The annual gala awards night on the Territory sporting calendar - the 2006 NT Sports Awards – has been held tonight at the Holiday Inn Esplanade.

The Minister for Sport and Recreation, Delia Lawrie, and sponsors announced the winners of the 2006 NT Sports Awards to a large crowd of past and future Territory sporting legends.

“Sport is an important part of our great Territory lifestyle. The NT Sports Awards aim to recognise the Territory’s best - on and off the field - across a range of sporting codes, culminating in the prestigious announcement of the NT Sportsperson of the Year Award,” said Ms Lawrie.

“Last year’s winners ranged from local teams and individuals to an olympic gold medallist, and this year’s range of nominees and finalists were no exception. All are fantastic representatives of their sport and the Territory.”

The Minister said in addition to the categories for the 2006 NT Sports Awards there was also the inclusion of the Hall of Champions and Roll of Honour this year, which will be an ongoing category of the annual awards.

“The Hall of Champions concept began more than 10 years ago but soon lapsed, so it was something I personally wanted to see re-established when I took on the role of Sport and Recreation Minister last year,” said Ms Lawrie.

“It will now be an on-going component of the NT Sports Awards allowing us to acknowledge our sporting greats and induct fine Territory athletes into the Hall of Champions and recognise the roll of ambassadors/officials in the Roll of Honour.”

The winners and finalists for the 2006 NT Sports Awards are attached.

Media are reminded this information is strictly embargoed until 11pm tonight.

Contact: Nikola Lekias 0438 323660
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD
1. Sharyn Smith (Rugby League/Aussie Rules)
2. Dave Walden (Disabled Sports)
3. Graham Ross Quinell (Weightlifting)

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD
1. Peter Chilman (Sailing)
2. Antony Yoffa (Motor Sport)

OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR AWARD
1. Kylie Bell (Netball)
2. Alex Foster (Cycling)
3. Joel Morrison (Australian Football)

COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD
1. Rohan Fisher (Tennis)
2. June Voukolos (Ten Pin Bowling)
3. Michael Rawiri (Rugby League)

TEAM OF THE YEAR
1. NT Men’s Team (Rachuig) (Ten Pin Bowling)
2. NT Secondary Schools Girls Team (Touch Football)
3. NT U/18 Rugby League Team (Rugby League)

NT PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR
1. Michelle Halprin (Ten Pin Bowling)
2. Ashlee Brown (Tennis)
3. Colin Hennessey (Hockey)

NT JUNIOR SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD
1. Joel Carroll (Hockey)
2. Maria Tsoukalis (Weightlifting)
3. Colin Hennessey (Hockey)

NT SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD
1. Danni Patricia Miatke (Swimming)
2. Maria Tsoukalis (Weightlifting)
3. Andrew McArthur (Ten Pin Bowling)

ERIC JOHNSTON ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD
1. Maria Tsoukalis (Weightlifting)
2. Ashlee Brown (Tennis)
3. Hayley Kate McKinnon (Surf Life Saving)

NT AMBASSADOR’S AWARD
1. Ashlee Brown (Tennis)
2. Andrew McArthur (Ten Pin Bowling)
3. Hayley Kate McKinnon (Surf Life Saving)

STEVE ABALA ROLE MODEL AWARD
Wendy Bury (Netball)

HALL OF CHAMPIONS
Rose Damaso (Hall of Champions)
Keith Kemp (Roll of Honour)