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# The Australian Sports Commission proudly supports Touch Football Australia

The Australian Sports Commission is the Australian Government agency that develops, supports and invests in sport at all levels in Australia. Touch Football Australia has worked closely with the Australian Sports Commission to develop touch football from community participation to high-level performance.

Touch Football Australia is one of many national sporting organisations that has formed a winning partnership with the Australian Sports Commission to develop its sport in Australia.

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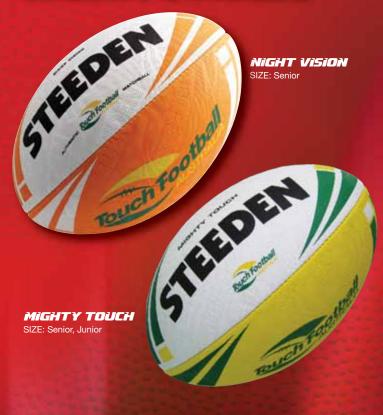


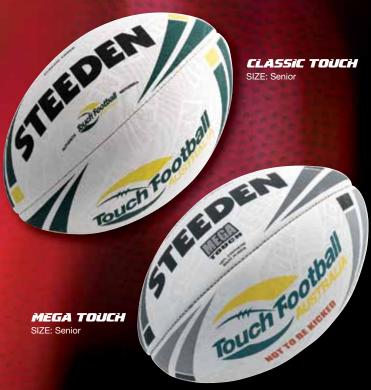




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# STEEDEN Touch Footballs















# Welcome to the eleventh edition of the Touch Football Australia (TFA) Hard Wrap.

The magazine continues to deliver the latest news and views from across all the states to the Touch Football community. This edition features the 2013 X Blades National Touch League (NTL) and the 'Elite Eight' Series which returns to Coffs Harbour, New South Wales.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the local Coffs Harbour Council for the opportunity to return to what many would see as the birth place of this competition. The NTL commenced in 1997 in Coffs Harbour and continues to grow and develop. We are looking forward to continuing to involve and improve in 2013.

I would also like to acknowledge the continued support of the NSW Government through our strategic partnership with Destination NSW. The NSW Government has secured various events through to the 2015 World Cup which is creeping ever closer.

The overall development of our elite showcase has continued to be front of mind with the resurgence of the State of Origin late last year and the Super Trans Tasman conducted in Auckland last month. It is evident that with the full schedule the potential expectations and demands on athletes is increasing and we must take a pragmatic view on how we not only we support them, but the way the sport changes and evolves.

Strategically, the enhancement of our elite products will bring profile to the sport, improve our products generally and our athletes overall. However, we will need to balance the expectations we all have at all levels.

There is no doubt that with changes comes some apprehension. The challenge for all of us is to buy into what the sport is looking to achieve in order to then support what we have all wanted for some time for the sport and for our participants. Conversely, athletes now have a consolidated schedule of elite participation to balance, which will require feedback and enhancements.

There is no easy solution, but again, we believe the various incremental changes aregoing to see the sport elevated to the next level over the ensuing years. We certainly have committed ourselves to consulting widely and finding solutions and we look forward to the continued challenge on and off the field ahead.

The challenge in front of us was no more evident than in New Zealand recently where there was some on field disappointment for our proud athletes. Equally, there was redemption and continued dominance with various amazing achievements to consider.

The Super Trans Tasman was unique in that it offered us an

opportunity to have all generations of our game in one place at one time. This is unique in sport and there were just as many thrills for those playing in the Youth divisions playing for the first time for their country, as there were for those potentially playing their last Test match in Australian colours in the seniors.

Particularly to those athletes in the Men's 50's that have been legends of our game for so long, we thank you for your long and valued contribution. We look forward to seeing you involved in the years to come whether that is on or off the park.

We had two players that played in the very first sanctioned Test match (Garry Lawless and Greg Young) play some 28 years later at the Super Trans Tasman; what an amazing advertisement for the game and the opportunities we offer and the type of people that are committed to our sport.

