

Case Study 14



Commonwealth Games Australia Leading coaching equity

Commonwealth Games Australia (CGA) is a member-based organisation (our members are the National Sporting Organisations [NSOs] representing the sports participating in Commonwealth Games), which receives no Federal Government funding and exists to administer, control and coordinate the participation of program sports and their respective athletes and officials in the Commonwealth Games.

Connecting with Communities is a key strategic priority for CGA, as identified within our [‘First Among Equals’ Strategic plan 2019-2026](#). This includes connecting with and positively contributing to Australian communities through sport, and living diversity, inclusiveness and the broadest possible definition of Team in all that we do.

“Our ambition is to unlock the power of the pursuit of sporting excellence and to connect with our communities.”

Overview

The 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games (Trinidad 2023) were held on the dual island Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago from 4-11 August 2023.

CGA selected a team of 75 athletes (14-18 years old) supported by 23 Sport Staff (coaches, managers etc) and 16 Headquarters (HQ) staff (medical, team management etc). Leading the team were Commonwealth Games Alumni Ellie Cole OAM (Team General Manager) and Greg Hire (Deputy General Manager).

Trinidad 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games

Underpinning the planning of all CGA Teams are the pillars of:

- Performance
- Life best Experiences
- Health and Safety

Further review of the ‘why’ behind Trinidad prompted a deeper consultation with the member sports on the program to delve into how we can use the Trinidad 2023 experience to add as much value to their respective performance programs as possible. What can CGA do through Trinidad 2023 that otherwise might not be possible? These discussions highlighted that not only are the athletes at a critical junction in their development with many about to embark on their first National multi-sport team, but Trinidad could provide an excellent development opportunity for emerging women in coaching they may otherwise miss out on, especially in a multi-sport international competition format.

Why?

Following the Women's High Performance Coaching Showcase in November 2022, a clear theme emerged that women in high performance coaching were repeatedly encountering the same challenges:

- A distinct lack of opportunity and defined pathway to progress and grow experience.
- When there were opportunities, feedback was that they lacked the experience and were overlooked.

Having decided that the Trinbago 2023 Team would approach these games through the lens of value adding, CGA saw Trinbago as a unique opportunity break this circuit.

A Commonwealth Youth Games gives great insight of what it means to be part of an Australian Team in a large, fully integrated, multi-sport event with the support of CGA and learnings from other sports.

How?

CGA consulted the member sports on the Trinbago program and proposed that as part of the approach a focus on nominating emerging female coaches should be adopted.

CGA is proud to work with member sports who welcomed the suggestion and embraced the idea. Of the 19 coaching roles on team, 11 were women.

Outside of coaching positions, the Chef de Mission, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Deputy CMO and Tobago Team Leader were leadership positions on team held by women.

Our Data

Commonwealth Games Australia 2022 and 2023 Teams

2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games	2023 Trinbago Commonwealth Youth Games
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officials: 34% Women• Athletes: 53% Women• HQ Officials: 57% Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Officials: 57% Women• Athletes: 69% Women• HQ Officials: 56% Women



Impact and Outputs

From a performance perspective, Australia topped the medal table:

Trinbago 2023 Australian Youth Team Medal Tally			
Trinbago Sports	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Athletics	5	6	7
Beach Volleyball		1	
Cycling – Road	2	2	1
Cycling – Track	8	2	5
Netball FAST5	1		
Rugby Sevens	1		
Swimming	7	6	7
Triathlon	2		1
TOTAL	26	17	21
			64

- Australia also had 62 individual medallists across Trinbago 2023
- Of those, 48 (77%) of the medallists were female
- Enthusiasm of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) as these games create opportunities across the board (emerging positions across teams in the Commonwealth)

The next steps

- There is genuine excitement from the CGF toward future Commonwealth Youth Games. For CGA, this means that the work from Trinbago can continue to grow and compliment programs like The AIS National Generation 2032 Coach Program with additional development opportunities across the system.
- History tells us that the investment of a Youth Games into team members (athletes and staff alike) is a strong indicator for future team selection eg 2026 Commonwealth Games and beyond.

"The opportunity to lead the Rugby 7s team at the Trinbago 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games was an incredible one. It was a truly enjoyable event and provided the chance to work with the next generation of athletes to help them achieve their sporting goals. The Games also provided development opportunities for all who were part of the Australian Team and being able to come together in a large, full integrated, multi-sport event allowed for all of us to learn and work together across the event. Investment in these types of experiences can only grow skillsets, further the abilities of coaches, and help to drive the capabilities of Australian teams across the board."



Shannon Parry OAM, Trinbago Rugby 7's Head Coach *October 2023*

Links

[Commonwealth Games Australia](#)
[Trinbago 2023 | Commonwealth Games Australia](#)