

2022/23 ANNUAL REPORT

TOUGH
FOOTBALL
AUSTRALIA




Touch Football Australia respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands of which we live and work. Touch Football is played in communities across Australia, and we acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we play, and recognise the significant contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to our game.

We pay our respect to elders past, present, and emerging; commit to working respectfully to honour their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to this country; and recognise the role and value of culture in all our communities.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION – JOSEPHINE SUKKAR AM

Sport has a place for everyone and delivers results that make Australia proud.

As we progress through this defining era in Australian sport, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) is clear in our vision to lead and support the sector. Our role is to provide opportunities for all communities to be involved in sport, while growing elite success and representation, inspiring future generations. As the Australian Government agency responsible for supporting and investing in sport at all levels, we strive to increase involvement in sport and enable continued international sporting success. We do this through leadership and development of a cohesive and effective sports sector, targeted financial support and the operation of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS). We play a unique role in the sport ecosystem and tackle the big challenges and opportunities with and for the sector. We're proud to do so and, through our vision, we aim to bring out the best in everyone involved in sport as we establish Australia as the world's best sporting nation. Collectively, we've already made huge strides to set Australian sport up for success. Australia's High Performance 2032+ Sport Strategy is an industry-wide approach to harness our collective strengths, talent, and resources. The strategy has a strong focus on Winning Well – balancing success and wellbeing and acknowledging that how we win is just as important as when we win. Working hand in hand with this is the codesigned National Sport Participation Strategy which will transform the way participation is connected, delivered, and supported in Australia. The strategy will be the first of its kind in Australia and I'm looking forward to seeing the positive impact it has on the sector. The sporting strategies, programs, and facilities we deliver now have the capacity to shape Australia's long-term prosperity, well beyond sporting boundaries. This is a defining era for Australian sport. We are well into the Green and Gold decade to Brisbane 2032, and we are focused on building sustainable success for decades to come. Meanwhile, it has been wonderful to see continued demand from sports to use the AIS facilities in Canberra to prepare for major events, at home and abroad. As the national home of sport, we are proud of the role we play in supporting athletes, coaches, and high-performance staff to reach their potential and I look forward to seeing many of our athletes shine at the upcoming Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

On behalf of the ASC, thank you to everyone who contributes to the sector as we work collectively to ensure every Australian sees a place for themselves in sport.

Josephine Sukkar AM



TFA CHAIR REPORT

This is my first annual report as Chair of Touch Football Australia, and I have big shoes to fill. On that note, my first order of business is to give my thanks to the outgoing Chair, Anita Hagarty, who remains as a director on the Board but stepped down as Chair following last year's AGM.

Anita has been a giant in her time as Chair. She has guided the organisation through three changes in the CEO position, COVID, floods, and the greatest ever number of participants in terms of the sport offerings making our game more accessible than ever. Despite all of the challenges, we are in the best financial position we have ever been in, our bounce back from COVID remains strong and our maturity as an organisation is one that should be enviable to other non-professional sports. Whilst decisions under her leadership have not always been popular, she has been brave enough to make those decisions and put the sport in the position it is today. Thank you, Anita, your mark on the sport has been indelible and your legacy will last for many years to come.

While I am on the thank-yous, I will continue along that path before I get to the highlights because it is due to all of these people that I have many highlights to include. To the New South Wales Touch Association, Queensland Touch Football, and our State and Territory Advisory Committees, thank you for the tireless work you all put in to growing the sport around Australia and enhancing the experience for our new and longstanding members. With so much competition for our athletes and new members, now is the time that we need to build on the relationships we have forged and achieve the growth we have only dreamed of. I look forward to working with you all on what is to come in the year ahead.

To our TFA staff, you are all exceptional at what you do in sometimes difficult circumstances, and we appreciate everything you do. Particular shout outs to our leadership team, Jamie O'Connor (CEO) who probably gets sick of my name appearing on his phone display, Tim Wyld, Charmain Steventon, Brad Mitchell, Wayne Grant, and Tian Huang. You all punch way above your weight and the sport is better for it.

A special shout out to our outgoing CFO Garry Foran. We had the pleasure of attending Gaz's farewell tour in March to say goodbye to such a long serving and valuable member of the TFA team.

To our TFA Board, who are prepared to make tough decisions always with the goal of growing the sport and enhancing the experience, thank you for your fearless dedication and leadership. It is a pleasure working with all of you and I look forward to another year of growing our great game.

To the Australian Rugby League Commission and the National Rugby League, particularly Mr. Andrew Abdo, thank you for your support of Touch Football and your dedication to making our sport your non-contact priority in the Rugby League family. We are really excited about what's to come.

Thank you to our principal partner DoorDash, our major partners, Red Rooster, Bristol, Pain Away, and Inferno and all of our official, event, and broadcast partners for contributing to the health and prosperity of our great game.

And lastly but definitely not least, thank you to all of our amazing volunteers, coaches, referees, officials, and players. You are the reason we do what we do and seeing you all involved in our game is our greatest achievement.

Speaking of our great achievements and to sign off on my first report as Chair, some of our amazing highlights this year have been the return of international touch with our Emus clean-sweeping the Open Trans-Tasman and the Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup; delivering on our commitment to fully-fund our Opens Emus teams; the 10 all draw in Rotorua in the first All-Stars match played outside of Australia; record numbers of teams at the DoorDash National Youth Championships; the growth of the All-Abilities divisions at the Inferno National Touch League to 15 teams; and of course growth across every participation metric indicating the sport has rebounded well from the past three years of disruption.

Erin Taylor
Chair
Touch Football Australia



TFA DIRECTORS BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR

Touch Football Australia (TFA) acknowledges the dedicated support of the Directors for the 2022/23 reporting year. The ongoing dedication of these Directors to the national body is vital to the sports ongoing success and links to the membership.



DIRECTOR	BOARD MEETINGS ELIGIBLE	BOARD MEETINGS ATTENDED
Erin Taylor	5	4
Neil Collins	5	5
Anita Hagarty	5	5
Kelvin Lockyer	5	5
Stuart Geros	5	5
Andrew Hill	5	3

TFA CEO REPORT

After a number of years of disruption, the 2022/23 reporting year was earmarked as one for post-pandemic recovery, with an uninterrupted return to participation across the country and investment into critical strategic initiatives our focus.

After being strategically constrained since 2020, the organisation embarked on some critical pieces of change and committed to delivering on major strategic initiatives. Despite these constraints, we are determined to achieve what we set to achieve at the start of this strategic cycle and deliver what we promised the sport that we would.

The heart and soul of this plan is to enhance the experience and grow the sport; it is the lens through which we make our decisions.

Through that lens, we made a commitment to change our membership model from the now antiquated team affiliation-based model that has served our sport well for the past 50 years to an individual membership model that will set our game up for years the next 50. This has long been on the sport's agenda, but we have never been placed well enough to undertake the work required to transition. Whether it be through financial insecurity, shortcomings in technology or community hesitation, the risk profile has been too high to allow the change.

Fortunately, coming into 2022/23 we were well placed to absorb any unforeseen financial downturn, our technology was capable of delivering a system that could manage the change and, with over 75% of community competitions utilising an individual fee through MySideline, our community was ready. While we recognise that there is a way to go yet, we are confident that the transition has been met with positivity and the new model is delivering at above expectation.

In addition to the transition in membership, we committed to take a deep look into the performance of the National Touch League. Since its creation in 1997, the event has undergone some minor alterations in attempts to deliver performance outcomes and meet the need of our sport. The introduction of Elite 8s and its subsequent removal due to the creation of the NRL Touch Premiership gave cause to revisit its relevance, effectiveness and to determine its ideal future state.

With the organisation's commitment to the return of the Premiership, consideration was given to the benefits of transitioning the event from its existing regional/state-based format to an affiliate-based format. In the hope of growing the event to allow more people the opportunity to experience our national event, and after extensive consultation, a determination was made to open the event to affiliates, regions and alliance states to compete on the one stage. I am looking forward to continuing to work alongside all of our sport's stakeholders to ensure the National Touch League offers the most exciting and engaging event experience on the calendar.

