



Joint media release ... please EMBARGO until 12.30pm WEDNESDAY 13 April

WNBL team bid hopes to create Central Qld's first national sporting team

CQUniversity and the Central Queensland region could receive regular national exposure thanks to a bid hoping to attract a Women's National Basketball League (WNBL) team to be based in Rockhampton.

If the application process is successful, as hoped, the new team would become the first national sporting team for Rockhampton and the wider CQ region, with home games to be played at the 2000-seat CQUniversity sports stadium.

The University and Rockhampton Regional Council are teaming up with Rockhampton Basketball and are confident about progressing a sponsorship and ownership package, enabling the team to enter the 2017 WNBL season.

The new team would have a fresh brand name identity, incorporating CQUniversity as the naming rights partner while promoting Rockhampton and the whole CQ region.

CQUniversity Vice-Chancellor Professor Scott Bowman says he is confident the venture will become a boon for female sport and local basketball, while building local community identity more broadly. He notes that CQUni has had naming rights for an NBL male team – the CQUni Cairns Taipans – for several years.

CQUniversity already has had intensive involvement with basketball research, working with local players and coaches to track and improve their performance and recovery. A Rockhampton-based WNBL team will attract additional professional coaches and elite players to the region, opening up more opportunities for research.

"We had a fantastic community response last year hosting Rockhampton's first NBL basketball game between the CQUni Cairns Taipans and the Townsville Crocs at the CQUniversity Rockhampton North sports centre, so this venue is primed to host the new WNBL home games," Professor Bowman says.

"If the bid is approved, we will be looking forward to opening a discussion with the community over things like the team name, mascot, colours, and an identity that reflects our region."

Rockhampton Mayor Margaret Strelow says that in just six short months we will know if this WNBL dream can be a reality for Rockhampton.

"This is not to understate our commitment to the NRL Bid team, but as a community we are also willing to get behind a national basketball team and we are particularly excited that in doing this, we are supporting a women's sport," Mayor Strelow says.

"We are a very strong basketball community already and this is a natural fit for us. I'm delighted that Townsville is also going to be so strongly involved in the WNBL."

"I commend Rockhampton Basketball and CQUniversity for stepping up to the plate and I call on our community to throw their support and enthusiasm into the bid."

Meanwhile, Rockhampton Basketball Inc Manager Matt Neason says that “Rockhampton Basketball forged a strong relationship with CQUniversity and RRC last year in the delivery of a national men’s pre-season game”.

“The success of that event gives an indication of just what’s possible,” Mr Neason says.

“The community and corporate sector have already demonstrated that they will proudly support basketball in the region. With 10 years of consecutive sell-out crowds, the success of our Rockets and Cyclones programs provides a great platform for a potential national league team.”

ENDS

Attention News Editors: You are welcome at our media announcement from 12.30pm WED 13 April (today) at CQUni Rockhampton North sports stadium.

*For those who can’t attend in person, please phone Rton Basketball’s Matt Neason **0439 308 858** any time after 11.30am today.*



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