



2022 Annual Report



**Blind
Sports
Australia**



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Sports
Australia**

Blind Sports Australia

A.B.N. 68 008 621 252

Foundation member of the Australian
Paralympic Committee

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Acknowledgement

Blind Sports Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay respect to their cultures, Elders past, present and emerging, and we commit to working together for our shared future.



SPORTAUS

**DIOGENES
INVESTING**

zena



Front Cover: Aussie Belles Goalball team walking next to each other in their Australian uniforms, at the end of one of their matches at the Paralympic Games.

Inside Front: Courtney Lewis a young blind and low vision Tennis player, getting ready to hit the ball. (Picture courtesy of Tennis Victoria).

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Image shows: a female blind bowler wearing a blue Victorian state uniform bowling on the green with her director standing in front of her providing guidance.

Message from the Chair and CEO

The past twelve months has seen an enormous contrast of circumstances in our community. The lasting impacts of Covid continue to affect travel, movement and engagement with each other. We know for many people involved in our blind sport community, there has been some hesitancy to re-engage in sport, either as a result of covid transport impacts, or due to anxiety about mixing with others in close settings.

Fortunately, in the second half of this period, we started to see more people returning to sport and re-engaging with the community, and it was encouraging to see a number of activities and events recommence. We certainly hope that as more activities return, more people can travel to take part in tournaments or events.

In August 2021, we tuned in with great excitement to watch the delayed Tokyo Paralympics, with a strong presence of athletes who are blind or vision impaired represented in the Australian Team. We watched very proudly as our Ambassadors, the Aussie Belles, fought hard and played strongly to progress to the Women's Goalball quarter finals - their best ever result.

Also in Tokyo, our own Wayne Phipps competed in the Men's under 66kg Para-Judo, the first Australian Para-Judo athlete to do so since 2008. While we didn't have an Australian team competing in Blind Football at the Games, we saw first-hand how this growing sport is played and it provided a great catalyst for our emerging national Blind Football players to strive for future Paralympic campaigns.

The Beijing Winter Paralympics were held in March, with two accomplished Australian athletes with a vision impairment competing, Melissa Perrine and Patrick Jensen. We congratulate Melissa for her achievements at multiple Paralympics, and thank her

for all she has done to support Blind Sport in NSW and nationally.

Our 'Driving Inclusion Through Sport' program has us working collaboratively in new areas to grow sporting opportunities, particularly in Darwin.

Thanks to a new partnership between Australian Blind Football and the John Moriarty Foundation, we are excited to be delivering sessions in remote communities in the Northern Territory. We plan to build on this framework, and replicate it with other sports in this region.

As we continue to build engagement and create awareness, this year we welcomed Diogenes Investing as a BSA sponsor. Diogenes Investing helps investors to build accommodation for people with disabilities. Their interest and passion for supporting blind sport has already seen them attend blind sporting competitions across the country to better understand the sports, and where the growth opportunities are.



Image shows: Phillip Drury from IIT and Blind Cricket Tasmania, presenting BSA CEO Matt Clayton with a certificate of appreciation in front of IIT signs.



A significant barrier to participation and including children who are blind or vision impaired in sport is having access to sporting equipment that is fit for purpose, such as audible balls. We have been working with national and international sport suppliers, such as Handi Life sport in Denmark to source a range of equipment for individuals, clubs and schools to purchase here in Australia. We have received good feedback on our sample range, and we are excited to be launching our online store before the end of 2022.

Our membership of the Australian Sporting Alliance for people with a disability (ASAPD) continues to achieve outcomes that collectively are of great

benefit to the nine National Sporting Organisations for people with a Disability (NSOD). Some highlights were:

- securing funding from Sport Integrity Australia and the National Sports Tribunal to help with the National Integrity Framework adoption and implementing the associated policies
- advocating for sport to be included in the 2022 – 2032 National Disability Plan
- providing input into the National Disability Survey and the development of Sport Australia's new Community Coaching - Essential Skills Resource
- advocating for improved inclusion outcomes with State/Territory Government Ministers for Sport, Health, Social Services



Image shows: Paralympic judo athlete Wayne Phipps in blue, fighting his opponent in white, with both athletes gripping each others Judoka-GI's.

