhouse Russia, 75-55, with Belinda Snell and Jackson each scoring 16 points, pushing the Opals into the Quarter Finals unbeaten after five games.

The Opals overcame a serious ankle injury to Opals vice captain Penny Taylor to defeat the Czech Republic 79-46 in the Quarters behind 16 points from Lauren Jackson to book a Semi Final clash against the host nation, China, which Australia won 90-56 with Snell top scoring with 16 points.

That win set up perhaps the most highly anticipated game in Australian women's basketball history, a Gold Medal match against the United States. The US

ultimately had the Opals' measure and controlled the game for the duration to take the victory by 27 points, 92-65. Despite the disappointing loss, it was nonetheless a remarkable achievement as it was the Opals' third Olympic Games Silver Medal in a row, dating back to Sydney 2000. Jackson top scored for Australia against the US with 20 points, lifting her tournament average to a team high 17.3 points per game.

Opals Head Coach Jan Stirling, who was honoured in the 2008 Queen's Birthday Honours list with an Australia Medal for her services to women's basketball as an elite coach and player and as a contributor to professional development and the community, stepped down following her second Games. She has since been replaced by Canberra Capitals head coach Carrie Graf.

Australia's women's basketball team for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing:

- Suzy Batkovic** - NSW
- Tully Bevilaqua** - WA
- Rohanee Cox** - WA
- Hollie Grima** - TAS
- Kristi Harrower** - VIC
- Lauren Jackson** - Capt. - NSW
- Erin Phillips** - SA
- Emma Randall** - VIC
- Jenni Screen** - NSW
- Belinda Snell** - VIC
- Laura Summerton** - SA
- Penny Taylor** - VIC

Staff: Jan Stirling (Head Coach), Gary Fox (Asst. Coach), Peter Lonergan (Asst. Coach), Amanda Berntsen (Physio), Donna O'Connor (Fitness Coordinator), Dr. Scott Burne (Doctor), Marian Stewart (Manager)



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee

Gliders



Photo: Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee



Photo: Courtesy of the Australian Paralympic Committee

The Gliders' 2008 campaign began in January with a training camp at the Australian Institute of Sport to select the Australian women's wheelchair basketball team to compete at the Osaka Cup in Japan. Australia took on reigning World Champion Canada, second-ranked United States and fifth-ranked Japan and finished with a Silver Medal at the prestigious event.

In June, the Gliders travelled to the United States for two tournaments - the Joseph F. Lytle World Basketball Challenge in Georgia and the North America Cup. At the Challenge, the Gliders faced Canada, the Netherlands, Great Britain, USA, Germany, Japan and Mexico and finished a creditable third, defeating Canada twice in one week. At the North America Cup in Birmingham the top four teams in the world - Australia, USA, Germany and Canada - went head-to-head and, despite another win over Canada, the Gliders eventually finished fourth. The Gliders completed their last pre-Beijing tournament at the AIS in July with a five-game series against China, sweeping all five games.

In Beijing, the Gliders were drawn in a tough pool with Great Britain, Brazil, the USA and Germany. First up was Great Britain and the Gliders got off to a strong start with a 59-30 victory riding the back of Cobi Crispin, who led the team in scoring in her Paralympic debut. Australia's second game proved just as fruitful with a comfortable 66-30 win over Brazil as five-time Paralympian and Gliders Captain Liesl Tesch topped the scoreboard. Athens Gold medalists, the USA, were next but the Gliders were outplayed and fell, 61-42. In their final pool match Australia was within two points of Germany with one minute remaining but were defeated, 64-56.

With a 2-2 record, Australia faced World Number One Canada in the Quarter Finals and kept the Gold medal dream alive with a stunning upset victory. It advanced them to a tough Semi Final against the USA, where the Gliders were defeated by thirteen points, 60-47, relegating them to the battle for Bronze. Despite the devastating loss, the Gliders regrouped to face Japan in the Bronze medal playoff where, befitting her title as Captain, Tesch scored 16 points to steer the team to Bronze with a 53-47 victory.

Australia's women's wheelchair basketball team for the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing:

- Clare Burzynski** - WA
- Shelley Chaplin** - VIC
- Cobi Crispin** - QLD
- Melanie Domaschenz** - VIC
- Kylie Gauzi** - NSW
- Melanie Hall** - NT
- Katie Hill** - NSW
- Bridie Kean** - VIC
- Tina McKenzie** - NSW
- Kathleen O'Kelly-Kennedy** - VIC
- Sarah Stewart** - NSW
- Liesl Tesch** - NSW - Captain

Staff: **Garry Hewson** (Head Coach), **Mark Hewish** (Assistant Coach), **Matt Dunstan** (Technical Assistant Coach), **Emma Whiteside** (Physiotherapist), **Sonia Healy** (Manager)

Boomers

The Boomers qualified for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing by winning the 2007 FIBA Oceania Men's Championship against New Zealand by two games to one.

After sweeping FIBA Asia Champion Iran 3-0 on Australian soil in June 2008 and retaining the Ramsay Shield 2-0 over New Zealand in the same month, a team of twelve athletes was selected to tour Europe and to represent Australia at the Acropolis Tournament in Greece. Victories over Croatia and Brazil were mixed with losses to Greece and Croatia, after which the team for Beijing was selected. Final tune-ups for the main event were had at the FIBA Diamond Ball Tournament in Nanjing (China) with victories over Angola and Yao Ming's China and a loss to reigning Olympic Champion Argentina, before a one-off international friendly against Team USA in Shanghai.

The Boomers' first game of the 2008 Olympic Games came against a hot-shooting Croatian team that netted 12-of-16 three-pointers and steamrolled the Aussies 97-82, with Captain Matt Nielsen top scoring for Australia with 13 points. Reigning Olympic Champion Argentina was the next opponent, who dispatched the Boomers by seventeen points, 85-68, with Australia's youngest player Patty Mills coming off the bench to top score with 22 points. Winless after two games the Boomers were desperate for a victory and it came in the form of a 106-68 thumping of Iran where Brad Newley top scored with 24 points. European Champion Russia followed and the Boomers elevated their game to knock off their highly favoured opponent by fifteen points, 95-80, with Andrew Bogut and CJ Bruton both scoring 22 points to lead Australia. The final preliminary round match came against Australia's nemesis Lithuania but the Boomers put history to rest with a sparkling 106-75 victory on the back of a 16-of-25 three-point shooting display and 23 points from Bogut.

With a three-win, two-loss record Australia was matched up against the might of the United States in a do-or-die Quarter Final and, despite trailing by only one point at the end of the first quarter, the Boomers could not match the eventual Gold Medal winners and the US ran out winners by 31 points, 116-85. Mills top scored for the Boomers with 20 points, lifting his tournament average to a team leading 14.2 points per game. Australia finished in 7th place behind the USA, Spain, Argentina, Lithuania, Greece and Croatia and ahead of China, Russia, Germany, Iran and Angola.

After leading the Boomers for two Olympic cycles, Head Coach Brian Goorjian was replaced by former Boomers Assistant Coach and San Antonio Spurs Assistant Coach Brett Brown, who was part of the 1998 FIBA World Championship and Atlanta and Sydney Olympics coaching staff.

Australia's men's basketball team for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing:

- David Andersen** - VIC
- Chris Anstey** - VIC
- David Barlow** - VIC
- Andrew Bogut** - VIC
- CJ Bruton** - WA
- Joe Ingles** - SA
- Patrick Mills** - ACT
- Brad Newley** - SA
- Matthew Nielsen** - Capt. - NSW
- Shawn Redhage** - USA
- Glen Saville** - VIC
- Mark Worthington** - WA

Staff: **Brian Goorjian** (Head Coach), **Brendan Joyce** (Assistant Coach), **Gordon McLeod** (Assistant Coach), **Dr Seamus Dalton** (Doctor), **Steve Evans** (Physio), **Nik Popovic** (Fitness Coordinator), **Nic Mercer** (Operations Manager)



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Getty Images

NBL



Photo: Getty Images

The 2007/08 National Basketball League season saw 13 teams in three countries compete for the Dr. John Raschke Trophy.

