



## **New Basketball Queensland High Performance Program**

Since 1994, the National Intensive Training Centre Program (NITCP) has been the flagship of elite junior athletic and coach development in Queensland. The aim of the program is to develop players for selection into the AIS and National Junior Teams, (Emus & Gems) with a **Vision** of equipping the athletes with the skills to compete successfully in the National Basketball League, Women's National Basketball League and the Australian National Teams (Opals & Boomers) in the future.

With a strong commitment to the elite holistic development of our junior athletes, the program has garnered much success. NITCP Athletes have gone on to represent various NBL & WNBL teams; AIS Programs; Junior & Senior National Representation (Incl Opals & Boomers); as well as Division 1 US Colleges. Athletes call a wide variety of associations home, including: Brisbane; Cairns; Gold Coast; Ipswich; Logan; Mackay; Maroochydore; Northside; Rockhampton; Southern Districts; South West; Toowoomba & Townsville.

The NITCP also provides unique Coach Development pathways providing our Elite Junior Athlete Coaches with opportunities to progress to National League Teams and Programs. The NITCP has been instrumental at providing Queensland Coaches with the necessary professional sports program skills, to compete at the elite junior level but also catapulting them to the ranks of the NBL & WNBL as well as National Programs and Australian Junior Teams: Mick Downer (Perth Wildcats); Dale Ryan (Brisbane Bullets); Paul Goriss (AIS & Australian Under 18 Mens); Dale Waters (Dandenong Rangers); Peter Buckle (Townsville Fire); David Mitchell (Logan Thunder) & Patrick Brady, Annette Winton & Nikki Bairstow (Townsville Fire).

Until the end of 2008, the NITCP was delivered on behalf of Basketball Australia by the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS) in conjunction with Basketball Queensland (BQ); however, due to the QAS shift in focus to Senior Elite Sport, (Olympic & World Championship athletes) 2009 sees the delivery of the NITCP move back to BQ. The QAS will still provide strong financial support (including continued provision of world class facilities in Brisbane and Townsville); but BQ will coordinate, manage and fund this program into the future.

The QAS has been outstanding in the professional support & delivery of the program over a sustained period, which has culminated in a large number of Queensland athletes securing Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Basketball Scholarships in recent years.

Every change brings opportunity and we have worked very hard over the past year to determine how the new look program will work. We believe that the new program will build on the excellent program delivered by the QAS so that the new program will, in many ways, provide increased athlete and coach development and support.

There will; however, need to be a change in the financial structure which will mean that participants will have to make a financial contribution to the program. Whilst this is not ideal; it is a sad reality that this is the only way in which this program can continue. BQ is not alone in charging participants and will ensure that the fees payable will be less than the average for other State of approximately \$300 per athlete.

## How the Program Will Work

The focus of the new NITCP remains success at senior international level (Boomers and Opals). The program must; therefore, individually case-manage all national squad athletes (junior and senior) to ensure that they maximise their potential.

Four tiers of athletes will exist in the high performance program, including the underpinning programs conducted by Basketball Queensland's state development program. The QAS will be directly involved in the delivery to Tier 1 and Tier 2 athletes:

- Tier 1: Athletes in national squads (World University Games, U19 and U17)
- Tier 2: Athletes expected to progress to a national squad within 12-24 months.
- Tier 3: Athletes in Queensland Junior State Team Squads.
- Tier 4: Athletes in BQ Blue Chip Program and Under 15 Development Squads

The program will, therefore, be broadened to cater for athletes aged 12 to 22.

### Tier 1 Athletes

#### *Senior National Squad Athletes*

Athletes in the Australian Universities squad that reside in Queensland would be supported. This includes athletes who are attending US College but return to Queensland for a number of months during their "summer break".

The daily training environment of these athletes will be coordinated by the program coach. Out of season the program coach will undertake some on court work and is the communication conduit between the national coaches and other coaches that the athletes may have.

The program coach will work with University Games squad members, and these sessions (where appropriate) will involve Junior Squad athletes. The program coach also works with association coaches who are involved in the daily training environment of Junior Squad athletes and works with those athletes in squad or camp sessions.

### *Junior National Squad Athletes*

These are athletes who are in national junior squads (Under 19 and Under 17 National Teams). The daily training environment of these athletes is coordinated by the program coach, with association coaches involved in the delivery. The program coach conducts squad sessions and camps.

Likely services provided to athletes:

- On court daily training environment;
- Long Term Athletic Development;
- “Holistic” services such as sports psychology, nutrition, recovery.

### **Tier 2 Athletes**

These are athletes who are seen to have the potential to progress to a national squad within 12 to 24 months. This may include:

- **Talent identification programs** – athletes chosen with little or no basketball experience, but with physical capability to be an elite basketball athlete;
- **Physically talented athletes** - athletes who have not yet progressed to state or national squads.
- **“Late developers”** – athletes that may have started at a relatively older age (for example, Chris Anstey started at age 17).

Likely services provided to athletes:

- These athletes would primarily receive on court development to raise their basketball skills quickly.

### *Coach Development*

For the national player development framework to be most effective coaches at all levels (from local association to national league) must work to a consistent, internationally based, standard. The individual case management of an athlete ensures that all coaches involved with that player, understand and are committed to that player’s development.

The individual case management also ensures that the workload of the athlete is manageable, both in terms of their basketball commitments and schooling.

To ensure program continuity BQ has appointed Murry Aldred as the Manager of this program. Murry was previously the Head Coach of the South NITCP and comes to the position with a wealth of knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the program and how to obtain maximum benefit from the relationship we have with the QAS.