Anthony Ziade also announced his retirement from the Men's team after the third Test match. Fittingly, Anthony leaves the side at an event where he proudly carried our national flag. Anthony has been a role model to many and has been a vital member of our family. We look forward to his continued involvement with our sport and know he will not be lost. We are sure there are various other players that will be slipping away from this level and we note and thank you for your service to our sport.

A special mention also to David Baggio and Dale Lawrence for the time they afforded at the event. As elite participants, they also gave time to a mentor program that will no doubt improve the way we coach and the way the next group of referees progress. Again, the commitment of the people in our game cannot be

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questioned as we all strive for ways to support and improve.

There is no doubt our opposition is committed to finding ways to lift the bar and it has only been through the lofty standards we have set that this can be achieved. Australia has been the dominant force in the sport since the revitalising of the Trans Tasman in 2009. However, in a game of fine margins and ability, on occasions the opposition will find a way to win.

As stated to many of the athletes, we could not be prouder of their collective effort or attitude. All of the participants that attended the Trans Tasman were outstanding role models for our sport and we have every faith in them as we build toward 2015 and beyond.

The challenge is what we do next, how we set ourselves for the next opportunity and how we will approach that opportunity when the time comes.

This is no different to the general domain of sport where there are numerous challenges ahead of us as an industry, as noted in the previous edition of The Hard Wrap. No one would have predicted the profound impact sport has had on headlines over the last few months.

We have been in a position as the leading community and participation sport for Australia for some time but hot on our heels are numerous sports that want more of what we have had and can be proud of.

Again, it will be how the community reacts to the game we love as we look to inspire the next generation of participants. Whether it is at elite level or at the park, we all have the responsibility of positioning Touch Football.

Whether it is achieving the position of the number one nation on the elite field or recognised as the highest participant sport in Australia this will only occur through continued and collective commitment, dedication and endeavour. Further, it will only occur with a unified view on direction and progress and a team approach to the thrilling times we have in front of us.

As has been stated on so many occasions we have the people to achieve these goals and we look forward to working together and supporting you all to achieve it. This is guided by our values and how we role model these and behaviours in all that we do – namely, leadership, integrity, professionalism, diversity and excellence.

When we speak of commitment I would like to take this opportunity to thank the TFA staff for the amazing work they do. I am privileged to lead a terrific group of people that give their all for the sport and are equally invested in results, both on and off the field.

As with any team sometimes you have departures and welcome new members. I would like to wish David Brady – General Manager, Business Operations all the very best for his new career. David joined TFA in 2006 through a State Manager role and has witnessed troubled times as well as seeing the new organisation grow and evolve. David's commitment, loyalty and passion for our sport has been front and centre in all that he does.

While realising a life goal with his new opportunity, he also finally gets the opportunity to take the field for the ACT Men's 40's at this year's NTL, which I know he will cherish. David has been a credit to this organisation and we look forward to his continued involvement in years to come.

We also welcome Julian Buckmaster – General Manager - Marketing, Communication and Partnerships to our team. Julian brings a wealth of experience from previous like roles with the PGA Tour as well as various senior business and government marketing and communication roles. We are excited about his addition to the team and the role he will play in the continued positioning of our sport.

Julian fulfils a lifelong ambition with his appointment and as one that has given so much to the game on the field as a two time World Cup winner, we are sure he will be equally valuable off it.

On behalf of the Board of Touch Football Australia I wish all players, coaches, referees and administrators involved in this event every success. We are sure there will be fierce competition followed by the interaction that embodies with our sport which is both social and friendly.

Thank you for the ongoing support from our valued sponsors and partners. TFA has established a great relationship with various partners that support us and the overall development of our game. We encourage all members of the Touch Football community to show your support to them at this event and into the future.

Finally, I would like to recognise the contribution of the TFA Board of Management and the continued support they offer the sport. Our sport continues to benefit from the commitment of them and all volunteers at all levels. We are in safe, capable hands for the future if we can retain them all.