Early season favouritism was bestowed on defending champions, the Brisbane Bullets, who were widely expected to battle it out with the team they defeated in the 2007 Grand Final series, the Melbourne Tigers, for the title.

It was however an upstart Sydney Kings team led by Coach Brian Goorjian who swept all before them in the regular season to win the minor premiership with an astounding 27-3 record. The Kings' feat was even more impressive given an undercurrent of off-court financial dramas swirled around the team for much of the season.

One of the highlights of the regular season was the two-man battle between the Tigers' Australian centre Chris Anstey and the Bullets' import guard Ebi Ere for the Andrew Gaze (MVP) Trophy. Ere was spectacular all season, leading the league in scoring at a sizzling 27.1 points per game. It was however Anstey who took the MVP trophy home, and a Hummer car from the league's major sponsor.

The Quarter Final round went largely as expected, with the top four teams – Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth – all advancing to the best-of-three Semi Finals.

The Wildcats nearly caused a major upset however by forcing their physical and exciting Semi Final series with minor premiers Sydney to a deciding third game, before the Kings reigned supreme in Game Three.

On the other side of the draw, the highly anticipated rematch of the Bullets and Tigers finally took place, albeit one round earlier than most people expected. The Tigers however quickly stamped out the Bullets' aspirations of back-to-back championships by sweeping the series 2-0 to set-up a classic Melbourne-Sydney Grand Final series.

The Kings opened the series at home and quickly showed why they were the favourites with a 95-74 victory in Game One. Melbourne bounced back at home in Game Two to level the series at one game all with a 104-93 win and then stunned the Kings on their own floor with an 89-87 Game Three victory behind a clutch late basket by import Sean Lampley.

Sydney rallied back in Game Four with a nail-biting 90-87 win in Melbourne to send the series to a fifth and deciding game for just the second time in NBL history. A sold-out crowd of 10,244 people packed the Sydney Entertainment Centre for the decider, but even that hometown show of support couldn't stop the Tigers claiming their second title in three years. Melbourne ran out winners 85-73 as Anstey was named MVP of the series.

Grand Final
Melbourne Tigers defeated Sydney Kings 3-2
Gm 1 - 74-95; Gm 2 - 104-93; Gm 3 - 89-87; Gm 4 - 87-90; Gm 5 - 85-73

Award Winners
Most Valuable Player (Andrew Gaze Trophy)
Chris Anstey (Melbourne)

Larry Sengstock Medal (Grand Final MVP)
Chris Anstey (Melbourne)

Coach of the Year (Lindsay Gaze Trophy)
Brian Goorjian (Sydney)

Best Defensive Player
Chris Anstey (Melbourne)

Rookie of the Year
Nathan Jawai (Cairns)

Most Improved Player
Cameron Tragardh (Woll)

Best Sixth Man
Dontaye Draper (Sydney)

All-NBL First Team
Ebi Ere (Brisbane)
Chris Anstey (Melbourne)
Mark Worthington (Sydney)
Kirk Penney (New Zealand)
Shawn Redhage (Perth)

Referee of the Year
Michael Ayles

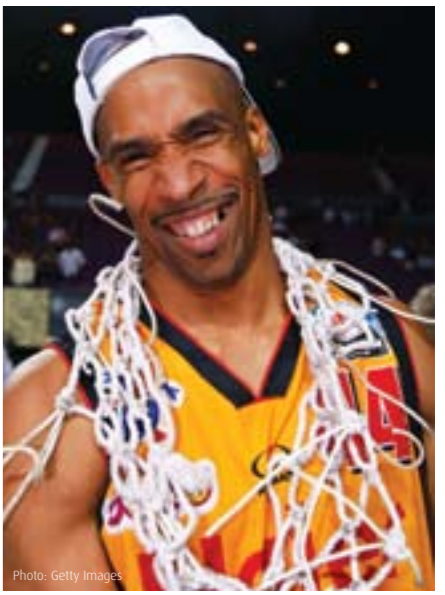


Photo: Getty Images



The 2007/08 Australian Defence Force Women's National Basketball League (WNBL) season marked the beginning of two new franchises in the competition - the Christchurch Sirens, who were the first non-Australian based team to participate in the WNBL, and the Bendigo Spirit, representing regional Victoria.

The new season also saw five rookie coaches take the helm of a WNBL club - Peter Buckle at Townsville, Dale Waters at Dandenong, Joe McKay at Perth, Leigh Gooding at Christchurch and Bernie Harrower at Bendigo - and come round three it became six as Chris Lucas parted ways with Adelaide to be replaced by Vicki Valk.

As the new Lightning head coach, Valk inherited a loaded team- Renae Camino, Jenny Whittle and Angela Marino were signed to join star guard Erin Phillips, captain Sam Woosnam, Australian junior rep Jess Foley and import Tracy Gahan - and the rest was, as they say, history. Twenty-one wins in total, just one loss at home all season, a double chance in the finals, the minor premiership and a Grand Final triumph were to follow.

Alongside Adelaide as the teams to beat were 2006/07 Grand Finalists Sydney Uni and Canberra, but every team had the ability to beat another on their day and the results soon proved that. Not until the 116th game of the 120-match regular season was the final four decided and not until the 118th game were the top four finishing positions determined.

Adelaide, Sydney Uni, Dandenong and Canberra were the four teams to make the playoffs and, when the Flames shocked Adelaide, 90-71, in the Major Semi Final, they advanced straight to the main event. Continuing the surprises, Dandenong overcame Canberra, 60-54, in the Minor Semi Final to send the Caps packing for the season, setting up a preliminary final in Adelaide where the Lightning defeated the Rangers by 10 points, 74-64. That established a Grand Final which was a rematch of the Major Semi Final, with the game to be played in the neutral venue of Wollongong.

As the only Wollongong-born player in the event, Adelaide guard Renae Camino was the star of the Grand Final before it even began but nothing changed after the tip off. Camino scored a game-high 32 points and added nine rebounds and was named MVP of the Grand Final as Adelaide downed Sydney Uni 92-82 to take the title.

SEASON AWARDS

Most Valuable Player
Natalie Porter (Sydney Uni Flames)

All Star Five
Jessica Foley (Adelaide), Tracy Gahan (Adelaide), Rohanee Cox (Townsville), Natalie Porter (Sydney Uni), Kathleen MacLeod (Bendigo)

Coach of the Year
Carrie Graf (Canberra)

Betty Watson Rookie of the Year
Nicole Hunt (AIS)

Robyn Maher Defensive Player of the Year
Emily McInerney (Dandenong)

Molten Top Shooter
Natalie Porter (Sydney Uni)

Molten Field Goal %
Tracey Beatty (Canberra)

Molten Foul Shot %
Kathleen MacLeod (Bendigo)

Molten 3-point %
Jessica Foley (Adelaide)

Molten Top Rebounder
Jennifer Crouse (Townsville)

Molten Blocked Shots
Jennifer Crouse (Townsville)

Molten Good Hands (assists + steals - turnovers)
Sharin Milner (Bulleen)





Photo: Milbank Photography

Junior Teams

Our Australian men's and women's Under 19 teams, the Emus and Gems, enjoyed a successful 2008 with qualification for the FIBA U19 World Championship for Men and Women the highlights.

EMUS

The Emus' 2008 campaign began in March at the Albert Schweitzer Tournament in Mannheim, Germany with games against Germany, senior club teams USC Heidelberg and TV Langen, Italy, Canada, Russia, Sweden, Turkey, Greece and the United States. With only one loss to Canada in the preliminary round, Australia faced Greece for a shot at the Gold Medal match but heartbreakingly fell short by five points in overtime. That set up a Bronze Medal match against the United States that Australia won by 20 points. Three months later the Emus contested the 30th William Jones Cup in Taipei against Kazakhstan, Chinese Taipei, USA Athletes in Action, Egypt, Jordan, Qatar and Korea Universities Select and, when the Emus defeated Qatar in a nail-biter 91-90, Australia took home the Bronze Medal.

Those games were great preparation for the Emus, who faced New Zealand in the most meaningful games of 2008 at the FIBA Oceania Championship in Adelaide in August. Australia was victorious in all three games by margins of 27, 15 and 11 points to book its place at the 2009 FIBA World Championship for U19 Men.

