

Sport SHORTS

October 2009

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Sydney World Masters Games

10–18 October

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Fit, Fun and Forever Young

Visit
www.2009worldmasters.com



Communities
Sport & Recreation

Sydney 2009 World Masters Games

With more than 27,000 competitors from 106 countries, including two Australian centenarians and one heir apparent to a European throne, the Sydney 2009 World Masters Games will be the largest-ever edition of the world's largest multi-sport event when they take place throughout the harbour city from 10-18 October.

Running nine days, featuring 28 sports and using 72 venues, this year's Games in Sydney will see more than double the number of people compete than did at the Beijing 2008 Olympics and also eclipse the previous multi-sport event participation record of 24,886 competitors that the Melbourne 2002 Games established.

Among the bumper entry epitomising the Games motto of fit, fun and forever young are 101-year-old lawn bowler Reg Trewin of Griffith in New South Wales, 100-year-old athlete Ruth Frith of Brisbane in Queensland and 41-year-old Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark, with His Royal Highness set to partner Sydney-based Chris Meehan in the tassar class of the sailing competition.

More than 200 Olympians from the past 17 summer Games, including Australian gold medallists and Games ambassadors Simon Fairweather, Russell Mark and Murray Rose, have registered for the Games. However people who have contested their sport's highest level will be the exception to the rule.

That is the beauty of the Games – they are open to everyone regardless of their level of sporting ability. People only need to meet their sport's minimum age, which ranges between 25 and 35 years, to be eligible. The Games represent a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for all sports enthusiasts to have an Olympic-style experience.

For many thousands of Games competitors their Olympic-style experience will begin with the Opening Ceremony at ANZ Stadium on Sunday 11 October, during which they will participate in what will be the largest athletes' parade ever and take centre stage

at what was the showpiece venue of the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

And for Games competitors in more than half the sports - archery, badminton, baseball, canoe/kayak, cycling, diving, hockey, rowing, sailing, shooting, softball, swimming, tennis, volleyball and water polo – their Olympic-style experience will extend to competing at Sydney 2000 Olympics venues as well.

Attracted by the chance to couple savouring an Olympic-style experience with visiting one of the world's favourite cities, more than 8,000 Games competitors will travel to Sydney from overseas, including well in excess of 2,000 Canadians, nearly 1,500 Kiwis and not far short of 1,000 Americans, while just under 8,000 competitors will come to the harbour city from the Australian states and territories other than New South Wales.

Consequently, the Games will deliver a welcome economic boost to Sydney and the state of which it is the capital, with the NSW Department of State and Regional Development projecting that the event will inject \$48 million into the local economy,



more than justifying the NSW Government's \$8.5m cash investment and full support for the project throughout the past six years.

The time has passed for people to register as Games competitors or volunteers - a community-minded workforce of more than 5,000 people will help the Games Organising Committee put on the event - but the Games do not have to begin without you because spectating at the Games is free!

For Games information, including competition schedules, visit the event's website at www.2009worldmasters.com



By Alice Wheeler
Sydney 2009 World Masters Games

World Masters Games

gun shooters out to combat wild image

It might seem unusual to compare shooting with yoga or meditation, but two of Australia's top competitors headed for the Sydney 2009 World Masters Games do just that.

Eighty-year-old Dan Daniels says people do not realise that shooting is more than just aiming a gun at a target and pulling a trigger.

"Everything has to be under control," Daniels said. "You have to control your breathing, the movements of every muscle in your body. You really go inside yourself and make your mind crystal clear."

Daniels, of Baulkham Hills, is one of the oldest competitors at the upcoming Games. He has been shooting for more than 40 years.

"My wife wants me to get rid of all these guns," Daniels said. "She says I'm getting too old to be firing rifles three days a week. I tell her it's what's keeping me alive so I live to see 100!"

Daniels says that the concentration needed in the sport keeps his mind sharp and his body in shape. Sans Souci's David Moore, 55, also registered for the Games, agrees.

"The initial reaction of most people is 'you shoot, you must be twisted'," Moore said. "They just see people with lots of guns in their house who like to pull triggers."

