



GSA ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 2026



Contact Information

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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 Committment

GSA is committed to providing the highest level of safety for all involved with all GSA sporting programs. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children and delivering the GSA's activities while acting in the best interests 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 280 of our athletes who are on high performance pathways across a range of sports.



Regional:
43% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a Regional Level

State:
20% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a State Level

National:
11% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a National Level

World:
2% of GSA Athletes
represent or compete at
a World Championships

VIS Scholarships:
4 GSA Past/Present
Athletes currently on VIS
Scholarships



Investing in Athlete Excellence

25
26 Highlights



280

Athlete



17

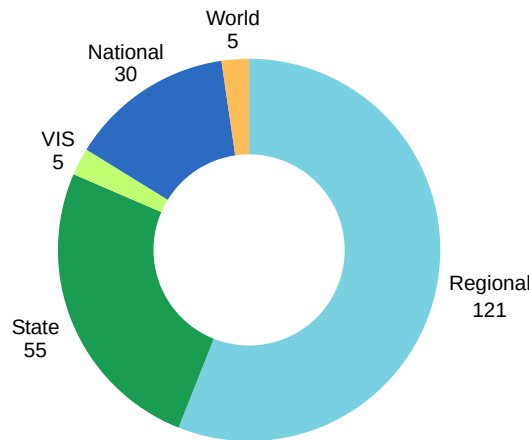
Sports



6

State Sporting Partners

Athlete Achievements



School Program

123

Student Athletes

21

Sports

Services

384

Hours of Coaching

81

Education Sessions

4

Inter-academy Challenges

Social Media Engagement

2578

Followers



Facebook



Instagram

2025–2026 Year in Review

A Year of Development, Achievement and Stronger Foundations

The Gippsland Sports Academy supported 280 athletes during 2025–2026, providing development opportunities across eight core sporting programs, alongside the Individual Scholarship Holder and Kurnai Aspiring Athletes pathways. The year focused on strengthening governance, enhancing athlete development and building partnerships to support the Academy's future.

1

Athlete Development & Performance

- **National swimming success:** Mackenzie Gibbs won three gold, one silver and one bronze medal at the Australian Championships, while Lockie Bellion secured two bronze medals in Multi Class events.
- **Netball pathways:** Fourteen athletes were selected for the Netball Victoria Talent Academy, with 28 athletes participating in the Diamond program.
- **Tennis progression:** GSA tennis athletes achieved third place at the Inter-Academy Challenge, improving on the previous year's result. Ten of the program's 16 athletes achieved regional representation or higher.
- **Hockey development:** Forty athletes graduated from the 2025–2026 program, with Ruby Shieffelbein selected for the U12 School Sport Victoria team as a goalkeeper.
- **Volleyball representation:** Amelia Hams earned selection in the Victorian State Team

2

Strengthening Pathways & Partnerships

- The Academy continued to strengthen its Individual Scholarship Holder and Kurnai Aspiring Athletes programs, extending opportunities for athletes to access coaching, strength and conditioning, sports science and personal development.
- New support from Marinus Link, Australian Solid Fuel Testing and the Victorian Volleyball Development Fund, alongside in-kind support from Just Hockey, strengthened the Academy's partnerships. Continued engagement with the Victorian Institute of Sport also supported connections with Victoria's high-performance sporting system.

3

Looking Ahead

Building on a year focused on governance and organisational development, GSA will continue to strengthen its programs and partnerships in 2026–2027. Priorities include an updated Individual Scholarship Holder program, the potential introduction of Baseball, and continued investment in accessible, high-quality sporting pathways for Gippsland athletes

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 403 athletes in 2025/26. 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

Dahlsens SINCE 1877
For the Builder.

access
BORING PTY. LTD.

CLAY TARGET SHOOTING PROGRAM

CRANES
CIVIL & SURFACING

BERETTA
AUSTRALIA

GOLF PROGRAM

Golf
West Gippsland

GOLF EAST GIPPSLAND

SOUTH GIPPSLAND GOLF INC.

Victorian
Golf Foundation



NETBALL PROGRAM

THE DOC SHOP
managed document solutions
...make space

netball
VICTORIA

TENNIS PROGRAM

tennis
VICTORIA

SWIMMING PROGRAM

MORWELL
BOWLING CLUB

GIPPSLAND
SWIMMING INC.

swimming
victoria

VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

HOCKEY PROGRAM

JUST
HOCKEY

ASFT
AUSTRALIAN
SOLID FUEL TESTING

Victorian
Volleyball
Development
Trust

ACADEMY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2025 - 2026

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
Swimmingl 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 Physiotherapy Group

Nutrition

Lauren Nicholls

Psychology

Christopher Shen

Christopher Shen Consulting

Strength and Conditioning

Stuart Goddard/Sam Fenton

Hannah Stephenson

Control High Performance
Bairnsdale Aquatic and
Recreation Centre

Remy Mcleod

Mcleod Taekwondo

Finance

Jason Sartori
Linda Gell

JDS Tax Solutions
Elite Bookkeeping Services



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to present the Gippsland Sports Academy's 2025/2026 Annual Report.

