



A busy schedule to open season 2017 with eight games on the menu. We start in Wodonga where the Bushrangers host the Warriors and if you've been listening to the pre-season hype on Pakky, you'll be tipping the visitors here. The home team has shown glimpses since entering the Big V, but has struggled to deliver consistently. Pakenham's new recruit, Brad Bridgewater, should excel at this level and will be a key player.

The Sharks are back in the comp, along with an import (Justin Taylor) and take on the Suns first up, also back after a brief break. A lot to like about Sherbrooke's connection with the Goannas (Aussie Deaf Team) and no doubt it will take time to gel - so maybe the Sharks here in a close one.

Wallan enters the Big V and face Mornington in their first ever game, a tough task given what we know the Breakers are capable of if they're up and firing. Hard to tip the home team as we get accustomed to what the Panthers bring to the table.

Mildura is down a division and ready to tango, taking on Altona to open the season. Calvin Henry is reported to be back again and if so he should rip this game apart (and this division). Altona can be scratchy at the best of times, we're sure to see some young faces and the Gators always love to shoot from deep range. Always hard to beat the Heat at the Hothouse, so we'll go with the home team here.

Coburg will host Camberwell, the Dragons down from Div 1 and up against a good quality opponent first up. The Giants have some real game-winners and showed some great signs last season, while the Dragons have undergone a transformation and will take some time to settle. Look for Mark Jeffers to keep the tempo up for the Dragons, while Mweemba Maluma again promises to be a leader out at Coburg.

Collingwood, fresh off a finals appearance last season, will be led by Manny Hendrix again and will welcome Craigieburn to get started. The Eagles have copped a heap of injuries in the pre-season and will come in underdone, which might spell trouble. These two battled for a finals berth last season and built a real rivalry in the process. Hard to see the All Stars losing this one. Two games on Sunday starting with Coburg travelling down to Mornington in what should be a good contest. Both teams will be keen to secure two wins first up, and of course avoid two losses. Depending on results from the previous night, this game could be the best of the opening round. Too close to call.

Camberwell brings the opening round to a close with a home game against Wallan - it's a busy weekend for the new guys on the block and a trip to Camberwell on a Sunday is never easy. Down a division, the Dragons will be very keen to make sure this season is a competitive one. Wins have been hard to come by in recent times, so in their first game at home you would think they will throw everything at the Panthers. Hard to know what's in store for Wallan until we have a form line, but that should come sooner rather than later with a couple of tough games for them to start the season.

Predicted winners are bolded below. Good luck for the season, we're underway!

North East vs <b>Pakenham</b>	Sat 7pm	Wodonga Sports & Leisure Centre
<b>Sth Peninsula</b> vs Sherbrooke	Sat 8pm	Hillview Stadium
Wallan vs <b>Mornington</b>	Sat 8pm	RB Robson Stadium
<b>Mildura</b> vs Altona	Sat 8pm	Toyota Hothouse
<b>Coburg</b> vs Camberwell	Sat 8:30pm	Coburg Basketball Stadium
<b>Collingwood</b> vs Craigieburn	Sat 8:30pm	Collingwood College
<b>Mornington</b> vs Coburg	Sun 2pm	Mornington Basketball Stadium
<b>Camberwell</b> vs Wallan	Sun 3pm	Balwyn High School



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