

VICTORIAN SPORT AWARDS

RECOGNISE
AND
CELEBRATE

THE OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENTS IN
VICTORIAN SPORT
& ACTIVE RECREATION

2016

THURSDAY
30 MARCH 2017

PROGRAM GUIDE

JOINTLY PRESENTED BY

VICSPORT



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The Victorian Sport Awards are the highlight of Victoria's annual sporting calendar and provide a major focus on the importance of sport to the Victorian community and economy. At the Awards on 30th March 2017 the Victorian sporting community will acknowledge and recognise the achievements of those who have been nominated during 2016.

Each year over 3.25 million Victorians participate in sport or active recreation supported by 580,000 volunteers, 100 sporting associations, 16,000 clubs and 26,000 people in paid or voluntary employment.

The Victorian Sport Awards recognise the contribution of the vast army of administrators, officials, coaches and volunteers whose daily contributions support the clubs and associations which in turn provide the best opportunity for their members to participate in their chosen sports.

The 2016 Victorian Sport Awards will, for the first time, include community sport and active recreation categories through an arrangement between Vicsport and the Victorian Government. It is exciting to know that local sporting heroes will be standing on stage with elite athletes showing the breadth of success and achievement by Victorians in sport.

I thank the Minister for Sport the Hon John Eren MP, Sport & Recreation Victoria and Vicsport's sponsors for their ongoing support and contribution to the Victorian Sport Awards and to the work of Vicsport generally.

Finally, I acknowledge the enormous effort, hard work and collaboration between and amongst sports clubs and associations, government agencies, local government the media and the many businesses who sponsor local sporting clubs and events for their outstanding contributions to sport in Victoria.

I am delighted to welcome you, on behalf of Vicsport's Directors and staff, to the 2016 Victorian Sport Awards and wish all of finalists the best of luck.



Margot Foster

Margot Foster AM
Chairman

As Minister for Sport, I'm delighted to welcome you to the 2016 Victorian Sport Awards.

The 2016 Victorian Sport Awards marks the start of an exciting new era. It brings the best of the Vicsport awards and the Victorian Government's Community Sport and Recreation Awards together to honour our sports heroes from grassroots to elite.

That means for the first time tonight, our grassroots heroes will share the spotlight with some of Australia's best sporting talents.

Celebrating achievement at all levels is an excellent way to acknowledge the hard work and dedication that has earned our athletes, coaches, volunteers, and teams their success.

All of our winners this year were chosen because of their remarkable efforts and their contribution to their sport, local community or state as a whole.

2016 was a fantastic year for sport, especially for women and girls, from the all-conquering women's Rugby Sevens golden run at the Rio Olympics to Carol Cooke's gold medal performance at the Paralympics.

Locally, the Victorian Fury claimed their seventh Australian Netball League Grand Final victory and the Melbourne City W-League went back-to-back going the whole season undefeated.

Victoria lives and breathes sport. We're home to some of the biggest home-grown and international sporting events, and a true breeding ground for some of the most passionate talents on the planet.

That's why the Victorian Government is proud to honour all our sports heroes. It's these selfless and dedicated individuals, clubs and organisations that are the first to step up to support their communities – they deserve to be recognised.

By acknowledging, supporting and celebrating our outstanding role models we can raise the bar and inspire a whole new generation to follow in their footsteps.

Please join me in congratulating all of tonight's nominees for their achievements over the past year.



John Eren

Hon John Eren MP
Minister for Sport, Tourism and Major Events

MY SPORT LIVE
VICTORIAN YOUNG ATHLETE
OF THE YEAR



EMILY BEECROFT – SWIMMING

Emily's strength in the water has seen her already compete internationally, including at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. She swims for the Traralgon Swimming Club and is a member of the Swimming Australia Youth Squad. In 2016 she won medals at both the Victorian Open and Australian Swimming Championships. She competed in four events at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games in the S9 category: 200m IM, 100m Butterfly, 100m Freestyle and 50m Freestyle. She was the youngest S9 female on the Australian Paralympic team. She proved her ability to perform under pressure in Rio, by swimming personal bests in all events and making three finals – 50m and 100m Freestyle, and 100 Butterfly. She placed sixth in both 100m events and fourth in the 50m freestyle – only 0.03 seconds out of medal contention.

ELLA EADS – KARATE

Ella's drive and motivation to be the best she can has paid off. She took up karate in 2008 and started competing in 2011. Ella is now a 2nd dan black belt and has had a rapid rise through the ranks. She was the Number 1 ranked competitor in the World for her age and weight category in 2016. She also finished the year ranked Number 1 in Australia and Oceania and Number 2 in the World Karate Federation rankings in her division. This was the first for an Australian junior female athlete since the ranking system was introduced. Ella has shown a willingness to guide and lead those around her. In 2016 she was the Karate Victoria Junior Kumite Captain, and helped teach and mentor 9 – 11 year old state athletes, as well as those at her club (Shindo Karate Association) in Bacchus Marsh.

SAMANTHA HOWE – SURF LIFE SAVING

Samantha is a two-time Australian and Youth World record holder. She is member of the Port Leo Surf Life Saving Club and is a qualified patrolling lifesaver and has shown commitment and dedication to excel in the pool lifesaving arena. After an outstanding performance at the 2015 Victorian State Titles, she was selected for the Life Saving Victoria Pool State team that competed at the Royal Life Saving Society Australian Pool Life Saving Championships in January 2016. It was at these Championships that Sam achieved two Australian records and one Youth World record. Sam was named Female Lifesaver of the Meet and was selected in the U19 Aussie Barras squad.

EZI MAGBEGOR – BASKETBALL

Ezi is an extremely talented Victorian athlete, who is currently on scholarship with Basketball Australia's Centre of Excellence Program based at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. Ezi has represented her state (Victoria Metro) at Australian Junior Championships and now Australia at two World Championships where she won a bronze medal with the U19 Australian Junior Team in 2015 and then a gold medal with the U17 Australian Junior Team in 2016. Ezi also won the tournament MVP for the U17 World Championships held in Spain, making her arguably the best player right now in world in her age group. Ezi is versatile, athletic, understated and quietly confident. She also has a positive and even temperament, and these qualities have helped make her a wonderful role model within her African community.