GEMS

The Gems' 2008 campaign kicked off in May with two matches played against Chinese Taipei at the Friendly Games in Canberra, with Australia victorious by four and five points in the keenly contested games. A tour to France followed where a five-nations tournament was undertaken in Reze and victories were garnered against Turkey and the Czech Republic before losses to France and Lithuania. It was then on to another French city, Fougères, for a four-nations tournament against Romania, Turkey and Lithuania where Australia departed undefeated. One month later the Gems contested the 30th William Jones Cup in Taipei against teams from Malaysia, Korea and Chinese Taipei. While wins were enjoyed against Malaysia and Korea, the strength of the senior women's team from Chinese Taipei proved difficult to handle, with Australia losing the final to the hosts by the slimmest of margins, 55-54.

All of those games were just training for the main event in 2008 however, the FIBA U19 Oceania Championship, which were held in Adelaide in August. The preparation clearly worked however as Australia easily dispatched New Zealand by 28, 29 and 36 points in the three-game series to clinch a spot at the 2009 FIBA World Championship for U19 Women.

The men's World Championship will be played in Auckland, New Zealand from July 2-12, and the women's World Championship will be played in Bangkok, Thailand from 23 July-2 August 2009.



Photo: Milbank Photography



Photo: Milbank Photography

Pearls & Boomerangs



Basketball Australia has two national teams for athletes with an intellectual disability, the Pearls (women) and Boomerangs (men). While the Boomerangs did not compete in 2008, the Pearls participated in the inaugural INAS-FID World Cup in Italy in November and finished 2008 ranked number two in the world after winning a Silver Medal at the event.

Kim Perry was named as Pearls' captain in October, nine years after her international debut in 1999, and provided invaluable leadership to the five rookies on the team throughout the 2008 campaign.

The Australians started their campaign with a win over Mexico in overtime, 63-54, despite trailing 21-6 after one quarter, with rookies Kaitlyn Papworth, Melissa Marlborough and Eliza Barden making their first baskets for Australia to contribute to the fight-back. Kim Larkin went to the freethrow line with Australia down 52-51 as the clock expired and made one of two to send the game into overtime. The Pearls took control in the extra period and won by seven points, with Larkin top-scoring with 16 points.

Barden top-scored with 14 points for Australia in the second game, leading the Pearls in a crushing 80-point victory over France, 92-12. The team backed up the next day with a 97-28 win against an inexperienced Portugal side as rookies Marlborough and Barden topped the score sheet again, joined by team Captain Perry.

On the final day of competition the Pearls faced an undefeated Russian side and, in Australia's toughest game of the tournament, they were defeated by sixteen points, 62-46.

The Pearls finished the World Cup with seven competition points, behind Russia (eight) and ahead of Mexico (six), France (five) and Portugal (four).

Coach Larry Davidson praised the entire Australian team at the event's conclusion and made special mention of rookie Natasha Nolan for her speed and toughness in the final game in which she scored a team-high 11 points.

The tournament provided invaluable international experience to the young Australian team which will help them in their quest to win the 2009 Global Games campaign, which will be played in the Czech Republic in July 2009.

The Australian women's team for athletes with an intellectual disability that competed at the 2008 INAS-FID World Cup in Italy:

- Kim Larkin** - VIC
- Mina Aldobasic** - VIC
- Bernadette Barden** - NSW
- Eliza-Jane Barden** - NSW
- Kaitlyn Papworth** - VIC
- Melissa Marlborough** - ACT
- Molly Urquhart-Moran** - VIC
- Nicole Skerman** - QLD
- Kim Perry** - NSW - Captain
- Natasha Nolan** - VIC
- Karina Baines** - NSW
- Renay Hall** - VIC
- Danielle Burden** - VIC

Staff: **Larry Davidson** (Head Coach), **Jo Larkin** (Assistant Coach), **Sally Duncan** (Manager)





Photo: Kangaroo Photo

Australian Club Championships



The 2008 Australian Club Championships (ACC) brought together the best men's and women's teams from the Waratah ABL, SEABL, QABL, Central ABL and Big V competitions for their shot at national glory, with the event held at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre in August.



Photo: Kangaroo Photo

By the tournament's conclusion, the Rockhampton Rockets were crowned as the best male basketball club in Australia and the Townsville Flames were crowned women's Champions for the second year in succession.

Rockhampton booked its place in the men's decider after a thrilling 100-93 victory over the Sandringham Sabres in the Semi Final while the Chargers beat the Melbourne Tigers 128-126 in overtime in the other Semi Final.

In the men's Grand Final, the Rockets defeated the Hobart Chargers in a cliff hanger, 103-99, with grand final MVP Ryan McDade finishing with a massive 24 points and 19 rebounds.

In the women's Grand Final, the Townsville Flames made it double celebrations for Queensland teams, clinching back-to-back national women's championships. The Flames, who edged out the Kilysth Cobras 77-71 in their semi, overpowered the Sydney Comets 73-57 in the decider. A Flames win looked on the cards at halftime when they led 38-26, but Sydney responded with a 22-10 third-quarter run to level the scores before Townsville went on a devastating 25-9 run spearheaded by MVP Cherie Smith to seal the Championship.

It was the second year in a row that Queensland's champions have completed a men's and women's ACC double.

At the conclusion of the event the men's and women's All-Star Fives were announced:

Men's All-Star Five

- Ryan McDade Rockhampton Rockets
- Daniel Johnson Melbourne Tigers
- Daryl Corletto Melbourne Tigers
- Anthony Stewart Hobart Chargers
- Jermaine Maybank Sandringham Sabres

Women's All-Star Five

- Sharin Milner Hume Broncos
- Rachael Flanagan Townsville Flames
- Cherie Smith Townsville Flames
- Sally Potocki Sydney Comets
- Clare Papavs Kilysth Lady Cobras

To qualify for the event, teams had to be crowned Champion of their respective Leagues. The 2008 League Champions were:

- Queensland ABL:** Men - Rockhampton Rockets; Women - Townsville Flames
- Waratah ABL:** Men - Sutherland Sharks; Women - Sydney Comets
- BigV:** Men - Melbourne Tigers; Women - Hume City Broncos
- Central ABL:** Men - Norwood Flames; Women - North Adelaide Rockets
- SEABL:** Men - Hobart Chargers; Women - Kilysth Lady Cobras

RESULTS

2008 CHAMPION ACC QUARTER FINALS

Men

- 16/08/08 - Hobart Chargers 133 def Knox Raiders 102 (Geelong Arena)
- 23/08/08 - Melbourne Tigers 119 def Forestville Eagles 92 (Veneto Club)
- 23/08/08 - Rockhampton Rockets 82 def Sutherland Sharks 68 (Bankstown Stadium)
- 23/08/08 - Sandringham Sabres 99 def Norwood Flames 82 (Mars Complex)

Women

- 23/08/08 - Kilysth Lady Cobras 85 def North Adelaide Rockets 55 (Kilysth)
- 23/08/08 - Townsville Flames 95 def Bankstown Bruins 50 (SeaFM Stadium)
- 23/08/08 - Hume City Broncos 66 def Nunawading Spectres 65 (Broadmeadows)
- 23/08/08 - Sydney Comets 69 def South West Metro Pirates 44 (Alexandria Stadium)

2008 CHAMPION ACC FINALS - Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre

Mens

- 30/08/08 - Rockhampton Rockets 100 def Sandringham Sabres 93
- 30/08/08 - Hobart Chargers 128 def Melbourne Tigers 126
- 31/08/08 - Rockhampton Rockets 103 def Hobart Chargers 99

Womens

- 30/08/08 - Townsville Flames 77 def Kilysth Lady Cobras 71
- 30/08/08 - Sydney Comets 78 def Hume City Broncos 77
- 31/08/08 - Townsville Flames 73 def Sydney Comets 57

National Junior Championships

The National Junior Championships are the breeding grounds for talented junior basketball players across the country, providing elite pathways from the grass roots of our sport to our senior national teams. These large scale events also provide invaluable networking opportunities for coaches, officials, administrators and volunteers.

