

Friday, 4 June 2025

## BENDIGO BECKONS FOR DIAMONDS WORLD CLASS NETBALL SERIES

In a win for sports fans and the Victorian economy, elite international netball is returning to Bendigo with the Australian Diamonds to take on the South Africa Proteas – thanks to the Allan Labor Government.

Premier Jacinta Allan today joined Netball Australia CEO Stacey West and Diamonds coach Stacey Marinkovich to announce a major partnership that will see the two sides clash at Red Energy Arena on Saturday, 4 October.

The game, the first of a three-match series, is expected to attract thousands of fans from across the state on the last weekend of school holidays – providing a boost for hotels, cafes and restaurants and further cementing Victoria's reputation as Australia's sports capital.

The Diamonds have an unbeaten record in Bendigo, playing in front of a sold out 4,000 strong crowd to claim the England series last year. More than 60 per cent of those attendees were visitors from outside the region, resulting in 1,774 hotel nights booked and pumping about \$1 million into the Bendigo economy.

In 2014, the national team beat England in its first ever Bendigo game. In 2023, Australia played its first standalone test series in 18 years against South Africa on home soil, claiming a clean sweep of the series.

The upcoming Bendigo match will be shown live and free across North America and Africa, showcasing Victoria on a global stage. The Labor Government's major sponsorship is also delivering netball events across the state, with this year's Super Netball premiership decider to be played at Rod Laver Arena in August.

As the number one ranked national netball team in the world, the Labor Government is proud to support the Diamonds, who are an inspiration for young people across all levels of the sport. Netball boasts the highest level of participation among young women for any sport in Australia.

Off the court, this sponsorship is delivering community benefits through ambassadorships, community engagement initiatives and training camps – including a high-performance camp for the Diamonds in Bendigo this September.

The Labor Government has also partnered with Netball Australia and Netball Victoria to deliver school clinics across the state, including three planned for 2025 – offering programs that promote community connection, healthy lifestyles and increased participation among underrepresented groups.

The Labor Government continues to secure world-class, exclusive events – from the Grand Prix and Grand Slam to NFL, NBA, the Boxing Day Test, AFL Grand Final, and more – driving \$40 billion in tourism spending and making Victoria the only place to experience the biggest and best events year-round.

Tickets for the Diamonds game against South Africa go on sale on August 21, and more information can be found on the Ticketek website.

### Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

*"Victoria is Australia's major events and sporting capital, with events like this driving economic growth, supporting local businesses and creating jobs while showcasing the best of Bendigo to audiences across the nation and beyond."*

*"With the Super Netball Grand Final and Constellation Cup also on the way, it's a fantastic time to be a netball fan in Victoria."*

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**Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards**

*“This is a big win for Bendigo – hosting the world’s best netballers will boost local businesses, fill our hotels and cafes, and inspire the next generation of netball stars across our region.”*

**Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements**

*“We’re supporting fantastic events right across Victoria, including the Frida Kahlo: In her own image exhibition, the Ballarat International Foto Biennale, Lenny Kravitz in Mildura, and the Jayco Herald Sun Tour because they help to drive visitors into our regions.”*

**Quotes attributable to Australian Diamonds Head Coach Stacey Marinkovich**

*“It’s great to return to Bendigo, where the passion and enthusiasm of the local community create an incredible atmosphere.”*