Message from the Chair and CEO

We are very pleased to welcome Matt Levy as our most recent board member. Matt's lived experience as an accomplished para-athlete, combined with his strong business background in governance and change management, an order of Australia recipient, published author and member of a number of national and international committees, brings a wealth of insight and skills to strengthen our Board.

Finally, we thank our incredible members who undertake so much work in connecting with blind

and vision impaired communities across a broad section of ages to engage them directly in sport and recreation. We acknowledge the amazing efforts of all the volunteers' and staff that make all of this possible.

To the many organisations that we partner with, including Paralympics Australia, and Sport Australia, we thank you for your continued support. To Vision Australia, thank you for providing our office space. We value and appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with you, and organisations like Blind Citizens Australia to grow participation opportunities for people who are blind and vision impaired.



Image shows: Krista Woodroffe from BSA, holding a blind football on a sports court, providing instruction to a male and female student from Griffith University.

Highlights



Blind Sports Australia



National Blind Football Initiatives

Supporting Australian Blind Football to launch the first National Blind Football series, the first womens' blind football match and inaugural womens talent identification camp.



Ambassador Program

Welcoming Oscar Stubbs to our Ambassador program. An accomplished multi-sport athlete Oscar is a member of the Australian Dolphins swimming team and the Australian Blind Cricket team. He competes in AFL Blind, Blind and Low Vision Tennis and VI Football.



Participation Survey

Completing our inaugural sports participation survey, providing an insight to people's motivations and barriers to participation, and showing us where we can develop programs that encourage people to take up blind sport.



Welcoming IIT as a new member

Congratulating our newest member, Inclusive Innovations Tasmania on winning Cricket Australia's 2022 Community Cricket Partnership of the Year Award for their Blind Cricket Tasmania participation initiative.



Tokyo Paralympics

Supporting our Ambassadors, the Aussie Belles goalball team in their preparations and celebrating their best ever Paralympic result. Also supporting athletes such as Wayne Phipps, to achieve his dream of competing in Para-Judo at the Tokyo Games.

Sam Theodore |
Chairman



Matt Clayton |
CEO

Image shows: formal photos of BSA Chair, Sam Theodore and CEO Matt Clayton, smiling and wearing suits

Sport Participation Survey

In May 2022, we asked our blind sport community to complete our very first survey into sport participation. With thanks to our members, partners, stakeholders and other sports organisations who helped promote our survey amongst their networks - we had 209 people respond.

Our findings reveal the motivations and barriers to people participating in sport and show opportunities such as boosting female blind sport participation are a priority. Transportation and travel stand out as the single largest obstacle for a person with a vision impairment to play sport.

This was the first time BSA has conducted national research into sporting participation, finding that 85% of the 209 respondents currently take part in sport, as either a player, coach/official or volunteer.



“For a long time it has been hard to find data around who is participating in sport from our blind and vision impaired community. We welcome the insights gained from our inaugural participation survey. Data is the key to help us understand and target key programs in more areas that need them, including female specific initiatives, and seek funding to achieve those outcomes.” **BSA CEO Matt Clayton**

79% of respondents who are blind or vision impaired participate in sport in some way, and 67% participate in a specific blind sport such as goalball or blind cricket. 21% of people surveyed who are blind or vision impaired do not participate in any sport. This is often due to factors such as availability of blind sports in regional areas, lack of awareness and lack of transportation.

While 75% of males with a vision impairment participate in a specific blind sport, that number drops to just 57% for females participating in blind sport.

“That’s nearly 20% less females with a vision impairment participating in blind sports than their male peers. We see this as an opportunity to build female specific initiatives that remove some of their reported concerns around cost, time, injury, and physical ability. By building such programs, we can hopefully motivate women and girls to get active and try blind sports.” **BSA CEO Matt Clayton**

Image shows: A female blind football player wearing a red football uniform and eye shades, kicking the ball on indoor football pitch at National Football Series.