I hope you enjoy this edition and the elite showcase this week.

**Colm Maguire** Chief Executive Officer









# A MESSAGE FROM GRAHAM ANNESLEY MP, MINISTER FOR SPORT AND RECREATION

On behalf of the NSW Government, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Coffs Harbour for the 2013 Touch Football Australia X-Blades National Touch League.

The National Touch League is the premier event for Touch Football in Australia and sees the country's best players compete for the chance to be selected in Australia's National Squad.

Returning to Coffs Harbour in 2013, over 100 teams from across Australia will compete in the event which will also see the second running of the Elite Eight Series. Of the 100 teams competing, the top players have been selected to form eight teams who will face-off in this elite contest.

The National Touch League is part of a series of Touch Football events secured by the NSW Government, to be held in regional NSW in the lead up to the Touch Football World Cup in 2015.

Like many regional events on the annual NSW Events Calendar, this line-up of Touch Football events helps to attract visitors and deliver economic benefits to NSW regional communities.

I wish all players the best of luck and touch football fans a great time in Coffs Harbour.

GRAHAM ANNESLEY, MP MINISTER FOR SPORT AND RECREATION

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# **ENJOY FANTASTIC EVENTS**

Each year, NSW will host a spectacular array of events including high adrenalin sports, exciting artistic collaborations and cultural experiences. Below is just a sample of what's in store. If it's worth seeing, it's on in NSW!



The Addams Family Australian Premiere Season From 10 March

Broadway's smash hit musical comedy hits Sydney!

Capitol Theatre, Sydney



Sydney Royal Easter Show 21 March - 3 April Fun for everyone, showcasing t

Fun for everyone, showcasing the best of Australian agriculture and country life. **Sydney Showground** 



Bluesfest Byron Bay 28 March - 1 April Australia's premier blues and roots music festival. Byron Bay



2013 Yonex Australian Badminton Open 2 - 7 April

See the world's best players in the world's fastest racquet sport.

**Darling Harbour, Sydney** 



Newton's Nation

3 - 5 May

Downhill skating, luge and other action sports festival.

Mt Panorama, Bathurst



Vivid Sydney 24 May - 10 June

Sydney is transformed into a canvas of lights, music and creative forums.

Sydney Opera House, Circular Quay and The Rocks



2013 NCHA Futurity 29 May - 9 June

One of the richest horse performance events in Australia

**Tamworth** 



State of Origin I & III - NSW v QLD 5 June & 17 July

See Rugby League's greatest rivalry – the Blues v the Maroons.

ANZ Stadium, Sydney



2014 FIFA World Cup™ Asian Qualifier Qantas Socceroos v Iraq

18 June

Support the Qantas Socceroos on the road to Brazil.

ANZ Stadium, Sydney



If it's on in NSW, it's on visitnsw.com



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# **L Wrap Party**

Saturday 16th March with Planet Groove

7.30pm | \$10 includes free drink







C.ex Coffs Vernon Street, **Coffs Harbour** 





When Cathy Gray called Dennis Coffey to congratulate him on becoming a Life Member of Touch Football Australia (TFA) following the 2011/12 Annual General Meeting, little did he know that she had some exciting news as well.

TFA's Director of High Performance, Cathy Gray and current Secretary-General of the Federation of International Touch (FIT), Dennis Coffey were rewarded for their contributions to the sport of Touch Football, joining the prestigious list of TFA Life Members.

"She phoned and congratulated me and I said 'when's it going to happen to you?' And she said it just did'," Coffey explained.

Gray and Coffey are two of TFA's longest serving volunteers andhad their Life Memberships conferred at the AGM.

Gray's involvement in the sport spans over 30 years, initially getting involved through teaching it at school. This progressed into the selecting discipline, with Gray holding many positions over the years, including being the Director of High Performance

# Gray and Coffey become Life Members

from 1999. Other achievements include being on the TFA Talent Identification Panel from 1990-1998, the TFA Selectors Panel from 1996-1998 and the TFA Director of Selectors from 1998-1999. She was also named a Ron Hanson Medalist at the 2010 Masters Trans Tasman Series and awarded the Phil Smith Medal at the 2011 World Cup in Scotland.