The past year has provided another opportunity to support young athletes from across Gippsland as they work towards their sporting goals. Our focus has remained firmly on delivering quality development opportunities through our established programs in hockey, netball, volleyball, swimming, tennis, golf, clay target shooting and taekwondo. There have been no new programs introduced this year; instead, our attention has been on maintaining and strengthening the programs already offered by the Academy.

The success of these programs is a direct reflection of the people who deliver them. I would like to acknowledge our coaches, staff and support teams for the time, expertise and enthusiasm they bring to the Academy. Their contribution provides our athletes with an environment in which they can develop not only as competitors, but also as young people.

Financial and community support continues to play an important role in allowing the Academy to provide these opportunities. We are extremely appreciative of our sponsors, including the Morwell Bowling Club for swimming, The Doc Shop for netball, Dahlsen's and Access Boring for strength and conditioning, and Cranes Civil and Surfacing for clay target shooting. We also thank our state sporting association partners for their ongoing support across swimming, netball, tennis, hockey, volleyball and golf.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the year has been seeing our athletes continue to challenge themselves and achieve success within their chosen sports. Their progress is made possible through consistent training, commitment and the willingness to learn. We congratulate every athlete who has represented the Academy during the year and recognise the effort required to balance the demands of high-level sport with education and family life.

The Academy is also continuing to broaden the pathways available to young athletes. The ISH program has continued to develop, while the Kurnai Aspiring Athletes Program has provided further opportunities for young people to engage with structured sporting development. These initiatives are an important part of ensuring that athletes from across our region have access to support and opportunities that may otherwise be difficult to find locally.

I would like to acknowledge the people who contribute to the governance and day-to-day operation of the Academy. Our thanks go to Executive Officer Anita Pistrin, Finance Administrator Rebecca Wagner and Program Administrator Jude Bergmann. I also acknowledge our volunteer Board Directors — Darrell White, Jim Vivian, Jenni Lewis, Kate McPherson, Matt DeSalvo, Jacob Gruis and Lauren Blunt — for their time, commitment and continued contribution to the direction of the Academy.

The Annual Awards Evening remains a significant occasion on the Academy calendar. It provides an opportunity to come together with athletes, families and supporters and celebrate the achievements of those who have made an outstanding contribution throughout the year. Congratulations to all award recipients, with recognition to this year's major award winners:

Tim Forsyth Award: Jack Brady – Clay Target Shooting

Darrell White Award: Wyatt Cobbledick – Hockey

David Drane Award: Xavier Gray – Swimming

Phil Shelley Award: Jude Bergmann – Hockey

Each of these awards represents a significant achievement and we congratulate the recipients on their recognition. Their success reflects the dedication and commitment that the Academy seeks to encourage across all its programs.

The Academy's strength is also supported by its strong regional partnerships. We thank the six Gippsland councils — Bass Coast, South Gippsland, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Wellington and Latrobe City — for their continued commitment to regional sport. We also value the support of the State Government and our ongoing relationships with the Victorian Institute of Sport and the other Victorian Regional Academies of Sport.

Another important part of our sporting tradition is the Gippstar Awards, which have now reached their 66th year. The continued recognition of junior and open athletes through the monthly awards and annual celebration at the Morwell Bowls Club is a wonderful way of acknowledging sporting achievement throughout the Gippsland community. I congratulate all nominees and recipients and thank Darrell White and the selection panel for their ongoing work in maintaining this important tradition.

As we look ahead, the Academy remains committed to providing athletes with the support, opportunities and encouragement they need to progress in their sport. Our continued success depends on the collective efforts of athletes, families, coaches, staff, volunteers, sponsors and community partners.

Finally, I thank everyone who has contributed to the Gippsland Sports Academy during the past year. Your support and commitment are greatly valued. Together, we continue to build upon the Academy's strong history and create opportunities for the next generation of Gippsland athletes.

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 2025–2026. This year has focused on growth, strengthened governance, organisational development and partnerships, while maintaining our commitment to supporting Gippsland's emerging athletes and coaches.