Sport Participation Survey Highlights

75% male & **57%** female respondents with a vision impairment **participate in blind sport**



need transport to get to sporting venues

48%

travel by public transport

41%

metro residents

14%

regional / rural residents



of people want to join a sport that caters for people who are blind or vision impaired

Top 5 blind sports



Tennis



Goalball



Cricket



Cycling



Running



love the idea of a program to encourage **female participation**

62% of females more likely to participate after such a program

79%

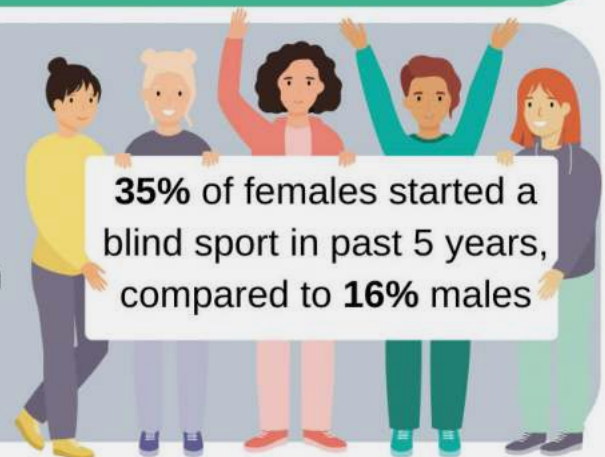
participate and/or volunteer in sport

21%

do not participate in sport

67%

participate in a specific blind sport



Quantitative Survey by Bastion Insights of 209 respondents - June 2022

Image shows: Sport Participation Survey Highlights infographic, outlining key data outcomes from survey.

About Blind Sports Australia

Blind Sports Australia (BSA) is a national sporting organisation for blind and vision impaired sport. BSA helps create pathways and opportunities for people to participate in blind sport from grassroots community level, right up to elite competition at national and international level.

We work with our members and other disability sporting organisations across Australia to grow blind sporting opportunities for people who are blind or have low vision and raise awareness of blind sports across the community.

BSA is a not-for-profit organisation. We are a founding member of Paralympics Australia, the Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability, and are Australia's representative to the International Blind Sports Federation.

Our Vision

We aim to be recognised as the local, national and international leader in blind sports and recreation in the visually impaired and blind community, the wider disability sport and sporting communities, and the general public.

We focus on growing participation and exposure through building awareness of blind sports, and seek to be the driving force behind creating opportunities for people who are blind or vision impaired to access sport and recreation in Australia and internationally.





Blind Sports Australia

Board

Board Chair: Sam Theodore
(chair@blindsportsaustralia.com.au)

Board Member: Voula Karantzas

Board Member: Matt Levy

Board Member: Brenton Lynch

Board Member & Board Secretary:
Melissa Martin

Board Member: Simon Talbot

Staff and Volunteers

Chief Executive Officer: Matthew Clayton

Marketing and Partnerships Manager: Felicity Wilkeson

Participation Projects Coordinator: Krista Woodroffe

Finance Support: Hui-Cheng Wee

Member Protection Information Officer: Kent Dredge



Images from top right clockwise: Low vision tennis player, Tim Haggis, hitting a black blind tennis ball. A Western Bulldogs AFL Blind player kicks a football, with a St Kilda player standing on the mark. A young Blind Golfer standing on two tactile rings on the ground, preparing to hit golf ball. Image of people on lawn tennis court learning blind and low vision tennis at Black Rock Sports Day.

Member Organisations



Goalball Australia is the governing body for the sport of Goalball in Australia and works with state Goalball associations, Blind Sports Australia and the Paralympics Australia to develop and grow the sport. Goalball Australia aims to provide development and elite pathways for its athletes, coaches and referees.

www.goalballaustralia.org



Blind and Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowling began in 2001 at AMF Box Hill. From this small group, five bowlers represented Australia at the inaugural IBSA Blind Tenpin Bowling Championships in Helsinki, Finland, in 2002.

BVIT works to further the goals of blind and vision-impaired Australians in the sport of tenpin bowling and conducts national competitions.

www.bvit.asn.au



Blind Golf Australia promotes the game of golf amongst blind and vision impaired people and co-ordinates blind golf nationally. The organisation represents Australian blind golf internationally and creates and maintains registers of blind golf events throughout Australia with information about players, sight classifications and handicaps.

www.blindgolf.com.au



Blind Cricket has been played in Australia since 1922. Its early origins were in Prahran, Victoria where a group of blind and vision impaired people came up with the idea of putting some rocks in a can and using it as a ball. Today, Blind Cricket Australia oversees competitions in all mainland states and is developing the game in Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

www.blindcricketaustralia.com.au



Australian Blind Bowls Association

The **Australian Blind Bowlers Association (ABBA)** is the peak body for State Associations, and was formed in 1977 to provide a sport for blind & vision impaired people.

www.blindbowlsaustralia.com



Blind Sports WA promotes the sporting activities of each Federation member amongst people who are blind and vision impaired in Western Australia. We are affiliated with Association for the Blind of WA.

