

SWSAS

News

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SWSAS News



SWSAS News is proudly produced in-house by the South West Sydney Academy of Sport for our South West Sydney community.

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Cover Image: Girl Power in Action.
Athletes during the Athlete Leadership Challenge Day at Burns Obstacle Course

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Ms Sally Quinnell MP, Member for Camden, Ms Anne Stanley MP, Member for Werriwa, Mr Gerry Knights, Academy CEO, Ms Charishma Kaliyanda MP, Member for Liverpool, and Mr Nathan Hagarty MP, Member for Leppington at the Academy's Sport Awards Night.

From the CEO's Desk

It is with the greatest of pride I provide this latest snapshot of what is happening at your very own local Regional Academy of Sport. It would be a gross understatement to say we are extremely busy with most sports working in overdrive, at training, education, and competition sessions.

And the results have been fantastic. Every day we hear about athletes getting into state teams, emerging athlete programs and school state teams.

The sporting year ahead promises to be one of unequalled significance for the South West Sydney Academy of Sport and for the wider sport sector of our region.

The Academy is already working towards inducting over 270 athletes and 60 plus coaches and support staff members in 2023-2024. It is envisaged that additional new sport programs will also join the Academy's current sports, as the year progresses.

With most Academy sport programs currently being re-vamped to provide as many opportunities as possible to learn more skills and importantly have fun along the way - it is 'onwards and upwards' for another exciting year at SWSAS.

The Academy has also been charged with increasing its support in the area of coach development, for higher achieving sports pathway coaches. This will commence with the support of the NSW Office of Sport, the NSW Institute of Sport, and our very own Regional Academy network.

I am pleased to report that each and every one of our corporate partners continue to recognise the community value of the Academy and have renewed their support, once again. Thank you one and all.

Well, what a wonderful event the Academy 2023 Graduation and Sports Awards Dinner was. Another amazing attendance at the event, designed to recognise our region's very special talented junior athletes.

The evening was filled with wonderful stories of their achievement's, hard work, and sporting dreams. Read the article to see who won 'Athlete of the Year'.

We are so very proud of the achievements of our athletes and coaching staff members over the past 12 months.

As always, we must remember that Academy success is due to the work of many, starting from coaches and trainers at the club and school level, through to our association and regional supporters, and our highly generous corporate sponsors.

The Academy is proud to be one, but important stepping stone in the development pathway of our local athletes, in support of their sporting 'Dreams'.

Regional Academies are working in partnership with the NSW Institute of Sport in the development and provision of an exciting new program, identified as PURSU32+. Designed specifically to identify and support the development of athletes with the potential of performing at the highest level, in their chosen sport.

With some possibly representing Australia in its home Olympic and Paralympic Games, in Brisbane in 2032.

We look forward to seeing many of these fine athletes join our large contingency of past alumni, when it is their turn to shine.

On an administrative note, we welcome back Liverpool City Councillor Karress Rhodes to the Board, and also congratulate Mrs. Amanda Coles for her recent appointment.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity once again to thank our Academy 'naming rights' partner the Campbelltown Catholic Club, and our Platinum Partner South32, plus our region's local Councils and all of our corporate partners, who continue to see excellent community value, in supporting the Academy.



Gerry Knights, CEO



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STARS IN OUR SIGHTS

The 2023 South West Sydney Academy of Sport Annual Graduation and Sport Awards Dinner, held at The Cube, Campbelltown Catholic Club on Friday 28 July, was indeed an unforgettable evening, with the Academy honoring a long list of exceptional athletes and the dedicated individuals behind the scenes.

Throughout the night, athletes from across the Academies twelve high-performance sports programs received well-deserved commendation for their outstanding achievements, with award winners in each sport recognised for their exceptional talent, dedication, and commitment to their respective sport programs, and to the Academy.

An esteemed athlete panel featuring Daniel Grida and Tim Coenraad from the Illawarra Hawks left the audience inspired through their stories of challenges through adversity, opportunity and loyalty, with an underlying theme resonating with both athletes having had serious setbacks and injuries throughout their sporting careers.

Grida leaving the athletes with the hope that "every storm eventually runs out of rain", that "just because things may not seem in your corner right now, doesn't mean that you won't succeed.

Sentiments well and truly reinforced by keynote speaker Australian Free-skiier, Olympian Mia Rennie.

Rennie encouraged each and every athlete to "be the best you first... athlete second" and more importantly, encouraged those present to be yourself, be different, and "embrace your weird", as she discussed the many up and down challenges that came with her journey to be well and truly placed inside the top fifty free-skiiers in the world.

Her experience of falling inches short in qualifying for the Olympics, through heart-breaking injury days before the trials, and the sheer 'mental shattering' of the recovery process left the room speechless.

Only to be followed by roars of accomplishment moments later as Rennie shared that there is indeed a happy ending with this story, and one where she gets to author her next chapter, because of the opportunities presented to her, the support she has received, and ultimately, in finding peace in her decision to pursue what she felt was the best pathway for her to follow - Even if it means representing Team Great Britain at the 2024 Winter Olympics.

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L to R: The 2023 Sport Program Coaches Award Winners: Amelie Alnimer, Daniel Lill, Piper Steed, Jasmine Scott-Castle, Cassandra Taylor, Marley Rhodes (on behalf of Brea Trevitt), Zoey Saba, Darcy Ryder, Jade Dabrowski, Blessing Donvenekham, Joey Eason, Adam Bates, Zoe Bruce, Max Brown-Tjakuapi, Parker Cameron, Clay Jonson, and William Chandhara.

Acknowledging those who work diligently behind the scenes, the Academy this year introduced the inaugural "Lifetime Achievement Award" to honour individuals with over 20 years of service.