The GSA continues to provide athletes with access to high-quality coaching, strength and conditioning, sports science, sport psychology, nutrition, wellbeing and personal development. Our programs develop not only sporting performance but also the knowledge, skills and resilience needed to support athletes throughout their sporting journeys.

Governance and organisational development have been key priorities, with continued work to strengthen policies, procedures and strategic direction. This provides a solid foundation for sustainable growth and ensures our operations reflect contemporary governance, child safety and athlete wellbeing standards.

Partnerships remain vital to program delivery. During the year, we welcomed new sponsors, including Marinus Link, Australian Solid Fuel Testing and the Victorian Volleyball Development Fund. We also gratefully acknowledge the in-kind support provided by Just Hockey. These partnerships demonstrate a shared commitment to developing Gippsland's emerging sporting talent.

The Academy also received strong support from the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS), providing valuable opportunities to access expertise and strengthen connections with Victoria's high-performance sporting system.

In May, I attended the International Talent Identification and Development Conference in Canberra and Brisbane. This provided valuable insights into contemporary talent identification, athlete development and high-performance pathways, informing the continued evolution of GSA programs.

Looking ahead to 2026–2027, we anticipate further growth through an updated Individual Scholarship Holder program and the potential introduction of a new Baseball program, expanding opportunities for talented athletes across Gippsland.

As a regional organisation, the GSA remains committed to providing quality sporting pathways close to home. Rising costs and increasing demand present ongoing challenges, making sustainable funding, sponsorship and strong partnerships essential to maintaining program quality.

I sincerely thank the GSA Board of Management for its leadership, our coaches and service providers for their dedication, and Rebecca Wagner and Jude Bermann for their outstanding contribution to the Academy's daily operations.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to our longstanding and ongoing sponsors, funding bodies and partners for their continued support and belief in the GSA. We also warmly welcome our new supporters. These relationships are fundamental to our sustainability and enable us to create meaningful opportunities for Gippsland athletes.

Finally, I thank our athletes and their families, whose dedication and resilience inspire everything we do.

The 2025–2026 year has strengthened the foundations of the GSA. With a continued focus on governance, growth and athlete development, we look forward to building on these achievements and advancing sporting opportunities throughout Gippsland.

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
2025	Jack Brady	Clay Target Shooting
2024	Jack Bateson	Clay Target Shooting
2023	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2022	Lucas Furlan	Clay Target Shooting
2021	Chelsea Beechey	Swimming
2020	Jordyn Cargill	Swimming

Darrell White Special Achievement Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2025	Wyatt Cobbledick	Hockey
2024	Ruby Shieffelbein	Hockey
2023	Layla Roberts	Hockey
2022	Lara Noblett	Netball
2021	Mackenna Whiteside	Netball
2020	Chris Axford	Volleyball

David Drane Encouragement Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2025	Xavier Gray	Swimming
2024	Campbell Scott	Tennis
2023	Zac Shieffelbein	Hockey
2022	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2021	Alexandra Luders	Tennis
2020	Olivia Baillie	Swimming

Phil Shelley Sports Development Award

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2025	Jude Bergmann	Hockey
2024	Kelly Godfrey	Hockey
2023	Lisa Auteri	Swimming
2022	Joanne Ballinger	Netball
2021	Judi Buhagiar	Netball
2020	Keith Ferguson	Clay Target Shooting

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 Brady
Clay Target Shooting



Darrell White Award:

Wyatt Cobbledick
Hockey



David Drane Award:

Xavier Gray
Swimming



Phil Shelley Award:

Jude Bergmann
Hockey

CLAY TARGET SHOOTING PROGRAM 2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Andrew Brady	Head Coach
Adrian Cousens	Assistant Coach
Jason Corbett	Assistant Coach

2025/26 Clay Target Shooting Athletes

Aiden Bartlett	Karson Lynch	Braith Staley
Jack Bateson	Summer Moretti	Bree Tangey
Jack Brady	Nicholas O'Kelly	Cooper White
Hunter Crane	Kate Perry	Ollie Zielezna
Clea Grillo	Gemma Scionti	Ted Zielezna
Zaeln Lynch	Zac Sporle	

Advisory Panel

Lauren Blunt	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Andrew Brady	Head Coach
Mark Coleman	VCTA South East Zone
Tim McGrath	Korumburra Gun Club
Matt Richardson	Morwell Field & Game
Jason Corbett	Bairnsdale Field & Game

Annual Award Nominees for Clay Target Shooting

Tim Forsyth	Jack Brady
David Drane	Cooper White
Phil Shelley	Adrian Cousens

CLAY TARGET SHOOTING PROGRAM 2025-2026

Overall our program was very successful with all Athletes improving from start to finish. For the first time we had representatives of high distinction attend our clay target training days such as the Coaching Development Leader from Shooting Australia and the Victorian Clay Target Association State Coaching Director who both travelled great distances to attend our sessions in Gippsland. We ran training sessions at the Korumburra Gun Club and Bairnsdale Field and Game Association as well as the Victorian Inter Academy Day at Werribee where we trained with and competed against the Bendigo Sports Academy and the South West Academy of Sport.

