



**WOMEN PARTICIPATING
AND LEADING IN SPORT**

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020



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WSA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As President of WSA it gives me great pleasure to present the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

Five months ago, on International Women's Day, I was in the stands at the MCG with 86,000 other cricket fans to witness our women's cricket team win the ICC T20 World Cup, and then within a week the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

It was such a great year for women's sport leading up to that event with the landscape shifting in a positive direction including:

- Wins by Ash Barty, Hannah Green and Sally Fitzgibbon across the world within a 24-hour period;
- Equal prize money in the WSL and for the Australian women's cricket team at the World Cup;
- Unprecedented pay deals and player conditions across several of the codes;
- And the stands filled with more fans – with 53,000 at the AFLW Final through to 86,000 at the Cricket World Cup; and more eyeballs were watching – like the One Million who tuned into the Suncorp Super Netball final.

We are still gauging the initial impacts of COVID-19 on women in sport and it will be an interesting year ahead for our advocacy work in this space.

Once again we conducted the #WISPAA - Women in Sport Photo Action Awards, with even more entries this year, culminating in another win for Michael Wilson and his subject Tayla Harris in the professional category, and Casey Sims in the amateur category.





Our Strategy day was held on the 11th October 2019 with Tamatha Harding generously donating her time to Facilitate. This session enabled the board to create a picture of where we want to be and the strategic pillars that we can work with to achieve that vision.

WSA continued to advocate in the following areas:

1. Gender pay equality and a living wage for all elite female athletes;
2. Equal access to sporting facilities and amenities;
3. Equal media time and space;
4. Champion role models in women's sport.

We achieved this through a range of events and activities including:

1. Mentoring programs for Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. (Thanks to Bron Parry for her ongoing support with this program. Much appreciated by all involved)
2. Women in Sport Leadership programs
3. #WISPAA
4. Director Speaking engagements and events including:
 - The Australia Day reception at Government house;
 - ICC T20 Women's World Cup;
 - Partnering with the Women In Sport Summit;
 - The Deakin University panel on the professionalism of women's sport.
5. Profiling women's sport and the athletes that compete through our various social media channels.

I would like to thank our board for all their dedication:

Gen Simmons – Deputy Chair, Louise Evans*/ Stefan Grun – Media & Communications, Isaak Dury - Website & Communications, David Bond – Treasurer/ Finance, Frances Cordaro*/ Samantha Culbert – Social Media & Marketing, Louise Evans*/ Iain Roy – WISPAA & events, Tamatha Harding – Project Management #WISPAA and Strategic Planning , Rebecca Read & Anthony Moore - Advocacy and finally Alison Buxton - Secretary & Governance.

I am so proud to be a part of this amazing team of people who give up so much of their time and talents to improve the environment for women and girls in sport daily. I want to say a huge thank you to everyone for their efforts. This is a voluntary board and it has certainly been a year for all of us to take stock of our work/life balance and how much we can contribute.

We had some movement in and out of the board during the year:

- Warwick Waters resignation January 2020
- Tamatha Harding replacing Warwick as a Casual Director
- *Louise Evans resignation March 2020
- Samantha Culbert replacing Louise as a Casual Director April 2020
- Alison Buxton resignation Mar 2020, however continued as Secretary until 2020 AGM (thank you so much Alison for staying on to help us)
- Stefan Grun replacing Alison as Appointed Director April 2020
- *Frances Cordaro resignation May 2020

Finally, I would like to thank the group of dedicated interns who so wonderfully supported us in providing content and managing our social media channels this year.

I was very excited to propose to the Board that Louise Evans be voted in as a Life Member in recognition of the dedication and commitment she has made to the board in six years as a director and for the legacy of #WISPAA – (for endorsement at the AGM).

This will be my final report as President of WSA. After five years of rebranding, recalibrating and celebrating our successes it is time to step aside for someone else to keep advancing our work. I leave the organisation in good hands with the current board, full of highly talented and professional individuals. It has been my pleasure to work with all the directors over the years and experience the impact we have made during that time.

Carol Fox
President/ Chair



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WOMEN IN SPORT MENTORING PROGRAM

WSA Mentoring Program Format

The WSA Mentoring Program Workshop is facilitated by Bron Parry, Dynamix Australia, and WSA President Carol Fox, Carol Fox & Co.

Mentees attend a half-day professional workshop focusing on being a confident leader, the art of networking, the role of boards and committees and career pathways.

