

THUNDER NEWS

EDITION NO 3
February 2019



2019 NBL1 – NEW LEAGUE ANNOUNCED

After much anticipation and expectation, the Victorian Basketball Association has now released details of a commercial relationship with the NBL and the related naming rights branding of our 2019 league as NBL1. The name references the fact that, not dissimilar to say the major soccer federation in the UK, there is a championship league, which equates in this case to our NBL, and a Division 1 league, in this case NBL1, which sits just below the championship league but shares all the benefits of marketing, promotion and vital exposure through mainstream media. This is a real coup for the league and represents a great opportunity for ongoing development, given that in SEABL days, the only group providing any effort towards enhanced commercial partnerships and better opportunities for league members, was SEABL itself. A copy of the official press release appears below:-



NBL1 TO SHOWCASE NEXT LEVEL OF AUSTRALIA'S BASKETBALL TALENT

Basketball Victoria has partnered with the National Basketball League (NBL) to create a new league to strengthen the pathway for Australia's best basketball talent. Tipping off on March 29, NBL1 will consist of 18 clubs across Southern Australia and feature both men's and women's teams. It will be played across 15 rounds and a four week finals series with every NBL1 game to be live streamed to bring fans closer to the action. Inaugural franchises will be Albury-Wodonga, Ballarat, Bendigo, Basketball Australia Centre of Excellence (ACT), Dandenong, Diamond Valley, Eltham, Frankston, Geelong, Hobart Huskies, Kilsyth, Knox, Melbourne, North West Thunder/Launceston (co-licensees), Nunawading, Ringwood, Sandringham and Waverley.

NBL Chief Executive Jeremy Loeliger said: "NBL1 will be the premier league in Australia after the NBL and WNBL, showcasing Australia's best emerging talent and many other professional players. "NBL1 will strengthen the pathway from the junior levels all the way through to the NBL, WNBL and ultimately the Boomers and Opals helping develop the next generation of stars. Importantly it will feature both women's and men's teams, and be a league all females and males coming through junior ranks can aspire to play in."

Basketball CEO Nick Honey said: "Australian basketball is booming at both the grassroots and elite level and NBL1 will be the premier winter basketball league that will continue to grow the game. NBL1 is a fantastic partnership that will bring promotional and commercial opportunities covering both women's and men's basketball. The NBL has flourished in recent years under the guidance of Larry Kestelman and a partnership with such a high-calibre organisation presents an outstanding opportunity to deliver a premier winter basketball competition."

Basketball Australia Acting CEO Paul Maley said: "This is another great example of Australian basketball working together to generate positive outcomes for the game and grow our great sport. "The NBL has done an incredible job over the past few years and the naming rights deal with Basketball Victoria will benefit the league from the NBL's expertise in sponsorship, media and marketing and the NBL will gain increased exposure for its brand."

2019 FIXTURE

Due to some unavoidable delays, some tied to our new partnership arrangement with the NBL, we are only now able to release the fixture for the 2019 NBL1 league and the spreadsheet below identifies our ten Tasmanian games consisting of two double header fixtures with the Launceston Tornadoes women in Ulverstone, (highlighted in yellow), two further double headers played in Launceston, (highlighted in blue) and our additional six stand-alone games in Ulverstone, (brown). It promises to be a very exciting season, with lots of old rivals participating and some new faces on the scene from the "Big V" association.

