



BROOMBALL

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At national level, men's and women's games are full contact, meaning players can use their bodies to stop opposition players from passing or running with the ball.

The NSW competition, based at the Penrith Ice Palace, has always shown a great depth of talent by dominating the intermediate divisions since they became part of the Australian championships in 2001.

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Four of a kind: NSW women celebrate their win

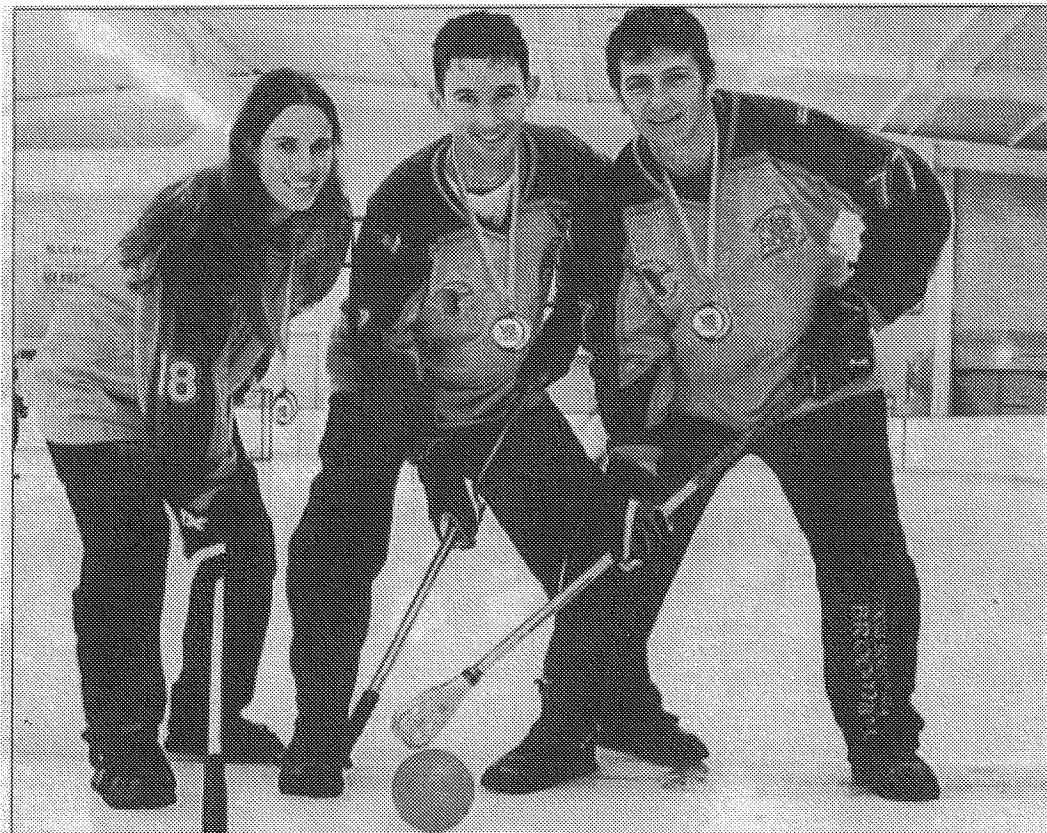
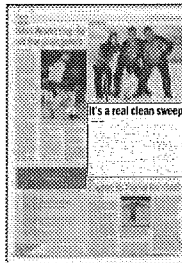
trouble overpowering Queensland in the final to make it through the tournament undefeated without conceding any goals. It was their fourth title in a row.

The NSW men's elite team defeated defending champions, the ACT, in overtime in the final.

The mixed elite team made it

back-to-back titles with a victory over ACT in the final, while both intermediate teams – men's and mixed – also went through the tournament undefeated.

Broomball was introduced into Australia by employees of the Canadian High Commission in Canberra in 1981.



Running on Ice: Linda Bell, Tim Brown and Peter Yabsley are used to the cold conditions in the ice rink.

It's a real clean sweep

By **Amanda Keane**

IT'S played with a broom and a ball and it's the most fun you can have on ice with your shoes on.

Already huge in the United States and Canada, broomball is becoming increasingly popular in Australia.