"The reality is this sport is 90% mental and only 10% physical. It's all in your head and as long as you stay sharp you can keep

competing. It's important to change people's perception of shooting."

Moore is a three-time Olympian, having represented Australia at Beijing 2008, Athens 2004 and Sydney 2000.

The Sydney International Shooting Centre, a legacy of the Sydney 2000 Olympics, will host all three disciplines of the Games shooting competition. Shooting is open to everyone aged 30 years and over. The three disciplines are clay target, pistol and small bore and air rifle, while there are specific disability categories as well.

Visit www.2009worldmasters.com or www.shootingcentre.nsw.gov.au for more information.



Fields of Play

The sustainability and adequacy of sportsgrounds and sporting facilities is an ongoing matter for every local government area, sporting organisation and the wider community. The recent Fields of Play forum brought all the players together to discuss the issue.



Facilitated by Sport and Recreation, Fields of Play was held in Sydney last month and attended by over 100 representatives from 25 councils across the Sydney basin and 13 State sporting organisations.

"Our industry needed to improve the communication and understanding on issues relating to sport and recreation facilities, especially sports field management, development and planning," says Mia Jenkins, one of the event organisers from Sport and Recreation.

"Game Plan 2012, the industry's five year plan, sets down a target of increasing physical activity participation 1% per annum between 2007 and 2016. This requires maximum use to be made of existing facilities and a strategic approach to their development, upgrade and design.

"It is recognised that councils and local sporting clubs are critical to achieving this target," said Ms Jenkins.

Fields of Play came about as a result of ongoing industry feedback to NSWSR. Many sports felt that facilities are often underutilised, as they do not meet the needs of sport with respect to location, primary and secondary usage and requisite standards. At the same time, local government highlighted a lack of understanding and communication from sport regarding facility development and use.

"Fields of Play was an opportunity to network and share ideas on working together for a sustainable future for community sport and recreation facilities," says Liz Daykin from Sport and Recreation, also involved in organising the event.

More information

Liz Daykin
Sport and Recreation
liz.daykin@communities.nsw.gov.au

Comments on Fields of Play

"...There was a real sense of purpose and collegial spirit amongst sport and local government representatives. A number of ideas and actions were determined at the forum to help strengthen relationships. Both parties left with an appreciation for each others issues and objectives..."

Jackson Hills,
Tennis Development Manager,
Tennis NSW.

"It was good to discuss processes and strategies with other councils on how they deal with the same issues we all face. Having the SSOs involved was extremely beneficial as it provided councils and sports with a greater awareness of each other's needs, wants and challenges..."

Gabby Ripoll,
Sports Liaison and Recreation Coordinator,
Campbelltown City Council

"...I came away with a broader appreciation of the challenges other LGAs face, needs of sport providers and useful tools with regard to the management of usage."

Steven Ecclestone,
Coordinator, Community Recreation
and Planning,
Canterbury City Council

"I found the forum valuable in terms of generating contacts at local councils and to look at the council's perspective on facility development and allocation."

Kurt Wrigley, CEO,
Australian Oztag Sports Association

Cost of sport

A major research project is underway to build a profile on the cost of delivering community sport in NSW.



The sport industry in NSW is united in its goal to make it easier and affordable for people of all ages to be physically active and involved in their communities.

Game Plan 2012, the industry's strategic plan, sets this out as one of its four key objectives over the next five years.

But when it comes to the affordability and cost of sport, little information or research exists. ABS data on the topic doesn't distinguish community sporting organisations from major sport and professional clubs with associated businesses.

The fact that community sporting organisations vary greatly in size, structure, available resources, facilities and staffing, further complicates the issue.

Sport and Recreation, together with the University of Technology and many sporting groups, has set out to learn more.

"To assist the sport industry continue deliver an affordable service for the community

in the future, it's essential to have an understanding of the costs associated with running a community sport club," says Kerry Turner from Sport and Recreation.

"We want a clearer picture on the current financial costs and revenue streams for running a typical club.

"We also want to know more about the financial pressures clubs face now and in the future," says Ms Turner.