Thank you to all our sponsors and most importantly our assistant coaches Adrian Cousens and Jason Corbett for their coaching expertise they provided to the program.

- Andrew Brady

GOLF PROGRAM 2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Richard Cooney	Head Coach
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2025/26 Golf Athletes

Ben Boers	Cooper Rimington
Rebecca Boers	Blake Robinson
Kaitlyn Boers	Thomas Simon
Tyler Elliott	Aydan Walters
Maddison Kelly	Hamish White
Lachlan McGrath	Lenny White
Arlen Peavey	

Advisory Panel

Matt DeSalvo	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Sam Kindlen	Golf Australia
Chris Crabbe	Golf Australia
Will Hanrahan	West Gippsland Golf Assoc
Brett Wyllie	East Gippsland Golf Assoc
Greg Williams	South Gippsland Golf Assoc

Annual Award Nominees for Golf

Tim Forsyth	Arlen Peavey
David Drane	Kaitlyn Boers

GOLF PROGRAM 2025-2026

The 2025 Gippsland Sports Academy Golf Program has continued to strengthen its high-performance focus, providing athletes with a structured, development-driven environment that combines squad training, individual coaching and exposure to elite facilities.

The program commenced in February with all squad members undertaking:

- A sports nutrition education session
- Comprehensive fitness testing
- Short game performance benchmarking
- Individual swing assessments

These foundational components ensured athletes began the season with clear data, measurable goals and a personalised development plan.

Squad and specialist sessions were conducted at Warragul, Wonthaggi and Bairnsdale.

This multi-venue approach has enabled athletes from across the Gippsland region to access quality coaching while also experiencing different course layouts and conditions to enhance adaptability and course management skills.

A major highlight of the 2025 calendar were the VRAS High Performance Days at Sandringham Golf Club and 13th Beach Golf Club. This opportunity provided athletes with exposure to an elite championship layout and direct engagement with high-performance coaching staff.

The day focused on:

- Advanced short game development
- On-course strategy and decision-making
- Performance benchmarking against state-level standards
- Understanding the demands of elite competition environments

These experiences continue to play a critical role in bridging the gap between regional development and state pathway opportunities.

Building on previous success, individual coaching sessions remain a key pillar of the 2025 program. Athletes continue to benefit from personalised technical analysis, including Trackman data and video review, allowing for precise swing adjustments and measurable performance gains.

The integration of Strength & Conditioning support into individual and squad sessions ensures a holistic development model, addressing physical preparation, injury prevention and long-term athletic progression.

The 2025 program reflects a strong commitment to:

- Individualised athlete development
- Regional accessibility
- Exposure to elite facilities
- Pathway alignment with high-performance systems

With a young and developing squad continuing to mature, the program remains focused on building technically sound, resilient and competition-ready athletes who represent Gippsland with pride.

The Gippsland Sports Academy gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Victorian Golf Foundation and the three Gippsland Golf Associations. Their continued investment ensures regional athletes can access high-quality coaching and high-performance opportunities close to home.

HOCKEY PROGRAM 2025-2026

Coaching Staff

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

2025/26 Hockey Athletes

Jessica Brewer	Ailish Furphy	Lilly Johnson	Phoenix Oliver
Alexis Burke	Cameron Fyfe	Conner Knights	Hayden Perry
Kyra Burke	Cadence Godfrey	Peyton Lugton	Harrison Prigg
Isabelle Byron	Isla Godfrey	Emma McCoy	Isla Robinson
Seth Christy	Alexis Hazell	Rachel McCracken	Maison Shieffelbein
Wyatt Cobbledick	Georgia Hazell	William Mitchell	Ruby Shieffelbein
Charlotte D'Amore	Lulu Hodges	Hayley Morcomb	Zakari Shieffelbein
Owen DeWinter	Eva Humphris	Jesse Nickson	Lucy Simpson
Luke Dodd	Otto Humphris	Ronan North	Erynn Thomas
Zoe Faliszewski	Asher Hunter	Lexi Oliver	Flynn Wong

Advisory Panel

Lauren Blunt	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Dan Godfrey	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Hockey

Darrell White	Wyatt Cobbledick
David Drane	Alexis Hazell
Phil Shelley	Jude Bergmann

HOCKEY PROGRAM 2025-2026

The 2025/2026 Gippsland Sports Academy (GSA) Hockey Program marked its third year of delivery, continuing to build on the foundations established in previous years and providing Gippsland athletes with a structured pathway for hockey development.