With the pandemic in the rear vision mirror and international borders reopened we were finally able to welcome back international touch as our Emus program kicked into gear ahead of the 2024 World Cup. It was an absolute pleasure to reignite on-field rivalries with New Zealand in an Opens Trans-Tasman and incorporating Japan into event gave all three nations the ideal preparation before heading to Nottingham next July.

We have a fundamental belief that you can't be what you can't see. Our elite athletes are critical to inspiring the next generation and are a major enabler of growth in grassroots participation. For the first time in decades, our Opens athletes played for their country at no cost; this is something we have been working toward for quite some time and a commitment that we will continue to uphold into the future. I would like to pay tribute to all of our past Emus athletes who paved the way for the current crop to reap these rewards; your contribution has not gone unnoticed, and the future will be forever indebted.

Not only did we welcome our opens teams back but, in partnership with the Federation of International Touch, we also played host to a 9 nation, 23 team, Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup where our youth teams swept all six divisions. In the absence of a Youth World Cup in this cycle it was important to provide opportunity for not only Australia's talented youth players but those from around the world to compete on the international stage and we were privileged to welcome them all to Brisbane.

To that end, I would like to congratulate all of our high-performance staff, players, coaches, managers, and medical team on a wonderful performance. Across the nine opens and youth divisions our teams managed to win all but one match showing that their hard work, passion, attention to detail, and drive to succeed hadn't disappeared during the hiatus. I would also like to extend our heartfelt and sincerest thanks to Brisbane Metropolitan Touch Association, Tourism Events Queensland, and Brisbane Economic Development Agency for their support in bringing these two series to life.

While delivering on a change agenda and investing into our elite Emus program was high priority, returning participation to pre-pandemic levels was at the top of the list. While we still have a way to go to reach those heights, we are well on track with growth recorded across every participation metric for the period.

Total participation grew by 30% to 551,017; full active junior participants jumped 14.7% while the number of people engaged in school programs bounced back to over 256,000, an increase of almost 50% on the previous year. Teams competing in community competitions increased by 10% and teams in modified formats increased to 446 across the country.

Off the back of completing our very first Reconciliation Action Plan and launching our second plan, our Innovate RAP during NAIDOC week, Indigenous participation grew by 10% to over 15,000 players with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples accounting for 8.5% of national participation. I would like to thank the Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council, and our Reconciliation Action Plan Panel led by Phil Gyemore and our working group for their support, advice, and advocacy over the past year. I look forward to continuing to work with our Indigenous leaders and communities as we continue to work hard at closing the gap.

Off the back of sound financial management, we managed to protect the organisation and members equity during the pandemic which allowed us to invest in our recovery. The 2022/23 year will see a \$60,297 deficit reported to the membership; evidence of our investment into strategic priorities and program recovery. The financial report shows total equity in excess of \$5.1M and cash of more than \$3.1M.

We farewelled former TFA CFO, Garry Foran in February this year as he transitioned into retirement; I would like to recognise his contribution over the course of his tenure with TFA and congratulate him on a wonderful career. His long-lasting legacy will be leaving us in the strongest financial position we have ever been.

We continue to benefit from a robust commercial program, and we thank our principal partner DoorDash, major partners Bristol, Inferno, Red Rooster, and Pain Away, and all of our official, event, and broadcast partners for investing in us so we can invest in our sport.

As a sport, we are also fortunate to have wonderful partnerships with government through Sport Australia, various state and territory government agencies and of course, the National Rugby League. To the Chair of the Australian Sports Commission Josephine Sukkar AM, Sport Australia CEO, Kieran Perkins, Australian Rugby League Commission Chair, Peter V'Landys and National Rugby League CEO, Andrew Abdo thank you for your ongoing support and we look forward to continuing to work hand-in-hand in delivering positive outcomes for our communities.

This past year will go down as one of evolution and change; and that can't be achieved without strong leadership, commitment, and resolve. I would like to pay tribute to Anita Hagarty who stood aside as Chair of Touch Football Australia this year and thank her for her dedication to our sport, for providing an environment committed to ongoing improvement, and for resolutely staying the course during the most difficult times.

To the newly appointed TFA Chairperson, Erin Taylor and the entire TFA Board; to the TFA Leadership team of Brad Mitchell, Tim Wyld, Wayne Grant, Charmain Steventon, and Tian Huang; to all TFA staff employed across the country; both NSWTA and QTF Boards and staff thank you for your support, for challenging us to be better and for another year of tireless contributions.

Finally, and on behalf of everyone at Touch Football Australia, thank you to our community, particularly our deeply committed volunteers who continue to deliver the sport and provide opportunities for our people to come together.

Jamie O'Connor
CEO
Touch Football Australia



2022/23 HIGHLIGHTS



1 JULY 2022 – 30 JUNE 2023

CHAMPIONS



ON FIELD



ALL STARS

- The NRL All Stars fixture was held in New Zealand and involved Māori Touch NZ for the first time in 2023, with the Indigenous and Māori All Stars playing out a dramatic 10-10 draw in Rotorua.

EMUS

- International footy made its long-awaited return with the Opens Trans-Tasman and Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup events successfully held in Brisbane.
- The Pain Away Australian Emus retained the Opens Trans-Tasman trophy in April. The Emus won all three divisions, but not without a fight from the Kiwis. It was also great to have teams from Japan involved.
- The Pain Away Australian Youth Teams also obtained a series clean sweep of all six divisions, in a dominant display at the inaugural Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup.



NTL



- The Inferno National Touch League returned to its usual March schedule which also saw the return of the Sydney Scorpions as Golden Boot Winners. The CQ Bulls went back-to-back in the Men's Open, with Sydney Scorpions taking the Women's title and South QLD Sharks the Mixed.

NYC



- A record 111 teams participated in the largest ever DoorDash National Youth Championships, which was finally free from border restrictions and buoyed by the return of school and regional teams. The Queensland Fire made a triumphant return winning both the Boys and Girls 18s divisions. The Brisbane Cobras claimed the overall champion entity.
-

NITFKO

- The National Indigenous Touch Football Knock-Out returned after a two-year hiatus in Dubbo in partnership with the Regional Enterprise Development Institute (REDI.E).

OFF FIELD

- Successfully completed the sports first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and launched our Innovate RAP continuing our reconciliation journey.
- Achieved Gold Status and the most improved award at the 2023 Pride in Sport Awards for our commitment to making Touch Football a safe and inclusive environment for all.
- Announced a transition away from team-based affiliation to an individual membership model creating efficiencies for volunteers and benefits to participants.
- Implemented a broadcast agreement with Sky NZ showcasing the sport to more individuals and growing our reach in the second biggest international Touch Football market.
- Together with our Naming Rights partner DoorDash, once again delivered \$100,000 in funding to local affiliates through the Footy Cash from DoorDash funding program.
- Teamed up with Red Rooster to give away \$10,000 in cash and prizes to affiliates through the launch of the Community Club of the Year initiative.



PARTICIPATION HIGHLIGHTS

NET PROMOTER SCORE

48

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

551,017

(+30.6%)

REGISTERED FULL ACTIVE

177,018

(+6%)

ENHANCED SCHOOL FOCUS

256,148

(+49%)

EVENTS

73,331

(+57.6%)

DIVERSITY



FEMALES

76,733

(+5%)



CALD

44,365

(+5%)



INDIGENOUS

15,065

(+10%)



ALL ABILITIES

643

(+61%)

VOLUNTEERS

COACHES

658

(+9%)

REFEREES

2,220

(+44%)

ACCUMULATIVE VOLUNTEERS

29,856

(+11%)



TOTAL TEAMS

17,491

(+10%)

MODIFIED TEAMS

446

(+190%)

