



3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2019

### **Australian Schools Rugby Union**

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and to both thank you for leading a school in which Rugby is played and to inform you of current pathways for representation for your students.

As a College Principal for seventeen years, I know that there is much pressure and competition to have students play in their chosen sport at all levels of participation – albeit some are beginners and others choose following the elite athlete pathway. Having had experience in GPS, ACT, CAS, ISA and Club Rugby in Canberra and NSW – as well as Queensland, I have seen the development and growth of sports competing with one another and for market share and identity. Rugby itself is broadening its capacity to include players in new and exciting pathways for the benefit of the game at all levels.

As this new landscape at the elite player level within schools is causing some confusion, I write in support of earlier correspondence from Rugby Australia, that there is a need to understand the open pathways for students to choose representation for State, Territory and National representation in 2019.

To this end, Rugby Australia (RA) and the Australian Schools Rugby Union (ASRU) have agreed on a new approach to the operation of the Australian Schools and Under 18 Team.

The Australian Schools Rugby Union and Rugby Australia have begun a new series of processes to enhance the training, coaching and selecting of Schools and U18 players in Australia which has resulted in the creation by RA of five new U18 Academies with inter Academy matches and also a broadening of the participation in the Australian Schools Championships for school players.

The Team will be presented and managed jointly so as to retain the benefits that teachers can bring, but also to obtain the benefits that Rugby Australia and its staff can also contribute.

The Team will retain its current name to continue the long and successful fifty year history of the Australian Schoolboys Teams. This will allow players of appropriate ability who are still Under 18 but not in school to be selected. The Australian Schools and U18 team has a Rugby Australia appointed Coach as well as Australian Schools Rugby Union appointed Assistant Coaches and Managers.

### **National Championships**

Players attending the Championships will be eligible for selection in the Australian Schools Barbarian team to play Samoa on 2 October in Sydney.

**The Australian Schools and U18 team selectors will attend the Championships and players may be selected for the State Academies as a pathway to the Australian Schools and U18 squad to eventually play in NZ in October 2019.**

Participation in the Schools National Championships 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2019, gives all players—Academy and others—the chance to represent their State and also to have the experience of playing wonderful school boy Rugby at the State and Territory level with the possibility of National representation.

Players selected in Academies **may choose to attend** the National Championships to broaden their representative experience and options for selection but this is not compulsory.

There are some Schools and selected State representatives who have been told that they may not participate in the Championships – but in reality, it is the individual **choice to represent** at State level – leading to possible selection in the Barbarians, Academy (if not already selected) and pathways to Australian Schools and U/18 selection.

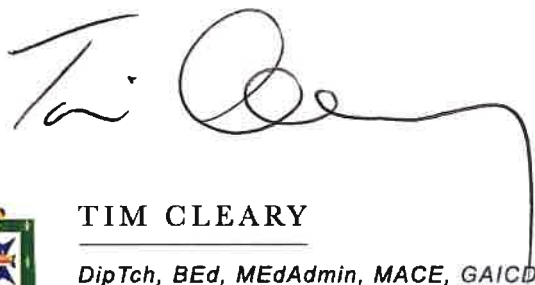
The various U18 Academies will play three matches during the year as part of their selection process for the Australian Schools and U18 team to play in New Zealand during October 2019.

Of the some 140 players in State Academies there will be 25 or so selected for further representation at Australian Schools and U/18 level. Therefore, the National Championships broaden the exposure, experience and possibilities for those who choose to attend.

I hope this clarifies the dual pathways available to your students and also the importance of the partnership with Rugby Australia.

It would be appreciated if you could pass this information onto your parents, Heads of Sport and Rugby so that players are also aware of the pathways available to them this year.

Yours sincerely,



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