



GIPPSLAND
SPORTS
ACADEMY



GSA ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025

Contact Information

03 5127 0223 

<https://www.sportgippsland.org.au/> 

Monash Rd, Newborough VIC 3825 

Acknowledgement of Country

Gippsland Sports Academy acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we work and we pay our respects to them, their culture and elders, past, present and emerging.

Gippsland Sports Academy is a supportive organisation and upholds the principles of diversity and inclusion.



Child Safe Commitment

The GSA is committed to providing the highest level of safety for all involved with all GSA's boarding programmes this includes protecting members privacy promoting positive behaviours and attitudes protecting their health and safety and wellbeing of members particularly children and delivering the GSA's activities while acting in the best interest of children in the sport.

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OVERVIEW

Gippsland has a combined population of approximately 300,000 over 6 Local Government Authorities: Bass Coast Shire; Baw Baw Shire; East Gippsland Shire; Latrobe City; South Gippsland Shire & Wellington Shire. Stretching from outer Melbourne to the eastern-most point of Victoria, Gippsland is the home to 304 of our athletes who are on high performance pathways across a range of sports.



Regional:

37% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a Regional Level

State:

17% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a State Level

National:

10% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a National Level

World:

5% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a World Championships

VIS Scholarships:

5 GSA Past/Present
Athletes currently on VIS
Scholarships



Investing in Athlete Excellence

24 25 Highlights



304

Athlete



17

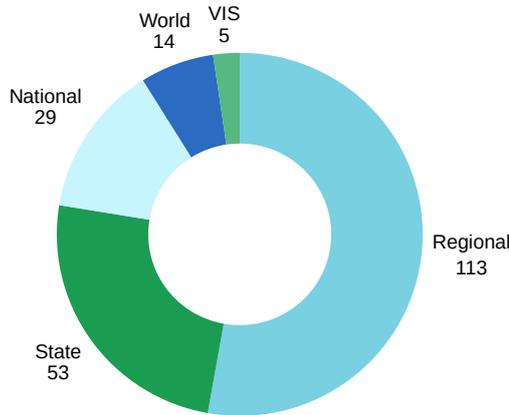
Sports



4

State Sporting Partners

Athlete Achiements



School Program

77

Student Athletes

15

Sports

Services

336

Hours of Coaching

62

Education Sessions

4

Inter-academy Challenges

Social Media Engagement

2333

Followers



Facebook



Instagram

2024–2025 Year in Review

A Year of Growth and Excellence

The Gippsland Sports Academy proudly supported over 300 athletes across 10 high-performance programs in 2024–2025.

From grassroots to international representation, our athletes, coaches, and partners worked together to strengthen Gippsland's reputation as a leader in regional sport development



1

Program Growth and Innovation

New Program Launched:

- Introduction of Taekwondo; expanding our footprint into a new Olympic discipline.

Development Pathways Expanded:

- The Kurnai Aspiring Athletes Program (KAAP) transitioned into a full program, engaging 77 athletes.
- Individual Scholarship Holders (ISH) grew from 4 to 10 athletes, now spanning 5 different sports



2

Athlete Development & Wellbeing

Sport Science Focus:

- Enhanced programs in strength & conditioning, sport psychology, and nutrition.

Wellbeing & Life Skills:

- Workshops on goal setting, time management, resilience, and mental health awareness.
- Emphasis on holistic athlete growth; performance, education, and personal wellbeing



3

Strategic Priorities & Future Direction

The year ahead will focus on:

- Expanding athlete access across Gippsland
- Strengthening partnerships and funding opportunities
- Advance technology and digital platforms for athlete engagement
- Support more Gippsland athletes to reach state, national, and international levels

Vision, Mission & About Us

Vision - Investing in Athlete Excellence

Our vision for the Gippsland Sports Academy is that of excellence:

- Gippsland's best high-performance program delivering specialised sport science and personal development for athletes to reach their full potential in their sport.

Mission

Through the engagement of specialised sporting experts, State Sporting Associations and the local community, we will enhance the sporting pathways and achievements of aspiring athletes within Gippsland.

About Us

The Gippsland Sports Academy was established in 1997 and is a community-based organisation providing developmental opportunities for talented Gippsland athletes within their own region. The Gippsland Sports Academy covers the full extent of Gippsland, from the south-eastern fringe of Melbourne through to the New South Wales border, including the mountain communities of the Great Dividing Range, and the diverse areas of South Gippsland.

The Gippsland Sports Academy provided services to over 304 athletes in 2024/25. The athletes assisted included many now on the fringe of international recognition and numerous athletes who represented Victoria and Australia.

The Gippsland sporting community relies heavily on the Gippsland Sports Academy to help break down the obstacles and disadvantages for local athletes such as travel, lack of expert coaching and development programs. The Gippsland community is extremely passionate about sport and the region has an immense nursery of natural talent.

What do we offer?

- *A pathway for Gippsland athletes in a local environment, to State & National level in consultation with the State Sporting Associations, Sport & Recreation Victoria and the Victorian Institute of Sport*
- *Exposure to expert coaches*
- *Fitness and skill development*
- *Sport science programs covering, strength & conditioning, psychology, nutrition & hydration, goal setting, time management and injury management.*
- *Work with other Victorian Regional Academies, State and Local Government, State and National Sporting Associations and organisations regarded as leaders in the sports industry.*
- *Integration of people with disabilities or disadvantages.*
- *Evaluate programs on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to Academy aims and objectives are not only maintained but improved.*
- *Provide resources through sponsorship, grant and donations to promote excellence among talented sports people at an affordable price*