FOOTPRINT

293

AFFILIATED COMPETITIONS

NATIONAL PARTICIPATION 2022/23

Participation Category	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Diff. 21/22-22/23
1. Full Active Membership - Adult	138,881	147,678	141,054	132,028	126,080	129,090	86,270	94,573	83,451	81,241	-2.6%
2. Full Active Membership - Junior	69,840	72,338	71,989	77,380	80,449	88,347	93,624	90,143	83,490	95,777	14.7%
3. Program Participants	22,728	20,050	6,648	9,875	12,948	13,790	10,027	11,822	9,262	14,664	58.3%
4. Event Participants	67,873	73,647	91,239	60,812	63,313	74,948	57,948	52,040	46,518	73,331	57.6%
5. School Delivered Programs	63,803	107,979	86,939	114,747	95,664	95,352	85,770	85,486	83,304	101,906	22.3%
6. School Managed Competitions	218,053	202,176	248,490	203,779	285,056	277,085	228,910	129,580	88,818	154,242	73.7%
7. Accredited Volunteer Participants	42,988	48,950	48,068	12,157	15,647	18,964	21,437	24,839	26,978	29,856	10.7%
Total Participants	624,166	672,818	694,427	610,778	679,156	697,576	583,986	488,483	421,821	551,017	30.6%
Schools and Juniors	351,696	382,493	407,418	395,906	461,169	460,784	408,304	305,209	255,612	351,925	37.7%

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2022-23 PARTICIPATION REPORT INCLUDE:

- Total participation has increased by 30.6% or 129,196 individuals
- Full Active Junior participants have risen nationally by 14.7%
- ACT events increased has increased by 85% for the reporting period
- WA Program saw the expansion by 1,039 participants
- TAS events grew by 5% on top of new and existing offerings
- NT total participants increased by 48.4% across the territory
- SA School Managed Comps grew by 24.4% or 1,211 students
- QLD total Schools and Junior numbers increased by 48.2%
- NSW Full Active members increased by 15.8% across the entire

TRADITIONAL FULL AFFILIATED MEMBERS

SENIOR TEAM COMPARISONS 2021/22 TO 2022/23

	S2-2021	S1 - 2022	Total 2021-22	S2-2022	S1 - 2023	Total 2022-23	Total Variance	Percentage Variance
NSW	2,490	670	3,160	2,732	840	3,572	412	13.0%
QLD	2,014	1,961	3,975	1,956	1,803	3,759	-216	-5.4%
ACT	123	94	217	142	93	235	18	8.3%
VIC	237	95	332	298	83	381	49	14.8%
TAS	225	37	262	206	36	242	-20	-7.6%
SA	140	65	205	142	83	225	20	9.8%
WA	392	137	529	373	136	509	-20	-3.8%
NT	98	143	241	116	149	265	24	10.0%
Total	5,719	3,202	8,921	5,965	3,223	9,188	267	3.0%

JUNIOR TEAM COMPARISONS 2021/22 TO 2022/23

	S2-2021	S1 - 2022	Total 2021-22	S2-2022	S1 - 2023	Total 2022-23	Total Variance	Percentage Variance
NSW	3,596	123	3,719	4,592	111	4,703	984	26.5%
QLD	1,993	1,005	2,998	2,136	1,133	3,269	271	9.0%
ACT	59	6	65	58	0	58	-7	-10.8%
VIC	29	1	30	25	1	26	-4	-13.3%
TAS	138	0	138	117	0	117	-21	-15.2%
SA	20	2	22	15	5	20	-2	-9.1%
WA	60	0	60	89	0	89	29	48.3%
NT	7	2	9	12	9	21	12	133.3%
Total	5,902	1,139	7,041	7,044	1,259	8,303	1,262	17.9%

NEW SOUTH WALES TOUCH FOOTBALL PARTICIPATION 2022/23

Participation Category	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1. Full Active Membership - Adult	54,309	54,079	52,020	51,086	55,955	35,877	39,856	28,959	31,409
2. Full Active Membership - Junior	40,016	54,079	42,210	43,684	52,084	53,975	50,280	40,587	49,159
3. Program Participants	8,444	517	296	3,028	1,623	825	1,483	552	1,108
4. Event Participants	36,959	63,060	30,055	31,119	32,208	31,677	27,137	16,940	33,928
5. School Delivered Programs	76,600	40,279	49,865	43,037	42,358	36,295	25,731	21,520	34,202
6. School Managed Competitions	189,822	229,447	179,241	255,557	251,387	206,578	106,064	64,361	101,442
7. Accredited Volunteer Participants	2,853	1,058	1,536	1,512	1,291	1,342	1,439	729	1,237
Total Participants	409,003	442,519	355,223	429,023	436,906	366,569	251,990	173,648	252,485
Schools and Juniors	306,438	323,805	271,316	342,278	345,829	296,848	182,075	126,468	184,803

QUEENSLAND TOUCH FOOTBALL PARTICIPATION 2022/23

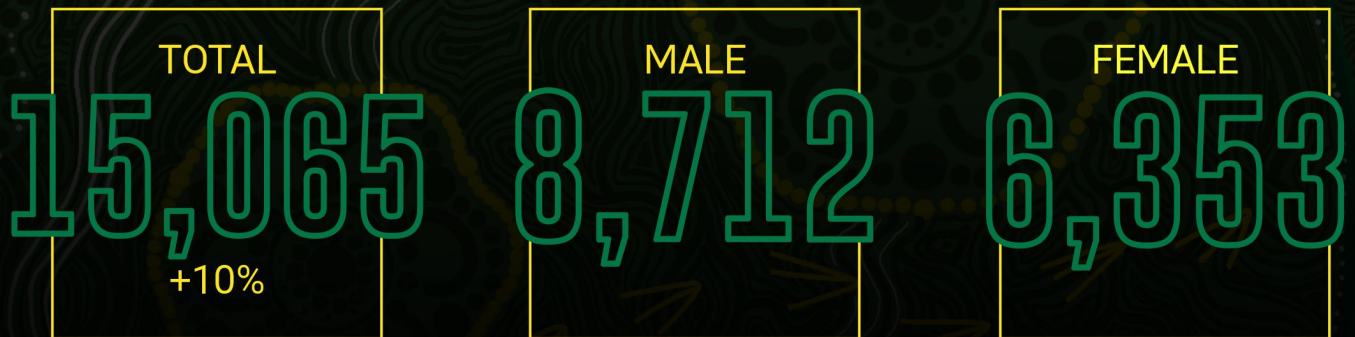
Participation Category	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
1. Full Active Membership - Adult	60,627	59,670	52,223	49,703	48,559	32,652	34,618	35,936	32,889
2. Full Active Membership - Junior	26,460	27,630	30,128	31,500	31,624	33,345	33,165	36,802	40,291
3. Program Participants	3,188	4,651	7,255	8,185	9,769	5,171	7,995	7,243	10,774
4. Event Participants	13,311	21,575	22,939	25,667	29,184	17,032	15,951	20,290	25,406
5. School Delivered Programs	15,565	17,329	27,995	18,152	15,471	20,152	23,962	20,639	25,492
6. School Managed Competitions	4,391	5,965	10,715	12,903	9,315	9,086	13,214	16,097	43,233
7. Accredited Volunteer Participants	1,033	1,166	1,316	1,349	1,322	775	1,491	1,098	1,304
Total Participants	124,575	137,986	152,571	147,459	145,244	118,213	130,396	138,105	179,389
Schools and Juniors	46,416	50,924	68,838	62,555	56,410	62,583	70,341	73,538	109,016