Following the workshop, mentees usually attend a networking event to practice their newfound skills. The networking events bring together prominent leaders in sport in the various states where workshops are held.

Mentees are matched with highly experienced, well regarded sports industry mentors whose specialisation and skills are aligned with the mentees aspirations and goals for follow-up one-on-one sessions.

Past and present mentees and mentors have gained significant career benefits and rewarding experiences from participating in WSA's Mentoring Program.

While 2020 has been a challenging year with a shift to online programs, we look forward to being able to run face to face sessions again when it is safe to do so.

WSA's South Australia Mentoring workshop Friday 13th March 2020

Six mentees participated from Netball SA, South Australian Cricket Association and Morphettville Park Women's Football Club.

Sport SA partnered with WSA for the program and provided a venue for the workshop and hosted the networking reception.

WSA's Melbourne Mentoring workshop Friday 8th May 2020

The workshop was originally scheduled to be held in late March however was postponed due to COVID-19 and was instead held online via zoom in May.

Ten mentees attended with participants coming from Bowls Australia, Melbourne City FC, Gymnastics Victoria, Netball Victoria, Western Bulldogs Football Club, Maribyrnong City Council and LaTrobe University.

Next Up

Planning is underway to run WSA Mentoring Programs in NSW/ACT and QLD in the latter half of 2020 and we hope to grow the program even further in 2021 and beyond.

Special thanks to WSA intern Samantha Byass for assisting with coordinating our 2020 programs and to WSA content creator Daniel Hill who assisted with the South Australia program.



WOMEN IN SPORT PHOTO ACTION AWARDS #WISPAA

Following the resounding success of #WISPAA's inaugural year in 2019, it became one of WSA's key strategic priorities for 2020. A team of directors worked together to bring the project to life, which once again aimed to help change media and public perceptions of female athletes by showcasing the skill, strength and athleticism of Australia's sportswomen in action.

This year's competition had the added consideration of COVID-19 and the impact that it was having on the industry as a whole. It was ultimately decided that it should go ahead, even during this time of uncertainty and with minimal sponsorship, as this was a fantastic chance to profile women in sport when there was not a lot of sport being played – we were not disappointed by the outcome.

2020 saw an increase in not only the number of photos entered under both the professional and amateur categories, but also in the number of photographers that submitted images. In total, there were 372 images submitted from 160 photographers, which is 88 more photos and 52 more photographers than the competition's inaugural year.

WSA also introduced a people's choice award, where the public were able to vote for their favourite images from the 30 finalists across the professional and amateur categories. This new initiative was well received with over 3000 votes being cast and only one vote separating the winner from the runner-up.

The #WISPAA website was integrated into the WSA site in 2020, ensuring there was a clear connection between the competition and the organisation that manages it, enabling us to build on the strength of both brands.

#WISPAA 2020 would not have been a success, if it were not for the continued support of our Athlete Ambassadors (Geva Mentor – Netball, Mel Jones – Cricket, Penny Smith – Shooting, Carrie Webb - Golf and Peggy O'Neill - AFL), the time given by our expert panel of judges (Federal Minister for Sport, the Hon. Richard Colbeck, multi-award winning journalist Samantha Lane, award winning photographer Ryan Pierse and WSA President Carol Fox) and of our prize sponsor – Quality Mind Global. **Thank you** to each of you for your support of #WISPAA, it is very much appreciated.



2020 WISPAA Winners and Runners Up

Professional Winner – 'From The Kick to a Punch' – Image by Michael Willson - Tayla Harris (Boxing)

Professional Runner Up - 'The Contest' - Image by Scott Barbour – Kelsey Browne & Gabi Simpson (Netball)

Professional Runner Up - 'Up and Away' - Image by Scott Barbour - Erin Brooks, Zarie Dawson and Aimee Chalk (Gymnastics)

Amateur Winner – 'At Full Flight' – Image by Casey Sims - Elizaveta Parnova (Track & Field)

Amateur Runner Up – 'Teamwork' – Image by Malcolm Trees – Noosa Bandits (Surf Lifesaving)

Amateur Runner Up – 'Flying Low' – Image by Matthew Long – Tayla Clifford (Touch Football)

People's Choice Winner - 'Teamwork' – Image by Malcolm Trees - Noosa Bandits (Surf Lifesaving)

People's Choice Runner Up - 'No Obstacle Too Big' - Image by Mason Hender – Peta Mullens (Cycling)



#WISPAA EXHIBITION

WSA arranged for 16 different exhibitions of the 2019 #WISPAA images in Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and the ACT. Highlights of this program included a launch event and exhibition at 50 Lonsdale Street in Melbourne, the images featuring in the display hall of the National Sports Convention at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, the Australian Institute of Sport Visitor's Centre and the Queen's Hall at the Victorian Parliament House.

