

“SEEING IS BELIEVING”

NETBALL'S VISION TO CELEBRATE
MORE FEMALE SPORTING ICONS



CELEBRATING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF FEMALES IN SPORT

Sport is a vehicle for change; a soapbox for causes, discussion and taking a stand. It is also part of the DNA that makes Melbourne so great - the fabric of what makes our town one of the most liveable cities, and without a doubt, the sporting capital of the world.

Melbourne prides itself on its inclusiveness and working towards a better way of life for all, yet the icons and symbols across our physical environment do not reflect the reality or future aspirations that we so often talk about.

There are 29 statues in Melbourne of male sports stars compared to three female athlete statues (as well as three horses; Phar Lap, Makybe Diva and Winx), and while all are so deserving of the honour, we need to break the bronze ceiling and visually represent more of the trailblazers and females who matter.

We continue to honour the men who have raised the bat and kicked the goals before us, and who have inspired generations of sports people to do great things. However, we want and need to empower young women by showing them that they are equally as capable of achieving excellence in sport by reflecting this in physical monuments of sporting icons.

When AFLW's Tayla Harris' statue was erected in Melbourne in 2019, it was not newsworthy because of the photo that sparked the conversation, it was newsworthy because it was rare. It was newsworthy because it was inspiring, empowering and a true reflection of our present and our future.

For almost 100 years, netball in Australia has celebrated women's achievements as athletes,

from grassroots to the elite. The sport has been a driver for female empowerment on and off the court and remains the number one team sport for females in the country. Often with the catch cry 'here if you need', our voices have done some good, but now is the time to be seen, as well as heard.

Victorians have dominated the netball space throughout history with record numbers across membership in participation and fans, as well as athletes and officials representing on the international stage. Victorian netballers have been household names not only in our own state, but across the world, and continue to be the names that women of all ages, from across the globe look up to and aspire to be.

This year's theme for International Women's Day is 'Choose to Challenge', and we are doing just that with our bid to have a statue of a Victorian female sporting icon, specifically a netballer, erected at the newly named John Cain Arena, in the sporting hub of Melbourne.

John Cain Arena has been the venue of professional netball games since it was originally built. It has been the home of the Melbourne Vixens, with the Melbourne Phoenix and Melbourne Kestrels playing a series of marquee games in the venue. Our teams have enjoyed terrific success in the stadium with the Vixens winning two premierships there and the Phoenix winning three, and a fourth at the former glasshouse across the road. The arena also hosted the netball finals for the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Yet our desire to have a female athlete immortalised in the precinct runs deeper than support of the sport. In his time as Premier, John Cain was instrumental in passing landmark Equal Opportunity legislation, as well as threatening the removal of future funding from the Victorian

Racing Club and Melbourne Cricket Club due to their exclusively male zones. The zones were abolished from those sporting clubs and the notorious lines painted on the ground prohibiting women from crossing were removed.

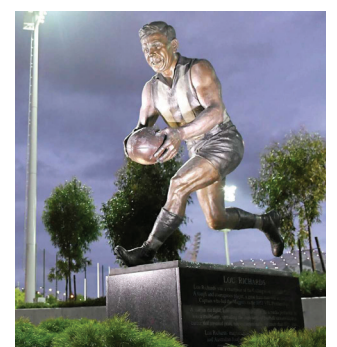
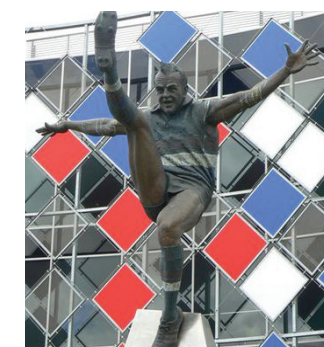
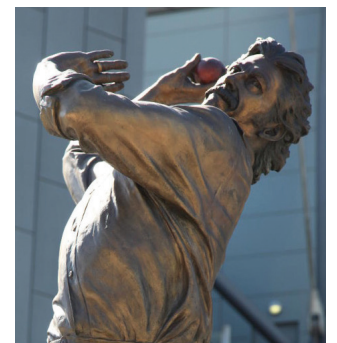
Gender equality has come a long way, but there is still work to be done. We need to be gamechangers and use sport as a vehicle for promoting the success of female athletes in their field.

A statue recognising the success and cultural impact of netball in Victoria would shine a permanent light, ensuring that the sport continues to play a major role in society, both at the elite and grassroots level.

We seek a financial commitment from the Victorian Government towards the creation of an iconic netball statue at John Cain Arena.

Proposed netball names

- Sharelle McMahon
- Joyce Brown OAM
- Lisa Alexander AM
- Simone McKinnis OAM
- Norma Plummer AM



Melbourne Olympic Park (Busts in Garden Square not included)		Melbourne Cricket Ground	
Male	Female	Male	Female
John Landy	Nil	Kevin Bartlett	Betty Cuthbert
Ron Clarke		John Coleman	Shirley Strickland
Lou Richards		Norm Smith	
Bob Rose		Jim Stynes	
Billy Slater*		Shane Warne	
Cameron Smith*		Neil Harvey	
Rod Laver		Bill Ponsford	
Ferenc Puskas		Ron Barassi	
		Don Bradman	
		Dennis Lillie	
		Haydn Bunton	
		Dick Reynolds	
		Leigh Matthews	
		Keith Miller	

*under construction

Other Melbourne Facilities		Flemington Racecourse	
Male	Female	Male	Female
Bob Skilton (Albert Park) (SSCT)	Tayla Harris (Docklands)	Roy Higgins	Nil
Jack Dyer (Punt Road Oval)		Bart Cummings	
Ted Whitten (Whitten Oval)			
Michael Long (Tullamarine)			
Peter Norman (Albert Park)			



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