MY SPORT LIVE
VICTORIAN YOUNG ATHLETE
OF THE YEAR



JAKE PERRETT – ATHLETICS

Jake is a 10-year-old Para Athlete who burst on to the National School Sports Championships competing for Victoria. He won two bronze medals and broke three national records in the 100m, 200m and Long Jump for 10yo T and F 46 category. Jake has been a role model to others by showing not only his peers, but also adults, that a disability doesn't have to mean that you can't achieve. Jake has also competed in the State Swimming Titles and participates in football and basketball.

WILL SHARP – ATHLETICS

Will is a gifted young man who has shown impressive talent and accomplishments in swimming and athletics. He possesses strong characteristics as a person and as an athlete, constantly showing dedication, determination and persistence in everything he does. Will is an inspirational and motivated athlete who has given his time to support other athletes during early morning and evening training sessions. He still visits the junior clubs where it all began for him, which highlights the valuable attribute of readily encouraging others.

HAYLEY WILSON – SKATEBOARDING

Hayley has been a passionate and mostly self-taught skateboarder since the age of seven. By the time she turned eight, her skills and focus led her to win her first competition. Hayley continued to follow her passion and at 10 she won her first Regional League event. Hayley honed her tricks and expertise on the skateboard circuit, and often competed in male dominated competitions. In 2016 she won the Victorian and Australian National Skateboarding competitions. Hayley also represented Australia in "Exposure" – the world's largest all female skateboarding competition in California U.S.A where she won the open AM women's street skateboarding competition. Now 15, Hayley is thriving in the sport and is always positive, friendly, and shows true sportsmanship. Her goal is to compete in the 2020 Olympics, X Games and Street League in skateboarding.

MICHELLE WU – TABLE TENNIS

Michelle is characterised by her dedication and hard work ethic that she brings to the sport of Table Tennis. Her positive attitude and outlook on life has seen her get through two years of injury, which was highlighted by her success in the 2016 Victorian Open Championships where she won the U/15 singles and doubles titles. Her positive spirit flows onto her teammates as she is constantly motivating them to achieve their best.

LUKE BEVERIDGE – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

Luke led the Western Bulldogs to one of the most inspirational and widely celebrated victories in Australian Rules Football history when his team beat the Sydney Swans in the 2016 Grand Final, their second premiership breaking a 62 year drought. The victory was admirable because many of Beveridge's players, including Captain Robert Murphy, endured injuries throughout the season. The Bulldogs' journey to premiership glory started with them finishing seventh in the home and away season and as outside contenders. But Beveridge kept his players focused and determined through the finals series, including two interstate games, and through a hard-fought Grand Final.

CRAIG JACKSON – SWIMMING

Craig led his athletes through an outstanding swimming season, including to the ultimate achievement of Olympic gold. Mack Horton's 400m gold at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games was a huge testament to Craig's coaching abilities. Mack also finished fifth in the 1,500m and fourth in the 4 X 200m Freestyle Relay. Mack's gold medal was the first ever won by a Victorian male in an individual event and he also won multiple Australian titles at the Australian Swimming Championships. Craig also coached Kotuku Ngawati to her first ever Australian Olympic team when she put in a personal best effort to secure a spot in the 200m Individual Medley.

LUCINDA WILLIAMS – CALISTHENICS

There is little left for Lucinda to achieve in calisthenics as both a performer and now coach. She was the Australian Calisthenics Coach of the Year in 2015 and continued to produce unbelievable results in 2016. Last year, her teams took a clean sweep of every championship section at the State Titles and every championship section at the Royal South Street Competitions in Ballarat. As well as an ability to motivate and inspire entire teams, Lucinda has also proved an excellent mentor to her individual students, who won many state competitions, including the coveted Graceful Girl competition at Royal South Street.

SHANNON WINZER – VOLLEYBALL

After first commanding the court as an elite player, which included representing Australia, Canadian-born Shannon made the move to coaching after retirement. She took on the Head Coach position of the Melbourne University Blues Women's Team, a struggling team in the Australian Volleyball League. In a remarkable turnaround, Shannon used her coaching philosophy of "strong culture and accountability" to build a team that went from last the previous year to winning the Australian Volleyball League 2013 final. To prove it wasn't a fluke, she led the Blues to victory again – for the next three seasons.

JACINTA COSTELLO – CYCLING

Jacinta began her cycling coaching career in 2004 teaching road safety education with the Education Department, Vic Roads, Bayside Council and Victoria University. In her short time as a coach, she has engaged more than 400 women in cycling throughout the community to either enjoy riding again or start for the first time. She started 'Ladies Back on Your Bike' with the goal to get more women to enjoy the benefits of life on their bikes. Her wonderful ability to develop programs and motivate many different groups of women has led hundreds of them to the paths and roads around Melbourne every week. Through her unwavering drive and efforts, Jacinta has helped to boost women's participation in cycling in Victoria to an impressive level.

HUSSAIN HANIF – CRICKET

Hussain's work with both females and males with intellectual disabilities in Melbourne's Western suburbs goes beyond coaching and getting them involved in sport. He's become a mentor and role model to his players. As well as teaching them batting and bowling techniques, Hussain also provides them with comfort and trust, a shoulder to lean on and an ear to listen. Hussain started the program when he was a volunteer junior coordinator at the cricket club looking after junior teams and playing senior cricket. The social and team environment created by the cricket club program has also helped several older players to get back into work and study.

ERROL HART – ATHLETICS

For more than three decades, including six years overseas, Errol has volunteered at least 20 hours each week to work as an athletics community coach, teacher and mentor. Since migrating to Australia in 1991, he up-skilled and refreshed his qualifications and accreditation (Athletics Australia) so he could ensure his coaching benefited the communities he came in contact with. His dedication, humility, welcoming attitude and diligence has encouraged participation in the sport. Due to his contribution, his local club has boasted a 60 per cent increase in membership. More than half of this membership consists of women and young girls, which is a wonderful achievement. Despite his years of service, he seeks no reward or recognition for his efforts and dedication.

TINA MCCARTHY – CYCLING

Tina has made continued and excellent efforts to open up the sport of cycling to more women. She is founder of Wheel Women Cycling and established the concept in 2012 after finding that there were limited opportunities for recreational female cyclists to participate or build confidence in the male dominated world of cycling. Through Wheel Women, Tina has developed a reputation of authenticity, honesty and very realistic role modelling for female recreational cyclists. Her message is one of inclusiveness. She ensures women — regardless of their age, shape or size — feel welcome in the world of cycling and she demonstrates this daily.

