

# Memo

**To** Association Executives, Netball NSW Life Members

**From** Claire Dale, Competitions Manager

**CC** Tain Drinkwater, Netball NSW CEO, Clare McCabe, President Men's Netball NSW

**Date** Monday, 6 December 2021

**Re** **Male Division inclusion into Competitions**

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Netball NSW is delighted to announce that 2022 will see Male Divisions introduced at the 2022 HART Junior and Senior State Titles and the top divisions of M-League run alongside the Court Craft Summer Series.

Please find following this memo a media release that has been circulated today.

## Information sessions

Netball NSW together with Men's Netball NSW, will be hosting an information session providing Associations who are interested in building their male base, with information on male recruitment along with details of entering a male team into Netball NSW Competitions.

### How to build your male participation base – information session

Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm on zoom

To RSVP to the information session [click here](#)

For further enquiries, please contact the Netball NSW Competitions Manager, Claire Dale on (02) 9951 5005 or [cdale@netballnsw.com](mailto:cdale@netballnsw.com)

Media Release: 6 December 2021

## Netball NSW to add male divisions to State Title competitions

In another ground-breaking development for the game, Netball NSW is delighted to announce that the 2022 HART Junior and Senior State Titles will include male divisions for the first time.

The development comes as netball in NSW looks to continue expanding the game's reach beyond its traditional playing base.

A frontrunner in terms of playing numbers when it comes to grassroots sport, netball has long been recognised as the leading team sport for women and young girls, as well as the standout leader in high-performance space for the same demographic.

However, as part of Netball Australia's State of the Game Review, a compelling case was made for netball to be more inclusive in many areas including gender.

The inclusion of male divisions in the State Titles – the sport's showpiece events at grassroots level – and the placement of the male M-League alongside Netball NSW's end of year competition, the Court Craft Summer Series, adds to a growing list of initiatives such as the introduction of the organisation's first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and the Inclusive Uniform Program.

Netball NSW CEO Tain Drinkwater said this was another landmark moment for the sport in the state.

"It is a myth that netball is only a sport for women and young girls," she said. "But while it was the only team sport that gave the female demographic a fair-go for a very long time, it must also be acknowledged that male participants haven't always been properly embraced.

"This is something that must change, and we are in the process of changing it with today's announcement. We want both boys and men to have aspirations to represent their state and country, and contrary to the negative narrative that's often aimed at netball there are already very well established and respected men's competitions which run annually.

"Anything that Netball NSW can do to prepare players for these competitions in terms of pathways opportunities via the State Titles and the Summer Series is imperative for us, and overdue.

"Our NSW Swifts and GIANTS regularly play against the NSW Men's teams in pre-season, and they always speak highly about the calibre of athletes in those sides. At Netball NSW we are very much looking forward to working more closely with men's netball to ensure this is another way the game can flourish.

"It is also part of our plan to rid community and elite sport of stereotypes and show that netball is a game for all, and build on its established strengths: our huge playing numbers at grassroots level in Australia, the 20 million playing around the world and the world-class pathways that have taken decades to build.

“With netball making a very justifiable claim for Olympic inclusion, today’s development is just a small way to help ensure our game remains flexible, open to change and pragmatic. This is what will ensure its continued presence at the top table of Australian sport.”

Men’s Netball NSW (MNNSW) was founded in 1985 and is an affiliated Association of Netball NSW. It currently operates the M League, the highest level of male competition in the state, with the best players selected annually for the Australian Championships in both Opens and Underage divisions.

MNNSW President Clare McCabe hailed the move by Netball NSW as a massive step in the right direction.

“Our future focus emphasises the need to create pathways for junior boys to play netball and remove all stigmas of boys and men playing the sport,” she said.

“Creating the male divisions at the State Titles will lead to a huge number of additional opportunities and exposure for the men’s game. It will also lead to more participants and a larger talent pool for those wishing to get involved in high-performance sport.

“In terms of Summer Series, partnering with the netball Associations and having them involved shows how serious we and Netball NSW are about further developing a strong platform for men in the game.”