Although not as commonly heard of as footy, netball or soccer, broomball has already attracted hundreds of participants to its fast-paced action-packed game based in Penrith.

And The Hills have their own NSW broomball champions.

Tim Brown and Kerry Baxter, of West Pennant Hills, Linda Bell, of Bella Vista, and Peter Yabsley, of Baulkham Hills, were part of the NSW Sliders team that took out the recent 2006 Australian Broomball Championships in Adelaide.

The Sliders were victorious in all five divisions, including the mixed intermediate, mixed elite, men's intermediate, women's elite and

men's elite competitions. Baxter, who made her sixth appearance at the nationals, was assistant captain of the women's elite team and was awarded women's all-star centre.

She also scored a goal in the grand final against Queensland.

"I was pretty proud of the team," she said.

Baxter is one of the longest standing members of the women's team.

She took up the sport eight years ago after hearing about the game from her partner, Tim Brown.

After starting the game at Blacktown Ice Arena, it has since moved to Penrith and now has up to 200 members.

"The game certainly has taken off in leaps and bounds," she said.

"It's a fun game to play. You meet plenty of people. It's great."

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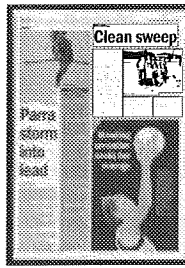
At national level, men's and women's games are full contact – players can put their bodies on the line to stop opposition players from passing or running with the ball.

"It can be physically tough," Linda Bell said. "You have to be really quick on your feet. You need to be as fast as you can."

Bell joined Baxter as the other assistant captain for the women's elite team. She was awarded women's all-star forward and scored an assist in the grand final. "It's not a high injury sport and not too reckless. It's definitely a lot of fun," she said.

Along with Baxter and Bell, Brown and Yabsley also had stellar performances in the championships. Brown was assistant captain of the NSW men's elite and mixed elite teams. He was also awarded men's MVP, men's all-star defender and MVP in the mixed elite division.

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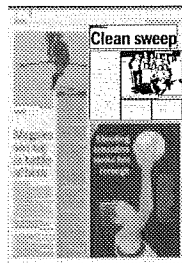
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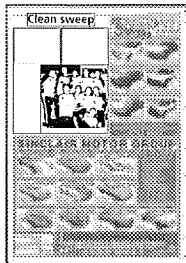
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BROOMBALL representatives from New South Wales have returned from Adelaide after securing an unprecedented clean sweep at the 2006 Australian Broomball Championships.

Josh Drinkall, Lauren Goulden, James Kristof, Ryan Findlayson, Glen Butler-Fleming, Damian Coyler and Daniel Wong were among the local Penrith representatives in the New South Wales team.

Broomball is a variation of ice hockey in which players wear special shoes to run on the ice and try to hit a ball into the goal. At National level, men's and women's games are full contact, meaning that players can use their bodies to stop opposition players from passing or running with the ball. The NSW competition is based at Penrith.

Saxon Hooper, captain of the NSW Men's Elite team that defeated the ACT in a thrilling Grand Final that went into overtime, said their victory felt like a long time coming.

"We were really hungry for a win in the Men's Elite," Mr Hooper said.

"We were disappointed in 2005, especially as we were the only NSW team not to win in front of a home crowd. We had to travel a bit further this year, but we knew we could do it."

A number of NSW players were voted Most Valuable Players in their divisions at the Australian Broomball Championships, including Glenmore Park's Glen Butler-Fleming who impressed in the Men's Intermediate Team.

The NSW local broomball competition is the largest in

Australia, with over 200 players competing in three divisions. Mr Hooper, who is also the President of the NSW Broomball Association, said that the size of the competition is of great advantage when competing at national competitions.

"With such a large talent pool, the local competition is really tough," he said.

"The B-Graders really need to step up if they want a chance to play in A Grade, so our intermediate teams also perform well at Nationals."

The full results from the Championships were: Men's Elite - NSW 2, ACT 1, Women's Elite - NSW 2, QLD 0, Mixed Elite - NSW 3, ACT 1, Men's Intermediate - NSW Red 2, NSW Blue 0, Mixed Intermediate - NSW Blue 2, QLD 0.



The NSW Women's Elite Team were victorious at the 2006 Australian Broomball Championships.