

Issue 8 July 2008

Hi All

Well, we are well and truly into the silly season, where we have not only your local leagues running but also your representative programmes happening.

I wish to congratulate all those associations who have teams going to Nationals, and also wish your association all the best for the coming premierships.

While on tournaments: Please ensure that all the rules and regulations of the tournaments are passed down to your coaches/Managers. Any team caught with players that are not eligible will lose all their points and may be disqualified from playing the rest of the tournament.

The other thing to remember is as each new league starts you should be updating your FIBA Organiser, if you aren't already. In fact every time you go into FIBA and make changes you should synchronise your database to the web. At this stage the association with the biggest amount of members is Palmerston North. Well done there Willie for keeping everything up to date.

In the next couple of months I am hoping to organize some more workshops on FIBA Organiser, to help take the majority of associations to the next level of using the software. I am aware that the majority of bigger associations are using FIBA well, but I would like to see the smaller associations using it as well, as over time it will save on your administration time. Can you let me know if your association is interested in taking FIBA to the next stage and how to utilize their web page.

If there is anything else your association needs assistance with, can you please let me know, so we can cover that off at the same time.

Thanks Nelson for your update, it was so informative for me that I have added it in the newsletter, as a great example of how you can keep me and others informed of what is happening in your area. Thanks Chris.

Keep on pumping and a special thank you goes out to all the volunteers who are running the Premierships throughout New Zealand, BBNZ appreciates you.

Yours in sport

Glenda Rodger

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Please note: FIBA's 2008 Official Basketball Rule book is out. You can access it from FIBA's website www.fiba.com or our website www.basketball.org.nz (go to 'officials' then 'resources'). The new rules will be valid from the 1st October 2008.

Update on FIBA

You will note on the www.fiba.com site prominent promotion of <http://www.myfiba.com> which is now officially live globally. You should also have noted that your BBNZ members mySport pages have this myFIBA "look"

Because NZ is early with this concept, it is interesting to look at the <http://www.myfiba.com> home page and note the number of your associations featuring!

Live & breathe your sport on **mySport**. My Own page:

http://www.sportingpulse.com/mysport.cgi?domain=callum_mcnair



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Kate McMeeken-Ruscoe's Road to Beijing

Basketball will get Tall Fern Kate McMeeken-Ruscoe to the Beijing Olympics, but it was a basketball that almost put her out of contention. During a practice session two days before the New Zealand Tall Ferns were due to assemble for the first time in Canberra in early April, McMeeken-Ruscoe accidentally stepped on a basketball, hyper-extending her left knee.

"I gave all the tendons and ligaments in my knee a good tug, they said I did everything but tear my ACL. I took that for a good sign"

The 28-year-old two guard said, the day before the Tall Ferns depart for Beijing, her first Olympics.

Coming off a calf muscle tear that saw her miss the final three weeks of the Christchurch Sirens inaugural season in the Women's National Basketball League (WNBL), McMeeken-Ruscoe immediately feared the worst.

"Once I knew the extent of my knee I wasn't too worried. It was just when I injured my knee, I thought 'oh, no, it's my ACL'."

McMeeken-Ruscoe sat out the first training camp in Australia and missed the Good Luck Beijing Test Event in April, all the while secretly fearing she would be watching TV One's Olympic coverage from home for the third straight Games – missing out on Carl Dickel's 2000 team and Tom Maher's four years later.

"For Athens I was in the top 14 and was one of the last two cut. That was a killer because I'd been outfitted and had a map of the Olympic village. It was tough. Sydney was so long ago. I made my debut in 1998. I was one of the young ones in the team and just didn't quite make it."

She passed a fitness test on the eve of the Tall Ferns six-game European tour in May, performed well, then held her breath until coach Mike McHugh named his Olympic squad following the team's final training camp in Christchurch three weeks ago.

"To be completely honest, the first reaction was relief",

said McMeeken-Ruscoe, who has taken time off her job at New Zealand Cricket to head to Beijing.

"Because I'd been through it before and I was just trying to keep my emotions in check. I don't think I was really happy about it until the next day. When he read my name out, then I could breath... It wasn't until the next day that I really started enjoying it, then I was happy."