Gray becomes the first female Life Member of the organisation and said that it was a 'massive surprise'.

"It just came straight out of the blue, I just feel very humbled and very privileged to be part of the organisation and the sport means so much to me," Gray said.

"I was sitting in the meeting (AGM) looking at the names on the (Life Members) board thinking 'they've all been in the sport for many years and have done this and that', but you never see yourself as part of that at all."

Like Gray, Coffey's involvement in the sport has spanned over three decades, being the inaugural National Coaching Director of the organisation and more recently the National Coaching Director between the years of 2000-2010. Coffey is also responsible for creating many resources about Touch Football over his time involved, while his current focus is at

an international level with his role with FIT.

Coffey said that he too was also blown away to be named as a Life Member.

"I did become very emotional.. You don't do what you do for this sort of recognition...I was just over the moon," Coffey said.

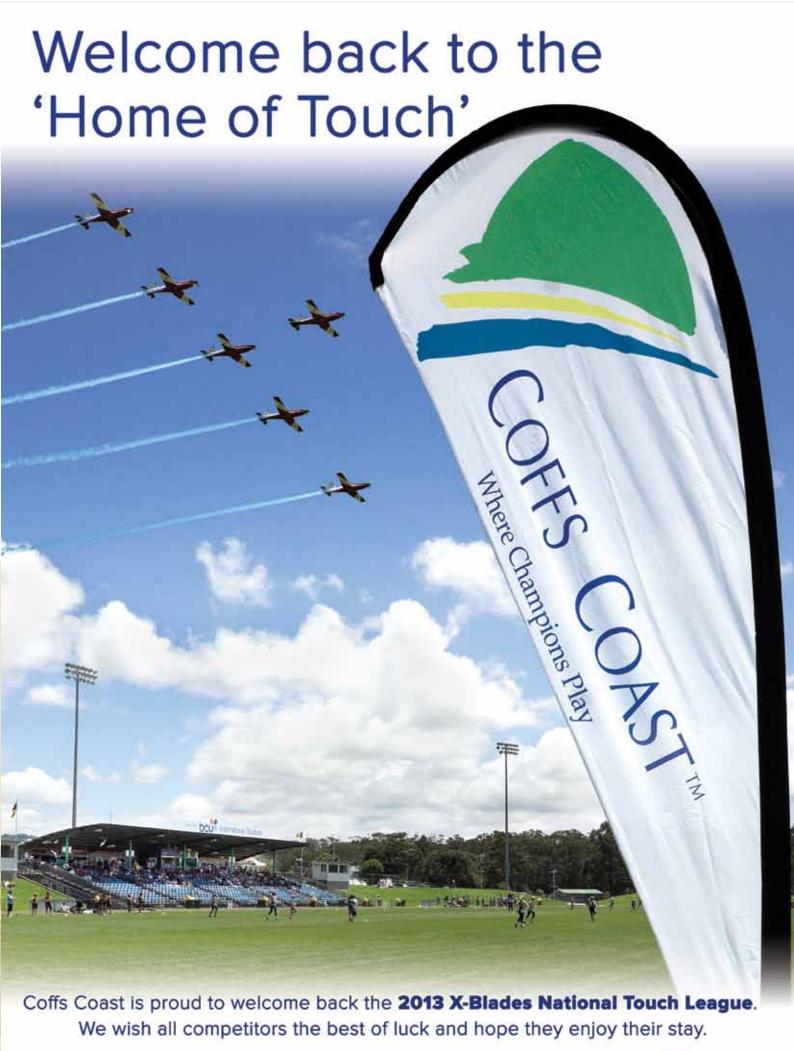
"To be part of the few people that have been recognised for what they have achieved and I'd like to think that it's not just for time, I'd like to think it's the outcome, for the difference you've made and if you can look back and say 'I think I did make a difference' then I think that adds to it."

