



Australian Womensport & Recreation Association

EDITION 3, March 2007

From the Editor

Welcome to our 3rd newsletter, the first for 2007. It has been a hectic new year for AWRA, with the national women's sport survey distributed in January and the report almost finalised. You will have also received notices in regard to the Annual General Meeting next week in Brisbane and to the adoption of a new constitution. If you have ever worked on constitutions you will know how time consuming this can be! Many thanks to Sandra Sampson for taking the lead on this.

Further to this the AWRA Committee of Management has been busy with final acquittal documentation for the Office for Women (Federal Government). AWRA received a \$25,000 Capacity Building Grant, 2005-2006, and has successfully achieved all outputs:

- A Strategic Plan, 2006-2008.
- Development of publications: membership brochure and wall poster.
- National survey on women's sport.
- Establishment of a website framework.
- Insurance cover

There were difficulties with the website service provider and while AWRA achieved a basic website we still require a more user friendly website with a functional membership section and e-commerce capabilities.

This newsletter includes information on the Australia Day Honours, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Women on Boards, Book Reviews, the Australian Sports Awards, the Women's Sports Foundation (USA), updates from some of the state womensport organisations and the usual congratulations, bouquets, brickbats and coming events.

Happy reading... Janice Crosswhite

AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS, 26 January 2007:

AWRA would like to acknowledge and congratulate the following outstanding women:

Officer (AO) in the General Division.

The Reverend Margaret Court MBE, City Beach, W.A. Service to tennis and pastoral work.

Member (AM) in the General Division.

Meredith Sussex, Melbourne. Service to Sports Administration-Commonwealth Games.

Pamela Tye OAM, Wentworth Falls, NSW. Services to hockey through the development of a national association.

Medal (OAM) in the General Division.

Christine Brierley. Labrador, Qld. Services to women's cricket.

Alisa Camplin. Doncaster East, Vic. Services to sport as a gold medallist.

Marie Dunn. Auburn, NSW. Services to netball.

Jean Gell. Canterbury, Victoria. Services to athletics.

Mary Herbert. Keirriaville, NSW. Services to junior soccer.

Neita Matthews. West Ryde, NSW. Services to netball and athletes with a disability.

Zali Steggall. Farlight, NSW. Services to alpine skiing and charities.

Joan Yet Foy. Carrara, Qld. Services to pistol shooting.

ABS 2006 Review of Sport and Recreation.

Some of the interesting facts are:

Participation

- There were 9.1 million persons aged 18 years and over (62.4% of the adult population) who participated in physical activities for recreation, exercise or sport at some time during the 12 months prior to interview in 2002. Slightly more than half of these persons (4.6 million) participated in organised sports and physical recreation.
- The most popular physical recreation activity for both males and females was walking for exercise. However, the participation rate was much higher for females (32.9%) than it was for males (17.5%).
- There were 1.6 million children aged 5-14 years (61.6% of the population) who participated in organised sport outside of school hours during the 12 months ending April 2003.
- The most popular organised sport for boys was soccer (outdoor) which had 301,100 participants (22.2% of the population), whereas for girls it was netball with 233,000 participants (18.1% of the population).

Time spent

- Australians aged 15 years and over spent an average of 27 minutes (8.5%) of their free time each day on sport and outdoor activities in 1997. For males the average time spent on sport and outdoor activities was 33 minutes, while for females it was 20 minutes.
- On average, 27.1% of Australians aged 15 years and over actually participated in sport or outdoor activities each day in 1997. Those who participated spent an average of 1 hour and 43 minutes (20.4%) of their free time each day

Women on Boards Survey 2006

WOB's was established in Sydney in 2000 with the objective to facilitate women onto boards. It started with securing more women not-for-profit company positions, including sporting organisations, and has grown considerably with a large member database across Australia. It runs networking events around Australia and is supported by federal government funds and some sponsorship. It is now aiming to secure more women onto corporate (paid) boards. Each year it conducts a survey of its members to determine whether its strategies are working. The results in 2006 are encouraging when compared with 2005.

The key message from the 2006 survey was that the WOB posted vacancies (on www.womenonboards.org.au) are at least as important as word of mouth and public advertising and more important than professional recruiters. However, when networking based approaches were aggregated this

accounted for 55% of all applications **therefore reinforcing the importance of becoming known to the relevant boards.**

Currently WOB's is advertising two sport board positions: Canoeing Australia and Hockey Australia. Both Boards pay expenses.

