

# TOUCH FOOTBALL AUSTRALIA



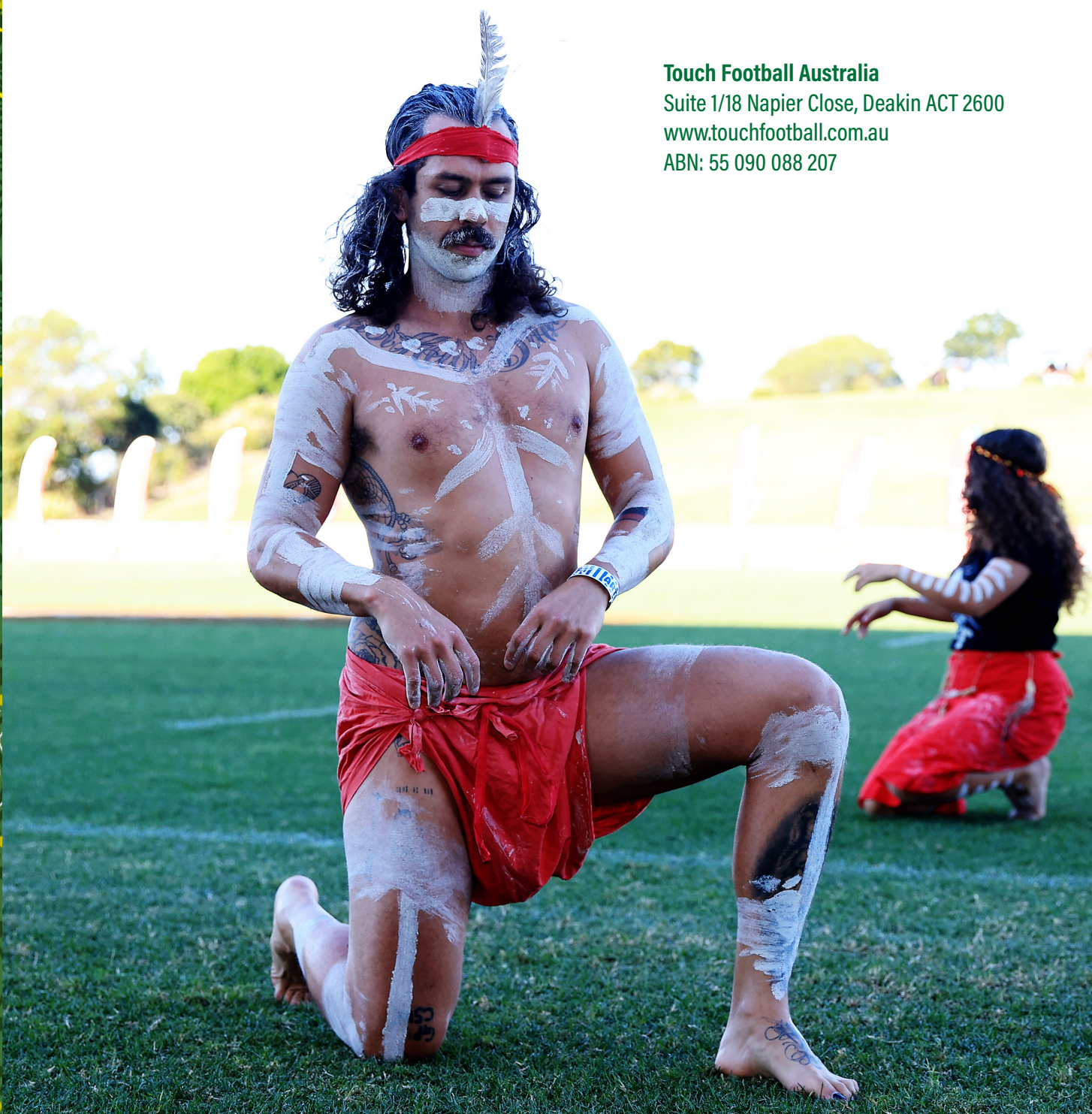
**2023/24**  
ANNUAL REPORT



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

I am delighted to have recently commenced as Chair of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and I look forward to continuing the legacy of those that have led the organisation before me.

I know the joy and pride that sport can bring us all, and the opportunities it provides. On the eve of the Paris 2024 Olympics and Paralympics, and eight years out from Brisbane 2032, my vision is for sport to be safe, fair, accessible and inclusive for everyone, with every athlete supported to reach their full potential.

We want to bring out the best in everyone involved in sport because that's how we will become the world's best – by working together and bound by a common purpose.

We encourage and help Australians of all backgrounds, ages and abilities to get involved in sport and we advocate for sport and the positive influence it has on the nation.

Our grant programs support athletes, coaches, officials and organisations, while our Sporting Schools program is helping more children access free and fun sporting opportunities than ever before. More than 9,200 schools are registered with the program and our goal is to reach 32 million participants by Brisbane 2032.

We're now 18 months into Australia's High Performance 2032+ Sport Strategy which is a united commitment from our Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports to 'Win Well' and build sustainable success towards Brisbane 2032 and beyond.

Australia's high performance sport system is more united than ever, working together to deliver the Horizon 1 Win Well Projects which included the landmark Connection to Country Action Plan.

Likewise, work continues to help Australians to 'Play Well' as part of the nation's first codesigned Sport Participation Strategy with a Play Well Leadership Group assembled that will oversee the implementation of the strategy and deliver on its vision that 'everyone has a place in sport'.

We are proud that our Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Campus has been the home of sport in Australia for over 42 years and welcome the \$249.7 million investment announced in the FY2024-25 Federal Budget to upgrade our high-performance facilities to ensure they are once again world-leading.

The funding will ensure our athletes have access to the best testing and training facilities available and includes a new multi-story and para-accessible accommodation building and Testing and Training Centre to provide state-of-the-art equipment and support for our athletes' development. An indoor Sport Dome will also provide 24/7 all-weather training facilities for our track and field sports.

I know success will be greatest when every part of the system is able to perform their role at their best, and I look forward to leading the ASC, including in its work towards ensuring there is a lasting legacy for all Australian sports and the community from this green and gold decade - when the eyes of the world will be on Australian athletes, Australian sport and Australian venues.

**Kate Jenkins AO**



# TFA CHAIR REPORT

Wow, what a year we have had in 2024. Customarily, the Chair's report starts with the acknowledgements and thank yous, which are still owing, and I will get to, but on this occasion, I would like to start by mentioning our success at the Touch World Cup held in Nottingham, England in July this year. Our Athelite Australian Emus teams did us incredibly proud winning twelve out of thirteen divisions and only losing one game across all thirteen divisions for the whole week. Some notable mentions to John Samin who played his 100th game for Australia, Dave Baggio refereed his 100th international game, and Shaun Francis in the Men's Open scored an incredible seventeen tries in one game, breaking the previous record of eleven. I have watched a lot of Touch in my time, but some of the performances I saw that week from our Aussies got as close to flawless Touch as possible. The efforts of our players, coaches, managers, referees, TFA staff, and most importantly all the families and friends that were there in support was awe-inspiring.

Being at the World Cup and then watching the Olympics and Paralympics from afar reinforced to me why sport is such a critical component of a successful society. Sport gives us such a wonderful community and being part of a community provides so many benefits to all of us not just in terms of health, but our mental wellbeing and connection with others and an abundance of general life skills. We are so lucky in our sport to have so many dedicated and hard-working volunteers across the nation working in so many (and often multiple) capacities. You are the lifeblood of our community and without you all we wouldn't be the vibrant and successful sport that we are. Thank you to all the volunteers and sideline supporters of our sport for all you do whether it be cheering on the sideline, coaching, administration, refereeing or helping in a non-official capacity, we appreciate you all.

Thank you to Mr Peter V'Landys AM, Mrs Kate Jones and the Australian Rugby League Commission, and Mr Andrew Adbo from the National Rugby League for your continued support and investment in Touch Football and the relationship between our sports. Our sports are so complimentary and as our relationship continues to grow, we look forward to greater engagement and investment to secure the future growth and domination of both our great games.

To the Australian Sports Commission and our State and Territory governments, thank you for your continued support and investment in our sport which is recognition of the fact that Touch works incredibly hard to provide participation opportunities to as many people as possible, and that we continue to look for new ways to do that and to provide a place for everyone to play.

To the NSW Touch Association (NSWTA) and Queensland Touch Football (QTF), thank you to your boards and staff for your passion, hard work, and dedication to growing the sport in your states and for your support of the TFA Board in our endeavours to do the same. Similarly to our State and Territory Advisory Committees and our State and Territory offices, growing the sport in our non-traditional states takes a mammoth effort and we thank you for everything you all do.

To the Board of TFA, thank you to all of you for your hard work and your fierce commitment to doing what is best for the sport. Lastly to our fearless CEO, Jamie O'Connor and our TFA staff, thank you for your unrivalled skill and dedication to Touch Football. It is sometimes difficult for people on the outside to comprehend the effort and skill required to do what you do, but our financial position, our participant numbers, and our place in the Australian sporting landscape is an accurate reflection of all of you. This year we say goodbye to Tim Wyld, our General Manager of Commercial after 16.5 years with TFA. One only has to look at our commercial revenue to see how successful Tim has been in his role. We also say goodbye to Zoe Wyld who has been the backbone of event delivery for ten years and similarly has been an amazing servant to TFA, and to Charmain Steventon who was with us for a short but effective stint in the GM of People and Culture role.

We are about to head into what will be extremely exciting times for our sport including a new strategic plan, a new World Cup cycle, and a potential bid for the 2032 Olympics to create greater opportunities for everyone from our grassroots participants to our elite stars.