Now a decade on from her international debut, McMeeken-Ruscoe joins former captain Noni Wharemate and captain Aneka Kerr in providing leadership for a squad that has an average age of 23, alarmingly young for international level, let alone an Olympics. Asked what could be expected from this Tall Ferns group, McMeeken-Ruscoe chuckled,

"the unexpected I guess."

"We're still a young team, we haven't been together long. I think we're going to be a lot smaller than most teams so we're working on things defensively and not letting teams get comfortable against us. We need to be a team of defenders. We're working on our fitness a lot . . . If there's a loose ball, then we need to get it and we need to do the little things that will help us be competitive on the court."

McMeeken-Ruscoe will have plenty of support from home from her basketball-dominated family – mother Jane McMeeken captained New Zealand in the 1980s, father Matt played internationally in 1977 and played and coached in the National Basketball League, brother Luke plays for the Canterbury Rams and cousin Brook Ruscoe was Under-21s MVP in March and a current member of the Junior Tall Blacks.

To follow Kate and the Tall Ferns at the Olympics keep an eye on this website: www.olympicbasketball.fiba.com



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Dear Coaches,

My name is Brian McCormick and I am a coach, trainer and author. I specialize in youth basketball player development and write a free weekly newsletter which I send to over 1200 coaches in 30 countries. The topics vary from week to week and include interviews, injury prevention, nutrition, shooting development, weight training and more.

I am writing to invite any of your coaches in your association to sign-up for the newsletter. To subscribe, simply reply to this message with "Subscribe" in the subject. Also, as I know most associations publish their own newsletters/magazines, if you ever want additional content on player development issues, please let me know.

Finally, I am looking for coaches and/or clubs with a reputation for developing youth players to interview for my web site, www.thecrossovermovement.com. If you know any coaches or clubs, please recommend them to me and pass along contact information if possible. **Brian.**

STRATFORD BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION INC

*Presents the 30th Anniversary of our
Annual*

KATH DAVIS MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

2ND & 3RD AUGUST 2008

For: Men's and Women's Teams of B & C Grade Standard (No FIRST or SECOND DIVISION players), Men or Women, will be accepted.

Referees: Any badged referees will be welcomed and compensated for any extra games officiated.

<u>ENTRY FEES</u>	<u>MENS OPEN</u>	<u>WOMENS OPEN</u>
FIRST	\$150.00	\$150.00
SECOND	\$650.00	\$650.00
THIRD	\$350.00	\$350.00
	\$200.00	\$200.00

Olympic Scheduling

The New Zealand Tall Ferns departed Wednesday for the Beijing Olympics from Auckland International Airport, competing in their third straight Olympics. Will the Tall Ferns be able to repeat their enthralling march to the quarterfinals, with wins over China and Korea, at Athens four years ago?

Watch the Tall Ferns in action on TV One; on TV One and TVNZ Sport Extra on Freeview; on TV One, TVNZ Sport Extra, tvnz.co.nz three, and tvnz.co.nz four streaming live on the TVNZ website. Check guides for times.

Tall Ferns Olympic Schedule

(All times NZ Time)

Saturday, August 9

Tall Ferns vs Mali, 3.15pm

Monday, August 11

Tall Ferns vs Spain, 1pm

Wednesday, August 13

Tall Ferns vs China, 8.45pm

Friday, August 15

Tall Ferns vs Czech Republic, 1pm

Monday, August 18

Tall Ferns vs USA, 2.15am

Tuesday, August 19

Women's Basketball Quarterfinals

Thursday, August 21

Women's Basketball Semifinals

Saturday, August 23

Women's Basketball Gold Medal and Women's Basketball Bronze Medal Games

Go Tall Ferns!



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Tall Ferns Beijing Bound

By now the Tall Ferns have landed in Beijing and going for gold. For most it is a dream, but for the Tall Ferns it is reality representing New Zealand at the greatest sporting event in the world.

