illawarra academy of sport

2026 YEARBOOK



CONTENTS

3 THE IAS

4 PEOPLE OF THE IAS

8 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

10 CEO'S REPORT

12 WHAT IS AN IAS SCHOLARSHIP?

13 TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

14 SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

16 HONOUR ROLL

ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT 2026 PROGRAMS

20 ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

22 STRENGTH & CONDITIONING REPORT

24 BASEBALL

25 BASKETBALL

28 BMX

29 ROAD/TRACK CYCLING

29 MOUNTAIN BIKE

30 GOLF

31 HOCKEY

32 FUTURE STARS

34 NETBALL

38 NETBALL UMPIRES

40 PARA ATHLETES

42 GIRLS RUGBY 7s

44 TRIATHLON

45 VOLLEYBALL

48 COACHES & MANAGERS

50 CLASS OF 2026

54 PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – COMMUNITY FIRST BANK

56 STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT IN HIGH-PERFORMANCE ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT

58 EVENTS OF 2026

60 2026 REGIONAL ACADEMY GAMES REPORT

64 ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT 2026 ATHLETE AWARDS NIGHT

66 ATHLETE SUMMARY

73 SPONSORS & PARTNERS

UNIACTIVE

PROUD SUPPORTERS OF THE ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT



- 24/7 GYM
- FREE 2HR PARKING
- 80+ CLASSES PER WEEK
- HYROX AFFILIATED TRAINING GYM
- 50M HEATED POOL
- STUDENT DISCOUNTS
- SPORT COMPETITIONS
- NO LOCK-IN CONTRACTS OR JOINING FEES

JOIN THE ILLAWARRA'S PREMIER TRAINING FACILITY

WE ARE UOW PULSE.

UOW Pulse is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to enhancing student life on campus.

ias UNIACTIVE

THE IAS

PURPOSE

To develop young, talented Illawarra athletes into high-performing citizens, enabling them to achieve extraordinary things.

VISION

We develop athletes and leaders by being a centre of excellence in the region.

VALUES

COMMITMENT
We value our people and commit to enabling their development.

CITIZENSHIP
We instil community spirit, fostering leadership, inclusivity and teamwork.

EMPOWERMENT
We foster an environment supporting the growth and development of our people.

INTEGRITY
We act ethically with honesty, fairness, and consistency.

EXCELLENCE
We commit to deliver service excellence, continuously enhancing our standards and celebrating our achievements.

PEOPLE OF THE IAS

SALV CARMUSCIANO
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DEB DALBY
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT & GOVERNANCE COORDINATOR (COMMENCED OCT 26)

LUKE MADIGAN
HEAD OF ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

SOPHIE HALL
ATHLETE SERVICES OFFICER (COMMENCED SEP 26)

RILEY MILES
ATHLETE SERVICES OFFICER (COMMENCED OCT 26)

MITCHELL VORLEY
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COORDINATOR (COMMENCED FEB 26)

JOEL MARTELLI
OPERATIONS SUPPORT OFFICER (CONCLUDED AUGUST 26)

COURTNEY GALLAGHER
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COORDINATOR (CONCLUDED FEB 26)

JENNIFER NEWTON
BOOKKEEPER

JOSH MEERS
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG STUDENT INTERN

ISABELLA SANDILANDS
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG STUDENT INTERN

LEON DAVIS-COOK
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG STUDENT INTERN

RANI HULME
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH

ASHLEIGH LONG
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH

OLIVIA HATCH
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH

JOSHUA QUINN
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH

DANIEL LEAHY
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH

JOHN MELVILLE
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH



IAS MEMBERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

POSITION	REPRESENTATION	PREFIX	FIRST	SURNAME
Foundation Member	The Vice Chancellor of the University of Wollongong, Professor G.Q. Max Lu AO	Mr	Jordan	Matthews
Foundation Member	Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Councillor Tania Brown	Mr	Paul	Clarke
Foundation Member	Mayor of Shellharbour, Councillor Chris Homer	Mayor, Cr	Chris	Homer
Foundation Member	Mayor of Kiama, Cameron McDonald	Ms	Melissa	Matters
Foundation Member	Mayor of Wingecarribee, Jesse Fitzpatrick	Ms	Sara	Moylan
Foundation Member	Mayor of Shoalhaven, Patricia White	Mr	Matthew	Graham
Community Member	Wollongong	Mr	Joshua	Kersten
Community Member	Wollongong	Mr	Matt	Gigliotti
Community Member	Wollongong	Ms	Katherine	Baker
Community Member	Shoalhaven	Mr	Jonathan	Seller
Community Member	Shellharbour	Ms	Sharon	Wingate
Community Member	Kiama	Ms	Jo	Collinge
Community Member	Wingecarribee	Mr	Ian	Campbell
Alumni Member	Alumni	Mr	Alex	Mackay
Special Community Member	Special Interest	Cr	Jessie	Pill

ELECTED DIRECTORS

POSITION	REPRESENTATION	PREFIX	FIRST	SURNAME
Office Bearer - President	Shellharbour	Ms	Sharon	Wingate
Office Bearer - Vice President	Wingecarribee	Mr	Ian	Campbell
Director	Wollongong	Mr	Matt	Gigliotti
Director	University of Wollongong Vice Chancellor's Representative	Mr	Jordan	Matthews
Director	Shoalhaven	Mr	Jonathan	Seller
Director	Kiama	Ms	Jo	Collinge
Director	Wollongong	Ms	Katherine	Baker
Director	Special	Ms	Jessie	Pill
Director	Wollongong	Mr	Joshua	Kersten






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ATHLETE EDUCATION
PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY
SPORT INTEGRITY
AUSTRALIA
Illawarra Academy of Sport
PARTNERS
BlueScope


NSW
10


2


WHO HELPS LIFT
YOU UP?


NSW
NAYLOR



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past year has been one of significant progress for the Illawarra Academy of Sport (IAS) as we continue to build on more than 40 years of supporting talented young athletes across our region.

At the heart of the Academy are the young people who embrace the opportunities provided to them. Their dedication, resilience, and achievements continue to make us proud, and I congratulate all our athletes on their efforts throughout 2026. Special congratulations go to Jack Gibson, recipient of the DRB Group Tobin Family Athlete of the Year Award, and to all those recognised at our annual Presentation Evening.

Beyond sporting achievement, the IAS remains committed to developing well-rounded young people by providing opportunities that build confidence, leadership, and skills that extend well beyond their sporting careers.

Behind the scenes, the Board has continued to strengthen the Academy's strategic direction, governance, and organisational capability, ensuring we are well positioned to support our athletes and respond to future opportunities.

A significant milestone this year was the IAS being entrusted by the Office of Sport with the management of the South East Sports Academy (SESA), creating opportunities to strengthen athlete development across both regions. This arrangement allows us to share our expertise and build on the strengths of both academies while preserving the IAS's identity, constitutional responsibilities, and commitment to our founding communities.

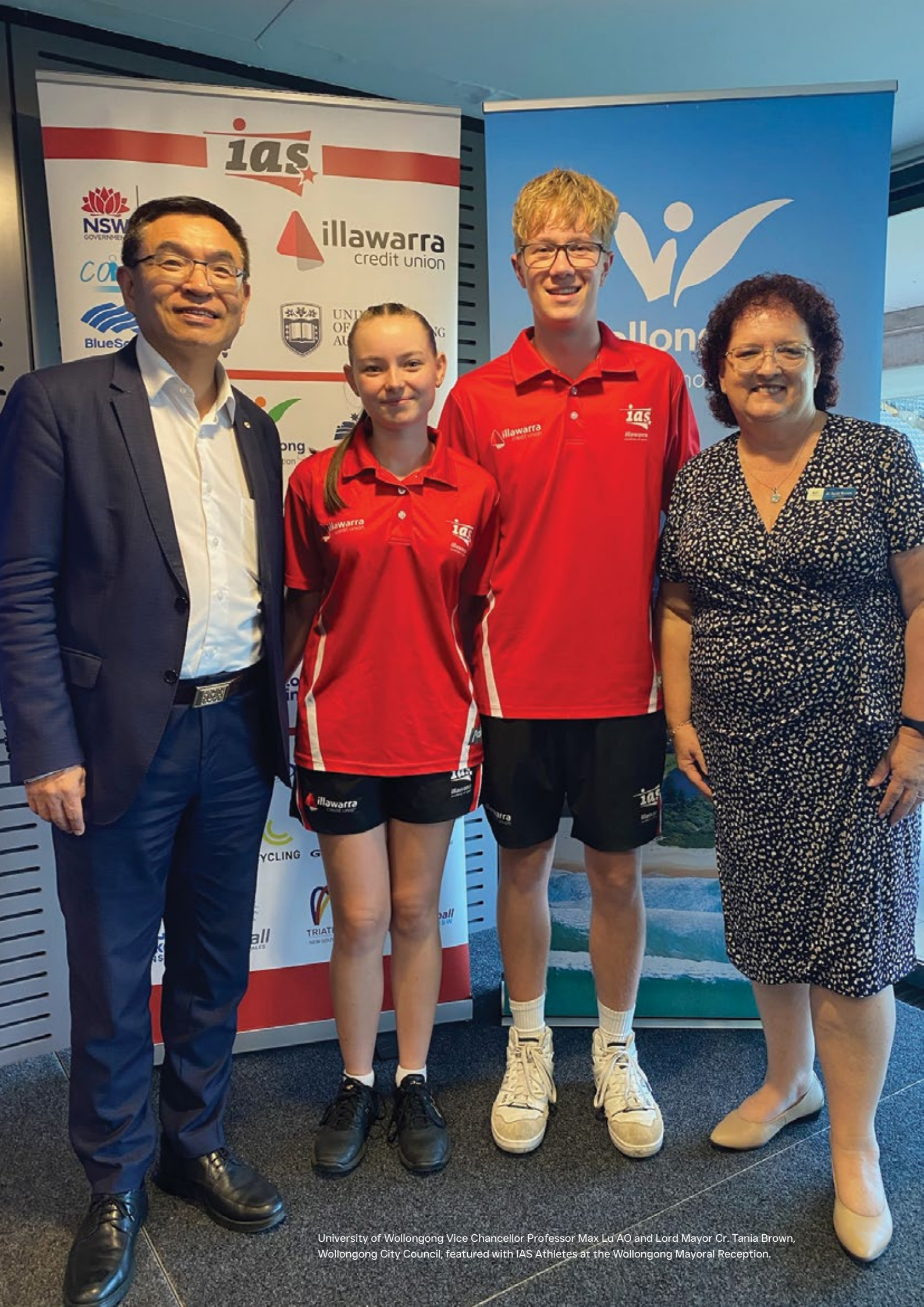
Our Foundation Members, the University of Wollongong and the mayors of our five local government areas, remain central to the Academy's purpose. Their contributions are dedicated exclusively to IAS athletes and programs, consistent with our founding purpose. We also hope to establish similar local government partnerships across the south-east region, building on the community-supported model that has served the IAS since 1985.

As I enter my final year as President, I remain committed to the three principles that have guided my leadership of the IAS: stability, sustainability, and succession. I look forward to continuing this work with the Board and management, ensuring a smooth transition and continuity of leadership.

I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members, our CEO, Salv Carmusciano, and his team, as well as to our Foundation Members, sponsors, coaches, volunteers, and partners who contribute to the success of our athletes.

Finally, to our graduating athletes, congratulations on your achievements. We hope your experiences and friendships remain with you long after your time at the Academy and that you continue to be part of our growing alumni community.

SHARON WINGATE
PRESIDENT, ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT



University of Wollongong Vice Chancellor Professor Max Lu AO and Lord Mayor Cr. Tania Brown, Wollongong City Council, featured with IAS Athletes at the Wollongong Mayoral Reception.



CEO'S REPORT

The Illawarra Academy of Sport exists to identify, develop and support talented young athletes in realising their sporting ambitions while equipping them with the skills, values and attributes required to thrive beyond sport. Reflecting on the past 12 months, I am immensely proud of what our athletes, coaches, staff, volunteers and partners have achieved together.

In 2026, more than 200 athletes were offered a place within the Academy and gained access to our suite of holistic development services. Across a range of sports, these young athletes embraced opportunities to develop not only their athletic potential, but also their leadership, wellbeing, education and personal capabilities. Their commitment to excellence continues to inspire us and reinforces the important role the Academy plays in our region's sporting landscape.

One of the year's highlights was the 2026 Regional Academy Games in Tamworth, where more than 100 IAS athletes proudly represented the Academy. The Games provided an invaluable opportunity for athletes to test themselves against some of the best emerging talent from across New South Wales while developing friendships, resilience and experiences that will remain with them for years to come.

We were also delighted to celebrate athlete achievement at our 2026 Athlete Awards Ceremony. Congratulations to all award recipients, and in particular to **Jack Gibson**, who was recognised as the **DRB Group Tobin Family Athlete of the Year**. The achievements celebrated throughout the evening served as a reminder of the extraordinary talent that exists within our region and the dedication required to pursue sporting excellence.

A significant milestone for the Academy during 2026 was the launch of the **Statement of Attainment in High Performance Athletic Development (Strength & Conditioning)**, delivered in partnership with TAFE NSW. This innovative program further strengthens our commitment to providing athletes with meaningful educational opportunities and industry-recognised qualifications that support lifelong learning and career development.

Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our young people remains a cornerstone of our organisation. During the year, we completed a comprehensive review and update of our Child Protection policies and practices, reaffirming our commitment to providing safe, inclusive and supportive environments for all participants.

The Academy continues to benefit from the unwavering support of our founding members, our five local councils, and the University of Wollongong. Their ongoing investment in the Academy enables us to deliver high-quality programs and opportunities for young athletes across the Illawarra.

We also acknowledge the invaluable contribution of our sporting partners, including the NSW Institute of Sport, State Sporting Organisations and local sporting associations. Together, we work to identify, nurture and support emerging athletes and coaches, ensuring talented young people have access to development pathways that help them reach their potential.

To our sponsors and community partners, thank you for your belief in the Academy's vision and purpose. Your support allows us to deliver genuine holistic development experiences for the region's most promising young athletes. A special acknowledgement goes to **Community First Bank**, which recommitted to the Academy for a further three years and partnered with us to deliver the highly successful Athlete of the Month initiative. We are equally pleased to welcome **Collegians** back as the Premier Partner of our Netball Program for the next two years.

Early in 2026, the Academy reached another important milestone when, following a competitive tender process, we were awarded management of the **South-East Sports Academy (SESA)**. For the previous eight years, SESA had been administered by the NSW Government Office of Sport. Throughout the year, our team worked closely with the Office of Sport to ensure a smooth transition

of management, and we look forward to engaging with athletes, families, coaches and stakeholders across the eight local government areas that comprise the south-east region. Importantly, this expansion will not diminish our commitment to supporting emerging athletes from the Illawarra. Rather, it represents an opportunity to extend the Academy model and strengthen athlete development pathways across regional New South Wales.

The achievements of 2026 would not have been possible without the strong leadership of the Illawarra Academy of Sport Board. Under the guidance of President Sharon Wingate (Finalist, NSW Sport Awards Volunteer Director of the Year 2026) the Board has provided clear strategic direction, identified key organisational priorities, and established an operating model that positions the Academy for long-term sustainability and impact. Their commitment to good governance and continuous improvement continues to strengthen the organisation.

I also extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated staff, coaches and managers. Their passion for athlete development is evident in everything they do. Time and again, they go above and beyond to support our athletes and their families, often behind the scenes and without recognition. During the year, we were pleased to welcome Mitch Vorley as our Strength & Conditioning Coordinator, whose expertise has already made a significant contribution to athlete development outcomes. We also acknowledge and thank those staff and volunteers who concluded their involvement with the Academy during 2026. Their contribution to our organisation and athletes is sincerely appreciated.

On a personal note, I was incredibly fortunate to undertake the Leadership Illawarra Program over the past two years through the support of a scholarship thanks to The Illawarra Connection. The experience has been both professionally and personally rewarding, providing valuable opportunities to learn from and connect with leaders from across our region. I extend my gratitude to the Board for their encouragement and support throughout this journey.

Finally, to those athletes whose time with the Illawarra Academy of Sport concludes at the end of the 2025/26 program cycle, congratulations on all you have achieved. We hope your time with the Academy has been both rewarding and memorable, and that the experiences, friendships and lessons gained will continue to serve you well in the years ahead. While your scholarship may have concluded, your connection with the Academy does not. You now join our growing alumni community, and we look forward to maintaining those relationships as you continue your sporting, professional and personal journeys. We hope many of you will remain engaged with the Academy and help inspire the next generation of talented young people across our region.

Thank you to everyone who plays a role in the Illawarra Academy of Sport. Together, we continue to create opportunities, develop potential, and build a stronger future for sport and young people throughout our region.

SALV CARMUSCIANO
CEO, ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT



WHAT IS AN IAS SCHOLARSHIP?

The Illawarra Academy of Sport is, and has been, a centre of excellence for the region producing Olympians, Paralympians, World Champions, and senior national team representatives since its inception in 1985.

Proudly recognised by the Australian Olympic Committee as an official Olympic Training Centre, the Academy offers a scholarship program which supports young, talented athletes to realise their full potential with high-performance coaching, training camps, participation events, a range of performance support services, and education programs to foster holistic development.

It is with the continued support of our five LGAs, as well as the State Government through the Office of Sport, and local community businesses, that we can offer a scholarship program, ensuring that talented athletes from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to pursue excellence and achieve extraordinary things.

An IAS Scholarship provides eligible, talented athletes with:

- High performance specialist coaching*
- Access to education programs fostering holistic development
- Supervised strength & conditioning programs
- Performance support services
- Local gym access**
- Training camps and tours
- Opportunity to compete in sport-specific events, including the Annual Academy Games

*Limited to IAS sport-specific programs only.

**Must reside within the LGA's of Wollongong, Kiama, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, or Wingecarribee to be eligible.

SCHOLARSHIP DURATION

IAS scholarships are offered annually.

Athletes must nominate each year to be considered for a scholarship, and may be required to attend trials as determined by their state sporting organisations.

ATHLETE COMMITMENT

Athletes fortunate enough to obtain an IAS Scholarship are required to participate in the following:

- Attend an athlete induction
- Participate in IAS education programs held across the scholarship year
- Attend an introduction to strength & conditioning session and undertake athlete testing
- Attend your local Government Mayor Reception
- Engage in voluntary community service as an IAS representative

ELIGIBILITY

IAS Scholarships are available to young, talented athletes who compete in either individual or team sports and are driven to achieve excellence in their chosen sport.

To be eligible to apply for an IAS scholarship, athletes must:

- Reside within the LGA's of Wollongong, Kiama, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, or Wingecarribee*
- Be recognised as a talented, emerging athlete within their chosen sport
- Aged 13 and over

*Athletes residing outside of the listed LGA's may apply as out-of-area athletes.

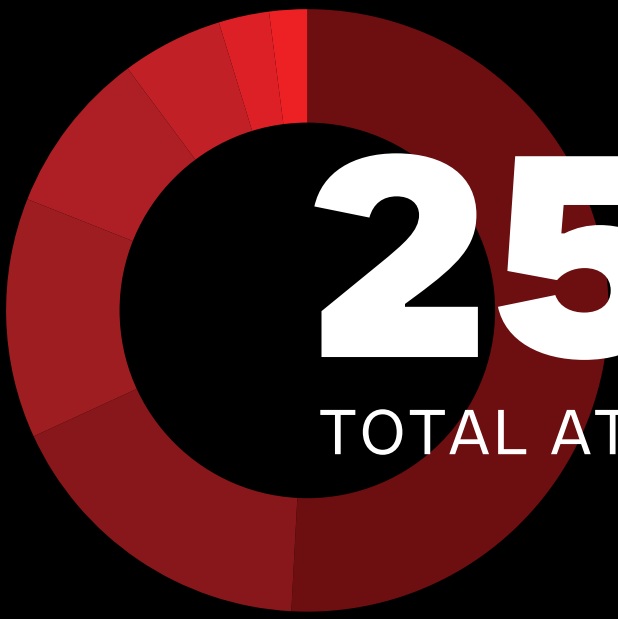
TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED 1986 - 2026

SPORT PROGRAM	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
AFL	0	138	138
Baseball	21	0	21
Basketball	274	259	533
Cricket	559	950	1509
Cycling	323	119	442
Golf	266	77	343
Gymnastics	0	26	26
Hockey	574	600	1174
Lawn Bowls	104	54	158
Lonestar/Future Stars	386	484	870
Netball	0	936	936
Netball Umpires	0	51	51
Para Sports	88	53	141
Rugby League	666	0	666
Rugby 7s	30	55	85
Rugby Union	543	34	577
Sailing	81	25	106
Soccer	151	9	160
Surfing	73	28	101
Swimming	110	93	203
Tennis	3	27	30
Tenpin Bowling	2	3	5
Touch Football	35	3	38
Triathlon	85	66	151
Volleyball	97	124	221
TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED	**4,471**	**4,214**	**8,685**

2026

ATHLETE PROFILE

- 126 Wollongong
- 41 Shellharbour
- 37 Shoalhaven
- 25 Kiama
- 21 Wingecarribee



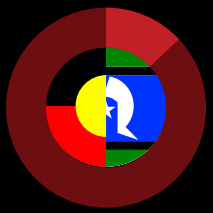
250
TOTAL ATHLETES



49% MALE | **51%** FEMALE



64% NEW | **36%** RETURNING



5%
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander origin athletes

ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

SCHOLARSHIP PROFILE

15
Sport Programs

31
Coaches & Managers

11
Education Programs

11
Sport Camps



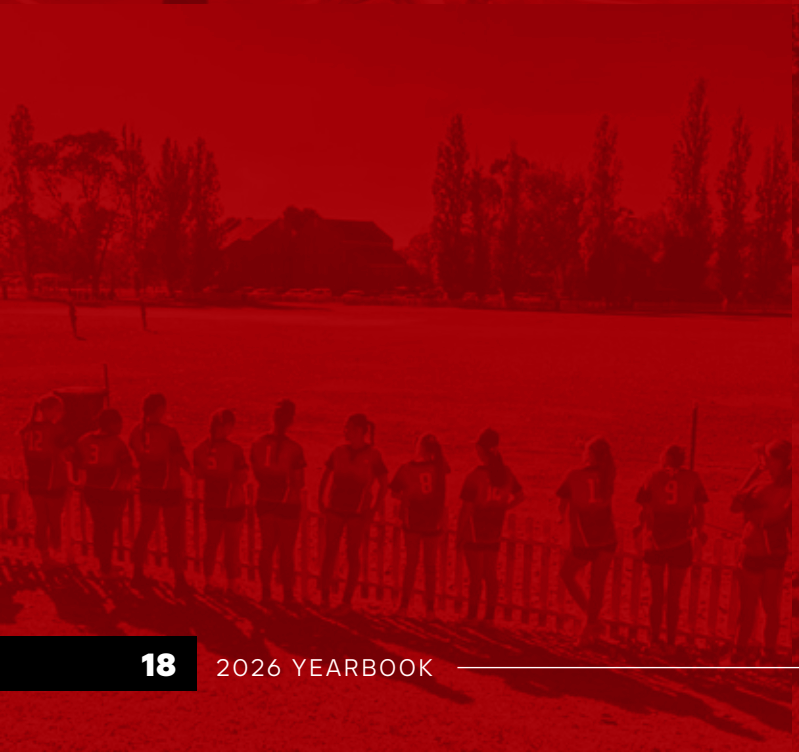
HONOUR ROLL

SPORT	ATHLETE	ACHIEVEMENT	IAS YEAR/S
Athletics	**Sarah Carli**	2024 & 2020 Olympic Games, 2026 Commonwelath Games, World Championships	2010-2012
Athletics	**Jye Edwards**	2020 Olympic Games	2011
Athletics	**Ryan Gregson**	2012 & 2016 Olympic Games, 2014 Commonwealth Games	2005
Athletics	**Madeline Heiner**	2016 Olympic Games, 2014 Commonwealth Games	2005
Canoe	**David Smith**	2012 Olympic Games Gold Medalist	2001
Cricket	**Brett Lee**	2003 Cricket World Cup	1990
Cricket	**Shane Lee**	1999 Cricket World Cup	1989
Cricket	**Phil Jaques**	Australian Test Cricket Team	1993
Cricket	**Nic Maddinson**	Australian Test Team, Australian T20 Cricket Team	2007
Cricket	**Trent Johnston**	Ireland Cricket Team	1988
Cricket	**Adam Zampa**	Australian Cricket ODI & T20 Team	2007
Cycling	**Rochelle Gilmore**	World Champion, Commonwealth Gold Medalist	1996
Cycling	**Ben Kersten**	2006 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	1995
Cycling	**Josh Kersten**	1998 Commonwealth Games Bronze Medalist	1994
Cycling	**James Williamson**	MTB 24 hour Solo World Championships Gold Medalist	2002
Cycling	**Caleb Ewan**	2014 Commonwealth Games	2010
Cycling	**Amiel Cavalier**	Australian MTB Team	2003
Cycling	**Josh Wall**	Australian Cycling Team	2001
Cycling	**Scott Law**	Australian Cycling Team	2008
Golf	**Jordan Zunic**	Winner of the New Zealand Open	2007
Gymnastics	**Ruby Pass**	2024 Olympic Games; 2026 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	2018
Hockey	**Kieran Govers**	World Champion, 2012 Olympic Games Bronze Medalist, 2014 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	2000
Hockey	**Tristan White**	2014 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	2005
Hockey	**Blake Govers**	2024, 2016 & 2020 Olympic Games	2012
Hockey	**Grace Stewart**	2024, 2016 & 2020 Olympic Games	2014
Hockey	**Melissa Simpson**	2007 Indoor Hockey World Cup	2002
Hockey	**Emma Cobbin (MacLeish)**	2011 Indoor Hockey World Cup	2004
Hockey	**Kurt Ogilvie**	2011 Indoor Hockey World Cup	2000
Hockey	**Lyndal Ogilvie**	2011 Indoor Hockey World Cup	2001
Hockey	**Kylie Smith**	Australian Indoor Hockey Team	1999
Hockey	**Stephen Madge**	Australian Kookaburras	2000
Hockey	**Flynn Ogilvie**	2024 & 2020 Olympic Games, Australian Indoor Hockey Team	2007
Hockey	**Simon Beaton**	Australian Indoor Hockey Team	2000
Hockey	**Kylie Smith**	Australian Indoor Hockey Team	1999
Hockey	**Kyah Gray**	Australian Indoor Hockey Team	2009
Kayaking	**Zoe Uphill (Lynam)**	2008 Olympic Games	1999
Lawn Bowls	**Karen Murphy**	World Champion, Commonwealth Games Gold Meadlist	1990
Lawn Bowls	**Leif Selby**	World Champion, 2010 Commonwealth Games Silver Meadlist	1990
Lawn Bowls	**Bret Duprez**	World Champion, 1998 Commonwealth Games Gold Meadlist	1990
Lawn Bowls	**Sarah Boddington**	Australian Women's Team	2008
Netball	**Marni Hansell**	Australian Netball Team	1996
Netball	**Sarah Barrett**	Australian Netball Team	1996
Para Sports	**Jasmine Greenwood**	2024 & 2020 Paralympic Games, 2022 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist; 2026 Commonwealth Games Silver Medalist	2017