**Erin Taylor**  
Chair  
Touch Football Australia



# TFA CEO REPORT

While the previous year was a year of change, a year where major strategic decisions were made, this one was a year of implementation and delivery; and it was another year of growth and success. We have never had more kids playing the sport, we have never had more people watching our sport, we continue to set record financial metrics, and we went within a whisker of a clean sweep at the Touch World Cup.

The most notable and most significant of those strategic decisions was the transition from team-based affiliation to an individual membership model which, now implemented, sets up our sport for the future. The roll-out has been met with positivity and, as far as major change goes, the shift was seamless. It has supported growth in participation and created financial stability.

Total participation grew by 9.7% to 604,714, and full active junior participants surpassed 100,000 for the first time in recorded history with a 19.3% increase. In the all-important unique membership category, junior participation grew by 9.1% to over 85,000 and seniors were up by 1.5% to almost 60,000. Growth in senior participation was particularly pleasing after back-to-back years of decline as full active senior participants saw a 9.6% rise – the first time since the 2020/21 reporting period and COVID disruptions.

Diversity and inclusion amongst our participants also continue to go from strength-to-strength with CALD participation increasing by 25.8% to 52,605, and All Abilities athletes increasing by 25.7% nationwide. Indigenous participation in our sport remains strong with almost 15,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples playing our game, accounting for a total of 7.3% of all Touch Football participants.

We entered the second year in our reconciliation journey under the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) – and I would like to thank the Australian Rugby League Indigenous Council, our RAP Panel led by Phil Gyemore, and our working group for their continued support and guiding the organisation on best practices and approach. The annual All Stars fixture also returned to Queensland and delivered a showcase to remember as part of a triple-header with the NRLW and NRL – broadcast on free-to-air for the first time – with the win for the Indigenous side capping off a week-long cultural immersion and fully integrated camp with the NRLW and NRL Indigenous sides to celebrate Indigenous culture.

Our other major strategic shift, the reformatted National Touch League – now known as The Championships was ushered in. The event's transition to state, regional, and affiliate-based format heralded a new era for the national championships with an enhanced focus on enjoyment and mass participation. The Championships garnered significant interest from the Touch Football community with a record 165 teams descending onto Coffs Harbour for the event's new format in a truly inclusive event, with some of the affiliates wasting no time in taking their opportunity by winning six national titles. I look forward to seeing the event continue to grow and for all to experience Touch Football at the national level.

At the international level, we welcomed back our Athelite Australian Emus to the World Cup stage after a five-year hiatus as they travelled to Nottingham, England in July. Although outside of the reporting period, it is important to recognise their achievements as they reaffirmed Australia's position as the global benchmark of Touch Football. In a dominant 7-day performance, the Emus were crowned Opens and Masters World Champions – claiming twelve out of thirteen Gold Medals following an undefeated round-robin stage, with the 2024 performance topping the Malaysia campaign with the Emus claiming two more titles in Nottingham.

In the largest World Cup to date with team numbers up by 72% since Malaysia, we saw over ninety athletes make their debut in the green and gold across our thirteen teams that competed in the pinnacle international event. Several records were also broken at the event which may never be achieved again in an amazing testament to our talented individuals, including Shaun Francis scoring seventeen tries in a single match, and John Samin and David Baggio reaching 100 international caps as a player and referee respectively. Congratulations to all involved with the 2024 Touch World Cup – from our players, coaches, managers, high-performance staff, and TFA staff on the ground and at home who delivered the game to our supporters across the world.

It would be remiss of me to recognise incredible contributions and success at an international level without paying tribute to Cathy Gray who retires from her role with us following this year's World Cup in Nottingham. Cathy has been a mainstay of our program for decades; she has been the beating heart, and she will be sorely missed.

We continue to be fortunate as a sport to have fantastic partnerships through the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), state and territory government agencies, and the National Rugby League. Thank you to the newly appointed Chair of the ASC, Kate Jenkins AO, ASC CEO, Kieren Perkins, Australian Rugby League Commission Chair, Peter V'Landys, and National Rugby League CEO, Andrew Abdo – your ongoing support is greatly appreciated as we continually strive for positive outcomes for our sporting communities across the nation.

Our commercial program continues to flourish, including welcoming Australia's first protein water brand, ENRGPRO to our growing family of commercial partners. We'd like to extend our thanks to principal partner DoorDash, major partners Red Rooster, Athelite, Bristol Paint, and Inferno, alongside all our official, event, and broadcast partners for investing in us so our sport continues to shine at all levels.

Growth in participation, unwavering support from our partners, and robust financial management means our financial position remains strong. This year we report to the members our healthiest result to date with a \$348,945 surplus result leading to over \$5.5M in assets and almost \$4M in cash at bank setting us up as we head into our next strategic cycle.

To TFA Chair, Erin Taylor and the entire TFA board, thank you for your ongoing support; to the TFA Leadership team of Brad Mitchell, Wayne Grant, Jess Wilkins, Tian Huang, and a special mention to Tim Wyld, whose remarkable 16-year contribution to our sport will be greatly missed. I also extend my gratitude to all TFA staff across the country, and to both NSWTA and QTF Boards and staff – thank you for your continued support, for encouraging us to strive for excellence, and for all your dedicated efforts throughout the year.

Lastly, on behalf of everyone at Touch Football Australia, thank you to our community, particularly our dedicated and hardworking volunteers who continuously bring our sport to life, and their unwavering commitment to keep Touch Football thriving for many years to come.

**Jamie O'Connor**  
CEO  
Touch Football Australia



# GOVERNANCE REPORT

## TFA Directors Board Meeting Attendance

Touch Football Australia (TFA) acknowledges the dedicated support of the Directors for the 2023/24 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	5
Neil Collins	5	5
Anita Hagarty	5	4
Craig Lowe	5	5
Christian Frost	5	5
Stuart Geros	5	4
Andrew Hill	5	5

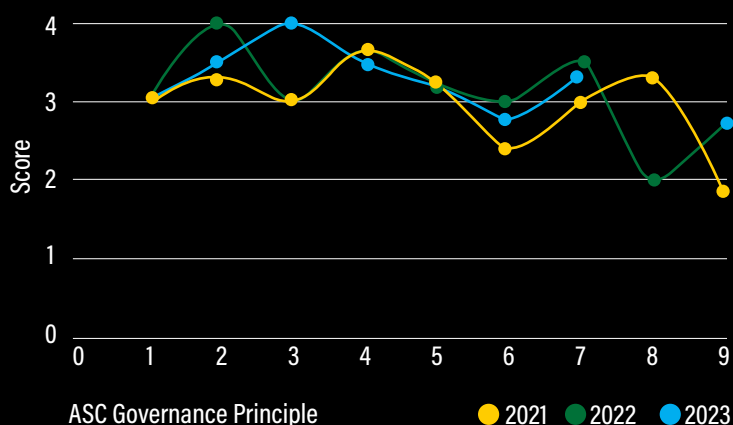
## ASC Governance Principles

As a part Touch Football Australia's commitment to transparency and best practice, the organisation has moved to incorporate governance into its annual report.

The accompanied graph shows our governance journey over the past three years. During this period TFA's average governance score has increased from 2.89 in 2020/2021 to 3.14 in this reporting period.

**Some of the governance improvements committed to and delivered in 2023/24 were:**

- The Board reviewed, updated and published the TFA Board Handbook which included updates to the Board Code of Conduct, Delegations of Authority, and the Conflict-of-Interest Declaration.
- The creation and publication of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan.
- Developed and implemented a strategic plan evaluation process to measure annual progress.
- Providing documented commentary and reporting to the membership on governance outcomes in the Annual Report.



Principle 1: The Spirit of the Game  
 Principle 2: The Team  
 Principle 3: The Gameplan  
 Principle 4: The Players  
 Principle 5: The Rulebook

Principle 6: The Playbook  
 Principle 7: The Defence  
 Principle 8: The Best and Fairest  
 Principle 9: The Scorecard



# 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

1 JULY 2023 - 30 JUNE 2024



# NYC

The DoorDash National Youth Championships continued to grow with a **record 121 teams participating in the 2023 event**. Queensland Secondary Schools Touch claimed back-to-back Boys and Girls 18s titles, whilst the South Queensland Sharks took home overall champion entity honours.



# ALL STARS

The NRL All Stars fixture was held in Townsville and was aired on free to air and subscription television for the first time attracting a total audience of **115k+ viewers across 9Gem, Fox League, and Kayo**. On the field the Indigenous All Stars were victorious, defeating the Mori All Stars 7-2.



# THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

A new format was introduced resulting in **a record 165 teams, broadcast, and social media reach for Australia's adult national championships**. On the field, the UQ Rebels claimed a rare treble – winning the national title, State Championships, and Metro Cup competitions in the one season. The Hunter Western Hornets broke through to claim the Men's Open crown, and the Southern Rebels re-asserted their dominance in the Mixed Open division.



## OFF-FIELD

**Successfully launched a new national membership model** for the sport creating efficiencies for volunteers and benefits to participants nationally. The transition marked one of the most significant administrative changes in the sports history and was seamless in its rollout.

**Maintained Gold Status at the 2024 Pride in Sport Awards** for our commitment to making Touch Football a safe and inclusive environment for all. TFA received the highest ranking of all National Sports Organisations.

**Surpassed 20 million annual social media reach / impressions** across TFA accounts.

**Welcomed Australia's first protein water brand, ENRGPRO** to our growing family of commercial partners.

Together with our Naming Rights partner DoorDash, **once again offered \$100,000 in funding to local affiliates** through the Footy Cash from DoorDash funding program.

Once again teamed up with **Red Rooster to offer \$10,000 in cash** and prizes to affiliates through the Community Club of the Year initiative.





# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP



In the largest World Cup to date in its return to the Touch Football landscape since 2019's campaign in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - thirteen Athelite Australian Emus teams competed in the 2024 Federation of International Touch (FIT) World Cup in Nottingham, England from July 15 to 21.

The 2024 campaign cements Australia's position as the global benchmark of Touch Football - having never lost a World Cup.

\* Event falls outside of 2023/24 reporting period.

The Emus successfully retained their Opens and Masters World Champion titles in dominating fashion over the week-long event, claiming twelve out of thirteen Gold Medals.

## GOLD MEDAL MATCH RESULTS

### Men's Open Australia 9 defeated New Zealand 6

**Player of the Final:**  
Ifor Jones - New Zealand

**Medal Recipients:**  
Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: Lebanon

**Coach's Award:**  
Jordan Marshall-King

**Players' Player:**  
Dylan Hennessey

**Top Try-Scorer:**  
Shaun Francis - 33

### Women's Open Australia 6 defeated New Zealand 2

**Player of the Final:**  
Kim Sue See - Australia

**Medal Recipients:**  
Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: England

**Coach's Award:**  
Tiarni Bryce

**Players' Player:**  
Ashleigh Kearney

**Top Try-Scorer:**  
Katherine Stevens - 23



# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP



## GOLD MEDAL MATCH RESULTS

### Mixed Open Australia 8 defeated New Zealand 7

**Player of the Final:**

Stephanie Maiolo – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: England

**Coach's Award:**

James Hegedus

**Players' Player:**

Stephanie Maiolo

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Olivia Goodsell – 34

### Women's 27s Australia 7 defeated England 1

**Player of the Final:**

Stephanie Halpin – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: England  
Bronze: South Africa

**Coach's Award:**

Rebecca Cachia

**Players' Player:**

Courtney Trenerry

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Haylee Murphy-Evans  
and Dymphna Smith – 20

### Men's 30s Australia 5 defeated New Zealand 4

**Player of the Final:**

Tommy Quinlivan – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: England

**Coach's Award:**

Jordan Dart

**Players' Player:**

Madalitso Masache

**Top Try-Scorer:**

James Sharp – 25

### Senior Mixed Australia 10 defeated New Zealand 9

**Player of the Final:**

Justin Otto – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: England

**Coach's Award:**

Lucena Gill

**Players' Player:**

Kelly Butler and  
Nicholas Bale

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Carly Walsh – 27

# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP



## GOLD MEDAL MATCH RESULTS

### Men's 35s Australia 16 defeated New Zealand 3

**Player of the Final:**

Jai Ayoub – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: South Africa

**Coach's Award:**

Scott Bradley

**Players' Player:**

Scott Bradley

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Taki Luke – 20

### Women's 35s Australia 10 defeated England 2

**Player of the Final:**

Serena Albert – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: England  
Bronze: South Africa

**Coach's Award:**

Kate Hilyard

**Players' Player:**

Serena Albert

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Laura Bain – 18

### Women's 40s Australia 4 defeated New Zealand 1

**Player of the Final:**

Relle Donovan – Australia

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: Australia  
Silver: New Zealand  
Bronze: England

**Coach's Award:**

Vanessa Cooper

**Players' Player:**

Kellie-Jean  
Johnston

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Kerrie Rendell – 13

### Men's 40s New Zealand 4 defeated Australia 3

**Player of the Final:**

Michael Rawiri – New Zealand

**Medal Recipients:**

Gold: New Zealand  
Silver: Australia  
Bronze: England

**Coach's Award:**

Richard Foote

**Players' Player:**

Shaun Street

**Top Try-Scorer:**

Troy Nichols – 19



# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP



## GOLD MEDAL MATCH RESULTS

### Men's 45s Australia 8 defeated New Zealand 2

<b>Player of the Final:</b> Drew Davies – Australia	<b>Medal Recipients:</b> Gold: Australia Silver: New Zealand Bronze: France	<b>Coach's Award:</b> Shane Warman	<b>Players' Player:</b> Shane Warman	<b>Top Try-Scorer:</b> Adrian Vallelonga – 24
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### Men's 50s Australia 8 defeated New Zealand 2

<b>Player of the Final:</b> Alan Woods – Australia	<b>Medal Recipients:</b> Gold: Australia Silver: New Zealand Bronze: England	<b>Coach's Award:</b> Cristin Davidson	<b>Players' Player:</b> Graham Knights	<b>Top Try-Scorer:</b> Cristin Davidson – 34
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### Men's 55s Australia 6 defeated New Zealand 4

<b>Player of the Final:</b> Edward Fong – Australia	<b>Medal Recipients:</b> Gold: Australia Silver: New Zealand Bronze: England	<b>Coach's Award:</b> Derek Duguid	<b>Players' Player:</b> Ian Jordan	<b>Top Try-Scorer:</b> Amir Ayoub – 13
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# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP





# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP





# 2024 TOUCH WORLD CUP



# PARTICIPATION HIGHLIGHTS

NET PROMOTER SCORE

55

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

604,714

(+9.7%)

REGISTERED FULL ACTIVE

203,540

(+14.9%)

ENHANCED SCHOOL FOCUS

389,539

(+10.7%)

EVENTS

79,712

(+8.7%)

FOOTPRINT

293

(AFFILIATED COMPETITIONS)

## DIVERSITY



FEMALES

90,442

(+17.9%)



CALD

52,605

(+25.8%)



INDIGENOUS

14,939

(-0.8%)



ALL ABILITIES

808

(+25.7%)

## VOLUNTEERS

COACHES

574

(-12.8%)

REFEREES

2,226

(+0.3%)

ACCUMULATIVE VOLUNTEERS

32,881

(+10.1%)



# NATIONAL PARTICIPATION 2023/24

## Touch Football Australia Participation 2023/24

Participation Category	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Diff. 22/23-23/24
1. Full Active Membership - Adult	86,270	94,573	83,451	81,424	89,266	9.6%
2. Full Active Membership - Junior	93,624	90,143	83,490	95,777	114,274	19.3%
1a. Full Active Membership Unique - Adult	61,704	65,708	58,895	58,606	59,502	1.5%
2a. Full Active Membership Unique - Junior	75,080	74,120	67,646	78,447	85,611	9.1%
3. Program Participants	10,027	11,822	9,262	14,664	13,316	-9.2%
4. Event Participants	57,948	52,040	46,518	73,331	79,712	8.7%
5. School Delivered Programs	85,770	85,486	83,304	101,906	105,539	3.6%
6. School Managed Competitions	228,910	129,580	88,818	154,242	169,726	10.0%
7. Accredited Volunteer Participants	21,437	24,839	26,978	29,856	32,881	10.1%
<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>583,986</b>	<b>488,483</b>	<b>421,821</b>	<b>551,200</b>	<b>604,714</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
<b>Schools and Juniors</b>	<b>408,304</b>	<b>305,209</b>	<b>255,612</b>	<b>351,925</b>	<b>389,539</b>	<b>10.7%</b>

## New South Wales Touch Football Participation 2023/24

Participation Category	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Diff. 22/23-23/24
1. Full Active Membership - Adult	35,877	39,856	28,959	31,409	36,938	9.6%
2. Full Active Membership - Junior	53,975	50,280	40,587	49,159	56,964	15.9%
1a. Full Active Membership Unique - Adult	27,920	29,752	23,674	24,970	26,868	7.6%
2a. Full Active Membership Unique - Junior	45,982	44,823	37,272	45,176	48,543	7.5%
3. Program Participants	825	1,483	552	1,108	3,116	181.2%
4. Event Participants	31,677	27,137	16,940	33,928	38,151	12.4%
5. School Delivered Programs	36,295	25,731	21,520	34,202	40,128	17.3%
6. School Managed Competitions	206,578	106,064	64,361	101,442	116,658	15.0%
7. Accredited Volunteer Participants	1,342	1,439	729	1,237	1,219	-1.5%
<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>366,569</b>	<b>251,990</b>	<b>173,648</b>	<b>1,342</b>	<b>293,174</b>	<b>16.1%</b>
<b>Schools and Juniors</b>	<b>296,848</b>	<b>182,075</b>	<b>126,468</b>	<b>184,803</b>	<b>213,750</b>	<b>15.7%</b>

# Queensland Touch Football Participation 2023/24

Participation Category	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Diff. 22/23-23/24
1. Full Active Membership - Adult	32,652	34,618	35,936	32,889	35,508	8.0%
2. Full Active Membership - Junior	33,345	33,165	36,802	40,291	49,812	23.6%
1a. Full Active Membership Unique - Adult	20,268	22,705	22,471	21,398	21,231	-0.8%
2a. Full Active Membership Unique - Junior	23,681	23,758	25,313	28,002	31,152	11.2%
3. Program Participants	5,171	7,995	7,243	10,774	8,342	-22.6%
4. Event Participants	17,032	15,951	20,290	25,406	26,297	3.5%
5. School Delivered Programs	20,152	23,962	20,639	25,492	26,001	2.0%
6. School Managed Competitions	9,086	13,214	16,097	43,233	42,767	-1.1%
7. Accredited Volunteer Participants	775	1,491	1,098	1,304	1,279	-1.9%
<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>118,213</b>	<b>130,396</b>	<b>138,105</b>	<b>179,389</b>	<b>190,006</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>Schools and Juniors</b>	<b>62,583</b>	<b>70,341</b>	<b>73,538</b>	<b>109,016</b>	<b>118,580</b>	<b>8.8%</b>

\*A unique participant is someone who could play multiple times but is only counted once in the reporting period, whereas a non-unique could play multiple times.