Before the team left, Basketball New Zealand, with the help of Canterbury Basketball, ZM, the Christchurch City Council and others, held a final farewell for the team. There was a great turnout of kids from across Christchurch who turned up to play games and get autographs from their favourite players. ZM did a promotion and some fans were lucky enough to win signed balls by the team. Maori TV was down there doing interviews with our Maori and Polynesian players, while a few photographers were taking shots for the local press. Thanks to all the team for putting in your own time and effort, all the kids who turned up to spur on our team, and to everyone else who helped out.

From everyone at Basketball New Zealand, we wish the Tall Ferns all the best for the upcoming Olympics. Kia Kaha and remember we will be with you in spirit and will be supporting you from home.

Be in to the draw to win spot prizes. Simply name the captain of the Tall Ferns and send your answer with name and address to paul@basketball.org.nz.

Also become a MyFIBA member and get the stats of the Tall Ferns games live. Go to www.myfiba.com now to register.



Good luck Tall Ferns at the Olympics!



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Making money from your website by promoting & using it

A new era in grassroots sport websites is underway, of which your site and thousands of others like it are playing a key part. Together with your IT partner, SportingPulse, we are going to cut new ground by helping you earn money for website traffic. In essence we want to work with you to commercialize the web traffic (or eyeballs) that you generate on your site.

On your own, your site is too small to gain significant revenue but collectively, the network SportingPulse has built attracts millions of page impressions per month, which forms an attractive proposition to the corporate world. Of course we are very mindful of those we engage for advertising campaigns.

The process will be simple. We will bring businesses to the table who wish to promote their products / services to the sports community. They will pay us for this privilege and we will in turn send you a cheque for the amount of time their advertising appeared on your site. We will not take any advertising requests from alcohol, gambling and adult services. We always adhere to a strict privacy policy on direct communication to individuals. Members will not receive spam.

What we do provide is outstanding opportunities for advertisers to target sports and regions via professional advertising that actually add substance and quality to websites within the SportingPulse network, including yours. Some recent campaigns have included AMEX, Powerade and Baker's Delight, all recognised companies with various commitments to sport. There are three main forms of advertising that may be adopted by these businesses. They are all neatly integrated within our network and do not look out of place. These are Leader-boards, Banners and Island ads.

Again, all are designed to look attractive and add a level of professionalism to your site. Our advertising department takes great care in trying to match the right clients with the right sports. The money raised from advertising on the SportingPulse network is poured back into grassroots sport and the ongoing development of the technology used to power your site and this fantastic network.

In some instances commercial agreements are in place with national sporting bodies and you may have previously received communications about this. The target is to inject 50 per cent of net returns back to you - grassroots sport. This is an exciting step forward and is opening a new revenue stream for you via your website. We trust you will show your support by encouraging your members to use your website as much as possible.



To learn more and discuss any questions on your mind please feel free to contact our communications manager with any questions you may have at i.nelson@sportingpulse.com – or phone 0800 808 202

2008 FIBA Oceania Under-19 Championships

At Wayville Sports Centre, Adelaide

Friday, August 1

Junior Tall Ferns 43 Australia Gems 71
Junior Tall Blacks 67 Australia Emus 94

Saturday, August 2

Junior Tall Blacks 71 Australia Emus 84
Junior Tall Ferns 49 Australia Gems 78

Sunday, August 3

Junior Tall Blacks 60 Australia Emus 81
Junior Tall Ferns 46 Australia Gems 81

Would your Basketball Association like free envelopes and postage?

Community Post can donate free postage-included envelopes to non-profit organizations which come under categories education, health and welfare, sport and recreation, arts and culture, and environment.

Applications for Community Post are open from 1 August – 31 August 2008. You can apply [online](#), or print a copy of the [application form](#) and send to your Community Post Regional Office or pick up an application form from one of our [PostShops](#). Applications close 31 August. Regional Boards meet in September and all successful groups will receive their Community Post envelopes by 31 October.

