

ADDRESS BY
HER EXCELLENCY MS QUENTIN BRYCE AC
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
ON THE OCCASION OF
**PRE-LUNCH ADDRESS & MATCH VIEWING OF THE HOLDEN NETBALL TEST SERIES –
AUSTRALIA V NEW ZEALAND**
ADELAIDE ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE
29 AUGUST 2010

Ladies and gentlemen, I am absolutely thrilled to join you here in Adelaide today for this special occasion recognising the inauguration of the Constellation Cup.

What a privilege it is to co-sponsor this new cup with His Excellency, and with two outstanding national sporting organisations, Netball New Zealand and Netball Australia.

This cup is really something, and well deserves its stellar signature, but, friends, the Trans-Tasman competition that it will crown is something else!

Australia and New Zealand have played out a spirited contest on the netball court for over half a century now.

The first test match in 1938 returned a victory score to Australia of 40 to 11.

In Manchester, 2009 - the very last time the Diamonds and the Silver Ferns went head to head - fortunes, alas, were reversed, delivering a 27 to 17 triumph to New Zealand.

Before too long we'll be on the edge of our seats again watching the latest victors and the World Number Ones battle to recalibrate the numbers, and jockey for the top position.

Ladies and gentlemen,
the Holden Netball Test Series

is a marvellous cooperative undertaking by Netball New Zealand and Netball Australia, their sponsors and supporters

and it represents an exciting evolution in world netball competition.

During each week of the challenge, the cream of the world's players throw down the gauntlet, and toss it through opposing hoops armed with their elite skills, fitness and finesse.

These are superbly umpired, exhilarating matches, attracting fast expanding stadium and television audiences.

And I know that the netballers,
and all those associated with this tremendous sport,
are saying bring them on!

A burgeoning public following and coverage that reflects the interest and enthusiasm of the crowds, are

what our netballers and their associations need
to grow their base and resources
and achieve the professional status
they've been striving for.

New Zealand has for a long time been a role model and inspiration for Australian netballers.

Our women have observed, and very much benefited, from the respect and profile afforded them when they tour New Zealand.

How wonderful it is in this highly competitive arena to have such a generous, enduring and rewarding collaboration between nations.

Friends, I have throughout my earlier career working for women's rights across all areas of society, been a keen follower and advocate of women's progress and achievements in sport, as players, coaches, administrators and executives.

I have been impressed by the leading role Netball Australia has taken in the community as well as being the managers of elite sportswomen.

Their contribution to women's health and wellbeing through their various fitness and mental health initiatives is an important one.

It recognises the vast capacity these sportswomen have to influence the lives and aspirations of Australian girls and women in positive ways.

They help us develop strength, agility and a sense of teamwork.

They show us strategic thinking, goal setting, discipline, and self confidence, the very qualities women need to succeed in school, business and life. And, as I heard former captain of the Australian team, Liz Ellis recount once:

If you don't make a mistake, you don't make a discovery.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, let's see what we can discover on the court today.

May the constellation of Diamonds and Silver Ferns sparkle in the heavens always and this afternoon, may the sparks fly below!