Para Sports	**Siobhan Paton**	World Champion, 2000 Paralympic Games Gold Medalist	1998
Para Sports	**Megan Newell**	2011 Special Olympic Gold Medalist	2004
Para Sports	**Jessica Smith**	2004 Paralympic Games	2003
Para Sports	**Brett Stibners**	World Champion, 2024 Paralympic Games (Assistant Coach), 2008 Paralympic Games Gold Medalist, 2016 & 2020 Paralympic Games	1996
Para Sports	**Sam Hardaker**	Australian Disability Swim Team	2001
Para Sports	**Jacqueline Charlesworth**	Australian Women's Wheelchair Basketball Team	1999
Para Sports	**Telaya Blacksmith**	2024 Paralympic Games	2020
Rugby League	**Josh Morris**	2013 Rugby League World Cup	2001
Rugby League	**Brett Stewart**	2008 Rugby League World Cup	1999
Rugby League	**Kane Linnett**	2013 Rugby League World Cup	2005
Rugby League	**Keith Lulia**	2013 Rugby League World Cup	2002
Rugby League	**Craig Fitzgibbon**	2008 Rugby League World Cup	1994
Rugby League	**Keeley Davis**	Australian Jillaroos	2016
Rugby League	**Rikeya Horne**	Australian Jillaroos	2016
Rugby League	**Luke Bailey**	Australian Kangaroos	1995
Rugby League	**Shaun Timmins**	Australian Kangaroos	1993
Rugby League	**John Simon**	Australian Kangaroos	1990
Rugby League	**Ben Hornby**	Australian Kangaroos	1995
Rugby League	**Luke O'Donnell**	Australian Kangaroos	1996
Rugby League	**Damien Cook**	Australian Kangaroos	2006
Rugby League	**Tyson Frizell**	Australian Kangaroos	2007
Rugby Union	**Martin Schliebs**	Australian Rugby 7's Team	1998
Rugby Union	**Paul Asquith**	Australian Rugby 7's Team	2007
Rugby Union	**Tom Connor**	Australian Rugby 7's Team, 2018 Commonwealth Games	2008
Rugby Union	**Alexander Kanaar**	Australian Wallabies	1999
Rugby Union	**Dan Palmer**	Australian Wallabies	2003
Skateboarding	**Kieran Woolley**	2024 & 2020 Olympic Games	2017-2021
Soccer	**Luke Wilkshire**	2010 FIFA World Cup, 2004 Olympic Games	1996
Surfing	**Michael Lowe**	World Surfing Championships	1990
Surfing	**Sally Fitzgibbons**	World Surfing Championships, 2020 Olympic Games	2005
Surfing	**Kim Wooldridge**	World Surfing Championships	1988
Surfing	**Chad Ryan**	World Surfing Championships	1990
Surfing	**Jake Spooner**	World Surfing Championships	1988
Surfing	**Todd Prestage**	World Surfing Championships	1988
Swimming	**David McKeon**	2016 & 2012 Olympics Games and 2014 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	2012
Swimming	**Jarrod Poort**	2016 & 2012 Olympics Games	2009
Swimming	**Emma McKeon**	2024, 2020 & 2016 Olympic Games Gold Medalist, 2014, 2018 & 2022 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist, 2013 World Championships	2008
Swimming	**Robert Hurley**	2010 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	2003
Swimming	**Lori Munz**	1998 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	1997
Swimming	**Sarah Kasoulis**	2002 Commonwealth Games	1999
Swimming	**Ben Denner**	Australian Swimming Team	2000
Swimming	**Kaine Love**	Australian Swimming Team	2000
Swimming	**Jason Cram**	World Champion, 2002 Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist	2000
Tennis	**Ellen Perez**	2024 & 2020 Olympic Games	2000-2010





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2026 PROGRAMS

ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT REPORT



The Illawarra Academy of Sport continued its commitment to developing well-rounded athletes through a high-quality sport, education, and performance support programs. Across the year, more than 220 athletes representing over 40 sports accessed education, strength and conditioning, and sport-specific development opportunities designed to enhance both performance and personal growth.

A major feature of the year was the Academy Games in Tamworth, where a strong IAS contingent tested itself against talented athletes from regional academies across NSW. The results highlighted the quality of preparation across the programs, with silver medals awarded to the boys' and girls' basketball teams, as well as the girls' hockey team. Further recognition came through the selection of several IAS athletes in RAS merit teams.

Service to the community remained a valued part of the scholarship experience. Athletes supported the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, the Wollongong Australia Day Aquathon, and a range of activities within their local government areas. These contributions gave scholarship holders practical opportunities to represent the Academy, work alongside others, and demonstrate leadership beyond competition and training.



The Academy's education program continued to equip athletes with knowledge and skills that extend beyond physical performance. The workshop curriculum addressed sport psychology with Condor Performance; media training with Tim Robinson; leadership with BurnBright; nutrition and healthy cooking with Embody Nutrition; drugs in sport with Sport Integrity Australia; financial fitness with Community First Bank; sports medicine with BaiMed; mentoring with Team Katz; and female athlete education with Jess Stoll from The Female Collective.

Athlete preparation was reinforced through regular training sessions and camps within each sport-specific program, as well as participation in RAS events throughout NSW. The IAS hosted the Southern Academies Basketball Camp in December 2025 and the Netball NSW RAS Netball Academy Challenge in September 2026.

The continued strength of IAS programs relies on the expertise and commitment of the Academy's coaches and support staff. Professional learning delivered through the Regional Academies network, State Sporting Organisations, and the Office of Sport supported their ongoing development. Their work across program design, delivery, evaluation, and refinement continues to shape a positive and effective environment for athletes.

The year demonstrated the value of a holistic model that brings together sporting performance preparation, education, and community involvement. The progress achieved across the Academy was made possible by the shared commitment of athletes, coaches, volunteers, partners, and supporters. I extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to the delivery of the sport programs and to the opportunities provided for the region's emerging athletes.

LUKE MADIGAN
HEAD OF ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT
ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT



STRENGTH & CONDITIONING REPORT



The 2026 scholarship year has been one of significant development for the Illawarra Academy of Sport Strength & Conditioning program, with a strong focus on improving the consistency, accessibility, and quality of physical preparation services provided to IAS athletes across the region.

A major priority throughout the year has been the development of a more structured athlete development framework. This has included formalising the IAS approach



to strength, speed, and plyometric development, while introducing clearer progressions to guide athletes according to their training history, physical development, and sporting demands. This approach allows athletes from a wide range of sports and stages of development to train within a consistent IAS system while still receiving individualised programming appropriate to their needs.

Access to Strength & Conditioning services has also continued across the IAS footprint, with opportunities provided in Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, and Wingecarribee. Alongside supervised sessions, athletes have been provided with greater opportunities for independent training and ongoing program support, helping them develop the skills and confidence required to take greater ownership of their physical preparation.

Physical performance testing was another key area of development in 2026. A standardised testing battery was implemented to assess key physical qualities, including lower-body power, reactive strength, sprint speed, change of direction, maximal strength, upper-body power, mobility, and aerobic capacity. Importantly, greater emphasis has also been placed on longitudinal monitoring rather than viewing testing as a once-off assessment. The introduction of enhanced athlete reporting allows athletes, parents, and coaches to better understand an athlete's progress throughout the scholarship year and identify priorities for continued development.

The Academy also continued to broaden its Strength & Conditioning offering through targeted programs and partnerships. This included the delivery of physical preparation support to the Baseball NSW Academy, ongoing involvement with NSWIS athletes, and the development of additional service models to support athletes and sporting organisations throughout the wider IAS region. Collaboration with local facilities, coaches, interns, and partner organisations has remained integral to providing athletes with high-quality training environments and support.

Education has remained an important component of the program, with athletes encouraged to understand not only what they are doing in the gym, but why. This is achieved through coach-led education on the gym floor, as well as structured education sessions. Developing good training habits, movement competency, consistency, and long-term engagement with strength and conditioning remains central to the IAS philosophy.

The progress made throughout 2026 provides a strong platform for the continued evolution of the IAS Strength & Conditioning program in 2027, with the aim of delivering an increasingly connected, evidence-informed, and athlete-centred physical development pathway across all regions.

MITCH VORLEY
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COORDINATOR
ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT





BASEBALL

The IAS partnered with Baseball NSW in 2026 to provide off-field performance support to players selected by BNSW that reside within the IAS catchment area.

The program consisted of performance support elements to complement existing Baseball training and competitions to improve overall talent development, with a view to enhance opportunities for selection into state and/or representative squads.

Through this partnership, selected players gained access to group strength and conditioning sessions, sport-specific education, and personal development workshops, all delivered through the IAS's established athlete services framework.

Sessions were delivered by accredited coaches, Aaron Tritton, Sean Chivers, Chad Blanch, and Craig Leighton ensuring a consistent high standard of instruction across hitting, pitching, fielding, and game development. The Illawarra Development Hub offered a path to representative and state-level competition.

With 21 athletes involved in the first year, we hope to be able to grow this program in 2026/27.



BASKETBALL

The basketball program enjoyed another successful year at the Illawarra Academy of Sport (IAS), providing great opportunities for athletes to grow and develop their basketball skills.

All basketball athletes demonstrated the benefit of the IAS scholarship through continued improvement in results across local, state and national basketball events. This success was made possible by the IAS and the support provided by the gym partners, educational partners, coaches, and managers to our athletes.

The scholarship year would not have been as successful without the help of Carli Lawson & Jackson Kirkwood during weekly sessions held at the University of Wollongong. In addition, special thank you to Deanna Chambers, Craig Browne and Kerrie Jamieson for their support and assistance with the delivery of Academy Games in 2026.

The strength and depth of the program were on full display at the 2026 Academy Games, where both the boys' and girls' teams secured 2nd place in a highly competitive field. Throughout the weekend, the teams demonstrated exceptional discipline, determination, and competitive spirit. Congratulations to IAS basketball athletes Edem Dowling, Lachlan Butler and Kalani Chambers who were all named in the Tournament All Star Five team for their respective competitions.

Our basketball athletes showed great improvement during the scholarship year, with numerous athletes selected for Basketball NSW pathway teams. Congratulations to the following athletes:

Australian Country Junior Basketball Cup selection:

- Bridie Lawson
- Mackenzie Sims
- Eleanor Taylor
- Harris Mushet
- Edem Dowling
- Lachlan Butler
- Joshua Musgrave
- Kalani Chambers
- Andie Lawson
- Lily Wildner
- Emily Clark
- Sophie Barlow

Southern Cross Challenge selection:

- Felix Nockels

State Performance Program selection:

- Edem Dowling
- Kalani Chambers
- Emily Clark

Basketball NSW Under 16 State Team selection:

- Edem Dowling - captain
- Lachlan Butler
- Kalani Chambers - co-captain
- Emily Clark (reserve)

MADDISON DELANEY
IAS BASKETBALL HEAD COACH



Basketball Athlete of the Year nominees with presenting partner Wallawa Traffic Group represented by Bec Woods



2026 Coach of the Year, Maddison Delaney (Basketball)


Regional Academy Games
Basketball
academygames.com.au
Regional Academy Games
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academygames.co










SPALDING


10


NSW
BASKETBALL NSW


9


7


10


Basketball
Regional Academy Games
Basketball
Regional Academy Games

BMX

IAS supported four new BMX athletes in 2025/26:

- Lachlan Jones (Wollongong)
- Lucas Caldwell (Wollongong)
- Wyatt Delforce (Shellharbour)
- Harvey Delforce (Shellharbour)

The program focussed on state and national competition performance, performance support, strength and conditioning, and athlete education.

Lachlan Jones was recognised at the 2026 Athlete awards as the BMX athlete of the year after wins in the ACT BMX Championships and NSW State Round 2, leading to qualification for the UCI BMX World Championships.



