



**THE HON KATE ELLIS MP
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Talented elite sport officials recognised

Some of Australia's best young emerging officials will benefit from the same professional mentoring, coaching and support available to elite athletes thanks to an initiative delivered by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC).

The Federal Minister for Sport, Kate Ellis today announced the 16 successful recipients for the 2008 National Officiating Scholarship Program (NOSP).

Ms Ellis said the Australian Sports Commission would provide 16 promising referees, umpires and officials from 12 sports, with up to \$10,000 each for professional development and support including personal mentoring, coaching and sports science expertise.

The scholarship recipients will also be supported by senior officiating mentors including NRL referee Steven Clark; AFL umpire, Bryan Sheehan; basketball referee, Bill Mildenhall and recently retired World Cup rugby referee Scott Young.

Ms Ellis said NOSP aimed to fast track the training and development of some of Australia's most talented officials.

"We're providing Australia's next generation of elite officials with the professional and specialised training and support that elite athletes have enjoyed for many years," Ms Ellis said.

"Australia has a strong and vibrant sporting system, the envy of much of the world.

"In order to support that system we need to ensure that some of Australia's best officials can draw on similar expertise and support available to the nation's top elite athletes.

"Officials play a vital part of any sporting contest. Australia needs to encourage more experienced and qualified officials to ensure sport is played fairly, by the rules and in a safe environment," Ms Ellis said.

The ASC remains committed to improving the competencies and support for officials across all levels of Australian sport. For more information on the ASC's support for referees, umpires and officials go to www.ausport.gov.au/official/index

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Recipients of 2008 National Officiating Scholarship Program

Corey Bowen, Australian Football League

Craig Beinke, Baseball

Christopher Morrey, Basketball

Robyn Boyd, Basketball

Mick Martell, Cricket

Samantha Gooding, Cycling

Kristian Griffiths-Jones, Football

Corey Lee, Football

Julie Hodges, Gymnastics

Tammy Howard, Netball

Collette Brennan, Netball

Peter Gough, Rugby League

Matthew Kellahan, Rugby Union

Ryan Arblaster, Swimming

Erin Collis, Swimming

Darren Grimsey, Volleyball