The new research project sets out to identify:

- financial costs that community sporting clubs face
- revenue generated used by community sporting organisations
- any innovative fee/income structures used by sporting organisations.

There are three major parts to the research – a review of existing literature, a club survey and case studies on innovative clubs.

"The club survey is the most significant part of the research," says Ms Turner.

"We've consulted extensively with sporting organisations to develop the survey and hope to have 80 clubs, from eight nominated sports, complete it.

"The survey is very detailed, asking specific information on a whole range of expenses, such as facilities, equipment, uniform, administration, officiating and insurance costs. The survey also looks closely at revenue generation through sponsorships, registration and canteen/bar and examines financial reporting and forecasts," says Ms Turner.

The research project is well underway, with the survey sent to sport clubs last month. Full results from the project are expected at the end of the year.

More information

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Sport for everyone

Students with a disability from independent schools recently attended a fun multi-sport day, designed to showcase ability and promote participation.

Held at Presbyterian Ladies College (PLC) in Sydney's inner west, the annual event attracted 120 students from Years 3 through to 12.

"The multi-sport day provides an opportunity for students to try sports and encourages them to get involved on a regular basis," says Margot Zaska from Sport and Recreation.

"It's also a chance for sporting groups, teachers and students to share information on sporting programs and opportunities for people with a disability."

A range of sports were on offer including football, softball, boccia, basketball, cricket, athletics, swimming and sitting volleyball. Preparations are already being made for the 2010 multi-sport day. There are also plans to expand the event to other regions and areas of NSW.

More information

Margot Zaska
Sport and Recreation
Margot.zaska@communities.nsw.gov.au



Central West showcases Disability Sport a Month

An innovative program to give people with a disability a taste of different sports is underway in the Central West of the State. Disability Sport a Month offers people with a disability and their families the opportunity to try a different sport each month and connect with local sporting clubs. The program was launched in late August in Orange and will take place each month until July 2010.

"There is an impressive array of sports on offer," said Darrin Yates from Sport and Recreation. "Some of the activities included are wheelchair sports, boccia, croquet, tabletop games, sitting volleyball, basketball, BMX and cycling, tenpin bowling, softball/T-ball and football (soccer).

"Blind cricket and sailability are also available to try and there are great wheelchair sports such as rugby, hockey and basketball available. We urge anyone who wants to expand their sporting horizons to give the program a go!"

Disability Sport a Month is supported by the Central West Disability Sport Network. Check out the Disability Sport a Month calendar at www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/active (click on what's on Western NSW) or call Sport and Recreation Orange Office on 02 6362 6623.

Respite Camps

for Teens with a Disability

Of the many challenges facing families of children and young people with a disability, getting a much needed break from day-to-day caring is one of the toughest. The Department of Disability, Ageing and Home Care (DADHC) and Communities NSW through Sport and Recreation have developed an exciting new program to deliver respite care for this important sector of the community.

The Respite Camps for Teens with a Disability program targets adolescents with an intellectual disability in regional and rural NSW. Camps will be held at Sport and Recreation Centres and will cater for teenagers and their families who have limited access to leisure and recreational facilities.

"The camps will give these teenagers the opportunity to participate in social and recreational activities outside of their everyday school and family life," says Simon Cleverley from Sport and Recreation.

"They'll get the chance to make new friends and widen their social networks as well as take part in new and challenging activities. All of this contributes to their social independence and enables them to practice decision-making in a low risk environment."

Mr Cleverley says the camps will also give parents, carers and siblings a break from the home environment. "Spending time with others knowing that their child is cared for responsibly will be a big boost for some parents who rarely get a break," he says.

"Brothers and sisters can share their experiences of living with a sibling with a disability with peers and develop other friendships."

The first camp is scheduled for teens from the Hunter region with low to moderate support needs at Broken Bay Sport and Recreation Centre during the October school holidays.

More information

Simon Cleverley
Sport and Recreation
Simon.cleverley@communities.nsw.gov.au



Local Government forum for Western NSW

Around 60 people are expected to attend the 10th annual Western Region Local Government Forum, to be held in Armidale this month.

