

The Finals



GRAND FINAL WEEK

A League Women

Let's start out with the A League Women's Qualifying Final where Zodiac's Courtney Kretschmer stole the show, giving the crowd something to cheer about as she put together one of her best all round performances of the season, dropping 13 points. The golds grabbed the ascendancy in the third period when they shocked the Magic with a 17-5 run, it was a telling patch and gave Zodiacs great confidence. Despite a late charge by the Magic, Zodiacs held firm and celebrated their move into the grand final, no doubt taking some genuine confidence with them. Kelli Schramm supported Kretschmer well, while Sophie Lee added a valuable 8 points. For the Magic, Tennille Searl led the way with 11 points, while the reliable Melinda Todd was reasonably well held with 7 points. Zodiacs running out winners 46-30.

The lady Zodiacs now face the dominant Strathalbyn Storm in the big dance.

Grand Final Preview



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It almost feels like Groundhog Day, but much more exciting! We have the Storm and Zodiacs squaring-off in what promises to be an absolute cracker game. While Strathalbyn have had the edge all season, there is no doubt the inclusion of late season recruit Kelli Schramm for the golds has them poised to capitalise should they bring the complete package.

All eyes will firmly be on Strathalbyn's All-star threesome of Carly Vivian, Candice Holdsworth and Shane Nethercott, as they are the genuine leaders for the Storm and look to complement each other's game extremely well. For the Golds look for the likes of Courtney Kretschmer, Sophie Lee and Jenna Brumpton to be vital cogs in a potential championship title.

Zodiacs absolutely must get on top early in this game, something they failed to do in previous meetings. However, a grand final is a different game unlike the regular season and anything is possible in 40 minutes? Look for a fast paced game with no quarter given by either side.

Key match-up: Carly Vivian (Strathalbyn) & Courtney Kretschmer (Zodiacs)

TIP: Strathalbyn by 11pts



EASTERN HILLS OFFICE HOURS 4.30PM – 9.30PM MONDAY - THURSDAYS

A League Men

Mount Barker Magic will head into this week needing just one win to claim the 2016 Summer A League Men's title after completing a 59-50 win over a pesky Zodiacs 1 in the qualifying final. Both teams had a question mark over how effective they would be with Zodiacs star point guard Joel Goodenough, and Magic forward Andrew Mason both carrying injuries into the game. The Magic shot out of the blocks early, going on a 19-9 run midway through the first term on the shoulders of Andrew Mason to take a commanding 36-21 lead and looked to have the game in their keeping. The small but enthusiastic crowd anticipating an easy win for the Magic, however the experienced Golds had other ideas and returned to the court and proceeded to chip away at the margin. Still down by 16 points heading into the last quarter, the Magic would not be denied, with Matt Johns showcasing his skills with a 10-point final quarter. Zodiacs winning the final quarter of play 17-10, but could not hold back the barnstorming Magic. Andrew Mason finished with 20 points, supported by Jason Warhurst (17 pts) and Matt Johns (16 pts). For Zodiacs it was again Mike Smith (24 pts) and Joel Goodenough (11 pts) leading the way.

There is no doubting that the Magic have had a great season, and coach Jason Warhurst would be pleased with the way his team moved the ball on offence and tightened up their man-man defence.

Grand Final Preview



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The 76ers with a week off and a semi-final win under their belt against the Magic should be full of confidence, but can they complete the job on the big stage? While the mistakes of the past fortnight for Magic have been talked about, they have certainly turned it around given their Qualifying final performance. Let's not forget that the Magic have been the ladder leaders all season, and can turn it on if they play as a team rather than look for individual efforts to get them across the line. German Arms Jordan Houlahan and Troy Parker-Boers will need to quell the dangerous duo of Andrew Mason and Matt Johns, while Jayden Tarca and Sam Scott have proven a handful for opposition teams this season and will need to be monitored closely by the Magic defence.

It's the last roll of the dice for the 76ers so expect a red-hot effort, but if the Magic get a sniff they won't let an opportunity slip for a second match in a row! Look for another blockbuster match-up between two extremely talented teams. Overall roster depth could be a telling factor between the two teams.

Scott Rattus is driving the "school bus" and if the 76ers want to take the title, they will need to climb aboard!

Key match-up: Jason Warhurst (Magic) & Scott Rattus (German Arms)

TIP: German Arms by 3pts in Double O/T



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Winter **LEAGUE**

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