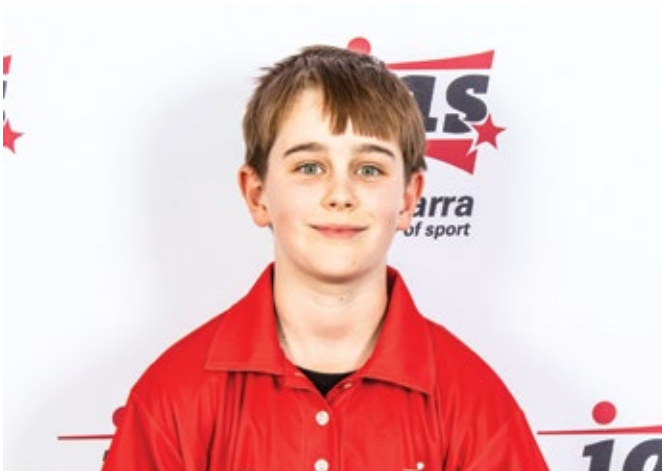


BMX Athlete of the Year Lachlan Jones with presenting partner UOW represented by Professor Helen Partridge, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

We extend a huge thanks to Southlake Illawarra BMX club for all they do to support BMX athletes in the Illawarra, particularly those who were selected into the IAS program. The IAS was proud to provide performance support for BMX athletes in 2026. Congratulations to the athletes involved on their achievements during the year.







ROAD/TRACK CYCLING

IAS had three athletes selected for Cycling in 2025/26:

- Joshua Cockrem (Wollongong)
- Oliver Morris (Wollongong)
- Noah Jovanovic (Wollongong)

Cycling athletes trained with coaches from the Illawarra Cycling Club and accessed performance support services through the IAS.

Oliver Morris was the recipient of the 2026 Ben Mikic Memorial Award (IAS Cycling Athlete of the Year) after representing NSW at the AusCycling U15 National Championship Final.



Road Track Cycling award nominees Oliver Morris (winner) and Joshua Cockrem with presenting partner Soto Engineering, represented by Frank Soto

MOUNTAIN BIKE

IAS had two athletes selected for Mountain Bike in 2025/26.

- Aston Lewis (Kiama)
- Indiana Lambert (Shellharbour)

Mountain Bike athletes trained with Lynne Vaughan in the Shoalhaven and accessed performance support services through the IAS.

Indiana Lambert was the recipient of the 2026 Mountain Bike Athlete of the Year after achieving first place in the U17 Victoria Downhill Series as a 15-year-old, recording the fastest female time of the competition.



Indi Lambert

GOLF

The 2025/26 IAS golf program delivered regular development activities, with sessions centred on purposeful practice, consistent preparation and long-term improvement.

Throughout the season, the program maintained a clear focus on engagement, skill development and the practical application of learning in training and competition environments.

Key features of the season included:

- Weekly training with Head Coach, Stefan Tuionetoa
- Opportunity to attend a JNJG / RAS Camp in ACT
- Opportunity to represent the IAS at the Regional Academy Games in Tamworth

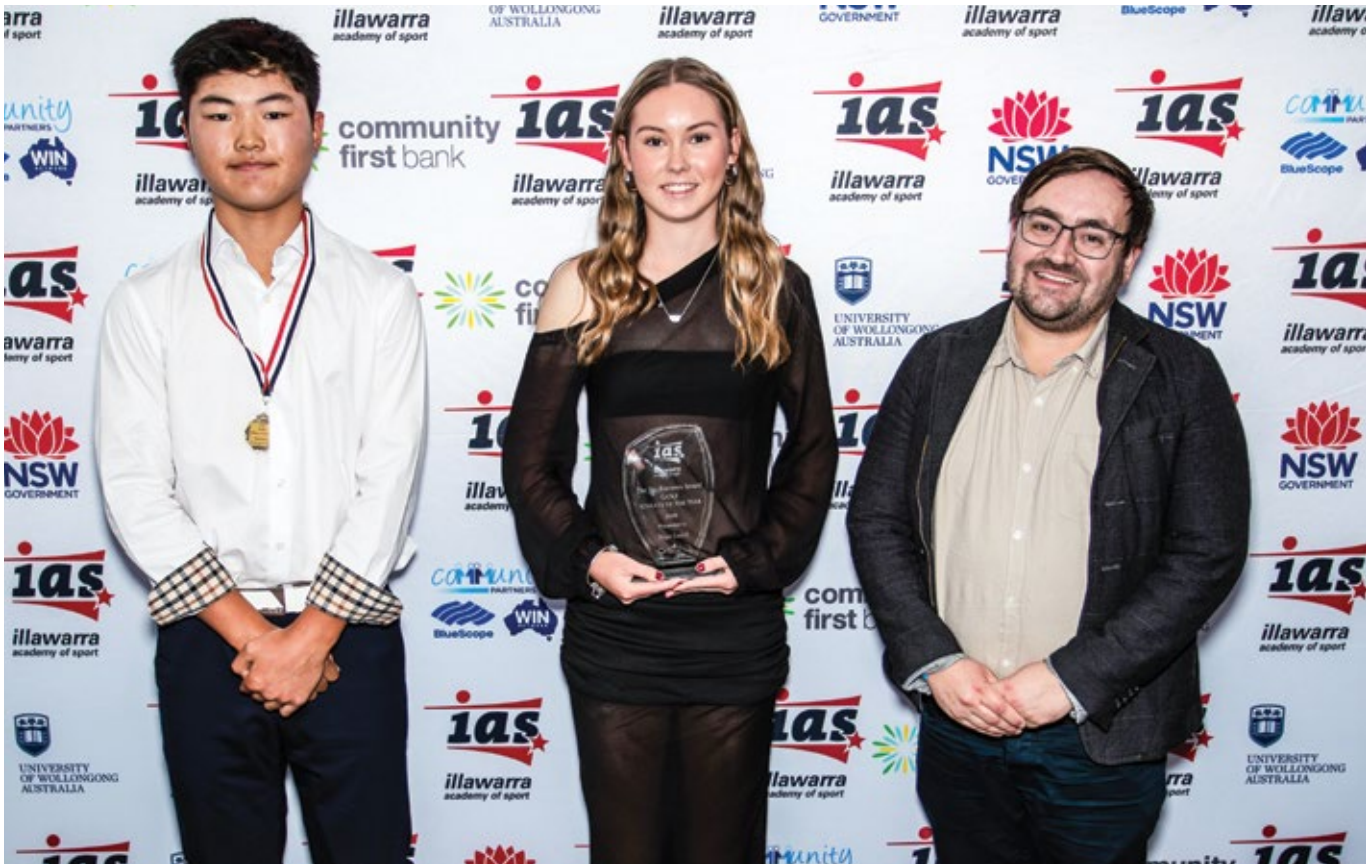
The season also highlighted the value of creating an environment in which participants can discuss their progress openly, identify areas for improvement and take greater ownership of their development.

The program benefited from the support of the JNJG and Golf NSW.

The IAS remains committed to supporting junior golf in the Illawarra and providing a clear, development-focused pathway for future participants.

The 2025/26 squad included seven emerging golfers, with Kiama's Sage Laird taking out the 2026 IAS Golf Athlete of the Year following her selection in the Jack Newton Development squad.





Golf award nominees Samuel Cheoi and Sage Laird (winner) with Cr. Stuart Larkins, Kiama Municipal Council

HOCKEY

The Illawarra Academy of Sport Hockey Program brought together emerging athletes from Wollongong, Wingecarribee, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven.

The 2025/26 program included boys and girls who trained from October to April, with the season culminating at the Regional Academy Games in Tamworth.

The 2025/26 cohort was coached by Michael Little (Head Coach), James Wright (Assistant Coach), Emma Baxter (Assistant Coach) and Tim Arthur (Goalkeeper coach). Across the training season, participants strengthened their technical skills, tactical understanding and overall game awareness. Guest coaches also contributed specialist knowledge and supported the program's focus on well-rounded athlete development.

Hockey-specific sessions were delivered at the Illawarra Hockey Centre. Sessions combined physical preparation, core skill development, structured game scenarios and small-sided games aligned with each session's objectives. This approach provided a progressive, learning-focused environment in which participants could consistently apply and refine their skills. Physical development was informed by data from the IAS strength and conditioning team, while technical development was aligned with Hockey NSW pathways.

A girls' squad represented the IAS at the Regional Academy Games in Tamworth during the April school holidays and finished runners-up. Due to insufficient numbers, a boys' team did not compete in the Games.

The girls' squad demonstrated strong skill, camaraderie and teamwork, reflecting its commitment to improvement and willingness to compete for one another.

Participation in strength and conditioning programs, sports psychology sessions, and a range of athlete education workshops complemented the on-field program. Together, these opportunities supported the development of aspiring hockey players across the Illawarra region. The ongoing commitment of IAS staff, coaches, board members, partners, and sponsors remains central to providing a high-quality pathway for pre-elite athletes.

The IAS hockey program thanks Illawarra South Coast Hockey association and Southern Highlands hockey association for their ongoing funding support.

The program also recognised the commitment, progress and achievements of participants across the season, including those who earned selection in state representative teams. These outcomes reflect the dedication of the cohort and the contribution of the coaches and support network who guided their development.



Hockey award nominees Toby Peoples Sam Peoples (winner), and Samantha Reed, with Hockeyroo and Olympian Casey Sablowski

FUTURE STARS

The Illawarra Academy of Sport Future Stars Program provides talented young athletes from across the region with high-quality performance support opportunities to assist their development through an emerging talent pathway.

The program supports athletes participating in individual or team sports for which the IAS does not currently offer a dedicated program, as well as athletes who fall outside the eligibility criteria of an existing sport-specific program. Scholarships are awarded for a 12-month period, commencing in October and concluding in September.

Throughout the 2025/26 scholarship period, Illawarra Academy of Sport Future Stars athletes represented a diverse range of sports, including water polo, athletics, surfing, swimming, football and many others.

The Illawarra Academy of Sport proudly congratulates all Future Stars athletes on their commitment, achievements and success throughout the 2025/26 scholarship period.

Special congratulations are extended to Lily Sproule (Athletics), Kadance Naylor (Athletics), and Orville Sarkar (Football), who were shortlisted for the DRB Group Tobin Family Athlete of the Year Award. We also recognise Lily Sproule, who was shortlisted for the DRB Group Athlete Leadership Award.




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SPROULE

NETBALL

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 2026 Illawarra Academy of Sport Netball Program supported 22 scholarship athletes and six training partners through a season of skill development, tournament competition and community involvement. This cohort stood out for the intensity they brought to tournament match play, combining a strong competitive approach with impressive skill execution under pressure.

Following the Netball NSW syllabus, the program introduced athletes aged 15–16 to a performance sport environment, developing their technical and tactical skills alongside fitness, strength and speed. Skills were delivered across two training blocks by the full coaching team.

Head Coach Gemma Silver was supported by Assistant Coaches Toni-Anne Jones, Jess Davies and Mel Hewison, and Team Manager Karen Clark. Squad leaders Denbigh Lewis, Emily King and Lucy Christian supported the group throughout the season.

Once again, our squad was incredibly lucky to host Netball ACT at the UOW Sports Hub for combined training and match play, providing an opportunity to strengthen team connections and work alongside athletes from another development program. A Performance Camp at Netball Central in March further extended the squad's development beyond regular training and tournament opportunities.

Watching training translate into tournament performance was particularly rewarding. Athletes demonstrated growing confidence in their skills, encouraged one another and took greater responsibility for their contribution to the team. These experiences reflected the program's emphasis on our squad values: Trust, Commit, Connect and Community.

ACADEMY GAMES

The 2026 Academy Games in Tamworth in April provided valuable opportunities for the IAS squad to demonstrate teamwork, resilience and continual growth across the tournament. Athletes embraced the challenge of competing against high-calibre opponents, showing improvement in consistency, communication and game awareness. The experience strengthened on-court



Netball award nominees Emily King, Sophie Lockyer (winner) and Lucy Christian with the Lord Mayor Cr. Tania Brown, Wollongong City Council



connections and reinforced the importance of adaptability under pressure.

Congratulations to our Division MVPs: Indy Bradley (Div 1) and Ava Target (Div 2).

ACADEMY CHALLENGE

The 2026 Regional Academy Netball Challenge provided a valuable platform for competition, collaboration and growth. Both IAS teams demonstrated improvement across the weekend, applying strong defensive pressure, improved game awareness and greater composure under pressure against high-quality opposition. The experience offered meaningful learning opportunities within a performance environment and gave athletes another opportunity to apply their training in competition.

Athlete Achievements and Community Contribution

It was an incredible year for representation across talent identification pathways, with twenty athletes named across Premier League pathway programs. These opportunities recognised the depth of talent within the squad and provided avenues for athletes to continue their development.

Denbeigh Lewis, Harper Bragg, Miki Kerr, Savanah Wikki, Ava Target, Madi Saywell and Darcie Wise were also recognised with 2026 South Coast Blaze club awards, celebrating their achievements within the club.

The squad also demonstrated leadership off the court, giving back to local communities through netball coaching and umpiring, and participating or volunteering in the IAS Aquathon and Red Shield Appeal opportunities. Their contribution reflected the importance of community within the Academy experience.

The achievements of former IAS athletes were another highlight. Izzy Christian and Isla Waterhouse, alumni of the 2025 and 2024 programs respectively, were named in Netball NSW state teams. Several alumni from earlier years also earned selections in Netball NSW Premier League teams.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND LOOKING AHEAD

Thank you to our athletes, coaching team, manager and families for their commitment and contribution throughout the season. We also thank Collegians for their support of future programs. We look forward to welcoming new and returning athletes in 2027 and continuing to support their development on and off the court.