A total of 41 athletes commenced the program, with 40 successfully completing and graduating. Seven structured training sessions were delivered, supported by a coaching team of six coaches across field hockey and goalkeeping disciplines.

Athlete attendance and engagement remained strong throughout the program, with the majority demonstrating consistent commitment to their development. Several athletes have now completed their third consecutive year, highlighting the value of the program as an ongoing development pathway for athletes within the Gippsland region.

A key change this year was the introduction of a shared field model using a four-station skill circuit, while maintaining gender-based training groups. This approach enabled athletes to train in smaller, skill-focused groups, increasing individual skill repetition and allowing coaches to provide more targeted instruction. Goalkeepers were integrated into the main training environment while also receiving dedicated goalkeeper-specific sessions, providing both game-realistic experience and specialist positional development.

Despite the logistical challenges of managing approximately 40 athletes on-field simultaneously, the program was effectively delivered through strong coaching ratios, structured session planning and clear station-based organisation.

The program also benefited from continued engagement with Hockey Victoria, including a session attended by High Performance Coach Mitch Hayde. This provided athletes with valuable insight into State selection expectations and reinforced the alignment of the GSA program with Hockey Victoria's development and high-performance pathways. The program concluded with a practice match attended by Ed DeSalis, Regional Development Officer, Hockey Victoria, providing further opportunities for athlete exposure, coach feedback and relationship building.

A key athlete pathway outcome was Ruby Shieffelbein, who achieved selection in the U12 School Sport Victoria team as a goalkeeper. This result demonstrates the program's contribution to supporting athletes progressing towards representative opportunities.

Moving forward, GSA will continue to focus on quality athlete development, maintaining the station-based training model, strengthening collaboration with Hockey Victoria and supporting athletes progressing through regional and State pathways.

- Dan Godfrey

NETBALL PROGRAM 2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Jae Schuback	Head Coach
Carol Gregorovich	Assistant Coach
Abby Gregorovich	Assistant Coach

2025/26 Netball Athletes

Lilly Adams	Arabella Fowler	Sapphire Pratt
Cleo Angelopoulos	Ava Harvey	Jessica Rowley
Ava Armstrong	Georgia Irish	Emily Sawyer
Eleanor Benson	Pallas Jackman-Riches	Harper Schuback
Isla Bloomfield	Roxie Jackson	Kenzie Shave
Georgia Blythman	Zoe McCulloch	Scarlett Shave
Macy Brodribb	Summer Parise	Taya Smith
Harper de Dios	Charli Paterson	Alahni Watson
Kiah Douthat	Ava Pattinson	Anna Watts
Mia Fede		

Advisory Panel

Kate McPherson	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Demelza Howard	Netball Victoria
Caitlyn DeGaris	Netball Victoria
Jae Schuback	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Netball

Darrell White	Taya Smith
David Drane	Jessica Rowley

NETBALL PROGRAM 2025-2026

I was 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 me 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 when available. They demonstrated strong leadership, offered constant support, and remained committed to helping every athlete improve.

We are proud to share that 28 of our athletes have taken part in the Diamond program. Out of these talented individuals, 14 have been selected in 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 held a training session with current Gippsland Stars athletes, which provided a valuable opportunity for our players to learn from high-performing athletes. They were able to hear about their personal pathways, gain motivation to strive for higher-level competition, and experience coaching from VNL-affiliated players. This session also gave our athletes a clear glimpse into the next stage of 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 emphasized 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. While I am stepping down from my head coach duties due to a growing family, I wish the program all the very best for the future. I look forward to seeing and hearing about the continued success of our athletes in the years ahead.

- Jae Evans

SWIMMING PROGRAM 2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Brian Ford	Head Coach
Josh Beaver	Specialist Coach
Dean Gooch	Assistant Coach

2025/26 Swimming Athletes

Zayden Burton	Lara Landels
Brody Cargill	Ruby Paulet
Darcy Connell	Thomas Pendergrast
Aliza Couling	Kody Said
Mackenzie Gibbs	Milla Said
Xavier Gray	Chloe Szkwarek

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	Mackenzie Gibbs
David Drane	Xavier Gray
Phil Shelley	Renee Cargill

SWIMMING PROGRAM 2025-2026

The swimming program was a terrific experience for swimmers and coaches this season

For the past 5 years the program has had a Performance and Development group of athletes working together and separately in activities throughout the 4 sessions held at Traralgon.