This year's esteemed recipients were Chairperson Peter Campbell, who commenced as a Director within the Academy in 2002, and Gerry Knights, a founding member of the Academy's working party in 1994, and current CEO, a position he has held since 2006.

Both gentlemen's contributions were recognised as pivotal in shaping the Academy's long-term success.

In addition to the QUBE Coach Recognition awards, which are presented to coach and support staff achieving three, five or seven consecutive years of volunteer service, the Academy took the extra step in recognising the invaluable role of Volunteers, with the introduction of the "Volunteer of the Year" award in 2023.

Ben Robinson, head coach of The Mac AFLW program, and Shinavia Jerochim, SVSR Mini Crane Hire Volleyball Squad Manager were jointly awarded this year, with both recipients celebrated for their tireless efforts and passion when working with the youth-aged athletes of the Academy.

Yet the highlights of the evening were by far centred around the athlete achievements, with the celebrated achievements of two outstanding athletes being awarded Athletes of the Year.

Fast being recognised across not only the South West Sydney region, but across the State and Nation as a phenomenal talent in baseball, Wests Future Stars athlete Adam Bates was awarded the South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal Athlete of the Year Award.

Fellow Wests Future Star squad member, Para-Swimmer Daniel Lill was honored as the South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal AWD Athlete of the Year, recognizing his incredible journey and achievements within the Academy.

Daniel Grida and Tim Coenraad from the Illawarra Hawks, with panel host Hawks GM People and Culture, Joe Tertzakian





Olympic Free-Skiier and keynote speaker, Mia Rennie



Silver (Five Year) Coaches Award recipient Samantha Garrido, with Gold (Seven Year) Coaches Award recipients Michelle McNamara and David Hine.



A large group of Bronze (Three-year) Coaches Award recipients, including; Caitlin Sendt, Emily Paulic (on behalf of Sue Paulic), Ben Robinson, Rev. Jim Dayhew, Daniel McDonald on behalf of Dan Morris, Sarah McNamara and Selesitina Savae

Following on from the successful implementation of the Academy's inaugural Indigenous Athlete Program in 2022-2023, the Academy was delighted in presenting its first Indigenous Person of the Year award, which was awarded to UAA / Sharp EIT Solutions Basketball athlete, Max Brown-Tjakuapi.

Brown-Tjakuapi was also the recipient of the inaugural Western Sydney University Award for Educational Excellence, an award that recognises the athlete's achievements to maintaining a high standard of excellence throughout their sport program, including attendance and participation, and a commitment to personal development. And comes with a \$1,000 grant from Western Sydney University to put towards his ongoing education.

Described by both his Basketball program coach and Indigenous Athlete Program Coordinator as an exceptional individual, Brown-Tjakuapi was deservedly celebrated for his remarkable contributions and achievements, ultimately joining ten fellow athletes as nominees for the Academy's most prestigious award, the Campbelltown Catholic Club, South West Sydney Academy of Sport, Chairpersons Award.

And, true to his coach's sentiments, Brown-Tjakuapi slam-dunked the evening, ultimately being selected as the 2023 Academy Chairpersons Award Winner, highlighting not only a sensational evening for the young basketball athlete, but standing as a true testament to his exceptional leadership and dedication over the program year.



Campbelltown Catholic Club representative Julie Puckrin, Chairperson Award Winner Max Brown-Tjakuapi, South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal representative Antony Leone, Western Sydney University representative Katie Aguilera and Academy Chairperson Peter Campbell.



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Since 2013, South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal
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of children and young people in our community.



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Sport Program Coaches Awards

Brea Trevitt (AFLW),
Jade Dabrowski and Max Brown-Tjakuapi
(Basketball),
Clay Jonson (BMX),
Joey Eason (Golf),
Jasmine Scott-Castle and Darcy Ryder
(Hockey),
Zoey Saba (Indigenous Athlete Program),
Blessing Donvenekham (Netball),
Piper Steed (Netball Umpire),
Cassandra Taylor and Parker Cameron
(Softball),
Zoe Bruce (Triathlon),
Amelie Alnimer and William Chandhara
(Volleyball),
Daniel Lill and Adam Bates
(West's Future Stars).

QUBE Coach Recognition Awards

Three Year Service – **Bronze Award**

Ben Robinson - AFLW
Sue Paulic - Basketball
Daniel Morris - BMX
Rev. Jim Dayhew - Chaplain
Sarah McNamara - Netball Umpire
Selesitina Savae - Netball
Caitlin Sendt - Triathlon

Five Years Service – **Silver Award**

Samantha Garrido - Netball

Seven Years Service – **Gold Award**

Michelle McNamara - Netball
David Hine - Triathlon



Chairperson Award Nominees: L to R: Jordan McSavaney (Softball), Alexis Paulo (AFLW), Libby Newcombe (Golf), Zayden Brooks (Hockey), Overall Chairperson Award Recipient Max Brown-Tjakuapi (Basketball / Indigenous Athlete Program), Cody Meisenhofen (Volleyball), Skylar Murphy (BMX) and Bodhi Jackson (Triathlon). Missing from photo: Leisl Hopoate (Netball) and Renae Edmunds (West's Future Stars)

South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal Athlete of the Year Finalists

Adam Bates
(Baseball)

Ethan Brooks
(Hockey)

Daniel Lill
(Para-Swimming)

Bella Ma
(Ice-Hockey)

Jordan McSavaney
(Softball)



Campbelltown Catholic Club Chairperson Award Nominees

Alexis Paulo
(AFLW),

Max Brown-Tjakuapi
(Basketball),

Skylar Murphy
(BMX),

Libby Newcombe
(Golf),

Zayden Brooks
(Hockey),

Leisl Hopoate
(Netball),

Jordan McSavaney
(Softball),

Bodhi Jackson
(Triathlon),

Cody Meisenhofen
(Volleyball),

Renae Edmunds
(Wests Future Stars)





Home Runs and Hard Work : A True Come Back

In the world of Softball, 2023 was a year for the record books for our outstanding athletes. What makes their success even more remarkable is the backdrop of the challenges that the sport faced in the post-COVID-19 era. Let's take a closer look at the remarkable success story of our talented players and coaches who not only excelled on the field but also played a crucial role in revitalising the sport in the South West Sydney Area.

