

Martu Sports Online 27

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A Smashing Success!

- ▶ Full coverage of Ngurra Kujungka's 2019 Softball Tour to Perth
- ▶ Warralong School Holiday Program

The Queens of Diamonds

YAPURRA WINS THE WESTERN DESERT SHIELD TROPHY AT SOFTBALL NATIONALS IN PERTH



The Newcrest Mining Ltd Western Desert Shield softball competition was held this January and combined fantastic success with a lot of fun for the Martu girls chosen to represent the Western Desert.

During the Martu Youth Festival held in July 2018 at Punmu, Softball WA representative Ali Brooks identified and selected the most talented softball players from that Festival. As a result, eighteen Martu girls from the Western Desert communities of Punmu, Warralong, Nullagine, Parnpajinya, Jigalong and Parngurr travelled to Perth for a week of activities, and played in three exhibition games during the National Softball Titles hosted by Softball WA.

The girls ages ranged from 14 to 37, and they competed in the two Western Desert representative teams of Yapurra and Kakarra in front of a live audience of around 500 appreciative fans at Softball WA headquarters in Mirrabooka. For the first time the games were livestreamed on Facebook to almost 7000 viewers and fans across the world, feeding the growing interest now that softball has become an Olympic sport.

In Perth the girls stayed and trained at Ern Halliday Recreation Camp (the Department of Sport and Recreation accommodation facility in Hillary's). All eighteen attended a healthy eating and cooking workshop, toured high performance training facilities at Edith Cowan University Joondalup, relaxed at the movies, visited the beach and squeezed in some shopping.

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The final results were:

Game 1	-	Yapurra 16 defeated Kakarra 14
Game 2	-	Yapurra 6 defeated Kakarra 4
Game 3	-	Kakarra 15 defeated Yapurra 10

Congratulations Yapurra – champions winning the three-game series two games to one.



The Most Valuable Player for the series was Sharonette Tom from Warralong who also coached Yapurra.

This aspirational opportunity for the Martu wouldn't be possible without the long-term support of Ngurra Kujungka's founding sponsor Newcrest Mining Ltd and the important three-year partnership with Softball WA.



This was the second year of partnering with Softball WA, and Softball WA Chief Executive Officer Russell Clarke is enthusiastic about the programs, opportunities and possibilities from this partnership.

He spoke enthusiastically about the connection between the Western Desert communities and Softball WA: "The three way relationship between Softball WA, Newcrest Mining and Ngurra Kujungka allows us to assist in the community development of sport for healthier lifestyles and gives us an opportunity to empower the game of softball to the girls of the Western Desert. We travel up to Telfer and the communities several times a year and take coaching courses, playing and skills development sessions, and the idea is to upskill the participants so that in the future they will be able to provide training in communities themselves, and become self-sustainable."



The partnership enables the girls to visit Perth for the National Championships and play the exhibition matches. It's a great opportunity for them to visit the metro area and experience things they may not have seen or done before.



It also gives other national players a chance to meet them and see their skills. Scouts from many teams including the USA travel to Perth to watch all the national games and look for talent.

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Russell Clarke said “The dream is one day to have one or more Martu girls go through to play for WA and ultimately to play for Australia, because softball is now an Olympic sport, and we’ve seen other sports where people from the Western Desert come to Perth and they’ve gone on to play on the national stage, and that’s the dream of Softball WA – to see these young ladies get that opportunity.”



When asked about this softball trip Yapurra player and coach Lucelle Francis from Nullagine said: “Taking our girls to softball tournaments where State teams compete against each other is an eye opener for the Nullagine girls. They see different techniques and learn new skills in how to play softball better.



These girls are building their confidence. It’s also a good opportunity for all the Western Desert girls to get to know each other better”.

During the nationals the Martu teams met players from all over Australia and were cheered on by hundreds of spectators throughout their exhibition games.

This was a fantastic and successful event.



Congratulations to all the girls who trained, played and represented their communities this year!

MARBLE BAR POOL FROGGY FUN

It was a warm week in Warralong, and perfect for the boys and girls on the Martu School Holiday Program to spend swimming and enjoying other water activities at the Marble Bar pool.

The Program began on Tuesday with a group trip to the cool and refreshing pool at Marble Bar, with Fran Kelly, the Warralong School Holiday Coordinator kindly driving the bus of 12 excited boys and girls.

I drove a car filled with new school teachers who were enthusiastic to help out on the program for the first time. After a big day of sunshine, swimming, fun and eating, everyone was ready for a long restful afternoon indoors. Wednesday kicked off with breakfast, followed by art and craft in the library. Everyone participated in lots of drawing and some beautiful pieces of art were created. After this



we played games and enjoyed some time outside until the heat forced us to retreat back inside where we relaxed and watched an afternoon movie together. Then it was time to head back home to shoot some hoops and to creatively colour the basketball courts with chalk.



Thursday was another wonderful day at the Marble Bar pool. The bus was brimming with enthusiasm and for the cool off ahead, and the day was spent with lots of swimming that left everyone with tired little legs but feeling very big smiles. Friday was the last day of our program, and our smaller contingent of boys and girls spent the morning working on an interesting and creative project. Journal covers were painted ready for sale to the immersion group from Sydney who will visit Warralong in the next holidays.



Thankyou! to our very creative Ngurra Kujungka Recreation Officer Sharonnette Tom for assisting us all week and giving her fantastic input. Thanks also to the School Holiday Coordinator Fran Kelly - we couldn't have enjoyed the fun at Marble Bar without your careful bus driving and support. Welcome and thank you to the new school staff Sarah, Jayden and Jan who assisted at the pool and were great (water!) sports, and finally thank you to all the parents and kids who supported the School Holiday Program - we look forward to more fun next time!

By Ngurra Kujungka Martu School Holiday Program Coordinator Claire Chauncy

Martu Youth Festival Update

This year's three day Martu Youth Festival will be held at Punmu during the first week of the April School Holidays.

The three day festival celebrating Martu culture, sport and music will start Monday 15th April and finish on Wednesday 17th April. It will include Men and Women's Football, Softball and Basketball competitions along with music workshops and the ever popular evening family concerts provided by our friends Desert Feet.

Representatives from West Coast Eagles, Swan Districts Football Club, Softball WA, Basketball WA and the WA Football Commission will be attending to assist Ngurra Kujungka profile and identify the most talented Martu sports people for future pathway opportunities.

We look forward to collaborating with regional and community stakeholders: Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service (PAMS), Fair Game, Jigalong Police, Punmu Corporation and Rawa Community School at Punmu.

Many thanks to our partners **Newcrest Mining Ltd**, **Martu Charitable Trust** and **Healthway** who provide the financial & logistical support to Ngurra Kujungka and the Martu communities of the Western Desert to make this festival happen.

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