

# SPORT



## SBL stars Albany bound

### Wagstaff set to weave his magic for Redbacks in crucial clash

#### BASKETBALL

ALBANY will get a taste of State Basketball League action when the Perth Redbacks fly into town to take on the Mandurah Magic at Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre on July 2.

With a lot of hype surrounding the possible return of the Raiders into the SBL in the near future, the Redbacks will return to the Great Southern for the first time since 2009.

In 2009, the Redbacks hosted the Magic in Albany as one of their home-round fixtures, and that will again be the case next month when they play a men's and women's match on the new ALAC courts.

Star Perth Wildcats forward and recent Australian Boomers inclusion Jesse Wagstaff is expected to line-up for the Redbacks in the Albany fixture.

Redbacks president Gary Prior said the club was looking forward to its Albany match.

"This is a really good thing, we were down in 2009 and really enjoyed it," he said. "Now with the new courts we as a club can't wait."

As well as Wagstaff, the Redbacks are expected to play a number of other big stars, including Sydney Kings player Joel Wagner and former Wildcat Adrian Majstrovich.

Prior welcomed the idea of Albany returning to the SBL and said this match was a chance for the town to get behind the bid.

"It is really up to the town to show their support for this game and show that it can be viable," he said. "There is a lot of cost involved with running an SBL team especially in the country so this will be in the interest of the city to see if it works."

Speaking about the match itself, Prior said both sides would not send a second string team to Albany, saying it was a crucial match ahead of the finals.

"The key to this is that it's a serious full on fixture and will be taken very seriously," Prior said. "It will be played in the last month before the playoffs and the teams want to win."

He said a lot of hard work had gone into getting the match to Albany and thanked the Department of Sport and Recreation in Albany, the City of Albany and the Albany Basketball Association.

Cameron Newbold



Jesse Wagstaff of the Wildcats shoots a free throw during the round 14 NBL match between the Perth Wildcats and the Wollongong Hawks at Challenge Stadium in 2010. Wagstaff is expected to line up for the Redbacks State Basketball League match in Albany on July 2.

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