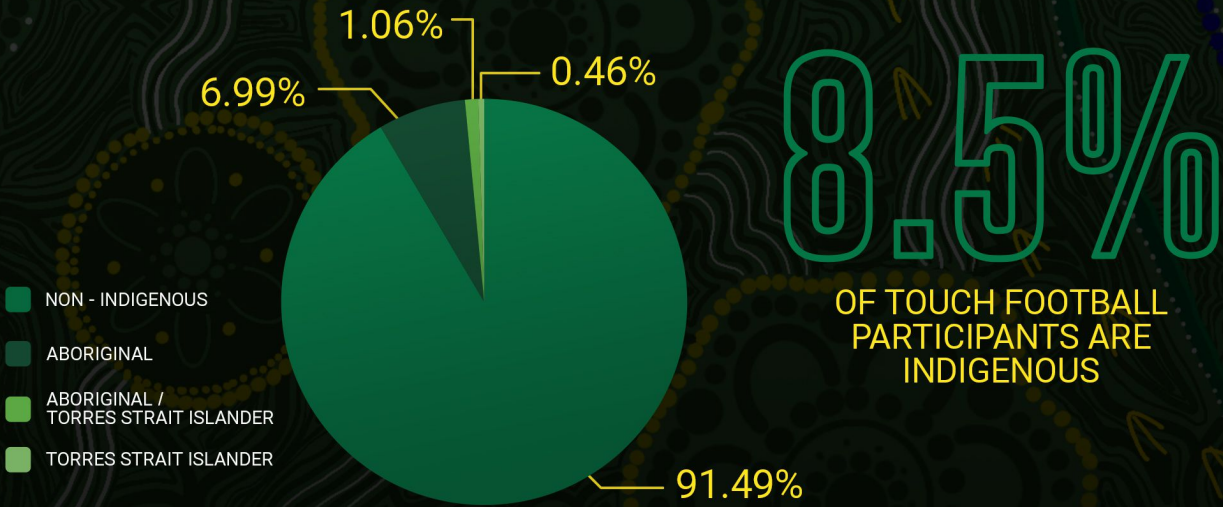
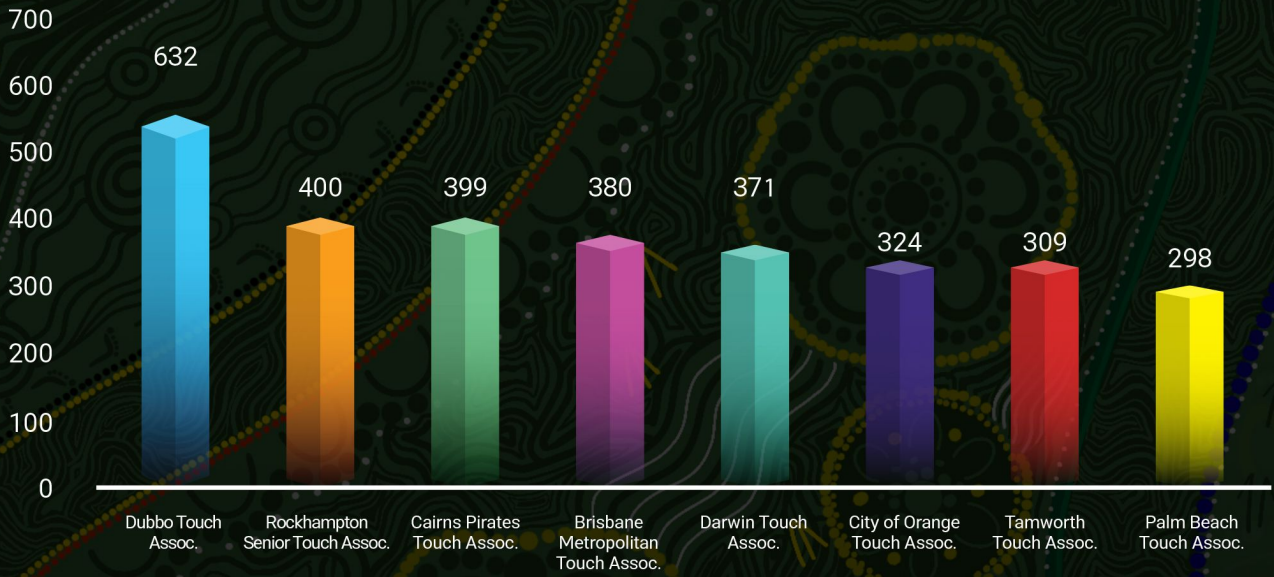
INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION 2022/23

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP) HIGHLIGHTS

- Established the next evolution of our reconciliation framework for the sport with the launch of our Innovate RAP in NAIDOC week 2023.
- Engaged the Indigenous community to design our Innovate RAP and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources.
- Delivered the National Indigenous Knock Out in Dubbo with prominent local Indigenous business partner REDI.E that saw teams from across NSW participate.
- In conjunction with the NRL, the TFA Indigenous All Stars competed in New Zealand for the first time. Māori Touch NZ were also involved for the first time, with players from both sides of the ditch being selected.
- Our people participated in external NAIDOC day activations throughout the country and were absorbed in the cultural learnings about the day and what it means to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- The sport continued to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands where our major events are held with local cultural groups engaged to educate the touch community through story, dance, and song.
- CEO Jamie O'Connor and leadership team members represented the sport alongside other National Sports Organisations and personality leaders in supporting the Voice to Parliament at North Sydney Oval.



INDIGENOUS PARTICIPANTS PER ASSOCIATION



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY REPORT

The 2022-23 reporting period was challenging for ACT operations, with cost-of-living increases, removal of child sport subsidies and increasing competition from other codes presenting a difficult operating environment.

Despite these challenges, and with a new team focused on growth outcomes, we are well placed to increase participation.

Human Resources

ACT operations have welcomed three new staff members during the reporting period. Gabe Hodges was appointed State Manager providing leadership and experience to a new team. Gabe has been joined by Tony Howarth, Competitions Coordinator and Justin Oag, Community Sports Officer. All three staff members are committed to grow participation numbers across the territory.

STAC

A new State and Territory Advisory Committee (STAC) was also formed consisting of Mike Kenderes (Chair), Mat Maclay and Rebecca Beath. Staff are looking forward to working with these dedicated volunteers and are appreciative of their time and efforts to help us grow the sport and enhance the experience in the ACT.

New staff and STAC members met with key stakeholders during the period, coming to the consensus that participation needs to be the focus going forward, with a major focus on offering new formats and/or new locations. The growth corridor of Gungahlin will be the focus for a new junior and senior competition and masters' competitions will be offered for the first time in summer 2023, with family competitions also re-introduced.

Events

Events returned in a big way throughout 2022-23, with the ACT team supporting many important social and health causes.

The highly successful NAIDOC Touch carnival returned for its nineteenth instalment earlier this year. Thirty teams from Federal Government departments united to celebrate NAIDOC week.

The Touch of Life event was also re-instated post COVID raising funds and awareness for Lifeline Canberra.

Another successful ACT Junior State Cup was held in December with team numbers increasing again. The popularity and growth of this event will likely see the event expand to be held over two days in the near future.

Partnerships

Our relationship with the Canberra Raiders continues to grow and provide mutually beneficial outcomes. A unique example of this collaboration has been Raiders players

being employed on a casual basis as Touch Football Field Officers, delivering clinics and programs. Currently four players are engaged as Field Officers helping deliver and promote the game. We look forward to building on our partnership with the Raiders and the Canberra Regional Rugby League to promote and grow both forms of the sport.

We offer our gratitude to the team at The Walking Clinic who have renewed their partnership with us and welcome the Physio Clinic as a new partner. Both organisations place the care and wellbeing of our people first and foremost and we look forward to implementing several exciting initiatives with these two leading Canberra businesses.

Sport and Recreation ACT continue to provide substantial funding and we thank them for their support. We remain committed to working with Sport and Rec as they implement a new funding program and classification system from 2024.

Modified Formats

One of the highlights of the year was undoubtedly sending our first ACT Raiders All-Abilities team to the Inferno National Touch League (NTL) in March. The participants thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and it is anticipated that two teams will participate in 2024. An inaugural ACT All-Abilities Cup was piloted during this reporting period and on the back of its success, will become an annual event with interest from interstate teams confirmed.

Performance

The Canberra Brindies and Canberra City Magic assumed operational control of their entities under the guidance of staff earlier this year.

ACT Representative teams and players continue to be successful especially amongst females. The Canberra Brindies U18 Girls were crowned champions at the NSW Junior State Cup Southern Conference and the Canberra Brindies 50s Men's team were crowned champions at the NSW Country Championships.

The ACT Raiders program continued to provide representative opportunities with six teams attending the Inferno National Touch League (NTL), the DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC) and NSW Junior Regional Championships events.

Highlights across these events include the U16 Girls making the quarter finals at NYC, our contingent of six teams was also the largest number of ACT teams to attend this event. The U16 Girls also made the quarter finals at the NSW Junior Regionals with Lily Quigley named in the NSW merit team.

Two female ACT athletes represented the Pain Away Australian Emus Youth Teams at the Asia Pacific Youth Touch Cup. Jess Crowe was a member of the Under 20s

Girls team and Elise Simpson a member of the Under 18s Girls team. We offer our congratulations to both Jess and Elise on their selection and championships.