For more information, or to make an enquiry, please email communitypost@nzpost.co.nz or visit

<https://www.nzpost.co.nz/Cultures/en-NZ/AboutUs/SupportingCommunities/CommunityPost/>



Basketball contacts on the Vodafone call free network

Region	Name	Number	Email
Mid Canterbury	Pauline Paterson	021-745749	patersons.ashburton@xtra.co.nz
Wellington Basketball	Craig Owen	021-805716	info@wellingtonbasketball.co.nz
Wellington Basketball	Voldi Simi	027-4891946	voldi@wellingtonbasketball.co.nz
Wellington Basketball	Coleen Ross	021-852070	colleen@wellingtonbasketball.co.nz
Wellington Basketball	Kenny McFadden	021-656040	kenny@wellingtonbasketball.co.nz
Waikato Basketball	Amiria Driscoll	021-0460982	john@sportingventures.co.nz
Waikato Basketball	John Davey	021-888446	john@sportingventures.co.nz
Waikato Basketball	Angela Agnew	021-861449	john@sportingventures.co.nz
Waikato Basketball	Megan Spooner	021-861340	john@sportingventures.co.nz
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Auckland Basketball	Nicholas Kengmana	021-852398	gm@basketballauckland.co.nz
Basketball Waitakere City	Aik Ho	021-555504	aikho@bwc.org.nz
Rotorua Basketball	Farida Soloman	021-861319	rotoruabball@xtra.co.nz
Rotorua Basketball	Sue Pene	021-861320	rotoruabball@xtra.co.nz

You have joined and are not on the list please let me know as soon as possible, so we can circulate your mobile number around. If you haven't joined but would like to, please contact our Vodafone Business Consultant Tony Holt.

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021 414 040

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FIBA Creates Academy for Executives

The World Academy of Sport and the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) today concluded an agreement to establish the FIBA Academy. This is a global education initiative of FIBA, its aim being to further strengthen the expertise and skills of the executives within its 213 National Basketball Federation membership.

FIBA Secretary General and IOC member Patrick Baumann stated: *"We are delighted to be working with the World Academy of Sport on this important educational initiative for World Basketball and our many valuable members. Through this partnership, we will be able to offer high quality online courses to executives and administrators in National Basketball Federations around the world."* Director of World Academy of Sport Chris Solly commented that *"FIBA is clearly focused on servicing and developing their membership and we are delighted to assist. We are already a trusted partner of many International Federations and FIBA is a welcome addition"*.

The majority of the FIBA Academy courses will be offered online for FIBA members. They will be divided into 10 modules in the sectors 'administration', 'marketing' and 'events', culminating with an online exam and a certificate at the end. The FIBA online modules will be offered free of charge to members. All other online and face-to-face Executive programmes will be offered at normal World Academy of Sport rates.

The FIBA Academy will be officially launched in January 2009 and will provide Administrative learning opportunities to the global FIBA family. The FIBA Academy project comes as a logical development of FIBA's 'National Federations Manual'. In a second stage, an Athlete Certificate will be added to the FIBA Academy Program. Courses will be part of a new FIBA administrative ranking system and participation by member federation officers in the course will be awarded with specific bonus points. The FIBA Academy will be located and managed by the foundation that the International Basketball Federation is in the process of setting up.

About World Academy of Sport

World Academy of Sport provides leading educational programmes to International Sporting Federations and their member constituents around the world. Being based at the Manchester Business School, ranked as one of Europe's top ten business schools and classified fourth in the UK, it provides access to world leading executive education scholars and facilities. Further information on the World Academy of Sport and its work can be found at www.worldacademysport.org.

Challenge is on to get 18 to 24 year olds enrolled to vote

As part of its special Let's Get Loud youth enrolment drive the enrolment team has asked us to spread the word about getting enrolled. There are over 100,000 – or the same number of people it would take to fill five of USA's top basketball stadiums at the same time - 18 to 24 year olds still not enrolled. If you're aged between 18 and 24, or you've got four team mates or friends around that age, chances are one of them won't be enrolled to vote at this year's election. The Electoral Enrolment Centre is issuing a challenge to all 18 to 24 year olds and anyone working with them to get as many young people enrolled as possible during August.

Enrolling is easy and means your vote will count at election time.

