Social winning game-plan set

**NETBALL**

A NEW season of social mixed netball will be played on Monday nights from February 1 to Match 7.

Team nominations are due on Thursday week and already a number of teams have indicated they are keen to play.

The season will follow the same format as the one that concluded in early December with Family Affair winning division one and Caneleers winning the division two final.

Teams must have at least four female players (a maximum of three males) on the court at any one time.

Games are of two 10 minute halves (centrally timed) with teams playing three games a night in a round robin format for the six weeks.

For registration forms, and more details, go to the Alice Springs Netball Association webpage.

Players who would like to play but are without teams can contact Steve Menzies through the ANSA office by email at netball@aliceprincesnetball.com.au.

Umpires will also be required and are asked to inform ANSA manager Jen Robinson in the registration office.

The season has been scheduled to fit in with the start of the regular Saturday season in March and the construction of the indoor stadium at the Pat Gallagher Netball Centre on Undoolya Rd.

Ironman champ eager to take the fight to diabetes

**CYCLING**

CENTRALIAN world masters walking champion Debbie Page (picture) is putting her shoes to one side to raise awareness about one of the biggest medical problems in the region – diabetes.

She is taking part in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Type 1 Diabetes Ride for a Cure through the Barossa Valley on Saturday.

It is the second time she has undertaken the 100km cycling event.

She said this event was more important to her than her recent success in the WA Ironman event in Busselton.

“In many ways the ironman is a fairly personal event and I find the JDRF cycle such a lovely contrast and balance to life as we set about to raise awareness and funds that will hopefully make a difference to more lives,” Page said.

“The national fundraising and awareness event for type 1 diabetes in Australia.

Cyclists from all over Australia will be gathering at the Barossa to raise funds for valuable research into curing diabetes.

“I am again the only cyclist from the Northern Territory so it basically falls on me to make our community aware of the fundraising event and the efforts hundreds of Australians put in.”

Page will join about 400 other cyclists in the event which consists of an 80km loop around the Barossa Valley from the Jacob’s Creek Winery. It goes through the towns of Rowland Flat, Lyndoch, Willa- town, Springfield, Eden Valley, Angaston and Tanunda.

After completing a clockwise lap, the cyclists doing the 100km ride will reverse direction and ride it anticlockwise.

Type 1 diabetes afflicts more than 10 per cent of the Alice Springs population. The national average is about 6 per cent.

Page said there were a lot of corporate teams with all the riders being people who though they could make a difference.

To help with Page’s fundraising for the cause go to jdrf-ride-2016.everydayhero.com.au/debbie.

Organisers hope to raise up to $1 million in vital funds to help JDRF to care, treat and prevent type 1 diabetes.

THE Paul Pearson Cup kicks off tomorrow with the best junior golfer from Alice Springs and abroad competing to take out the prestigious event.

Now in its fifth year, the tournament was created in 2012 in memory of the passing of local life member Paul Pearson, an advocate for junior golf in Alice Springs.

“This is an event for the boys’ edition of the tournament was won by local junior Mitchell Gridley with NSW golfer Hannah Park taking out the girls’ competition, and local pro Steve Tieck believes Gridley will feature heavily again.

“The local hope for this year is again Mitchell Gridley (5 handicap) and 2014 champion and local Club Champion George Worrall (0 handicap).” Tieck said.

“Mitch has found some form again and shot 74 yesterday and local junior George Worrall has had a fantastic year. George is the top-ranked junior in the field and the hot favourite to win his second Paul Pearson Cup.”

“In the girls, Jade Longstaff (Darwin) and Katelyn Rika (Gove) will look to represent the Territory.”

While Gridley and Worrall are among the favourites for the coveted prize, Tieck believes the competition provided from interstate and state competitors will make the week tough for the local golfers.

“There is a wealth of talent from interstate, including five players from NSW with the favourites to rival the locals to be Douglass Riss-Ceballos (0 handicap), and two from Queensland, finished up as overall runner- up to their best representative.”

Riss-Ceballos will be keen to make amends for last year after finishing as runner-up to Gridley. Tieck also believes the girls’ competition will be hotly contest- ed, with interstate pair June Song (NSW) and Isabelle Simpson (Queensland) the two favourites.

According to Tieck, the Cup is based on the priority list of junior golfers as it offers them a chance to gain National Ranking Points.

“The Paul Pearson Cup is an important event to junior golfers as it is a National Junior Ranking Event, meaning a win or finish here can boost the golfer’s national junior ranking and could possibly be the catalyst to a great year of golf,” he said.

New Zealand and Japan next month. The season has been scheduled to fit in with the start of the regular Saturday season in March and the construction of the indoor stadium at the Pat Gallagher Netball Centre on Undoolya Rd.

Steve Menzies

**LAWN BOWLS/GOLF**

THE establishment of a new bowling green and driving range at the Alice Springs Golf Club was fantastic for the town, according to PROBuild on site project manager Aaron Blacker.

Apart from providing additional recreational facilities, it will provide employment for more than 30 people during the life of the project.

“We will employ eight or nine people fulltime while there could be up to 24 people on site working for subcontractors,” Blacker said.

“This project is very important to us, as it is out in the open and benefits the town. The earthworks will continue seven days a week and then we will cut back to six days a week until completion in early April.

“Planting of the grass for the bowling green will take place about March 26 and have a three to seven-week germination period.

“We don’t want an early winter.”

The bowling green will be established where the current practice green is but the mixture of grasses in the practice green make it unsuitable for lawn bowls.

Northern Territory Sports Minister Gary Higgins is delighted to see the project begin after almost seven years of discussion.

“It is good to see the works are under way. Congratulations to the Alice Springs Golf Club for moving ahead with the project,” he said.

“This project is another example of the Northern Territory Government investing in sport and active recreation in Central Australia.

“We have allocated $1.5 million towards the project, which will increase social patronage at the venue and provide another quality sporting facility for locals and visitors.”

An equally important part of the project is the development of a modern driving range.

It will enable golfers to practise into the night.

Special compressed balls will be used that do not fly the 300-plus metres some players hit off the tee.

Anthony Geppe

Golf club expansion rolls on with new lawn bowls facility

Steve Menzies

Vanessa Stokes.

**SOFTBALL**

VANESSA Stokes is waiting on a call from the national softball selection panel after she had mixed fortunes playing with the SA Stargz in the Gilley’s Shield which was cut in half by rain.

Stokes was hoping to press her case for selection in the Australian side for the World Cup during the tournament which was cut in half by rain.

Starch finished the five round-robin games in third position but lost the semi-final to ACT 2-3.

Stokes pitched in three games for a total of 12.2 innings and finished with 13 strikeouts. Only 2015 Pitcher of the Tournament Monica Perry, who pitched the whole semi-final, was used more (41 innings for 15 strikeouts) by SA.

Stokes is still expected to make one of the Australian squads to play against New Zealand and Japan next month.