

1999 Australian Under-18 Championships

***Held on the 16th to 20th
September at the Coffs Harbour
International Sports Stadium, the
event showcased some marvelous
talent.***

Boys 18

Sixteen Boys teams and seventeen Girls teams descended upon Coffs Harbour in September to contest the 1999 under 18's Touch Championships. For the second time in as many years both the Southern Suns and South Queensland and Border Districts featured in the semi final of the Boys division.

In an awesome display of speed and precision, the South Queensland and Border Districts team simply demoralised the tournament favourites Queensland State Secondary Schools in their semi final clash 4-0. The other semi was just as brutal with NSW Combined High Schools spanking Southern Suns 7-0.



Looking stunning in attack, Trish McCarthy from the NSWCCC.

The final was a speed-fest with both sides taking the ball the length of the field with each set of six. NSW CHS prevailed and eventually ran out winners 4-3 in a tightly fought contest. Clint Greenshields starred for the New South Wales team by scoring 14 touchdowns, which was the tournament record.

However, the most valuable player for the team was Mark Thompson while Brad David also from NSW CHS was named Player of the Final with Marc Laird from the Southern Suns named as Player of the Series.



One of the great standouts: Northern Territory's star, Bo De la Cruz, showing the ball.

Marcus Ewing from the Northern Territory scored five touchdowns in one game to hold that record for the tournament. The girls division was also keenly contested but Queensland State Secondary Schools just outclassed every other team as they had for the past five years. They lost one game in 1996.

The first semi finals saw New South Wales Combined High Schools run out comfortable winners 7-2 against New South Wales Combined Catholic Colleges. In the second semi, Queensland outclassed Hunter Hornets 8-3 and they continued that form in the finals defeating New South Wales Combined High Schools 7-2.

**1999 National Schools and Under
18's Championships
Finals Results**

Boys Open			
NSW CHS	4	SQBD Sharks	3
Girls Open			
Queensland	7	NSW CHS	2



Schools Touch League 1999

Placing	Boys	Girls	#
NSW CHS	19	17	36
QSST	14	20	34
SQBD Sharks	16	13	29
NSW CCC	12	15	27
Hunter Hornets	10	14	24
Northern Territory	11	12	23
Southern Suns	13	5	18
Central QLD	7	10	17
Sydney Metropolitan	6	11	17
Northern Eagles	8	7	15
Sunshine Coast	4	9	13
Brisbane Cobras	9	3	12
South Australia	2	6	8
South West QLD	-	8	8
Sydney Rebels	5	2	7
NSW CIS	1	4	5
Sydney Scorpions	3	1	4

2000 'Australia's best in Touch return to Coffs Harbour!'

*The nation's best Touch players
converged on Coffs Harbour to
contest the Australian Touch
Association's 2000 National
Touch League.*



The tournament is the pinnacle of domestic competition in Australia and was created from a need identified for elite competition for Australia's best Touch players. The tournament provided an opportunity for players to identify with a regional area and thus gain more support from the local Touch playing community.

"Ownership is the key in this tournament, with an increased number of players being catered for, the competition tends to be more even than the previous National Championships, and this makes a far more enjoyable tournament," explained Bill Ker, Chief Executive of the Australian Touch Association.

"Touch is one of Australia's largest participant-based sports and this tournament offers players the opportunity to participate against their peers," Ker enthusiastically continued.

The Open's and 20 years tournament ran over four days from Friday 10 March, this was immediately followed by the Senior divisions commencing Wednesday 15 March. The Senior tournament caters for players in age divisions from 30 years to 50 years for men and women.

The traditionally strong Touch states of Queensland and New South Wales were represented by teams from various geographic areas, whilst developing states are represented by the Crusaders which combine the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Tasmania and the Barbarians consisting of South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Mens Open

Three time Men's and undefeated champions the Sydney Scorpions returned to defend their title. Winning was not going to be easy let alone remaining undefeated since the inception of the NTL concept. Two time runners up the Brisbane Cobras were out seeking revenge and their first title.

After the initial round game the Scorpions and Crusader were undefeated at the top of the Pool A ladder although both had two drawn games. In Pool B the Cobras stood alone and undefeated at the top of the table.