Blind Sports WA co-ordinates sport between States and creates a register of all events within Australia; and works with other bodies for international events on behalf of our members.

Contact: blindsportswa@gmail.com

Further Information: Blind Sports Western Australia



Blind Sports South Australia is the peak sporting body for people who are blind or vision impaired. Supporting over 10 different sports, Blind Sports South Australia provides a link between the athlete, other sporting community & agencies in South Australia & the national body, Blind Sports Australia.

www.blindsportssa.org.au



Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association has been helping Queenslanders with a disability lead active, healthy lives and achieve their dreams since 1977. We are Queensland's peak body for sport, recreation and fitness for people with a physical disability or vision impairment.

www.sportingwheelies.org.au



Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria is a state-wide organisation established in 1977 to promote health and wellbeing for people of all ages who are blind or vision impaired. Our objective is to increase participation and develop competitive and recreational sporting opportunities for people who are blind or vision impaired.

www.blindsports.org.au



Blind Sports and Recreation NSW/ACT is the peak organisational body for community members with blindness and low vision in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, providing sport and social recreation activities.

We are recognised by the State Government as well as multiple peak vision agencies including Vision Australia, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Save Sight Institute and Blind Citizens Australia.

www.blindsportsnsw.com.au



Inclusive Innovations Tasmania is BSA's newest member, and seeks to develop and deepen inclusive attitudes and human capacity. They have been instrumental in developing Blind Cricket Tasmania.

www.inclusiveinnovationtasmania.com.au

Financial Summary

Blind Sports Australia has continued to feel the impacts of Covid, like so many other charities and sporting organisations. This year however, unfortunately there was not the same level of government assistance available as previously, to support the impact of covid on our activities and increases in operating costs.

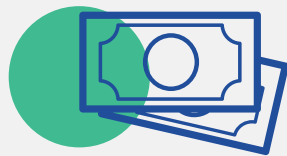
The Australian Sports Commission continues to be our most consistent form of funding, with \$65,000 as part of our annual National Sporting Organisation for people with a Disability (NSOD) sport investment agreement.

We also received additional funding from Sport Australia through the Capability Grant program,

to enable us to undertake our Sport Participation Survey, which has already provided us with invaluable data and insights.

During this year we received further tranches of funding for the "Driving Inclusion Through Sport" program and the "Information, Linkages and Capacity Building" program, which was announced in 2020-21. A substantial amount of this funding is to be carried over into the 2022-23 financial year, with extensions being granted for both programs, due to the impact of covid.

A key investment that we made this financial year, was to source equipment for schools, parents and participants in Australia. Thanks to a negotiated



\$276,216
BSA Revenue

- **Grants/Donations**
- **Sport Australia Grants**
- **Sponsorships**
- **Donations**
- **Other Incomes**
- **Memberships**
- **Camp Fees**