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 Mackenzie Gibbs from Sale (3 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze) and Lockie Bellion from Traralgon (2 bronze) came home with National medals in the Multi Class events. National Finals to Xavier Gray from Sale and Brody Cargill from Traralgon was also 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: Brian Ford and Dean Gooch - Traralgon coaches, Anita Pistrin - Academy EO - an organised and efficient administrator who understands swimming and made the program run like clockwork and Renee Cargill from Traralgon who assisted greatly throughout the year particularly on the camp.

It is our privilege to have the Morwell Bowling Club support the swimming program for over 12 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 2026/27 and for years ahead.

- Brian Ford

TAEKWONDO PROGRAM

2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Remy McLeod	Head Coach
Mark McLeod	Head Coach

2025/26 Taekwondo Athletes

Ivy Battley	Steph Dane Jaira Gamayon	Joshua Richardson
Alby Bright	Aleksei Jackiw	Stacey Richardson
Ella Butler	Alexandra Jaskula	Marisa Rinaldi
Jesse Campbell	Cohen Joske	Ryan Scott
Noah Campbell	Jaxson Kuill	Sharna Tansley
Tasman Campbell	Connor Mahoney	Belinda van Ginkel
Kyla Cruz	Mímí McLeod	Macie Vitale
Taylan Coath	Maxwell Monteith	Ben Williams
Jesse Durrant	Emmanuel Rodriguez-deGroot	

Advisory Panel

Sandra Timmer-Arends	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Remy McLeod	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Taekwondo

Tim Forsyth	Ryan Scott
David Drane	Taylan Coath

TAEKWONDO PROGRAM

2025-2026

We have had a very positive experience with the GSA program. The athletes that have continued to engage we believe have the potential to compete at a very high level, however, have not had the exposure or opportunity to compete. We have noted certain blockers that continue to arise including, location and parental commitment. This is something we would like to unpack further and trouble shoot for the future. We are unsure if there is the opportunity to assist athletes who are located remotely with transport, such as a GSA Bus or van. We have seen athletes miss out due to parents not wanting to make the travel.

Regarding athlete development, Our goal is for the returning athletes to have the opportunity to compete at tournament. After assessing the athlete's engagement outside of the sport specific monthly sessions, we believe it would be beneficial to reevaluate how to engage the athletes with the other professionals such as, nutrition, physio and psychologist. Chris Shen has made himself available to our athletes however, it would be great if there was a way we can have a platform for parents and athletes to easily communicate directly to the other practitioners.

We can report a significant increase in athlete performance this was logged through certain students training and their performance at competition.

The athletes involved in the GSA program have formed friendships and created a positive training environment.

- Remy McLeod

TENNIS PROGRAM 2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Nicole Bauer	Head Coach
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2025/26 Tennis Athletes

Felix Bathgate	Campbell Scott
Darcy Hanson	Annika Shankar
Amber Koopmans	Eshan Shankar
Matilda Nave	Andrew Thompson
Bella Prince	Madison van den Broek
Siena Rikken	Tom Wood

Advisory Panel

Darrell White	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Cam Govan	Tennis Victoria
Nicole Bauer	Head Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Tennis

Tim Forsyth	Tom Wood
David Drane	Madison van den Broek

TENNIS PROGRAM 2025-2026

The Gippsland Sports Academy Tennis Program delivered strong outcomes across athlete development, performance, participation growth and cultural leadership, aligning closely with the Academy's strategic pillars.

PARTICIPATION & PATHWAYS

The program supported a cohort of 16 athletes, comprising 8 returning and 8 new athletes, ensuring continuity while welcoming emerging talent into the Academy pathway. A significant achievement was the increase in female participation, rising from 2 athletes to 6, strengthening pathway opportunities for female tennis athletes and supporting the Academy's commitment to inclusive high-performance sport.

PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE

Athlete performance outcomes showed clear progression throughout the year. The most notable result was at the Inter Academy Challenge, where the team improved from last place in the previous year to an overall 3rd place finish. This result reflects improved competitive readiness, consistency and collective accountability, and is indicative of the athletes' commitment, work ethic and ability to perform under pressure.

In June, athletes participated in a High-Performance Day at the National Tennis Centre, training alongside regional academy athletes from across Victoria. This exposure to an elite environment provided valuable benchmarking, reinforced professional training standards and enhanced competitive mindset.

