



**Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck**  
Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians  
Minister for Youth and Sport

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Celebrating 40 years of the WNBL**

Today, Minister for Youth and Sport Richard Colbeck launched the WNBL's 40<sup>th</sup> season alongside past and present legends of the game.

The WNBL began in 1981 and is one of the longest running elite women's sporting competitions in Australia.

Minister Colbeck said opportunities for girls and women in all sports are continuing to grow because of pioneering competitions like the Women's National Basketball League (WNBL).

"It has been fantastic to see the accelerated growth of elite women's competitions in a broad range of sports in recent years," Minister Colbeck said.

"The WNBL can be very proud of its contribution to the growth of women's sport in Australia but also how it has helped pave the way over such a long history.

"The WNBL has grown from humble beginnings to become one of the most respected women's basketball competitions in the world.

"The Australia Opals national team has been a force on the world stage for decades and many of our Australian players have become international stars like Michele Timms AM, Robyn Maher AM, Lauren Jackson, Penny Taylor and Liz Cambage, just to name a few.

"I congratulate the WNBL on reaching this amazing milestone, it's wonderful to celebrate the league's achievements and I'm looking forward to watching all the action during the upcoming 40<sup>th</sup> season.

"The Morrison Government will continue to work with Basketball Australia and all our national sports to support even more Australians to get more active, more often."

The Government is delivering more than \$3.5 million for female high performance basketball, including funding for our national women's teams, the Opals and wheelchair basketball team the Gliders.

At a grassroots level the Morrison Government has prioritised upgrading female-friendly community sport facilities, including more than \$11.9 million in grants for 73 basketball facility upgrades.

Basketball is one of the most popular team sports in Australia, with more than one million participants every year.

The WNBL 2019/2020 season begins in Adelaide on October 11. For more information visit:

[www.wnbl.com.au](http://www.wnbl.com.au)

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