MEDIA RELEASE
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Australian Rugby Union throws support behind Wheelchair Rugby

The Australian Rugby Union (ARU) has joined forces with Disability Sports Australia (DSA) in a new partnership to foster and promote the development of Wheelchair Rugby in Australia.

The partnership will aim to drive Wheelchair Rugby participation and develop pathways within the sport at state, local and national levels, as well as developing coaching and officiating accreditation frameworks and programs.

Having played in the celebrity match at the ‘Fierce 4 Rugby Nationals’ in 2015, ARU CEO Bill Pulver said: “At the ARU we have always seen Wheelchair Rugby as part of the Rugby Family. After trying the game myself last year I have a real appreciation of the toughness of the athletes, and we are looking forward to working with DSA to deliver a long-term plan to develop the game at every level.”

Jenni Cole, CEO of Disability Sports Australia, said: “We are delighted to have such a supportive partner in the ARU – their corporate skill and reach will greatly assist to grow Wheelchair Rugby programs and awareness in Australia.”

As the national governing body for Wheelchair Rugby, DSA runs the Fierce 4 Rugby National League, and the GIO Fierce 4 Rugby National Championships annually, and oversees all aspects of programs and pathways for Wheelchair Rugby players, coaches and officials.

“As a charity which receives minimal government funding, we know that it is only through great partnerships like this that we can continue to develop wheelchair Rugby and increase opportunities for athletes with quadriplegia and multiple amputations to be part of this exciting sport,” said Ms Cole.

The ARU and DSA will commence work on a four-year sport development plan for Wheelchair Rugby from grassroots through to the national team level. The ARU will also assist DSA to bid for, and deliver national and international Wheelchair Rugby events.

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