2019 THUNDER FULL SCHEDULE

ROUND	DATE	TIME	OPPOSITION	VENUE
1	Sat 30 March	7.30pm	Sandringham Sabres	Ulverstone
2	Sat 6 April	M6 & W 8pm	Nunawading Spectres	Launceston (Double Header)
3	Sat 13 April	8.00pm	Hobart Huskies	Kingborough Basketball Stadium
BYE	Sat 20 April			
4	Sat 27 April	7.30pm	Bendigo Braves	Bendigo Stadium
4	Sun 28 April	2.30pm	Waverley Falcons	Waverly Basketball Centre
5	Sat 4 May	7.30pm	Frankston Blues	Frankston Basketball Stadium
5	Sun 5 May	2.30pm	Eltham Wildcats	Eltham High School
6	Sat 11 May	W6 & M8pm	Dandenong Ranger	Ulverstone (Double Header)
7	Friday 17 May	7.30pm	Albury Wodonga Bandits	Ulverstone
8	Sat 25 May	8.00pm	Ballarat Rush	Mars Minerdome
8	Sun 26 May	2.00pm	Basketball Australia COE	Tbc - In Melbourne
9	Sat 1 June	7.30pm	Geelong Supercats	Ulverstone
BYE	Sat 8 June			
10	Sat 15 June	7.30pm	Hobart Huskies	Ulverstone
12	Fri 21 June	8.00pm	Geelong Supercats	Geelong Arena
11	Sat 22 June	W6 & M8pm	Knox Raiders	Ulverstone (Double Header)
12	Frid 28 June	W6.30 & M8.30pm	Melbourne Tigers	Launceston (Double Header)
13	Sat 6 July	7.30pm	Kilsyth Cobras	Ulverstone
14	Sat 13 July	8.00pm	Ringwood Hawks	The Rings
14	Sun 14 July	2.00pm	Diamond Valley Eagles	DV Sports & Fitness Centre
15	Sat 20 July	7.30pm	Waverley Falcons	Ulverstone

Thunder Home Games in Ulverstone all game commence at 7.30pm

Double header in Ulverstone Women's Games - 6.00pm Men's Game - 8.00pm

**Double header in Launceston Men's Games - 6.00pm Women's Game - 8.00pm
Except Friday 28 June - Women's Games - 6.30pm Men's Game - 8.30pm**

One of the pre-requisites for joining the league this season was to agree to the livestreaming of all our home games, which will be facilitated by the installation of high tech cameras in all the designated stadiums used by teams in the league. This requirement precludes us from splitting our games on the North West coast, but we would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank the Devonport Council, their stadium staff and all the members of the Devonport Basketball Council who were so obliging and supportive in assisting us with our Devonport fixtures in 2018. We could not have made these games happen without their input and their "nothing is too much trouble" approach. Thanks again from everyone at Thunder.

UNDER 20 TASMANIAN TEAM

Congratulations to all the selected players who represented Tasmania at the national U20 championships in the ACT in mid February, and in particular to Thunder players Kobe Jackson, Tre Armstrong, Troy Schaeche and Lochie Boucher who all had noteworthy tournaments. It was a great opportunity for the guys to renew acquaintances with Lachie Dent, our new Thunder signing, who played for New South Wales in the championships. They all have met at many previous junior nationals. The team finished a very respectable fourth.



Tre and Lachie have also been selected in the 23-strong Australian squad for the FIBA Under 19 World Cup, which will be held in Greece from June 29-July 7. They will attend a selection camp at the Centre of Excellence in Canberra on March 8-11 and we will all have our fingers crossed when the final team is announced.

Thunder's physio, Ryan Carroll of Physiotas also continues to expand his horizons and has been named as team physio. Ryan recently attended a High Performance Rehab conference in Sydney looking at a range of sports injuries and while there, rubbed shoulders with physios from the Australian Boomers and also one of the physio team from the NBA's Philadelphia 76'ers!

COMFORT SEATING

A new sponsorship deal that has been struck for season 2019 will, we are sure, find favour with all our existing and new sponsors this season. An agreement with Michael Amos Upholstery will see an addition to the designated sponsor's seating, the front two rows in every grandstand, by way of a padded cushion. This should certainly enhance the game night experience for those lucky patrons in the "ringside seats" and should help Thunder attract further interest from businesses keen to be a part of our corporate support team.

FLAGS AT GAMES

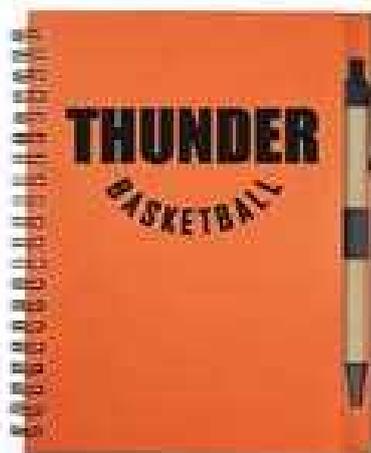
There have been a number of directives from NBL1 management around the staging of our home games, the overall marketing, the livestreaming of games and aspects of stadium set-up. One new initiative will be the mandatory display of not only the Australian flag, but also the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islands flag. We will liaise with stadium management to assess the best location for their placement.