U14 Regional Championships: Boys NSW Metro Strikers Shine At the U14 Regional Championships in Redcliffe, QLD, our Boys NSW Metro Strikers showcased their prowess on the diamond. Led by Team Captain Aiden McSavaney, along with Parker Cameron and Bowan Williams, they claimed the coveted first-place title. Their dedication, teamwork, and exceptional skills catapulted them to victory, making us and their clubs all immensely proud.

Girls NSW Metro Slammers: Second-Place Glory Not to be outdone, the Girls NSW Metro Slammers, featuring the talented Natalia Dean, secured a well-deserved second place at the same championship. Natalia's incredible contributions and leadership on the field were instrumental in the team's success.

Podium Finish at the NSW State Championship The Softball NSW Academy Games saw our Girls team achieve yet another milestone. They finished in a remarkable third place, underlining their commitment to excellence and their ability to compete at the highest level.

Representing NSW U16's Squads Several of our athletes made their mark by earning spots in the prestigious NSW U16's squads. Aiden McSavaney, Parker Cameron, Clayton Hapuku, Bowan Williams, Lachlan Boland, and Ezekiel Turnbull showcased their skills, determination, and potential on this grand stage. Natalia Dean continued to impress as a part of the Girls U16's Squad, highlighting her bright future in the sport.



Taking on the World: The Australian Aussie Drop Bears Adventure Natalia Dean embarked on a journey of a lifetime as she joined the Australian Aussie Drop Bears in their international endeavors. Their stellar performance in the USA was nothing short of impressive, as they clinched second place in a fiercely competitive field.

Natalia Dean's achievements in 2023 extended beyond team success. She earned a spot on the Babe Ruth 14&U All-Defensive Team, a testament to her exceptional skills on the field. Her leadership and sportsmanship qualities were also recognised as her team won the sportsmanship award.

Coaching Success

The coaches in the RBI Australia Softball Program: Head Coach Shane Milligan, Assistant Coach Marsheal Walker, Assistant Coach Harrison Pudner and Blake Jackson, Apprentice Coach Jasmine Taylor and Manager Kathleen Cameron have been instrumental in revitalising the sport in the region after the setbacks caused by COVID-19 and adverse weather conditions.



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Through their commitment and adaptability, they have kept the sport alive, providing essential training and support to young players. Their passion to fostering a sense of community for Softball has played a crucial role in its resurgence at the South West Sydney Academy of Sport.

The year 2023 was a year of remarkable achievements and milestones for our Softball program athletes following the effects of COVID-19 on the sport's rebuild. Their hard work, dedication, and unwavering passion for the sport have not only propelled them to the forefront of softball excellence but have also played a crucial role in revitalising the sport after the challenges of the post-COVID-19 era. As we celebrate their successes, we look forward to even greater accomplishments in the years to come, knowing that the future of Softball shines brightly in their capable hands. Congratulations to our softball stars for an incredible year!

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Indigenous Talent ID Day

The 2023 Indigenous Talent Identification Day will provide Indigenous athletes, and Indigenous athletes with a disability from across the Academy region the opportunity to be talent identified across a number of sports, and undertake education and sport science testing in a high-performance environment with the opportunity to join the academy

The Day is Free!

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Future Leaders Learn to Conquer Obstacles

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport held its highly anticipated 'Captain's Class' Leadership Day at the renowned Burns Obstacle Course in Bringelly in mid-June.

The event was held as a practical opportunity for athletes to demonstrate the Academy's core values of commitment, opportunity, respect, and integrity. Twenty-five exceptional athletes, representing roughly ten percent of the Academy's 2022-2023 program intake, demonstrated an unwavering dedication and commitment to overcoming challenges, seizing the opportunity to step outside their comfort zones and develop leadership skills.

Throughout the day, the athletes, who came from each of the Academy's thirteen diverse sport programs, were fortunate enough to have 2022 Ninja Warrior Grand Finalist Saxon Johnstone take the athletes through the Burns own version of the 'Ninja Course'.

Johnstone added an extra layer of excitement and expertise to the day, taking on the role of a guide and mentor, generously sharing his insights and knowledge with the athletes.

Athletes eagerly asked about his training, mental preparation, and obstacle strategies. Johnstone responded, offering not only practical advice and personal anecdotes that resonated deeply. Johnstone emphasised that key attributes such as perseverance, discipline, and a positive mindset, empower athletes to push their boundaries.

"Having Saxon speak to the athletes left a lasting impression, motivating athletes and fostering their growth as future leaders in sports" said Academy Sport Administration Officer Catarina Di Ramio.



"What sets this event apart from any ordinary Academy education session is the practical challenge for athletes to undertake something far different to what would be considered a normal training program" said Di Ramio.

"It was great to see the unwavering respect the athletes displayed for one another, and despite the competitive nature of the race, the athletes fostered a supportive and inclusive environment, encouraging and motivating each other along the way" she added.

The unforgettable experience at the Captain's Class Leadership Day not only celebrated the achievements of the Academy's athletes, but also served as a reminder of the significant impact they can have on their community.