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR SOPHIE LOCKYER

Sophie Lockyer has been named the 2026 IAS Netball Athlete of the Year. Her achievements included selection in the NSW Under 17 state team and the Australian National Training Squad, marking significant milestones in her netball development, on top of strong representative and premier league pathway representation. The Academy congratulates Sophie on her award and these pathway achievements, and looks forward to following her continued progress.

GEMMA SILVER
HEAD COACH




Team Benches


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NETBALL UMPIRES

The 2025/2026 Illawarra Academy of Sport season has been another successful year for the Netball Umpires Program, filled with plenty of achievements, challenges, laughs and memories.

The squad has grown so much throughout the season, in confidence, technical development and together as friends. Starting over a decade ago, IASs Netball Umpires Program has produced proud achievements each year with many of our athletes going into Netball NSW elite pathways.

Sports official development has continuously been supported by IAS and the athletes and coaches are grateful for this.

EMMA AND RACHAEL (COACHES)





The IAS welcomed Collegians as our Netball and Netball Umpires major partner

ABBEY WHITCHURCH, NETBALL UMPIRE OF THE YEAR

Being a part of the IAS has been an experience that I will always be grateful for. It has given me opportunities that I may not have had if I wasn't in the IAS. Being in the IAS also allowed me to meet some amazing people and make friendships, not only from the IAS but from other sporting academies as well.

The program has also taught me that becoming a better athlete is about much more than what happens on the court. From the training sessions and games to education sessions about leadership, nutrition and community involvement, I have been able to develop skills and experiences that have helped me grow as both an athlete and a person. Every part of this program has helped me grow and become more confident in myself.

Looking Back on the 2025/2026 Season I am so proud of everything our squad has achieved and the effort every person has put in. Some highlights include

- 3 squad members awarded their national B badge
- Senior and Junior Netball NSW State Titles Participation
- Invites from Netball NSW to umpire the upcoming summer series
- Netball NSW RASI camp held at Netball Central
- Academy games held in Tamworth
- Netball NSW Academy Challenge hosted by the IAS

On behalf of the netball umpire squad, a very big thank you to our coaches, Emma and Rachael, for everything they have done for us throughout this season. Your patience, encouragement and dedication to this squad have helped each of us push ourselves and work towards our individual goals. We are all so grateful for all the time and effort you put into every session, as well as all the laughs and memories along the way.

A huge thank you also goes to the IAS staff and all our sponsors for continuing to invest in the development of the young athletes and officials within the Illawarra region. The opportunities provided through this program have made a genuine difference to all of us, and I feel incredibly lucky to have been part of it.

A big thank you to our local councils in Kiama, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee and Wollongong for your ongoing support of IAS and the opportunities you help provide for athletes and officials across our region. Your support plays such an important part in allowing programs like this to continue and gives us the chance to develop, compete and grow. We really appreciate everything you do for us and for supporting the next generation of athletes.

Finally, thank you to our parents, families, fellow officials and everyone who has supported us throughout the season. Your encouragement, guidance and belief in us have never gone unnoticed.

I am so grateful and honoured to be a part of the Illawarra Academy of Sport Netball Umpire Program this year, and I'm incredibly grateful to be named Netball Umpire Athlete of the Year and to receive the $250 award courtesy of the Collegians. It has been a year I will always remember, and I am so proud of what we have all achieved together. I can't wait to see what's next for all of us!



Netball Umpire award nominees Matilda Donnan, Abbey Whitchurch (winner) and Sophie Placek with presenting partner UniActive represented by Chris Fonoti

PARA ATHLETES

This Regional Para Unit Partnership enhances collaboration between the IAS and the NSWIS to support the identification and development of future Paralympic athletes.

The Partnership aims to complement initiatives delivered by the NSWIS Para Unit, remove barriers for Para-athletes and elevate training environments for Para-athletes in the IAS area.

To be eligible for selection athletes must be:

- Minimum 13 years old
- Have an eligible physical, vision, and/or intellectual disability for Para-sport, based on a previous provisional or national classification.
- Be representing one (or more) of the 29 Para-sports and events competed at the Paralympic Games.
- Be representing at a state or national level within their Para-sport or show appropriate talent potential as determined by the National Sporting Organisation (NSO) or National Sporting Organisation for People with Disability (NSOD) for their sport, NSWIS Para Unit and Paralympics Australia (PA).
- Must be living, working, or attending a school within the area of the IAS while the initiative is being delivered.
- Considered eligible for the Para Accelerate and/or Para Transition initiatives as offered by the NSWIS Para Unit. This follows a nomination and assessment process between the NSO/NSOD, PA, and the NSWIS Para Unit.

In 2025/26, the IAS supported three NSWIS athletes

- Jack Gibson (Triathlon)
- Dylan Braan (Powerlifting)
- Chelsea De Jong (Equestrian)

Each athlete receives $1000 funding from NSWIS along with $500 from IAS to be used for allied health services that will support their performance.

The NSWIS Para Unit, in partnership with the IAS delivered a Talent Identification Camp in Wollongong in July. Para athletes from across the region were assessed through testing across a range of sports. Four athletes were categorised and have been included in the 2026/27 program.

In addition, the IAS supported a further six para-athletes as part of the Future Stars program in 2025/26.

Eddie Clare – Swimming

Oskar Driscoll – Swimming

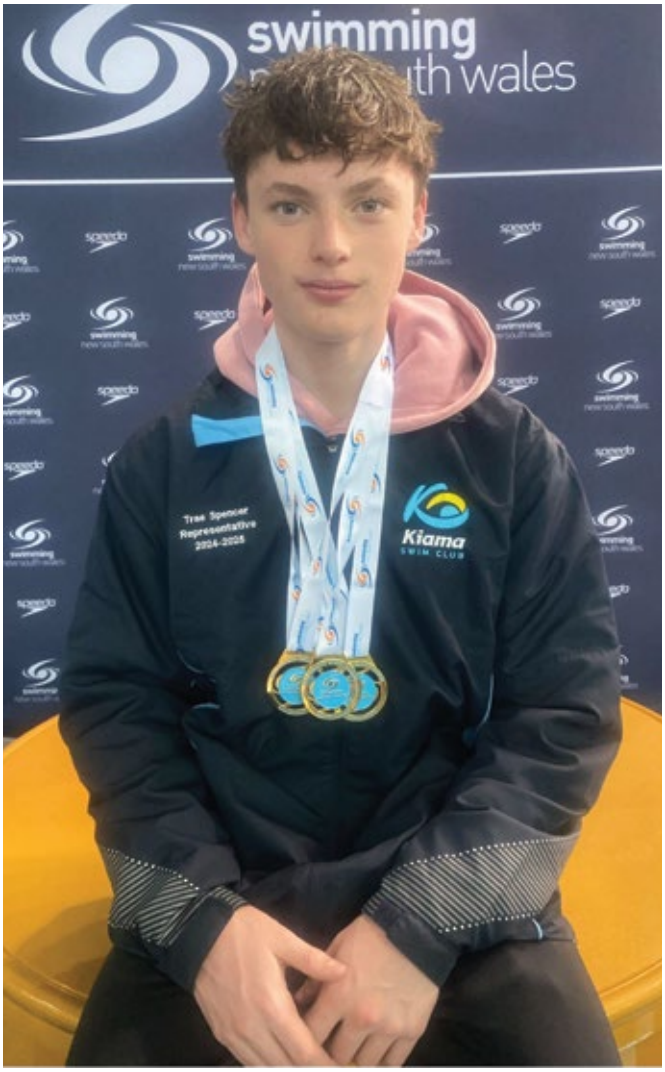
Carly Young – Weightlifting

Ellie Linsley - Triathlon

Trae Spencer – Swimming

Xavier Wilson – Athletics

Trae Spencer (pictured) was awarded the IAS Para athlete of the year award for his outstanding achievements in Swimming where he competed at Country, State, National Age Championships, the Australian Open Championships, and the World Para Swimming Series as a Next Wave Para Athlete.





2026 Para Athlete of the Year, Trae Spencer

GIRLS RUGBY 7s

What an outstanding inaugural year for the Illawarra Academy of Sport Rugby Sevens Program.

The athletes demonstrated exceptional commitment and growth, not only on the field but also in the classroom. Throughout the program, participants were exposed to a range of athlete development topics, including media engagement, anti-doping education, nutrition, and athlete wellbeing. These sessions provided valuable insight into the broader responsibilities and attributes required to become a high-performing athlete.

With the Illawarra building a name as a strong breeding ground for rugby talent, the program brought together some of the region's most promising female players. Representing the Illawarra Academy of Sport, these athletes embraced the opportunity to further develop their skills while contributing to the ongoing growth of rugby across our region.

The results achieved throughout the season were a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment displayed by all athletes involved. Their efforts were reflected in several outstanding performances across major competitions.

COMPETITION RESULTS

Monaro Sevens Tournament

U14/U16 Champions

Players of the Tournament

- U14: Maleia Jones
- U16: Rora Chase

The Armidale School Rugby Carnival

U14/U16 Runners-Up

Players of the Tournament

- U14: Starr Cooper
- U16: Amarli Daszkowski

Following the dual success at The Monaro Sevens, participation in the Academy Games in Tamworth was another highlight of the season and provided a valuable experience for all athletes involved.

For many members of the U14 squad, the trip to compete at The Armidale School Rugby Carnival, Australia's largest rugby carnival, represented their first opportunity to travel and compete away from their family environment.



Girls Rugby 7's award nominees Tara Lee and Maleia Jones (winner) with presenting partners Community First Bank represented by Jenna Steel & Stephanie Holding



The experience proved to be both exciting and rewarding, contributing significantly to their personal and athletic development.

A particularly pleasing aspect of the program was the leadership shown by the U16 athletes throughout the season. During the Armidale tour, they consistently led by example, offering guidance, encouragement, and support to the younger U14 players. Their willingness to mentor their teammates helped foster a positive and inclusive team culture and was a wonderful reflection of the values promoted through the program.

The inaugural IAS Rugby Sevens Program has laid a strong foundation for future success, and all athletes should be extremely proud of their achievements and the way they represented both the Academy and the Illawarra region.

U14 Squad

- Grace Blair
- Layla Bramstedt
- Indie Bramstedt
- Ava Colerio
- Starr Cooper
- Ryah Hayward
- Zarielle Jack
- Maleia Jones
- Marli Kissell
- Reeva Milthorpe
- Lola Raikes
- Eseta Tuidraki
- Matarina McCreedy
- Alexa Trencevski

U16 Squad

- Ashanti Atallah
- Jade Blair
- Rora Chase
- Amarli Daszkowski
- Ebony Gallagher
- Niamh Hicks
- Tara Lee
- Teyah Michalowski
- Zali Milthorpe
- Holly Sheridan
- Jayda Stringer
- Arlee Taingahue

DANE MILTHORPE
HEAD COACH, IAS GIRLS RUGBY SEVENS

TRIATHLON

PROGRAM FOCUS

The 2025/26 Triathlon Program focused on developing athletes' draft-legal cycling skills, which are crucial for competing in the NSW draft-legal series. We welcomed several new athletes to the program and had only a short period to prepare for the first race of the season in Port Kembla. All athletes demonstrated great dedication and commitment in learning and refining their cycling skills, transitions, and open-water swimming techniques in preparation for the opening race. Athletes then continued to develop these skills throughout the season.

As the season progressed and the athletes' skills improved, they were able to work towards achieving their goals. We established process goals for race performance and outcome goals, such as selection in the NSW squad.

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

The squad performed brilliantly throughout the State Series. Every athlete finished in the top 10 of the points score for their respective category. Five athletes achieved podium finishes throughout the State Series, and five athletes were also successful in gaining selection in the New South Wales All Schools Team to contest the Australian All Schools Championships on the Gold Coast.

Five of our junior athletes were also selected in the Triathlon NSW Emerging Talent Squad for the upcoming season.

TRAINING

We met regularly to focus on developing our cycling and transition skills. By the middle of the season, we had seen significant improvement.

We also participated in the NSW Tri Masterclass sessions at Port Kembla and Penrith to further develop our race fitness and tactical skills in preparation for the major end-of-season races.

In January, we travelled to Jindabyne for a combined training camp with the IAS Cycle Squad. It was a massive week of training, consisting of 15km of swimming, 300km of cycling, 35 km of running, and two strength and conditioning sessions led by Sammi. It was a challenging week, but the gains made were instrumental in our performances during the major end-of-season races.

ATHLETE ACHIEVEMENTS

Jack Gibson

- 1st Australian Paratriathlon Championship
- 2nd Oceania Championship
- 4th Devonport WTPS
- 4th Hamburg WTPS

Isla O'Connor

- 3rd Academy Games (Junior)

Harry Fraser

- 3rd NSW Billigence Series Overall

NSW All Schools Representatives

- Pixie Hanson, Skye Bell, Luke Barritt, Isla O'Connor, Harry Fraser

These were some of the individual highlights of the season. Most importantly, the growth and development of the entire squad was extremely impressive. All athletes demonstrated excellent sportsmanship, resilience, and respect while representing IAS at races across the country. The coaching staff are incredibly proud of this squad and its achievements.

Thank you for a great year.