## Key highlights from the 2023/24 participation report include:

- Full active junior participants surpassed 100,000 for the first time in recorded history and 85,611 in unique numbers.
- Full active senior participants increased with a 9.6% rise and the first time since the 2020/21 reporting period.
- Alliance states full active junior participants saw an increase of 18.5% for non-unique and 11.8% for unique participants.
- NSWTA saw total participants increase by 16.1% with juniors and schools growing by 15.7%.
- Victoria achieved a 40.1% rise in school-managed competitions where a main focus of attention had been identified.
- School-delivered programs in ACT rose by 75.5% achieving a total of 4,031 students experience our sport through the education system.
- Events in Western Australia saw a sharp rise in representative touch with a 52.3% increase through the reporting period.
- Coach and referee accreditations grew by 69.2% in Tasmania strengthening the technical arm in the southern state.
- The Northern Territory posted an 11.9% increase in the schools and junior market which is a 50.9% increase since the 2018/19 period.
- The full active total membership in South Australia grew by 17.5% which is the first increase since 2018/19.



# INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION

## 2023/24

- TFA delivered the 2023 National Indigenous Touch Football Knock Out (NITFKO) in Dubbo, where the event has cemented its home, with teams from all over the state coming together in a celebration of culture and activity.
- The annual All Stars fixture was once again delivered as a showpiece to start the 2024 NRL season in Townsville with Touch Football showcased as part of a triple-header with the NRLW and NRL. Maori Touch New Zealand were once again engaged to bring their best talent to North Queensland and broadcast on free-to-air for the first time.
- TFA has entered the second year in the reconciliation journey under the Innovate RAP led by the TFA RAP Panel that guides the organisation on best practices and approach.
- TFA staff were introduced to a cultural learning experience delivered by the Dalmarrri group who educated and guided the team through a combined artwork centred around the Uluru Statement of the Heart at the 2024 staff conference.
- TFA staff have also been educated through an online learning module that sits within the sport's Learning Management System. They have also been engaged in days of significance including National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week activities where staff are encouraged to participate in external activities.

TOTAL

14,939

MALE

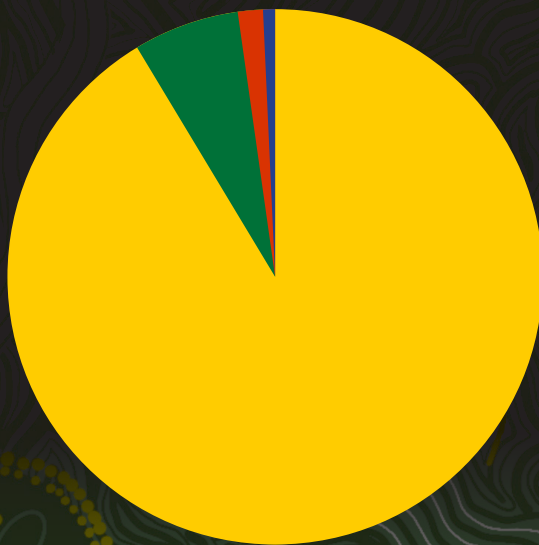
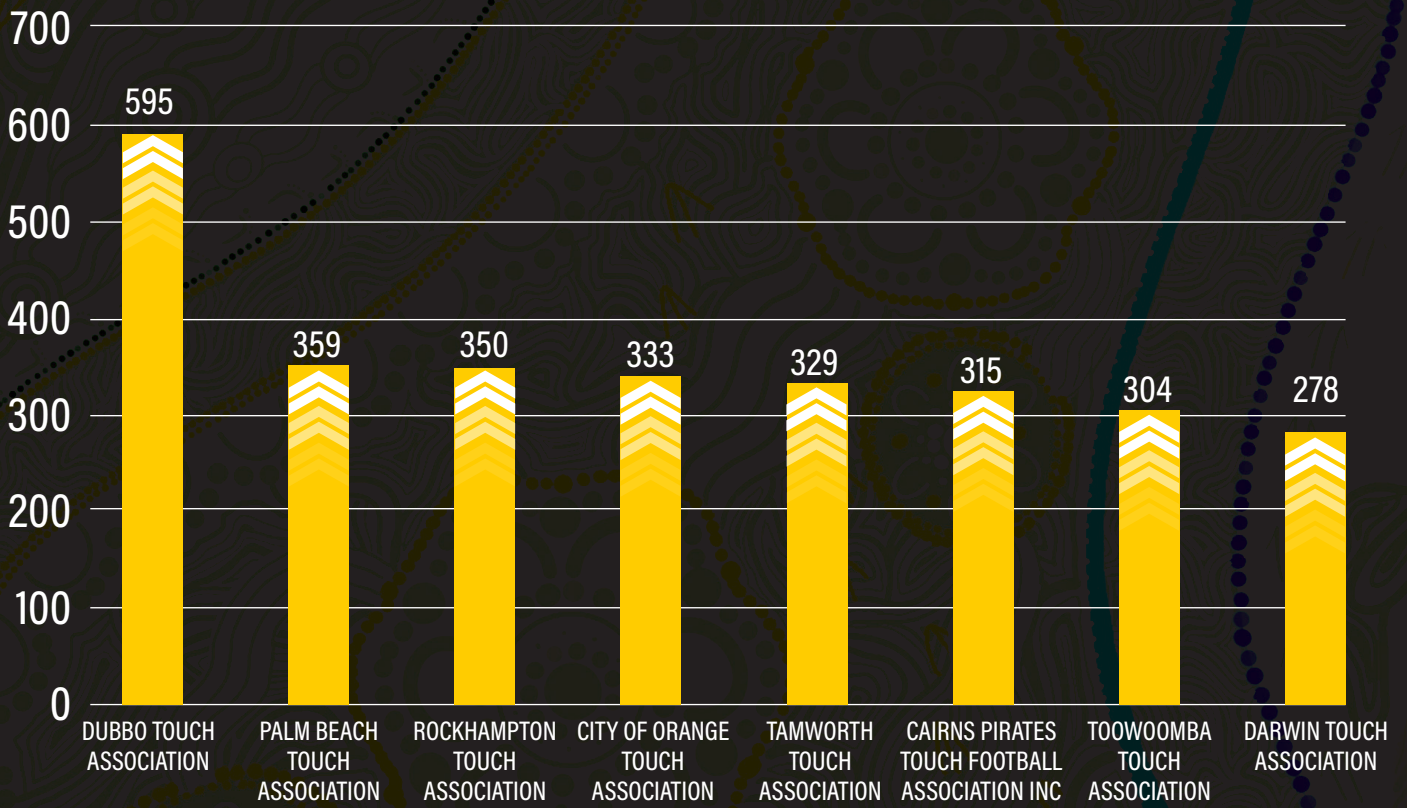
8,906

FEMALE

6,033



## Indigenous Participants Per Association



# 7.3%

**OF TOUCH FOOTBALL PARTICIPANTS ARE INDIGENOUS**

- NON-INDIGENOUS (92.75%)
- ABORIGINAL (5.82%)
- ABORIGINAL/TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER (1.12%)
- TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER (0.3%)



# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY REPORT

Touch Football ACT (TFACT) reported a slight increase in senior participation and a marked improvement in junior participation for the reporting period. This growth was primarily driven by increased participation numbers in school clinics and gala days.

## Human Resources

This year, ACT welcomed Holly Stephens to the position of Competitions Coordinator – working tirelessly to increase our senior retention rate and improve the player experience. Justin Oag also continues to develop our junior programs and has taken on responsibility for our representative tours – with the office continuing their commitment to the growth and retention of players within the ACT.

## STAC

Rebecca Beath stepped down from her role within our STAC, and I would like to thank Rebecca for her work during her tenure. Sarah Rodrigues has been appointed to the vacant position. Sarah has over ten years of experience in the practice of law and conveyancing and has been our Judiciary Panel Chair – we welcome Sarah and look forward to working with her.

TFACT and STAC members met with the community in April for a planning day to discuss the future of Touch Football within the ACT – with growth the primary focus with strategies discussed regarding the timing and structure of competitions to be implemented from this summer.

## Events

Events continue to be an important feature on the ACT calendar – with the annual NAIDOC Day achieving a capacity number of teams from the Federal Government in the reporting period.

Touch of Pride made a successful debut in Canberra with eight teams participating in a celebration of inclusion and diversity, with 50% of each team's entry fee donated to QLife.

The ACT Capital Territories Cup attracted 1,058 junior players from the ACT and surrounding regions which was an increase of 13%. Due to the interest and continued growth, the event will change to a two-day format from 2024 to welcome additional teams.

## Partnerships

We continue working with the Canberra Raiders with mutually beneficial outcomes, including the provision of employment opportunities for their NRLW players with the girls supporting TFACT gala events. The Raiders continue to actively promote all our competitions through their channels and have provided

opportunities for in match advertising at Raiders home games. Many of our junior female players also represent the Raiders in both Touch Football and Rugby League.

I'm pleased to report that we have entered renewed partnerships with long term supporters the Walking Clinic and Physio Clinic for a further three years. The agreements now include performance screenings of nominated teams in preparation for The Championships, presented by Inferno and the DoorDash National Youth Championships (NYC).

## Inclusion

TFACT continues to support inclusion and diversity through events and days of significance such as NAIDOC Day and Touch of Pride.

The All Abilities program also continues to go from strength-to-strength with the assistance of dedicated volunteers. TFACT sent two All Abilities teams to The Championships in March and all participants thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

The inaugural All Abilities Cup was also held over a weekend in October 2023, with ACT and regional teams participating in skill sessions and a round-robin event. For many of the participants, it was their first taste of competitive sport, with the event now an annual fixture on the ACT calendar.

## Performance

A Head of Development and Pathways position was created this year, with Chris Tarlinton appointed with responsibility over leadership, management, and delivery of all aspects of talent development and performance.

