



Welcome to Australian Womensport and Recreation Association e-news, second edition, December 2006.

On behalf of the AWRA Committee of Management I would like to wish everyone Seasons Greetings and a safe and healthy holiday. While this is a very busy time of the year it is hoped that you have time to read the e-news and a gentle reminder to keep up your daily fitness regime!

As you know, AWRA has been extra busy over recent months trying to develop a website that was to be launched in October 2006. Progress has been slow and somewhat frustrating. This project will continue into the new year, thus the reason for the e-news coming out in this format rather than on the website.

The national survey on women's sport is also running late but is progressing. All members and over a 1000 national and state sporting organisations will be sent an e-mail copy in mid-January, with a completion and close-off date scheduled for early February. When you receive the survey please take the time to complete it and return to sender.

In December, AWRA submitted an application for a Women's Leadership and Development Program Capacity Building Grant 2007-2008 to the Australian Government Office for Women. The application seeks funding to further upgrade our basic website and particularly to provide e-commerce opportunities to enable learning modules for leadership and governance in the sports industry to be downloaded.

On 14 December Dawn Wilcock, AWRA Treasurer, and I met with the Federal Minister for the Arts and Sport, Rod Kemp, at his East Melbourne office. We had a very positive discussion on the Senate Report *About Time! Women in Sport and Recreation in Australia*, which the Minister fully endorses. In regard to the recommendation that the Government funds \$3 million a year over three years for media/sports partnerships, he suggested that AWRA request a meeting with the Prime Minister to lobby for budget inclusion. AWRA has suggested to the Minister that the repeat of the 1996 *Illusionary Image* report on the media coverage of women's sport needs to be completed before the implantation of the \$3 million strategy so that base data is known, in order to record the difference. AWRA has offered to implement this project.

We also lobbied (and wrote to the Minister) for a womensport seminar to be held in conjunction with the ASC Conference next 2007 in Brisbane and for Federal

Government support for the world conference on women's sport to be held in Sydney in 2010.

Minister Kemp talked about the decline of school sport. He also talked about the Federally funded, After School Sport Program in primary schools, which is an initiative of this Government. The program was implemented to counter increasing rates of overweight and obese children and to arrest the decline in school sport and the reduced curriculum time given to Physical Education. If readers can contribute good practice case studies in primary and secondary school sport please email crosswhite@bigpond.com and we will compile these to put on our website and to present to the Minister.

However, Minister Kemp is concerned that the After School Sport program, while seen as successful, is not enough to boost school sport and declining levels of fitness. The federal government cannot direct state governments on education policy.

Co-incidentally, two days after our meeting the *Weekend Australian* (Inquirer P.30) featured an article by Barry Cohen (federal Labor MP 1969-1990) headed *Leading to Fitness* which deals with the matter of obesity (he says exercise is the cure) and the need for more multi-purpose sporting complexes that include gymnasiums and swimming pools. His vision is for \$4 billion (250 centres costing about \$15 million each) to construct health and fitness centres around Australia, financed from the health budget, with a nation wide campaign to encourage the community to use them.

This suggestion is placing health and fitness facilities in the wider community (with co-location with schools preferable) and is something that can be supported by the Federal Government. What do you think?

I know I support this idea. In the late 1990's I was secretary of the Northern Beaches Indoor Sports Centre Ltd, a company set up by the Manly Warringah Basketball Association (where I was President), MW Netball, Academy Netball Club, Pittwater Council with Narrabeen Sports High School involved, to construct a 4 court multi-purpose sports stadium (cost of \$2.8 million) between the high and primary schools. It took years of meetings, paper work and fund raising and has been operating successfully for 4-5 years. I am now on a Steering Committee to do something very similar at Diamond Creek (outer north-east Melbourne), where the schools will use the facility during the day and the sports groups and the wider community will use the facility after school hours and on weekends.

It would be wonderful if there was a dedicated national government funding program for regional sports centres as none exists and has not since the "Ros Kelly whiteboard affair". If this was the case, then sporting organisations and schools could work together to develop regional plans and seek funding across the three government levels of federal, state and local.

Janice Crosswhite OAM (President)

SPORT NEWS:

