

## --- Media Release ---

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### Indigenous-Inspired Boxing National Team Uniform Unveiled

Boxing Australia has unveiled new national team uniforms inspired by the Indigenous artwork of its former athletes, aiming to bind Australia's boxing community even closer together.

Adding to the significance, the new competition uniforms incorporate Aboriginal artwork by former Australian boxing representatives Paul Fleming (2008 Olympics, 2007 World Championships) and Brad Hore (2000 & 2004 Olympics, 2002 & 2006 Commonwealth Games, 2005 World Championships).

More Indigenous Australians have represented Australia in boxing at the Olympics than any other sport and Boxing Australia President Ted Tanner said the new uniforms are important.

"There have been more indigenous Australian boxing representatives than in all other Olympic sports combined," Tanner said. "Alex Winwood's participation at the Tokyo Games last year means 20 Indigenous Australians have represented Australia at the Olympic Games.

"This generation of Australian boxers will be able to wear with pride the new competition singlets and shorts with their Indigenous culture designs and, in doing so, honour the deep historical heritage they represent.

"We are also very fortunate to have Brad Hore and Paul Fleming support the project. They were both very good boxers and members of past Australian teams and clearly they both have a wonderful artistic talent for competition gear design."

The new uniforms will be worn for the first time in competition by the Australian team competing at the IBA Elite Women's World Championships, to be held in Istanbul from 8-20 May. An Olympic representative in 2004 and assistant coach of the World Championships campaign Jamie Pittman was moved by the launch of the new uniforms.

"I identified as a man from the Wonnarua tribe back when I first started boxing, I needed a belonging in my life and not only was it with boxing, it was with my culture. Understanding that a bit more helped me both in and out of the ring.

"When the uniforms were unveiled, the buzz straight away from the athletes was amazing. I'm jealous to be honest, I wish I could put the kit on myself. It feels like wearing those uniforms they'll fight a bit more for us, for our land, for our country. It means a bit because of the story that's on the print."

The Australian women's team has been preparing for the world championship with a training camp at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. Angela Harries, from the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, will make her world championship debut and said the team felt honoured to be wearing the new uniforms.

"Boxing is a close community, I'm really proud to be wearing this design, I think it binds us together. To be the first team to wear this to wear a uniform is special."

The uniforms are designed and provided by Sting Sport. "We at Sting are both extremely honoured and very privileged to have been trusted to incorporate the artwork of former Olympians and Indigenous artists Brad Hore and Paul Fleming into the designs of the new uniforms. The finished product is both exciting and visually striking, and it will show the proud culture and designs of our Indigenous community on the global stage."

Brad and Paul have used their experience as elite athletes to re-connect with their communities after their amateur careers. Brad educates Indigenous youth on the importance of making positive life choices, while Paul works at a Western Sydney school as an Aboriginal Education Officer, connecting with young Indigenous kids and teaching them about Aboriginal culture.

Brad described the story represented in his artwork: "The Kangaroo and Emu footprints line either side representing Australia's Coat of Arms. The soaring boomerang represents the knowledge passed down through generations of talented boxers. A meeting spot in the middle is where in spirit all past and future boxers will meet, linking us all together."

Paul detailed the meaning behind his artwork: "I used traditional ochre colours as they represent Aboriginal and mother earth (our land). The centre circle represents the Olympics, and two circles represent the past and future. I have done the feel moving towards the centre because everything in the past has led there. And the Olympics can change your future. I have also done emu and kangaroo footprints as they are on our coat of arms. I added a male symbol with a spear and a female symbol with a Coolamon (used for holding babies). I've also added symbols for people around the two end circles to represent everyone who's been there through your journey to the Olympics and onto the future."

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