"With their exceptional skills and unwavering dedication, they continue to set a shining example for aspiring athletes, proving that true leadership extends far beyond the field of play" said Di Ramio.

A sentiment echoed by Sport Program Manager Alley Hanagan, who said, "The athletes embarked on an exhilarating obstacle course race, where their commitment and determination were on full display. With each hurdle, climb, and reach they encountered, their resilience and perseverance shone through, with spectators eager to cheer them on".

"These athletes showcased the true meaning of commitment, embodying the Academy's values by pushing their limits and refusing to give up". Said Hanagan.

As these remarkable athletes continue their journey within the Academy, and their local club and representative teams, it is clear that they are destined for greatness, and their achievements serve as an inspiration to others within the South West Sydney sporting community and beyond.



ACADEMY SET TO TAKE OFF WITH XPS

Following substantial investigations and trial periods of a range of Athlete Management Systems (AMS) and data-management software programs over the past three years by not only the South West Sydney Academy of Sport, but by fellow Academies within the Regional Academies of Sport (RASi) Network, the South West Sydney Academy of Sport is excited to announce that it will be implementing the XPS Network as its preferred AMS program moving forward.

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport will join with nine other Regional Academies across NSW in implementing the same AMS program, allowing the best collation, collaboration and measurement of junior athlete sport performance data possible.

The ability to provide quality ongoing data regarding the development of Academy athletes and coaches, has been highlighted as a key deliverable in most recent communication with the NSW Office of Sport, State Sporting Organisations, and the NSW Institute of Sport, when discussing the Academy's sport program frameworks and reporting requirements.

The XPS Network is a worldwide company delivering in 33 languages, across 92 countries, and is managed in Australia by Sideline Sports. The AMS program has been successfully implemented in many major sporting clubs and federations worldwide, as well as in high-performance sports environments including major Colleges and Universities.

The Academy will commence the roll-out of the XPS Network to its athletes and coaching staff commencing in the 2023-2024 Academy sport programs.



The XPS Network AMS program provides athletes, coach and support staff alike online and mobile access to a vast array of tools and features including:

- **Individual Skill Development and Program Planning:** Build and plan team and individual programs and sessions, including athletes Strength and Conditioning programs.
- **Tactical Skill Development:** Recreate training and game situations through diagrams and animations in integrated Playbook software, including an extensive library of skills and drills.
- **Athlete Monitoring:** Monitor readiness, wellness, and training load, to support data driven coaching decisions, as well as storing an athletes sport science testing results and tracking improvements.
- **Program and Match Analysis:** Examine performance in training and matches, including integrated video analysis software, which can generate high levels of accountability and feedback.
- **Coach-Athlete-Parent Communication:** Keep all communication and calendar reminders with coaches, athletes and parents in a central location.
- **Injury Management:** Report injuries and illnesses, manage treatment and rehabilitation periods, and can provide seamless communication between academy medical team and coaching staff members.

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THE SKYS THE LIMIT FOR ACADEMY BMX ATHLETE

While in Sydney the athletes did a battery of tests, received advice from experts on such things as nutrition, participated in group activities, and took inspiration from a panel of elite divers which included four-time Olympian and medallist Melissa Wu, Ruby Drogmuller – who relocated from Moree in northwest NSW to pursue her dreams – and master coach Chava Sobrino, who guided Matthew Mitcham to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games gold medal.

Thirty-nine targeted junior athletes from regional NSW attended the first Pursu32+ 'NSWIS Ready' Regional Academy of Sport Program camp at Sydney Olympic Park in early September, where they received insights into the expectations that would accompany them should they progress to an elite sport program or an athlete scholarship with NSW Institute of Sport.

The athletes, aged between 12-18, were nominated by either their Sport and/or a Regional Academy and were then invited to submit an Expression of Interest to join the pilot program. Selection was based on their potential to progress to elite competition and ultimately the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games.

However, they needed to display other traits including their resilience, motivation, aptitude, commitment, while even the level of support and encouragement that's provided to them by their family was a consideration.

Amongst them was South West Sydney Academy of Sport Bounceback Physiotherapy BMX athlete Skylar Murphy, who from all accounts was right at home amongst some of the states best up and coming stars.

Andrew Logan, NSWIS's Director, Coaching, Regional and Talent, said providing the athletes with inspiration by visiting the stadium that hosted the Sydney Olympics, the NSW Rugby League, and Cricket's High Performance centres, and hearing an athlete of Wu's calibre share her story were as vital as the physical and educational components of the weekend.

"Mel Wu is a four-time Olympian and she's pursuing her fifth Olympic Games, and on the opening night of the camp we heard Mel share her story," said Mr Logan. "And while they watched [vision of] her achievements you could see all the young people in the room were taking it in.

"Heroes inspire, and people want to be like their heroes . . . so if they dream of competing at an Olympic Games or competing at the highest level, then getting inspiration from hearing other elite athletes share their story resonates and means they know it is achievable and that they can believe in themselves."

Ms Murphy, along with fellow athletes selected into the NSWIS Pursu32+ program will head to Jindabyne for a second camp later this year.



Alumni Continuing to Excel on World Stage

On the tail end of celebrating an incredible sport program year at the recent Academy Athlete Graduation and Sport Awards Dinner, with sporting success after sporting success being achieved by athletes of the South West Sydney Academy of Sport within the local community, the Academy is excited to report on the success of both current and alumni athletes who have featured on the international stage in recent weeks.

Including most recently throughout August, where alumni Hockey athlete Courtney Schonell helped secure the Hockeyroos' ticket to Paris, scoring what ended up being the match winning goal against New Zealand.