Organised by Sport and Recreation and hosted by Armidale-Dumaresq Council and Armidale Sports Council, the forum is an opportunity for representatives from councils and the sports industry to share information, network and discuss current issues.

The theme of this year's forum is "Building Community Capacity" and will

cover topics such as:

- Creating healthy inclusive communities and the role of recreation
- Moving ahead in leaps and bounds – a local council case study
- Youth Services Toolkit – a resource for Youth Workers
- Creating disability sport opportunities
- Workshop on how to make community development fun and effective.

Both local council and sporting group representatives will attend.

FORUM DETAILS

Date: Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 October, 2009
Time: 9am-3pm daily
Venue: Armidale City Bowling Club, 92 – 96 Dumaresq Street

For more information:

Contact Sport and Recreation on (02) 6362 6623 or visit www.dsr.nsw.gov.au

STATS CHAT

WITH ROSEMARY PERRY
 Coordinator, Statistics and Research, Sport and Recreation

Participation by age and gender in sport and physical activity

In NSW in 2008, both males and females (aged 15 years and over) had similar overall participation rates – 83.8% for males compared to females at 81.4%.

However, participation rate patterns do differ according to the age group of your gender.

Males

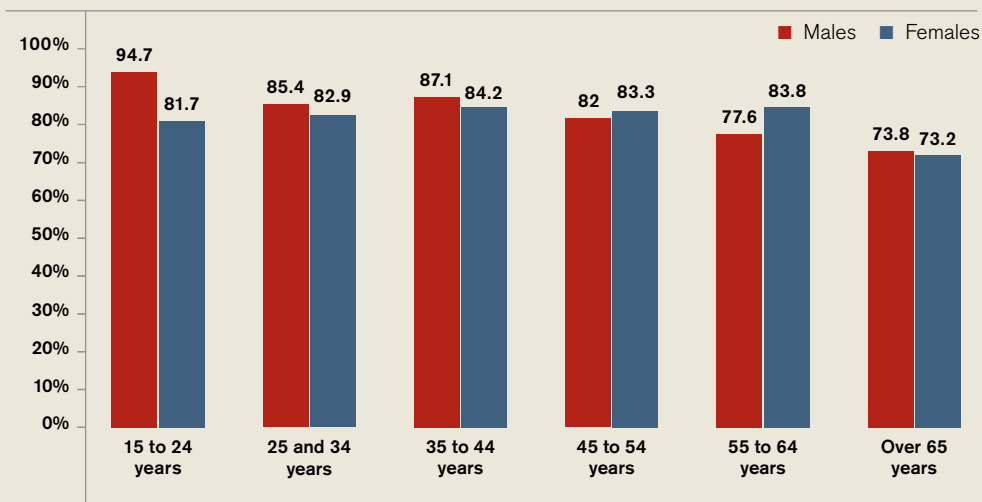
The highest participation rate for males is 94.7% between the ages of 15 and 24 years. The participation rate then decreases significantly to 85.4% for those aged 25 and 34 years and then goes up again to 87.1% for those in the 35 to 44 years range. Rates then decrease to 82.0% for males between 45 and 54 years, 77.6% for 55 to 64 year-olds and down to the lowest rate for those aged 65 and over to 73.8%.

Females

For females, their participation rates are highest in the older age groups, with the highest between the ages of 35 and 44 years at 84.2%. The rates then remain fairly stable at 83.3% for 45 to 54 year-olds and 83.8% for 55 to 64 year-olds. As opposed to males, the participation rates for females are lower in the younger age ranges – 81.7%

for 15 to 24 year-olds and 82.9% for 25 to 34 year-olds.

Although participation rates for males decrease gradually after the 35 to 44 age group, there is a significant decrease for females after the 55 to 64 age range with those aged 65 and over having the lowest participation rate of 73.2%.



Tougher penalties

for unruly SCG/SFS patrons

Sport and Recreation Minister Kevin Greene said penalties for anti-social behaviour at the Sydney Cricket Ground and the Sydney Football Stadium will increase so that patrons can safely enjoy a day out at the cricket or the football.

