

Media Release

26th February 2020

DEAF SPORTS AUSTRALIA CELEBRATES 140 YEARS OF DEAF SPORTS IN AUSTRALIA

On the 22nd February 2020, Deaf Sports Australia (DSA) hosted its '140 Years of Deaf sports in Australia' celebration. The event at the Federation Square in Melbourne, saw over 150 attendees, many of whom were athletes, sports officials, staff, partner organisations, sponsors and community.

Attendees enjoyed reminiscing amongst many valuable photos, posters and items related to DSA's deaf sports history on display at the event. Anne Bremner's presentation on the history of deaf sports in Australia was an event highlight. Did you know the first Deaf sport 'committee' was the Victorian Deaf Cricket club which started in 1880 and the first match on record was in 1882/3. Australian Deaf women also played this sport back in 1909!

Australian Deaf Sports Federation (now known as Deaf Sports Australia) was established in 1954. The first ever deaf sports event that took place was once called the Deaf Carnival, dated back in 1911. Today, it is now called the Australian Deaf Games; *"The Games We Love"*. The XIX Australian Deaf Games (2022) will take place in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie.

In addition to the birthday celebration, there was an Awards ceremony.

The following awards winners are:

- Male athlete of the Year - Alex Kirchner
- Female athlete of the Year - Tiffany Brodie
- Coach of the Year (joint winners) - Robyn Larkin and Gordon Townsend
- Team of the Year (joint winners) - Australia Deaf Lawn Bowls Team & Australia Deaf Golf Men's team
- Organization of the Year - Cricket Australia
- Volunteer of the Year - Melissa Hale
- Rising Star of the Year (joint winners) - Hamish Adams & Deaf Sailing Queensland
- Media Story of the Year - Cricket Australia

Deaf Sports Australia wishes to thank the following organizations for their generous support:

- Access Plus
- Ai-Media
- Deaf Can:Do
- Deaf Society
- Expression Australia
- Deaf Services
- Hearing Australia

Deaf Sports Australia extends their gratitude to all those who have attended and our other presenters at the ceremony including Kate Corkery (Sport Australia), Tanya Hosch (AFL), Callum Ashbury and Hannah Britton. Phil Harper, General Manager for Deaf Sports Australia, summarises the emphasis of sports as being a vital part of the deaf community. "It's important that [we] come together as a community, nurture our sport, our history and culture and at the same time continue to work with our partners and learn from the next generation."

Deaf Sports Australia's President Kathryn Armfield says that she was very impressed with the outcome of the event. "I am inspired, humbled and honoured to be part of a significant mark in our history. I give thanks to the pioneers of yesteryear shaping our rich history and placed Australia on the global stage."

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