Schools and Juniors

Participation in DoorDash First Try sessions and school gala days increased returning to pre-COVID numbers.

Technical

The ACT Referee's Association continues to support the development of referees and are a major contributor to the 100% increase in course participants throughout the period. Fifty referees completed referee courses via the Nest throughout 2022/23. With events returning and increased representative opportunities on offer for coaches, there was also an increase in the number of coaches undertaking courses, up from three to seven.

In closing, I would like to thank our STAC members, referees, volunteers, participants and staff for their guidance and support during this reporting period. We look forward to working with you all and are in a good position to grow the sport and enhance the experience over the next twelve months.



NEW SOUTH WALES TOUCH ASSOCIATION REPORT

Despite the challenges that continued to shape the landscape of sports over the last few years, our association's unwavering commitment to promoting health, community, and excellence in Touch Football remained stronger than ever. With four years of disruption, via the fires of 2019, the pandemic across 2020 and 2021 and the continual rain throughout 2022, the 2022/23 period saw a welcomed return to the game from many who had been forced to sit out or leave.

Recognition

The highlight of the year no doubt was New South Wales Touch Association's (NSWTA) 50th Anniversary celebrations. The gala dinner will long live in the memories of those who attended as one of the best nights the sport has experienced in NSW. We congratulate and recognise all those who were selected into our NSW Golden Jubilee teams for Men's Open, Women's Open, Mixed Open, Men's Seniors, Women's Seniors, and Indigenous Mixed Team. Also, to the Coaches, Referees and Selectors also announced. We would also like to acknowledge those members of the selection panels and say thank you. Truly one of the most difficult roles undertaken in the history of the NSWTA to get to a final fourteen, coach, selector, and referee team for each of these teams.

The dedication of our volunteers was instrumental in overcoming challenges of the past few years, and we thank them for their continuous and tireless work on behalf of the Association. We continue with our programs to recognise and appreciate their contributions, further strengthening the sense of community within the Association. The obvious highlights being Katrina McIlwraith from Hills TA and Mary Wachman from Eastern Suburbs TA being named joint Rod Wise Medal winners as Volunteer of the Year, along with Rod Hetherington being named the inaugural Aileen May Medallist for President of the Year.

Participation

The past year saw increased community engagement through clinics, All Schools events and programs, and of course our volunteer lead domestic competitions. Our efforts to make Touch Football accessible to all age groups and skill levels resulted in a significant rise in participation on the previous period. While seeing participation increases on the previous year of approximately 20% in juniors and 8% in seniors is pleasing, we have not yet been able to claw back to pre-pandemic levels. Our school-based programs also saw significant growth but again we temper this with the knowledge that the past three years have seen many of

these programs unable to run. That said the signs that we are on the road to recovery are good.

Events

The disruptions caused by the pandemic and weather have put a dent into our representative program and participants. In 2022/23 NSWTA successfully organised and ran all our representative events. While all were pleasing, the State Cup continued to showcase the best talent in Touch Football from throughout the state and demonstrated the resilience of our athletes. The most pleasing aspect however was to finally be able to hold the State Finals of the Junior State Cup, which in a new format for the sport proved to be a winner amongst parents and participants.

We continue to embrace technology to enhance our reach and engagement of our game. Our livestreaming and social media engagements continue to grow. Both play an important role via interactive digital content to help streamline communication and provided valuable resources for players, coaches, and officials alike.

Inclusion

We continued our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment within the Touch Football community. It has been difficult to continue the All-Abilities program through the pandemic and rains, however we were able to restart it again with the staging of an All-Abilities game on the main stadium of the State Cup. Efforts were made to create awareness, eliminate barriers, and provide equal opportunities for all participants.

Performance

Our commitment to developing elite athletes remained steadfast. The year saw advancements in our high-performance programs leading into this coming reporting period and the NSW players performance in the State of Origin competition. This led to once again retaining the Shield, something the NSWTA has held since 2004. We would also acknowledge and congratulate Queensland Touch Football, in making the 2022 Origin the most competitive on record.

Finance

Despite the economic uncertainties, we maintained financial stability through prudent management of resources, strategic partnerships, and diversified revenue streams and we would acknowledge both the Finance Director, Rod Hetherington, and the Board for their stewardship in this area.

As we step into the new fiscal year, we are excited about the prospects that lie ahead. We will continue to focus on promoting Touch Football as a means of fostering healthy lifestyles, building strong communities, and nurturing sporting excellence. Our commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability will guide us in all our endeavours.

We extend our gratitude to our members, partners, sponsors, volunteers, and the broader Touch Football community for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to achieve greatness both on and off the field.

Dean Russell
General Manager



NORTHERN TERRITORY REPORT

Touch Football in the Northern Territory achieved strong participation growth for the year, increasing by 48.4%. This growth was led by a strategic focus on delivering school programs and competitions. Our goal for the upcoming twelve months is to convert these participants into organised competitions throughout the Territory.

Human Resources

NT operations saw a new staff team lead the sport, with Ian Bateman appointed State Manager who was joined by Temieka McAlpine (Sport Operations Coordinator) and Keiran Crowe (Community Sports Coordinator). The new team wasted no time in targeting strategic objectives to deliver growth outcomes and set the direction for future growth.

Participation

Our main participation centres experienced consolidated results for the year. Darwin Touch adult participation remained steady, however junior numbers were down slightly on last year.

In comparison, Palmerston reported increased junior participation and continue to build momentum. Our office is currently facilitating an operational review of this location with outcomes focused on driving further growth.

Alice Springs continues to operate efficiently with a well-supported committee and referee panel that delivers courses and upgrades throughout the Northern Territory. The affiliate has witnessed the return of a vibrant female competition after the disruption of the last three to four years.

Katherine Touch has recently welcomed a team of new Board members who are passionate about growing the sport. On a personal note, I'd like to recognise the hard work and dedication that Jason Brown has provided over many years organising Touch Football in Katherine.

Nhulunbuy (Gove) has also welcomed new members to their Board as their competition continues to grow in their remote community. East Arnhem Sport and Recreation have been instrumental in providing access for staff to remote areas of the NT, including Milingimbi, Groote Eylandt, Gapuiwiyaka and Ramingining where activations through school and local community groups have started. I offer my gratitude for the assistance provided.

Partners

I'd like to acknowledge the significant support received from our partners, particularly the Northern Territory Government via the Office of Sport and Recreation, East Arnhem Sport and Recreation, the Remote Sports Voucher Scheme, and the Youth Vibe Holiday Grants program. I extend our thanks to Club House Territory and the Be-Inclusive Games who continue to help us develop

awareness of the sport. As the office looks to create more inclusive offerings, the support from Disability Sports NT is critical as we expand further in this space. Finally, we would like to thank NRLNT for their contributions as we continue to create efficiencies across both codes.

Pathways

In the representative space, the NT sent six teams to the 2022 DoorDash National Youth Championships. A further five NT teams participated at the Inferno National Touch League including our first All-Abilities team which was a milestone moment. All teams were competitive in their respective divisions and learnt from their experiences.

Programs

In a first for the location, the Northern Territory Government has partnered with three Central Australian football codes in Alice Springs to bolster junior sports participation and grow membership. The Northern Territory Rugby League, Rugby Union, and Touch Football will receive funding to share in a full-time sports Development Officer that will target participation in the area. Our staff are also delivering programs through a School Sports grant for Katherine and surrounding regions in remote and regional areas within the Big River Regions.

Events and Schools

Staff were active delivering events including Beach Touch, the NT Titles, All Schools Regionals in Katherine and Darwin, and the Dave Langridge Cup where a total of 1,590 participants enjoyed our sport across all events. This was an increase of 1,065 from the previous period.

School participation increased significantly after a strategic push focusing on DoorDash First Try Sporting Schools, After School Clinics, Holiday Programs and Come and Try day delivery.

These concentrated efforts saw an increase of 52.5% or an uptake of 1,478 participants in the school and/or program space.

Technical

Four Level 1 Referee Courses were delivered, two of which were held in Darwin while a further two were conducted in remote areas of NT. We offer our thanks to Ken Golden for his ongoing support of the next generation of referees while attending the Northern Territory Titles.

