



PRIDE
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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CELEBRATING GREAT LGBTQ SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE 2025 AUSTRALIAN PRIDE IN SPORT AWARDS

Netball Queensland, the Australian Football League (AFL), Hockey ACT and Macquarie University Sport are among a diverse mix of sporting bodies and individuals to be recognised at the upcoming 2025 Australian Pride in Sport Awards, celebrating the many Australians engaging in sport and the people making that possible.

Launched in 2018, the Australian Pride in Sport Awards is the first event of its kind dedicated to celebrating and recognising outstanding efforts to make Australian sport more inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. Proudly presented by Pride in Sport — a national initiative led by ACON, Australia's largest LGBTQ+ health organisation — the awards honour those leading the way in fostering diversity and inclusion across the sporting landscape.

In addition to acknowledging the contributions of sports clubs and organisations, the event also recognises individuals, community members, and allies from a wide range of sporting disciplines for their commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ inclusion both within sport and the wider community.

Andrew Purchas OAM, co-founder of the PSI and a leading advocate for inclusive sport in Australia, said the Awards were a sign of how sport continues to evolve into something more community-driven and representative of modern Australia.

"The Pride in Sport Awards have become a cornerstone of the sporting calendar—not just because they celebrate progress in LGBTQ+ inclusion, but because they reflect a broader commitment to community and belonging," Purchas said.

"What we're seeing across codes and clubs—from elite organisations to grassroots programs—is a strong shift toward making sure more Australians can access the physical, mental and social benefits of sport, no matter their background."

"When someone can join a local team, walk into a stadium, or get involved in a sporting community without fear of judgement or exclusion, that's powerful. That's when sport is truly doing its job—not just entertaining us, but connecting us. And these awards are about recognising the people and organisations who are doing that work."

Beau Newell, National Program Manager for Pride in Sport, reinforced the night's core message—that inclusion in sport isn't just about diversity, it's about growing the game and ensuring more Australians feel welcome to take part.

"These awards are about recognising the people and organisations making sport a place where more Australians—regardless of who they are—feel welcome to play, coach, support and belong."

"The 2025 Pride in Sport Index results are the strongest we've seen. That tells us inclusion isn't just a value—it's driving real change. More clubs are creating safer, more welcoming environments, and that means more people getting involved in sport across the country."

"Inclusion isn't just about checking a box—it's about growing the game. When LGBTQ+ people feel safe and respected, it strengthens sport for everyone."

Newell added: "These awards are a celebration, but also a reminder. We need to keep reaching out, listening and taking action—because sport should be for everyone, and everyone should have the chance to be part of it."

ENDS

(See next page for complete list of award recipients.)

2025 Pride in Sport Awards Recipients

Award	Recipient	
Sporting Organisation of the Year	Netball Queensland	
Community Sporting Organisation of the Year	Kingston City Rollers	
Most Improved Sporting Organisations	Australian Football League (AFL)	
LGBTQ Ally Award	Paul Heptonstall, National Rugby League	
Executive Leader Award	Kate Davies, Netball Queensland & QLD Firebirds	
LGBTQ Inclusive Coach Award	Georgia Verry, Conscious Combat Club	
LGBTQ Role Model Award	(Joint winners) - Rowen D'Souza, Gay & Lesbian Tennis Alliance - Isaac Humphries, Adelaide 36ers & National Basketball League	
LGBTQ Positive Media Award	AJ Lamarque: 'Pride Basketball Australia Ambassadorship', Basketball NSW & Spectres Australia	
LGBTQ Inclusion Initiative Award	AFL Queensland Pride Round, Australian Football League	
Platinum Sporting Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hockey ACT Macquarie University Sport Tennis Australia 	
Gold Sporting Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Football League Cricket Australia Gymnastics NSW Hockey Australia Lacrosse Victoria National Basketball League Netball Queensland Netball Victoria NSW Rugby League Surf Life Saving Australia Tennis NSW Touch Football Australia UWA Sport VicSport 	
Silver Sporting Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Dragon Boat Federation Hockey WA National Rugby League (NRL) Queensland Rugby League Squash Australia 	
Bronze Sporting Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Sailing Australian Sports Commission Basketball Australia Calisthenics Victoria Diving Australia Life Saving Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne United Rugby Australia Surf Life Saving Queensland Tennis West UNSW Sport Volleyball NSW
Platinum Community Sporting Organisation	Kingston City Rollers	
Silver Tier Community Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaroy Tennis Club Perth Pythons Hockey Club 	
Bronze Tier Community Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballarat Roller Derby Sydney Roller Derby 	
Most Improved Community Sport	Perth Pythons Hockey Club	



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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 LGBTQ+ 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 an independently administered benchmarking system 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](#).