The National Junior Championships entertained basketball fans all over Australia in 2008, with Gawler, SA (U14 girls clubs), Darwin, NT (Under 14 boys clubs), Kalamunda, WA (U16 boys and girls), Ballarat, VIC (U18 boys and girls), Albury NSW (U20 boys and girls and Ivor Burge men and women) and Newcastle, NSW (National Schools) playing host to literally thousands of aspiring U14 to U20 basketball players during the week-long events.

Winners included Werribee (VIC), Bulleen (VIC), VIC Country, VIC Metro, Victoria, South Australia, NSW Metro, Caulfield (VIC) and Xavier (NSW).

Rising stars Ryan Broekhoff (VIC) and Cayla Francis (SA) took out the R.E. Staunton Medals as the outstanding male and female players at the 2008 Under 20 Junior National Championships in Albury. The R.E. Staunton Medal is named after the late legendary basketball figure Bob Staunton, who did tremendous work for junior basketball in this country in all areas of the sport including coaching and administration. Staunton represented NSW as a player and was involved in the first-ever televised basketball game in Australia. He was the manager of the Australian Senior Men's team from 1975 to 1980 and served for many years as the head of the Australian Basketball Federation. During his tenure Staunton played a big part in helping to establish the Australian Junior Championships, the National Youth Teams and the Australian Institute of Sport program.

Fair Play Awards were won by:

U14 Boys – Andrew Gaze Fair Play Award – Ipswich, Qld

U14 Girls – Jenny Cheesman Fair Play Award – Alice Springs, NT

U16 Fair Play Award – Tasmania

U18 Fair Play Award – Northern Territory

2008 Basketball Australia Junior Awards:

Mike Ellis (WA) – Male Coach of the Year

Donna Mitchell (TAS) – Female Coach of the Year

Brett Henley (QLD) – Male Referee of the Year

Tara Glennie (VIC) – Female Referee of the Year

Mark Valentine (VIC) – Male Administrator of the Year

Val Mann (NSW) – Female Administrator of the Year

Kellie Pacis (SA) – Male Contribution to Players with an Intellectual Disability

Jo Larkin (VIC) – Female Contribution to Players with an Intellectual Disability

Rockhampton Morning Bulletin (QLD) – Best Media Coverage

Barry Barnes (ACT) – Junior Basketball Volunteer of the Year – Male

Nattalina Weston (VIC) – Junior Basketball Volunteer of the Year – Female

Pat Dickson (ACT) – Junior Basketball Scoretable Official of the Year

Norma Bacic (NSW) – Junior Basketball Statistician of the Year

Simon Cross (NSW) – Junior Basketball Vocation and Education Award – Male

Dayna Schinz (VIC) – Junior Basketball Vocation and Education Award – Female



Photo: Kangaroo Photo

2008 Championship Results

U14 Boys Club Championships – The Ken Watson Trophy

Werribee, Vic 60 def Sandringham, Vic 42

U14 Girls Club Championships – The Michele Timms Trophy

Bulleen, Vic 51 def Melbourne Tigers, Vic 33

U16 Men's National Championships – The Robert Young Trophy

Vic Country 65 def Vic Metro 59

U16 Women's National Championships – The Norma Connolly Trophy

Vic Metro 81 def SA Metro 57

U18 Men's National Championships – The Merv Emms Trophy

Vic Metro 88 def SA Metro 70

U18 Women's National Championships – The Maree Jackson Trophy

Vic Metro 57 def NSW Metro 54

U20 Men's National Championships – The Jack Terrill Memorial Trophy

Vic 90 def NSW 63

U20 Women's National Championships – The Arthur McRobbie Trophy

SA 99 def Vic 61

Ivor Burge Championships – Men

Vic Metro 86 def NSW Metro 38

Ivor Burge Championships – Women

NSW Metro 68 def Vic Metro 59

National Schools – Men

Caulfield Vic, 107 def Brisbane State, Qld 69

National Schools – Women

Xavier NSW, 71 def Unley, SA 54



Photo: Kangaroo Photo



Photo: Kangaroo Photo

One Momentous Day

On November 8th, 2008, in an historic move for basketball which will ensure a bright future for the sport, NBL clubs and state and territory associations passed a unanimous vote for basketball's long awaited reform.

"Today signals a critical moment in the history of basketball in Australia, with the final vote on accepting the recommendations of the review being undertaken by the NBL clubs and Basketball Australia state associations," said Chairman of the Boards of Basketball Australia and the NBL, David Thodey at the time.

"Our great desire was to see a unanimous outcome for the reform of basketball in this country, for the best interest of all basketball participants. Today, I am very proud to announce that the vote has been unanimous in its support of reform.

"It is time for change and this unanimous vote of confidence is a vote for our sport, our future and a show of support for the basketball community – the hundreds of thousands people that dedicate their time and effort, and demonstrate their ongoing commitment to what was, and will again be, one of the greatest sports in this country.

"Basketball has a bright future in Australia, and with renewed focus, commitment, and support we are determined to ensure the right foundations are set for the next decade," said Thodey.

"This will be achieved through the introduction of a single, streamlined national structure for basketball, which promotes unity, accountability and a results driven approach.

"The formation of this single management body will strengthen the focus on building the sport across all levels and provide stronger links between national and state bodies.

"We have committed to moving forward together to transform basketball back to its rightful place as a major mainstream sport in Australia, through the development of sound commercial strategies, strong financial management and measurable outcomes," said Thodey.

"This is no short-term plan. We aim to deliver a revised governance and management structure and a sustainable business model and plan to ensure the sport's successful future."

Eighteen months previously, Basketball Australia and its state/territory members and the National Basketball League and each of the NBL clubs signed a commitment to change, with the change based on the findings of an independent industry review conducted by the Dynamic Sports and Entertainment Group.

The commissioning of a full review received the buy-in from all parties, with agreement it was time to invest in the business of basketball.

The aim of the review was to obtain a clear, independent view of the state of basketball, so the interim board could develop a revised management structure and a sustainable business plan for basketball in Australia, which would deliver strong commercial and community benefits for the sport.



The outgoing BA Board (L-R seated) Ken Madsen, John Maddock, Scott Derwin, Shelley Lambert (L-R standing) Lois Appleby, John Davidson, Libby Woods, Dan Kirtley. Photo: Kangaroo Photo



The new Board of Basketball in Australia (L-R seated) John Maddock, David Thodey, Scott Derwin, Diane Smith-Gander (L-R standing) Bruce Spangler, Andrew Garz, Seamus McPeake. Photo: Kangaroo Photo

Developing Players



In 2008 the National Intensive Training Program “NITP” (formerly the “ITC”) continued its success as one of the premier junior high performance programs in the world.

National Intensive Training Program (NITP)

The NITP is the key component of BA’s systematic and unified national player and coach identification and development strategy that targets and teaches outstanding junior basketball players and coaches in every state and territory within Australia.

The recommendations resulting from the High Performance review conducted in 2008 and the consideration and implementation of those recommendations will shape the NITP’s continued success for future years. As part of the recommendations a new High Performance General Manager will be appointed in 2009.

A majority of athletes who played at National Junior Championship level were part of the NITP. The program was led by state and territory NITP Head Coaches and working with their many network coaches in weekly practice sessions on strength and conditioning, sports psychology and regular camps, the coaches successfully balanced the program with the athletes’ school and lifestyle commitments.

Selection criteria for NITP development camps take into account the athletes’ performances at major events, including club games, the Australian Country Junior Basketball Cup, the Pacific Coast Slam, NITP combined camps, NITP small group/individual sessions and, if applicable, performances on international tours. NSW, SA, NT and Victoria Country programs toured the USA in 2008 to compete against a range of schools and colleges to be exposed to the international game with great success and it is hoped that these tours will continue in the future.

Camps also have a strong educational element, with participants attending scheduled supervised study times of two hours duration each throughout the camps.

The NITP isn’t just about players though; it is about the coaches that direct them. Basketball Australia appointed David Herbert (WA) and Justin Schueller (TAS) as NITP Head Coaches in 2008 while Patrick Hunt finished up in his role as Manager of Player and Coach Development to take up in a position at the AIS. His contribution over many years has been invaluable and he will be missed, although thankfully he has not been lost to basketball, as he will continue on the Executive of the World Association of Basketball Coaches and in his new role, will work with the AIS basketball coaches, as well as coaches in the other AIS sports.