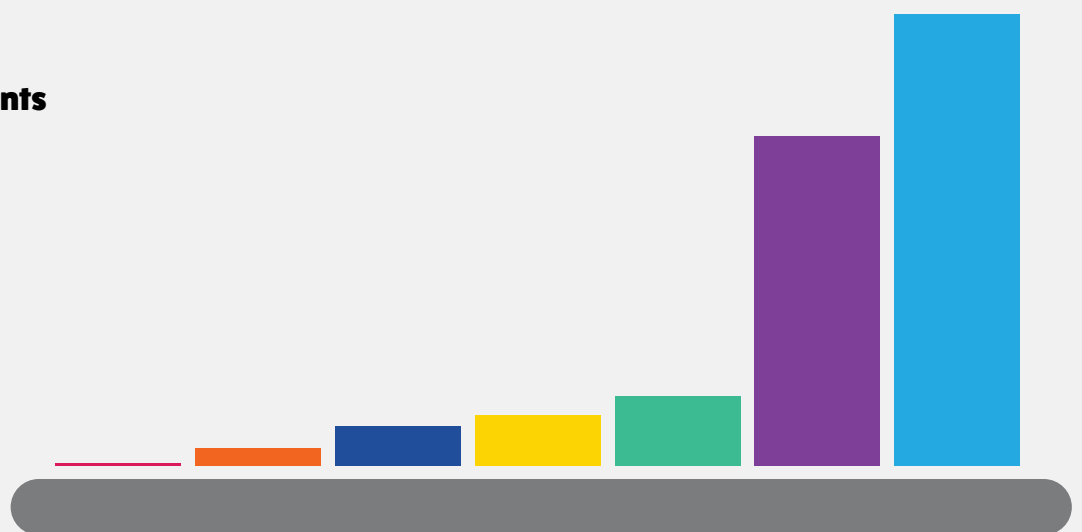


Image shows: a coloured bar chart of revenue sources which lists grants and funding as the top two sources for BSA.

arrangement with Handi Life Sport in Denmark, we have procured a significant amount of equipment that we will now make available in Australia for people to purchase online. This investment in the 2021-22 financial year will see a new revenue stream emerge for BSA and also enable improved public access to blind and vision impaired sporting equipment, which should positively increase participation.

As we look to recover from the impacts of covid, significant challenges still remain around increasing participation levels and global financial concerns. To address this, we are creating new revenue streams, sourcing new equipment and looking to secure more grant revenue. This is complemented by

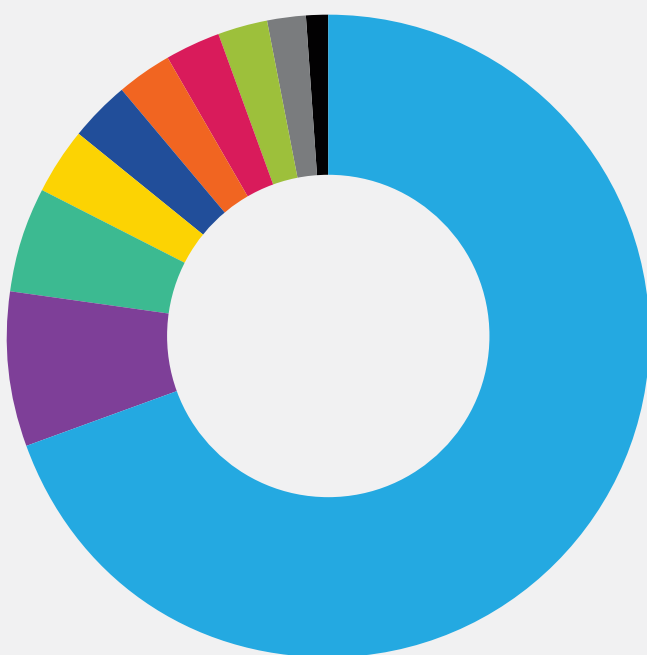
developing a corporate partnership program, which has already started to see results with Diogenes Investment coming on board as a multi-year partner.

The BSA team have also been exploring new fundraising opportunities, which we hope will not only bring increased revenue, but also raise the profile of all Blind Sports, members and athletes. These new initiatives will be launched in early 2023.

The full 2022 BSA Financial Report can be downloaded from www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au/2022-annual-reports



\$307,879
BSA Expenses



- **Employees Expenses**
- **Program Costs**
- **Insurance Costs**
- **Training**
- **Resources and Equipments**
- **Grants to Members**
- **Marketing Costs**
- **Travel Expenses**
- **Accounting Auditor Fees**
- **General and Admin Fees**

Image shows: a coloured pie chart of expenses which has employee expenses as the largest slice followed by member grants.

Message from the Australian Sports Commission

Sport has a place for everyone and delivers results that make Australia proud.

This is the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) vision as we embark on a defining era in Australian sport over the next decade and beyond.

We are setting out to lead, support and provide opportunities for all communities to be involved in sport, while growing elite success and representation, inspiring future generations.

Our role, as the Australian Government agency responsible for supporting and investing in sport at all levels, is to increase involvement in sport and enable continued international sporting success.

We do this through leadership and development of a cohesive and effective sports sector, targeted

financial support and the operation of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS).