VALUED SPONSORS OF THE GSA

MAJOR FUNDING AGENCIES



CONTRIBUTING GIPPSLAND COUNCILS



PROGRAM PARTNERS



VALUED SPONSORS OF THE GSA

STRENGTH & CONDITIONING PROGRAM



CLAY TARGET SHOOTING PROGRAM



GOLF PROGRAM



NETBALL PROGRAM



SWIMMING PROGRAM



TENNIS PROGRAM



ACADEMY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2024 - 2025

BOARD MEMBER

PROFILE

Sandra Timmer-Arends
Board Chair

Head of Sport, St Pauls Grammar School, Traralgon
Netball Advisory Panel Representative
Programs Subcommittee

Jenni Lewis
Deputy Chair

Community College Gippsland Teacher
Harness Racing Industry Volunteer
Swimming Advisory Panel Representative

Darrell White
Treasurer

Tennis Advisory Panel Representative
Finance Sub Committee
Programs Subcommittee

Jim Vivian
Secretary

Finance Sub Committee
Clay Target Shooting Advisory Panel Representative

Jacob Gruis

Manager Campus Planning & Delivery, MBA
Sports Advocate, Volleyball Coach & Administrator

Lauren Blunt

Strategic Planning, Logistics & Sports Management
Army Reserve Infantry Soldier

Matthew DeSalvo

Human Resources Director
Former Elite Volleyball Athlete & Sports Advocate

Kate McPherson

HR Operations, Administration & Supply Chain
Volunteer & Sports Enthusiast

ACADEMY CONSULTANTS

ASSOCIATION

CONSULTANT

ORGANISATION

Physiotherapy

Gippsland Physio Therapy Group

Nutrition

Lauren Nicholls

Psychology

Christopher Shen

Christopher Shen Consulting

Strength and Conditioning

Stuart Goddard
Hannah Stephenson

Control High Performance
Bairnsdale Aquatic and
Recreation Centre

Remy Mcleod

Mcleod Taekwondo

Finance

John Barclay
Linda Gell

Pakenham Taxation & Accounting
Elite Bookkeeping Services



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board, I am delighted to present the Gippsland Sports Academy's 2024/2025 Annual Report. This year marked an exciting development with the introduction of our newest program in Taekwondo, complementing our existing programs in hockey, netball, volleyball, swimming, tennis, golf, and clay target shooting. The expansion of our offerings reflects the Academy's ongoing commitment to providing athletes across Gippsland with diverse, high-quality opportunities to pursue their sporting goals. I extend my sincere appreciation to the GSA staff, coaches, and support teams, whose dedication has ensured the delivery of excellence across all programs.

We remain deeply grateful to our valued sponsors, whose loyalty and support underpin much of our success. Special thanks go to the Morwell Bowling Club (swimming), The Doc Shop (netball), Cranes Civil and Surfacing (Clay Target Shooting) and Dahlsen's and Access Boring (strength and conditioning). We also acknowledge the generous backing of our state sporting association partners in swimming, netball, tennis and golf.

Over the past year, we have celebrated several outstanding achievements across our programs and in May 2025, athletes proudly graduated after successfully completing their full programs in Clay Target Shooting, Golf, Hockey, Netball, Swimming, Tennis, and Volleyball. In addition, December 2024 marked the exciting launch of our Taekwondo program, expanding our offerings even further. We also congratulate the four ISH athletes who graduated during 2024 and are delighted to share that in 2024–25 the program has grown to include ten athletes. We are equally proud of the seventy-seven athletes currently involved in the Kurnai Aspiring Athletes Program, which commenced in the 2024/25 financial year. Congratulations to all athletes on their remarkable dedication and success.

The smooth operation of the Academy is made possible by the tireless efforts of both staff and Board members. Our gratitude goes to Executive Officer, Anita Pistrin, Finance Administrator, Rebecca Wagner, and Program Administrator, Jude Bergmann. We also commend our volunteer Board Directors — Darrell White, Jim Vivian, Jenni Lewis and newly appointed members, Kate McPherson, Matt DeSalvo, Jacob Gruis and Lauren Blunt — whose commitment and leadership continue to strengthen the Academy's foundations.

A highlight of the year was the Annual Awards Evening, hosted in May at the Morwell Italian Club. The event brought together athletes, families, and distinguished guests to celebrate excellence and commitment. We extend congratulations to all graduating athletes, with special mention of our major award recipients:

Tim Forsyth Award: Jake Bateson – Clay Target Shooting

Darrell White Award: Ruby Shieffelbein - Hockey

David Drane Award: Campbell Scott - Tennis

Phil Shelley Award: Kelly Godfrey - Hockey

Rising Star Award: No Rising Star Award for 2024

We are also proud of the continued support from the six Gippsland councils — Bass Coast, South Gippsland, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Wellington, and Latrobe City — whose collective involvement reflects a strong regional commitment. Equally, we thank the State Government for its recognition of the importance of Regional Sports Academies, and we value our ongoing collaboration with the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS) and the five other Victorian Regional Academies of Sport (VRAS).

Our dedication to tradition remains strong through the Gippstar Awards, now in their 65th year. Monthly junior and open nominees continue to be acknowledged, culminating in the annual celebration at the Moe RSL. Congratulations to all award recipients, and a special thank you to Darrell White and his selection panel, whose commitment ensures the ongoing success of these awards.

In closing, I extend heartfelt thanks to our coaches, sports science consultants, parents, guardians, volunteers, and supporters. Each plays an important role in ensuring the continued growth and success of our athletes and programs. Together, we are building on the legacy of the Gippsland Sports Academy and ensuring a vibrant future for sport across our region.

Sandra Timmer-Arends
Board Chair

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

It is with great pride that I present the Executive Officer's Annual Report for the Gippsland Sports Academy (GSA) for the 2024–2025 financial year. This has been a year of growth, resilience, and strengthened commitment to supporting Gippsland's emerging athletes and coaches. The Academy continues to play a pivotal role in developing pathways to elite sport while fostering a culture of excellence, wellbeing, and community connection across the region.