- ❖ **Netball:** The Australian Netball team won the three test series in October against New Zealand. Although the underdogs, the fitness, determination and strong defensive play of the Aussies told against the Silver Ferns. Overall the Australian shooters were below the Silver Ferns in accuracy but took more shots. Narelle McMahon was named player of the series which may have been some compensation for losing the co-captaincy with Liz Ellis. McMahon, now vice captain of the team, was presented with a basket of toiletries as her prize for player of the series, starting some more cross Tasman debate and comparison to the Australia V NZ games held in Australia where game MVP's received \$4000 cash.
- ❖ Australian and Sydney Swifts captain Liz Ellis capped a remarkable comeback from a career-threatening knee injury to claim the most valuable player award at the National Netball League awards. Liz won the game's highest honour for a record-equalling third time and received \$10,000 in prize money.
- ❖ **Triathlon:** Michellie Jones won the Hawaiian Ironman (why not Ironwoman?) triathlon world championship in 9 hours, 18 mins and 31 secs.
- ❖ **Gymnastics:** The Australian team finished a very creditable 6th in the team's event at the World Championship in Denmark in October. This is a great result for a young and inexperienced team.
- ❖ **Marathon:** Kerryn McCann, the Commonwealth Games gold medal winner, was named with the Socceroos as the Sport Australia Hall of Fame Don award winner. The award, named after Sir Donald Bradman, is awarded to the athlete/s who best combine performance with sportsmanship, inspiration and dignity.
- ❖ **WNBL:** A team from Bendigo will join the Women's National Basketball League next season, and a New Zealand team is trying desperately to follow suit. The yet to be named Bendigo team represents a region where women's basketball is the most popular female sport, and two of the current world champion Australia players, Kristi Harrower and Emily McInerny, originate from there. Brisbane, one of Australia's sporting hotbeds, hasn't been involved in the League since 1998 and still isn't interested, which frustrates WNBL general manager Lorraine Landon. A rumour is circulating that the Chinese national women's team (coached by Tom Maher) will move into Sydney next year and also join the WNBL as preparation for the Beijing Olympics.
- ❖ **Surfing:** Layne Beachley has won the World Championship for the seventh time, which is an unbelievable effort. What a role model and an icon for girls and women in sport!
- ❖ **Athletics:** Jana Rawlinson (Pitman) is expected back on the track very soon after the birth of her first child. She was able to maintain a regular training regime for seven and a half months with her doctor monitoring the heartbeat of both Jana and the baby.

- ❖ **Cycling:** Recently Anna Meares scorched around the Dunc Gray velodrome in world record time for the 500m time trial.
- ❖ **Dragon Boats:** Melanie Cantwell, the head of one of Australia's leading dragon boat clubs, has won the inaugural NSW Ministers Recognition Award for Contribution to Women in Sport and Recreation. Melanie's work with Dragon Boats started 12 years ago and she is the first female president of Dragon Boats NSW. In this time, the sport has grown from 660 members in 12 clubs to more than 2000 members in 35 clubs - 55% of members are women aged between 21 and 70 plus. Melanie was also involved in setting up the Dragon Abreast clubs, whose aim is to encourage breast cancer survivors to participate in a sport which uses upper body strength. Melanie is also the first Australian woman to sit for and pass the International Dragon Boat Federations Officials Exams.
- ❖ **Soccer:** The winter 2006 Sweeney Sports Report shows that soccer has become one of the three most popular sports in Australia. Soccer is almost level with Australian Rules and is equal with swimming as a sport in which most people are interested - ahead of cricket, tennis, rugby league and rugby union.
- ❖ **Table tennis:** New CEO, Bronwyn Marshall, (former Opal player and basketball coach at the AIS) has been appointed to run Table Tennis Australia in Brisbane. She has been an Executive Officer for various sports.

THUMBS UP:

- **To the Australian Government** which hosted an official reception for the Opals winning the World Basketball Championship, in Canberra at Parliament House, on 18 October 2006. Janet Howard has been named the Patron of the Women's Basketball League and Defence Jobs are a new sponsor of the Opals.
- **To Northern Territory Sport and Recreation** which has a new Women and Sport page on the website. Check it out at: www.sportandrecreation.nt.gov.au - click on Participation and Development and then Women and Sport - or use the direct link: http://www.dcdsca.nt.gov.au/dcdsca/intranet.nsf/pages/sr_womenandsport#was
- **To the Weekend Australian (December 16-17 2006) for announcing** Leisel Jones and the Opals in their list A-List of 20 – admirable Australian heroes who inspired us over the past 12 months.

Book Review:

Remembering Amy, Amy Gillett, the girl who never gave up by Mike Safe; Allen & Unwin, 2006. Mike Safe, a writer with the *The Weekend Australian Magazine* is also Amy Gillett's uncle so the book is written from a family and journalistic perspective.

There are many interviews with Amy's friends, family, rowers and cyclists so the reader does get a good perspective on her dedication and determination to succeed. Amy rowed at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics (finished fifth) but missed selection for the Sydney Olympics. Her switch to cycling was working for her and she was preparing for a ride to secure selection for the Melbourne Commonwealth Games when she was killed. Although a sad book it would appeal to and motivate young women seeking to do their best at in any sport. *Recommended for school libraries.*

DID YOU KNOW?