JOSHUA BURT – HOCKEY

Josh is a much loved and admired member of the hockey community, not just in Victoria but throughout the world. Not content with just coaching, Josh became the Manager of the Australian Men's Hockey Team (The Kookaburras) in 2010, a position he had worked tirelessly to achieve and loved dearly. At about this time, he started down the Technical Official pathway. His game knowledge and respect within the hockey community soon saw him appointed in his first international match (2011 Oceania Cup). Shortly after that he received his first overseas appointment as a Judge at the 1st Sultan of Johor Cup in Malaysia.

LIAM COSTELLO – WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

Liam has been a wheelchair rugby referee for 12 years, and in that time has become a world-class referee. In 2011, Liam was internationally graded and officiated at the 2011 Asia Oceania Zonal Tournament (the Paralympic qualifier for the 2012 London Paralympic Games) in Seoul. Regarded as one of the top wheelchair rugby referees in the world – top four based on the fact he was awarded the bronze medal game at the 2016 Paralympic Games – and at just 27 years old, Liam was also the youngest wheelchair rugby referee at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. He is one of only three internationally graded wheelchair rugby referees in Australia and the only one in Victoria, and continues to work with his local club.

GREG GRIFFITHS – CYCLING

Greg's own racing career came to an abrupt end following a motor racing crash in 2002 at the Brunswick velodrome. After the crash, Greg undertook the State and then National Commissaire assessment courses. His excellent performance prompted Cycling Australia to nominate him as a participant in an upcoming International Commissaire course being conducted at the UCI headquarters in Switzerland. The course was for road and track and was attended by 24 participants from around the world. Of the 24, four passed both disciplines and three others passed either road or track. Greg was one of the four that passed both disciplines, proof that he is on the road to further excellence

STEVEN (NGHIA) TRAN – KARATE

Steven has been described as an "all round nice guy" who is constantly thinking of ways he can improve himself and always offers guidance to those trying to climb the ranks in karate officiating. He also runs a small karate club where he teaches karate at the development level. Steven draws on his experience to provide guidance to elite athletes and referees all over the world. He became an accredited international referee in 2001. By 2004, Steven achieved his World Karate Federation (WKF) accreditation. In order for Steven to be WKF accredited, the WKF actually dropped the age limit so that Steven was able to be the youngest WKF accredited Official — a remarkable achievement alone and testament to Stevens excellent skills.

HELEN CHAMBERLAIN – GYMNASTICS

When it comes to experience presiding and judging gymnastics competitions, Helen must be up there with the best. As a key member of the Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) Technical Committee and as the Event Coordinator, Helen is vital in ensuring all WAG gymnasts have appropriate competitions throughout the year. Helen has a wealth of gymnastics knowledge having worked as a Judge for almost 40 years, beginning while she was at university. As well as officiating State and National competitions, Helen has also worked as an International Judge for over 20 years.

HARY MILAS – FOOTBALL

Hary has set an admirable example by combining his officiating skills with a passion for helping those in need. He regularly volunteers his time to support charity and community events including; Homeless World Cup, Victoria Police Soccer Team, Victorian Pride football match & the Reagan Milstein Foundation. Hary was a volunteer referee at the 2008 Homeless World Cup. After the event he was invited to join the Homeless World Cup referees panel for the following year, and this began a much-loved passion for Hary who could use the power of football to help homeless people.

LAWRENCE MUIR – BICYCLE MOTOCROSS (BMX)

Lawrence took up BMX when his children took up the sport and soon moved into officiating and other roles to help create more BMX opportunities to young people. His dedication to BMX throughout 2016 was further displayed when he led the officiating group by example at every BMX Victoria event, taking on various roles including Chief Commissarie. During this role, he was also ever present as part of the BMX Victoria Event Management Group sub-committee, which primarily plans and delivers BMX racing in Victoria.

ROBERT OLDFIELD – SWIMMING

Robert is a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable Technical Official. He has been officiating for more than 25 years after starting this work at a Diamond Valley Swimming Club (now DVE Aquatic). Robert was qualified as an Austswim teacher in the 1980s and has continued to coach Junior squads. His passion, however, belongs to officiating. Robert is currently a District Referee for Metro North Swimming, a level 2 Referee, and a Presenter & Assessor of the National Officiating Program.

BILL UPSTON – CYCLING

Bill has been a cycling official for more than 30 years. He has a deep passion for supporting his club (Southern Masters Cycling Club) and Masters-based cycle racing. During his time in the sport, he has officiated more than 1,000 races. His presence and knowledge has also been critical to the smooth running of weekly races conducted by the Southern Masters Cycling Club. Bill has passed on his knowledge and experience by mentoring more than 100 officials at the club level to help support the club's weekly events. He continues to focus on what's best for the club and running safe and fun events.

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
VICTORIAN SPORT ADMINISTRATOR
OF THE YEAR – EUNICE GILL AWARD



NEIL DALRYMPLE – BOWLS

Neil has made a huge contribution to the sport of bowls over the past few years. His efforts have helped well-place bowls at grassroots and elite levels. Neil's vision and drive for the sport across all its departments and facets has been described by peers as "amazing". Interestingly, Neil also finds time to make further community contributions, such as President of his beloved cricket club where he continues to compete. Neil is extremely approachable and takes great interest in all levels of the sport and has a real desire to guide the game to greater heights. Neil does not back away from making the hard decisions and this helps make him an outstanding leader.

ANDREW SKILLERN – HOCKEY

Apart from being a visionary sport administrator, Andrew is one of the most passionate and committed people in hockey, whose approachability and generosity with his time puts him in high regard within the hockey community. As a long serving staff member of Hockey Victoria, Andrew has initiated and implemented a number of new key initiatives. These initiatives have provided either new opportunities for more people to be involved, or have improved the existing opportunities that may not have been possible without his vision for the future of the sport.

JESS SMITH – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

Jess has made an invaluable contribution to women's football over the past seven years, including five years with the Victorian Women's Football League. Aside from being a well-respected, driven, passionate and collaborative professional, her colleagues say everything about her is "unique and special". Jess has helped to carve out new opportunities for women by creating the VFL Women's competition (the first state league competition aligned with the VFL), which is an important step in the pathway for women and girls. She also worked with AFL Victoria staff to integrate the men's and women's competitions.