Over the past year, more than 300 athletes participated in 10 programs, gaining access to high-performance coaching, strength and conditioning, sports science, and wellbeing services. We further expanded our sport psychology and nutrition offerings, focusing on both new and returning athletes. A key milestone was the addition of Taekwondo to our suite of programs, broadening our reach and supporting more athletes across Gippsland.

The transition of the Kurnai Aspiring Athletes Program into a full program further strengthened our partnership with local schools and the broader community, ensuring greater access to Academy services. The Gippstar Awards once again celebrated exceptional sporting talent from across the region, and the establishment of a pathway into the Individual Scholarship Holder (ISH) Program has provided more athletes with opportunities to benefit from our high-performance environment.

While we have achieved much, we continue to face challenges, particularly the rising costs of program delivery, travel, and facility access. Growing demand for Academy programs highlights the need for additional resources to ensure we can maintain quality and reach. Balancing the delivery of high-performance programs with community access remains a key focus and will require ongoing strategic planning and partnerships.

Looking ahead, the Gippsland Sports Academy is well positioned to seize new opportunities. Our priorities include expanding scholarship pathways to ensure inclusivity across both traditional and emerging sports, strengthening athlete support services with a particular focus on sports science, and enhancing our digital platforms to improve accessibility for regional families and athletes. We will also continue to advocate strongly for investment in Gippsland athletes.

Our achievements are made possible through the collective efforts of many. I extend my sincere thanks to the Board of Management for their leadership and vision, to our dedicated coaches and program staff for their expertise and passion, and to our office team, Rebecca Wagner and Jude Bermann, for their outstanding support and commitment. Also thanks to our sponsors, partners, and funding bodies, whose contributions enable the delivery of high-quality programs. Most importantly, I acknowledge our athletes and their families, whose dedication and resilience inspire everything we do.

The 2024–2025 year has demonstrated the strength of sport in Gippsland and the crucial role the Academy plays in nurturing talent and creating pathways to success. With strong foundations, collaborative partnerships, and a clear vision for the future, the Gippsland Sports Academy is well placed to continue leading the development of regional sport.

Anita Pistrin
Executive Officer



THE ACADEMY HONOURS ITS OLYMPIC, PARALYMPIC AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETES:

Emily Beecroft

Amanda Drennan

Ruby Storm

Ashley Delaney

Lichelle Clarke

PATRON OF THE ACADEMY



Tim Forsyth

Official Patron of the Gippsland Sports Academy. Born in Mirboo North, Gippsland, Victoria. Elite High Jump Achievements.

AMBASSADORS OF THE ACADEMY



Tim Matthews

The Academy established an Ambassadors program in 2006. It aims to use the support of prominent sports people to promote the Academy as well as foster and encourage the development of Academy athletes.



Don Elgin

TIM FORSYTH OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2024	Jack Bateson	Clay Target Shooting
2023	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2022	Lucas Furlan	Clay Target Shooting
2021	Chelsea Beechey	Swimming
2020	Jordyn Cargill	Swimming
2019	Elayna Pistrin	Clay Target Shooting

Darrell White Special Achievement Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2024	Ruby Shieffelbein	Hockey
2023	Layla Roberts	Hockey
2022	Lara Noblett	Netball
2021	Mackenna Whiteside	Netball
2020	Chris Axford	Volleyball
2019	Lachlan Chester	Volleyball

David Drane Encouragement Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2024	Campbell Scott	Tennis
2023	Zac Shieffelbein	Hockey
2022	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2021	Alexandra Luders	Tennis
2020	Olivia Baillie	Swimming
2019	Jordan Johnston	Tennis

Phil Shelley Sports Development Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2024	Kelly Godfrey	Hockey
2023	Lisa Auteri	Swimming
2022	Joanne Ballinger	Netball
2021	Judi Buhagiar	Netball
2020	Keith Ferguson	Clay Target Shooting
2019	Brian Ford	Swimming

Rising Star Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2023	Lucas Furlan	Clay Target Shooting
2021	Chelsea Beechey	Clay Target Shooting
2017	Ruby Storm	Swimming
2016	Emily Beecroft	Swimming



Tim Forsyth Award:

**Jack Bateson
Clay Target Shooting**



Darrell White Award:

**Ruby Shieffelbein
Hockey**



David Drane Award:

**Campbell Scott
Tennis**



Phil Shelley Award:

**Kelly Godfrey
Hockey**

CLAY TARGET SHOOTING PROGRAM 2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Andrew Brady	Head Coach
Adrian Cousens	Assistant Coach

2024/25 Clay Target Shooting Athletes

Jack Bateson	Zaeln Lynch	Isaac Robinson
Jack Brady	Alicia McGrath	Gemma Scionti
Jasper Carstein	Rocco Moretti	Bree Tangey
Hunter Crane	Summer Moretti	Ollie Witt
Sam Ditchburn	Jack O'Reilly	Ollie Zielezna
Clea Grillo	Kate Perry	

Advisory Panel

Jim Vivian	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Andrew Brady	Head Coach (Trap)
Tim McGrath	Korumburra Gun Club
Matt Richardson	Morwell Field & Game
Dave Jones	Bairnsdale Field & Game

Annual Award Nominees for Clay Target Shooting

Tim Forsyth	Jack Bateson
David Drane	Jack Brady
Phil Shelley	Adrian Cousens

CLAY TARGET SHOOTING PROGRAM 2024-2025

The programs progression continued well in the 2024/2025 program with a total of 18 Athletes and 5 different assistant coaches involved, with the highlight being Gippsland winning the Victorian Sports Academies Inter Academy Challenge at the Werribee Victorian Clay Target Club against the South West Academy of Sport and the Bendigo Sports Academy.