TFA would like to congratulate Cathy and Dennis on becoming Life Members of the organisation and thank them for their valued contribution to the sport.

TFA is in the initial planning phase of establishing a bi-annual 'Legends Dinner'. The dinner will host the Life Members and current Hall of Fame members and will be extended to Australian representatives, present and past. The dinner will be the forum to present Hall of Fame inductees, as well as various other organisational recognition awards. Stay tuned for more details in the coming months.



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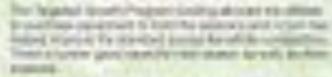
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# TEAM & ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY

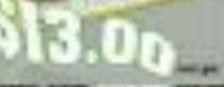
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# **Smith Strives To Be Best**

As soon as he finished refereeing the Open divisions at the 2013 Super Trans Tasman Series, Brad Smith was already looking forward to the next event.

"I don't like to look backwards, I only like to think of my next game and what I can do in my next game. I set goals but as soon as you reach those goals you're a bit deflated and you just can't wait to set another goal and try to progress a bit further," Smith said.

The Trans Tasman Series was the first time that Smith had refereed at an international level in the Open divisions, and while he is already focused on the next task at hand, he says it was a great experience.

"I loved the tour, loved standing there for that national anthem in the middle of the field but as soon as that national anthem and the game is over you just start looking around for another opportunity. I loved it while it was on."

Smith's next goal comes at the 2013 X-Blades National Touch League, hopeful of gaining a top three spot and refereeing in the final of the Elite Eight.

"There's a possibly of working onto that Men's Open game in Coffs Harbour, so ultimately that's the goal."

"The big goal is to achieve the number one ranking and keep it, my first coach and mentor is Rick Borg and his involvement with the sport is something that I strive for."

While he aims high, Smith says that his enjoyment in the sport comes from many different levels and roles.

"I love the sport and the people so when you're not away at an international level or national level it's Queensland or regional or local. There's not a lot of difference to me whether I'm refereeing Open's Men at the Queensland State Cup or my son's under eight's team, I get just as much enjoyment," Smith said.

When he is not busy refereeing, Smith is also an integral part of the Ipswich Touch Association. Smith was also recognised last year in Ipswich, being named the City of Ipswich Official of the Year, something that Smith says came as a surprise.

"It is a bit of a shock to be looked at

it in that way, I don't really see myself as someone of any stature," Smith said.



It's been a tough start to the year for the Ipswich Touch Association, with floods once again affecting their fields. Flooding has impacted the affiliate on numerous occasions in recent years and they are hopeful of being up and running again by early March.

"They had a metre and a half through the clubhouse once again, I think we've been flood affected at the complex four times in the past three years I think. We are the most flood affected sport in Ipswich, which is very heartbreaking."

"The only good thing that comes out of all of this rain is the community spirit. We wish somehow we could thank the Ipswich community, they were very helpful. We've had financial donations from other Touch associations and offers of support from QTA and TFA, which we are very grateful for."