The penalty notice for anti-social behaviour will increase from the current maximum of \$220 to \$330 – an increase of 50 per cent. However, court imposed fines of up to \$5,500 still apply for more serious offences such as pitch invasion.

“The new rules and increased fines will reinforce the standards of behaviour expected of all spectators,” Mr Greene said.

“Fans should be able to enjoy a day at the cricket or footy without having to put up

with idiots. We are targeting anti-social behaviour such as throwing missiles, setting off fireworks and bringing alcohol inside the grounds.”

Mr Greene said it is important to remember that these changes only affect people who breach the rules. “The aim of this regulation is not to take away from the fun or atmosphere of a top sporting contest. It is squarely aimed at protecting the genuine fans and their safety by setting reasonable standards of behaviour for all spectators.”

Trust members who misbehave will also face a longer suspension period. The proposed Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium By-law 2009 will replace the 2004 By-law which expired on 1 September 2009. The By-law sets

the general conditions of entry to the Sydney Cricket Ground and Sydney Football Stadium, including prohibited behaviour and conditions of Trust membership.

Copies of the Regulatory Impact Statement and a draft of the proposed By-law are available to view at www.communities.nsw.gov.au

or may be obtained from:

Mr B. Lamerton
Sydney Cricket and Sportsground
Trust Offices
Moore Park Road
Paddington, NSW 2021.

Kay Cottee Award encourages young sailors



Keen young sailors from NSW will get the chance this month to spend four days on the water at Point Wolstoncroft Sport and Recreation Centre on Lake Macquarie courtesy of a NSW Government, all expenses paid course.

“Twenty four teenagers – 12 boys and 12 girls – will build their skills on a course run by Sport and Recreation in association with champion sailor Kay Cottee and the NSW Yachting Association,” said the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Kevin Greene.

“The Kay Cottee Sailing Encouragement Award is a fantastic opportunity for young people keen to either learn to sail or to hone their sailing skills. The course is open to kids with little or no experience in sailing, though participants need to be competent swimmers.

“Kay Cottee AO was the first female sailor to perform a single-handed, non-stop circumnavigation of the world and her 1988 voyage continues to inspire many young Aussie sailors,” he said. Applications for the Award closed in August, with selection done by ballot.

HELP, we need more volunteers!

Summer sport has kicked off – and many sport clubs will still be scrambling for committee volunteers. Here are some ideas for filling the gaps.

How do we recruit volunteers?

It's the million dollar question for many sports clubs. There has been much published on the topic, but it's still something clubs struggle with every season.

We know the many reasons why people don't volunteer. And while on the surface this information may not seem useful, it actually can be. Below are some of the top reasons people don't volunteer* – and how your club could overcome them.

Why people typically won't volunteer*	How a club may overcome this
Volunteer roles too demanding	Break committee roles and/or jobs down into small tasks
Long hours involved in volunteer work	Better utilise technology to reduce the burden (e.g. start an online workspace rather than have to meet all the time)
Increased parent expectations on volunteers / fear of being abused	Take a strong stance on unacceptable behaviour – and communicate your position widely and often
Lack of knowledge or skills	Offer training with all committee roles. Put mentors in place for all new committee members
Lack of understanding about club policies and processes	Develop and publish job descriptions for all volunteer roles

Similarly, we also know the reasons why people do volunteer and can build on these to attract more people.

Why people typically do volunteer**	How a club may build on this
Help others in the community	Using your website, newsletter and other sources, communicate the benefit your club has in the community. Build a strong sense of your contribution and the impact it has on people's lives.
Personal satisfaction	
To do something worthwhile	Seek out the talents within your club - marketing gurus, website experts, landscapers, builders, accountants, photographers etc. Approach people for help, even if it's just for a specific task, not a whole committee role.
To use their skills and experience	
For social contact	Incorporate social events with volunteer committee meetings and training.

While some of these volunteer recruitment strategies can be done immediately, others need to be worked on over time. So start planing for next season now. It will be worthwhile. Appointing a volunteer coordinator is a great way to ensure this important part of your club's operations gets the full attention it deserves.