Throughout the program we ran training sessions at both the Bairnsdale Field and Game and the Bairnsdale Clay Target Club as well as the Korumburra Gun Club with huge efforts put in by all the host clubs to facilitate the Gippsland Sports Academies Clay Target Program, which we are forever grateful for.

The proudest moment for our squad was the selection of the Victorian Junior Skeet Team, with all 3 team members being from the current Gippsland Sports Academies Clay Target Program which was Jack Bateson, Hunter Crane & Jack Brady and the boys did both Victoria and Gippsland proud when they competed at the Australian National Championships in Perth, Western Australia.

We had some great individual performances at National level as well, with Jack Bateson winning an Open National Skeet Title and Jack Brady winning Junior National titles in both Trap & Skeet.

Overall, the program continued its growth and is set to continue growing, with great results from our top Athlete's and solid improvement from all Athlete's, particularly from our returning Athlete's that are into their second year of the program and beyond.

Thank you to all the guest coaches who assisted throughout the program, particular Adrian Cousen's from Bairnsdale who has been assisting with the program coaching for several years now.

Thank you to all the program sponsors, particularly our major individual one Cranes Civil & Surfacing, the program would not be what it is without your continued support.

As always to our Executive Officer Anita Pistrin, thank you for everything you do to make our programs run smoothly.

- Andrew Brady

GOLF PROGRAM 2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Richard Cooney Head Coach

2024/25 Golf Athletes

Ben Boers	Cooper Rimington
Rebecca Boers	Blake Robinson
Kaitlyn Boers	Thomas Simon
Maddison Kelly	Ethan Smith
Lachlan McGrath	Lenny White
Arlen Peavey	Billie Wrigley

Advisory Panel

Jim Vivian	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Sam Kindlen	Golf Australia
Chris Crabbe	Golf Australia
Fran Renehan	West Gippsland Golf Assoc
Karin Liedke	East Gippsland Golf Assoc
Greg Williams	South Gippsland Golf Assoc

Annual Award Nominees for Golf

Tim Forsyth	Lenny White
David Drane	Becky Boers

GOLF PROGRAM 2024-2025

The 2024 program commenced in February, providing all athletes with a comprehensive introduction including a nutrition session, a full fitness assessment, short game testing, and individual swing evaluations. Each athlete was also offered two individual coaching sessions with Richard at Latrobe Golf Park in Melbourne, utilising cutting-edge Trackman technology and advanced video analysis software, all included as part of the program.

Regular squad coaching sessions were held at Warragul, Traralgon & Wonthaggi Golf Clubs. A key highlight of the year was the Inter-Academy Challenge, as well as the VRAS High Performance Golf Day hosted at 13th Beach in October. These events brought together athletes from various regional academies and provided invaluable exposure to Golf Victoria's High-Performance coaches.

In addition, the squad participated in a Regional High-Performance Day held at the Australian Golf Centre. This session offered athletes the opportunity to train on a world-class short game facility and receive detailed feedback on their course strategies from expert coaches.

Following the success of the individual Melbourne sessions, the program will now incorporate more of these tailored coaching opportunities alongside regular squad training. Moving forward, individual coaching will be a key component of the Golf Program, with our Strength & Conditioning coach also attending these days to support athlete development holistically.

The Gippsland Sports Academy extends sincere thanks to the Victorian Golf Foundation and the three Gippsland Golf Associations for their generous support and funding, which has been instrumental in the success and growth of the Golf Program.

- Richard Cooney

HOCKEY PROGRAM 2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Daniel Godfrey	Head Coach
Robert Douglas-Green	Assistant Coach
Clio Bergmann	Girls Coach
Mitch Chaffey	Goalkeeper Coach
Marc Harbert	Assistant Coach
Nathan Forrester	Assistant Coach

2024/25 Hockey Athletes

Isabel Barling	Charlotte D'Amore	Sanne Schelfhout
John Brewer	Mitchell Farley	Maison Shieffelbein
Kyra Burke	Chloe Findley	Ruby Shieffelbein
Isabelle Byron	Isla Godfrey	Zak Shieffelbein
Brady Cake	Peyton Lugton	Joshua Smorenburg
Eamon Carter	Aiden Mair	Freya Somerville
Seth Christy	Emma McCoy	Erynn Thomas
Zoe Clay	Dillon Meredith	Cailean Thomas
Wyatt Cobbledick	Cole Murphy	Andre Wassermann
Zach Coster	Bailey Pembrey	Flynn Wong
Emily Coster	Sierra Roberts	

Advisory Panel

Howard Williams	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Dan Godfrey	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Hockey

Darrell White	Ruby Shieffelbein
David Drane	Mitchell Farley
Phil Shelley	Kelly Godfrey

HOCKEY PROGRAM 2024-2025

The 2024–2025 GSA Hockey Program ran over six sessions between December and March, alternating fortnightly between Churchill, Drouin, and Sale. The program was designed to prepare Gippsland-based hockey athletes for higher-level play, including Junior State Championships (JSC), School Sport Victoria (SSV) trials, Hockey Victoria state trials, and State League competitions.

The program aimed to enhance foundational hockey skills, introduce advanced techniques, build athlete confidence and on-field communication. Emphasis was also placed on developing game sense and tactical understanding to align with metropolitan level expectations.