HOLISTIC ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

Athletes increasingly engaged with the Academy's integrated support services, we thank Christopher, Lauren and Stuart for their ongoing support. As athletes have embraced these services, there has been a noticeable improvement in self-management, preparation and professionalism. Continued engagement with these supports will be critical to developing well-rounded athletes capable of sustained performance.

LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

A core focus was the development of athlete leadership. Senior athletes were intentionally encouraged to mentor incoming and younger players, and this objective was achieved with outstanding success. Senior players consistently demonstrated leadership through behaviour, preparation and communication, contributing to a strong, supportive and accountable training environment aligned with Academy expectations.

REPRESENTATION & OUTCOMES

The program achieved exceptional representative outcomes, with 10 of the 16 athletes earning regional representation or higher during the year. This highlights the effectiveness of the training environment and the athletes' ability to transfer preparation into competitive success.

SUMMARY

Overall, the Tennis Program demonstrated measurable progress across participation growth, performance outcomes, leadership development and holistic athlete support. The foundations established this year position the program strongly for continued advancement within the Gippsland Sports Academy framework and provide a clear platform for further performance progression.

- Nicole Bauer

VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

2025-2026

Coaching Staff

Lachlan Morland	Head Coach
Blake Hunter	Assistant Coach

2025/26 Volleyball Athletes

Annika Alda	Ethan Findlay	Ruby Marland
Brooke Arkley	Yasmin Gloria	Tara Moodie
Hayden Arkley	Josiah Gubaton	Chloe Ringer
Blake Burgess	Andre Gutierrez	Christian Ringer
Kye Clissold	Amelia Hams	Faith Ryan
Edward Denness	Edward Hams	Georgia Scarce
Abigail Dourley	Michael Jeges	William Thomson
Djay Fieldsend	Chloe Johnson	Aishah Tirhazouine
Tenesha Fieldsend	Jaedon Kindom	Chloe Wilson

Advisory Panel

Jacob Gruis	GSA Board Member
Anita Pistrin	GSA EO
Lachlan Morland	Head Coach
Blake Hunter	Assistant Coach

Annual Award Nominees for Volleyball

Darrell White	Amelia Hams
David Drane	Blake Burgess
Phil Shelley	Ian Burgess

VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

2025-2026

The 2025/26 volleyball season saw 27 athletes participate in the program, with Lachlan Morland as Head Coach and Blake Hunter as Assistant Coach. The program continued to attract athletes from a variety of local associations and backgrounds, creating a diverse group of players with different levels of experience. Attendance throughout the season was excellent, with almost full participation across all seven sessions.

This season focused on a holistic approach to volleyball development, with athletes working on technical and tactical skills alongside the mental aspects of performing consistently under pressure. A key focus was developing players who could remain level-headed, confident and composed during high-stakes situations, while also being positive and reliable teammates on court.

One of the challenges throughout the season was managing the differences in skill and experience across the athlete group while maintaining engagement and focus during longer training sessions. Despite this, the athletes demonstrated excellent commitment and a strong willingness to learn and improve.

The program also contributed to several achievements outside of GSA. Amelia Hams was selected to represent the Victorian State Team, which is a fantastic achievement and reflection of her continued development. Many of our athletes also represented their local associations at the Country Championships across both junior and senior levels, providing valuable opportunities to apply the skills and confidence developed through the program.

Looking ahead, we would like to build on this year's strong foundation by increasing the program beyond seven sessions. We would also like to work with a smaller athlete pool, allowing for more focused and individualised training. This will provide greater opportunities to challenge athletes at their appropriate level and continue developing the next generation of volleyball players.

- Lachlan Morland

INDIVIDUAL SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS (ISH) 2025-2026

2025/26 ISH Athletes

Rachel Denbrok - Athletics / Cross Country

Isabel Grylls - Weightlifting

Ava Harrington - Modern Pentathlon

Taj Makepeace - Athletics / Gymnastics

Nathan Moore - Athletics / Cross Country

Rhys Pollerd - Archery

Luke Scholes - Brazilian Jiu Jitsu

Xanthe Wade - Showjumping

Matthias Preston - Orienteering

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.

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) 2025-2026

Kurnai Aspiring Athlete Program – 2026 Review & 2027 Vision.

2026 was a fantastic year for the Kurnai Aspiring Athlete Program (KAAP). Across all year levels, our student-athletes showed great dedication as they balanced their schoolwork, training, and sports competitions.

Student numbers grew significantly this year, showing a strong interest in athletic development across the college. Our athletes made great progress in their fitness, sports skills, and confidence under pressure. A key highlight was the positive team culture: senior athletes led by example and encouraged others, while our new members brought wonderful energy to the team.

We are proud of everything our students achieved this year, from personal bests to growing as leaders. Every athlete worked hard and contributed to the success of the program.