MEMBERSHIP/MERCHANDISE

We have just about finalised our 2019 merchandise items for our membership packs and our retail stand at home games. Membership fees have been retained at 2018 prices, namely \$30 for adults and \$20 for juniors. We have added some new items this year and hope people will find them appealing and more importantly, useful! The following will form part of the adult packs along with our handy fridge magnet rosters and we will also have a “speccky” Thunder gym towel which we think will be a very popular addition to our merchandise range. The junior packs will comprise a Size 3

Notepad and Pen



Shopping Bag in pouch



Coaster bottle opener



basketball which should be great for snapping up those all-important player autographs, and we will also include our team poster and a pair of our Zenith Wealth plastic clappers. Subject to production confirmation, we will also include a set of the popular player cards, which also provide great signature opportunities for our young fans and collectors. As for other years, junior members will also receive discounted admission to our extremely popular school holiday clinics. We hope to hold two of these again this season.



WET AREA

The club has been granted a variation to our licensing arrangements and we are now free to set up a “wet area” downstairs in the stadium. The approved area is to the rear of the Thunder player’s bench in the “glass room” corner of the stadium and we hope to have this facility up and running for all 2019 home games. We appreciate that the upstairs licensed area can quickly become full, given the limited viewing options, and hope that provision of an alternative space, close to the game night action, will find favour with fans who might wish to enjoy a quiet “coldie” during the course of the evening.

DOOR PRICES

The requirement for closer ties with the Tornados, as laid down by NBL1 League management will see the introduction of double-header games this season, as well as a much closer working relationship with the “Torns” around a number of our organisations operational aspects. One of these relates to door prices, where we wish to have consistency between the two clubs in terms of the admission fees across the different categories of spectator. To that end we have rationalised our prices in line with theirs and also come to an agreed increased charging regime for the four double-header games, where patrons will have the opportunity to watch two top-class men’s and women’s games on the one night. The new prices and a comparison to the 2018 fees appears below. You can see that some categories have increased, while others, like child and family, (two adults and two children), have been reduced, and taking a sample of 100 of each type from 2018 and comparing costs to the same numbers across the revised 2019 pricing, the overall dollar figures come out exactly the same.

	2018	2019	Double-Headers	Season Ticket
ADULT	\$13	\$15	\$20	\$120
CONCESSION	\$9	\$10	\$15	\$80
CHILD	\$6	\$5	\$5	\$40
FAMILY	\$32	\$30	\$40	N/A

While season ticket prices have been set, we will likely have to cap numbers in terms of the premium seating stand, as sponsorship packages do take up a lot of seats in this highly-sought after area.

IMPORT’S UPDATE

Our two American imports, Nick and Jordan, are now happily domiciled in an apartment at 2/97 Leven Street in Ulverstone, (notwithstanding that the odd huntsman spider appearing on a wall or in the bathroom, has occasionally thrown a hand grenade into the relaxed atmosphere.) While on the subject of Aussie wildlife, the boys were also given a chance to interact with a swarm of jellyfish and a couple of decent sized skates during cool down in the river last week, so they are getting a very quick introduction to the local fauna! Nick should be used to all manner of wildlife, given that he used to have a pet python while back in the States! As is always the case, the boys are “good on the tooth” and while both claim to be fine chefs in their own right, any donations of “fruit or veg”, a hot casserole or a sumptuous home-cooked pavlova would not be turned away! All offerings are welcome!

The guys were joined yesterday by NSW recruit Lachie Dent. He will be playing with Penguin in the NWBU. The guys have hit the ground running fitness wise, with multiple training sessions a week with Thunder and NWBU teams, two coastal roster games a week and individual workouts at the stadium and the gym; they are also attending a couple of fitness sessions a week with Nick Haywood at Turner’s Beach. They should be in great shape by season kick-off at the end of March!!



HISTORY



COURT ASSETS: American imports Greg Stolt (left) and Shawn Redhage (right) tower over Patrick North-West Thunder chairman Craig Brakey. Picture: Leila Williams.