On a related topic, Basketball continues to be an inclusive sport with states and territories doing good work in fostering relationships with various organisations to deliver programs, with successful initiatives for 2008 including a Memorandum of Agreement with Deaf Basketball Australia and the development of coach material for wheelchair basketball and adaptive coaching workshops. In another positive step, the Pacific School Games included wheelchair basketball and Athletes with Intellectual Disability in their programs in 2008.





Photo: Kangaroo Photo

Developing Coaches

A total of 4,208 accredited coaches currently sit in Basketball Australia's national database - 3,805 Level 1 coaches and 403 with Level 2 accreditation. 1,605 are females and 2,603 are males, which shows the great job associations are doing to qualify their coaches.

New Coach Accreditation and Development Curriculum

In 2008 there were two workshops involving coach accreditation and development curriculum focus groups. The workshops have involved developing a new, relevant and user-friendly approach to accrediting coaches from the community level through to national league and international levels. The focus group will continue to work with consultants and the Australian Sports Commission to develop resources and to come up with the final product for coach accreditation and development.

Interstate Coaching Experience

The 10th annual Interstate Coaching Experience (ICE) was conducted in Canberra. ICE provides a development opportunity for nominated coaches and comprises sessions with Canberra Capitals WNBL program as well as the AIS Men's and Women's programs. The 2008 ICE was facilitated by Basketball Australia's Manager of Player and Coach Development, Patrick Hunt. Attendees for the 2008 experience included: Daniel Gibson (ACT), Dale Gleeson (NSW), Leigh Bathman (VIC), Keith Bragg (TAS), Tom MacDonald (SA), Brett Banting (WA), Blair Smith (QLD), Trish Atkinson (ACT) and Paul Lankford (VIC).

Dr. Adrian Hurley Scholarship

The Dr. Adrian Hurley Scholarship was established to reward one of our hardworking NITP Network Coaches and to encourage promising NITP Coaches as well as providing an additional educational opportunity for coaches. Selection is based on a result of efforts in the NITP, support of programs and potential to coach at an elite level in the future. The scholarship provides an opportunity to attend the

AIS Basketball Program for a five-day period. While at the AIS, attendees observe individual and team practice sessions with the AIS men's and women's program, have an opportunity to view the latest sport science program, access the National Sport Information Centre and gain knowledge of the latest resources, and where possible attend Canberra Capitals, Canberra Gunners and ACT NITP programs. The 2008 Dr Adrian Hurley Scholarship was awarded to Peter Cunningham from Basketball Victoria Country.

Adaptive Coaching Workshop

With the revamp of the coach curriculum, one of the units that is included at each level of coaching is Adaptive Coaching. This includes much of what was covered in the "Coaching Athletes with Disabilities" module that was optional under the previous NCAS system. Adaptive Coaching has been made a mandatory unit, at each level, and will be developed into a core skill. In 2008 a workshop was conducted at MSAC to discuss barriers of performance, assessing the potential of the athlete, basic skills, complex skills and team skills. BA would like to thank the Australian Sports Commission and Basketball Victoria for their support in putting the workshop together.

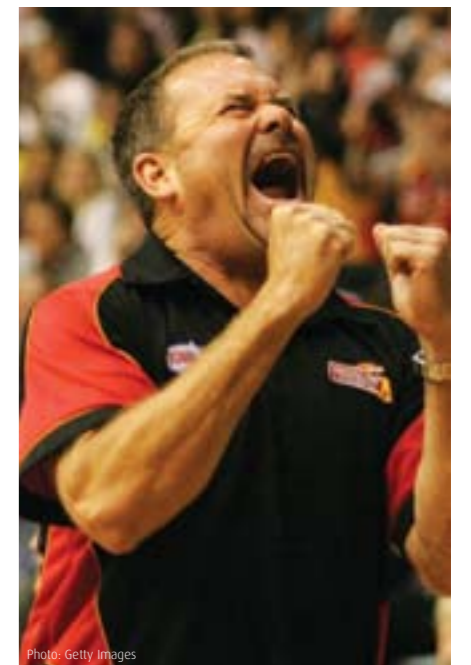


Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Getty Images



Photo: Kangaroo Photo

Developing Officials

Basketball Australia is continually working to identify, educate, develop and assist officials at every level of the sport.

National Referee Development Program

The National Referee Development Program is the key component of Basketball Australia's identification and development strategy. Referees are now not only participants at the state level but selected participants are also chosen to attend the Australian Development camp at the AIS and the National Junior Championships. The 2008 Referee Camp, held in conjunction with the Australian Development Camp, was a great success with the introduction of additional lectures and a greater focus on recovery and fitness. A highlight of the camp was a strength and conditioning session with the Canberra Raiders rugby league trainers, which was covered by WIN TV locally.

Australian Junior Championships

In 2008 the education and development program for referees at Australian Junior Championships was reviewed over several meetings and workshops, with modifications made to enhance the existing program. The introduction of a Video Technical Assistant, for example, was a new role created by the Referee Commission along with the redefinition of the Referee Manager's role.

In addition, the rostering system was changed so Referee Commissioners could utilise the highest ranked officials for finals and semi-finals, while officials for playoff games will now be selected using a frequency chart to ensure proper rotations. Referees will now also be flown into tournaments one day prior to championships to allow Referee Commissioners to conduct pre-tournament clinics. The use of Bunn Sheets as an evaluation tool has also been revised, as has the practice of lengthy post-game interviews with referees.



Photo: Ian Knight Photography



Photo: Ian Knight Photography

National Officiating Scholarship Program

The National Officiating Scholarship Program (NOSP) aims to assist in the development of officials and mentors in a high performance environment. The key elements of the scholarship program are: a more concentrated evaluation of officials, including self-evaluation techniques; opportunities to officiate interstate and internationally; mentoring officials; holistic training in conflict management, nutrition and fitness; experience at national league level; and experience with other sports.

Basketball Australia was fortunate in 2008 to have two successful applicants chosen for the 2008 ASC Scholarship Program, Victorians Robyn Boyd and Chris Morrey. His selection allowed Chris a chance to attend an international referee camp in the Netherlands conducted by Alan Richardson, the Euroleague Technical Adviser since 2000, while Robyn was able to officiate the FIBA Oceania Youth Tournament held in Guam along with Drew Meads (2007 scholarship), gaining experience and knowledge with other international referees from the FIBA Oceania zone.

Also in 2008, an International Referee Camp was attended by Lucas Doughty, a 2007 scholarship holder, in Poland where a number of international referee commissioners attended including Lubomir Kotleba, the Sports Director of FIBA.



Photo: Kangaroo Photo



Photo: Getty Images

Developing Indigenous Athletes

Buoyed by the successes of Rohanee Cox (Opals), Patrick Mills (Boomers) and Nathan Jawai (drafted to the NBA) it was a banner year for BA's Indigenous Sports and National Deadly programs, which are made possible by funding from the Australian Sports Commission.

Indigenous Sports Program

The Indigenous Sports Program continues to support states and territories in delivering sustainable programs in Indigenous communities. These programs include conducting coaching and officiating courses as well as 'how to run a competition' courses so that the programs can be self-delivered in the communities.

National Deadly Program

In 2008 the National Deadly Program achieved exceptional positive results for basketball. Regional coaches were targeted nationwide to identify, deliver and monitor athletes in the program with some regions in Queensland and northern NSW also conducting Regional Camps.

Nationally, with the support of coaches and Australian Sports Commission Regional Coordinators, a total of 241 athletes were evaluated. The National Deadly Squad, through the support of Head Coach Tim Mallon, was established and consisted of 33 athletes (13 female, 20 male), with 16 coaches active in the program.

Two athletes in the National Deadly Squad, Joshua Thomas and Keehan West, gained selection to teams that competed at BA's National Junior Championships, with neither athlete having competed at this level prior to their involvement with the program.