In its second year, the program maintained steady participation numbers. Across the six sessions, athletes improved in basic and advanced skills including hitting, slapping, reverse stick, and tactical decision-making. For the goalkeepers, focus was on improving core goalkeeping techniques including kicking, hand saves, and clearing under pressure, with an emphasis on proper form and consistency. Goalkeeper skill development was a highlight, with two goalkeepers achieving selection into state teams, and a field player successfully transitioning into a very capable goalkeeper. Numerous participants showed increased confidence, especially in their vocal communication and leadership during gameplay. Goalkeepers notably developed their ability to organise and direct defenders effectively. Across the group, athletes demonstrated greater tactical awareness and improved decision-making during small-sided drills and match-play scenarios.

Three athletes were selected to representative squads during or following the program:

Ruby Shieffelbein – 2025 SSV U12 Girls Team

Sierra Roberts – 2024 SSV U12 Girls Team

Tara Lambert – 2025 U16 Girls Victorian State Team

Additionally, participants demonstrated significant individual growth throughout the program, regardless of representative selection. With parent feedback overwhelmingly positive, many commented on visible development in both skill and confidence. Coaches noted the value of consistency and individualised feedback. Future initiatives through this program will include creating home-training video resources, separating age groups where appropriate, and rotating gender session times to offset weather-related session loss.

Sincere thanks to my coaching team: Mitchell Chaffey, Clio Bergmann, Marc Harbert, Rob Douglas-Green, and Nathan Forester. I would like to extend my gratitude to Jude Bergmann and Anita Pistrin for facilitating the program, and to the GSA consultants for providing athlete development support across strength, conditioning, nutrition, and psychology. Special recognition also goes to the families and athletes for their commitment, travelling long distances and showing up rain, hail or shine to participate in the sessions.

- Dan Godfrey

NETBALL PROGRAM 2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Jae Schuback	Head Coach
Jo Ballinger	Head Coach
Jodie Whykes	Assistant Coach
Carol Gregorovich	Assistant Coach
Abby Gregorovich	Assistant Coach
Angela Chittem	Assistant Coach

2024/25 Netball Athletes

Chloe Allen	Kiah Douthat	Sienna McPherson
Skye Black	Claire Finger	Evie O'Doherty
Laura Blackshaw	Kira Hamilton	Scarlett Shave
Millie Brosnan	Amelia Henry	Kenzie Shave
Evie Carman	Ella Higgins	Olivia Stothers
Madeline Cook	Mia Hoodless	Beth Wallace
Jesse Daly	Sophie Howes	Lily Wheeler
Tiahli Dedigama	Charlotte Kemp	
Lexi Doherty	Leah Kirkbride	

Advisory Panel

Sandra Timmer-Arends	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Demelza Howard	Netball Victoria
Caitlyn DeGaris	Netball Victoria
Jae Schuback	Head Coach
Jo Ballinger	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Netball

Darrell White	Tiahli Dedigama
David Drane	Sienna McPherson

NETBALL PROGRAM 2024-2025

We are very honoured to keep leading this program. The joy of watching athletes grow, both in their skills on the court, and seeing them develop into confident, disciplined athletes who excel and make positive contributions to the netball community fills us with tremendous pride.

Our coaching staff operated as a strong team, working together smoothly to improve the abilities of every athlete. Through a well-structured series of training sessions, each coach contributed valuable insights. They demonstrated strong leadership, offered constant support, and remained fully committed to helping every athlete improve.

We are proud to share that 25 of our athletes have taken part in the Diamond program. Out of these talented individuals, an outstanding 16 have been selected to trial for the Netball Victoria Talent Academy. This is a true reflection of their dedication and the strong support they've received from our programs. Many of our athletes also represented their regions at Associations Championships with opportunities to be Talent Identified to progress to Talent Academy and selection in State Teams.

We organised a round-robin competition with the Casey Future Demons, a program linked to Casey VNL. This event provided a valuable opportunity for our athletes to compete against strong opponents and engage with VNL-affiliated coaches, while also giving them a glimpse of the next stage in their netball development.

The VRAS inter-academy tournament offered an excellent opportunity for both development and competition. Our athletes delivered outstanding performances, demonstrating our talent and competitiveness across the state. They showcased impressive skill, game awareness, and sportsmanship in every match. Each game reflected their commitment and the training they had undertaken, as they applied the strategies and techniques we emphasised throughout the program.

We would like to express our gratitude for the tremendous support from The Doc Shop, Netball Victoria, the GSA board, Anita, and the GSA staff. Together, we've built a strong foundation for our athletes to excel, and we eagerly anticipate more success and continued collaboration in the future.

- Jae Evans & Jo Ballinger

SWIMMING PROGRAM 2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Brian Ford	Head Coach
Leigh Nugent	Specialist Coach
Dean Gooch	Assistant Coach
Paul Myers	Assistant Coach

2024/25 Swimming Athletes

Emily Auteri	Billy Fisher	Thomas Pendergrast
Olivia Baillie	Maggie Fisher	Teddy Ripper
Phoebe Balcombe	Cormac Flynn	Miah Roberts
Lockie Bellion	Riley Lowe	Kody Said
Max Brocklesby	Mostyn Lumsden	Milla Said
Zayden Burton	Isabella Lynch	Zac Sherar
Brody Cargill	Archer Marsland	Chloe Szkwarek
Darcy Connell	Hugh Munro	Will Upston
Gemma Cook	Issy Nash	Noah Warner
Aliza Couling	Ash Nicholes	Sam Wells
Claudia Croatto	Campbell Nicholson	Jess Whiting
Genevieve Dennis	Kayla Pratt	Kayla Wilson

Advisory Panel

Jenni Lewis	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Brian Ford	Gippsland Swimming
Dean Gooch	Gippsland Swimming
Dylan Muir	Gippsland Swimming
Paul Myers	Gippsland Swimming
Jackie Madden	Gippsland Swimming

Annual Award Nominees for Swimming

Tim Forsyth	Kody Said
David Drane	Gemma Cook

SWIMMING PROGRAM 2024-2025

The swimming program was a terrific experience for swimmers and coaches this season. Again led by Olympic 2004 and 2012 head coach Leigh Nugent who was involved in every session with the bulk of the Gippsland coaches in attendance.