With now just under a year to Paris 2024, it is hoped that Schonell, fast becoming a mainstay within the current Hockeyroos rotation, will become the Academy's third Hockey, and ninth athlete overall to represent Australia at the Olympics.

Schonell is not the only former Academy Alumni to achieve great success, with netballer Ash Brazill claiming Gold at the Netball World Cup, held in South Africa in late July.

"We are so proud to have been able to watch Ash (Brazil's) journey from a junior athlete to Commonwealth Games and World Cup champion" said Academy Sport Operations Manager, Stephen Craig.

"Ash is a pioneer, and a true role model for young female athletes in both Netball and AFL" said Craig, who hopes that even though she has retired from competitive Netball, that the legacy she leaves on the sport will be long.

Yet it's not just the Australian Diamond's who were boosted by a strong Academy connection, with the Tongan 'Tala', making their first World Cup appearance, boasting three alumni and one current member of the Academy's Bingara Gorge Netball Program.

Finishing an inspiring eighth in the world, former Academy Head Coach Jacqua Pori-Makea-Simpson (pictured above with her coaching staff) has indeed stamped her authority on the Tala, leading the program as Tongan National Head Coach throughout the qualification tournaments and World Cup, where her side came away with strong wins against Fiji, Zimbabwe and Scotland.

And with three matches against the traditional powerhouse sides in Australia, England and South Africa now under their belts, have the experience and determination to now look ahead to the 2027 World Cup, which will be held in Sydney.

Joining Pori-Makea-Simpson on the sideline's with the Tongan National team were current Academy Head Coach Van Nguyen, taking on the role as Head Physio. Former Academy Athletes Tiana Mosca and Kodie Heddle (pictured top right) were also on hand to support the Tala throughout the tournament as support physio and team medic respectively.

Back home another three athletes have had their latest experience on the pathway to become 'Diamonds', with the Australian 17 and under National Netball development camp taking place in Canberra throughout July.



Current Academy athletes Ellie Hart (pictured below left) and Kelis Ogle teamed up with alumni athlete Neveah Matenga as a part of the national pathway program which saw the squad put through their paces by elite and high-performance coaching staff, placing these athletes well on their way to future National selection.

"The opportunities for young girls in sport to stand up and be counted alongside their male counterparts in South West Sydney are fantastic to see", said Craig, who hopes that the recent success of Australia's National Women's teams, including that of the Hockeyroo's, Diamond's and the history-making Matilda's goes a long way to inspire the next generation of young female athletes within the South West.

"We hope to see a significant increase in the number of young female athletes nominating and trialling for spots within the Academy's sporting programs, and ultimately helping their development to achieve their own piece of sporting success." said Craig.



HER SPORT, HER WAY

FEMALE ED SESSION

In Late June, the South West Sydney Academy of Sport, held the highly anticipated Female Education Session at Western Sydney University, Campbelltown Campus, as a part of its focus on athlete sports education.

The Academy was fortunate to have Rebecca Yabsley from Sydney West Sports Medicine lead the evening and share her expertise on the science of the female body and how it affects the athletes sport performance.

"The night provided a wonderful opportunity for over fifty of our Academy's aspiring young female athletes to comfortably delve deeper into the factors that impact women in sport, and how to best facilitate changes that they are or will undergo. And this is something we should all be proud of." said Academy Sport Program Manager Alley Hanagan.

"The girls loved it, and learned so much. It was good to have someone of Rebecca's experience and professional background share with our athletes in their sporting journey." said Hanagan, who added that the female-only workshop provided a 'safe place for all to share and discuss their personal experiences as a female athlete.'

The Academy is looking forward to seeing the athletes continue to apply this knowledge, and nurture a supportive environment for one another in all aspects of life.

Encouraged by the resounding success of this most recent topic, the Academy is looking to continue to implement gender-specific and socially relevant education sessions throughout it's targeted sports education and skill development programs.



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SOUTH WEST SYDNEY ACADEMY GOLF DAY

Friday 24 November 2023

Campbelltown Golf Club, Glen Alpine

7:00am Breakfast

8:15am Shotgun Start

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SOUTH WEST SYDNEY SET TO HUSTLE

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport has officially joined forces with 3x3Hustle, Australia's Official FIBA and Basketball Australia 3x3 pathway organisation, as they become the latest 'Hustle' operator, after having their first taste of the 3x3 Hustle life at the NSW State Qualifiers in December 2022, where the Academy had two teams compete in that event.

Five Academy teams also competed at the Basketball NSW 3x3Hustle held at Minto in June, where the Girls finished 1st and 2nd, and the Boys 2nd, 4th and 5th against a very strong field.

The Academy will look to increase 3x3 basketball participation rates in South West Sydney, through the introduction and exciting atmosphere 3x3Hustle events bring.

"We are excited to have the South West Sydney Academy of Sport as our latest Hustle operator, and to help develop 3x3 basketball in the South West Sydney region," said Head of 3x3Hustle, Jaele Patrick.



The purpose of the Academy in joining the 3x3Hustle family is to implement the opportunity for individuals to participate in the region, and further help develop the 3x3 pathway opportunities.

As an Olympic and Paralympic sport, 3x3 Basketball fits well within our Academy's sport program framework of providing opportunities for talent identified athletes within the South West Sydney region to gain experience, exposure and development within a sports high performance pathway.", said Academy Sport Operations Manager, Stephen Craig.

"Recognising that participation rates within our region are somewhat lower for female basketball athletes, 3x3 provides a great opportunity for us to assist development of these athletes, as 3x3 does not rely on large training squads."