Women in the 2006 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games: A Women's Sports Foundation (USA) Research Report

An analysis of participation, leadership and media coverage

As most people in the sports industry know, increasing women's participation in the Olympic Movement as participants and leaders has been a slow and challenging process. The Women's Sports Foundation (USA) has released a very detailed and well researched report on this subject.

In brief, some of the findings are:

- While the number of 'events' open to female athletes has increased steadily during the past 30 years, the actual number of female Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games participants and the number of opportunities to medal within those events has yet to equal the number of male participants or medals. The 2006 Paralympic Winter Games statistics are a good illustration of this discrepancy; while there are nearly an equal number of events open to female athletes, the total number of female Paralympic athletes was 99 of 474 or 20.9%. And, while women's participation has attempted to "catch up" with small increases in participation numbers, men's events and participation opportunities have continued to increase, thereby perpetuating and increasing the participation gap. For instance, there were 1,006 women (38.3%) and 1,627 men (61.7%) in the 2006 Olympic Winter Games compared to 886 women (36.9%) and 1,513 men (63.1%) in 2002.
- Interestingly, the same continued growth of men's sport and, as a result, the perpetuation of the gender gap has occurred in U.S. high school and college sport in the wake of Title IX's push for gender equity (BFHSA, 2006; NCAA, 2006).
- Some countries claim that the lack of women in their delegation is a result of lack of funding; however, the majority of these countries cite other reasons for the exclusion of women, such as social, cultural and religious differences (Good, 2002). However, the Olympic Charter specifically states that "Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement." (IOC, 2004). Thus, social, cultural and religious differences between men and women are not legitimate justifications for the lack of women in delegations.
- While the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has made significant efforts to play a leadership role in growing women's participation, it has had limited success in encouraging the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the 203 National Olympic Committees (NOC) and international winter sport federations (IF) to commit to gender equality.
- Women are also significantly under-represented in the IOC and on IF boards of directors, the international governance structures that determine whether women's sports are offered in Olympic, Paralympic and world championship competition. There are few women serving as members of National Olympic Committees (NOC), such as the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), that determine the size and composition of their respective national Olympic and Paralympic delegations and whether developmental programs are offered to support women's sports participation.
- And, like the situation in the United States, the under-representation of women is also reflected within each country's respective National Sports Governing Bodies (NGB) boards of directors (e.g., USA Hockey, U.S. Figure Skating, etc.) and at community leadership levels where grassroots participation opportunities ultimately determine the Olympic and Paralympic participation pipeline. Without strong leadership from governing boards at all levels, insufficiencies in financial support and programmatic infrastructure will continue and the number of female Olympic and Paralympic athletes will continue to lag behind men.

- Olympic status raises the visibility of both sports and athletes, opening new doors to media visibility, high earnings through prize money and endorsements, college scholarships and jobs and key influencer connections. More significantly, Olympic status also ignites the aspirations of millions of girls who are inspired to participate by the heroes they see. With an estimated audience of 2 billion, the Olympic Winter Games is the most widely viewed forum for winter sports (USA Weekend, 2006). Thus, it is important to regularly examine the state of women's participation as leaders and athletes in the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This report specifically examines such participation and leadership in the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games from both an international and United States perspective. The full report can be found at:

http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/binary-data/WSF_ARTICLE/pdf_file/1164.PDF

Congratulations to:

- ✚ Baklai Temengil of Palau, Chair of the Women in Sport Commission of the Oceania National Olympic Committee, who has been invited to join the International Working Group Board as a replacement for Lois Fordham, who was the ASC rep until June 2006 when the ASC resigned from the organisation.
- ✚ CAAWS, the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity, which celebrates its 25th anniversary. Look at the website www.caaws.ca
- ✚ Olympic and Commonwealth Games track star, Katie Mactier, 31, who claimed the women's road race crown at the Australian Open Road Championships in Bunninyong, near Ballarat, Victoria. Mactier, the 2001 road champion, out gunned eleven rivals, including the reigning Olympic and reigning Commonwealth Games road Champions, to win the title in a time of 3hr10min35sec ahead of 2003 U23 Olympic Distance Triathlon World Champion, Nikki Egyed, 24, with Mactier's Victorian team mate Emma Rickards third.
- ✚ Australia's Jacqui Cooper who jumped to a world record points score and equalled the record of aerial skiing victories with a near flawless performance at Mont Gabriel, Canada, in January. The three-time World Cup champion also climbed to the No. 1 world ranking in a weather-shortened one-jump competition.
- ✚ National netball coach, Norma Plummer, who has appointed three former Australian players to share the role of Assistant Coach in preparing the national team for the demands of the 2007 World Netball Championships in New Zealand in November. Experienced international campaigners - midcourter Sue Kenny, goaler Nicole Cusack and defender Roselee Jencke, who have 157 caps between them - will share the responsibilities of assisting Norma Plummer in a move aimed at combining new ideas, specialised experience, and a fresh approach to Australia's preparation.
- ✚ Serena Williams, who was in tears and frightened she would never win another tournament after crashing to a third-round loss to lowly-rated Sybille Bammer at the Hobart International prior to the Australian Open. Now the American has her sights on a return to the world No.1 ranking after clubbing Maria Sharapova 6-1 6-2 in the most one-sided Australian Open final in more than a decade. Hugely satisfied to have answered her critics with an emotional and stunning success at Melbourne Park as an underdone and unseeded outsider, Williams revealed she and older sister Venus are now plotting to dominate tennis like the old days.
- ✚ While on the Australian Tennis Open, a woman umpired the final of the men's singles for the first time. Frenchwoman Sandra de Jenken is considered one of, if not the best tennis umpire in the world.
- ✚ Long distance runner Suzy Walsham established a career high after becoming the first woman to cross the finish line in this year's Empire State Building staircase race in New York. This result adds to an already successful career for Walsham who represented Australia at last year's Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. Walsham completed the event only three minutes behind the overall winner Thomas Dold from Germany in a time of 13 minutes and 12 seconds.
- ✚ The Matilda's thrashed New Zealand 6 -0 in the AIS, Canberra in a February match.

- ✚ World No 3 Karrie Graf has started the year in fine form winning the Australian Open-Ladies Masters "double". Webb delivered a message to her top-ranked rivals Annika Sorenstam and Lorena Ochoa, vowing to improve on the form which earned her a sixth Ladies Masters to add to her tally of 45 victories.
- ✚ New Zealand will have a team in the WNBL next season, along with the other expansion team, Bendigo Braves. However, the Chinese national team will not play in the league, instead coming to Australia for regular friendly games as a prelude to the Beijing Olympics.
- ✚ ABC TV for their great coverage of the WNBL season and for staying with their live coverage of the grand final when the event went past 6pm.
- ✚ The Canberra Capitals, who surprised many with back to back premierships, accounting for the Sydney Uni Flames. A great team effort by the Caps, lead by MVP Tully Bevilaqua.
- ✚ Wimbledon team organisers who have announced that women will receive the same pay cheque as men across the event – of the Grand Slams it is only the French Open that still offers higher money to men tennis players
- ✚ Women's Golf Victoria which has advertised for a CEO with a package circa \$110K neg.
- ✚ The Matildas have secured top place in the four-team preliminary 2008 Beijing Olympic qualifying group after defeating Myanmar, Uzbekistan and Chinese Taipei. The Australian team now moves into the second and final stage of qualifying to take place in April. The Matildas have already qualified for the FIFA Women's World Cup in September.
- ✚ The Australian women's cricket team, which has secured a six wicket win over England in Chennai. Set 217 to win, the one-day international points were collected after victory in the 40th over.
- ✚ Kristy Harris, who is currently dominating the Ironwoman series.
- ✚ Lisa Corrigan (ACT) for breaking the Australian Mile record, and defeating Sarah Jamieson (Vic) in doing so, at the Telstra A-Series in Melbourne, 2 March.

Bouquets to:

Athletics Australia for rebuilding itself and currently producing 28 Australians ranked in the top 20 (10 who have reached the top 10), thirteen personal bests produced over the European season and three Australian records broken. Our athletes enjoyed much success at the Commonwealth Games and there is a very strong group of juniors coming through, such as Lisa Corrigan (above).

Netball Australia and Netball New Zealand for joining forces in a bold move to establish a Trans Tasman professional netball league of 10 teams, with all games televised by Fox Sports and Sky TV. However this will be at the expense of some well established Australian teams and skeptics are asking what is the strength of the five NZ teams? Is the new competition going to help NZ more than Australia? Time will tell.

Brickbats to:

Cricket Australia for trying to emulate the AFL's Brownlow presentation night, where the media concentrates more on the player's partners and gowns than player achievements. By the way the international cricket player of the year was Lisa Sthalekar (NSW). Following the night AWRA received this email from a prominent male sports administrator:

“ While women's sport struggles to find a place in and amongst the media, it is events like last night and moreover, the coverage of it, that make the job more difficult not less. That the night is played up for the 'look' of the partners as much as anything, continues to reinforce a 'culture' that is in the long term damaging to women's sport. Tough job fighting this.”