Just go online to www.elections.org.nz or Freetext your name and address to 3676 and you'll get an enrolment form sent to you. You can get a form from freephone 0800 36 76 56 or from any PostShop. Make sure you fill the form in, sign it and send it back.

Enrol now, and remember to spread the word about how easy it is. While the election date hasn't been announced yet, the election must be held by 15 November. Time is running out. Don't leave it too late to enrol. **Do it now.**



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An update from one of our member associations

Hi there, the Nelson Basketball Association is in full swing with leagues and age-group programmes happening. Firstly a huge thank you to the floor controllers, referees, duty teams, coaches and players for making our leagues happen. Thanks Dallas for compiling the leagues and making sure everyone is informed of their games. Dallas spends a great number of hours trying to accommodate coaches/ teams requests as well as coercing our limited number of referees to officiate at your games.

Competitions – our website has draws, results and standings for all leagues, www.nelsonbasketball.co.nz – Fixtures/ Results and Miniball Draw

Senior Men and Women

The Old Boys Tropics are the front runners in the A Men grade. A side that features many of the Giants squad is proving hot to handle. Stoke Nayland A are leading the Women's A Grade early on. The Nelson College Old Boys and Stoke Nayland Saturday 6's share the lead after four rounds of competition in the men's B grade. Ashes Yellow are the only unbeaten side in the Women's B grade. We have:

- 50 Miniball teams playing in competitions
- 16 Intermediate teams playing in competitions
- 42 Secondary School teams playing competitions
- 25 Senior grade teams playing in competitions

Representative – The U15 and U13 Age Group teams are busy preparing for the Zone 4 Premierships in Dunedin and Blenheim respectively.

Nelson Summer Camp (January 2009) - The Nelson Summer camp will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday 23rd -25th of January 2009. Once again we are talking with top coaches to make this an excellent learning opportunity – more to follow shortly.

Referees – Zero Tolerance Program:

On a serious note, please respect the referees in charge of your games. Abuse from Coaches, players and spectators will not be tolerated. Referees are volunteers working for you to make your game happen. Appreciate them for the commitment they provide basketball in Nelson. Please feel free to volunteer yourself to learn how to become a referee.

Contact our local BBNZ Regional Referee Officer James Campion for more details on 029 2798136 or james@basketball.org.nz

Nelson Basketball Congratulates:

- ★ Nelson Giants for winning the Sport Tasman Sportsperson of the Year Awards '2007 Team of the Year'
- ★ Daph McKay for winning the Sport Tasman Sportsperson of the Year Awards 'Services to Sport'
- ★ Heather Walker for winning the Fulton Hogan League – TrustPower Community 'Volunteer Award'
- ★ Mike Fitchett for making the 2008 Tall Blacks Squad
- ★ Adam Rainbird and Jelena Vucinic for making the New Zealand U18 teams preparing for the U19 World Championships in Auckland, New Zealand, September 2009
- ★ Shannon Perrett and Michael Karena for making the New Zealand U16 Team to play in the Australian State Championship in Perth, July 2008
- ★ Jelena Vucinic, Adam Rainbird and Aaron Dempster for making the U19 and U17 National Tournament teams
- ★ The 22 players selected for the second BBNZ Cluster camps (names on website).

An enormous thanks to our funding partners and supporters – Houston Motors, Hirepool, NZCT, Pub Charity, Pelorus Trust, Eureka Trust, Lifestyle Accounting, AJ Brown Builders, cityfitness, Daniell-Smith & Co, Matthews Eyewear & Eyecare, Transfield Services, Tasman Brewing Co., Nelson City Council, The Canterbury Community Trust, McFadden, McMadden, Phillips, Mainland Foundation, Paper Plus, Haven Sports Trust, Fuji Xerox, Telfer Young, Nelson Glass, Endeavour Homes.

Introducing our new BBNZ team members

Cath Kara our new
Support Coordinator



You can contact Cath at:
04 498 5956
cath@basketball.org.nz

Nick Crocker our new
Tournaments Manager



You can contact Nick at:
04 498 5967
nick@basketball.org.nz

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...What happens in Vegas ... usually stays in Vegas ...

unless you're the New Zealand Junior Tall Ferns. With six straight wins, the JTF's - coached by Darryl Pene - ensured they will bring championship trophies back from Sin City after winning the varsity girls section at The Main Event tournament in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Sunday.