3x3 concepts, including skill development, sports education, strength and conditioning programming and performance opportunities, such as Hustle events, will be included as a new sport program within the Academy, which will continue to operate the more traditional 5v5 basketball program that has itself seen continued growth over the past few years.



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CHUMPY PULLIN FOUNDATION SLAM DUNKS WITH NEW SCHOLARSHIP

Following on from the Athlete Graduation and Sport Awards Dinner, on request of the Chumpy Pullin Foundation, of which 2023 keynote speaker Mia Rennie is an ambassador, the Academy submitted a list of major award recipients to the Chumpy Pullin Foundation, who have then selected an athlete to receive an additional award in partnership with the South West Sydney Academy of Sport.

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport is pleased to announce the athlete selected to receive the Chumpy Pullin Athlete Performance Scholarship for 2023, as our Chairperson Award Winner and Indigenous Person of the Year, Max Brown-Tjakuapi.

The Chumpy Pullin Foundation's core values echo the spirit of the late Chumpy Pullin, and this award aims to empower young South West Sydney athletes, providing them opportunities to refine their skills, broaden their horizons, and reach their full potential.

Through this partnership with the Academy, the foundation aspires to continue Chumpy's legacy of breaking barriers and inspiring the next generation of Australian athletes to thrive in their sports and life pursuits.

And in assisting to provide a gateway to nurturing exceptional talent within South West Sydney. This award is a testament to the Foundation's commitment to fostering growth and development in aspiring athletes who exhibit dedication, passion, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.



As a part of the scholarship, Max will receive a series of peer-2-peer athlete mentor opportunities with Olympic Free-Skier Mia Rennie, along with additional mentoring sessions with former Australian Cricketer and Director of Mindset & Performance Partners, Simon Williams.

The Academy extends its thanks to the Chumpy Pullin Foundation, Mia and Simon for their support of our athletes and their goals.



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A young man, Max Brown-Tjakuapi, is featured in two images. The top image shows him in a red basketball jersey, jumping high to shoot a basketball. The bottom image shows him smiling, wearing a dark jacket with 'SANTAS' and 'EST 97' on it. The background is a dark blue with white splatters and a starry pattern.

Max
Brown-Tjakuapi

MARK OF A CHAMPION

Max recently showcased his remarkable talent at the NAIDOC Tournament, where he represented the Warriors basketball club in both U19's and U16's teams, gaining invaluable experience alongside future tour companions bound for New Zealand. Notably, Max faced off against seasoned players, including fellow SWSAS Teammates, in a tournament that celebrated his Aboriginal Heritage. Max's dedication and rising star status in the sport make him one to watch as he continues to excel on the court and proudly represent his community.

Max, How did you end up becoming involved in the sport of Basketball?

When I started Year 7, a few of the older kids at school asked me to join in on a game at lunch. I really enjoyed playing and asked mum if I could join a local competition with some friends, but then we were stuck in lockdown for three months. My dad put up a hoop in our front yard and I spent hours shooting. I played my first official game at the end of 2021.

What does being a champion mean to you, both on and off the court?

Being a champion is about being a good team player, taking care of your team mates and your friends and showing good sportsmanship, building good training habits and looking after your health and never giving up.



Can you share a moment in your sporting career when you faced a significant setback of adversity, and how did you overcome it to ultimately achieve a goal/success?

On the last day of school, I injured my ankle (a grade 2 sprain) playing basketball. At first, I was devastated, because it meant that I wouldn't be able to train or play for 6 weeks. But I knew I had to do everything I could to get it better before the end of the holidays when I was going to return to training and competition.

I spent the holidays going to physio, the gym and completing a modified training program with SWSAS. When the school holidays had finished, I was ready to get back into training and competition. Having this experience also helped me understand how important it was to look after my body and what steps I need to take to do that.

In your personal opinion, what are the key qualities or attributes of an athlete that maximise performance?

Some attributes include the being able to focus and stay motivated by setting both short term goals and long term goals. Athletes also need to be able to be positive as not everything goes your way and you need to keep your chin up and move on. Being able to listen to your coach and taking on feedback so that you can develop. Also, you need to love your sport.

How do you maintain your motivation and focus, especially during challenging training periods or when facing tough opponents?

I maintain my motivation by keeping my chin up and keeping a positive mindset - If I miss a shot or lose the ball, I try to get the rebound or get back on defence straight away. I also focus on my short term and long term goals. When I'm in the gym or training on the court a good playlist also helps (lots of Taylor Swift).

What are your long-term aspirations and goals within Basketball and/or Future Career Outlook?

My long term goals include playing professional basketball and playing at the Olympics. After my basketball career, I would like to work with basketball players, helping them with their health, diets and training programs.



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2023/24 PROGRAMS

Nominations & Trials Schedule

SPORT	NOMINATIONS CLOSE	LOCATION	DATES & TIMES
AFLW	6th October	Peter Miller Park, Casula	Tuesday 17th October 7pm - 8:30pm
BMX	20th October	Macarthur BMX Track, Elderslie	TBC
Basketball & 3x3 Basketball	6th October	Mt Annan Leisure Centre, Mt Annan	Saturday 14th October • Girls : 1pm-2:30pm • Boys Session 1 : 1pm-2:30pm • Boys Session 2 : 3pm-4:30pm (Boys MUST attend both sessions) Saturday 21st October • Girls & Boys : 1pm-3pm
Golf	6th October	Please refer to the Sport Programs Page for further information on the selection process	
Hockey	6th October	Moorebank Hockey Complex, Moorebank	Wednesday 11th October Wednesday 18th October Times TBC
Netball & Netball Umpires	6th October	Thomas Hassall Anglican College, Middleton Grange	Sunday 15th October 9am - 11am
Softball	6th October	TBC	Thursday 19th October Thursday 26th October Times TBC
Triathlon	11th August	N/A	Team Selected
Volleyball	6th October	TBC	TBC
Wests Future Stars	30th September	Please refer to the Sport Programs Page for further information on the selection process	





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Volleyball Seeks Excellence on the State Stage

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport's SVSR Mini Crane Hire Volleyball Squad has continued its impressive run of performance, having again risen to the occasion, delivering remarkable success in winning both the Boys and Girls divisions of the 2023 Regional Academies of Sport Volleyball Championships held in mid-July at Port Macquarie.