Two National Deadly Camps were conducted in 2008 and included intense training sessions, elite athlete education (sport psychology, nutrition, Drugs in Sport) and time spent living at the AIS. A Deadly Coach Workshop was also conducted to educate eight coaches involved with the program.

Basic physical testing was conducted by the ASC Regional Coordinators to identify athletes with potential. Through the support of Eric Drinkwater (Charles Sturt University) and David Pyne (AIS) further comprehensive testing was conducted at the National Deadly Camps.

Olympic role models Patrick Mills, Rohanee Cox and the first Indigenous NBA Draft Pick Nathan Jawai as well as the pathways they took to reach the top were publicised through BA publications and posters. These were distributed to all state/territory associations and Indigenous networks. Former Olympian Danny Morseu has also spoken to athletes and displayed support for the program. Media support for the program also came from WIN TV (Northern NSW), ABC Radio (Cairns), The Canberra Times, The Northern Daily Leader and The Coffs Harbour Chronicle.

The Deadly Program gained support from organisations including Midnight Basketball Australia, Djarragun College (Cairns), South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy, NSW South West Academy and Clontarf Academy (WA), for which BA is sincerely appreciative.

Basketball Australia is committed to the National Deadly Program while funding, opportunities and inclusion to existing programs is being sought for its ongoing sustainability.



Photo: Kangaroo Photo



Photo: Getty Images

Aussie Hoops



Photo: Kangaroo Photo

Aussie Hoops was introduced in 2002 with the support of the Australian Sports Commission and in 2008, in consultation with state and territory associations, Basketball Australia developed a new Aussie Hoops model.

A New model

The Aussie Hoops program is about kids having fun and using a “game sense” approach, while learning the experience of basketball by playing a series of games. Aussie Hoops is for boys and girls of any ability (including kids in wheelchairs) between the ages of 5 and 12 years. It can be played all year around, indoors or out, and involves many activities. In many cases, you don’t even need a hoop to enjoy the program.

The new model has three components - ‘In School’, ‘In Association’ and ‘Holiday Camps’. In line with this new model is a new merchandise pack has been developed which comprises a backpack, a water bottle, a sweatband, a T-shirt and a basketball. The main objective of the new model is to establish who does Aussie Hoops, and which associations and schools run the program. The TBN database and website have been invaluable in this process.

Delivered in schools and associations all across Australia, the ‘In School’ program can be during or after school time, it can be a ‘one-off’ session, or it can be a weekly program. Aussie Hoops at stadiums can either be part of a holiday camp or a weekly program during the school term.

There are loads of activities complete with handy session plans and activity cards, meaning that coaches and parents or even teenagers can easily run a session. Kids develop their basketball and general motor skills through the program doing modified activities and games. They are having so much fun, in most cases participants don’t even realise they are learning!

Many associations have continued to support the program through promotions and activities both locally and at National League games, for which BA is most appreciative.



Photo: Kangaroo Photo



The Australian Institute of Sport Men's and Women's Basketball program remains an integral part of Basketball Australia's high performance unit. Recognised around the world as one of the best of its kind, the program has a strong tradition of striving for excellence in basketball and in life, and continues to support the development of talented junior players.

In February, AIS Scholarship holders Ryan Broekhoff and Cayla Francis were awarded the R.E. Staunton Medals for the Most Valuable Men and Women's players at the Under 20 National Championship after leading Victoria and South Australia to the titles. The 2008 Program was launched on March 11 with returning scholarship holders Stephanie Cumming and Clinton Steindl named as Bob Staunton Memorial Scholarship Recipients.

In the Women's National Basketball League the AIS women's team produced their best season in six years by winning eight games, their highest number of wins since the 2002/03 season. Continuing a great AIS tradition, Nicole Hunt was named the 2007/08 WNBL Betty Watson Rookie of the Year after an outstanding season where she averaged 10.2 points, 4.1 assists and 3.6 rebounds per game.

After such a successful WNBL season, a number of female students graduated from the AIS, allowing eight new athletes to enter the program. The majority of the first half of the year was spent conditioning the athletes for overseas competition with tours to Europe and Chinese Taipei scheduled, where the girls recorded a 5-2 win-loss record. Scholarship holder Kerryn Harrington was named MVP of the Fougères International Youth Tournament in France, and was also named in the All Star Five alongside fellow scholarship holder Rachel Jarry.

The men's team competed in the South East Australian Basketball League and finished the season with a 13-13 win-loss record and won a finals berth, but due to FIBA Oceania commitments the team was unable to contest the finals.

Members of the AIS men's team won many awards throughout the SEABL season, with Brock Motum named the 2008 SEABL South Men Australian Youth Player of the Year, and Head Coach Marty Clark named the SEABL Men Coach of the Month in June. In July the men's team defeated the Australian Opals, who were only one month out from the Olympic Games in Beijing.

The men's team travelled to Italy in late September and played a number of local club sides, including Under 19, Under 21 and professional teams, and recorded a 7-3 win-loss record.

Enjoying successful international careers since their departure from the AIS, a number of former scholarship holders competed for the Boomers and Opals at the Beijing Games. They included Patrick Mills, Andrew Bogut, Joe Ingles, Brad Newley, Glen Saville, David Andersen, Matthew Nielsen, Lauren Jackson, Suzy Batkovic, Hollie Grima, Kristi Harrower, Erin Phillips, Emma Randall, Jenni Screen, Belinda Snell, Laura Summerton and Penny Taylor.

Photo: Eric Li for Canberra Pictorial

Media and Communications



2008 provided many challenges in media and communications with a general apathy toward the sport amongst many members of the mainstream media meaning any win was a hard fought win. At the end of a very busy year however those wins amounted to many, with a highlight being the Boomers quarter final match against the United States in Beijing ranking as the highest rating event of the Seven Network's coverage of the Games across all sports.

The Opals, in particular, provided a welcome positive relief and after international competitions in Australia against Chinese Taipei and Brazil as well as game reports and audio sourced while the team toured overseas, the Opals entered Beijing as the highest profile women's team at the Games. The Sun Herald's Olympic lift out, released at the end of the first week of the Games, was fronted by a full page picture of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd with the Opals team after the team's opening match victory. When the Opals faced the United States in the Gold Medal match, it was the most highly anticipated women's basketball match in our history and if Australia had lifted itself to victory the media would have reached unprecedented levels for our sport.

Much anticipation and media hype was also generated around the Boomers' quest for a medal at the Olympic level, with the general public believing that 2008 may be the Boomers' year. Early losses in the tournament derailed those hopes but, as previously mentioned, the Boomers received blanket media coverage across print and radio media. This coverage peaked around the Boomers clash with the US in the Finals, but alas it was 'David versus Goliath' without the happy ending.

The Basketball Australia website, www.basketball.net.au, and the WNBL website, www.wnbl.com.au, provided fans, family and the media with up to date scores, results, player diaries and feature stories supported by a wealth of action images from the major sporting competitions and the activities of our national teams. These stories were trickled down to the 274 websites on The Basketball Network (TBN) and with the great success of FIBA Live Stats contributed to nearly 1 billion page impressions (99,924,547) being recorded right across TBN. On average TBN experienced 293,516 unique browsers per month. WNBL.com.au experienced its most active year to date on the back of 500 stories being posted during 2008, an increase of 25 per cent.

'Tip-off', the Basketball Australia e-newsletter, continued to provide the basketball community with a fortnightly update while the WNBL newsletter was sent out to an ever growing list of subscribers. In addition, weekly NBL and WNBL Podcasts were aired through the websites. The WNBL Game of the Week was broadcast live on ABC2 on Friday nights and replayed on ABC1 on Saturday afternoons while FOX Sports continued its partnership with the NBL by playing the Game of the Week on Wednesday nights and covering all Finals games.

Australia's most respected sports magazine, Inside Sport, ran feature articles on Opal Erin Phillips as well as Boomers Patrick Mills, Andrew Bogut and Brian Goorjian with 'Life Coach', an inside look at two days in the life of Australia's head coach, winning the NBL's feature story of the year award. Patrick Mills was also featured at length in the international bible of sport, America's Sports Illustrated.