One Foundation Coaching Course was also held during the period.

In closing, I would like to thank our STAC, affiliates, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders across the game throughout the NT. We look forward to an exciting period next year with further participation gains and program delivery across the top end.



QUEENSLAND TOUCH FOOTBALL REPORT

Queensland Touch Football (QTF), our Regions and Affiliates continued to bounce back after significant weather events caused disruptions to facilities, venues, competitions, and events over the past 12 months. The year presented substantial challenges and many highlights, including the return of the Queensland Touch Football Awards as part of the annual Festival of Touch.

Following the February 2022 floods, impacting the QTF office and storage facility, QTF staff relocated back into the Milton Office in October. QTF continued to deliver our "Unite, Inspire, and Grow" Strategic Plan, with many great initiatives delivered throughout the year, none more so, than the return of the QTF Awards Night. The Awards celebrate and recognise the achievements of our volunteers, coaches, officials, administrators, organisations, teams, and athletes who have contributed to Touch Football's growth, development, and success.

Events

The Junior State Cup event attracted a record number of 139 teams in 2022. Unfortunately, due to weather this event was cancelled. This decision was not taken lightly and was a disappointing outcome for all involved. On a positive note, the State of Origin Series was a success in Coffs Harbour in August 2022. The series was the closest in recent years, with Queensland celebrating victory in all Opens Divisions (Men's, Women's and Mixed), and Men's 20s; however, the overall result alluded Queensland, falling short by one division win.

Human Resources

During the year we have seen the departure of several long-standing Queensland Touch Football staff, and it is timely to acknowledge their significant contributions to the Association and sport. We thank Tristan Mana, Terry McSweeney, and Fiona Meggitt sincerely for their respective legacies they leave on the departure from QTF.

Tristan Mana's contribution across development and performance pathways has been integral to the ongoing development and success of Touch Football in Queensland at regional and state level. Tristan's influence and values remain evident through the entire QTF Game Development team that continues to thrive. Terry McSweeney retired following a 20-year involvement in Touch Football, including roles at national, regional, and state level. QTF acknowledged Terry's contribution at the QTF Awards night as we celebrated many years of service. Fiona Meggitt also departed after four-plus years, and QTF is forever grateful for her contribution and patience during her tenure as Finance and Business Manager.

Community

Our Game Development team continued to expand across Queensland, providing ongoing support for affiliates and schools which is paramount to ensuring continuing growth in Queensland. Total participation increased by 29.8% with junior and school participation remaining a key priority. Junior participation continued its growth trajectory from last year, with an 9.5% increase in both participants and teams.

We continue to look forward to working with our stakeholders, as we strive to live our Shared Values – these being *Forward Thinking, Stronger Together, Passionately Proud, Leading with Humility and Fostering Fun*.

2022-23 Highlights

- Hosted successful State of Origin Series winning Open Men's, Women's and Mixed (NSW defeated QLD 9-8).
- Engaged Beyond the Break Consulting to maximise media exposure and reach of Touch Football in Queensland.
- Announced Kayo and Sky Sport NZ Partnership for the 2022 Qld State Cup, 2023 Junior State Cup, and 2023 Qld State Cup integrating within Touch Football Australia's broader broadcast partnership.
- Returned home to the QRL Office in Milton after flooding in February 2022.
- Announced our flagship Junior State Cup event will be hosted in Rockhampton, biennially in 2023, 2025, 2027, 2029, and 2031 in a ten-year partnership with Rockhampton Regional Council.
- Successful in securing a \$175,000 School Sport Program funding from Queensland Government to enhance the quality and quantity of school sport performance pathways and create positive participation experiences.
- Successfully secured Sports Australia 'Women Leaders in Sport Grant' and delivered the QTF 'Women Leaders in Touch Football' program to encourage, support and enable females in leadership roles.
- Launched new partnerships including Star Outdoor – QTF supplier, Budgy Smuggler – QSC event partner and The Fit Lab – Presenting Partner of the Q Youth Academy.
- Relunched the QTF Awards Night celebrating and showcasing excellence, providing fun, memorable, and inclusive experiences through the great sport of touch football.
- Rolled out Coach and Referee Developer programs that support and encourage coaches and officials to take the next step in their coaching or officiating journey.
- Implemented new brand strategy aligned with QTF Strategic Plan, Vision, and Values.

2022-23 Participation Highlights

- Total participation in Queensland increased by 29.8% across all Participation Categories.
- Junior Full Active participation increased by 9.5% in both participants and team numbers.
- Program participation increased by 48.8% with the introduction of new programs in recent years.
- Event participation increased by 25.2%, following massive disruptions from weather events and COVID.
- School Delivered Programs increased by 23.5%, following an increased focus on school sport program/events.
- School Managed Competitions increased by 168.6%, following improved participation reporting on our schools.
- Accredited Volunteer Participation increased by 6.4% as we continue to prioritise coach and official education.
- Combined School and Junior participation increased by 48.2%, reflecting our focus on juniors and schools.
- Junior teams increased by 250 teams (8%) and Senior teams remained steady (-0.03%).

Finally, I would like to thank and acknowledge our many stakeholders, our regions, affiliates, boards, volunteers, and staff, who each and every day, work hard to ensure the future for Touch Football in Queensland remains prosperous.

Greg Denny
CEO,
Queensland Touch Football



SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPORT

2022/23 has represented a time of change for South Australian operations and an opportunity to reset. On behalf of our community, I give thanks to David Harris who moved on from his position as Community Sports Coordinator after four years. Whilst it was sad to see Dave go, it presented us with the opportunity to welcome Andrea van Metzinger to the role, where she continues to bring energy and growth into the sport.

Participation

Adult participation numbers continued to decline throughout the state, although there were some areas of growth, including Barossa Touch Club, Demons Touch Football Association and Mount Gambier Touch Football, which is pleasing to see. I'd like to thank all our volunteers at affiliates for their passion and commitment to the sport in SA, and the team and I look forward to helping increase participation numbers in the future.

Schools

The greatest participation increases came through school participation driven by the Catholic Schools Championships (311 teams), School Sport SA Championships, Reynella East Touch Football Carnival (32 teams), SAAS Touch Football Competition (Term 4 and Term 1), SACSA Touch Football Competitions, Catholic School Girls Saturday morning competition and IGSSA competitions, who all increased in size. This, in addition to our involvement with ACHPER PE Week, Closing the Gap event and the SAPSASA Tea Tree Gully Carnival contributed to growth in school-based participation.

DoorDash First Try sessions were delivered to over twenty schools, with many schools returning annually. This year, saw the first All Abilities DoorDash First Try sessions delivered, which was a significant achievement and great outcome to upskill staff and Field Officers.

Events

There was great interest and excitement with NRL State of Origin being held in Adelaide, and the festivities that came with this, including the Parliamentary Friends of Rugby League, Touch Football game at Adelaide Oval. Our referees were also invited to meet and learn from State of Origin referees during a Q&A session held at our office.

In the event space, we continued to support the Your Podiatrist Cup, which was held in Mount Gambier with teams from Melbourne, Adelaide, regional Victoria, and Mount Gambier competing in hot conditions. Team numbers were down this year with thirteen teams entered across all divisions. The organising committee still delivered another great event and I'd like to acknowledge the referees who travelled to support the tournament.

The 2023 TFSA League was one of the most tightly contested for many seasons. Adelaide University Graduates Oval hosted the Grand Finals for the first time which was successful. All three games provided plenty of entertainment for the large crowd, with the Eastern Stingrays winning the overall permit award for the first time in many years.

Final Results:

Mixed Open

Eastern Stingrays 6 defeat Central Scorpions 5

Women's Open

South West Wolves 3 defeat Eastern Stingrays 2 (drop-off)

Men's Open

Eastern Stingrays 11 defeat Central Scorpions 9

Individual Awards

Rising Referee Award: April Zimmermann

Referee Team Award: Jon Hall

Referee of the Series: Tess Leahy

Women's Open MVP – Kelly Lycett (Central Scorpions)

Men's Open MVP – Ferghus Kernahan (Central Scorpions)

Mixed Open Male MVP – Darren Williams (South West Wolves)

Mixed Open Women's MVP – Megan Elliott (South West Wolves)

Pathways and Performance

Our SA Heat team returned to the DoorDash National Youth Championships for the first time since 2019, represented by our 18s Girls team. The team finished seventh in their pool and fourteenth overall. Player awards included: Most Valuable Player: Mia Forbes, Players Player: Zoe Moretti, Coaches Award: Nakia Krylov.