The programs impressive run of results came on the back of the Regional Academy Games in April, where the South West Sydney Academy of Sport won both the Boys and Girls Divisions. The latest win holding the Academy Boys program as Champions across all four contested tournaments since the Academy commenced the Volleyball program in 2021.

Competing at the event with two Boys and two Girls teams, from the outset of the competition, the SVSR Mini Crane Hire Volleyball Squad emerged as true ambassadors of the hard work, determination, and skill they had invested in their training throughout the program year.

Whilst the Boys "A" team secured the coveted Championship trophy in a straight-sets win against the North Coast Academy of Sport, a clear reflection of their relentless training regimen and their commitment to honing their skills, the Boys "Shadow" team clinched fifth overall, showcasing their journey of improvement and the progress they've made through continuous hard work and perseverance.

The Academy "A" Girls side all but dominated throughout the two-day event, in the end clinching the championship with a come from behind win against North Coast Academy of Sport to claim the title.





Their display of teamwork and their passion for the sport shone through, resulting in an exceptional performance. Not to be out done among fierce competition, the Girls "Shadow" team went within a win of making it an all-South West final, falling just short, finishing the tournament in 3rd place. Their diligent training and strategic teamwork were evident in their consistent display of skill and sportsmanship.

Following on from the outstanding performance at the Academy Volleyball Challenge, an incredible fourteen athletes from the Squad have achieved further recognition in being selected into various NSW Phoenix State teams and Shadow squads for the upcoming Australian Youth Volleyball Championships that will be held in Bendigo in late September.

Boys Nikola Sivic, Paul Marqous, Cody Meisenhofen, William Chandhara, Bryan-John Nathan-Barber, and Girls Charlize Guimbatan, Sienna Pavoncelli, Elvena Abel, Amelie Alnimer, Sibelle Hassan, Heromee Vinluan Tibayan, Unise Blake, Celeste Davis and Maliha Flexman, having been selected. This achievement is a testament to their exceptional talent, dedication, and the rigorous training they have undergone.

Joining them in Bendigo as a part of the NSW Phoenix 17U Boys program are Academy coaching staff David Toolmalati (Head Coach) and Francis Ah-Kin (Assistant Coach), who will no doubt keep a watchful eye on the Academies talented athletes competing.

The Squad's achievements mirror the incredible hard work they've put in day after day, demonstrating their resilience in the face of challenges and their determination to succeed. Their hours of practice, early mornings, and late nights have culminated in a performance that speaks volumes about their commitment to excellence.

Under the watchful guidance of gym partner FitClinic's specialists, the Squad has undergone a tough strength and conditioning program to keep them at their peak. The athletes' commitment to their physical training has been instrumental in enhancing their performance on the court. FitClinic's expertise has played a pivotal role in shaping the squad's physical capabilities, enabling them to excel in a demanding and competitive environment.

As the Squad continues to evolve and push their boundaries, their performance throughout 2023 stands as a powerful reminder of the rewards that come from embracing hard work, discipline, and a passion for the sport.



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The Academy hosted a Coach Panel with L to R: Jeff Cooper, Guy Creber and Van Nguyen as a part of its inaugural coach symposium.

Getting the CAP to Fit

Having a strong culture and relationship system in place between coach, athlete and parent is essential for the success of any sport program.

As we look ahead to the 2023-2024 South West Sydney Academy of Sport program year, our focus is on maximising those relationships within each program, for the benefit of both athlete and coach.

This is achieved by a deeper understanding of not just the parties involved in the process, but by the process itself.

The detail in the programming of not just the trial and selection process, the season ahead or each training session; but including the education, extra curricular sport development, and the individual feedback provided to athletes during and after the program itself.

Identifying and then building the relationships that young athletes desire to be a part of, to create a culture and environment where they will thrive for success, and find that extra edge that

makes the difference between a contender and a champion - on and off the field.

With that strategy in place, the Academy hosted a symposium at Wests League Club in early September, which included a night of coach education and development.

The evening featured a guest coaching panel, made up of esteemed Academy Coaching staff members, Van Nguyen (Netball), Jeff Cooper (Basketball) and Guy Creber (Wests Future Stars), led an open discussion that focused on how coaches can effectively plan their program to maximise relationships and implement a strong culture striving for success.

The three panellists touched on a number of key topics surrounding identifying and building the relationships that young athletes desire to be a part of, and how to create a culture and environment where the athlete will strive for success, not just on, but also off the court.



With 90% of Academy sport programs focus being on individual skill development, training and education, leaving 10% or less on actual competition, the panel also provided insight into how to plan their sport program content and training sessions.

A key answer to this was the coaches need to be intentional about communicating their season and training plans with not just their fellow coaches, but with the athletes themselves. Through being intentional about building one on one relationships with the athletes through training sessions and incorporating individual athlete performance plans and goal setting exercises into their training sessions.

Following the panel discussion, coach and support staff undertook a coach development workshop, where those present were provided the opportunity to provide feedback on the Academy sport program structures, and help shape the culture and future direction of the Academy, its sport programs, and future coach development opportunities.

