
Basketball WA and WAIS Expand Partnership to Strengthen Pathway for Female Athletes

Basketball WA and the Western Australian Institute of Sport (WAIS) have expanded their partnership through a new initiative designed to elevate WA's top female basketball talent within the national performance pathway.

The adapted partnership, which underpins the existing WAIS Basketball Scholarship Program, will see WAIS work directly with Basketball WA's National Performance Program (NPP) for girls aged 15–19.

The collaboration provides identified athletes with access to world-class testing, monitoring, and training standards aligned with elite and professional environments.

This initiative strengthens the connection between state and national performance systems, giving athletes the best opportunity to progress to the Australian representative level and, ultimately, to become WAIS scholarship holders. It represents the first model of its kind nationally, with the potential to be replicated across Australia.

This partnership also forms part of Basketball WA's wider commitment to elevating the performance of athletes and coaches across the state, with a particular focus on accelerating the development of girls within the pathway.

This is a core strategic priority identified through the formation of BWA's soon to be launched Performance and Pathways strategy.

Basketball WA Chief Basketball Officer Tyrone Thwaites said the partnership reflects a shared commitment to advancing women's basketball in Western Australia.

"This partnership ensures our emerging female athletes are immersed in a truly elite environment from a younger age," Thwaites said.

"It's about exposing them to the testing, performance expectations, and daily training standards that define high-performance sport.

"Through WAIS's expertise, our National Performance Program athletes are better prepared to reach the green and gold level, and this program sets a new benchmark for how states can connect their systems to the national pathway.

"This initiative underpins the WAIS scholarship program and forms part of a broader suite of projects we'll soon announce through our 2025–28 Performance and Pathways Strategic Plan - focused on strengthening the environment for women and girls in basketball."

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WAIS performance staff will work alongside Basketball WA coaches and program leads to deliver integrated support, including sport science, strength and conditioning, athlete education, and performance testing.

WAIS Head Coach of Women's Basketball and WA U20 Women's Head Coach, Shane McDonald, said the program is already making a tangible impact on the athlete experience.

“The collaboration between WAIS and Basketball WA means our athletes are now exposed to the same high-performance systems that drive national and professional success,” McDonald said.

“It's giving them a real understanding of the standards required to compete at the next level, while also creating stronger alignment between the state and national programs.”

The program began late last month and represents a major step in Basketball WA's ongoing investment in female athlete development.

Further initiatives will be unveiled as part of the organisation's upcoming 2025–28 Performance and Pathways Strategic Plan.

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