Separately, our exhibition partner ISPT, arranged for the images to be displayed at 13 ISPT commercial and retail properties across NSW, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. Collectively, WSA and ISPT exhibitions toured all states and territories except Tasmania and the NT appearing in 29 venues across 9 months.

In addition, WSA worked with the creative team at Federation Square in Melbourne to create a 6 minute video featuring the 30 images of the 2019 winners, runners up and finalists to feature on their screens in October 2019. This was an exceptional branding opportunity with the WSA and #WISPAA branding on each panel.

WSA is staging a virtual webinar in September 2020, hosted by Samantha Lane and with an expert panel to discuss this year's images and the impact the #WISPAA competition has had in raising the profile of women in sport.

Given the complexities caused by COVID-19 restrictions, WSA is looking at alternative options to display the 2020 images in digital and physical exhibitions around the country. These exhibitions will build on the success of the #WISPAA exhibition program in the 2019-20 year in raising the profile of #WISPAA, the images of the amazing athletes depicted in them and of women in sport generally.





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WSA'S ADVOCACY IN THE MEDIA

Our traditional media exposure continues to grow with WSA being approached as a voice of authority for comment and analysis about Women in Sport issues.

A big thank you to outgoing Communications Director Louise Evans for the media profile and presence she has built for WSA. A combined effort by Frances Cordaro, Gen Simmons and Stefan Grun managing the media portfolio during 2020 has seen the positive momentum continue.

Highlights of the media coverage gained by WSA include:

- **FIFA Women's World Cup**

WSA was featured on BBC World News discussing the positive impact for women's sport of the FIFA Women's World Cup.

- **Lack of Female Referees**

WSA took the position that female referees and umpires will not become the norm until the major sports provide equal training and pay for officials of women's and men's matches and featured in over 70 publications including SBS, The Canberra Times and Yahoo.





- **#WISPAA Exhibition**

WSA excited media interest by taking our #WISPAA Photo Exhibition on tour around Australia.

- **Women's Health Women in Sport Awards**

WSA once again took part in the judging process for the Women's Health Women in Sport Awards where there was much coverage for Ash Barty winning the top award.

- **ICC Women's World Cup**

WSA comments on the success of the ICC T20 Women's World Cup and the work of Cricket Australia were run by Australian Associated Press publications.

- **#WISPAA 2020**

The follow up year of #WISPAA was once again well received by the media with interest peaking when the finalist images and subsequently the winners were announced. Media highlights included an interview on ABC Grandstand and a feature piece in the Guardian.

- **The Future of Women's Sport**

WSA was approached for comment by several media outlets seeking to understand what the future looks like for women's sport due to COVID-19. Media highlights included an ABC radio interview with Tracey Holmes and a feature story on Mamamia.



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SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media continues to be used by WSA to increase the visibility and strengthen our programs by connecting, engaging and building relations online with WSA's wide audience. During the recent pandemic, the ability to remain connected virtually has been ever more important.

We have experienced another year of dramatic growth on our four social media channels: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram, with users up more of 50% to nearly 20,000 across the platforms. Whilst both Twitter and Facebooks continued to grow at a reasonable pace, the near 200% increase in LinkedIn users to over 5,500 and over 500% growth in Instagram to over 1,600 reflect the importance of our engagement with sports management professionals as well as the visual impact of #WISPAA.

It is exciting to see the growth in the user base and it represents a great opportunity for WSA to continue to amplify the great work that not only WSA does, but its members and female athletes, administrators and sports professionals across the country. This wouldn't have been possible if not for the work of WSA board members Louise Evans, David Bond, Gen Simmons, Alison Buxton and Frances Cordaro who posted daily on social media channels through to the end of the year 2019. We would especially like to thank our interns and content creators who took over at the beginning of 2020 and have all made such a significant contribution during what was not the easiest of times: Daniel Hill, Ella Smith, Georgina Mallon, Gabrielle Egan, Lydia Frazer and Sophie Moore.

In addition to our social media platforms WSA has partnered with WiSP Spots to create the Beyond Balls podcast series. Created and produced by Ella Smith and Georgina Mellon there are now 10 episodes available featuring discussion with a range of fantastic women including Mel Jones, Lisa Alexander and Sandy Brondello.