Disappointingly no SA Heat teams participated at the 2023 Inferno National Touch League, however, five players represented other entities and four SA referees attended. Our referee contingent had a successful event with Jon Hall receiving his twenty years' service award and James van Gilst obtaining his Level 6 Badge.

Whilst on the subject of referees, I offer my congratulations to Amanda Sheeky who officiated at the Opens Trans-Tasman Test Series in Brisbane, another great achievement for Amanda.

Technical

Throughout the year, referee courses were held with ten level 1 referees now taking the field in regional areas and seven referees achieving their level 2 badge through a course held in Adelaide.

In closing, I would like to thank our STAC members, Deirdre Morrow (Chairperson), Erin Taylor (TFA Board Member), Tim Wyld (TFA Leadership Team) and Amanda Sheeky (General Member) and to give thanks to outgoing member Mick Gray (General Member) for his contributions to the sport in South Australia.

I also would like to acknowledge our affiliates, volunteers, participants and staff for their support and guidance through the 2022/23 period.

Finally, to the Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing thank you for your ongoing support.



TASMANIA REPORT

General

Tasmanian operations continued to face challenges throughout the year with participation declining by 6.7%. Despite this result staff have implemented new initiatives throughout the state and we remain optimistic that we will see future programs, school engagements, and events rebound shortly.

Participation

Whilst total participation declined across the state, most of our affiliated competitions either consolidated or reported slight participation increases which is a testament to their committees and local communities. Our largest affiliate Southern Touch reported eight less teams, Launceston saw a slight increase over the same period with junior numbers remaining consistent. Devonport Touch Association numbers remained consolidated with a slight dip in junior teams as they transition away from a school based junior competition to a traditional individual and club-based model. Burnie Touch Association team numbers remain the same, however pleasingly their junior program continues to grow and develop with more than thirty-five children participating.

Events

Our events continued to gain momentum with a 5% participation increase. The Cold Climate Classic saw twelve teams partake in the Devonport event that was a celebration of the game and opportunity to highlight and sample local food and wine that the Northwest region is renowned for. Congratulations to the Men's champions Cold Bloods and the Mixed champions, Eastern Shore Rebels. I would also like to recognise the continued support of our Cold Climate Classic partners Events Tasmania, Devonport City Council, and the Spirit of Tasmania for making the event a must attend showpiece on the Touch Football calendar.

The Tasmanian Junior State Cup was successfully delivered in Launceston with 350 players, coaches and referees attending the event. The interest from the Tasmanian Touch Football community continues to grow since the separation of the senior and junior cups with Launceston Touch Association crowned the Champion Affiliate for 2023 while the Champion Club was awarded to the Magpies. The divisional category champions were as follows:

- U12s Girls – Eastern Shore Rebels
- U12s Boys – Live Wires
- U14s Girls – Magpies (series winners)
- U14s Boys – Bulldogs
- U16s Girls – Magpies (series winners)
- U16s Boys – Grasscutters
- U18s Girls – Magpies
- U18s Boys – Condors

The Senior State Cup returned to Devonport on November 26-27 and provided us with an opportunity to upgrade several referees to Level 2. Thank you to Ken Golden for coming down and assisting us with this process. This contribution saw three referees upgraded to Level 2 and the Referee of the Tournament awarded to emerging national referee Bayley Aziz. After two days of tough competition, the following teams were awarded champion status:

- Women's Open – Launceston
- Men's Open – Southern Touch
- Mixed Open – Launceston
- Women's 30s – Southern Touch
- Men's 30s – Southern Touch
- Champion Affiliate – Southern Touch

Inclusion

Tasmanian staff and Deadly Choices collaborated to deliver the inaugural Indigenous Touch Football Carnival and Community Day on July 14, held at Southern Touch, Wentworth Park. The event was supported by Karadi Aboriginal Corporation with Rugby League and Touch Football ambassador Scott Prince attending the event and promoted by Petero Civoniceva and Bo de la Cruz.

Southern Touch introduced a Pride Round which saw teams support the LGBTIQ community in a great initiative that also provided free online awareness training. The round generated opportunities to create conversations about inclusivity and diversity along with what it meant to be an ally.

Performance

Tasmania were incredibly proud to send eight teams to the DoorDash National Youth Championships with teams in all divisions. Representatives played with pride and purpose against the country's best junior players. Overall, our Thunder teams finished a credible eleventh out of twenty. At the conclusion of the event, we honoured the following players for their performances on and off the field.

- U12s Girls MVP & Players Player – Poppy Beaumont
- U12s Boys MVP & Players Player – Ethan Shipp
- U14s Girls MVP & Players Player – Maddy Medwin
- U14s Boys MVP & Players Player – Oryn Waters
- U16s Girls MVP – Ally Wilson
- U16s Girls Players Player – Sophie Strong
- U16s Boys MVP & Players Player – Jordy Shipp
- U18s Girls MVP & Players Player – Emily Brandsen
- U18s Boys MVP – Harvey Hurd
- U18s Boys Players Player – Zavier Wootton

To recognise and celebrate our people, the Tasmanian Awards Night was reinstated.

Sam Free from Southern Touch received the junior representative Player of the Year. Sam had an impressive tournament at NYC which carried on to a strong NTL debut. The Senior representative Player of the Year was awarded to Sheldon Smith who took home the Players Player Award at NTL and the Player of the Final at the previous year's Tasmanian State Cup. The Representative Team of the Year was awarded on strong performances on a national level with the Under 14 Boys taking the title just ahead of the Women's Over 27s team who performed well at the previous NTL. Coach of the Year was awarded to Brent Mills while Referee of the Year went to Kodey Prendergast who received his Level 4 upgrade and represented Tasmania at the NYC. The Volunteer of the Year was awarded to James Dowling who contributes across multiple sectors of the sport from administration, refereeing and coaching and has impacted many Tasmanian participants. Congratulations to everyone recognised.

Schools and Juniors

The School Series continues to be a major junior activation across the state with 86 teams participating this year culminating in a final's day held in Launceston. The series was held over three locations with Devonport, Launceston, and Hobart each hosting games. I would like to thank all the schools involved in the series and hope to see you all return next year. Results for the series were:

- Girls 7/8 – St Patricks College Green def Kings Meadows
- Boys 7/8 – Riverside def Latrobe
- Girls 9/10 – Launceston Church Grammar def Kings Meadows
- Boys 9/10 – Riverside def Marist Regional College

Technical

There were twenty-six new accreditations for the reporting period across refereeing and coaching. Of the seventeen Referees course participants, eleven of these are new to the sport receiving Level 1 accreditation. Six Level 1s were assessed and upgraded to Level 2 who can now filter back into grassroot competitions and events increasing the experience for all participants. The reporting period also introduced seven new coaches to the sport who will drive improvements and development to aspiring players.

In closing I would like to thank our dedicated STAC members, volunteers, and staff for their support and guidance through the reporting period.

I would also like to acknowledge James Dowling who in addition to receiving the Tasmanian Volunteer of the Year award was also recognised as the Bristol Paint TFA Volunteer of the Month for July.

The sport is looking forward to a bright 2023- 24 and are looking forward to seeing all existing and new members enjoying the sport they love.



The Victorian Schools Touch Football League (VSTFL) entered its sixteenth season and continues to be a vital junior competition within the State as the Associated Grammar Schools entered over 100 teams across seventeen schools which allowed 1,308 students to play our sport.

The objective now is to transition these participants into organised competitions over the coming twelve months.

Technical

Victoria was active in providing accredited courses to our volunteer base and upskilling coaches and referees that will improve the standard of the sport in the state. Sixty-three referees acquired certifications with Level 1 and Level 2 badges the most popular. Sixteen aspiring coaches also received Foundation level accreditation, with a further six foundation level referee coaches becoming qualified.