Our continued coaching, advice, and behind the scenes given from both our Kurnai and Gippsland Sports Academy staff give our students the support they need to succeed. Looking ahead to 2027, our goal is to keep building a strong environment for our young athletes. We plan to expand training opportunities, build stronger links with local sports clubs, and help every student reach their full potential.

- Boadie Motton
KAAP Coordinator

THE GIPPSLAND SPORTS ACADEMY PROUDLY ADMINISTERS THE GIPPSTAR AWARDS

It gives me much pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Gippstar Awards for the year ended June 2026.

This opportunity is taken to once again offer sincere thanks and appreciation to the six Gippsland 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 for their continuing financial support, which is very much integral and essential for the on-going administration of these Gippstar Awards.

These Gippstar Awards, first established in 1962, 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. Congratulations are extended to all of the Gippsland athletes who were announced as this year's monthly Open and Junior Gippstar Award category winners.

This year, our "66th Annual Gippstar Awards Evening", was held at the Morwell Convention & Reception Centre on Thursday 13th August last. A key feature of the evening was the announcement of this year's 2025/26 annual Gippstar Award Winners, as follows:

- Open Champion: Luke Missen (Para-Standing Tennis) from Eagle Point
- Junior Champion: Jack Brady (Clay Target Shooting) from Glengarry
- Special Achiever: Bree Kenny (Hockey) from Orbost
- Team of the Year: Old Spice Girls Netball Team
- Club of the Year: Orbost Hockey Club
- Gippsland Champion: Sophie Molineux (Cricket) from Bairnsdale

Particular thanks are extended to Judi Buhagiar who again "anchored" the Awards Evening as MC – well done 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. Special welcome to Lauren and Remy who joined the Panel during the year.

Thank you very much to our Gippstar Awards administrator Jude Bergmann for your continuing invaluable efforts to keep the Gippstar Awards "ticking", including your social media promotion of these Awards.

Also, to the Gippsland Sports Academy Board and CEO, Anita Pistrin, thank you for your dedicated commitment to enhancing the Gippsland community profile of these Gippstar Awards.

The Gippstar Awards have a very long and proud history. They are a key part of our Gippsland sporting landscape

Darrell White

Chairman, Gippstar Awards Panel

Panel Members:

Davyd Reid, Judi Buhagiar, Rob Goldie, Rod Twinning, Robin Lowe, Fred Debono, Remy McLeod, Lauren Blunt, Darrell White.

OPEN ANNUAL GIPPSTAR WINNERS

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2026	Luke Missen	Para-Standing Tennis
2025	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2024	Daniel Barry	Triathlon
2023	Paige Barr	Rowing
2022	Cohen Wade	Modern Pentathlon/Tetrathlon
2021	Alex Vuillermin	Rowing

JUNIOR ANNUAL GIPPSTAR WINNERS

YEAR	AWARD WINNER	SPORT PROGRAM
2026	Jack Brady	Clay Target Shooting
2025	Kody Said	Swimming
2024	Ash Nicholes	Swimming
2023	Lucas Furlan	Clay Target Shooting
2022	Kayla Wilson	Swimming
2021	Jordyn Cargill	Swimming

GIPPSTAR TEAMS AWARDS

YEAR	AWARD WINNING TEAM
2026	Gippsland Grammar Senior Girls 1st Quad Scull Team (Junior) & Old Spice Girls (Open)
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

GIPPSTAR CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARDS

YEAR	AWARD WINNING CLUB
2026	Orbost Hockey 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

GIPPSTAR GIPPSLAND CHAMPIONS AWARDS

YEAR	AWARD WINNER
2025/26	Sophie Molineux, Cricket
2024/25	Eleanor Patterson
2023/24	Emily Beecroft, Swimming
2022/23	Aoife Coughlan, Judo
2021/22	Jack White, Basketball
2020/21	Sophie Molineux, Cricket

JUNIOR AWARD WINNER:

Jack Brady

**OPEN AWARD WINNER:**

Luke Missen

**CLUB OF THE YEAR:**

Orbost Hockey Club

**TEAM OF THE YEAR:**

Gippsland Grammar Senior Girls 1st Quad
Scull Team (Junior) &
Old Spice Girls Netball Team (Open)

**SPECIAL ACHIEVER AWARD:**

Bree Kenny

**GIPPSLAND CHAMPION AWARD:**

Sophie Molineux





10 September 2026

**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 2026 being the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss 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 2026 is a result of its operations and cash flow for the financial year ended.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Sartori'.

Jason Sartori
Principal
JDS Tax Solutions



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