KERRY TAVROU – GYMNASTICS

As the dedicated Gymnastics Development Manager for Inclusion, Kerry has ensured that Gymnastics Victoria's focus on involving everyone in the sport, not just the high achievers, is a thriving part of its development program. In his six years working within Gymnastics, Kerry has been able to draw on his previous learnings to have a tremendous impact not only on inclusive Gymnastics programs within Victoria, but also on Gymnastics in Australia and the wider sports community. Kerry has developed the Inclusive Leader Gymnastics Club initiative which encourages Gymnastics Clubs to be inclusive by providing them with resources and recognising them on the award-winning inclusive app.

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
VICTORIAN YOUNG VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR



NAJMO ABDINASIR – FOOTBALL

Najmo is a young Somali woman who is a volunteer Young Leader for I Speak Football (ISF). She is using the "World Game" to promote social unity in the Victorian community. Najmo is driven by a passion for football and its ability to bring young people together, no matter their social, cultural or religious background. She was coach of a young soccer team in Somalia, and has come to Australia with hopes to spread her love of soccer to other young people. She is a source of inspiration for young women participating in the program and has showed herself, her peers and the world that young women have a bright future in the sporting world and in Victoria's society.

BRADLEY POWELL – FOOTBALL

Brad is passionate about bringing football and people from all walks of life together. He is a volunteer Young Leader for I Speak Football (ISF), which is a leadership program designed to enable young people aged between 18 and 25 to use football to spread the message of unity in diversity. Brad led successful football development and social cohesion initiatives in Melbourne schools throughout 2016. He completed a Bachelor of Sports Development, including placement at the Department of Sport and Recreation, working on programs promoting sport to disabled, Indigenous Australians and female groups. He then began volunteering his time to take part in ISF, helping refugee and migrant young people to feel like they belong in Australian society, and to meet new friends and learn about each other's cultures.

CHAITANYA (CHAD) RAJHANSA – CYCLING

Chad is an international student from India, who moved to Australia to undertake a course in Sport and Event Management. Over the past year, he has dedicated his time to volunteering at Cycling Victoria at its various events. Chad is exceptional thanks to his unwavering can-do attitude, his quick uptake on the requirements for conducting events, and his willingness to learn both the technical side and the labour intensive side of staging events. He initially started with track before expanding to road and providing expertise with information technology. He has always been punctual, supportive of staff, spectators, riders and other volunteers.

WILL ROBERTSHAW – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL & CRICKET

Will is a senior player with the Ormond Cricket Club (OCC) and the Ormond Amateur Football Club. Will is an outstanding young volunteer with both clubs, and also with the Ormond Junior Football Club. It is his contribution as a junior coach for which this nomination is focused. Will is an inspirational coach and mentor for junior cricketers and footballers at the Ormond clubs. Will is unique, as he has developed a positive, caring and inspirational coaching philosophy that is grounded in all his coaching roles. This achievement is made all the more admirable given that he is only 19 years old.

JOHN COCKS – SWIMMING

At 80 years old, John has proved that age is not barrier to sporting success. His achievements in Masters Swimming during 2016 were nothing short of phenomenal. On moving into the 80–84 age group, he set in excess of 50 records, to be the current holder of 20 National and 30 Victorian State Records. His National records cover all four of the competitive strokes. In addition to this, on 13 March 2016 John smashed the World Record for the 200m Individual Medley in the Men's 80-84 year age group, by more than two seconds. His time of 3:27.46 now stands as the second fastest of all time in the world, for that event, in that age group.

SALLY CUMMINGS – SURF LIFESAVING

The 2016 Australian Surf Lifesaving Championships marked a very special achievement for Sally because she won her fifth consecutive Australian Title in the 30-34 years beach sprint. In addition to her being the current World Title holder for the 30-34 years beach sprint (Montpellier, France 2014), this completed her clean sweep of the 30-34 year age group and she achieved it five years in a row. This exceptional achievement by Sally in 2016 was made even more remarkable by the fact that she had to overcome a serious foot injury and returned to training only six weeks out from the Nationals. Sally also holds five Open State titles and five Masters State titles in the Beach Sprint.

NAZIM ERDEM OAM – WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

For more than 20 years, Nazim has been a powerful presence in wheelchair rugby. As the current Vice Captain of the Australian team, he is the longest-serving player on both the national and Victorian teams. He has played more than 250 international games – a staggering number that shows an amazing and enduring sporting ability. He is a five-time Paralympian, and won gold medals at Rio 2016 and London 2012, and silver medals at Beijing 2008 and Sydney 2000. At the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF) World Championships he won bronze in 2002, silver at the 2010, and gold in 2014. He has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal for this stellar career and tireless work as a mentor and getting more people into the sport.

MARILYN LUCK – TENPIN BOWLING

Marilyn has been blind since the age of 45. After a number of years of struggling with depression, she decided that she would get involved in sport. She started tenpin bowling and cricket and has excelled in both sports. Marilyn began playing tenpin bowling in 2007 and had a first game score of 22. But her dedication and endeavour to improve helped her reach a personal best of 235. Marilyn now frequently bowls over 200 and her highest game in 2016 was 227. She approaches tenpin not as a blind bowler but as a sighted one. Through many hours of practice she has developed a unique bowling action and is the only blind bowler in the world who does not use a guide rail. Marilyn has been a World Champion since 2007, yet still strives to improve her game and to set incredible benchmarks in blind bowling.

NICOLE LIVINGSTONE OAM PROFILE – 2015 RECIPIENT OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO SPORT AWARD

Nicole Livingstone OAM is widely renowned as one of Australia's greatest swimmers of all time, representing Australia for 12 consecutive years from 1985 – 1996. She made her Olympic debut in Seoul in 1988 before claiming her first Olympic medal four years later in Barcelona winning the bronze medal in the women's 200m backstroke – Australia's first woman's backstroke medal since 1948, and only its third in the history of the Games.

Over the course of her career, Livingstone competed at three Olympic Games (winning one silver and two bronze), three Commonwealth Games (winning six gold, two silver and one bronze), and six Pan Pacific Championships (winning four gold, two silver and one bronze). In 1992, Livingstone set a world record in the 200m backstroke (short course).

11 years on since retirement and she still holds the longest winning sequence of any Australian swimmer in history at the national titles, winning ten consecutive 100m Backstroke titles between 1987 and 1996.