In closing, I would like to thank our Victorian STAC members, volunteers, participants, and staff for their support and guidance and I look forward to seeing the sport rebound strongly over the next twelve months.

I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Tim Cromb who was named the Bristol Paints Volunteer of the Month for October 2022 for his contributions to Ballarat Touch Association.



VICTORIA REPORT

The recovery post-pandemic continues to be challenging for Victorian operations, with participation numbers in decline across several categories. There are signs for optimism however, with junior full active participation increasing by 74.5%. Junior participation will continue to be our focus as we look to establish a larger participation base through activating strategic pockets and partnerships where opportunities exist.

One of the most significant partnership opportunities that we're eagerly awaiting is the completion of the new Sports Centre at Broadmeadows that will become the home of Touch Football in Victoria, further integrating our operations with NRL Victoria and the Melbourne Storm. Coming online in early 2024, the facility will provide first class training and office facilities that will take the sport forward across all levels.

Human Resources

Our office farewelled several key personnel throughout the reporting period with twelve-year veteran David Diack departing in November 2022. David still has strong connections to the sport, and we thank him for many years of service. We also saw the departure of Catherine Stanton, Tarryn McDowall, and Phil Smith. Despite this turnover, the office now has a fresh group of staff who are dedicated to making meaningful change in an environment ready for expansion.

Footprint

Staff have been steadfast in achieving our strategic objective of increasing the participation footprint in Victoria with six new competition locations affiliating to deliver the sport. These new locations include the Northwest Wolves, Hume Eagles, Werribee Bears, Southern Districts, Box Hill Rugby, and Outkast Sports. We also continued to work with the Northern Thunder Rugby League and Pakenham Eels to provide out of season offerings in Touch Football and League Touch. The Northern Thunder based out of the new State Sport Centre, could add up to an additional 500 junior players, expanding junior participation exponentially while also implementing a new senior competition. The alliance with NRL Victoria will continue to provide opportunities with clubs in communities that have an appetite for multiple formats of the sport twelve months of the year.

Events

The Victorian Junior State Cup saw forty-five teams participate, an increase of seven teams as event momentum continues. Our VT League was delivered without disruption in 2022 with the Melbourne City Lions crowned Club Champions. Congratulations to all teams that claimed divisional titles:

- Melbourne City Lions Women's Division 1
- Melbourne City Lions Women's Division 2
- Monash Touch Men's Division 1
- Phoenix Touch Men's Division 2

Partnerships

We continue to work closely with the NRL Victoria team and the Melbourne Storm as the office looks to find efficiencies across both codes and provide offerings year-round. As part of these partnerships, we are also looking to activate a combined workforce to deliver both products in an area that has enormous potential, particularly when our shared office comes online in early 2024.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to the Bells Hotel for their continued support throughout the reporting period as our venue of choice and their connection with Make Them Talk, who deliver our social media content that showcases the sport on a professional level for the community.

Inclusion

The University Sport Indigenous games were held on June 29 with thirty-three teams competing in the event. The Australian Catholic University were crowned champions, taking out the title in a close final against University of Newcastle 5-3. The Queensland University of Technology and University of Queensland made it through to the semi-final stage but were unable to progress.

An agreement and endorsement were provided for the Sri Lankan 7s Touch tournament with provisions to deliver the event later in 2023. It is the first multicultural event that Victorian staff will be involved with and we're looking forward to a celebration of cultures and sport combining to deliver a unique experience for the community.

Performance

Eight Victorian Storm teams participated in the 2023 Inferno National Touch League. This provided 131 individuals the opportunity to compete against strong opposition and provided an understanding of the level individuals need to reach to be competitive against players from New South Wales and Queensland.

A further six Storm teams participated at the DoorDash National Youth Championships. These teams consisted of boys and girls teams in the U14s, U16s, and U18s divisions. The best performing teams were the U18 Girls team who finished eleventh and the U18 Boys team finishing a creditable tenth.

Schools and Juniors

The DoorDash First Try program continues to be a strong entry point for the sport with twenty-five Primary Schools and fourteen Secondary Schools engaged. A total of 489 sessions were conducted by staff, Field Officers, or teachers to 4,314 school students.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA REPORT

The 2022-2023 reporting year saw participation increase by 14.4% in Western Australia, with school and program participation the key growth drivers. Full active senior participation declined, and junior participation remained consolidated after three years of year-on-year growth.

WA staff are indebted to our Affiliates and volunteers who deliver competitions and programs throughout the year, across the State and we thank you all.

Funding

I'd like to thank the Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries (DLGSC), and Healthway for their ongoing funding commitments to the sport. DLGSC continue to provide regional initiative funding and have committed to support our operations for 2023-2024. Our longstanding partnership with Healthway continues for a further three years until 2025 focusing on the promotion of the LiveLighter and GO for 2&5 messages.

Schools

With schools returning to normal and operations in full swing, our office delivered school programs and conducted face to face clinics and sessions for 21,946 students. This represents a 12.8% increase on the previous year and is a testament to the hard work carried out by staff and field officers.

School competitions were delivered to pre-COVID levels with 550 additional students participating in competitions to the previous year.

School Sport WA (SSWA) resumed touring again and participated in the School Sport Australia Championships held in Wagga Wagga NSW. SSWA teams were represented in all divisions, with WA teams all finishing fourth in their respective competitions.

Events

The 2022 LiveLighter Super League Series was successfully held over eight rounds, plus finals, and saw nineteen teams, an increase of two teams from 2021 compete in Open divisions.

Our series champions were:

- Men's Champions: Perth Brothers
- Women's Champions: Fremantle
- Mixed Champions: Tompkins Park

The 2022 Junior State Championships presented by GO for 2&5 were an outstanding success. Seventy teams participated in age groups 8s to 17s years, equalling the number of teams from the previous year. The return to UWA Sports Park provided the opportunity to play on the Friday evening under the new lights to assist in spreading the draw across the weekend. The enthusiasm from Affiliates, parents, officials, and players will continue to see this event grow and the addition of more regional teams.

The senior State Championships presented by LiveLighter conducted in February saw fifty-seven teams participate which was an increase from forty-five teams in 2022. It was excellent to see Broome, Busselton, Geraldton, Goldfields, Hedland, and Karratha teams make the trip to Perth to compete, along with five teams from Singapore adding to the diversity of the event. Congratulations to Perth Brothers who claimed the Champion Affiliate for the event. A special thanks to the referees and Tournament Panel who assisted in making the weekend a success, whilst overcoming a shortage of available referees.

Unforeseen issues sadly saw the ANZAC Challenge cancelled earlier this year. In conjunction with NRL WA, we are looking forward to conducting the ANZAC Challenge in 2024.

The inaugural Country Championships were conducted in Geraldton in June, with teams representing Exmouth, Geraldton, Goldfields, Karratha, and a Barbarians team. Goldfields were crowned champions defeating Karratha in the Grand Final. Many thanks go to the Geraldton Touch Association and Lauren Norris for their organisation and assistance of a great event.

Appreciation also to the referees who assisted to make it a fantastic weekend. The Country Championship will be conducted every three years, with North and Southwest Carnivals held in between.

Education

Referee and coaching courses were conducted throughout the State. This saw 113 referees accredited and fourteen coaches gain their accreditations.

Human Resources

A big thank you to our staff Jeremy Wallace, Kathleen Madden, and Tallas Williams who worked tirelessly throughout the year to achieve outstanding results in many areas of their roles having only been with TFA for a short period.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the many other people who have contributed to Touch Football in WA throughout 2022-2023. Thank you to our STAC members Sally Irwin (Chair), Lauren Norris, Jason Cullen, Neil Collins, and Jamie O'Connor. Also, the Referee Panel of Rob McKay (Chair), Alison Watters, Ben Dempsey, and Lucas Patterson.

Thank you also to those affiliates and their committee members who deliver our game and provide advice and feedback, along with all the volunteers assisting in the game of Touch Football in WA.

A thank you to all and your assistance, dedication, and advice is appreciated.



THANK YOU TO TFA'S VALUED PARTNERS

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