*Volunteers in Sport: Issues and Innovations, Griffith University 2008. Available at www.dsr.nsw.gov.au
 **Volunteers in Sport fact sheet, NSW Sport and Recreation. Available at www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/research

Filling the volunteer gap

Many of the staff at Sport and Recreation are involved in sport clubs. Here's their advice on filling the volunteer gap at your club:

"Building on networks and using a personal approach is important. I find that asking people to volunteer in a passive way (through newsletters, flyers and our website) doesn't work. You actually need to approach people and ask face-to-face. Some of our existing committee members have very good networks in our club – they know a lot of people/families. Recruiting new volunteers works better when they approach people they know, who have the skills and interest to do a certain committee job, and ask them in person."

"At my club we try and get committee members from people who have children playing and/or are playing themselves with the club. There are always a few 'special positions' on the committee and through club networking members are asked if they could contribute some of their time to help out in specialty areas like web design and accountancy."

"It is really important to keep the volunteers you already have involved – as well as recruiting new ones. For many people just knowing that the job they are doing is appreciated by those around them will keep them motivated and willing to be involved. Simple things like saying thank-you at the end of the day, offering to assist if they look like they need a hand and valuing their comments and suggestions are all important."

Judy Fasher

Champion volunteers

A regular feature – profiling the efforts of sporting volunteers in NSW.

How long have you been volunteering?
I've been a volunteer for the sport since 1985.

Why do I volunteer?
Equestrian Sport has been an obsession since I can first remember. I like my fellow sports enthusiasts and have always wanted to contribute to the growth and opportunities within the sport.

What's the key to getting people to volunteer for sport?
Most important is to make people feel important and that anything they do to help is valued. Ask people to help and let them know they are contributing to something very valuable.

How much time do you dedicate each week?
The number of hours spent is very variable on average 20 to 30 hours as a conservative estimate....my family would say more!

What's the key to getting people to volunteer for sport?
The key to keeping volunteers involved in the sport is constantly giving us all the opportunity to see that we are making a difference to the riders' experience. Increasing competitors at all levels of Equestrian is resulting in higher levels of required volunteer support. This is recognised by Equestrian NSW who run a highly successful recruitment program for volunteers.

What's your most rewarding moment?
The moment we heard that the sport of Equestrian had been recognised by the Australian Sports Commission and the NSW Institute of Sport (NSWIS) as worthy of government support. It was something I worked on with Wayne Roycroft (National

Coach) Sue Ryan (mother of competitors Matt Ryan and Heath Ryan) and Franz Venhaus, CEO Equestrian Australia. The decision enabled us to put in place an elite high performance program, meaning our riders and their horses could travel overseas and compete in both Olympic Games and World Equestrian Games without the riders having to be responsible for all their costs, which as you can imagine are prohibitive.

Another highlight was the creation of the NSWIS Scholarship Program for Elite Riders.

Contributions to Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC)

Judy was nominated by Mark Fulcher, Manager of SIEC. He says:
"Judy is a volunteer involved in many activities at SIEC. She has been instrumental in the NSWIS program and the driving force behind our regular Friday night showjumping event, geared towards novice and young riders. At the 2008 Equestrian NSW Awards Judy was honoured with a special award for Extraordinary Service to the Sport, highlighting her tireless work in all areas of equestrian. She's truly an amazing volunteer."

Judy too values her work with SIEC saying:
"It has been a great pleasure to see SIEC develop since the 2000 Olympic Games as an outstanding venue. It serves all equestrian sports, from kids jumping ponies to our top Gold Medallists. The venue is now recognised as the home of the major Equestrian Events run in NSW, largely thanks to enthusiastic staff, government support and the combined efforts of many volunteers."



ABOUT

Name: Judy Fasher

Current club/association/ organisations:
Equestrian NSW

Current volunteer role(s):

- Equestrian NSW Board Member
- Equestrian Coach and Coach Educator for NCAS
- Equestrian Committee Member Eventing NSW
- Former Elite Squad Coordinator, New South Wales Institute of Sport

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Do you know a champion volunteer?
We're looking for champion volunteers to profile in upcoming issues.