Out of the pool, Livingstone has gone from strength to strength in the world of sports media and broadcasting. Working for the Nine Network and Network 10, Livingstone has hosted or provided commentary on Wide World of Sports Saturday, the Commonwealth Games, swimming and surf life saving coverage as well as regular appearances on 'The Project'.

Through the world of business, Livingstone is continuing to contribute to the sports industry. Livingstone is currently the Deputy Chair of VicHealth, Director of the Sport Australia Hall of Fame, Vice President of the Victorian Olympic Council, Director of Swimming Australia and is a member of the Executive of the Australian Olympic Committee.

On behalf of sport in Victoria and Australia, we thank Nicole for her tremendous contribution to sport to date.

BRIMBANK COMMUNITY SOCCER HUB – BRIMBANK CITY COUNCIL

The Brimbank Community Soccer Hub project was established by Brimbank City Council in 2013. Its aim was to bridge the gap between social and mainstream sport competitions to give newly arrived communities access and insight into operating a sports club. The Sports and Recreation Unit (at Brimbank Council) worked in partnership with key stakeholders, including the Centre for Multicultural Youth, New Hope Foundation, Victoria University, Melbourne City Football Club and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre to develop a soccer hub that enabled informal groups that had been participating in soccer on a casual basis to play together.

ALL NATIONS SOCIAL CRICKET PROGRAM – CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG

Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse municipality in Victoria with 65 per cent of its residents born overseas, and more than 3,000 asylum seekers – the highest number in any Victorian locality. The Social Cricket program arose from the challenge presented by these conditions, coupled with an understanding that asylum seekers and new arrivals needed activities that would provide them with health and social benefits, including social inclusion, physical and mental health and a sense of belonging and engagement with the wider community.

LET'S PLAY TOGETHER IN HUME – HUME CITY COUNCIL

One in three women in Australia experience physical violence. The Let's Play Together in Hume initiative responds to a high rate of family violence experienced within the Hume City Council boundaries. Let's Play Together in Hume started with strengthening the established sporting club network. The Network provided a regular forum where contemporary issues and support needs were explored. Gender equity and social inclusion was identified as an area of interest and partners were assembled. It then worked with individual clubs and associations to build female participation across the club and to implement best practice in gender equity.

ALLOCATION AND USE OF SPORTING FACILITIES, GROUNDS AND PAVILIONS POLICY – MORELAND CITY COUNCIL

In 2009, Moreland City Council began research and consultation to identify the key challenges in the provision of sport, leisure and active recreation for women and girls within the municipality. The review identified several issues around gender inequality. To address the inequity, council introduced a Sports Ground and Pavilion Allocation Policy. The policy requested clubs to be inclusive of women, juniors, people with a disability and people from culturally diverse communities, or risk losing allocation of a ground to a club that is being inclusive. This is the first council in Victoria to prioritise the allocation and use of sporting grounds and pavilions to clubs that demonstrate inclusiveness of women and girls.

KIDS ADVENTURE OUTDOORS ANGLESEA – KAOS – BUSINESS & TOURISM ANGLESEA

Kids Adventure Outdoors (KAOS) is a festival celebrating fun and adventure that is designed to plant the seeds for a life of activity in natural environments. The KAOS aim is simple as it is powerful – to get more kids active outdoors more often. Kids Adventure Outdoors Anglesea was an initiative of YMCA Victoria. It was a Pilot Event held during April 2015 as part of Active April & Nature Play Week. KAOS encouraged children (and their parents) to get more active in the outdoors and connect with nature. Its aim was also to help them to develop lifelong skills by introducing them to a range of fun activities that had them running wild.

ACHILLES MELBOURNE – RUNNING CLUB

Achilles Melbourne is a running club for people with disability that brings athletes and able bodied volunteers together to train in a supportive, friendly, and safe environment. Though this chapter welcomes people of all abilities, Achilles Melbourne has a particular focus on guiding and supporting runners who are blind or have low vision. Achilles Melbourne is the only running club of its kind in Victoria. Since its inception in March 2016, Achilles Melbourne has grown to a membership of 14 blind runners, 20 full-time volunteer guides and guide-dog minders, and another 20 casual volunteers. It is an incorporated club and affiliated with Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria.

WHEEL WOMEN PROGRAM – WHEEL WOMEN

Wheel Women is an initiative driven by founder, Tina McCarthy, a passionate recreational cyclist who set herself a goal of encouraging more women to cycle. Tina became aware, through her own experiences and through discussions with a researcher from Deakin University, that a lack of skills and confidence, coupled with traffic-filled roads and a male dominated cycling culture, were turning women away from cycling. Wheel Women was established in 2012, to provide a safe space for female recreational riders to meet like-minded women, build relevant skills and confidence while feeling supported rather than intimidated. Wheel Women has successfully established a culture of fun and inclusion where women riders feel safe to participate in education sessions, group rides and events in supportive, judgment-free environments.

ACTIVE MORELAND – ACTIVE WEEK 2016 – YMCA VICTORIA

Active Week is an initiative that was launched by YMCA Victoria through the Active Moreland aquatic and leisure facilities in 2015, which aimed to engage all Moreland community members to be more active, more often and to connect with their local community groups and other community members. With the inaugural event a success, Active Week returned in 2016 and has now been established as an annual event that is fast becoming a major highlight of the Active Moreland and Moreland Community Events calendar. Active Week was developed to provide community members with a chance to try a new recreational activity that they may not have tried previously or did not know existed, with no cost associated with participation.

VICHEALTH
VICTORIAN SPORT DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR –
FULL & ASSOCIATE MEMBER



STRENGTHENING LIFELONG PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION – THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION (VICTORIA)

The Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Victorian Branch (ACHPER Victoria) has had significant influence on sport and active recreation for more than 30 years. ACHPER Victoria's vision is 'Active and Healthy Victorians' and it works towards this through building the capacity of teachers to deliver high quality Health and Physical Education (HPE) in Victorian schools. This work has become increasingly valuable as more and more research indicates the importance of high quality HPE as a determinant for lifelong activity and healthy choices.

WALKING BASKETBALL – BASKETBALL VICTORIA

Walking Basketball is a low impact, social and fun way to improve the levels of physical activity for inactive and slightly active Victorians, including the elderly and those recovering from injury. This program is a positive step towards helping participants to begin and hopefully maintain an active lifestyle through more regular physical activity. Walking Basketball is for participants across all ages, genders and abilities, and helps to sustain and improve health and decrease risk factors associated with sedentary behaviour.