Six ACT Raiders teams participated in the 2023 NYC, giving 100 players and coaches a taste of representative Touch Football at the highest level.

Seven teams also headed to The Championships in Coffs Harbour, including a Men's 20s team for the first time. Our Women's 45s team were crowned champions in their division with a strong performance in the final.

ACT players continue to participate in the NSW pathways, enhancing the development of our players with two of our juniors, Chloe Smith and Elise Simpson, attending the inaugural Emerging Blues Camp.

The focus for the next twelve months will be the development of the pathways for our male players.

## Schools and Juniors

Growth was seen across all aspects of our junior programs, with almost 4,000 children introduced to our sport through school clinics and gala days. This saw transition into our competitions with an 18.25% growth in membership – a testament to the hard work carried out by staff and field officers.

TFACT again assisted School Sport ACT with the development of their teams that travelled to Darwin to participate in the School Sport Australia championships. ACT teams finished third in three of the divisions and placed fourth in the remaining division.

## Education

Forty-one (41) referees and thirty-two (32) coaches were accredited during the reporting period, a 65% increase on last year. Many of the referees were juniors that are now supporting our grassroots competitions and gala days.

In closing, I would like to thank our STAC members Mike Kenderes, Mat Maclay, and Sarah Rodrigues.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Justin Oag and Holly Stephens who work tirelessly to ensure that quality programs are delivered within the ACT.

Finally, I would like to thank the TFACT community including our referees, coaches, volunteers, and participants for their continuous guidance and support.



# NEW SOUTH WALES TOUCH ASSOCIATION REPORT

We are pleased to report that New South Wales Touch Association (NSWTA) has seen continued growth in both membership and participation throughout the 2023/2024. We have experienced a 17.6% increase in adult participation and a 15.88% rise in junior participation, bringing us back to our pre-COVID levels.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our dedicated volunteers who generously contribute their time to support our grassroots activities, and to our staff, who continually listen to our members and develop programs to assist affiliates in achieving their goals – which align with our mission of growing the sport.

## Strategic Plan

We have made significant strides in our strategic plan, scheduled for completion by December 31, 2024. As of June 30, 2024, we have completed nineteen projects under the strategic and operational plan, with nine more on track for timely completion. While two projects have been extended, the communications plan, as part of our digital strategy, and the ambassador program, we remain confident they will be completed.

However, two programs are at risk – the school conversion rates from MySideline, which will be partially completed, and the Facility Audit Review, which depends on affiliates providing required information through the Health Check program – due to lower-than-expected engagement from affiliates.

Our recent decision to undertake a Governance and Operating Model Review means that the current strategic and operational plans are on hold until the review is completed in April 2025.

## Participation

This past year has seen increased participation in our programs, primarily due to development initiatives conducted by regions and affiliates alongside those organised by NSWTA. We appreciate the efforts of all involved in these development programs – recognising them as crucial pathways for our Touch Football athletes. We also launched the Emerging Blues program to identify and nurture future State of Origin players, with our High-Performance Unit leading this initiative. We are grateful to NSWRL for providing free access to their Centre of Excellence for this program.

## Community

Our community engagement initiatives, including local clinics and All Schools events, have continued to build. However, transitioning school participants into our volunteer-led domestic competitions remains challenging, with our current transition rate at 29%, with an aim to improve this rate moving forward. School-based programs also saw significant growth and are approaching pre-pandemic levels.

## Inclusion

Our footprint spans 137 locations across NSW, with 8,419 Indigenous members, 18,583 CALD members, and 145 All Abilities athletes. While pleased with these figures, we are focused on the All Abilities sector in the upcoming cycle. The disruptions of 2020 to 2022 significantly impacted this area, but we are starting to rebuild with the help of dedicated volunteers. At our events, we plan to leverage their expertise to provide best-practice guidance and enhance accommodations for this sector.

## Recognition

We continue to recognise and appreciate the contributions of our volunteers – further strengthening our community. The NSWTA Gala Awards celebrated this with Tony Trad receiving the Rod Wise Medal for Volunteer of the Year and Shelley Rush-Nicolls of Maitland Touch Association being named the Aileen May Medallist for President of the Year. Shelley was also a joint winner of the Sport NSW Community Sports Administrator of the Year award.

## Events

Our representative program thrived in 2023/24, with the successful integration of the NSW Junior State Cup conferences and finals on Kayo Sport and Sky Sport Next as part of TFA's broader media rights agreement – offering a more professional approach to streaming and promoting the game, with this significant investment a valuable contribution to the sport. The NSWTA State Cup remains the premier event, showcasing top talent from NSW and internationally, with numerous overseas teams, individual players, and referees participating at the 2023 event in preparation for the 2024 Federation of International Touch World Cup. We are proud of the NSWTA contingent that represented Australia at the World Cup, and we supported each member financially as an investment in our people.

## Governance

This year also saw transitions at the board level with long-serving board member Chris Dolahenty not re-elected at the AGM, creating a casual vacancy. We welcomed Anthony Dudeck and Paul MacPherson to the board, and later appointed Nic Grose of Dubbo Touch Association to the vacant Director Country role – maintaining our board's gender diversity.

Although outside the reporting period, we would be remiss not to acknowledge the contributions of outgoing Chair, Mark Hearnden, and long-serving Technical Director, Ian Matthew. Mark, who joined the board in 2015 and became Chairperson in 2020, will not seek re-election at the upcoming AGM. Ian, who has served on the board for twenty-six years, has stepped down from his role as Technical Director. We extend our deepest thanks for their remarkable service and significant impact on the sport in this state.

In closing, we acknowledge the dedication of our volunteers in overcoming recent challenges and delivering a product that the community values. We are committed to promoting Touch Football to foster healthy lifestyles, build strong communities, and nurture sporting excellence. While our focus on innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability will guide our future efforts, and we look forward to the review we are about to undertake as a basis of setting our organisation up for success into the future.

We thank 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

## Human Resources

The past twelve months has seen multiple staff changes for Touch Football Northern Territory (TFNT) with State Manager Ian Bateman resigning in September and Temieka McAlpine assuming the role. Fiona Evans stepped into the Sports Operations role, before leaving in May 2024. With limited staffing resources, Kieren Crowe has continued to strive in his role as Community Sports Coordinator and provide our community with school programs and will look to increase our junior footprint in the next twelve months.

## STAC

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, Michelle Duggan stepped down from our STAC and Jacob Leonard was elected to the general council position. The TFA-nominated position was also reallocated to ensure our ratios fit within criteria. President Tim Pearson and Member Michael Fleming have been crucial in the upskilling and support of Temieka in the State Manager role.

## Funding

TFNT continue to receive support from the Northern Territory Government via the Office of Sport and Recreation Tier 1 funding and the Remote Sports Voucher Scheme. The structure of funding has been altered for the year ahead, however the amount of funding has been retained for the next three years.

## Participation

Participation numbers remained consolidated throughout 2023/2024 despite issues with field access and staffing shortages. Junior participation has slightly reduced but senior numbers have been maintained – with an overall positive retention rate of 60% returning to play year on year. Looking forward, we will launch a new junior format with the view that it will be adopted throughout the NT and increase participation.

## Pathways

TFNT attended the 2023 NYC with two teams and a new travel structure – with athletes travelling to the Sunshine Coast with their families and not staying as a team. Unfortunately, TFNT did not have a team attend The Championships in 2024, but several referees did attend the revamped event in Coffs Harbour.

## Events

TFNT have again successfully held several events, including the Dave Langridge Cup in Gove, the Bali Vibes Beach Touch Tournament, and the NT Titles. These events, while smaller due to travel cost challenges, were successful and have been reviewed for next year. The Dave Langridge Cup will alter to every second year due to volunteer burn-out, and the NT Titles will move to utilise the entire May Day long weekend.

## Schools

In 2023/2024, TFNT delivered programs to nine (9) schools reaching 4,550 students. TFNT also hosted the Top End and Darwin Region Gala Days with over 600 participants, as well as assisting with the Katherine Gala Day.

August was a significant month with the School Sports Australia Touch Football Championships held in Darwin – with players from all over the country joining TFNT for a week of Touch Football. This was a great opportunity to support a major event and provided some huge learning opportunities for all our staff.

## Education

At this year's NT Titles, Isaac Lane and Clayton Lane achieved their Level 3 referee accreditation – a huge achievement and recognition for their several years of hard work. We also ran six (6) x Level 1 referee courses and two (2) foundation coach courses throughout the year across Darwin and Alice Springs.

Over the past twelve months, TFNT has had great support from TFA and the wider Northern Territory sporting communities. We would like to extend a special thanks to Kieren Crowe (Community Sport Coordinator), Tim Pearson (STAC President and Referee Coordinator), the entire NT STAC Committee, Ken Golden (Referees), Nathan McDonald (NTRU), Tony Crowe (NRLNT), the NT Government, participants, all our affiliate committees, and all the travelling referees who have supported our events. We are truly thankful for the support and the time that each person volunteers, and could not operate without their support, advise, and expertise.



# QUEENSLAND TOUCH FOOTBALL REPORT

## Participation

Queensland Touch Football (QTF) continues to Unite, Inspire and Grow – with growth across participants, teams, and events continuing again this year. Queensland affiliates continued to lead the way with junior participation increasing 11.5%, equivalent to an increase of 323 teams. This is the third year that junior numbers have increased by 10% or more. Senior participation also increased by 6% across Queensland.

Event participation continued to remain strong led by our marquee event, Junior State Cup, following its relocation to Rockhampton under a ten-year partnership with Rockhampton Council – which will host the Junior State Cup every second year between 2023 to 2031.