The Cobras quarter final opponents were the North Queensland Tropical Cyclones who had a narrow 0-1 loss to the Crusaders and drew 3-3 all with the Scorpions. Being very wary of the Gavin Shuker led Cyclones the Cobras started very pensively but soon took control and ran out winners 9-5.

The Scorpions quarter final was against their cross town rivals the Sydney Mets whose only wins were against the Sydney Rebels and Hunter Hornets. Despite strong games from Jason Yee and Kurt Nowatny the Mets went down 2-3.

Queensland's Gold Coast Sharks and their north western neighbors the Sunwest Razorbacks met in the third quarter final. Although losing only one preliminary game the Troy Morgan led Razorbacks were no match for the Sharks going down 1-10 in a very one sided game.

Inspired performances from Adam Leeson and Michael McLaughlin saw the Crusaders run away with their quarter final against the Northern

Eagles. Strong games from Eagles players Neville Donovan and Shaun Allan could not stop a drubbing to the tune of 7-3

The first semi saw the Scorpions pitted against Sharks who quite fancied their changes after their strong quarters win. Laurie Brindell, Ben Robinson, Corey Foster and Ryan Pollock could not stop a rampaging Scorpion outfit who were too classy winning 7-3. Strong games from Mark Boland, Anthony Nolan, Adam Fahim and Glen Fitzgerald ensured victory for the Scorpions.



*Legend Scorpions, NSW and Australian Player
Mark Boland*

In the other semi the Crusaders undefeated run came to an unexpected halt at the hands of the Cobras. The Star studded ACT representative players in the Crusaders were expected to be too good for the Cobras. Despite strong games from Matthew Curran, Jason Chaffey, Michael McGovern and Robert Sinclair-Smith they went down fighting 5-6. Best for the winners were Peter Stoddart, Brent Madders and Michael Rogers.

Both teams wanted the victory in the final more than anything else. The Scorpions wanted to win their fourth consecutive title and remain undefeated at this level while the Cobras needed the win for their first victory and to shed the bridesmaid tag.

In a game that remained close for most of the forty minutes the Scorpion opened a two point break they held until the final whistle winning 6-4. Mark Boland, Phil Jarrett, David Roberts and Shane Fredriksen had outstanding games.

For the Cobras the Madders brothers played hard and were ably assisted by Trent McDonald, Rod O'Shanesy and Brett Freshwater. Craig Madders was named Player of the Series while Mark Boland Player of the Final. Leading scorers were Ben Robinson (Sharks), Brent Madders (Cobras) and Gavin Shuker (Cyclones) all with eight touchdowns.

Women Open

Women's title holders the Brisbane Cobras were keen to crowned champions again.

Scorpions sting Rivals in the Men's Open and Peter Topp explains what the NTL competition means for Australian Touch.

Sydney Scorpions again proved themselves as Australia's best bunch of male Touch players, storming home to win their fourth straight National Touch League title this week.

Coached by high profile Rugby League player manager, Sam Ayuob, the Scorpions Open Men's team beat Brisbane City Cobras 6-4 in Monday's final. The win was a fitting end to the National Touch League Open and 30 years Championships held at the Coffs Harbour International Sports Stadium over the weekend.



Hayley Rogerson for the Razorbacks.

The tournament organiser, Peter Topp, said the competition was the nation's premier Touch event, and had helped Australia to become the world champions in the Men's and Women's Open divisions. "The standard of Touch has improved because of this tournament," Topp

explained. "The competition is getting tougher and tougher, and the players are getting better and better."

This is the fourth year the National Touch League has held the event in Coffs Harbour. With 54 teams in the Opens and 20 years divisions, joined this week by another 57 senior teams, the tournament attracts about 2500 players and staff to the Harbour city and generates an estimated five million dollars in the Coffs Harbour economy.

