

Embargoed until 12:00pm AEDT

Wednesday, 13 March 2024

Sydney/Gadigal, Australia

WOLLONGONG TO HOST 2024 NATIONAL YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS BOYS' TOURNAMENT

Wollongong will once again play host to the National Youth Championships as the 2024 Boys' tournament kicks-off this July.

Taking place over six days from 16 – 21 July, the 2024 National Youth Championships Boys' tournament for the Under 15 and Under 16 age groups will be held across WIN Stadium, JJ Kelly Park and Ian McLennan Park in Wollongong.

After successfully hosting last year's Girls' tournament, and as a long-standing breeding ground of elite footballing talent, Wollongong will welcome 32 teams featuring some of the best emerging players from across Australia.

The National Youth Championships are the flagship youth event in the Australian football calendar, with teams from Football Australia's nine State and Territory Member Federations competing not only to claim the coveted national title, but to impress attending national team technical staff.

Embedded within Football Australia's talent identification scheme, the National Youth Championships serves as a crucial stepping-stone for young players with many of today's Subway Socceroos tracing their beginnings to the tournament.

Players like Jordan Bos (Football VIC), Nathan Burns (Football NSW), Brett Emerton (Football NSW), Rhyan Grant (Football NSW), Harry Kewell (Football NSW), Mark Milligan (Football NSW), Lucas Neill (Football NSW) and Wollongong local Luke Wilkshire (Football NSW) have all progressed through the National Youth Championships pathway just to name a few.

The annual National Youth Championships not only provide an opportunity for aspiring young players to showcase their skills, but also coaches, officials, and technical staff a chance to learn and grow in their respective fields.

Football Australia CEO James Johnson said: "We're thrilled to be returning to Wollongong for the 2024 National Youth Championships Boys' tournament."

"After successfully hosting the 2023 National Youth Championships Girls' event, we are delighted to be returning to the Illawarra this July where the best of the country's emerging young talent will be looking to impress for future honours.

"We would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to the NSW Government, Destination NSW, Wollongong City Council and Destination Wollongong for their ongoing support of Australian football and our elite pathways," concluded James Johnson.

The National Youth Championships will deliver strong economic benefits to the local economy, while competitors will experience some of New South Wales' best regional sporting facilities with the Illawarra plays host to the Boys' event.

Destination Wollongong's General Manager Mark Sleigh said: "We are excited to welcome the nation's most talented up-and-coming footballers back to Wollongong, this time for the 2024 National Youth Championships Boys' tournament.

"A proven pathways event for junior players who will showcase Wollongong's premier football fields and seaside stadium. This six-day event will also have a significant economic boost to the visitor economy during our winter season."

2024 National Youth Championships – Boys

Venues: WIN Stadium, JJ Kelly Park and Ian McLennan Park, Wollongong, NSW

Dates: 16 – 21 July 2024

Fixtures and further information will be released in the coming months.

-ends-

Football Australia Media Contacts

James Coman | Media and Communications Coordinator

E: James.Coman@footballaustralia.com.au | T: +61 (0) 450 510 204

Rebecca Trbojevich | General Manager – Media and Communications

E: Rebecca.Trbojevich@footballaustralia.com.au | T: +61 (0) 413 855 608