BEN BELL, SCOTT ASCHCROFT, LUKE JONES
IAS TRIATHLON COACHES



2026 Triathlon Athlete of the Year, Jack Gibson with presenting partner BlueScope WIN Community Partners represented by Bill Wilkins

VOLLEYBALL

During the 2026 IAS indoor season, 36 athletes were selected, and all developed significantly throughout the season. From this group, 18 players were selected for Illawarra representative teams to compete in the State Volleyball League, while 10 players were selected for NSW youth squads. Many others were named as shadow players for NSW squads, gaining valuable experience and further developing their volleyball skills.

We competed in two competitions during the season. The girls' team picking won gold at the Regional Academy competition and finished fourth in the State Youth Championships. The boys' teams also performed well, recording several wins against strong opponents, but were ultimately unable to secure a medal.

All athletes demonstrated outstanding growth throughout the season and, hopefully, will use this experience to continue pushing themselves to greater achievements in the future.

NICHOLAS THORPE
IAS VOLLEYBALL HEAD COACH



Volleyball award nominees Timothy Binns (winner) and Coco Threadgate with Mr Shaun Robinson, Manager Assets, Wingecarribee Shire Council'




To Gain


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COACHES & MANAGERS

NAME	SPORT	POSITION
Maddy Delaney	Basketball	Head Coach
Carli Lawson	Basketball	Coach
Kerrie Jamieson	Basketball	Manager
Aaron Tritton	Baseball	Coach
Sean Chivers	Baseball	Coach
Chad Blanch	Baseball	Coach
Craig Leighton	Baseball	Coach
Carla Mete	BMX	Manager
Marco Baez	BMX	Coach
Michael Marshall	Cycling	Head Coach
Jared Madsen	Cycling	Assistant Coach
Lynne Vaughan	Mountain Bike	Head Coach
Stefan Tuionetoa	Golf	Head Coach
Michael Little	Hockey	Head Coach
James Wright	Hockey	Assistant Coach
Emma Baxter	Hockey	Assistant Coach

NAME	SPORT	POSITION
Tim Arthur	Hockey	GK Coach
Gemma Silver	Netball	Head Coach
Jess Davis	Netball	Assistant Coach
Toni Jones	Netball	Assistant Coach
Mel Hewison	Netball	Trainee Coach
Karen Clark	Netball	Manager
Emma Corfield	Netball Umpire	Co-Coach
Rachael Cox	Netball Umpire	Co-Coach
Dane Milthorpe	Rugby 7's	Head Coach
Fred Siasat	Rugby 7's	Coach
Ben Bell	Triathlon	Head Coach
Nick Thorpe	Volleyball	Head Coach
Jake Lewkowicz	Volleyball	Assistant Coach
Sean Thorpe	Volleyball	Assistant Coach
Holly Nowland	Volleyball	Assistant Coach



Wollongong City Council

Snapshot



Council's role is to lead strategic planning of sports and recreation in Wollongong, advocate and work with national associations and sporting bodies, manage key sporting facilities, infrastructure delivery, ongoing maintenance, and grant management – all to support clubs and associations working directly with the community.

Planning for the future

Designed to meet the demands of a growing population and evolving participation trends, Council's 2023–2027 Sports Grounds and Sporting Facility Strategy provides a clear framework for infrastructure investment, service delivery, and athlete support—from grassroots to elite levels.

With Wollongong projected to grow by more than 32,000 residents by 2036, the pressure on existing sports infrastructure is intensifying. Council's strategy aims to safeguard green space, deliver climate-resilient playing surfaces, enhance community health, ensure equitable access to sport and recreation and embrace emerging trends.

We're committed to all levels of sport – from enthusiastic amateurs and keen youngsters, to aspiring and elite professional athletes.

Wollongong is ideally located to serve as a regional sporting hub and we're exploring opportunities with the NSW Government to establish this at key locations. We're planning for the provision of new sporting facilities and precincts, like the Darkes Sporting and Community Hub in West Dapto, and making plans on ways to improve existing facilities like at Beaton Park.

By embedding sport and recreation into the city's liveability agenda our goal is to make active participation accessible, inclusive, and sustainable.

We deliver:

$19M+ sports facilities upgrades (2026-30)

$5.5M sports facilities maintenance (p.a.)

$500K sports grants (p.a.)

193 playing fields

174 outdoor sports courts

9 turf wickets

9 supervised swimming pools

1 golf course



wollongong
city of innovation

CLASS OF 2026

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL AREA
BASKETBALL		
Felix	Nockels	Wollongong
Sophie	Barlow	Wollongong
Bentley	Bell-Williams	Wollongong
Emilia	Lane	Wollongong
Lucy	Malesevic	Wollongong
Thomas	Holland	Kiama
Harris	Mushet	Shellharbour
Fletcher	Browne	Wollongong
Lachlan	Butler	Wollongong
Kalani	Chambers	Wollongong
Emily	Clark	Wollongong
Heidi	Cliff	Kiama
Edem	Dowling	Wollongong
Matthew	Drinkwater	Wollongong
Ruby	Galea	Wollongong
Isaak	Hart	Wollongong
Andie	Lawson	Wollongong
Bridie	Lawson	Wollongong
Chase	Luzuriaga	Wollongong
Joshua	Musgrave	Kiama
Eleanor	Musgrave	Kiama
Dane	Nolan	Wollongong
Owen	Olbourne	Wollongong
Mackenzie	Sims	Wollongong
Charlotte	Stirling	Wingecarribee
Jacob	Svarc	Wollongong
Eleanor	Taylor	Kiama
Harlen	Walsh	Shellharbour
Ella	Whittle	Wollongong
Lily	Wildner	Wollongong
Jude	Wood	Wollongong
BMX CYCLING		
Lachlan	Jones	Wollongong
Wyatt	Delforce	Shellharbour
Harvey	Delforce	Shellharbour
Lucas	Caldwell	Wollongong
FOOTBALL		
Layla	Mullan	Wingecarribee
Roy	Lucas	Shoalhaven
Tehani	Aperau-Bob	Shellharbour
Orville	Sarkar	Shoalhaven
Toby	Rootham	Shoalhaven
Eden	Casey	Shellharbour

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL AREA
FUTURE STARS		
Emily	Rolfe	Wollongong
Carly	Young	Wollongong
Lucinda	Corby	Wollongong
Joseph	Heffernan	Wollongong
Axel	Comer	Wollongong
Harper	Beaton	Shellharbour
Max	Serfontein	Shellharbour
Xavier	Wilson	Shellharbour
Kobi	Hayward	Shellharbour
Rubylee	Neill	Kiama
Ellie	Linsley	Kiama
Ethan	Spark	Shoalhaven
Trae	Spencer	Shoalhaven
Milla	Topliss	Shoalhaven
Annika	Rowe	Shoalhaven
Elsie	Procter	Shoalhaven
Ruby	Roberts	Shoalhaven
Oskar	Driscoll	Shoalhaven
Charlie	Britton	Shoalhaven
Kadance	Naylor	Shoalhaven
Lily	Sproule	Shoalhaven
Eddie	Clare	Wollongong
Oskar	Driscoll	Shoalhaven
Carly	Young	Wollongong
Ellie	Linsley	Kiama
Trae	Spencer	Shoalhaven
Xavier	Wilson	Shellharbour
GOLF		
Samuel	Cheoi	Wollongong
Archie	Hollands	Kiama
Callan	Earle	Wollongong
Sage	Laird	Kiama
Jaidon	Kyriacou	Shellharbour
Nash	Duncan	Kiama
Harlan	Joshua	Wollongong
HOCKEY		
Toby	Peoples	Wollongong
Malachy	Hurley	Wollongong
Bonnie	Ornelas	Wollongong
Evie	Kent	Wollongong
Max	Elliott	Shellharbour
Eli	Mayo	Shellharbour
Sam	Huetter	Shellharbour

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL AREA
Jasmine	Wright	Kiama
Loxley	MacNamara	Wingecarribee
Max	Handley	Wingecarribee
Riley	Marshall	Wingecarribee
Heidi	Bowie	Wingecarribee
Sam	Peoples	Wollongong
Bryn	Fuller	Wollongong
Samantha	Reed	Wollongong
Edwina	Jones	Wollongong
Sienna	Mason	Shellharbour
Maya	Huetter	Shellharbour
Tom	Gair	Wingecarribee
Ben	Bragg	Wingecarribee
Brayden	Dawes	Wingecarribee
Harry	Isedale	Wingecarribee
Alexander	Stone	Wingecarribee
Ethan	Dawes	Wingecarribee
Bryce	Rodger	Wingecarribee
MacKenzie	Perry	Wingecarribee
Lila	Gardiner	Wingecarribee
Matilda	South	Wingecarribee
MTB CYCLING		
Aston	Lewis	Kiama
Indiana	Lambert	Shellharbour
NETBALL UMPIRE		
Matilda	Donnan	Wollongong
Charlotte	Weir	Shellharbour
Abbey	Whitchurch	Shellharbour
Sophie	Placek	Wollongong
Stevie	Hopkinson	Wollongong
Malani	Murphy	Wollongong
NETBALL		
Addison	Diamond	Kiama
Miki	Kerr	Shellharbour
Sia	Knowles	Wingecarribee
Amelia	Rutledge	Wollongong
Savannah	Wiki	Wollongong
Indy	Bradley	Wollongong
Brooklyn	Horwood	Shoalhaven
Harper	Bragg	Kiama
Emily	King	Wingecarribee
Neve	Wilkins	Kiama
Olivia	Seymour-Munn	Shoalhaven
Darcie	Wise	Wollongong
Ava	Stone	Wollongong
Lilly	McIntosh	Shellharbour
Olivia	Borg	Wollongong
Sophie	Malyn	Wingecarribee

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL AREA
Sophie	Howarth	Wollongong
Isla	Missingham	Shoalhaven
Ava	Weeks	Wollongong
Denbigh	Lewis	Wollongong
Madeleine	Saywell	Wollongong
Ava	Targett	Wollongong
Sophie	Lockyer	Wollongong
Layla	Miles	Shoalhaven
Roxana	Bobruk	Shoalhaven
Zara	Low	Wollongong
Lucy	Christian	Wollongong
PERFORMANCE SUPPORT		
Eddie	Clare	Wollongong
Eilidh	Marshall	Wollongong
Owen	Wall	Kiama
nandana (nandu_	jagarlamudi	Wollongong
Tully	McCarthy	Wollongong
Sidney	Bartle	Shellharbour
Drew	Cooney	Wingecarribee
Ewan	Debeck	Shoalhaven
Liam	Hockey	Wollongong
Hunter	Mojsoski	Wollongong
Cody	Luzuriaga	Wollongong
Ashton	Smith	Kiama
Oliva	Sarin	Shellharbour
Luka	Cardow	Shoalhaven
Katherine	Welsh	Kiama
Kobe	Weir	Shoalhaven
Flynn	Hutchinson	Shellharbour
Oliver	Hawkins	Wollongong
Jacob	van Alphen	Kiama
Flynn	Hutchinson	Shellharbour
CJ	Agno	
RT CYCLING		
Joshua	Cockrem	Wollongong
Oliver	Morris	Wollongong
Noah	Jovanovic	Wollongong

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL AREA
RUGBY 7S GIRLS		
Eseta	Tuidraki	Shellharbour
Layla	Bramstedt	Shellharbour
Indie	Bramstedt	Shellharbour
Zali	Milthorpe	Shellharbour
Reeva	Milthorpe	Shellharbour
Grace	Blair	Shoalhaven
Niamh	Hicks	Shellharbour
Zarielle	Jack	Wollongong
Starr	Cooper	Wollongong
Ryah	Hayward	Shellharbour
Maleia	Jones	Wollongong
Sienna	Mamo	Kiama
Lola	Raikes	Wollongong
Ashanti	Atallah	Shellharbour
Rora	Chase	Wollongong
Jayda	Stringer	Wollongong
Marli	Kissell	Shellharbour
Tara	Lee	Wollongong
Holly	Sheridan	Kiama
Jade	Blair	Shoalhaven
TRIATHLON		
Luke	Barritt	Wollongong
Isla	Oconnor	Wollongong
Harry	Fraser	Shellharbour
Cate	Giason	Wollongong
William	Mason	Shellharbour
Jack	Gibson	Shellharbour
Pixie	Hanson	Wingecarribee
Sam	Hughes	Shoalhaven
Jake	Barritt	Wollongong
Milton	Stepanovski	Wollongong
Narelle	Berlanda	Wollongong
Taylor	Mulhere	Wollongong
Thomas	Kite	Wollongong
Ruby	Payten	Wollongong
Skye	Bell	Wollongong
Miller	Bell	Shoalhaven

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	COUNCIL AREA
VOLLEYBALL		
Claire	Musson	Shoalhaven
Ukhaanzaya(Uka)	Mendsaikhan	Wollongong
Sebin	Park	Wollongong
Billy	Henshaw	Shoalhaven
Thomas	Kao	Wollongong
Samuel	Towers	Wollongong
Ellora	Egan	Wollongong
Timothy	Binns	Shoalhaven
Angelique	Salvador	Wollongong
Elijah	Duncan	Shoalhaven
Claire	Vogelaar	Kiama
Myra	Williams	Shoalhaven
Grace	Donnelly	Shoalhaven
Anouk	Mackenzie-Steele	Wollongong
Elyse	Turk	Wollongong
Jasper	Jacobs	Wollongong
Kaitlyn	Warfield	Shoalhaven
Nicholas	Rebikov-Vincent	Wollongong
Alex	Tran	Wollongong
Marku	Boshoff	Wollongong
Spencer	Bragg	Wollongong
Lily	Ison	Shellharbour
Tayla	Wiki	Wollongong
Andrii	Korenkov	Wollongong
Riley	Robles-kell	Shoalhaven
Nathan	Richardson	Shellharbour
Matilda	Vermey	Wollongong
Noah	Finlay	Shoalhaven
Jensen An	Maynard	Wollongong
Megan	Fackender	Shellharbour
Coco	Threadgate	Wollongong
Eunice	Cavalida	Wollongong
Sam	Larcombe	Shoalhaven
Rosalie	Van Stralendorff	Wollongong



Investing in the next generation.