POP UP SQUASH SHOP – SQUASH AND RACQUETBALL VICTORIA

Squash & Racquetball Victoria's 'Pop Up Squash Shop' was a new concept for Australia but one that has been trialled in the United Kingdom. As of August 2016, one activation has been completed at Eastland Shopping Centre in Ringwood, with a second activation planned for a 2017 school holiday period. The concept of a 'Pop Up Squash Shop' brought squash and racquetball into the retail environment and provided an opportunity to create a relationship with shoppers and promote an easy, non-threatening pathway into regular activity and new social networks.

SPORT AND RECREATION SPATIAL – VICTORIAN UNIVERSITY IN COLLABORATION WITH FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

Historically, the capacity of the sport and recreation industry to make evidence-based decisions to improve participation has been severely limited by a lack of access to accurate and reliable data and associated capacity for analysis. Sport and Recreation Spatial is a collaborative program of research conducted by Victoria University and Federation University. The Sport and Recreation Spatial research team undertake research and analyse data on sport and recreation participation, facilities and health outcomes, to support evidence-based planning and decision making in the sport and recreation sector.

ARTHUR J GALLAGHER
VICTORIAN COMMUNITY SPORTING
EVENT OF THE YEAR



2016 VICTORIAN DISABILITY SPORT & RECREATION FESTIVAL – DISABILITY SPORT & RECREATION

The Victorian Disability Sport & Recreation Festival is the largest event of its kind held in Victoria and is part of Melbourne's celebrations of International Day of People with Disability (IDPWd). This unique, free community event promotes and celebrates physically active lifestyles for people of all abilities through participation in accessible and inclusive sport and recreation. Every year since its inception in 2009, the festival has met its mandate of empowering people with a disability to include more exercise in their lives for improved health and wellbeing. In 2016, the festival brought together a record 48 exhibitors including state sporting associations, disability sport organisations, outdoor recreation and leisure specialists, adaptive sporting equipment suppliers, and venue managers, for a day of free activity and fun. More than 29,000 people came through the festival on Crown Riverwalk, Southbank.

GMHBA LORNE PIER TO PUB – LORNE SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

The GMHBA Lorne Pier to Pub is in its 37th year. The GMHBA Lorne Pier to Pub is the largest open water swim in the world and is organised and run entirely by volunteers from Lorne Surf Life Saving Club. The race attracts up to 5,000 competitors, and in 1998, it entered the Guinness Book of Records when 3,071 swimmers took part and made it the world's largest open water swim. The GMHBA Lorne Pier to Pub swim attracts swimmers from all ages and from all levels, including recreational and professional.

WATER POLO PRIDE CUP – WATER POLO VICTORIA

The inaugural Water Polo Pride Cup was held on February 5 2016 at Melbourne Sports and Aquatics Centre (MSAC) as part of both the 2016 National Water Polo League and the 2016 Midsumma Festival. The event saw two games of elite water polo played between the Victorian Seals and Queensland Breakers men's and women's elite teams, in addition to a game between Melbourne and Sydney's Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex (LGBTI) water polo clubs, the Surge and the Stingers. Supported by a crowd of around 1,500 and with a television audience of circa 50,000, the event was designed to be an open celebration of diversity and inclusion in sport.

YARRAWONGA-MULWALA MULTISPORT FESTIVAL – YARRAWONGA-MULWALA SPLASH 'N' DASH COMMITTEE

The YMMF is a two-day multisport event and includes a Triathlon Australia Age-Group World Qualification Standard Distance Triathlon, sprint and mini distance triathlons, School Sport Victoria qualification events, and fun runs for kids and adults (distances up to 10km). With more than 1,100 participants and volunteers, the festival resulted in a substantial economic boost to the local area and great fundraising opportunities for many non-profit organisations in the community. A key feature of the 2016 event was a new triathlon course, which was designed to highlight the region's stunning Lake Mulwala and the Murray River areas. This course encompassed a cross border event featuring a run over the iconic Yarrowonga Mulwala curved bridge that connects the two states, making it one of the most unique and picturesque courses on the triathlon circuit.

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CLUB – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

Melbourne University Women's Football Club is Australia's largest women's football club with more than 160 registered players across six divisions: U12, U15, U18, Senior Thirds, Senior Reserves and VFL Women's. The club had 17 players drafted to the inaugural AFL Women's competition, the highest from any club. The club was VFL Grand Finalists in 2016 and drew a record attendance for community women's football with more 5,000 spectators. A high volume of multicultural and Indigenous Australian participants has created a culturally inclusive and diverse environment.

MYRTLEFORD SAINTS FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL & NETBALL

The years leading up to the 2016 season had been tough for the Myrtleford Football Netball Club, which had struggled for sustained success. The club turned it around and made the 2016 finals in the senior competition for the first time in a number of years. Part of this improvement was due to the committee recognising the important role the club could play within the small Myrtleford community. Through the 'Got Your Back' program, it focused on delivering education and awareness to club members, players and friends and family, on issues that matter.

MELBOURNE STARS BASKETBALL CLUB – BASKETBALL

Since 2009, Melbourne Stars Basketball Club has focused on making sport available to people within the Aboriginal Community. For the club to succeed in this objective, it was key that it effectively engaged with the Aboriginal Community and ensured the program offerings were affordable, culturally safe and flexible to meet the many barriers faced by the children and families targeted. The club has gone from strength to strength and has grown significantly, with strong representation in the local domestic competition.

YARRAVILLE CLUB CRICKET CLUB – CRICKET

The Yarraville Club Cricket Club has grown a reputation for being a welcoming and inclusive club in Victoria. In 2016 the club introduced two all abilities teams, which led to significant changes to the activities of the club. The club's committee has widened the club's activities to ensure that all events are all inclusive. In line with this, the club adopts the Harmony in Cricket philosophy to ensure that their club is welcoming to people of all backgrounds and abilities.

HAWTHORN CYCLING CLUB – CYCLING

The Hawthorn Cycling Club holds the impressive status of being the fastest growing club in Australia. A major part of this growth has been due to the success of a number of community and member based programs. This has resulted in its number of female members quadrupling over three years, and participation at the weekly events increasing by 50 per cent, leading to \$1.3 million in funding for the Hawthorn Velodrome.