Thanks to the unwavering support of Council and affiliates, 209 teams from twenty-nine affiliates, 3,000+ players, coaches, and referees gathered for three days of footy, fun and friendship. Gold Coast Touch Association were crowned back-to-back Affiliate Champions after a nail-biting contest against Rockhampton Touch Association.

## Events

Queensland Representative Schools Touch dominated the School Sport Australia 12s and 15s Championships, winning five out of the six titles. QTF continues to work with Queensland School Sport to support State teams, aligning schools and our community pathway to ensure the best players, coaches, and officials represent Queensland. Queensland 12s Boys, 12s Girls, and 15s Boys were crowned champions – while the 15s Girls went down narrowly in the final at the 2023 School Sport Australia (SSA) National Touch Football Championships held in Darwin.

At the 2023 NYC, Queensland Schools 18s Boys and 18s Girls were both crowned champions – achieving back-to-back titles. In the 18s Girls, Queensland Schools defeated NSW Combined High Schools in a dominant performance, and in the 18s Boys, Queensland Schools defeated NSW Combined Catholic Colleges by a single try. Queensland regional teams dominated the NYC – winning seven of eight divisions on offer in the U12s, U14s, and U16s divisions. The South Queensland Sharks claimed the overall champion entity claiming victory in four finals, claiming 16s Boys and 16s Girls divisions, 14s Girls, and 12s Girls – while the Brisbane Cobras defeated the Sharks in the 14s Boys final. A huge congratulations to all the players, coaches, and referees on their selection in the Nationals.

The year ended with Festival of Touch, including our largest Queensland State Cup on record with 2,000+ participants across 130 teams, including eleven international teams from five nations, including England and Japan in the Premier Men's and Women's divisions. The Rockhampton Redbacks defended their Premier Men's title for the fourth time in as many years, UQ Rebels triumphed again in the Premier Women's division, and Gold Coast claimed the Premier Mixed title. Gold Coast Touch Association retained the Champion Affiliate for the third year in succession. Our annual Affiliate and Sports Performance Conferences had 170+ attendees listen to guest speakers including TFA CEO, Jamie O'Connor and QRL CEO, Ben Ikin. In the evening, 250 guests gathered for the QTF Awards Night to celebrate and recognise the achievements of our outstanding Queenslanders across seventeen award categories.

QTF announced Festival of Touch will remain on the Gold Coast for an additional two years with Experience Gold Coast securing hosting rights for 2024 and 2025.

## AGM

The 2023 AGM ushered in changes to the QTF Board, significantly QTF Chairman Troy Morgan stood down ending an eight-year contribution to QTF. During Troy's tenure as Chairman, he not only led our Board but also inspired the wider QTF Management and Staff – Troy's contribution was acknowledged through a special presentation at the QTF Awards Night.

Life Membership was also bestowed on David Field for distinguished special service to QTF, recognising his thirty-year contribution to the sport. David joins a small but distinguished group of Life Members and was the first Life Member recognised since 2010.

In January, the Board unanimously elected Mathew Gilbertson as the new Chair of the QTF Board. Mathew is no stranger to the sport, having previously served on the Victorian, QTF, and TFA Boards – and more recently as long-standing Director and President of the South Queensland and Border Districts Touch Association. QTF engaged McLaughlin Sports Consultancy to undertake an independent review of the QTF Talent Pathways, with primary objective to establish a sustainable framework that enhances and promotes opportunities within the performance and talent pathways. With the final report received by QTF, work has commenced on implementing the review recommendations.

**Representative**

The Championships were hosted under a new format, with Queensland regional and affiliate teams continuing our success. The South West Queensland Swans reached the Men's Open final finishing runners-up, and UQ Rebels were crowned Women's Open champions after an extra-time win, following on from their Queensland State Cup title. The Brisbane Cobras were runners up in the Mixed Open final, however claimed victory in the Women's 27, Men's 30s, and Women's 40s. UQ Rebels claimed the Women's 20s, while the South Queensland Sharks claimed back-to-back titles in the Men's 40s and Men's 50s divisions and claimed the Men's 60s title. Other winners included Arana Touch in the Men's 45s and the Swans in the Women's 50s and All Abilities Tier 2.

South Coast Schools continue their dominance at the Queensland Representative School Sport Touch Championships, victorious in all bar one age division – winning the 10-12 Boys, 10-12 Girls, 13-15 Boys, 16-18 Boys, and 16-18 Girls titles. The clean sweep was only avoided with Metropolitan East securing the 13-15 Girls title. Congratulations to players, coaches, and referees in representing their schools' regions, on receiving awards, and selection for Queensland at Nationals.

On the international stage, 110+ Queenslanders, players, coaches, and referees were selected to represent the Athelite Australian Emus at the 2024 FIT Touch World Cup in Nottingham, England. Congratulations to Emus captains including Kim Sue See (Women's Open), Tim Baartz (Mixed Open), Jenna Rowsell (co-captain, Women's 27s), Dave Zanette (co-captain, Men's 30s), Justin Otto and Kelly Goodwin (Senior Mixed), Dave Maher (Men's 35s), Kelly Kennedy (Women's 35s), Nathan Jones (Men's 40s), Gavin Shuker (co-captain, Men's 50s), and 2024 Ron Hanson Medallists (Australian flagbearers) including Queenslanders Kelly Kennedy, Troy Morgan, and Phil Gyemore.

A special thanks to our regions, affiliates, schools, boards, volunteers, and staff who each day work hard to ensure the future for Touch Football in Queensland remains prosperous. Our ongoing success relies on collaborations across the sport, and this is evident through continuing participation growth across juniors, schools and events.



Of note, from July 1, 2024, QTF will introduce a Queensland Membership providing an individual membership, aligned with TFA Annual Membership, providing one single membership paid annually.

We continue to look forward to working with our stakeholders, as we strive to live our shared values – Forward Thinking, Stronger Together, Passionately Proud, Leading with Humility and Fostering Fun.

**2023/24 Participation Highlights**

- Total participation in Queensland increased by 3% across all participation categories.
- Junior participation increased by 11.5% and adult participation increased by 6%.
- Junior team numbers increased by 323 teams and senior teams increased by ninety-one teams.
- Event participation increased by 3.5% with affiliate, regional, and school events at all-time highs.
- Combined school and junior participation increased by 4.5%, reflecting our focus on juniors and schools.

**Greg Denny**

CEO, Queensland Touch Football





# SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPORT

**2023/24 has been a positive year for Touch Football South Australia (TFSA) with growth in most participation areas. This was led by the TFSA office, STAC Members, affiliate contacts, and field officers who have grown in numbers throughout the period.**

## Human Resources

The TFSA office welcomed two new staff members, Isabella Sedgmen and John Potter, in Ground Controller positions at City Touch – replacing Kainen Heath. We would like to thank Kainen for his significant contributions during his three years with TFSA.

## Participation

Full active adult and junior participation numbers in SA saw some pleasing growth during the period, with the switch to the individual membership model proving a positive for members. TFSA would like to thank our volunteers at the affiliate level for their passion and commitment to the sport of Touch Football in SA, and we look forward to continuing to work with affiliates to continue to increase participation numbers moving into the 2024/25 reporting period.

## Schools & Juniors

The School Competition space continues to grow through relationships with school sporting bodies, with competitions such as the Catholic Schools Championships, SSSA 7/8, 9/10, and 11/12 events, SAAS Touch Football Competition (Term 4 and Term 1), SACS Touch Football Competitions, Catholic School Girls Saturday morning competition, and IGSSA competitions all having high numbers of participation.

Alongside involvement with ACHPER PE Week, the SAPSASA Tea Tree Gully Carnival has brought about large growth in school-based participation. TFSA also combined with NRLSA staff to deliver a beach program in October, offering participants an opportunity to experience both sports.

Touch Football programs, both through DoorDash First Try (Sporting Schools) and standalone sessions, were delivered to over twenty schools by Andrea van Metzinger and the team of Field Officers, with many schools continuing to return each year. Additionally, a regional visit to Port Augusta allowed Touch Football to be delivered in the area for the first time.

## Events

The Your Podiatrist Cup was held on January 20 in Mount Gambier, with sixteen teams across SA and VIC participating. This was an increase from the previous year, especially pleasing with a team

and individuals from Mildura experiencing the event for the first time with positive results.

Adelaide once again hosted the Australian Masters Games, being a favoured location for the event. The event in October saw players from QLD, NSW, VIC, and SA come together to play games whilst also enjoying all that Adelaide has to offer.

The 2023 TFSA League competition was once again a tightly contested season, with many players and referees being exposed to the competition for the first time. The season concluded with three highly entertaining games and a drop-off in the women's grand final for the second year in a row.

The grand finals were held at Adelaide University Graduates Oval for the second successive year, and we'd like to thank the Adelaide University Touch Club for providing this opportunity along with hosting other rounds this season. Central Scorpions walked away with the Mitchell Cup for champion overall permit – with all three teams represented in the grand finals.

## Results

### Mixed Open

South West Wolves 5 defeated Central Scorpions 4

### Women's Open

South West Wolves 2 defeated Eastern Stingrays 1 (drop-off)

### Men's Open

Central Scorpions 8 defeated Northern Vipers 6

## Individual Awards

Rising Referee Award: Torran Clarke

Referees Referee Award: Indy Garner

Referee of the Series: Jordyn Tomba and Amanda Sheeky

**Women's Open MVP:** Emily Gale (Eastern Stingrays)

**Men's Open MVP:** Josh Dobie (Northern Vipers)

**Mixed Open Male MVP:** Khyle Raye-Arbon (Central Scorpions)

**Mixed Open Women's MVP:** Lauren Frost (South West Wolves)



### Recognition

This year saw Bill Sheeky from Demons Touch Football Association awarded the Bristol Paint TFA Volunteer of the Year Award, which is great recognition of the love and passion he has for both his community and the sport. Bill was recognised for his twenty-eight years of involvement with the club, which he founded, and continues to be heavily involved in today as a player, coach, referee, and President. A special mention also goes to the Adelaide University Touch Club's Tyson Blanco, for being one of the Bristol Paint TFA of the Month award recipients.