Channel 10 for its reality TV program “The Losers”, Sunday nights. It is hard to understand why people agree to go on these shows, where ethics are questionable and contestants are sometimes intimidated and made out to be losers because of their obesity. There are many issues of body image, health (mental and physical aspects),

voyeurism, desperation, etc and yet the show averages one million viewers a week! What does this say about Australian viewer habits? However, we do know that reality type shows are relatively cheap to produce and so allow television channels an easy out to meet Australian content quotas. Wouldn't it be better if a million Australians were watching fit and healthy women playing sport?

A Brickbat and a Bouquet to the Herald Sun for their edition of *The Greatest Sportswomen* (weekend 12 February 2007). The magazine is one of 14 in a series that looks at the world's and Australia's greatest achievers. The Sportswomen edition features Cathy Freeman, Layne Beachley, our swimmers, tennis players, gymnastics, track and field greats but almost ignores team sports - there is no mention at all of the Hockeyroos (two gold medals at Olympics and Comm. Games) the Opals (Olympic silver and bronze medals and current World Champions) or the Australian Netball or Water Polo teams.

Did you know?

- ❖ Netball Australia (NA) has gone public on a report commissioned by them from ACNielsen, called *Motivations and Barriers to Women Participating in Sport and Netball* (strange title as it reads as if netball is not a sport) which says dress rules in netball stop many from playing.

A drop in netball numbers (510,000 aged 15 years and older players in 2004 compared to 545,000 in 2003) is partly blamed on tight fitting uniforms, lycra outfits and standard short netball pleated skirts. The report recommends that the sport adopts uniform options like shorts or leggings and that local associations and clubs adopt flexible guidelines to allow players to wear what is comfortable.

Well done to NA which has followed up the Senate Report into women in sport and recreation in Australia which recommended that clubs, schools and sports associations review their dress code policies so that players feel more comfortable joining and playing a sport.

NA CEO Kate Plamer said: "We may have to make decisions to change the way our product looks, is played and attracts participants".

The report was conducted by interviewing 15 girls and women across a range of ages.

- ❖ 8 March 2007 was International Women's Day. This is a specific day to focus on the needs and achievements of women and it is also a day to celebrate the progress that has already been achieved for women.
- ❖ Dawn Fraser is standing as an independent candidate for the NSW Legislative Council
- ❖ Geelong schoolgirl bowls sensation Samantha Warren was the talk of the Australian Open after claiming her third Kiwi international scalp. The 17-year-old also has plenty of tongues wagging over the stylish attire she is wearing as one of the first bowlers in the country to take advantage of Bowls Australia's new relaxed dress regulations. Bowls Australia's Women in Sport spokeswoman Sally West said Warren had jumped at the chance to wear the pilot range of women's bowls clothing.

West said, "This is groundbreaking for bowls and vital for the sport's image. Our research has shown that a lot of women believe that dress regulations are too stringent in bowls and that they prohibit a number of women from getting on the green. Bowls Australia recently eased the regulations at a national level. We hope the new rules will be extended to state and club level in the future and, with the backing of State and territory associations, the sport will become more attractive for players of all ages."

Book Reviews

The two following book reviews feature outstanding Australian women who are not generally known for their sporting prowess but who have included physical activity as an important part of their lives and as young girls and women developed a sense of confidence and empowerment from their strong and healthy bodies.

In the case of Margeret Whitlam she was in the Australian swimming team for the 1938 Empire Games in Sydney where she finished last in the breaststroke. She may have won a medal if she was well but was suffering a chest infection in the days before antibiotics and as she says she was lucky not to sink to the bottom after she dived in as she was so unwell. Margaret Whitlam taught her children to swim and campaigned for a swimming pool for Cabramatta when the family moved there. She was President of the Cabramatta Swimming Club and her children remember her as the mother wearing a stopwatch around her neck, helping as a volunteer official.

A very interesting and compelling read. **Margeret Whitlam, A Biography, by Susan Mitchell, Random House Australia Pty Ltd 2006**

Who has heard of Joice Nankivell Loch? She is Australia's most decorated and heroic woman and yet unheard of. Born in Ingham, Queensland in 1887 and died at Ouranouplou, Greece in 1982 she was honoured with a total of eleven medals by Poland, Rumania, Serbia, Greece and Britain (MBE) for services to their people for saving thousands of lives. She assisted and cared for tens of thousands refugees, developed mosquito eradication programs, developed a rug trade which gave employment to Greek women, did medical (self trained doctor) rescue work, saved over 1000 Polish women and children from the Nazis and funded a water supply to her Greek village.