VICTORIA VIKINGS – HOCKEY

For many years the Victorian Vikings had been on the cusp of success within the Australian Hockey League (AHL), often finishing third behind championship dominators Queensland and Western Australia. But through determined persistence, and after 18 years, it won the Australian Hockey League. The 2016 team was the most cohesive and equally talented team that Victoria had sent to a National Championships in many years. Captain Russell Ford, an AHL stalwart and Beijing bronze medallist, and dual Olympian Chris Cirello, Commonwealth Games gold medallist Glen Simpson and Andrew Philpott, brought a wealth of experience to the team. While 2016 Junior World Cup stars Kiran Arunasalam, Josh Simmonds and Steve Gale injected fresh new skills to the mix.

VICTORIAN FURY – NETBALL

On the back of winning the 2015 Victorian Sport Awards Team of the Year, the Victorian Fury returned in 2016 having won its fourth consecutive premiership within the Australian Netball League (ANL) competition. The Fury has been extremely successful in the ANL competition since it began in 2008, winning seven of nine premierships. The Victorian Fury athletes have changed significantly throughout the past four seasons with only one athlete being involved in all four premierships. Not only has there been a change over in athletes within this time, but the coaching and support staff has changed as well. We believe this change, and continued success, is testament to the depth of talent within Victoria.

MELBOURNE CITY FOOTBALL CLUB WOMEN'S TEAM – FOOTBALL

The Melbourne City Women's Team has raised the bar for women's sport in Australia. The time and resources invested into developing the strongest women's team in the country paid off in the club's inaugural season — it won both trophies on offer in the W-League and managed to finish undefeated in a very competitive league. In addition to the team's success, Larissa Crummer was the club's Golden Boot winner with 12 goals. The 2015/16 team was made up of a great mix of youth and experience from around the world. The team managed to put the league on the map, and in the minds of Victorians. It's unusual to gain instant success in sport, which makes the club's triumphs in its very first season a truly remarkable feat.

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY BLUES WOMEN'S TEAM – VOLLEYBALL

The Melbourne University Blues Women's Team continued to break records during 2016. It is one of eight clubs that compete in the national volleyball competition, the Australian Volleyball League (AVL), and enters both a men's and a women's team. The Melbourne University Blues Women's Team recorded its historic fourth consecutive national championship (the team's fifth total championship) and in doing so set an AVL record as the most successful team. When taking out the 2016 Women's AVL Championship, the Melbourne University Blues Women's Team also broke the record for most consecutive wins of thirty matches, having not lost a match since 2014.

NOBLE PARK FOOTBALL CLUB U19'S – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

Over the years the club has struggled to field a side. Head coach Jamie was a key instrument in bringing the team together, and with his support and constant communication, the club had a full side for the 2016 season. From the start of the season, the team worked hard to overcome issues around dedication, devotion, role modelling and team spirit. These genuine efforts on and off the field led to them win the 2016 Eastern Football League Division Premiership and hopefully to begin a new era of success for the club.

SOUTHERN MARINERS SENIOR LEAGUE – BASEBALL

Made up of baseball clubs from Berwick, Bonbeach, Chelsea, Cheltenham, Moorabbin, Sandringham, St Kilda, Springvale and Pakenham, the Southern Mariners won the 2016 Baseball Victoria Senior League Championships (Under-18s). The achievement earned the team the right to compete in the 2016 Australian Senior League Championships. In the Australian Championships, the team defeated Hills (Sydney) in the final to book a place in the 2016 Asia-Pacific Senior League Championship, where it earned a place in the 2016 World Series. It was the first Victorian team to qualify for the tournament and the first Australian team to represent the Asia-Pacific region in the Senior League World Series.

VICTORIAN 19/U STATE TEAM – NETBALL

The Victorian 19/U state team competed in the National Netball Championships in Perth in April 2016. This team had an outstanding tournament. It went undefeated in the preliminary rounds and took top spot on the ladder after four days. The Victorian 19/U team finished as tournament champions, after defeating Netball NSW in the grand final. This team of athletes had a tough road to the National Championships, with a number of athletes being injured during the preparations. The team also lost its Vice Captain just two weeks prior to the tournament. To the girls' credit, they took those disappointments and used them on court, proving that they had worked hard to be there and wanted to win.

MT MARTHA LSC U15 RESCUE & RESUSCITATION – SURF LIFESAVING

The Mount Martha LSC Under 15 R&R Team achieved their best ever score and gold in the final at the 2016 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships held on the Sunshine Coast. The team, led by coach Geoff Waters, had a fantastic season winning gold at every Victorian competition they attended. They also travelled interstate to compete at the Manly/Freshwater carnivals in NSW in January and again came home with gold medals. The team were honoured with the Outstanding Achievement of the Year Award and nominated for the Team of the Year at the recent Life Saving Victoria Awards of Excellence. They have represented their Club, coaches and families with pride and dignity.

JOHN COBURN – FRANKSTON YCW FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB

John has been a member and volunteer of the Frankston YCW Football Netball Club (FNC) for approximately 30 years. Over this time, John has been involved as a junior participant through to playing seniors, before taking on the role as Football Manager where he served for many years. In addition to being to the club's Football Manager, John has held every executive position on the club's committee including; Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President and President. John is recognised for his compassion where he often takes time to visit life members and their families, checking on their welfare and maintaining their involvement in the club. As a testament to John's lifetime of service, the Frankston YCW FNC's home ground was re-named the John Coburn Oval.

PATRICIA GILCHRIST AND CAROL PEARCE – TENNIS

Pat and Carol are a team. While this award is an individual award, it's impossible to split them. They are a hard working dynamic duo and are both passionate about tennis, and in particular, tennis in country Victoria. They have helped numerous country clubs along the way to operate more efficiently and effectively, and to be the best they can for their members. Country Week is their baby, and an event that they have helped to grow for nearly three decades. Since they first took on the event 27 years ago, it has gone from strength to strength, with players giving great praise for the duo's work.

MAURICE GLEESON OAM – BLIND SPORTS AND RECREATION VICTORIA

Maurice is celebrating his 25th anniversary as President of Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria (BSRV). He has been a member of BSRV since its inception in 1977 and has put in tremendous work to strengthen the organisation and provide more sports opportunities for blind and vision impaired people. The vast majority of his service has been in a voluntary capacity. Prior to this, Maurice was President of the Victorian Olympic Sports Association for the Blind, where his philosophy was to get people involved, regardless of their ability.