For 4 years the program has had a Performance and Development group of athletes working together and separately in activities throughout the 3 sessions held at Traralgon and Warragul. It was of great benefit to the whole program having all the coaches and best swimmers in Gippsland unite.

Major competitions of the year – Victorian Country Championships, Gippsland Championships, Victorian State Championships culminating in Australian Championships in April - were outstanding both with results and medals. At the highest level we had a number of swimmers make finals and Gemma Cook from South Gippsland Bass win a bronze in the Multi Class Girls 12 – 13 years 50m Freestyle event. National Finals to Ash Nicholes, Jess Whiting and Lockie Bellion from Traralgon also was a great result for the program this year.

Thank you to the following team members, personnel and organisations who provided wonderful assistance to the program:

Dean Gooch – Traralgon coach

Paul Myers – Warragul coach

Garry Cole – East Gippsland coach

Anita Pistrin – Academy EO – an organised and efficient administrator who understands swimming and made the program run like clockwork,

It is our privilege to have the Morwell Bowling Club support the swimming program for over 10 years and their enduring and outstanding contribution to the sport we trust is rewarded each year with the continued success of the swimmers.

We look forward to building on that success in 2025/26 and for years ahead.

- Brian Ford

TENNIS PROGRAM 2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Jason Yap	Head Coach
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2024/25 Tennis Athletes

Felix Bathgate	Matilda Nave
Candice Bramwell	Riley Nave
Nicholas Christoforou	Cruze Ross
James Harman	Campbell Scott
Heath Kamphuis	Henry Seeber
Zac William Langstaff	Eshan Shankar
Louis Lazzaro	Andrew Thompson
Milla Lazzaro	Tom Wood

Advisory Panel

Darrell White	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Cam Govan	Tennis Victoria
Jason Yap	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Tennis

Tim Forsyth	Eshan Shankar
David Drane	Campbell Scott

TENNIS PROGRAM 2024-2025

Firstly, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed, both directly and indirectly, to the success of the GSA program over the past year. Your support has been invaluable, and I'm truly grateful for the collective efforts that have made this journey possible.

After coaching the GSA athletes throughout 2023, I've come away with high hopes and aspirations for taking this tennis program to new heights. My goal has always been to support these athletes to the best of my ability, helping them grow both as players and individuals. With 10 returning players and 6 new additions to the program, I've seen a remarkable level of intensity, commitment, and eagerness to learn. All the athletes have shown a strong willingness to absorb new strategies and improve their game on court.

I'm proud to report that we've achieved an 81.25% attendance rate, which reflects the dedication of the athletes. In this time, we've made substantial progress on technical, strategic, physical, and mental levels. While we didn't win the Inter-Academy Challenge in Ballarat, I couldn't be prouder of the growth we've seen from all our players. Their development, both on and off the court, fills me with immense pride and gratitude.

Thank you to everyone for your ongoing support and belief in the GSA program. I look forward to what the future will bring, and I'm excited for the continued progress of our athletes.

- Jason Yap

VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

2024-2025

Coaching Staff

Andrew Papalaskaris	Head Coach
Lachlan Morland	Assistant Coach
Blake Hunter	Assistant Coach

2024/25 Volleyball Athletes

Aira Aganon	Tenesha Fieldsend	Amber Mazon
Brooke Arkley	Josiah Gubaton	Noah Miller
Blake Burgess	Amelia Hams	Yrnhel (Spencer) Padungao
Jessica Churchill	Banjo Jackson	Richard Patrickson
Matthew Churchill	Alexis Jarvis	Georgia Scarce
Kye Clissold	Chloe Johnson	William Thomson
Djay Fieldsend	Jeffrin Mathew	

Advisory Panel

Howard Williams	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Andrew Papalaskaris	Head Coach
Lachlan Morland	Assistant Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Volleyball

Darrell White	Amelia Hams
David Drane	Brooke Arkley
Phil Shelley	Blake Hunter

VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

2024-2025

The 2024/25 volleyball season welcomed Blake Hunter as an additional assistant coach alongside Locky Morland, with the returning program head coach being Andrew Papalaskaris. This season saw 20 athletes with a strong attendance and a large variety of players from different areas and associations.

Throughout the season players worked on both technical aspects of how they played the ball, but the many aspects of what volleyball players do before and after playing the ball that helps with what is a very movement orientated sport. These included developing players spike approach, service routine, movements on and off the net to block and attack, as well as their ability to play full rotation volleyball with given positions around the court to help enhance their match play outside of the GSA program.

This was complimented by further discussion around proper warm up and cool down protocols, fuel and hydration strategies for training and match play and the importance of maintaining strength, mobility and flexibility both in and out of season for volleyball athletes.

While it's essential to celebrate the accomplishments of this season, it's equally important to stay focused on continuous improvement as we look ahead to next year. A heartfelt thank you to Locky and Andrew for their unwavering dedication and coaching efforts throughout the year. Additionally, we were thrilled to welcome Coach Blake to the team this season. His expertise, energy, and fresh perspective were invaluable in helping us reach new heights. A special thanks also goes to Anita and the office staff for their consistent support, ensuring that everything behind the scenes ran smoothly.

As we turn our attention to the 2025 program, we're excited about the potential for growth and improvement. Our primary goal is to retain this year's athletes while attracting even more talented players to join the program. With a renewed focus on skill development, teamwork, and leadership, we aim to make a significant impact not only in local leagues but also in state-level competitions and beyond. The foundation we've built this year is just the beginning, and with continued hard work, we're confident that we can achieve even greater success in the coming season.

