

WEDNESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2024

RACV SUPPORTS NETBALL VICTORIA IN INAUGURAL FIRST NATIONS TOURNAMENT IN NAARM

Netball Victoria, with support from RACV, is proud to be participating in Netball Australia's [inaugural First Nations Tournament](#) this weekend, marking a significant milestone in promoting diversity and inclusion in the sport.

The pilot tournament, which will be held from 13 to 15 September 2024 at Netball Victoria's home – the State Netball Centre in Naarm – is the first-time teams from all states and territories have participated in a national First Nations competition.

The event aims to provide accelerated and equitable opportunities for First Nations participants in netball and will showcase the talent of First Nations athletes, coaches and umpires. This follows the establishment of Netball Australia's inaugural First Nations Invitational team – the Black Swans – who made their debut in June.

Netball Victoria's CEO Andrea Pearman said Netball Victoria recognises the ongoing contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to netball in Victoria and remains committed to nurturing enduring and trusting relationships with First Nations communities.

"The inaugural First Nations tournament is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the talent we know is abundant in First Nations communities right across the state and country," Ms Pearman said.

"Initiatives like this tournament are great step, not just for athletes to showcase their talent, but to develop the visibility and accessibility of the talent pathway for First Nations netballers across the country and create conversations and action.

"We're committed to the ensuring our game is a safe and inclusive space for all participants, as we want every First Nations athlete to feel respected and supported at every level in our netball community."

This event builds upon existing efforts to promote First Nations participation in netball, including RACV's support of the Victorian Netball League's First Nations Round, the Melbourne Vixens' activities during Suncorp Super Netball's First Nations Round, and sponsorship of Netball Victoria's First Nations Advisory Group.

In addition to supporting First Nations initiatives, RACV's partnership with Netball Victoria also focuses on delivering grassroots programs that provide better access and opportunities for multicultural and LGBTQ+ communities to participate in netball across Victoria.

RACV Head of Partnerships Megan Ballantyne said the partnership with Netball Victoria was the company's most enduring.

"RACV is proud to support initiatives like the First Nations Tournament to improve accessibility of netball to diverse communities," Ms Ballantyne said.

Victorian First Nations athlete and proud Wiradjuri woman, Tully Bethune, said First Nations programs and tournaments shine a light on the talent First Nations athletes bring to the table.

"Playing on the big stage is something I've dreamed of since starting netball and this is really a good opportunity for us as players to represent our cultures in a way that we love, and in a safe space, and for the broader community to see we can do it," Ms Bethune said.

"To me, a culturally safe space is being confident in being open and not judged; showing who you are as a person and knowing you'll be accepted, and this team and tournament has certainly made me feel this way."

The 2024 [First Nations Tournament](#) will be free for patrons to attend.

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Further information

High-res images are available for use, please email the RACV media team.

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