

ON WRITING THE HISTORY OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION 1938-1988

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The History of Basketball in New South Wales 1938 to 1988 Fifty Years of Achievement and Development was finally published on 9 November 1990. It is 518 pages in length and contains seventy pages of illustrations, many of a unique historical nature. Over a hundred pages are devoted to statistical material while in depth studies of varying length are attempted for each major facet of the sport. *The History* is prefaced by a thread text, an overview of some one hundred and thirty-two pages which traces the sport from its origins to 1988. This area was the work of four writers so it lacks balance but leans in the right direction by giving space to the early development and in the recent decade by merely summarising the President's Annual Reports.

In each area of Basketball administration the writer chosen was usually someone long associated with that particular aspect of the sport. For instance, a long time treasurer wrote 'finance', and two men whose coaching experience spanned nearly forty years covered that area. There was some stylistic continuity with one person writing Junior Men, the Women's area, most of the forty-three profiles of people prominent in the sport, and the earlier sections of publicity, referees and country development.

With a diversity of authors, some twelve in all, it was necessary to build a secure base from which all research could proceed. Like most sporting bodies the Association had large gaps in its records. However, most of its early officials were still living in the early 1980s and it was possible to eventually produce a full set of Minutes as well as a full set of all the State Association's printed publications. These are now housed with the Association along with work sheets which index every topic,

within the Minutes and the various publications, on a monthly basis. Several years were spent preparing these unique reference sheets so that writers would have few problems researching their topics. Even a duties of officials chart, over two metres long, was created to follow the work loads of the State's officials over time.

The Association's History gained much from the Basketball archives of Mr Jack Small who had first been associated with the sport at Y.M.C.A. level in the late 1920s. He has a whole room of his home full of Basketball archives. Mr Small has held some senior offices at State level from 1938 to the present time, so he was a unique resource.

The preparation of the History took six years. It was produced 'in house' by the Association using its own computer facilities. There were frustrations and delays particularly when information was requested from local associations. Some associations just failed to reply to any requests, others just did not have the material required about their past. However, no other State Basketball Association in Australia nor the National Basketball Federation have ever attempted so ambitious a project and very few sporting bodies in Australia can produce such a complete record of their first fifty years of existence using their own officials as writers and relying for production on their own desktop computing facilities. Those who contributed to the Basketball history are wiser people for the experience.

For persons wanting more detail, Tom Moore of the New South Wales Basketball Association is listed in *The History* as the first point of contact.