- Andrew Papalaskaris

INDIVIDUAL SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS (ISH) 2024-2025

2024/25 ISH Athletes

Alicia Cook	Badminton
Roly Durano	Badminton
Ava Harrington	Modern Pentathlon
Rhys Pollerd	Archery
Xanthe Wade	Showjumping

Advisory Panel

Jim Vivian	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO

The Gippsland Sports Academy (GSA) Individual Scholarship Holders (ISH) Program is a key initiative aimed at empowering young athletes across Gippsland to achieve success in both sport and life. The program offers a structured and supportive pathway that enhances athletic performance while fostering personal development and growth.

Throughout the year, the ISH Program has provided athletes with access to a range of high-quality services and opportunities. These have included strength and conditioning sessions, sport science education, nutrition support, fitness testing, and injury management – all vital components in developing well-rounded, high-performing athletes. Our athletes attended the ACE Day this year, which was an interactive day of Pilates, Strength & Conditioning and cooking nutritious energy balls.

The ISH Program embodies a holistic approach, equipping athletes with the tools to thrive both in their sporting careers and personal lives. By integrating education, wellness, and high-performance training, the program continues to build resilient, capable, and future-ready athletes who represent Gippsland with pride.

KURNAI ASPIRING ATHLETES PROGRAM (KAAP) 2024-2025

Kurnai Aspiring Athlete Program – 2025 Review & 2026 Vision.

The Aspiring Athlete Program reached new heights in 2025, with students showing impressive commitment, growth, and resilience across the year. The energy within the program has been incredible, as athletes balanced training, competition, and school life while striving to perform at their best.

This year, we saw a large growth in athletes within the program. These athletes have demonstrated the ability to sharpen their physical preparation, refine their technical abilities, and develop the confidence to back themselves in high-pressure moments. One of the standout aspects of 2025 has been the way returning athletes set the tone for the group — leading with their actions, encouraging teammates, and showing what it takes to succeed. At the same time, our newest members brought fresh energy and enthusiasm, ensuring the culture of the program remains strong and welcoming.

We are proud of the collective achievements made this year, whether through personal bests, leadership growth, or the determination shown in training and competition. Every athlete has contributed to the success of the program, and we congratulate them on the progress they've made.

None of this would be possible without the support of our KAAP staff whose guidance and encouragement ensure the program continues to thrive. Their efforts behind the scenes create the opportunities that allow our athletes to shine.

As we turn our focus to 2026, the vision is clear: to continue building a high-performance environment that supports athletes to take the next step in their sporting pathways. We aim to grow participation, create further opportunities, strengthen connections with elite programs, and keep pushing our athletes to unlock their full potential.

- Jeff Derkacs

KAAP Coordinator

VRAS PARA SPORT PROJECT 2024-2025

2024/25 VRAS Para Project Athletes

Lockie Bellion

Melanie Hilton

Will Firth

Advisory Panel

Jim Vivian

GSA Board Member

Anita Pistrin

GSA EO

Campbell Message

Para Australia

Gippsland Academy of Sport continues its wonderful support of para-athletes as part of the growing Pathways Academy Programs nationally. This year saw three passionate athletes continue to strive, 2 of which were in Wheelchair Basketball and 1 in Swimming. Athletes competed in a number of events including swimming nationals (with great results!), competing in the National Women's Wheelchair Basketball League and a member of the State Wheelchair Basketball League Premiership team!

The 6 Victorian Regional Academies of Sport have supported 20 para-athletes this year, with VRAS athletes being supported with Pathways Academy Grants worth \$19,500. This complements the 11 NSW Regional Academies and newly supported WA Regional Academies of Sport and talent Centres for a total of 67 athletes and \$72,000 in Pathway Academy Grants. The Northern Territory Sports Academy and the Tasmanian Institute of Sport have raised their programs in line with the national SIS/SAS Para Sport Uplift and now offer bespoke Para Units inline with every Institute and academy in the country!

Thanks for everyone's hard work and congratulations to Gippsland Academy of Sport. With some exciting changes due to an increase in funding in the Para Uplift, some developments in the program will be communicated soon! We look forward to another great year in 2026!

- *Campbell Message*
Paralympics Australia

THE GIPPSLAND SPORTS ACADEMY PROUDLY ADMINISTERS THE GIPPSTAR AWARDS

It's my pleasure to present the Gippstar Annual Report for the year ended June 2025.

These Gippstar Awards have a long and proud history. They were "re-badged" as the Gippstar Awards in 1975, having originally being known as the Caltex Sportstar Awards when they were first introduced in 1962. The Gippstar Awards are much respected and highly regarded throughout Gippsland as they play a vital role in acknowledging Gippsland's highly talented sporting talent and administrators. Athletes from a broad range of sports have been recipients of these Awards as a result of their clearly demonstrated achievements. These outcomes provide inspiration to other sporting "Gippslanders" to be dedicated to reaching their full potential.

Annually, this opportunity is taken to again gratefully acknowledge with sincere thanks the vital on-going financial contributions from the six Gippsland region Councils, namely, Latrobe City Council, Wellington Shire Council, Baw Baw Shire Council, East Gippsland Shire Council, Bass Coast Shire Council and South Gippsland Shire Council. The continuing support of these Councils' is very much valued and is essential for the on-going administration staffing of these Gippstar Awards. Congratulations to all of the Gippsland athletes who were announced as this year's monthly Open and Junior Gippstar Award category winners.