Also, in another achievement for the Adelaide University Touch Club this year, the club was a finalist in the 2023 Red Rooster TFA Community Club of the Year Award. This was awarded for the Women's Development Competition, which was the result of many hours from their dedicated committee members.

A special acknowledgement also goes to Simon Quast from Botanics Touch Football Association, who stepped down from the president role after more than a decade of service. TFSA would like to thank Simon for his leadership and commitment to the sport whilst also welcoming Nathan Lenic to the president position.

### Pathways & Representative

SA Heat was represented by two teams at the 2023 NYC – 18s Girls and 16s Boys. The 16s Boys team finished seventh in their pool and fourteenth overall, and the 18s Girls finished eighth in their pool and fifteenth overall.

### 18s Girls Awards

**Most Valuable Player:** Kate Lovell

**Coach's Award:** Jasmin Thirlwell

**Player's Player:** Mia Forbes

### 16s Boys Awards

**Most Valuable Player:** Diezel Watson

**Coach's Award:** Brendan Talbot

**Player's Player:** Cooper Topp

In March 2024 at The Championships, SA Heat was represented in the Mixed Open B division, coached by Dean Philp and Craig Barnett, in a positive given that SA Heat was not represented in the 2023 event. Congratulations to all involved and the below award winners.

**Most Valuable Player:** Joel Nolan

**Player's Player:** Patrick McGavin

**Coach's Award:** Caitlin McMahon

Two referees represented SA at The Championships, Jon Hall and Amanda Sheeky, with Amanda being awarded Leading Female Referee for the event.

SA had three teams represented at the School Sport Nationals in Darwin, U12s Boys, U12s Girls, and U15s Girls. Congratulations to the coaches and participants involved.

### Education

SA Heat NYC teams completed technical courses as part of their selection into the representative teams, resulting in fourteen (14) juniors completing the Level 1 referee course with a positive flow-on effect of more qualified referees to attend school-based competitions.

A Level 1 referee course was also held regionally in Port Lincoln, with seven (7) participants now accredited and refereeing regularly at the affiliate competition. Ten (10) coaches also achieved their Foundation Level in this reporting period and are actively coaching teams both at state and junior level.

### STAC

TFSA would like to thank our STAC members, Deirdre Morrow (Chairperson), Stuart Geros (TFA Board Member), James Sharp (TFA), Megan Elliott (General Member), and Amanda Sheeky (General Member), and give thanks to outgoing members Erin Taylor (TFA Board Member) and Tim Wyld (TFA GM Commercial) for their contributions to the sport of Touch Football in SA.

We also would like to acknowledge the affiliates, volunteers, participants, NRLSA staff, and TFA staff for their support and guidance through the 2023/24 period. We'd also like to give thanks to the Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing for their ongoing funding support to deliver the sport of Touch Football in SA.



# TASMANIA REPORT

The 2023/2024 period saw significant change for Touch Football Tasmania (TFT), particularly in terms of staff with the departure of State Manager Jeff Quick and Operations Coordinator Des Fogarty. This resulted in difficult periods within TFT prior to the appointment of Kim Williams as State Manager in March, and the appointment of new Community Sports Coordinator Ryan Shipp in June who is based in Launceston in a part-time capacity.

These appointments have brought a change of philosophy within TFT with the new administration focusing on growth through a commitment to increasing school-based and community-based programs, and increased support of our affiliate competitions in Hobart (STA), Launceston (LTA), Devonport (DTA), and Burnie (BTA). There will also be an increased focus on coach development and player pathways to target retention of players and volunteers, and to also re-establish a sense of pride and prestige within our representative pathways and major events.

From building relationships with our affiliates and listening to stakeholder feedback – it has become clear that there is a need to refocus much of our time and energy to grow Touch Football here in Tasmania through significant improvements in communication and clarity around all our programs at the grassroots level and at the high-performance level.

## Participation & Growth

Unfortunately, there has been a slight decline in both senior and junior active memberships compared to the previous reporting year. Senior active memberships total 2,520 and junior active memberships total 1,371, which is a decrease of 4.8% and 4.6% respectively.

**Southern Touch Association:** Our biggest affiliate competition with a total of 1,508 unique members registered for 2023/2024. This includes 1,092 senior players and 416 junior players.

**Launceston Touch Association:** A total of 944 members for 2023/2024, including 477 senior players and 467 junior players.  
**Devonport Touch Association:** A total of 383 members for 2023/2024, including 181 senior players and 202 junior players (summer season only).

**Burnie Touch Association:** There was a breakdown in the relationship between Burnie Touch Association and TFT resulting in a downturn of numbers for the summer competition – with only twenty-three players registered for a small four-team social competition last summer.

**Sporting Schools Programs and School Series Gala Days:** There was a significant reduction in these numbers compared to the previous year, down 23.8%. This is attributed to a focus on high-performance from previous administration, and a lack of communication regarding the School Series (Gala-Based Schools state-wide competition). With a renewed focus on growth, driven by a greater presence in the schools in our affiliate regions for 2024/2025, we're confident that we will see an increase in these numbers over the next twelve months.

**School-Run Competitions:** The Southern Independent Secondary Schools (SATIS) ran a Term IV Touch competition at Wentworth Park on Friday afternoons as part of their organised sports competitions. A total of twenty-nine teams (290 participants) were involved in the Year 7/8 and Year 9/10 competitions.

## High-Performance

TFT were again able to send eight teams to the 2023 NYC with Tasmania Thunder participating in all divisions from 12s through to 18s Boys and Girls.

At The Championships in March 2024, Tasmania was again unable to send any competing teams which will be an area of focus for TFT. Stakeholder feedback over the past six months indicates this was due to a lack of prior organisation from TFT alongside differing perspectives, and an absence of a visible structured appointment process for representative coaches.

## State Cup

The 2023 Senior State Cup was held in Hobart with twelve teams participating in 2023, compared to eleven teams in the previous year, with the Mixed Open division attracting the most teams with six. The Men's 30s division had four teams and the Women's Open division had two – however, the Men's Open and Women's 30s divisions did not proceed with only one team nominating in each.

The 2024 Junior State Cup was held in Devonport with twenty-nine teams participating – an increase from the previous year's total of twenty-five teams (however falling short of the thirty-three-team count in 2022). The division with the highest number of teams was the U14s Boys which had six teams, followed by the U12s Boys with five. It's also important to note that only two teams were entered in each of the U16s Boys, U16s Girls, and U18s Boys – with these age groups an area of focus to increase the number of participants.

## Cold Climate Classic

Hosted in Devonport, the third year of the Cold Climate Classic attracted a total of nine teams to the event. There were seven mixed teams entered in the social division and just two mixed teams entered in the competitive division. The event will take on a new format for 2024 and be held in Launceston on November 16 and 17 with a target of a significant increase in numbers.

## Accreditation for Coaches and Referees

### 2023/2024 Referee Courses:

- 7 x Level 1 referee courses were held resulting in a total of thirty (30) referees completing their Level 1 accreditation
- 2 x Level 2 referee courses were held resulting in four (4) Level 2 referees assessed, with eight (8) more still to be assessed
- 1 x Level 3 referee course held resulting in five (5) referees assessed

### 2023/2024 Referee Upgrades:

- 1 x Upgrade from Level 1 referee to Level 2 referee
- 4 x Upgrade from Level 2 referee to Level 3 referee

### 2024/2024 Coaching Courses:

- 2 x Foundation coaching courses held resulting in five coaches completing their accreditation

## Pathways

Although TFT have eight teams participating in the NYC in 2024, the selection process for both coaches and players needs to be reworked. Stakeholder feedback believes that the selection process for coaches lacked transparency and was left too late – resulting in an unstructured selection of players rather than an organised process based on performance at the Junior State Cup and/or summer affiliate competitions which limits the prestige of state representation. We are aspiring for improved processes and visibility for the pathways of aspiring Tasmanian players, with a twelve-month calendar to be set in place that clearly outlines the opportunities available to progress within the representative and high-performance space.



A structured pathway for coaches will also be an area of focus across the next twelve months as a new coaching structure will also be introduced nationally that will provide us with direction here in Tasmania.

Referees, however, are an area of strength with strong numbers in our affiliate competitions, particularly in Launceston. James Anderson is excelling in overseeing the referee programs with strong support from Bayley Aziz in Hobart – noting that both Bayley and Kodey Prendergast proudly represented TFT at the recent 2024 Federation of International Touch World Cup as Level 6 referees.

## Future Focus

- A renewed philosophy and focus on the growth of our sport is currently required in Tasmania, including:
  - An increased number of programs within schools,
  - A stronger link between our school programs and local affiliate competitions,
  - An increase in 'come and try' days to attract new participants to our affiliate leagues; and
  - Greater support of our affiliate leagues – particularly Burnie.
- Increased level of communication between TFT and all affiliate leagues in Tasmania,
- Earlier organisation and greater promotion of our major events to increase participation,
- A structured twelve-month event calendar that provides a logical and clearly defined pathway for players, coaches, and referees in Tasmania; and
- A continued focus on strengthening relationships with all stakeholders within Tasmania and nationally.

I am excited to work with all stakeholders to commence and/or implement these initiatives over the next twelve months.