Photo: Courtesy of Australia Post

Marketing

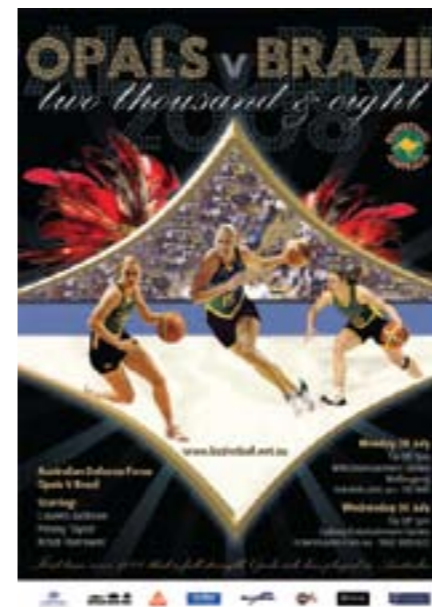


Photo: Courtesy of Australia Post

In the lead up to the Beijing Olympics in August, 2008 it was a busy year for the Marketing Department.

Events

Opals World Challenge: The Opals contested three games against Chinese Taipei held in Terrigal on the NSW Central Coast, where posters and flyers promoting the event were distributed throughout the northern regions of Sydney and New South Wales.

Boomers World Challenge and Ramsay Shield: The Boomers hosted a three-game series against Iran in June in Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne with the series broadcast live on Fox Sports, followed by the annual Ramsay Shield against New Zealand in Melbourne. Posters and flyers were distributed to promote the event.

Opals v Brazil Series: Significant sponsorship for this two-game series in Wollongong and Sydney was provided by the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation. Posters, flyers and viral campaigns were produced to market and promote the series, with the Sydney game televised on Fox Sports.

Farewell Luncheon: The Boomers and Opals were farewelled at a stunning luncheon held on the top floor of the Q1 building - Q Deck on the Gold Coast. Both teams were presented with custom made rings courtesy of the Australian Opal Cutters sponsorship with Basketball Australia.

The WNBL: Several marketing items were produced to support both the League and its clubs including posters distributed pre-season, fixture cards and program cover pages.

Australia Post Junior Boomers Clinics

Australia Post held for the second consecutive year a series of Junior Boomers Clinics. In a national promotion, the Boomers revisited their primary schools to hold coaching clinics for students with participating students receiving a show bag containing Australia Post and Aussie Hoops merchandise. Boomers participating in the clinics included Jason Smith, Adam Gibson, Luke Schenscher, Mark Worthington, CJ Bruton, Russell Hinder, Jacob Holmes and Patty Mills.

Sponsorship

Continuing their support of Basketball Australia were Australia Post and the Australian Defence Force as naming rights sponsors of the Boomers and Opals. The Australian Sports Commission also continued to provide significant contributions to the sport of Basketball as our principal partner. BA gratefully acknowledges and recognises the support of its sponsors including: Australia Post, the Australian Defence Force, Peak, Molten, Sporting Pulse, Australian Opal Cutters, Gatorade, Komat, Skins, ThermoSkin, Coast 2 Coast, Beiersdorf, Alpha Sports Medicine, Southern Design and Print, Champion, Rising Stars and Kangaroo Media.

Rebranding

Throughout 2008 a tremendous amount of work was undertaken to rebrand the sport, uniting it aesthetically with a consistent look and feel. The fruits of that effort will be witnessed in April 2009 when the new branding is completed, launched and implemented.

Mid way through 2008 the General Manager of Sales and Marketing, Nicole Pensko, departed Basketball Australia after three years with the organisation. The newly created position of General Manager of Commercial Operations will be filled by Dominic Teakle in January 2009.

The Basketball Network (TBN)



Financial Management



With the assistance of Basketball Australia's official technology partner, SportingPulse, The Basketball Network (TBN) continued its growth in 2008. Originally introduced in 2001, TBN provides affiliated associations with access to a website module, FIBA Organizer's competition management system, FIBA Organizer's membership module, the FIBA Live Stats program and the social networking website MySport at no cost to the association.

TBN is cost effective and reliable and provides a simple website coupled with the most comprehensive competition management system available, helping associations to manage their members, competitions and promotions to great effect.

Of the 463 associations across Australia, 274 (or 61 per cent) are now on TBN, 155 (or 34 per cent) had previously never had a website before, while 23 (or 5 per cent) continue to use a website managed by another provider.

As a result, nearly 1 billion page impressions (99,924,547) were recorded right across TBN (page impressions are the total number of individual pages viewed). On average, TBN experienced 293,516 unique browsers per month (a 'unique browser' is an identifier of a computer, not a person that has visited a website) while over 320,000 names of registered participants have now been added to the national basketball database.

With a BETA version of FIBA Live Stats launched in October 2007, the FIBA Live Stats program is now used in the NBL, WNBL, Australian Junior Championships, National Wheelchair Basketball League, Big V, SEABL, QBL, Waratah and Central Leagues.

FIBA, the world governing body of basketball, released FIBA Live Stats as a free product to other International Basketball Federations in July 2008, after successfully testing the product in Australia.

For the first time since 2003, Basketball Australia recorded a deficit for 2008 with a loss of \$71,196 for the year. However the Board and Council had approved a budget deficit of \$165,992 for the year to allow for additional costs associated with Olympic Games preparation as well as the organisation's ongoing structural review. The final result therefore was an improvement of just over 57% against budget. The 2008 result took retained earnings for Basketball Australia to just over \$1.182 million at the end of 2008.

Both revenues and expenses were slightly lower in 2008 than in 2007, with 2008 revenues of just over \$7.111 million or 1.4% lower than 2007 operating revenues whilst expenses in 2008 of just over \$7.182 million were below those of 2007 by 0.6%. There were revenue and expense variations across most parts of the organisation rather than many stand-out changes across the two years. Other significant items included higher Australian tournament revenues and expenses in 2007 (Boomers Olympic qualifying series against New Zealand) than in 2008 (Opals series against Brazil); and offsetting lower tournament costs in 2008 were significantly higher structural review costs, and flowing from this initial integration costs, in 2008 than in 2007.

During 2008 a service agreement remained in place between Basketball Australia and NBL Management Limited (NBL). The provision of financial management services by Basketball Australia to the NBL continued to be the major cornerstone of the agreement. This worked well during the year and will obviously remain in place through to the integration of the two bodies from July 2009.

Basketball Australia continued with their efforts to assist the States and Territories to achieve their objectives via the application of economies of scale for various goods and services such as sports injury and personal accident insurance, public and association liability insurance, as well as national junior championship airfares, during 2008. This will continue into 2009.

Much of the financial management focus for the organisation in 2009 will centre on preparations for the integration of Basketball Australia and the NBL from July 2009, as well as development of budgets and financial management procedures for the new organisation. Given the current economic climate, the new entity is going to need to ensure that it maintains the financial management philosophy of Basketball Australia of working hard to maintain traditional funding sources whilst seeking new opportunities together with ensuring that costs are tightly managed through the organisation.

Maher and Gaze Medallists

THE MAHER MEDAL

The Maher Medal is named after one of Australia's greatest sporting families, the Mahers, honouring husband and wife Tom and Robyn Maher, who have been involved in 566 games for Australia as either a player or a coach, playing an instrumental role in Australia's rise to world prominence. The medal recipient is determined from a vote of all members of the women's senior national team after each game, with the player receiving the most votes awarded the Maher Medal.

The 2008 Maher Medal for Female International Player of the Year was awarded to LAUREN JACKSON and SUZY BATKOVIC (shared) after their significant contributions on the world stage. Jackson has now been the recipient of the Maher Medal an unprecedented six times in its 20-year history, first winning the medal in 1999 at the age of 18, while Batkovic was honoured for the second time, after winning the award in 2001. Jackson was Australia's leading scorer at the Beijing Olympics with 17.3 points per game.

