

INTERSTATE COACH'S REPORT 2007

NAME: Peta Whelan

SPORT: Northern Territory Netball Championship Team (U16 Schoolgirls)

1. SELECTION OF SQUAD/TEAM

This year, the NTSS Netball Championships were held in Alice Springs. It was a nice change from having the championships in Darwin and made the top end girls appreciate what it is like to play netball in the southern end of the territory. In relation to the size of the Territory, we had good numbers for the 3 days of selection. Stacey West (NT Institute Coach), Vanessa Haw (Championship Manager) and myself were the selection panel for this year. Due to time constraints with travel and commitments with the Arafura Games, we elected to select the team outright from the championships. We did have a 'possibles vs probables' game at the completion of the grand final, which I believe to be an invaluable way of selecting those final few spots for the team that are up for grabs. The competition that you would normally see out of a train-on comes out in this game. We also selected girls from every cluster to ensure that each was represented in this game. Girls from remote areas were given that opportunity to play at a level they may not find in their home town.

12 players were selected after the 3 days:

- 2 Rivers
- 2 Desert Storm
- 4 PARCS
- 2 Northern Subs
- 2 City

A few weeks prior to departure to Sydney, one of our Katherine girls pulled out so a reserve from Northern Subs was put into the team.

2. PRE-EVENT TRAINING PROGRAM

This year I again trained the girls that lived in the Darwin area, with trainings held at Parap Netball Courts and also at Marrara. We also had the opportunity to train with the NTIS netball athletes which I believe was excellent preparation for the girls that had not been away to a national event. The girls were also fortunate enough to have Stacey West and Kathy Kellam coach them on occasion. The girls in Katherine were training with their A Grade teams and the Alice Springs girls were training with Bill Adams. On top of this, each girl was given a booklet on their announcement into the

team which contained detailed information on expectations, lead-up to the tournament and what to expect, as well as a play book and a reflection section for each game that was to be played in Sydney. It also contained individual training sessions that the girls were required to complete weekly.

3. OUT-OF-DARWIN TEAM MEMBER PREPARATION

As stated in the above, each girl was issued with a home program that was to be completed weekly. As per last year, it was fortunate to have the girls based in bigger areas that had access to coaches and facilities.

4. INTENSIVE WEEKEND/CAMP/WEEKEND

The first time that the girls came together as an actual team was when we travelled from Darwin to Alice Springs. Before our connecting flight to Sydney, we trained at Anzac Hill High School. This training was more for the fact of getting the girls to bond together as a team and as a unit as well as warming themselves up and getting them mentally into the right frame of mind before we hit Sydney running.

Due to my experience of Sydney, I was able to book us accommodation at a bed and breakfast and utilise the public transport system for us to travel around. The girls stayed in groups of 6 in 2 rooms and Vanessa and myself were in a room together. This was a great experience and allowed the girls to really get to know each other. It also makes the girls have to trust and rely on their team mates...a good quality for your team to have!! We had training at the Anne Clark Netball Centre in Lidcombe whilst we were there and I also organised for us to travel as a team to Darling Harbour and Circular Quay and travel across on the ferry to Luna Park. I thought that this would be an unforgettable experience for the girls, particularly those who had never been to Sydney. Just seeing the Harbour Bridge was an experience for them!!

I recommend to future netball teams and any other sports that travelling down and doing the training camp prior to the tournament is a positive way to start the week and a new and exciting environment for the athletes to work in. As coaches and managers, you also get to bond with your athletes on a more personal and professional level.

5. COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

We again had good support from the community this year. Darwin Netball Association let us utilise the Parap Netball Courts for free and NTIS was also very

helpful and generous with their assistance. School Sport NT also assisted with our fundraising with the raffle and the benefits of selling tickets for that. A few of our girls also obtained individual sponsorship. NT News and ABC Radio again gave us huge support with their write ups and broadcasting. A huge thank you to Andrew Aloia from the NT News, and Shannon Byrne from ABC Radio for their continued support in our program.

6. GAMES REPORT

Although the girls did not win a match this week, we still had some of the best results that an NT has ever had. After having a shocking day against ACT and SA, the girls bounced back and lost by 1point to VIC. There was a bit of controversy about whether it was a draw or not, but that was something we did not need to tell the girls about. It was such an amazing feeling to have to girls giving it to the Victorian side and them having no answers, plus the fact that every team and every spectator that was there came in to watch our girls match it with the Vics!!

And to top that achievement up, the girls only lost to NSW by 12points, another huge achievement for this team!

This matched last years feeling of placing 5th. I feel very honoured and privileged to have been a manager and a coach for these girls over the past 3 years. This year Jessica Moller was selected in the Australian Team and Eulaly Allen came particularly close.

Game 1: Northern Territory **21** vs Tasmania **50**

Game 2: Northern Territory **30** vs Western Australia **39**

Game 3: Queensland **44** vs Northern Territory **23**

Game 4: Australian Capital Territory **44** vs Northern Territory **24**

Game 5: South Australia **53** vs Northern Territory **10**

Game 6: Northern Territory **28** vs Victoria **29**

Game 7: New South Wales **42** vs Northern Territory **30**

Finals

Game 8: Western Australia (5th) **43** vs Northern Territory (8th) **23**

Playoff 7th and 8th

Game 9: Northern Territory **26** vs Australian Capital Territory **35**

Final Placings

- 1st NSW
- 2nd VIC
- 3rd SA
- 4th QLD
- 5th WA
- 6th TAS
- 7th ACT
- 8th NT

Australian Merit Team Members (to compete in Adelaide, 2008)

Jessica Moller

Amy Safe (MVP) Award

Eulaly Allen

All players achieved their required quota for quarters and played above them. There was only one girl who didn't and that was due to her injuring herself halfway through the week. Every game was a team effort, not just by the girls on the court at that particular time. I would also like to thank Vanessa for the help and effort she put into this week also!

A part of me is so disappointed that I cannot coach this team again next year as I am in the UK, but when I do come back to the Northern Territory I would love the opportunity to be a part of School Sport NT in some form or another!

Peta Whelan