

fair break Invitational 2022



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PRESS RELEASE

IMAGE:

FairBreakers: Founder Shaun Martyn with South Coast Sapphire Jade Allen and FairBreak Coach and Australian cricket icon Geoff Lawson. (Please see Media Kit for more images and player profiles)



South Coast Sapphires - Australia's entry to FairBreak's world first Invitational Women's T20 Cricket Tournament

Women's world cricket began a new chapter today with the announcement of 11 of the 15 players selected for the South Coast Sapphires, Australia's entry to FairBreak's world first Invitational Women's T20 Cricket Tournament.

Australia's up and comer and Sapphires team member Jade Allen faced a few bowls from cricketering legend Geoff Lawson at Narooma, on the Far South Coast of New South Wales to test out the new uniform, made from recycled materials, to mark the occasion.

The tournament will be held in Dubai from May 1-15, bringing together 90 players from over 36 countries. It is the next and biggest step to date in FairBreak's goal to create a platform for associate nations to play with full member nations and showcase aspiring and established women cricketers on a global stage.

The Sapphires will be captained by former Pakistan Captain Sana Mir, a cricket icon, FairBreak stalwart and winner of the Asia Game Changer Award for her humanitarian work. Her experience will be a steady hand for the Sapphires, who hail from eleven countries and have a range of experience and depth to their cricketering. For some, like Allen, it's their first international match.

"It's a very proud moment for me to be captaining the South Coast Sapphires," Mir said. "The team comprises some incredible cricketers like Chamari Athapaththu, Shabnim Ismail and Kim Garth."

"There will be 10 to 13 different nationalities in any one team so it's going to be an incredible tournament," she said.

Athapaththu (captain of Sri Lanka) has dominated with a left hand bat for over 10 years, Ismail (South Africa) is one of the world's fastest female bowlers and Garth (Ireland) is an all rounder who will continue to impress after a successful Women's Big Bash League with the Melbourne Stars.

Athapaththu holds the record for the second highest individual score in Women's World Cup history with a 178 not out against Australia in 2017. She'll be supported by middle-order batter Jemimah Rodrigues (India) who was one of the highest run scorers in the UK Hundred, and Ireland's Gaby Lewis who has a penchant for opening the batting and was yesterday (Sunday) named in International Cricket Council's Women's T20I Team of the Year.

The bowling contingent will have the experience of Hong Kong's Betty Chan, a right arm off spin bowler who first represented Hong Kong in 2006 at the age of 16. Since then she has become a key member of the Hong Kong team, known best for her economical right arm off-spin bowling. Joining Chan are 17 year-old fast bowler Geetika Kodali (USA) who has already played 11 games for USA since her international debut in 2019 and Australia's Jade Allen (age 19) whose right-arm leg spin is sure to be a disruptor on what is her first international.

At the wickets are Shebani Bhaskar (USA) and Babette de Leede (Netherlands). Bhaskar has left a swathe of wickets behind her after debut at 12 years of age. De Leede debuted with the Netherlands in 2015.

The Sapphires will be coached by Mauhtashim Rasheed (Head Coach Pakistan Women's team and Bowling Coach National Cricket Academy), led by Manager Sue Strachan who is the first female President of Cricket Scotland.

The Sapphires will join the other five other teams in Dubai in late April for four days of training before the 15 day tournament.

Shaun Martyn, FairBreak founder and Managing Director said the Sapphires had drawn one of the great figures in women's cricket in Sana Mir and was excited for Allen, who hails from Cobargo on the Far South Coast of New South Wales, Australia.

"This tournament is a great opportunity for this region to present itself on a global stage," he said. "It also exemplifies a commitment to opportunity and inclusion for our players who will experience a quality event in which their talents are encouraged and rewarded."

Australian cricket great Geoff Lawson was at the announcement for a session in the nets with Allen and will lend his coaching and expertise in Dubai.

"A wonderful combination of the world's greats and promising players has been selected to represent the South Coast Sapphires," he said.

"From Pakistan legend Sana Mir who will captain the team and has visited the South Coast, to local product Jade Allen, there is a raft of talent who will not only play competitive, entertaining cricket but will be proud ambassadors for the region."

Allen is looking forward to the experience, particularly as her international debut with Cricket Australia Women's Under 19 squad was canceled due to the pandemic in March 2020.

"Being a part of the FairBreak Invitational will provide a tremendous opportunity to not only play overseas and with a great variety of skilled players but allow me to expand my game. I'm really looking forward to the experiences that it'll bring," she said.

Along with equal opportunity for women and ending solar poverty, the tournament will also focus on world first research on breast health biomechanics.

World-leading researcher Associate Professor Deidre McGhee from Breast Research Australia and University of Wollongong has teamed up with FairBreak to conduct research on breast health biomechanics.

During the tournament McGhee will conduct research on breast support, bra fit and injury management as well as provide educational programs to support their health, safety and performance.

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