Proud Naming Rights Sponsor of the 2026 DRB Group Tobin Family Athlete of the Year Award and the Athlete Leadership Award.

enquiries@drbgroup.com.au 4228 1888 www.drbgroup.com.au

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT COMMUNITY FIRST BANK

BACKING OUR ATHLETES. BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY.

Community First Bank is proud to continue its long-standing partnership with the Illawarra Academy of Sport (IAS), building on a relationship established by Illawarra Credit Union in 2009. Following the merger of our two organisations, the partnership continues under the Community First Bank name, reflecting our enduring commitment to supporting local talent and creating opportunities for the next generation.

During 2025–26, our partnership continued to support initiatives that recognise sporting achievement, encourage personal development, and help athletes build skills for the future.

The Athlete of the Month program remained an important part of our support, recognising young athletes for their performance, dedication to training, leadership and contribution to their communities. Celebrating these achievements acknowledges the hard work behind sporting success and encourages athletes to continue pursuing their goals. We are honoured to recognise the following Athlete of the Month winners for 2025-26 financial year:

- July 2025 - Kadance Naylor, Track & Field
- August 2025 – Allegra Beretov, Road & Track Cycling
- September 2025 – Manha Khan, Netball Umpiring
- October 2025 – Lily Sproule, Track & Field
- November 2025 – Sophie Lockyer, Netball
- January 2026 – Max Elliot, Hockey
- February 2026 – Elsie Proctor, Football
- March 2026 – Sam Peoples, Hockey
- April 2026 – Lachlan Butler, Basketball
- May 2026 – Emily King, Netball
- June 2026 – Toby Peoples, Hockey

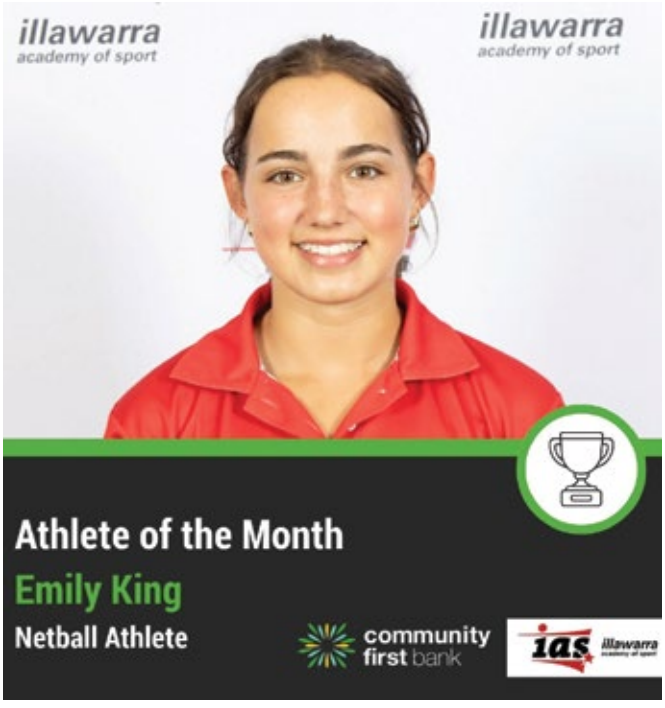
We also continued our focus on financial wellbeing through a financial education workshop delivered during the 2025 Induction Day. Developing an understanding of budgeting, saving, and making informed financial decisions can help young people build positive financial habits that extend well beyond their sporting careers. By supporting financial education alongside athletic development, we aim to help athletes prepare for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. We look forward to expanding these workshops further in the coming year.

Our support also extends to the practical needs of competing athletes. Through assistance with food expenses associated with travel to the Regional Academy Games, we helped ease some of the costs involved in participating in these important sporting opportunities.

For Community First Bank, this partnership represents more than sponsorship. As a member-owned bank, we believe in contributing to the strength and wellbeing of the communities we serve. Supporting IAS allows us to invest in young people, celebrate local achievement, and help create opportunities that benefit individuals, families, and the wider Illawarra community.

While our brand has evolved following the merger, our commitment to the region remains unchanged. We are proud to carry forward the legacy of Illawarra Credit Union and continue supporting the Academy, its athletes, and the dedicated coaches, families, and staff who help them thrive.

We look forward to building on this partnership and supporting the next generation of Illawarra athletes as they pursue their ambitions, develop skills for life, and inspire their community.



It Takes a Community to Build a *Champion*

Every athlete's journey is supported by a community that believes in their potential.

Since 2009, Community First Bank has proudly supported the Illawarra Academy of Sport, helping local athletes access opportunities to learn, grow and achieve their best — in sport and beyond.

Through athlete development, the Athlete of the Month program and financial education, we're proud to support the people behind the performances, helping build confidence, capability and a stronger community.

Learn more at communityfirst.com.au/illawarra-academy-of-sport/



community first bank

Community First Credit Union Limited ABN 80 087 649 938 | Operating as Community First Bank | AFSL and Australian credit licence 231204

ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT ATHLETES COMPLETE HIGH PERFORMANCE ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Illawarra Academy of Sport and TAFE NSW are celebrating the successful completion of the 900-83278 Statement of Attainment in High Performance Athletic Development (Strength and Conditioning), delivered through a unique collaboration designed to support the education and career aspirations of talented local athletes.

Throughout the 11-month program, athletes combined practical workshops at the TAFE NSW Shellharbour campus with self-paced learning and assessments to develop valuable knowledge and skills in strength and conditioning, fitness programming, and sports nutrition.

Students completed three nationally recognised units of competency:

- HLTHPS010 Interpret and use information about nutrition and diet
- SISXCAI009 Instruct strength and conditioning techniques
- SISXCAI010 Develop strength and conditioning programs

These units provide participants with practical skills that can be applied in their own sporting environments and form a pathway into further study and careers across the sport, fitness, recreation, health and community services sectors.

During the program, athletes learned how to interpret nutritional information, develop and evaluate strength and conditioning programs, and design personalised fitness plans to help individuals achieve their health and performance goals.

The collaboration reflects a shared commitment by TAFE NSW and the Illawarra Academy of Sport to supporting the holistic development of young athletes by providing opportunities both on and off the field. The skills and nationally recognised training gained through the program will help participants continue their sporting journeys while exploring future education and career pathways.

" It was a privilege to work with the Illawarra Academy of Sport athletes throughout 2026. During this time, athletes undertook three units focused on strength and conditioning and nutrition, providing them with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of key concepts that support athletic performance, recovery and overall wellbeing.

As students, the athletes were a pleasure to teach. They consistently demonstrated respect, maturity and a genuine willingness to learn, creating a positive and engaging learning environment. Despite the demands of balancing their academic studies, sporting commitments and personal responsibilities, they approached the program with enthusiasm and professionalism."
– Emma McLeish, TAFE NSW Teacher and IAS Alumna.

Congratulations to all athletes who successfully completed the program and demonstrated their commitment to personal development, lifelong learning and sporting excellence.

INTERESTED IN FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES?

Following the success of the Strength and Conditioning program, TAFE NSW and the Illawarra Academy of Sport are pleased to offer the 900-83501 Statement of Attainment in Applied Sport Performance Analysis and Training Design for 2026-2027. The program includes four nationally recognised units that develop skills in client screening, fitness assessment, exercise program design, and the application of anatomy and physiology to support safe and effective exercise instruction.

Places are limited and available to current and former Illawarra Academy of Sport athletes.



Wingecarribee
SHIRE COUNCIL

Backing local talent

On the field. In the workplace. In the community.





Your future starts here.

Gain practical skills, build confidence and kick-start your career while making a difference in your local community.

Wingecarribee Shire Council is proud to support young people through:

✓ Work Experience
✓ Apprenticeships
✓ Traineeships
✓ Cadetships

Ready to take the next step?

Start your local government career journey with us!
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EVENTS OF 2026














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2026 REGIONAL ACADEMY GAMES REPORT

From April 17th to 19th, nearly 100 IAS athletes, coaches, and managers joined some of NSW's best young talent at the 2026 Regional Academy Games in Tamworth.

Organised by the Northern Inland Academy of Sport (NIAS), the Academy Games were being held in Tamworth for the second time as part of a three-year deal.

With participants from 11 Regional Academies across NSW, nearly 1,000 athletes and their families attended the Academy Games.

The Games were officially opened with a ceremony which saw all competing athletes proudly marching around the track at the Tamworth Regional Athletics Centre representing their Regional NSW academies.

IAS athletes competed in basketball, golf, hockey, netball and triathlon, while our netball umpires officiated matches at the Academy Games.

The impressive results of our IAS athletes and their efforts are detailed below.



BASKETBALL

The IAS basketball squad consisted of 11 male and 11 female athletes who travelled to Tamworth and played 10 games across 3 days.

It was a jam-packed weekend of back-to-back games and every athlete contributed greatly to their team's success.

The IAS boys team went through the pool stages undefeated, followed by a close semi-final win against the Central Coast Academy of Sport, before losing the grand-final to the Hunter Academy of Sport.

The IAS girls team went 2-1 in the pool stages, suffering a 2-point loss to the Central Coast Academy of Sport on Saturday afternoon, before facing them again in the grand-final after beating Western Region Academy of Sport on Sunday morning. The team played some great basketball and finished runners up.

Congratulations to Edem Dowling and Lachlan Butler who were named in the Tournament All Star Five Boys team, and Kalani Chambers who was named in the Tournament All Star Five Girls team.

The IAS basketball coaching staff were thrilled with the athlete's effort, behaviour, sportsmanship and adversity over the entire weekend. Our squads consisted of a mixture of ages from 14s to 16s and a range of experience from U16 NSW State Squad members, ACJBC athletes and a handful of SPP athletes.

GOLF

The Illawarra Academy of Sport golf squad delivered a strong and resilient performance across three days of competition, navigating challenging conditions before finishing an impressive third overall.

Day 1 at Longyard proved a stern test, with windy, dusty conditions making scoring difficult. Despite this, the team showed composure. Nash Duncan led the way early at +5, while Jaidon Kyriacou, the defending champion, posted a solid +3. Sage Laird, the squad's lone female competitor and last year's third-place finisher, sat just one shot off the lead at +4 after a steady round. Archie Hollands (+8) and Samuel Choi (+7) battled through inconsistent ball striking but relied on strong putting, while Harlan Joshua handled the conditions well to sit square with his handicap and in contention in the nett division.

Day 2 brought improved conditions and scoring followed. Archie and Samuel capitalised to finish tied 15th with rounds of 73 and 74, while Nash continued to build consistency to place tied 13th. Harlan surged to outright fourth in the nett division at -3, and Jaidon produced a standout stretch of four birdies in seven holes to secure sixth overall in a strong title defence. Sage mounted a serious charge with an early pair of birdies, pushing the eventual winner all the way before finishing a heartbreaking one shot short. The team's collective effort saw IAS seeded second heading into the match play event.

Day 3 saw IAS take on Hunter Academy of Sport in match play. Archie secured an early point with a composed 1-up win, and Jaidon added another with a calm, bogey-free performance. Despite strong efforts from Harlan and Nash, both went down to quality opposition, leaving the tie at 2-2. The final result came down to Sage in the deciding match, where she fought hard but was edged out 2 & 1 in a high-quality contest.

Across all three days, the team demonstrated skill, resilience, and outstanding sportsmanship. Finishing third overall, the squad can be proud of a performance that highlighted both individual talent and strong team culture.

HOCKEY

The Illawarra Academy of Sport hockey program enjoyed a standout weekend at the Academy Games, highlighted by resilience, rapid team cohesion, and impressive individual performances.

The weekend began with both teams taking to the field shortly after the opening ceremony. Riley, the squad's only male athlete, represented a combined Central Coast Academy of Sport/Northern Inland Academy of Sport side and showed outstanding adaptability and commitment despite joining an unfamiliar group. He quickly became a key contributor in goal, delivering strong performances throughout the tournament. His efforts were instrumental in helping his side reach the semi-finals, where they were well placed at 1-1 before going down 3-1 to an undefeated Hunter Academy of Sport outfit.

The girls team entered the competition with limited preparation, with several players only joining the squad weeks prior. Despite this, they exceeded expectations from the outset, claiming back-to-back wins to open their campaign. After a tough loss to a strong NIAS side, they advanced to a semi-final against HAS, where a composed shootout performance—led by Audrey in goal and conversions from Eddie and Evie—secured a place in the final.