Topp praised Coffs Harbour as a location for the



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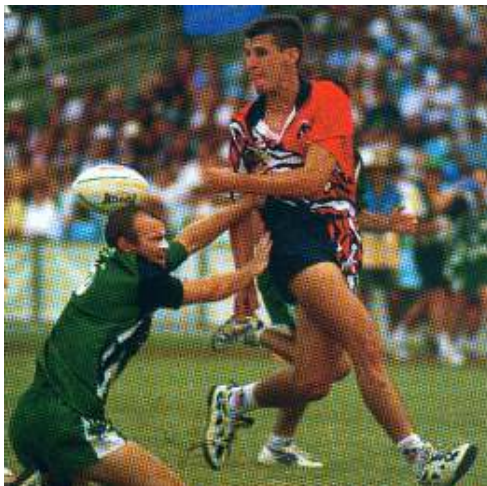
event and described the international stadium as the best Touch stadium in the world. "Proximity and quality was what counted for in this sort of event," Topp concluded.

Eagles soar at Coffs

The Coffs Harbour Advocate reported that:

The 2000 Senior National Touch League came to an exciting conclusion on Saturday at the Coffs Harbour International Stadium with four of the seven finals being decided in extra time drop-offs.

Coffs Harbour was well represented in the Northern NSW Eagles, which completed a double at the tournament having tasted success in the Men's 45 years and the Women's 35 years divisions.



Shane Duell (Brisbane Cobras) get a pass away before being touched by Lars Hanson (Sydney Scorpions)

The teams came to the event with great expectations. The Men were here to defend the title that they have won for the last two years, and the women were here to avenge defeats in the previous two years. Final success came to local teams after strong performances in the round games, both teams being undefeated.

*The Men's team won its final convincingly 7-0 against Sydney Mets. The Women's had a more difficult time, winning **4-3 in an extra-time drop-off** against the Sydney Scorpions.*

The teams had further reason to celebrate when Peter Vincent was named Player of the Series, Final, and leading touchdown scorer, with 13 for the Men's 45s division.

Coffs Harbour player, Cate Vincent, was named player of the Final in the Women's 35s division. In the Men's 30s division the two undefeated teams played an entertaining game, which was won convincingly by the Gold Coast Sharks, 7-3 over the Sydney Scorpions.

Player of the Series was Adrian Harrington, from the Sharks. He was also player of the Finals and leading touchdown scorer, with 14 for the tournament, and with three in the finals.

The Women's 30s division also went to a drop-off, with the Hunter Western NSW Hornets defeating last year's winners, the Southern NSW Suns 4-3 in an extra-time drop-off. Player of the Finals was Serelee Langbridge.

The Men's 35s was won by the Gold Coast Sharks, again in a drop-off. The team came from third place to defeat the Sydney Scorpions, 5-4. Player of the Series was Dave Cheong from the Scorpions. He was also leading touchdown scorer. Whilst Player of the Final was Wayne Moore from the Gold Coast Sharks. The Men's 40s division saw the Sydney Mets, in an extra-time drop-off, defeat last year's winners, Sun West Razorbacks. Player of the Finals and Player of the Series was Victor Tagliafero from Mets.



In the hot Coffs Harbour sun there was plenty of demand for this stuff! TID Director, Cathy Gray, and Australian Womens Open Coach Peter Bell, stand guard

**2000 NTL Final Results
Opens / Seniors / Youth**

Men's Open

Scorpions 6 Cobras 4

Women's Open

Cobras 6 Mets 5

Mixed Open

Cobras 4 Rebels 3

Men's 30

Sharks 7 Scorpions 3

Women's 30

Hornets 4 Suns 3

Men's 35

Sharks 5 Scorpions 4

Women's 35

Eagles 4 Scorpions 3

Men's 40

Mets 7 Razorbacks 6

Men's 45

Eagles 6 Mets 0

Men's 50

Rebels 2 Cobras 1

Men's 20

Mets 4 Scorpions 3

Women's 20

Sharks 4 Mets 3

Non National Event

Women's 40

Hornets d Sharks

**2000 NATIONAL TOUCH
LEAGUE CLUB CHAMPIONS**



2000 Overall Points Table

1	Gold Coast Sharks	105
2	Sydney Metropolitan	95
3	Sydney Scorpions	81
4	Brisbane Cobras	79
5	Sunwest Razorbacks	78
6	Southern Suns	67
7	Hunter Western Hornets	57
8	Northern Eagles	51
9	NQ Tropical Cyclones	47
10	Crusaders	43
11	Sydney Rebels	33
12	Barbarians	12
13	Australian Defence Forces	6
14	Touchwest	3

2000
Under 18's NTL
sets new heights
for schools and
community Touch

***From the 31st August to the 3rd
September the Schools and under***

18's players converged once again on Coffs Harbour to contest the Australian National Touch Titles

The rapid rise in schools and community Touch saw 18 boys and 19 girls teams turn up to contest the 2000 titles.