She was born on a Queensland sugar planation, and grew up in poverty in Gippsland, working on the family farm. She was the farm labourer that did the unpaid physical work and so grew fit and strong and used to manual work and a practical, commnesense fix it approcah.

This book is repititious in parts as it deals with similar refugee plights in different countries but it is an amazing story. It is also very sad as the details of war and dfamine are expalined through her actual diaries. **Blue Ribbons Bitter bread, The Life of Joice Nankivell Loch, Australia's Most heroic Woman by Susanna De Vries, 2000; Hale & Ironmonger Pty ltd.**

2006 Australian Sports Awards

Held at the Melbourne Casino on 22 February 2007 (organised by the Confederation of Australian Sport) the gala night was a show case of Australian sport for 2006. It may also be remebered as an evening that featured women as winners - as that seemed to be the general comment afterwards.

The major winners were:

Masters Athlete of the Year, Marie Kay (Swimming)

Volunteer of the Year, Sally Duncan (Basketball)

Sports Tourism Award, Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games

Coach of the Year, Jan Stirling (Opals)

Young Australian Team of the Year, Women's Artistic Gymantics Games Team

Young Australian Female Athlete of the Year, Melissa Wu (Diving), who gave an amazing , mature acceptance speech by video

Sports Moment of the Year, the Soccerroos

National Team of the Year, equal winners the Sydney Swifts and West Coast Eagles -the first time in the history of the award that a female team has been a winner!

International Team of the Year, the Opals (Basketball)

Female Tahlete of the Year, Liesal Jones (Swimming)

Male Athlete of the Year, Nathan Deakes (Athletics)
Dawn Fraser Award, Emma Snowsill (Triathlon)

Updates from the state womensport associations...

Womensport West

- * A Strategic Planning meeting was held in December to plan for 2007-2009 and give us some fantastic insight into what we can achieve.
- * Members got together for the first Networking Function on 27th February with a fun game of Lawn Bowls. Some participants took the opportunity to improve their skills while others spent more time in the gutter...
- * Our next function is a partnership with Surfing WA for a Schoolgirls Breakfast with Layne Beachley, an inspiration to women and girls of all ages. This is a new event that we are hoping will become an annual event.
- * Womensport West President Jennifer Riatti attended the WA Sportstar of the Year awards with representatives from Barwick Wines, our major wine sponsor for the WA Sportswoman of the Year. A great night was had by all.
- * The next Expert Panel has been booked for April with Nutrition planned as the topic. Nutrition is a very hot topic in the world of sport and women athletes are keen to understand the impact of diet on their training and performance.

Womensport and Recreation Victoria

Eloise Pietsch has commenced work as the new executive officer, replacing Fiona Justin who resigned in December to take up legal work in Darwin. The organization will be moving to new offices in April.

A very successful Spring Boards and Starting Blocks networking event was held recently with the Victorian Commissioner for Police, Christine Nixon, speaking on change in organizations. A one day conference on 29 May 2007, *Women in Sport, Changes and Challenges* targets people working in the sports industry who have a passion for gender equity. Registrations or more information can be made through the office by calling 03 9654 7545.

Coming up...

Hockey:

February 24-April 8 : Women's Australian Hockey League

Swimming:

March 17-April 1: World Swimming Championships, Melbourne VIC
April 3: Duel in the Pool (Aust v USA), Homebush NSW
April 11-15: 2007 Australian Age Championships, WA
April 16-17: 2007 Age Open Water Championships, WA

20 March 2007, 3pm: Annual General Meeting of AWRA at Womensport Queensland Offices, Stockwell Building, West End, Brisbane. All welcome.

14 May 2007, 9am-4.30pm, Old Parliament House, Canberra. The **'Engaging with Business'** Forum is the first in a series facilitated by Sports Education and Learning in response to the Senate's Women in Sport Inquiry. It has been developed for anyone working in women's sport or with female athletes,

those who deal with sponsorships, partnerships, developing athlete career pathways, CEO's, local government agencies, boards, coaches and athletes. **Early-bird registrations now open at www.sealglobal.net** For more information contact Lisa McConchie at Sports Education and Learning on 02 9648 1314 or email lisa.mcconchie@sealglobal.net

NICA's Short Course Program: Come & Try Circus Classes for the first time in 2007 (National Institute of Circus Arts); call 03 9214 6585 for a brochure or visit www.nica.com.au