In the decider, the team produced their most complete performance of the tournament, taking a 1-0 lead into half-time through relentless defensive pressure and sharp attacking play. However, with minimal rotations across the weekend, fatigue set in during the second half, allowing NIAS to capitalise and claim a 4-1 victory. The silver medal capped off an outstanding campaign, with Zoe named Division 1 MVP after a series of exceptional performances against older and elite-level opposition.

Across the weekend, the squad demonstrated outstanding effort, coachability, and sportsmanship, representing the Illawarra Academy of Sport with pride both on and off the field.

NETBALL

The Illawarra Academy of Sport netball squads delivered a composed and competitive showing across two days at the

Academy Games in Tamworth, navigating long days and high-pressure conditions inside the Tamworth Regional Sports Dome.

Day one set a strong foundation, with both Division 1 and Division 2 teams working through tightly contested matches. The focus on execution, role clarity, and maintaining intensity under fatigue was evident, alongside consistent sideline energy that reinforced a growing team identity. The next step identified was translating that off-court unity into on-court momentum during key moments.

On day two, both teams elevated their performances, showing clear improvements in defensive presence, attacking precision, and overall consistency. The Division 2 team pushed deep into finals contention, narrowly missing a grand final berth, while both squads demonstrated stronger composure under pressure and more disciplined decision-making when momentum shifted.

Individual performances were also recognised, with Indy Bradley named Team One MVP and Ava Target earning Team Two MVP honours, both voted by opposition coaches.

Overall, the campaign provided a valuable benchmark for the program, with clear progression across the group as focus now turns to preparation for the final tournament in September.

NETBALL UMPIRES

Another super successful Academy Games for the IAS netball umpire athletes.

The Academy Games are an important pathway for netball umpire development with emerging officials working with specialist umpire coaches to fine tune their rule knowledge, communication skills, and progression through the state and national netball umpiring pathway.

As a result of their outstanding performances, IAS netball umpires were appointed to officiate semi-finals and a grand-final match.

In addition, all three IAS officials were awarded their National B Badges. Recognised as a significant achievement on their national umpiring pathway, the athletes had an absolute cracker of a tournament and their coaches couldn't be prouder.







TRIATHLON

A successful weekend for the IAS triathlon athletes after a very long season kicking off in August last year. The Academy Games was our last race of the season.

Showing our squad strength we were second in the Mixed Team Relay with Isla O'Connor, Luke Barritt and Taylor Mulhere making up the team.

- Isla O'Connor had a great race coming 3rd in the Junior Girls
- Taylor Mulhere 4th, Luke Barritt 5th in a very competitive Youth Boys field
- Ruby Payten raced well with the fastest run split in the Youth Girls
- Tom Kite raced really well to make the A Final

All our IAS athletes put in an incredible effort at the Academy Games and showed an amazing display of talent and skill.

The IAS would like to thank all our coaches, managers and parents; without such a supportive community, opportunities like attending the Academy Games would not be possible.

Thank you to our long-term major partner Community First Bank for going above and beyond in support of our athletes at the Academy Games and thank you to our long-term performance partner BaiMed for keeping our athletes fit and healthy during the Academy Games.

Thank you also to Wollongong City Council, Kiama Municipal Council, Shellharbour City Council, Shoalhaven City Council, Wingecarribee Shire Council, University of Wollongong and the NSW Government Office of Sport for your continued support of the IAS and our athletes.

FUTURE SPORTING STARS' SUCCESS AND COMMITMENT CELEBRATED AT ANNUAL IAS AWARDS

Courtesy of Keeli Dyson, Region Illawarra

The next generation of sporting stars from the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands have been celebrated for their achievements and dedication, with the skills gained during their training at the Illawarra Academy of Sport (IAS) acting as a springboard to further success.

The top young talents from nearly a dozen sports have been recognised at the annual IAS Athlete Awards, with some of the up-and-coming stars already donning the green and gold and demonstrating their incredible potential.

"The quality of athletes coming through the region every year surprises me, it really does astound me – particularly across the varying sports," IAS CEO Salv Carmusciano said.

"It seems to be getting better and better."

The most prestigious award of the night, the DRB Group Tobin Family Award for Athlete of the Year, went to 17-year-old triathlete Jack Gibson, whose commitment to his sport has helped him emerge as a top international performer with Paralympic potential within the next few years.



The Tobin Family IAS Athlete of the year, triathlete Jack Gibson with members of the Tobin Family, award partner DRB Group, IAS alumna Karen Murphy OLY and IAS President Sharon Wingate



IAS Athlete Leadership award nominees Harper Bragg, Samantha Reed (winner) and Lily Sproule with presenting partner DRB Group represented by Naomi Rao and the NSW Government Office of Sport represented by Pierre Comis

"He's achieving amazing things in his sport of triathlon," Salv said.

"It's not just the fact that he's made it to the national stage and he's competing for his country in those events and achieving incredible results at that level, it's also all the other things that make him a quality athlete and a quality citizen.

"His engagement in the education, his engagement in his community and the service he gives his community is just second to none.

"He's just completely dedicated to his craft."

That dedication and commitment to being not only good athletes, but good citizens, has been a crucial part of the IAS ethos for decades and is embedded in other awards presented on the night such as the BaiMed Commitment to Excellence Award which went to basketballer Lily Wildner.

"You get identified through your sporting endeavours but once you're in the IAS, you get developed as an individual and as a person and that's what we hang our hat off and so we want to recognise that during our awards as well," Salv said.

"The Commitment to Excellence Award which is proudly sponsored and presented by Baimed really does celebrate the individuals that are completely committed to their training, to their rehabilitation, to their strength and conditioning, to the cause basically.

"[Lily] unfortunately did her ACL at the Academy Games in April, so she's been going through her rehabilitation and what we noticed of Lil was obviously just her resilience following the injury to continue with her training and continue with her rehabilitation with the IAS, and also to undertake the new TAFE course we have offered exclusively to IAS athletes which is that Statement of Attainment in High Performance Sport Development.

"Credit to her, she's got a full portfolio and there's never a dull moment in her household no doubt, but she just keeps going from strength to strength."

The importance of an athlete's ability to step up and lead within their sport and their community by committing to personal growth and inspiring others was also recognised, with hockey player Samantha Reed receiving the Athlete Leadership Award.

"It is earmarked for athletes that are clearly showing the potential to be, and are already emerging leaders in the Illawarra," Salv said.

"I think the key thing with that particular award this year was that we had three female nominees for that particular award which we're really proud of."

The stakeholders, sponsors and partners of the IAS were also acknowledged, with their contributions ensuring that young athletes in the region are able to continue to receive the quality training and resources well into the future.

"We can't possibly function the way we do without the support of those organisations so we make sure we celebrate them as well on the night and we're just wrapped to have them on board," Salv said.

"The Illawarra's very much united in its endeavours to help young people achieve extraordinary things."



BaiMed Commitment to Excellence Award nominees Lily Wildner (winner) and Emily King with Kat Dawson, Manager of Clinical Services & Physiotherapist at BaiMed

SUMMARY

CATEGORIES	WINNER
Basketball Athlete of the Year, proudly supported by Wallawa Traffic Group	Edem Dowling
BMX Athlete of the Year	Lachlan Jones
Mountain Bike Athlete of the Year	Indiana Lambert
The Ben Mikic Memorial Award Cycling Athlete of the Year, proudly supported by Soto Engineering	Oliver Morris
The Vic Burrows Award Golf Athlete of the Year	Sage Laird
Hockey Athlete of the Year	Sam Peoples
The Margaret Corbett OAM Memorial Award Netball Athlete of the Year, proudly supported by Collegians	Sophie Lockyer
Netball Umpire of the Year, proudly supported by Collegians	Abbey Whitchurch
The Brett Stibners Award Para Athlete of the Year, proudly supported by 360HR Solutions	Trae Spencer
Girls Rugby Sevens Athlete of the Year, proudly supported by Community First Bank	Maleia Jones
Triathlon Athlete of the Year, proudly supported by BlueScope WIN Community Partners	Jack Gibson
Volleyball Athlete of the Year	Timothy Binns
DRB Group Tobin Family Award IAS Athlete of the Year	Jack Gibson
DRB Group Athlete Leadership Award	Samantha Reed
BaiMed Commitment to Excellence Award	Lily Wildner
Coach of the Year, proudly supported by Qube Ports	Maddison Delaney
Service Award	Karen Clark

NOMINEE	SPORT
Kalani Chambers	2026 Basketball Athlete of the Year Nominee
Lachlan Butler	2026 Basketball Athlete of the Year Nominee
Wyatt Delforce	2026 BMX Athlete of the Year Nominee
Harvey Delforce	2026 BMX Athlete of the Year Nominee
Lucas Caldwell	2026 BMX Athlete of the Year Nominee
Aston Lewis	2026 Mountain Bike Athlete of the Year Nominee
Joshua Cockrem	2026 Cycling Athlete of the Year Nominee
Samuel Choei	2026 Golf Athlete of the Year Nominee
Jaidon Kyriacou	2026 Golf Athlete of the Year Nominee
Samantha Reed	2026 Hockey Athlete of the Year Nominee
Toby Peoples	2026 Hockey Athlete of the Year Nominee
Lucy Christian	2026 Netball Athlete of the Year Nominee
Emily King	2026 Netball Athlete of the Year Nominee and 2026 BaiMed Commitment to Excellence Award Nominee
Sophie Placek	2026 Netball Umpire of the Year Nominee
Matilda Donnan	2026 Netball Umpire of the Year Nominee
Ellie Linsley	2026 Para Athlete of the Year Nominee
Xavier Wilson	2026 Para Athlete of the Year Nominee
Oskar Driscoll	2026 Para Athlete of the Year Nominee
Tara Lee	2026 Rugby Sevens Athlete of the Year Nominee
Harry Fraser	2026 Triathlon Athlete of the Year Nominee
Isla O'Connor	2026 Triathlon Athlete of the Year Nominee
Coco Threadgate	2026 Volleyball Athlete of the Year Nominee
Anouk Mackenzie-Steele	2026 Volleyball Athlete of the Year Nominee
Orville Sarkar	2026 DRB Group Tobin Family IAS Athlete of the Year Nominee
Kadance Naylor	2026 DRB Group Tobin Family IAS Athlete of the Year Nominee
Lily Sproule	2026 DRB Group Tobin Family IAS Athlete of the Year Nominee, and 2026 Athlete Leadership Award Nominee
Harper Bragg	2026 Athlete Leadership Award Nominee




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2026 ATHLETE
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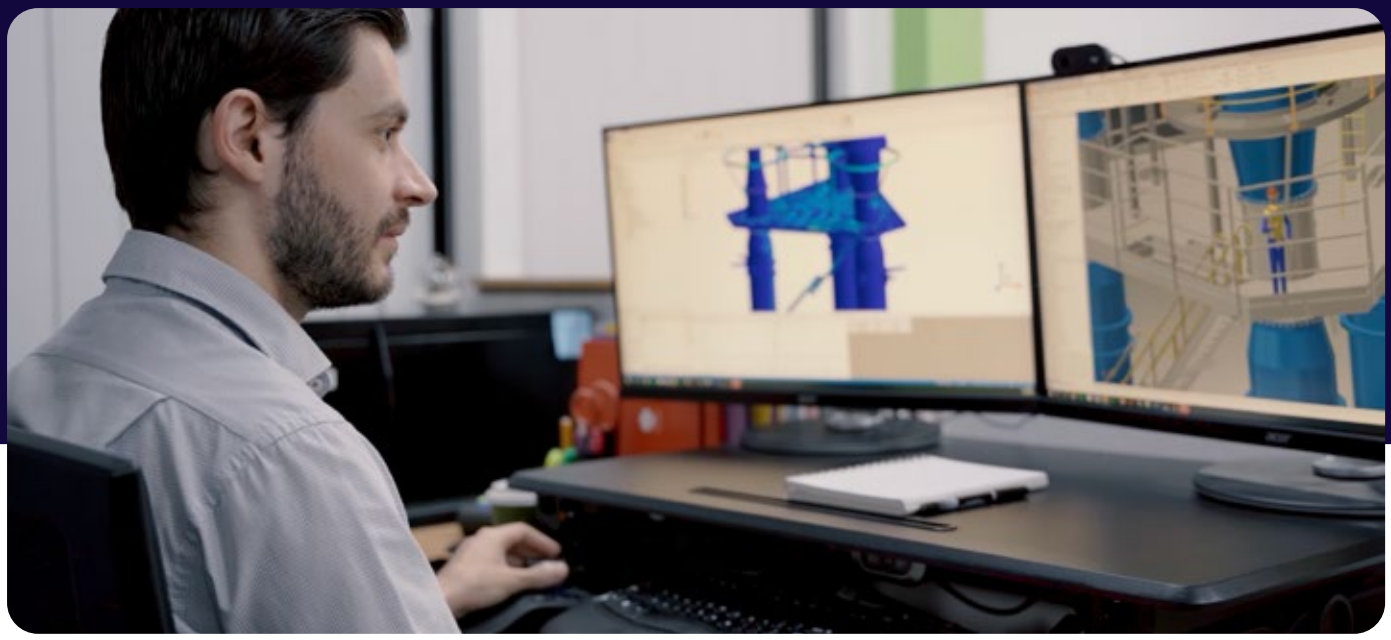




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