With post presence Chevannah Paalvast leading the way with 14 points and forward Milika Nathan compiling a 12-point and 10-rebound double-double, the Kiwis defeated ECI Select West, of North Dakota, 57-50 in a tight final. With starters Paalvast, Nathan, Erin Rooney, who scored 10 points, Captain Jordan Hunter and Cody Hippolite playing well, the JTF's were able to hang basket-for-basket with the Roughriders early in the second half, before edging ahead down the stretch.

The final win capped an undefeated six-game run through Las Vegas in their preparations for this weekend's three-game FIBA Oceania Under-19 Championships in Adelaide, winning by an average margin of almost 19 points per game and allowing their opponents just 32 points per contest. *"Of the six games, the girls really dominated four of them,"* Pene said from Las Vegas' McCarron Airport, before the team's Vegas-Los Angeles-Sydney-Adelaide journey. *"They really pushed the pace. Teams over here are more used to grinding it out in the half-court. We think this is the way Australia are going to play, so went want to be prepared to play with them'.*

Pene continues *"Our defence kept us in it but our rebounding let us down. That was disappointing, we let them get more than one shot . . . we were really pleased to get the games, we just need to be able to sustain it. There's times when the girls' concentration goes. The girls did play well as a team and we get another two warm-up games in Adelaide against Central league teams."*

The tournament was also an opportunity for the Kiwis to make an impression on USA college scouts and recruiters, who flood to the tournament, and New Zealand players received a significant amount of attention. *"There were scouts that showed interest,"* Pene said. *"There are a few guy that are keen to go to the States to play, so we'll see what happens."*

The JTF's defeated Fort Worth Gray, of Texas, 44-27 in Sunday's semi-final, with Paalvast scoring at will inside, scoring a game-high 15 points, while Rooney had 12 points, Hippolite 10 points, Harriet Fenwick 12 rebounds and Nathan 11 rebounds.

**Junior Tall Ferns at The Main Event
Las Vegas, Nevada, USA**

◆**Final** Junior Tall Ferns 57 (Chevannah Paalvast 14, Milika Nathan 12, Erin Rooney 10) ECI Select West (ND) 50

◆**Semifinal** Junior Tall Ferns 44 (Chevannah Paalvast 15, Erin Rooney 12, Cody Hippolite 10) Fort Worth Gray (TX) 27

◆**Quarterfinal** Junior Tall Ferns 51 (Chevannah Paalvast 15, Erin Rooney 10) ECI Select East (ND) 28

Pool Play

◆**Junior Tall Ferns** 36 (Erin Rooney 12) Bloomington Panthers (IN) 34

◆**Junior Tall Ferns** 75 (Jelena Vucinic 15, Chevannah Paalvast 14, Milika Nathan 12) Washington Triple Threat (WA) 30

◆**Junior Tall Ferns** 44 (Erin Rooney 16, Zoe Kensington 10) Hoop Dreams (ID) 25

Saturday's quarterfinal saw New Zealand over-run ECI Select West, of North Dakota, 51-28, with Paalvast again top-scoring with 12 points, while Rooney had 10 points and Fenwick pulled down 15 boards. An aggressive full-court press defense allowed the JTF's to mow through their three pool games unbeaten, with two Rooney free-throws securing a 36-34 win over the Bloomington Panthers, of Indiana, along with a big 75-30 result over Washington Triple Threat and 44-25 over Hoops Dreams, of Idaho. Rooney had 12 points and Fenwick 13 rebounds against the Panthers, Jelena Vucinic, daughter of Tall Blacks coach Nenad Vucinic, with 15 points and Paalvast 14 points against Washington and Rooney 16 points and Fenwick 12 boards versus Hoop Dreams.

The Junior Tall Ferns will be joined in Adelaide by Harbour pair Kezia Kelly and Rebecca Dew, who were ineligible for The Main Event as they have already committed to American college programmes.