We play a unique role in the sport ecosystem and tackle the big challenges and opportunities with and for the sector.

We're proud to do so and through our vision, we aim to bring out the best in everyone involved in sport as we establish Australia as the world's best sporting nation.

The 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games provided a perfect launch pad for our athletes to shine. To finish on top of the medal table with 67 gold and cement our status as the most successful nation in the event's history sets us up brilliantly as we look to host the next Games in Victoria 2026.



Image shows: Three Australian blind football players competing for a ball on blind football pitch, with white kickboards in background, during National Football series match.

These Games, uniquely hosted in regional areas, will be another opportunity to inspire Australians to get involved in sport, and to champion the role sport can play in engaging every Australian.

This is a defining era for Australian sport. We have begun the Green and Gold decade to Brisbane 2032, and we are focused on building sustainable success for decades to come.

The sporting strategies, programs and facilities we deliver now have the capacity to shape Australia's long-term prosperity, well beyond sporting boundaries. A thriving Australian sport system is enormously influential to a thriving Australia.

We will advocate for sport and its positive influence on Australia, promote and support inclusive and diverse sporting environments and drive thought leadership and innovation to inspire world's best practices.

We will build the capability of sport and the people involved through projects like our Sport Volunteer Coalition Action Plan which outlines a new approach to foster positive, safe and fulfilling experiences for sport volunteers, and our Women Leaders in Sport programs which champion equal representation in sport.

Josephine Sukkar AM

Chair of the Australian Sports Commission

It has been great to see the AIS site buzzing with activity again after a challenging few years due to COVID-19. We continue to welcome sports and athletes back to the campus, who are all keen to use our facilities to prepare for major sporting events.

Our aim is for sport in Australia to be world's best so we will optimise our facilities to advance sport and use them to showcase sport at its best.

This is an incredible opportunity to unite and inspire Australia through sport as we capitalise on the calendar of major sporting events on the road to a home Olympic and Paralympic Games.

On behalf of the ASC, thank you to everyone who contributes to Australian sport with the aim of making it better for all.



Image shows: Josephine Sukkar, Chair of the Australian Sports Commission, smiling at camera.



Creating Awareness

Creating awareness of blind sports amongst the vision impaired community and public is a key driver in building an understanding of blind sports and the opportunities available to people with low vision. Highlights of the year include:

In March 2022, BSA partnered with several local clubs in Bayside Melbourne to host a multi-sport inclusive sports day. With the assistance of our members, attendees of all ages and abilities in the community experienced blind bowls, blind cricket, blind football and blind tennis as part of a fully integrated program.

BSA's mutually beneficial Ambassador program supports both individual athlete and team development. In 2020 we announced our inaugural brand Ambassadors, Australia's female paralympic goalball team, the Aussie Belles. In mid 2021, we were very pleased to host professional development sessions in presentation skills training and media skills to help the Belles.



Post the Tokyo Paralympics, paralympians Jenny Blow, Meica Horsburgh and Tyan Taylor retired from the Belles. We thank them for being our Ambassadors and doing so much to help raise awareness of blind sports. This year, we announced Belles Raissa Martin, Amy Ridley and Brodie Smith would continue as BSA Ambassadors. In June 2022, we added another Ambassador, multi- sport athlete Oscar Stubbs, who competes in swimming, cricket, tennis and football.

Images from top left show: Members of the Australian Blind Cricket Team congratulating each other after winning a match against the New Zealand Blind Cricket Team in Brisbane. Four images of BSA Ambassadors, Amy Ridley, Brodie Smith, Raissa Martin and Osca Stubbs, all athletes smiling at camera on blue BSA background.

In 2022 Blind Cricket in Australia celebrates 100 years. So it was fantastic to work with member Blind Cricket Australia and Cricket Australia to welcome the International Cricket Inclusion Series after an international hiatus for our national team due to Covid. The Aussies played against the New Zealand Blind Caps and won the series 7 – 0 playing a mix of T20 and one day international matches. Congratulations to Steffan Nero (NSW) for making a new world record score of 309 runs in a one day international.

A large part of creating awareness of blind sport also means having access to the specialised equipment needed to play, such as the different sized audible balls, tethers for guides and blackout goggles. We know that the cost and difficulty in sourcing these

items can be a barrier, and we have been working with overseas and Australian suppliers to make this equipment available to members, schools and sports. This helps build physical literacy among children and people with a vision impairment. This year we provided equipment in the NT to enable Come N Try Days.