# VICTORIA REPORT

## Human Resources

The Touch Football Victoria (TFV) office farewelled three staff in 2024 with Marcus Ryan, Keeley Hocking, and Evan Money departing. We thank them for their work and committed support throughout their tenure with TFV. With these departures, we welcomed two new staff, Brandyn Grenfell as Sport Operations Coordinator and Juan Rodriguez as Community Sports Coordinator. Both have settled in well to their roles and are having an immediate impact on community engagement.

Over the course of the year, we had three university placement students join us from Monash University supporting social media and communications, Deakin University supporting centrally managed competition and events, and Victoria University supporting grant applications, centrally managed competitions, and events. It has been a pleasure sharing Touch Football insights with these students and helping them on their career journey.

## Footprint

TFV has been working with rugby league clubs Northern Thunder, based out of Seabrook Reserve, and Hume Eagles, based at Bridges Recreation Reserve – with new facilities completed in 2024. We hope to expand Touch Football to these two clubs in the upcoming year now that facilities are completed.

## Events

The 2024 Victorian Junior State Cup consisted of thirty-four teams from U10s to U18s for the first time as we welcomed school teams to participate in the event – with an aim for expansion in 2025.

VT League was also held at our new Seabrook Reserve facility in Broadmeadows, hosting twenty-six teams, with Melbourne City Lions taking out the Club Championships. Congratulations to all teams that claimed divisional titles:

**Division 1 Men's:** Harlequins

**Division 2 Men's:** Melbourne Phoenix

**Division 3 Men's:** Galaxy

**Division 1 Women's:** Melbourne City Lions

**Division 2 Women's:** Melbourne City Lions

**Division 3 Women's:** Melbourne City Lions

Congratulations also to our three regional affiliates who hosted very successful events with the support of TFV – comprising of both metro and regional affiliates. Ballarat hosted the Western Affiliates Cup in November 2023, Geelong hosted Battle of the Bests in February 2024, and Sale hosted the Sale Knockout in April 2024.

## Partnerships

TFV moved office locations from Albert Park to the new NRL and Touch Football State Centre at Seabrook Reserve in Broadmeadows, enabling a stronger relationship to be built with the NRL and Melbourne Storm. We have collaborated with Melbourne Storm on two of their home games – delivering community Touch Football activations on Gosch's Paddock and activations on the AAMI Park big screen to advertise our school holiday program.

The social connection and culture within the office and between NRL and Touch Football staff has been fantastic for both teams, and we look forward to strengthening this relationship further next year and extending it to align some strategic priorities of both organisations.

## Inclusion

The Sri Lankan Touch Football tournament was held in August at Box Hill Rugby Club, showcasing ten teams in a celebration of Touch Football and culture including food, music, and support from the Mayor of Whitehorse City Council. Since the event, Sri Lankan Touch Football has become an affiliate of TFV and is planning an even larger event in September 2024.

Melbourne University has also been working to establish an All-Abilities program with the support of Able Australia. They are currently planning their first sessions for 2024 and promoting the program through local All Abilities organisations.

## Performance

Nine teams represented Victoria Storm at The Championships in March 2024, with 144 players across Men's and Women's 20s, Opens, Masters Mixed, and Masters divisions. The event provided a great opportunity to challenge our Victorian players who now bring a wealth of learning and experience back to our local affiliates as players, coaches, and referees.

The 2023 NYC saw five Victoria Storm teams and 80 players compete in the U14s, U16s, and U18s divisions. The event came at a challenging time with the onboarding of a new team in the TFV office, however, all teams had a great experience, and we look forward to growing the number of teams and a stronger cohort in 2024.

## Schools and Juniors

Through sporting schools, TFV have continued to run the DoorDash First Try program. We have had strong participation again in 2023/2024 with a total of sixty-nine schools and 7,496 participants completing the programs run by our field officers, staff, and schoolteachers.

This year, Victoria is thrilled to partner with Girls Sport Victoria where Touch Football will become a sport option to twenty-five girls' schools across the state in the 2025/2026 summer season. The introduction of Touch Football to these schools began with a two-day event where participants could try multiple new sports – leading to a Touch Football carnival for the twenty-five schools hosted by TFV at Seabrook Reserve in November 2024, and an education session for heads of sport and school coaches in 2025.

**Education**

TFV delivered a foundation referee coaching course and two coach facilitator courses in 2024 to ensure the state can become more self-sufficient in education delivery. This has proved very successful with the running of significantly more Level 1 referee courses, including upskilling all NYC U16s and U18s players as Level 1 referees.

TFV also partnered with Mentone Grammar to deliver a Level 1 referee course and will look to expand this model into our AGSV, APS, and GSV partnerships in 2025 to ensure our school Touch Football programs are more sustainable and school-aged participants can become qualified referees.

In the lead up to the 2024 NYC, TFV invited Tony Trad to Victoria to deliver a foundation and talent coaching course, and coach facilitator courses. This initiative saw sixteen newly qualified coaches educated and allowed a new cohort of coaches to enter our state level program. Tony ran courses on the Friday and Saturday, then attended training for all NYC teams on the Sunday to assist and develop coaches. He has since followed up with multiple one-on-one online coach development sessions which has been invaluable for our state.



# WESTERN AUSTRALIA REPORT

The 2023/2024 period saw junior participation increase by 35.85% which is the fourth year in succession that junior participation has increased in Western Australia. Senior participation decreased slightly, and overall participation was down marginally due to fewer student numbers in schools and programs.

Touch Football Western Australia (TFWA) staff are indebted to those affiliates and volunteers who continue to deliver competitions and programs throughout the year.

## Funding

TFWA would like to thank the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and Healthway for their ongoing funding commitment to the sport.

DLGSC continue to provide regional servicing funding and have committed to funding for 2024/2025. Healthway funding also continues until 2025 with an agreement to include the promotion of LiveLighter and 'Fuel to Go and Play' messages.

## Schools

TFWA staff and field officers continue to deliver school programs with face-to-face clinics engaging 16,958 students in 2023/2024 – a slight reduction on the previous year due to large numbers from additional regional school visits, but still a testament to the hard work by staff in delivering these programs.

Two all-girls Indigenous gala days were also conducted – one in Perth and one in Karratha in conjunction with the STARS Foundation.

School competitions were conducted with over 1,210 students playing in competitions – an increase of over 25% on the previous year. School Sport WA (SSWA) also toured and participated in the School Sport Australia Championships held in Darwin – represented in 15s Boys (fourth place), 15s Girls (sixth place), 12s Boys (fourth place), and 12s Girls (fourth place).

## Events

The TFWA 2023 LiveLighter Super League Series was held over eight rounds plus finals, which saw nineteen teams in the Open divisions. Our series champions were:

**Men's Champions:** Fremantle

**Women's Champions:** Perth Brothers

**Mixed Champions:** ARKS

The 2023 Junior State Championships, presented by 'Fuel to Go and Play' was an outstanding success with ninety-six teams participating from 8s to 17s age groups – increasing from seventy teams from the previous year. Held at UWA Sports Park, this provided the opportunity to play on the Friday evening under new lights to assist in spreading the draw across the weekend. The enthusiasm from affiliates, parents, officials, and players saw the event grow with the addition of regional teams from Exmouth and Goldfields.

The Senior State Championships, presented by LiveLighter conducted in February saw fifty-seven teams participate, equalling the previous year. It was excellent to see Broome, Busselton, Geraldton, Goldfields, Hedland, and Karratha teams make the trip to Perth to compete. New affiliate Baldivis entered four teams in their inaugural participation, and two teams from Singapore added to the diversity of the event. Congratulations to Perth Brothers who claimed the Champion Affiliate for the event for the second year in a row, and a special thank you to the referees and Tournament Panel who assisted in making the weekend a success despite the heated conditions.

The ANZAC Challenge in 2024 saw the Perth City teams win both the Men's and Women's games for the first time since its inception in 2021. TFWA thank NRL WA for their ongoing cooperation to have both Rugby League and Touch Football games in the one program for the ANZAC Challenge.

The North-West Touch Carnival was conducted in Karratha in June 2024 with teams representing Broome, Exmouth, Geraldton, Hedland, Karratha, Newman, and Tom Price. Karratha Gold were crowned champions in the senior division, defeating Hedland White in the final. For the first time, a junior division was also conducted, with Hedland Green claiming victory over Karratha Blue. Many thanks go to the Karratha Touch Association and Alex Craig for their organisation, and to the referees who assisted to make it a great event. The 2025 North-West Touch Carnival will be conducted in Broome.

## Education

Both referee and coaching courses were conducted in metro areas and each of the regional towns by TFWA staff. This saw 199 referees accredited and 61 coaches gain their accreditations.

**Human Resources**

A big thank you to TFWA staff Jeremy Wallace, Kathleen Madden, and Tallas Williams who worked tirelessly throughout 2023/2024 to achieve outstanding results in many areas including events, high-performance, school programs, and regional servicing. We would also like to extend gratitude to many others who have contributed to Touch Football in WA throughout 2023/2024, including STAC members Sally Irwin (Chair), Lauren Norris, Jason Cullen, Neil Collins, and Jamie O'Connor who served until January 2024. Following the WA AGM in January 2024, the new WA STAC consists of Sally Irwin (Chair), Lauren Norris, Matt Cooper, Craig Lowe (TFA Board), and Luke Saldern (TFA National Referee Program Manager).

Thank you also to the referees, led by Rob McKay and Alison Watters, who assisted at many events throughout the year. And thank you to the affiliates and their committee members who continue to deliver our game and provide advice and feedback, along with all the volunteers assisting in the game of Touch Football in WA.



# THANK YOU TO TFA'S VALUED PARTNERS

## PRINCIPAL PARTNER



## MAJOR PARTNERS



## OFFICIAL PARTNERS



## EVENT PARTNERS



## BROADCAST PARTNERS









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