In the Boys 20's division Group A, NSW Combined High Schools went through their preliminary rounds undefeated scoring 52 touchdowns and only having seven scored against them. Brisbane Cobras and South Queensland Border Districts in Group B also went through undefeated 33-13 and 31-13 for and against respectively.

It was a similar story in group C for Queensland State Schools and Southern Suns, again both undefeated with a for and against of 46-5 and 39-10 respectively.

On a better percentage average, Southern Suns ousted SQBD from the semis and proceeded to meet NSW CHS in a close fought game. Despite a starring effort by Troy Malcolm (Player of the Series) for CHS, the Suns proved too strong



Joe Williams

defeating them 4-3. Matt Tope, Nash Beeby and Adam Springfield also starred for the School team.

The other semi saw Queensland run away with the game 8-3 against Brisbane Cobras. Best for the Cobras was Lindsay Medley, Tim Willet and Jarrod Kendall.

For the third time in four years a non-school team was contesting the finals and it would only be a matter of time before one of them secured the title.

The Southern Suns fancied their chances after drawing 2-2 with Queensland in the round game and with a strong performance from South Sydney's NRL future goal kicking half back Joe Williams (Player of the Final); it appeared the Suns would be the first.

Unfortunately an inspired Queensland team snatched victory 8-7 at the death to win the title and avenge their third place in 1999.



Jamie Soward playing for the Southern Suns

Other outstanding players for the Suns were Michael Duncan, Jamie Soward (current St George NRL goal kicking half back), Andrew Wise and Shaun Street. The QSST team was best served by David Conlon, Mark Regazolli, Wilson Namok, Tory Hipperson and David Zanette.

In the **Girls 20's** Division, Queensland was chasing their sixth title in eight years being runner up on the other two occasions. Unfortunately for the non-school girl teams they were again unable to break into the inner circle and get a finals birth.

They faced very little opposition in their round games being undefeated and recording a 78-4 for and against. In group Band C, NSW CHS and NSW CCC also were undefeated before their semi final clash.

Queensland was untroubled in their semi final clash with South Queensland Border Districts winning 5-1. Candace Winder starred for the Border Districts along with Belinda Dawney and Caroline McDonald.

Their perennial opponents NSW CHS had an easy run into the finals beating Sydney Mets 7-0 in the quarters and NSW CCC 7-1 in the semis. Best for Mets was Karina Da Silva and best for CCC were Natalie Giles, Melissa McCall and Carly Morgan.

The finals would again prove to be a torrid affair going down to the wire and again Queensland prevailed by a whisker, 5-4. Missy Shaw was best for Queensland ably assisted by Kate Adams, Kelly McGennity and Hayley Rogerson.

Elise Anthony (Player of the Final) stood out in a team that was narrowly defeated. Shan Corcoran from the Brisbane Cobras (who finished 10th) was Player of the Series.

2000 Australian Under-18 Championship Results

Girl's Bronze

SQBD 6 NSWCCC 1

Girl's Grand Final

QSST 5 NSWCHS 4

Boy's Bronze

Cobras 4 NSWCHS 3

Boy's Grand Final

QSST 8 Suns 7

Touch Receives Royal Attention



Gabby Maher was delighted when along with six of her fellow Touch players she was asked to attend a lunch at Olympic Park to meet Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II.

The event was organised by the New South Wales Government, and provided the opportunity for young sports people to receive some national recognition for the various sports.

This was unmistakably, a highlight of Gabby's brilliant sporting career. During her brief discussion with Her Royal Highness, Gabby and her fellow Touchies fielded a variety of questions about her sport. The Queen was fascinated to learn how girls came to be playing a game of football at an international level.

Her Royal Highness was surprised to learn of the mass appeal that Touch had throughout Australian society.



Shaking the hands with Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II is Giselle Tirado, and left to right, is Shane Frederickson, Mark Boland (obsured), Jye Malcolm, then Kitty and Gabby Maher, Nadina Bambury.