Volunteers can be 'champions' for all sorts of reasons – e.g. innovations and great ideas, hours dedicated, helping to grow your sport and making sport special for others. We want to hear about a range of volunteers. Email us your nomination and briefly (100 words) tell us why they're a 'champion volunteer'.

Email
Shannon.dixon@communities.nsw.gov.au

SPORT SNIPPETS

Communities NSW



Communities
Sport & Recreation

The NSW Government recently announced a restructure of the State public sector, aimed at improving services to the community by delivering integrated services and reducing internal red tape and barriers between agencies. As part of these reforms, NSW Sport and Recreation is now a part of Communities NSW. If you do business with us, please note that Communities NSW has a new ABN 96 991 896 913. For more information on Communities NSW, visit www.communities.nsw.gov.au

Increased frontline funding for disability sports

Sport and Recreation Minister Kevin Greene has announced disability sports in NSW will benefit from improved funding arrangements that will see more money invested in frontline services. "From this financial year, disability sports organisations will be awarded funding directly from the NSW Government worth a total of \$230,000," said Mr Greene. "The funding will be administered by Communities NSW which will absorb the administration costs, saving over \$70,000 annually. This will allow more money to be directed to frontline services." Information on the new application process will be available shortly. A new Ministerial Advisory Committee will be established to consider support to disability sporting organisations and other ways to maximise participation in disability sports and physical activity.



Koori netball tournament

Aboriginal communities are invited to take part in an upcoming netball tournament. To be held on 23-24 October at Charlestown Netball Courts, the tournament will run in three divisions – girls 14 and under; women 15 years and over; and mixed women/men teams. For more information, contact Sport and Recreation's Newcastle office on (02) 4929 1613.



Deaf runner wins City2Surf

Melinda Vernon demonstrated recently that being deaf is no barrier to achieving your sporting dreams as she won the world's biggest fun run, the iconic City2Surf in Sydney. Melinda who is profoundly deaf beat a field of Australia's top female distance runners coming in at 47:46 minutes for the 14km.

"I have always wanted to win this race, it was a dream since I was a little kid watching it on TV, I wanted to be the one up there on the dais getting a trophy and today the dream has come true," said Vernon. "I don't see being deaf as holding me back in my sporting career, rather I see it as a challenge that has helped make me the athlete I am today," she said.

Grants for young athletes

The Australian Sports Commission's Local Sporting Champions grant program is open. The program helps athletes aged between 12 and 18 who are competing in state or national sporting competition that requires travelling more than 250 kilometres to meet the cost of attending the competition. For more information visit www.ausport.gov.au/champions

For more information, visit www.deafsports.org.au



Ask the coach

with Simon Woinarski

Coaching Junior Teams during the Finals

During the finals the better teams play against each other and the stakes are raised. This brings out the best in some people and the worst in others.

In these circumstances the actions of the coach are critical to your team's performance and how positive the experience is for the players.

For coaches of primary school age players it is important to reiterate to parents the philosophy of junior sports participation at this age group. In other words, participation and enjoyment are still higher priorities than winning.

A meeting with the parents to reinforce this and your expectations of their behaviour while watching and the messages they are

giving the players may be a good idea, especially if you have any concerns leading into the finals. And remember to practice what you preach and set the behavioural standard for parents and spectators.

Also remember that you are the coach of the team and no matter how much well meaning advice you get you have to make the decisions you believe are right. It's a good policy to stay consistent with the selection and player rotation policies you have used during the year.

Emphasise to your players that finals are an opportunity for them to test themselves against other good teams and enjoy more challenging matches than the normal season and try to de-emphasise the

quest for a premiership. Leave that stuff for the older athletes.

No matter how well you manage the environment for your junior players they will feel more anxious and nervous when they play and this can result in uncharacteristic mistakes. Expect this and stay encouraging on the sidelines.

Something else to be aware of is that some primary age children may not be equipped to deal with the emotions of winning or losing a final. Tears and inappropriate behaviour can happen if you overemphasise the importance of winning. Creating a more supportive environment will help them cope with these emotions better and help them to deal with similar situations when they are older.



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