This included having coaches focus on building the Academy culture, through practical examples of what it looks like to put the Academy's core values of Commitment, Opportunity, Respect and Integrity into practice.

Coaches were asked to share and develop a list of attributes that coaches look for in the athletes they select, and identify the types of athletes and coaches that help reinforce and represent the South West Sydney Academy culture.

Yet the coaches of the Academy were not alone in providing this information, with an invited group of identified Athletes from across the 2022-2023 sport programs invited to attend their own Athlete Leadership workshop prior to the coach panel discussion.

Athletes where they were asked to complete a similar task, yet from the athletes perspective, in identifying the key attributes that athletes look for in a coach, and what the athletes would like to see included within the Academy sport programs.

With a wealth of information coming out of the Coach Symposium, the Academy is now looking to its next step in its coach development and education pathway, through a Community Coaching Survey, which it released in mid-September.



South West Sydney Sports Community Coaching Survey

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport is currently undertaking a Community Coaching Survey, aimed at identifying the challenges, barriers and opportunities for coach education and development within the South West Sydney Community.

We are inviting anyone associated with coaching or sports administration at all levels, from volunteer coaches, committee members, school teachers, through to professional coaches and sport administrators, and from all sporting clubs, associations and organisations across the South West Sydney council areas of Campbelltown, Camden, Liverpool and Wollondilly to participate in completing this survey.

It is the chance for you to have your say on coach education and development within your local South West Sydney sporting community.



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Introducing Mark Hull

Mark Hull has spent over 30 years working with coaches, seeing first-hand the pressurized world of sports and the highs and lows of coaching.

A former art teacher, high school and college wrestling coach, and a parent of three children who've come through the club, high school and college programs, he's seen the potential and pitfalls in it all.

For six years he served as the "character coach" for the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire football team, expanding that role to work with the UWEC softball, soccer, basketball & gymnastics teams. Mark has also been a presenter for USA Wrestling's Coaches School at the Olympic Training Centers in Colorado Springs and Lake Placid; at the National Wrestling Coaches Association Convention, along with numerous school and club coaching staffs across the country.

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SWSAS Hockey Athletes Charlotte Manny and Nathan Julius with Gerry Knights (SWSAS CEO), Brent Livermore (HNSW) and Nathan Czinner (NSW Pride Player)

Regional Academies of Sport Strengthen Partnership With Hockey NSW Futures Locked In

The Regional Academies of Sport (RAS) and Hockey NSW are excited to announce an extension of their partnership in building and implementing a significant development that promises to shape the future of athlete development and performance within the Hockey NSW pathway.

Labelled 'Futures Academy,' this initiative is designed to propel the sport of Hockey towards excellence and innovation on the pathway to the 2032 Brisbane Olympics, and with the support of the RAS will assist in the development of regional athletes from across the state.

The role of RAS in this re-built tier one program will be to provide Performance Support to the state's leading regional athletes. Essentially preparing talented young pre-elite male and female athletes for the rigours of the elite levels of their chosen sport.

RAS provide critical opportunities for young sports people to access quality support and development opportunities in a holistic environment – opportunities that would not otherwise be available.

With a strategic focus on holistic athlete development, the Hockey NSW Futures Academy aims to redefine the pathway for aspiring athletes in NSW. This comprehensive program marks a pivotal moment in our journey towards creating a pipeline for future Hockeyroos and Kookaburras, whilst nurturing talent across the state.

Whilst Hockey NSW will provide the coaching, skill acquisition and sport development component of the program, RAS will provide the identified athletes with off-field performance support including education in strength and conditioning, sports psychology, and nutrition.



The strength and conditioning component incorporates functional testing, movement screening, athlete conditioning and training load management to provide an integrated approach and a service that is individually suited to promoting enhanced athletic development and a transferal effect for improved sports performance.

Chair of the Regional Academies of Sport Brett O'Farrell commented on the exciting partnership "To work with the state's most promising young athlete's ten year's out from the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games is quite exciting, this program has been built to develop the next generation of Future Champions and we hope to witness many Kookaburra and Hockeyroos on our tv screens in the coming years originate from this program."

Brent Livermore OLY OAM, high performance manager for Hockey NSW commented "Hockey NSW is pleased to announce an exciting shift with the alignment and partnership with the RAS that will help guide and steer the direction of the Futures Academy and pathway not only in Regional NSW, but across the state."

"It is a well needed shift in the pathway to engage and align with all members and stakeholders in building the foundations required to implement a sustainable pathway across NSW," said Mr Livermore.

Speaking on behalf of our local South West Sydney Academy of Sport, O'Farrell added that, "After joining then Campbelltown Hockey Association in 1977, and still playing in its Senior Men's Competition, South West Sydney Academy of Sport CEO, Gerry Knights is well aware of the sport's development needs, and continues to be an active influence on its Junior development pathway."

"This exciting program holds immense significance for our budding female and male hockey talents in South West Sydney, particularly for those proudly representing the Metro South West Hockey Association, which includes the powerhouse Moorebank Liverpool Hockey Club" added O'Farrell.

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport, through the support of Club Menangle, will also be operating a tier two development program within the regions with the aim to talent identify and provide a further opportunity for those pathway athletes in the sport.

Nominations for the 2023-2024 Club Menangle Hockey program are now open with further details available on the Academy's website www.swsas.org.au.



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Your partnership will also be a direct investment into a better tomorrow.

The South West Sydney Academy of Sport is a not-for-profit community based organisation, which relies heavily on the financial and social support of its outstanding corporate partners, in providing these much needed development opportunities.

The Academy in return invests a large amount of its time back into its local sporting community, increasing the reach of our corporate partners throughout the region.

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