



PRIDE
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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2024 PRIDE IN SPORT AWARDS

The finalists for the 2024 Australian Pride in Sport Awards have been announced ahead of a glittering ceremony being held in Melbourne on 23 April. Now in its seventh year, the event will see sporting identities, clubs and codes across the country gather to celebrate LGBTQ+ inclusion throughout Australian sport over the past year.

First held in 2018, the Australian Pride in Sport Awards is the first celebration of its kind dedicated solely to recognising exceptional efforts in making sport more inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. It is produced by Pride in Sport, the national not-for-profit sporting inclusion program spearheaded by Australia's largest LGBTQ health organisation ACON.

This year, the Australian Pride in Sport Awards will be emceed by international star Adam Hills. A five-time Gold Logie nominee, Hills is one of Australia's best-known comedians, hosting *Spicks and Specks* and *Adam Hills Tonight*, and over a decade on the UK's Channel Four talk show, *The Last Leg*.

Returning to CENTREPOINT at Melbourne Park, the event will include dinner, drinks, as well as the much-anticipated award ceremony. The Awards will also feature entertainment from *Australian Idol*, West End and Young Divas star, Emily Williams.

One of the leading events on the LGBTQ+ sporting calendar, the Australian Pride in Sport Awards honours athletes, employees, volunteers, and organisations as it showcases the results of the Pride in Sport Index (PSI) – the national benchmarking instrument used to assess LGBTQ+ inclusion within Australian sport.

The Australian Pride in Sport Awards will feature a host of leading sporting and community figures, including Pride in Sport patrons, World Cup and Ashes-winning cricket captain Alex Blackwell and NRL legend and pioneer Ian Roberts. Funds raised from the awards will support efforts making Australian sports inclusive of LGBTQ+ communities.

Pride in Sport National Program Manager, Beau Newell said: "The PSI allows sporting organisations and clubs around Australia to benchmark their LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and practices on a yearly basis, and the Australian Pride in Sport Awards provide an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate those that have demonstrated very real efforts towards making sport pitches everywhere a more welcoming space for everyone."

"Over the past few years, there has been a noticeable pivot towards embracing LGBTQ+ inclusion and fostering a stance of zero tolerance towards homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia. This shift is evident not only in corporate diversity and inclusion initiatives but also in the realms of sports and society at large, offering inspiration to many in our communities who want to play sport.

"Sporting bodies and clubs across Australia are acknowledging the necessity of implementing measures to ensure that your sexual orientation and gender identity do not hinder your participation, enjoyment, or engagement with sports, regardless of someone's level.

"Since its inaugural year, the Australian Pride in Sport Awards have been acknowledging and celebrating this significant shift in practice with LGBTQ+ inclusion work in Australian sport.

"Over the years, as the PSI and Awards have continued, we've noticed a consistent expansion in both the quantity and diversity of sports organisations involved, along with increased dedication from these bodies to foster safer, more inclusive spaces and experiences for LGBTQ+ people.

"This is fundamentally what the Pride in Sport Awards is all about and we couldn't be happier to once again come together and celebrate these achievements."



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The 2024 Australian Pride in Sport Awards is on Tuesday 23 April 2024, 6pm – 10pm at CENTREPIECE at Melbourne Park, Olympic Blvd, Melbourne. For more information, [click here](#).

ENDS

ALLY OF THE YEAR

- Kristen Stone Hutchinson, Lacrosse Victoria
- David Keough, Collaroy Tennis Club
- Sophie Moore, Football Australia
- Kirsten Penny, National Basketball League

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AWARD

- John Baker AM ESM, Surf Live Saving Australia
- Shaun Barnett, Perth Scorpions Volleyball Club
- Kristina Mitsikas, UWA Sport
- Rebecca Shaw, Gymnastics NSW

LGBTQ INCLUSIVE INITIATIVE AWARD

- Champion Q League Netball, Queer Sporting Alliance and Netball Victoria
- 2023 NBL Champion Pride Round
- Rainbow Racquets, Squash Australia
- Sydney WorldPride Tennis Project, Tennis NSW

INCLUSIVE COACH OF THE YEAR

- Shaun Jacobs, Sydney Hookers [Boxing]
- Trent Robinson, Sydney Roosters/Allianz Coach for All [Rugby League]
- Georgia Verry, Conscious Combat Club [Martial Arts]
- Lil Waters, Mt Alexander Falcons [Australian Rules Football]

LGBTQ ROLE MODEL OF THE YEAR

- Davis Atkins, Hockey Australia
- Campbell Harrison, Sport Climbing Australia
- Greta Hayes, Hockey NSW
- Martin Stark, World Gay Boxing Championships

POSITIVE MEDIA AWARD

- “Sam Kerr: ‘Everyone should feel comfortable in whatever skin they're in, whoever they want to be, whoever they want to love.’” - Liana Buratti, Football Australia
- “‘We always play with pride’: How the Matildas helped pave the way for LGBTQIA+ visibility in football” – Samantha Lewis, ABC News
- “A-League player Josh Cavallo tells football codes to 'grow up' and be more inclusive ahead of pride round” – David Marchese, ABC Triple J
- “Equal the Contest” – Mitch Nivalis

ADDITIONAL AWARDS ANNOUNCED ON THE NIGHT*

- Sporting Organisation of the Year
- Community Sporting Organisation of the Year
- Most Improved Sporting Organisations
- Gold, Silver and Bronze tier Sporting Organisations

*These awards are based on the results of the Pride in Sport Index (PSI)

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ABOUT PRIDE IN SPORT

Pride in Sport is a national not-for-profit program that assists sporting organisations and clubs with the inclusion of LGBTQ employees, players, volunteers and spectators. It is part of ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs, which provides a range of services to employers, sporting organisations and service providers with support in all aspects of LGBTI inclusion. All funds generated through membership and ticketed events go back into the work of Pride in Sport, actively working alongside sporting organisations, clubs and participants to make Australian sport inclusive of LGBTQ communities. For more information, visit the Pride Inclusion Programs website [here](#).

ABOUT THE PRIDE IN SPORT INDEX

The Pride in Sport Index (PSI) is a benchmarking system, independently administered from sporting bodies, that provides the opportunity for all national and state sporting organisations to have their LGBTQ related initiatives, programs and policies reviewed, measured and monitored. An initiative of the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Australian Sports Commission and a legacy of the Bingham Cup Sydney 2014 (the world cup of gay rugby), it was developed alongside an advisory group that includes representatives from the National Rugby League (NRL), the Australian Football League (AFL), the Australian Rugby Union (ARU), Football Federation Australia (FFA), Cricket Australia, Swimming Australia, Water Polo Australia, Basketball Australia and Golf Australia. For more information, visit the Pride in Sport website [here](#).