This year, our "65th Annual Gippstar Awards Evening", was held at the Moe RSL on Thursday 14th August last. A key feature of the evening was the announcement of this year's 2024/25 annual Gippstar Award Winners, as follows:

- Open Champion: Ashley Nicholes (Swimming) from Traralgon
- Junior Champion: Kody Said (Swimming) from Traralgon
- Special Achiever: Jane Mitchell (Swimming) from Traralgon
- : Wayne Seear (Athletics) from Warragul
- Team of the Year: Lindenow PS Lawn Bowls Team (Junior) & Traralgon Masters Swimming Team (Open)
- Club of the Year: Fish Creek Football Netball Club
- Gippsland Champion: Eleanor Patterson (High Jump) from Leongatha

We were indeed fortunate to again have the benefit of having netball identity Judi Buhagiar as our MC for the evening – thankyou Judi.

A key ingredient for the success of these Gippstar Awards is the submitting of nominations by our sporting community. We encourage our community minded sportspeople of Gippsland to take advantage of our "on-line" nomination facility. Your participation is essential and will be very much appreciated. On behalf of the GSA, I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all of our Gippstar Panel members who have participated throughout the past year.

Thank you very much to our Gippstar Awards administrator, Jude Bergmann, for your on-going invaluable assistance, including your "media platforms" promotion of these Awards. Appreciation is extended to the various Gippsland print, radio and television media outlets for their interest and reporting support of these Awards.

Finally, to the Gippsland Sports Academy Board and EO, Anita Pistrin, thank you again for your continuing dedication to the future of these Gippstar Awards.

Darrell White

Chairman, Gippstar Awards Panel

Panel Members:

Davyd Reid, Judi Buhagiar, Rob Goldie, Rod Twinning, Robin Lowe, Fred Debono, Tanya Hellier, Darrell White.

OPEN ANNUAL GIPPSTAR WINNERS

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2025	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2024	Daniel Barry	Triathlon
2023	Paige Barr	Rowing
2022	Cohen Wade	Modern Pentathlon/Tetrathlon
2021	Alex Vuillermin	Rowing
2020	Alex Vuillermin	Rowing

JUNIOR ANNUAL GIPPSTAR WINNERS

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2025	Kody Said	Swimming
2024	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2023	Lucas Furlan	Clay Target Shooting
2022	Kayla Wilson	Swimming
2021	Jordyn Cargill	Swimming
2020	Cohen Wade	Modern Pentathlon

GIPPSTAR TEAMS AWARDS

YEAR	AWARD WINNING TEAM
2025	Lindenow PS Lawn Bowls Team (Junior) & Traralgon Masters Swimming Team (Open)
2024	Maffra Eagles Basketball Under 14 Squad
2023	Gippsland All Abilities Netball Team & Sale United Football Club Women's Team
2022	Moe U13 Blue Netball Squad team
2021	No Nominations due to Covid
2020	Lindenow South A Grade Netball Team

GIPPSTAR CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARDS

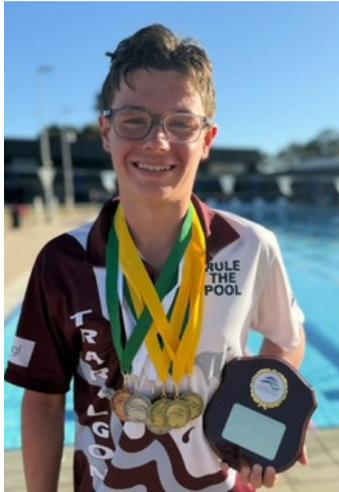
YEAR	AWARD WINNING CLUB
2025	Fish Creek Football Netball Club
2024	Sale United Football Club (Soccer)
2023	Falcons 2000 Soccer Club
2022	Seaspray SLSC
2021	Stratford Football Netball Club
2020	Lindenow South FNC

GIPPSTAR GIPPSLAND CHAMPIONS AWARDS

YEAR	AWARD WINNER
2024/25	Eleanor Patterson
2023/24	Emily Beecroft, Swimming
2022/23	Aoife Coughlan, Judo
2021/22	Jack White, Basketball
2020/21	Sophie Molineux
2019/20	Peter Siddle, Cricket

JUNIOR AWARD WINNER:

Kody Said



OPEN AWARD WINNER:

Ashley Nicholes



CLUB OF THE YEAR:

Fish Creek Football Netball Club



TEAM OF THE YEAR:

Lindenow PS Lawn Bowls Team (Junior) & Traralgon Masters Swimming Team (Open)



SPECIAL ACHIEVER AWARD:

Jane Mitchell & Wayne Seear



GIPPSLAND CHAMPION AWARD:

Eleanor Patterson



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05 September 2025

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REPORTS TO THE BOARD OF GIPPSLAND REGIONAL SPORTS ACADEMY INCORPORATED

SCOPE

I have reviewed the Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 being the Balance Sheet, Profit & Loss and Cash Flow Statement presented by the Academy.

No opinion is expressed as to whether the Academy's accounting policies are appropriate to the needs of the Academy.

The review has been conducted in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards. The procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosure in the Financial Statements, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the Financial Statements are presented fairly so as to present a view which is consistent with the understanding of the Academy's financial position and performance represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows. The review opinion is expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

REVIEW OPINION

The Financial Statements of the Gippsland Regional Sports Academy present a true and fair view in accordance with the Academy's accounting policies. The Financial Position of the Gippsland Regional Sports Academy as at 30 June 2025 and the results of its operations and cash flow for the financial year ended.



JOHN BARCLAY
Principal

Pakenham Taxation & Accounting

Pakenham Taxation & Business Services Pty Ltd ACN: 070 826 596 "Liability limited by a scheme approved under professional standards Legislation"

CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone: (03) 51270223

Email: anitap@sportgippsland.org.au

Webpage: www.sportgippsland.org.au

Address: PO Box 282 Newborough Vic 3825



**GIPPSLAND
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