The JTF's play the Australia Gems in three games for a place at the FIBA Under-19 World Championships in Thailand next year, while the Junior Tall Blacks, who have been preparing by playing the Northern Conference of the Conference Basketball League (CBL), will meet the Australia Emus in a three-game series in Adelaide for Oceania seedings at the FIBA Under-19 World Championships in Auckland next July. As hosts, New Zealand qualified automatically, while Australia will claim Oceania's berth no matter the result this weekend.

Well done girls!

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Conference Basketball League

Two New Zealand Tall Blacks returned to the court for club teams in the Conference Basketball League (CBL) last weekend. Starting centre Craig Bradshaw made his first appearance for the Central Conference's Wellington Saints in a loss on Sunday, while shooting guard Corey Webster returned to his Northside team in a Northern Conference win.

Bradshaw shot 8-of-13 from the field and top-scored with 24 points and 13 rebounds as the Saints fell 91-86 to Wellington in round six of the Central Conference, adding two assists, two blocks and two steals. Webster, who played in 10 games for Northside before being called up to the Tall Blacks, had 23 points, five rebounds, four assists and four steals as Northside held on against AUT University 104-101. Webster's Northside currently sit in position to claim one of five Northern Conference spots for the CBL National Tournament in Wellington from August 28-30.

The Junior Tall Blacks/Breakers development squad have finished up their regular season with an 18-6 record - the only team to have booked a place at the CBL Nationals - but could lose the regular season champs tag over the final three rounds. The Western Bay Suns, of Tauranga, remain second but have lost their last two, while the three-time defending CBL champion Waikato Titans, coached by Jeff Green, have rattled off 10 straight wins to move ahead of Northside and the Harbour Heat Reserves, still the team with the best record at 16-3, in the top-five. AUT, Auckland and West Ballaz Massey remain outside chances to crash the party.

The Saints will need Bradshaw to help make up ground in the final three rounds of the Central Conference, with Wellington and Turanga Health Rising Suns sharing the lead and only two spots available for the national tourney. However, without Bradshaw, the Saints defeated Wellington 105-93 on Saturday, avenging back-to-back losses the previous weekend. The Rising Suns split their road double-header with the Taranaki Panthers last week to hold the best record.

The sole CBL Southern Conference berth will likely come down to a three-game series between Otago and the North Otago Penguins. Otago were the only South Island CBL entrant, gaining automatic qualification, but offered to put their place at stake to the winner of the Southern Inter-Association League, which features Otago, North Otago, Central Otago and Southland, and currently led by the Penguins.

Conference Basketball League (CBL) Nationals

Thursday, August 28
Southwest Stadium, Wellington

Friday, August 29
Southwest Stadium, Wellington

Saturday, August 30
Wellington East Girls' College, Wellington

One on One...

The end of the 2008 NBL season highlighted clearly to all that there have been issues with the running of the League. This is not a new phenomena but something that has been an issue for some years. The recently announced review should result in a two to three year plan to 'upgrade' the league and we look forward to constructive dialogue with all stakeholders as we work to get it right!

The Tall Blacks ultimately failed in their quest to qualify for the Olympics. However when you look at the final 12 teams in the Olympic draw it is clear that basketball in Europe is immensely strong and the challenge of beating Greece in front of 18,000 fans in the Athens Olympic venue was simply too much for this new team. The challenge now is to build on the foundation work done with this new squad and we look forward to their progress!

A number of tournaments and Leagues are operating around the country and this is keeping the BBNZ staff extremely busy. A number of minor issues have arisen relating to the effective operation of these events. We all need to bear in mind that there are literally thousands of competitors in these events and only a handful of administrators and volunteers. So please remember that we all need to work together to ensure that these events run smoothly. And a big thank you to those who work tirelessly to deliver successful events!

And finally on behalf of all of us in the basketball community our very best wishes go to the wonderful Tall Ferns for their Olympic campaign. You are on the most elite of world stages and we are all there with you. **Bounce bounce...**

Dale Stephens
Chief Executive