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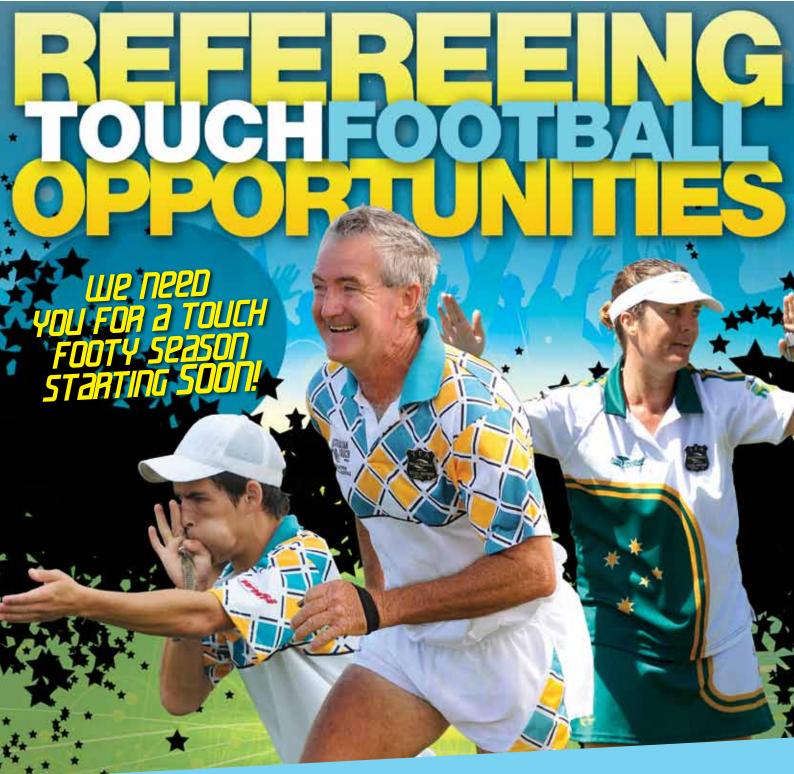
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# Players Helping Next Generation Of Stars

It's no doubt been a busy couple of months for our Australian representatives who have been hard at work training and competing in the Super Trans Tasman Series as well as preparing for the 2013 X-Blades National Touch League, but remembering where they came from is something that they don't forget.

contingent have been teaching Australia's next generation of stars a thing or two that they have learnt along the way in recent times, proving to be great role models for the up-and-coming talent in our sport.

The Australian Men's and Mixed teams travelled to Parkes to train in the lead up to the Super Trans Tasman Series as well as holding clinics with the young Parkes Pumas teams that compete in the New South Wales Junior State Cup.

Even when they were in New Zealand, some of the Australian teams visited schools in Auckland to teach them about Touch Football.

And just a week after returning from the Super Trans Tasman Series, many members of the Australian contingent travelled to Port Macquarie to coach, referee, manage or support their club's junior teams.

Australian Men's Open players, Scott

Buckley and Nick Good, were two of a number of national representatives to coach at the event, helping out the Penrith Panthers 16's Boys side.

the team and would like to take them through to their final years at a junior level, while Good remembers training with the team when he was playing 18's Boys and they were under 10's.

The opportunity to coach at a club that means so much to them is something they both enjoy, and they are still learning things along the way as well.

"They are probably exactly like our Men's Open team, they are all good friends, they've been playing with each other since under 10's. They all get along and that's probably why we put so much time and effort into the kids, because they were exactly like we were. They're just good kids and the things that they can do are ridiculous, they are better than what we were at their age."

given so much to us and it's one weekend a year and a few training sessions, it's the least we can do really for the sport," Good

"The coaches that we had growing up, we both had Jason Zabielo, who was an Australian player and it's not that any other coach is different, it's just that when they talk you listen because you know they've been there and done that.'

And giving back to the sport isn't just in the minds of our Open and Masters athletes, with many of our successful Youth program athletes helping out as well.

playing in the New South Wales Junior State Cup event and this year was one of a number of Australian Youth players that were helping players just a few years their junior. Studdon assisted the Eastern event and loved still being involved in one of her favourite events.

"I'd still love to be playing but I was going to come up and support it anyway, so I'm happy to help out.'

"I do miss playing out there but I'm happy I'm still involved, it's good to help the girls to learn some things."





**ISSUE 11** 



Coaches play a vital role in our game, from introducing and teaching children the skills involved in Touch Football, through to providing advice and guidance on and off the field to adults, being a coach truly is a great experience.

Our game is always looking for new people to become involved, so to find out more on how to become a coach visit www.austouch.com.au for details on your local affiliate and competitions.

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# **Touch Football** Community Recognised

Several members of the Touch Football community have been recognised recently by their local community.

Touch Football Australia would like to congratulate the following people on their achievements:

# Lang Wins **Senior Sports** Award

Mudgee Touch Association secretary. Kathy Lang was also recognised on Australia Day, receiving the Mid-Western Regional Council's Senior Sports Award.