In May 2022, we supported our member Australian Blind Bowlers Association in hosting their annual National Championships at Club Tweed in NSW. Bowlers and their guides enjoyed a week of competition before the event was cut short due to covid. Several media stories about the sport of blind bowls featured during the event. Club Tweed and the ABBA will also play host to World Blind Bowls Championships in March 2023.



Images from left to right show: An image of blind sporting equipment, including various audible soft and hard balls, tethers and tennis racquets. Image of Steffan Nero holding his cricket bat in air, wearing his Australian Cricket uniform, in front of a scoreboard showing his record score of 309 runs. Image of a young girl with a vision impairment, learning lawn bowls at Black Rock Sports Day.



Building Engagement

By engaging our members, other sporting organisations, our partners, sponsors and inclusion groups, we grow participation in blind sports. In 2022 we welcomed our eleventh member organisation, Inclusive Innovations Tasmania who have been instrumental in working with us to create ongoing opportunities for people who are blind or vision impaired in Tasmania. Their work in developing Blind Cricket Tasmania establishes a pathway for Blind Cricket in the State.

In March we were invited by Griffith University on the Sunshine Coast to take part in a Physical Literacy in Schools workshop. Delivered to 120 teaching students, the sixty-minute session included communication and guiding principles for people who are blind or vision impaired. Students experienced audible ball tracking activities wearing simulation glasses and blind folds and took part in a blind sport activity. Specifically designed to show

future educators how to incorporate sport into a school's physical education curriculum, these sessions proved to be a great success, and we have been asked to return for future workshops.

In August 2021, the postponed Tokyo2020 Paralympics were finally held. In the lead up to the games, we worked closely with several of our para-athletes, supporting them to prepare and qualify for Tokyo. As Australia's national organisation for blind and vision impaired sport, we work together with Paralympics Australia to assist athletes with their classification and qualification pathways to the Paralympic Games.

We supported judoka Wayne Phipps to achieve his dream of representing Australia. Wayne's determination had been tested by the challenges of travel during covid times, making qualifying for the Paralympics at international competitions extra

image shows: A teaching student from Griffith University learning to guide another student in front of BSA banner.

difficult. Wayne's dedication paid off, and his reward was being selected as Australia's first Para-Judo athlete since 2008, competing in the under 66kg class. Despite losing his one bout, Wayne became Australia's third ever Paralympian to compete in Judo and has no regrets.

"Man, it's unbelievable just getting here. Going through the last three or four years of competing and trying to gain those points and eventually crack the top 20, for me was a dream come true." Wayne Phipps (West Australian Newspaper 27th August 2021)

The Aussie Belles, the Australian women's Goalball team and our BSA Ambassadors achieved a history making best-ever Paralympic performance - reaching the quarter finals against Turkey. The team of Meica Horsburgh, Jenny Blow, Tyan Taylor, Raissa Martin, Brodie Smith and Amy Ridley were nominated for the honoured Paralympics Australia 2022 Team of the Year due to their strong teamwork and one team ethic of 'together'.

Post Tokyo, Meica, Jenny and Tyan announced their retirement from elite competition, although each

continue to be actively involved with the goalball community. We congratulate them on their sporting career and for being such excellent ambassadors for Blind Sports Australia. We wish them every success in their future endeavours.

In March 2022, the Winter Paralympics were held in Beijing. Melissa Perrine competed in the Giant Slalom with guide Bobbi Kelly, and Patrick Jensen competed in five events including the mens' Downhill and Giant Slalom with his guide Amelia Hodgson.

As a three-time Paralympian and two times bronze medal winner Melissa had the great honour of being chosen to co-captain the Australian Winter Paralympics team and carry the flag at the opening ceremony. Melissa was named Ski and Snowboard Australia's Paralympic Athlete of the Year and Female Para-athlete of the Year at the Paralympics Australia Awards. As Melissa retired post Beijing, we congratulate her not only for her achievements at multiple Paralympics, but also for the work she has done to support blind sport in NSW and nationally.