GEORGE HALKIAS – FOOTBALL

George has been involved in community sport, recreation and sport for development in Victoria and nationally for more than 15 years and his work has impacted the lives of thousands of people. His involvement has brought sport to many Victorians who otherwise faced huge participation barriers and challenges to their health and well-being. In 2004 George co-founded the Big Issue street soccer program, for which he and another staff member volunteered their time to run weekly sessions in Fitzroy's public housing estates. The goal was to engage homeless and marginalised people, including those with mental health and substance abuse issues. In addition to coaching the weekly training sessions, George successfully sourced funding and coordinated Australia's first ever representative team at the Homeless World Cup in Edinburgh in 2005.

DAVID HANSEN – TRIATHLON

David is a foundation member of the Geelong Triathlon Club, a foundation member of Triathlon Victoria and has been a race administrator, club official, competitor and sponsor of athletes and founder of Super Sprint Triathlon since 1980. David was at the beginning of the sport in Australia and competed as a professional triathlete in the mid 1980s before moving into sports administration and then into event management roles. As an event manager, David has been at the vanguard of the sport's innovation. This includes his work to pioneer arguably the most successful 'Corporate' triathlon in the world.

GOVERNOR'S AWARD VICTORIAN MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR FRANK WILKES AWARD

DYLAN ALCOTT OAM – TENNIS

Dylan had a stellar 2016 and continued to make sporting history. He won two gold medals at the 2016 Paralympic Games for the single and double titles, which added to gold and silver medals at previous Paralympics in wheelchair basketball. He also won the Queensland Wheelchair Tennis Open, Apia International Sydney, Australian Open, South African Open, Japan Open, Open de France and the British Open. But perhaps his most remarkable achievement was being named the Newcombe Medalist, Australian Tennis' highest accolade and the first time it had been awarded to a wheelchair athlete. He also received the Australian Tennis Award for Most Outstanding Athlete with a Disability. Despite his busy schedule, he still supports and guides other wheelchair athletes, motivating them through his achievements and infectious positivity.

MATTHEW DELLAVEDOVA – BASKETBALL

In 2016, Matthew became the sixth Australian to win a NBA championship ring when his Cleveland Cavaliers won the title. Now a regular starter for the Milwaukee Bucks, Matthew was also an integral part of the Australian team at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, which was the Boomer's most successful games. He finished the games with the second highest number of assists. Growing up in a rural area, he advanced through the Basketball Victoria Country Pathway and continues to give back to this program. Despite being undrafted leaving college, Matthew scraped his way into Summer League and then joined the Cleveland Cavaliers on a non-guaranteed contract. Through grit and determination, he fought past a lot of players to stick on the roster and become a key player on the road to Cleveland's championship.

TIMOTHY DISKEN OAM – SWIMMING

Tim achieved tremendous success in 2016, including winning a medal of every colour at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games — gold in the 100m Freestyle S9, silver in the S9 50m Freestyle and bronze in the 200m Individual Medley SM9. Tim was taught to swim 15 years ago at PLC in Burwood and he still competes for the PLC Aquatic Swimming Club. Since finishing school, he now trains full time at the Australian Institute of Sport with the aim of continuing to represent Australia at the highest level. During breaks, he still returns to Melbourne to represent PLC and train with the club, and to pass on his experience and knowledge. He has recently been awarded an Order of Australia Medal.

MACK HORTON OAM – SWIMMING

Mack had an incredible year. A major highlight was winning gold — Australia's first in Rio — in the 400m Freestyle at the 2016 Olympic Games. The victory saw Mack become the first male Victorian swimmer to win an individual Olympic gold. He also came fifth in the 1,500m and fourth in 4 x 200m Freestyle Relay. At the Australian Swimming Championships, he won gold in the 400m and 1,500m Freestyle. A home-grown Victorian talent, Mack has been with Melbourne Vicentre for his entire swimming career. Mack started with the Vicentre development squad and joined up with his coach Craig Jackson when he was 12. Mack has kindly put his name to the letters that welcome new athletes and members to swimming in Victoria, and recently helped launch the Optus Junior Dolphin program, which encourages kids to participate in swimming.

GOVERNOR'S AWARD VICTORIAN FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR KITTY MCEWAN AWARD

KIM BRENNAN AM – ROWING

Kim helped bring women's rowing to the forefront when she won the gold medal at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games in the Single Scull. A win in the Queen's Cup, while representing Victoria, was another significant 2016 achievement. Kim is the most successful Australian female rower ever, and gives a huge amount of effort to the sport through regular media engagements and athlete mentoring. Kim is smart, sensible, a fair competitor and a great role model for all athletes in rowing and also across other sports. Kim has shared her gold medal success story with Australian sports fans and athletes and in doing so has inspired many young athletes.

CAROL COOKE AM – CYCLING

Carol is a true role model and leader in sport. She has both excelled on the bike as a world and Paralympic champion. Beyond this, her activities in the community are numerous and, as such, in 2016 she was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia. Carol is a leader both on and off the bike. She is always the first to give time and support for local para-cycling in Victoria and Australia, and works tirelessly to ensure the sport's growth. In addition, she is a key leader of the Australian National Team and the highly successful para-cycling program. Carol also works as a motivational speaker and fundraiser for the MS Society.

ASHLEIGH MCCONNELL OAM – SWIMMING

Ashleigh was a member of the amazing team that won gold in the 4 X 100m Freestyle Relay at the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games in world record time. She was also sixth in the S9 100m Freestyle and 15th in 400m Freestyle. Ashleigh is a committed and skilled athlete who goes quietly about her business, works hard and has achieved some great results over the years, which culminated in the gold medal at Rio 2016. Ashleigh trains with an able body squad and completes the same sessions that the other athletes in her squad swim. She is quietly determined and focused with her training.

SHANTELE THOMPSON – WRESTLING AND BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU

In 2010 Shantelle was diagnosed with post-natal depression after the birth of her twins the previous year. She turned to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu as an alternative to pharmaceutical drugs and used this to manage and heal. Before this, Shantelle had never participated in sport or any kind of physical training on a regular basis. In 2016 Shantelle's achievements included the World Champion – IBJJF Purple Belt Super Heavy Champion, Freestyle 2015/16 Oceania Champion (75kg) and the Victorian NAIDOC Sportsperson of the Year.



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