

## Issue 10, December 2012

Welcome to the Christmas edition of WASO news. Despite my best intentions, we were unable to produce a mid-year newsletter, and this one has been struck by Cyclone Evan.

For many of us, the London Olympic Games were the highlight of the year, as we encouraged our athletes to "be the best that they could be"! The support and enthusiasm of the British spectators lifted their athletes' performances and inspired us all.

This issue highlights some of the achievements of the Oceania women at the Games, and in the months which followed. Their efforts encourage us to keep working together to make a difference for our athletes, and at the grassroots level, to increase the involvement of women and girls in sport.

With my personal best wishes for a Happy Christmas, and New Year

Warmest Regards

Helen Brownlee  
Chair, WASO

### 2013 Oceania Events

**8 March, 2013 International Women's Day**

**16 - 21 April, 2013**  
**ONOC General Assembly**  
**Nadi, FIJI - incorporating workshops and AGM**

**Date to be advised - Oceania Women & Sport Workshop.**

**11 October, 2013 - UN International Day of the Girl**

## 2012 London Olympic Games



The London Olympic Games set new benchmarks for women's participation, and the Oceania women were strongly represented across all sports.

- For the first time, every participating nation (204 national teams) was represented by at least one female athlete.
- Female athletes made up 44.4% of the overall participants – more than at any previous Games. (Beijing 42%)
- The Games program featured 46.4% of women's events, and women featured in all 26 sports.
- Women were selected as Flag Bearers for the Opening Ceremony by over 50 nations, including from Oceania: Australia, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.
- Many teams had the highest percentage of female athletes ever e.g. New Zealand at 48%, with the women winning 50% of the gold medals.

• London 2012 also demonstrated the inspirational value of the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) which debuted in Singapore in 2010. The London Games featured 156 athletes who participated in the first YOG, representing 80 NOC's. Of these, 21 YOG veterans earned medals, with twelve of those medallists being young women. For Oceania, Jessica Fox (AUS) became the youngest canoe slalom athlete in history to win an Olympic medal - silver in the Women's K1 Slalom event, after securing three Junior World Championship medals just prior to the Olympics.

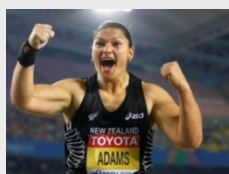


In early December, the 2012 Oceania Beach Volleyball Championships saw Vanuatu's Henriette Latika and Joyce Joshua beat their rivals Australia in straight sets in Papeete, Tahiti. Congratulations girls! We are so proud of you!

From being ranked 350<sup>th</sup>, Team Vanuatu are now 36<sup>th</sup> in the world, and as a result of these recent successes are placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the Pacific and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Asia. This has been an amazing journey for the sport in Vanuatu, as the women have overcome social and cultural barriers as well as the difficulty of financing their international competitions. They need to continue to play in the FIVB World Tour events which are pre-requisites for qualification to the World Championships and Olympic Games.



## Women and Girls Empowered Through Sport



In the London Olympic stadium, Shot put champion **Valerie Adams** (NZL) won back to back Olympic titles, following her gold medal win in Beijing 2008.



The Sprint Canoe events saw **Lisa Carrington** (NZL) win gold in the K1 200m event.



Australia's champion hurdler, **Sally Pearson** led from the start of the 100m hurdles event at the 2012 London Olympics, but a photo finish was required to confirm her win in a time of 12.35. Only later did she reveal that she was nursing a back injury which will require careful management in the future.



The first gold for the Australian Team was won by the women's 4 x 100m Freestyle Relay: **Cate Campbell**, **Alicia Coutts**, **Brittany Emslie** and **Melanie Schlanger**.



**Jo Aleh** and **Olivia (Polly) Powrie** (NZL) won gold in the 470 Women's sailing event.

### New Resource

FIBA Oceania have advertised a wonderful resource for every girl who wants to improve their game, and every coach of a girl's or women's team who is interested in making them better.

The coaching DVD "Queens of Hoops" shows some of the best female players in the world, the best coaches of female teams, real game footage from the Olympic Games and World Championships, drill demonstrations and a self-improvement program. Contact your NOC for the DVD or further details.

### All Stars Team Selected

Every Pacific Island country at the Youth Championships had players or officials selected in the 2013 All Star contingent – to train and play in Australia from 5/6 to 21 January, 2013.

#### The All Star Girls Team:

Reva Dauphin, Metua Hausia, Oceane Lefranc (Tahiti); Maggie Evo'o, Renagi Fred (PNG); Audrey Guillou, Allisonne Laukau (New Caledonia); Tiyanan Kainamoli, Kelera Koyamainavure, Ro Naivaluvou (Fiji)  
Coach: Laisiasa Puamau (Fiji)  
Assistant: Nicky Francois (N.C.)  
Referee: Cathy Poithili (N.C.)

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### Olympic Experience - Ella Nicholas, Cook Islands *(An abridged version of Ella's thoughts on her Olympic debut)*

How can I describe the Olympic experience? It is not just the events, the athletes or the Olympic Village – it is all of these parts and more, coming together to make an incredible and unique Olympic culture. Just amazing!

The feeling at the start line was exhilarating; the whole world was watching and I felt ready to show all that I had prepared for. Even though I didn't achieve the result I was aiming for, I did succeed on a personal goal level.

My future? I couldn't imagine my life without canoe slalom, so I will continue training for the next 4 years with the aim of competing at Rio 2016 and winning a medal. Aim for the moon and if you miss you will fall among the stars.

I am proud to have competed, but even prouder to have more motivation than when I began. The Olympics didn't feel like the end of my sporting career, but an amazing step in a journey...and one that I hope continues for a long time.