- ✚ **The Women's Circus**, based in West Footscray, has just finished another outstanding season. Some 60 performers, most over 40 years of age, tumble teeter, parade and cavort, reminding us that "a woman's work is never done." Look out for it next year.
- ✚ **Boxing:** According to the Amateur International Boxing Association secretary-general, Caner Doganeli, "the number of countries taking part in women's boxing is increasing.....women's boxing is now more popular than men's." The AIBA is using the World's women championships held in New Delhi in November to press for the inclusion of women's boxing in the 2010 Commonwealth Games and 2012 Olympic Games.
- ✚ **Netball** is one of the ten core (compulsory) sports to be offered by a host country organising a Commonwealth Games. The Commonwealth Games Federation has also announced the sports for 2010 in the New Delhi Games are aquatics, archery, athletics, badminton, cycling, gymnastics, hockey, lawn bowls, netball, rugby Sevens, shooting, squash, table tennis, tennis, weightlifting, wrestling and events for athletes with disability.
- ✚ **Cricket Australia** is using various women celebrities from around Australia to help the sport shake off its "blokey" image! Swimmer Brooke Hanson will be the face for Ladies Love Cricket Day (on December 27th at the MCG) which commences with a Maidens Breakfast organized by Cricket Victoria and Women of the MCC Committee.
- ✚ **Samantha Stozer** (tennis) heads the list of Australian women sports money winners while Greg Norman still heads the list for males. Parents and grandparents should note that tennis and golf are the leading money earners for female athletes!
- ✚ **Great stride for Women:** To fight off the macho image in the town of Fuenlabrada near Madrid half of all roads signs and traffic signals are to show silhouettes with female attributes such as skirts or pony tails instead of the usual striding man.
- ✚ **Dawn Fraser**, Patron of the Alice Springs Masters Games had two of her long standing master's records broken during the Games in October. Dawn has just had a knee reconstruction but was able to play social golf in Alice Springs

while carrying out her Patron duties. She is keeping busy travelling around Australia, involved in promotional events.

- ✚ **Asics** is “running after the girls.” The shoe company is looking at the specific needs of female runners as a way of differentiating itself in the crowded footwear market. Due to hormonal differences, different build and foot shape, women suffer more back, knee and ligament injuries than their male counterparts. Asics is contributing to research into the bio-mechanical differences between men and women.

- ✚ **Australian Sports Commission:** Farewell to Lois Fordham, Director Corporate Services, ASC, who has resigned to be CEO of the Brisbane law firm, Macdonnells. Lois has been a strong supporter of the women’s sport movement and was the Oceania representative on the International Women’s Group.

- ✚ **Asian Games (Dohar, Qatar)** 800m silver medallist Santhi Soundarajan (from India) has failed a sex test and will be stripped of her medal. However, she cleared a gender test at the Asian Games in South Korea a year ago. This is the second controversy to hit the Indian athletics team within a month, as a female shot putter failed a pre-competition dope test.

Physical Education, Health and Nutrition. Here are some good websites to investigate:

Ausport: www.ausport.gov.au Australian Institute of Sport links and information.

Active-Ate: <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/active-ate/index.html>

Primary and middle years program promoting healthy eating and physical activity.

Health Victoria: www.health.vic.gov.au Health resources including rural and topical information.

Better Health: <http://tinyurf.com/q5hnn> Victoria’s one stop health site.

Health matters: <http://abc.net.au/health> An A to Z library of health topics.

BBC human body interactive: www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody Explore virtual representations of each part of the body.

St.John Ambulance quick reference: www.stjohn.org.au/quick_ref.html Fact sheets on first aid.

Brian Mac: www.brianmac.demon.co.uk General sports topics, specific fitness and training resources.

CalorieKing: www.calorieking.com.au/foods Food product information.

Sports Medicine Australia: www.smasa.asn.au/resources/resources.htm Fact sheets exploring all aspects of sports science.

Health Insite: www.healthsite.gov.au/Index.cfm Resource centre indexing health information.

Healthy Eating: www.fruitvegweek.health.wa.gov.au/eating/Index.asp Dietary resources suitable for upper primary and middle years.

Child and youth health: www.cyh.com/Default.aspx?p=1 Separate pages for early childhood, kids, teens and young adults.

Indigenous health infonet: www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au Information about many aspects of indigenous health including key facts, specific problem areas and cultural aspects.

Nutrition & Physical activity: www.health.gov.au Federal Government health reference site.

CALENDAR

January 7-13, 2007: Australian Open Fastpitch Championship, Blacktown.

January 10, 2007: History will be made when both genders compete in a Twenty20 cricket double header at the Adelaide Oval. This is a first in Australian domestic cricket. The women's teams are Southern Scorpions (South Australia) and Queensland Fire. (*Postscript*: the NSW and Victorian women's teams played Twenty20 games on December 20 but while the men played on the MCG the women played on the nearby Punt Road ground).

January 17-21, 2007: at Sydney Olympic venues, Australian Youth Olympic Festival with 1500 athletes from 23 countries competing across 16 sports.

February 2007: WNBL Finals.

March 2007: Brisbane. Annual General Meeting of Australian Womensport and Recreation Association. Date and venue to be confirmed.

NAME THE E-NEWS COMPETITION CONTINUES... over the holidays is a good time to put our minds to a catchy name for AWRA's e-news. Please send your suggestions to Kay Edwards at