Above images: From left to right show the Aussie Belles Women's Goalball team, waving to the crowd, while hand in hand, at the Tokyo Paralympics. Image shows Griffith University students sitting on floor wearing blindfolds, learning basic skills of Goalball.



Driving Growth

Driving the growth of new sporting hubs in regional areas continues to be a priority, and this year we have worked in collaboration with other organisations to create participation opportunities in the Northern Territory (NT). We have also produced new education resources that assist current and prospective coaches, clubs, educators, and volunteers to successfully engage people who are blind or vision impaired and help them thrive in a sporting or active environment.

In June 2022, we visited Darwin to help host the Activate Inclusion Sports Day in collaboration with Disability Sports NT and Variety - the Children's Charity Australia. With help from SEDA College students, we held forty-minute physical literacy sessions in rotation with smaller groups for 130 students from six schools. The sessions included general communication and guiding, and interactive activities using simulation glasses and audible balls. To help local sports clubs and schools to engage students of all abilities, we have available on loan audible equipment kits containing a variety of balls with a sound from Disability Sports' NT head office.

The growth of Australian Blind Football (ABF) has continued apace this year with the inaugural national football series kicking off in the second half of the year - congratulations to the first champions, South Melbourne Football Club. Some of the national squad have been selected to join Australia's team, the Bilbies, who will compete at the 2022 IBSA Asia-Pacific Blind Football Championships in India in November. These championships are a qualifier for Paris2024 and the 2023 IBSA Blind Football World Championships which will take place at the IBSA World Games in Birmingham in August 2023.

In July 2022, with support from Guide Dogs Victoria, the inaugural Womens' Blind Football National Talent ID camp was held and included the first womens' blind football match in Australia. We look forward to working together with ABF to build an ongoing pathway for womens' football.

ABF has partnered with the John Moriarty Foundation (JMF) to help deliver blind football to students in the NT, and also welcomed Macron as a sporting equipment partner for team apparel.

Image shows: A young student at NT school activity day, wearing VI simulation goggles, giving a thumbs up.

“We are extremely excited to be partnering with John Moriarty Football, an organisation with a long standing and succesful community football program. At ABF, we believe in football for all and by working with JMF staff we will be able to support their coaches in providing opportunities for children who are blind or partially sighted, in Australia’s most remote indigenous communities, to play football. You never know, we might even discover a future blind footballer to take the field at the Brisbane 2032 Paralympics.” **ABF National Manager, Dave Connolly**

After an interrupted 2021 season, the Victorian Blind Football League (VBFL) has four teams competing in 2022 with many players travelling regularly from interstate to compete in Melbourne. This year, the VBFL features an inaugural Pride Round, and All Stars Match. Exciting plans are underway to launch AFL Blind WA league in 2023. Well done to member Blind Sports WA for working with the AFL to make this happen. We look forward to helping build the

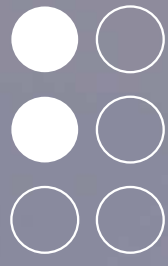
opportunities to create leagues in other States/Territories.

During the year, we were pleased to advise on incorporating activities for children who are blind or vision impaired into the NAB Auskick All Abilities program. We also eagerly received our first shipment of official AFL Blind Sherrin footballs which are bright yellow and incorporate a buzzer - these will be for sale in our online store shortly.

In May 2022, the Victorian Blind and Low Vision State Championships were held over three days at the National Tennis Centre, followed by the Queensland State Championships and Championships in WA and SA later in the year. This encouraging growth of blind tennis across Australia is due to the collective efforts Tennis Australia and their Inclusion Team, Blind Sports Australia, and our state members holding Come N Try days to encourage more people to participate. 2022 will see Tennis Australia host the inaugural Australian Blind and Low Vision State Championships in Melbourne.



Above: Three images from left to right show three children learning golf technique from Blind Golf coach. Image shows a group of people at the Black Rock Sports Day, standing in front of BSA discover your sport sign. Image shows a young boy wearing a blind fold, learning to dribble a blind soccer ball on a grass pitch.



2022 Annual Report



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Image shows: Back cover image shows Winter Paralympian Melissa Perrine, skiing down snow covered slope at the Beijing Winter Paralympics, with her guide skiing in front of her.

Thanks to Paralympics Australia and Behind the Lens photography for use of their images.