Lang was recognised for her contribution to several sports in Mudaee including her efforts in both the 2012 Trans Tasman Series as well as the NRL City versus Country game.

# Smith Wins Official of the Year

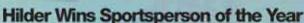
Australian referee, Brad Smith was recognised at the 2012 City of Ipswich Sports Awards, being named Official of the Year. It capped off a great year for Smith, who refereed at the 2011 Federation of International Touch (FIT) World Cup and 2012 State of Origin Series, while most recently he was a part of the 2013 Super Trans Tasman Series as a referee in the Open divisions.



# Cherry wins Sevens Player of the Year

Australian Women's Open Touch Football representative. Emilee Cherry was recognised for her impressive start to her Rugby Sevens career, named the Women's Player of the Year at the John Eales Medal in November.

After taking up Rugby in 2011, Cherry has been a constant inclusion in the Australian Women's Sevens team. She also helped Queensland win the Women's Open division at the 2012 State of Origin series while injury kept her out of the 2013 Super Trans Tasman Series.



Australian Mixed Open co-captain, Kylie Hilder was named the Sportsperson of the Year at the Great Lakes Australia Day Awards ceremony.

Hilder took out the award for her efforts in helping Australia win the Mixed Open title at the 2012 Trans Tasman Series in Mudgee.



# Yass Touch Wins Community Group Award

The Yass Touch Association received the Australia Day Community Group award at the Yass Valley Australia Day Awards. The Yass Touch Association was recognised for its involvement with the Yass Touch Football Knockout, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2013.

If you know someone that has won an award in your local community, be sure to email media@austouch.com.au.

# Make the touch



# Windows 8

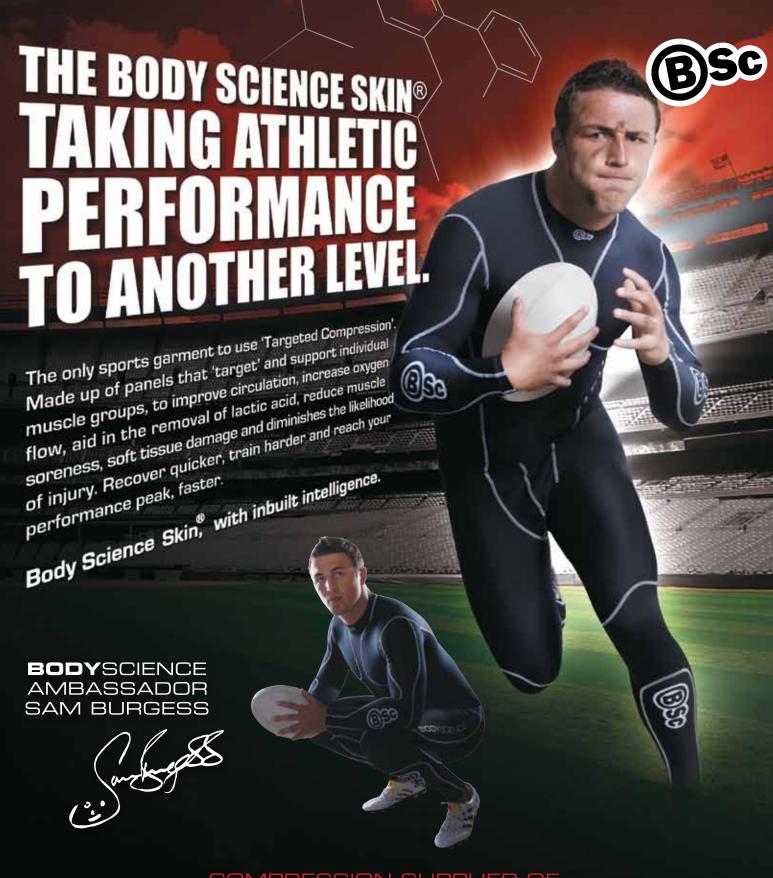


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