PREVIOUS MAHER MEDAL WINNERS: 1988 Robyn Maher; 1989 Samantha Thornton; 1990 Robyn Maher; 1991 Robyn Maher; 1992 Sandy Brondello; 1993 Rachael Sporn; 1994 Michele Timms; 1995 Michelle Brogan; 1996 Michele Timms; 1997 Michelle Brogan; 1998 Carla Porter; 1999 Lauren Jackson; 2000 Lauren Jackson; 2001 Suzy Batkovic; 2002 Lauren Jackson; 2003 Trish Fallon; 2004 Lauren Jackson; 2005 Hollie Grima; 2006 Lauren Jackson; 2007 Rohanee Cox; 2008 Lauren Jackson and Suzy Batkovic.

THE GAZE MEDAL

The Gaze Medal is named after one of Australia's greatest sporting families, the Gazes, after the father and son combination of Lindsay and Andrew that attended nine Olympics and eight World Championships between them. The Medal is voted on by all members of the senior national team after each game, with the player who receives the most votes being awarded the Gaze Medal.

The 2008 Gaze Medal for Male International Player of the Year was awarded to PATRICK MILLS for his outstanding impact on the senior men's national team. At just 20 years of age, Patrick made his Olympic Games debut as a back-up point guard and led the team in scoring at 14.2 points per game, including high scores of 22 points against Athens Olympic Gold Medallists Argentina and 20 points against Beijing Olympic Gold Medallists, the United States. It is the first time Patrick has won the award.

PREVIOUS GAZE MEDAL WINNERS: 1988 Phil Smyth; 1989 Luc Longley; 1990 Andrew Gaze; 1991 Andrew Vlahov; 1992 Mark Bradtke; 1993 Andrew Vlahov; 1994 Andrew Gaze; 1995 Andrew Gaze; 1996 Andrew Gaze; 1997 Shane Heal; 1998 Andrew Gaze; 1999 Mark Bradtke; 2000 Andrew Gaze; 2001 Brett Maher; 2002 Chris Anstey; 2003 Matthew Nielsen; 2004 Shane Heal; 2005 CJ Bruton; 2006 Sam Mackinnon; 2007 Sam Mackinnon; 2008 Patrick Mills.



Photo: Kangaroo Photo



Photo: Kangaroo Photo



Photo: Kangaroo Photo

Contacts

BASKETBALL AUSTRALIA OFFICES

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WEBSITES

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National Basketball League / www.nbl.com.au
Women's National Basketball League / www.wnbl.com.au
Australian Basketball Association / www.ababasketball.net.au
Aussie Hoops / www.aussiehoops.com.au

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STATE ASSOCIATIONS

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Stephen Fox, President (until May 2008)
Mark White, President (from May 2008)
Mark Cartwright, Chief Executive

Basketball NSW

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Adrian Hurley
Daniel Martinez, Chief Executive

Basketball NT

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Pam Adam, President

Basketball Queensland

PO Box 1281, Milton QLD 4064
Ph: 07 3377 9100
Fax: 07 3371 7239
www.basketballqld.net.au
Neil Fitzpatrick, Chairman
Graham Burns, General Manager

BA Life Members

Frank Angove OAM (dec), Dr Ivor Burge MBE (dec), Richard Butler, Bob Elphinston OAM, William Feltham (dec), Lindsay Gaze OAM, Dr Adrian Hurley OAM, Ron Harvey CVO AM, Robert Kidner (dec), Lorraine Landon, Ken Madsen MBE, John Martin, Arthur McRobbie OAM (dec), Alistair M Ramsay MBE OAM, Dr John Raschke OAM (dec), George Russell OAM, Jack Small OAM (dec), Malcolm Speed, Robert Staunton OAM (dec), Sid Taylor AM, Betty Watson OAM, Ken Watson MBE (dec)

Basketball SA

PO Box 29, Findon SA 5023
Ph: 08 8444 6454
Fax: 08 8444 6445
www.basketballs.net.au
Bruce Spangler (Chairman - until October 2008)
Peter Sexton (Chairman from October 2008)
Mark Hubbard, Chief Executive

Basketball Tasmania

PO Box 21, New Town TAS 7008
Ph: 03 6228 1822
Fax: 03 6228 1844
www.tas.basketball.net.au
Lou Cox, President
David Scott, General Manager

Basketball Victoria

Box 3 MSAC Aughtie Drive, Albert Park VIC 3206
Ph: 03 9927 6666
Fax: 03 9927 6677
www.basketballvictoria.com.au
Dan Kirtley, President
Wayne Bird, Chief Executive

Basketball WA

PO Box 185, Floreat WA 6014
Ph: 08 9284 0555
Fax: 08 9284 0550
www.basketballwa.asn.au
Libby Woods, President
Rick Smith Chief Executive

WNBL COMMISSION

John Davidson (Chairman)
Scott Derwin
Wendy James (from March 08)
Charles Ryan (until March 08)
Libby Woods
Rachael Sporn (from June 08)
Kathryn Herlihy (from March 08)

BASKETBALL AUSTRALIA

MEMBERSHIP

International Basketball Federation (FIBA)
FIBA Oceania
Australian Olympic Committee
Australian Paralympic Committee

PATRON

Hon. Kevin Rudd, MP, Prime Minister

PATRON FOR WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Ms Therese Rein

PRESIDENT

John Maddock (until November 2008)

CHAIRMAN

David Thodey (from November 2008)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Scott Derwin

DIRECTORS

John Maddock (continuing)
John Davidson (until November 2008)
Ken Madsen, MBE (until November 2008)
Lois Appleby (until November 2008)
Dan Kirtley (until November 2008)
Libby Woods (until November 2008)
Shelley Lambert (until November 2008)
Scott Derwin (until November 2008)
David Thodey (Chairman) (from November 2008)
Bruce Spangler (from November 2008)
Diane Smith-Gander (from November 2008)
Andrew Gaze (from November 2008)
Seamus McPeake (from November 2008)

STAFF

Scott Derwin, Chief Executive
Michael Haynes, Chief Operating Officer / General Manager, Community Basketball
Lorraine Landon, General Manager, National Teams and Competitions
David Morris, General Manager, Finance and Administration
Nicole Pensko, General Manager, Sales and Marketing (until August 2008)
Chuck Harmison, General Manager, National Basketball League
Patrick Hunt, Manager, National Player & Coach Development
Marie Byrne, Manager, Executive Support Services
Geoff Tripp, Manager, Business Development
Bill Baxter, Manager, Media & Public Relations
Marc Howard, Manager, Communications (NBL)
Bruce Keirs, Manager, Education and Officials Development
Marian Stewart, Manager, National Women's Operations
Nic Mercer, Manager, National Men's Operations
Dan Sloan, Manager, International & Events (until May 2008)
Renae Maycock, Manager, International & Events (from June 2008)
Jodie Craig, National Teams Administrator (from June 2008)
Diane Lowe, Competition Manager (ACC/WNBL)
Ben Hawes, Communications Officer (until June 2008)
Kimberley Lewis, Communications Officer (from September 2008)
Jessica Davidson, Marketing Coordinator
Jarrod Greedy, Community Programs Coordinator
Ryan Benson, Technology Coordinator (until March 2008)
Ruth Sabado, Accounts Clerk
Clair Spry, Development Officer, Basketball Network (from April 2008)

BA Hall of Fame Members

Legends - Dr John Raschke (dec), Alistair Ramsay

Inductees - Dr Ivor Burge (dec), Jenny Cheesman, Andrew Gaze, Lindsay Gaze, Dr Adrian Hurley, Robyn Maher, Alistair Ramsay, Dr John Raschke (dec), Phil Smyth, Sid Taylor, Eddie Crouch, George (Juris) Dancis, John Holden, Maree Jackson, Luc Longley, Tom Maher, Patricia Moore, George Russell, Larry Sengstock, Robert Staunton (dec), Michele Timms, Ray Tomlinson, Betty Watson, Frank Angove (dec). Barry Barnes, Norma Connolly, Kevin Coombs, Karen Dalton, Lorraine Eiler, Bob Elphinston, Inga Freidenfelds, Arthur McRobbie (dec), Keith Miller, Ed Palubinskas, Henry Perazzo, Avis Scullin, Rachael Sporn
Lifetime Achievement Award Winners - Ken Watson (dec.) Jack Small (dec.) Robert Young, Fred Van Dongen



Basketball Australia **Annual Report**

2008