

MEDIA RELEASE

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Basketball



Rollers team announced for Paralympic Games test event

Basketball Australia is pleased to announce the Australian Men's Wheelchair team that will compete at the 2008 Wheelchair Basketball International Invitational Tournament in Beijing, China from January 20-25.

The Rollers will compete against host nation China, World number one Canada and World number two United States with the competition being the first major international tournament the Rollers will use in preparation for the Paralympic Games.

The 12-man team was selected following a camp held at the AIS earlier this month.

Perth's Brad Ness will captain the side while four-time Paralympian Troy Sachs returns to the international stage after recovering from a shoulder injury that kept him out of the 2006 World Championships.

"For the first time in past three or four years we have had our top 13 or 14 players available for selection for a tournament," Head Coach Ben Ettridge, who boasts a 13-and-1 win/loss record as coach, said. "It's the strongest we have been for some time."

"I've picked the best possible team for this tournament because I want to go out there and show Canada and the US what we are like at full strength.

"For us it's a case of putting in place the things we have been working on and now we get the chance to do it against two of the other best teams in the world. The more we play against the USA and Canada, the better for us. It is chance for them to see what we do at full strength.

"Basically, I am saying they [Canada and the USA] are going to have to chase us now instead of us chasing them. It's going to be tough but hopefully we can pull it all together."

Melbourne's Dylan Alcott, 16, will make his senior international debut at the tournament. Also a talented wheelchair tennis athlete, Alcott was a member of 2006 Rollers side who claimed silver at the FESPIC Games in Malaysia.

Recently retired Roller Daryl Taylor will be an assistant coach on the tour.

"I am very happy about the fact that Daryl Taylor has come on board as an assistant coach for this tour," Ettridge said. "It's great that an athlete, who has recently left the game, wants to put back in and that is what it's all about.

"We've got the guys that have been there before. Troy has four Paralympics under his belt and Tristan Knowles and Grant Mizens have a Paralympics under their belt so we have some experienced heads that will make us stronger."

Silver Medalists at Athens in 2004, the Australian Rollers are currently ranked 3rd in the world.

The Rollers team:

Name/Classification/Town

Brad Ness (c)/4.5/Perth Wheelcats

Dylan Alcott/1.0/Melbourne (Dandenong Rangers)

[Brendan Dowler/1.0/West Sydney Razorbacks \(Wollongong\)](#)

Justin Eveson/4.5/Perth Wheelcats

Shaun Groenewegen/4.0/Melbourne (Dandenong Rangers)

Michael Hartnett/1.5/Perth Wheelcats

Adrian King/2.0/Brisbane Spinning Bullets

[Tristan Knowles /4.0/"Highlube" Wollongong Roller Hawks](#)

[Grant Mizens/2.0/West Sydney Razorbacks](#)

Shaun Norris/3.0/Perth Wheelcats

Tige Simmons/1.0/Brisbane Spinning Bullets

[Troy Sachs/4.5/West Sydney Razorbacks \(former Wollongong junior\)](#)

Head Coach: Ben Ettridge/Perth

Assistant Coach: Daryl Taylor/Adelaide

Manager: Kelvin Browner/Perth

Physiotherapist: Ian Lowther/Perth

Doctor: Dr. Larissa Trease/Canberra

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