



# RD 1 - PREVIEW

## STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WOMEN

Season 2017 tips-off with arguably the league's greatest rivalry when Diamond Valley and Eltham clash in an intriguing opener. Both teams have undergone plenty of changes, Bec Cole is a massive in for the Wildcats, while WNBL teammate Kasey Burton has been on fire for the Eagles during the pre-season. Always hard to tip a winner first-up, but if Cole and a returning (player-coach) Katrina Hibbert get going, look out.

The Sharks will welcome SCW newcomers Sunbury and if you believe all the hype then the Jets will put on a great show following their unbeaten title-winning season in D1W last year. Britt Carter and Kaitlyn Mileto are both back for the home team, along with Jamilee Pearce, forming a very strong trio, and they'll need to fire given the Sharks are without some quality young talent who are now showing their class in the collegiate system. The Jets have loaded up and have plenty of class, but Sth Peninsula's big three will keep the visitors honest. Expect a very close game first up with the home team edging out the highly-fancied Jets.

Hume City will roll-out some new faces in an opening round clash with a young Bulleen outfit. Lauren Pearce will be busy with her football commitments (still no word on whether or not she will play Big V this season), so the pressure will be on others to step-up for the Boomers. Could be a long season for the Bulleen crew so this is a good test to open up with. The Broncos will start red-hot favourites in this one and should claim a good win.

Sunday starts with Waverley and Knox going head-to-head in the game of the round. Both teams are expected to be a force this season and given they stay fit and healthy, the Falcons and Raiders will be right there at the business end. Waverley has gone on a recruiting spree and loaded up with a view to being a championship contender - Kelly Bowen, Jackie Vanderzaag, Renae Mokky and Sarah Yousef are four quality players to add to Tegan Cunningham. For the Raiders, defence will again be a hallmark of their game. New imports are expected to make an immediate impact, while Bec Ott is coming off a successful debut WNBL season and will be a force back at this level. The Falcons will start slight favourites, but don't be surprised if Knox get the edge with superior defence.

Sunbury backs up with a game back at home, welcoming an undersized McKinnon to The Hanger. A big crowd will be on hand with the Jets unveiling their D1W championship banner from last season. The Cougars have two very good imports in Ariel Thomas and Morgan Pullens, but they lack some height in what looms as a challenge they'll have to face all season long. Expect the Jets to get the points here.

The opening round closes with Warrandyte hosting Ringwood in another game that always has a bit of feeling between close neighbours. The Venom have some returning young guns led by Mollie Burke, but Meg Dargan will take on a huge workload with Nicole Romeo yet to return from her European gig. The Hawks have undergone a huge transformation over the off-season after a number of players upped and left to join the Falcons. Inez Lie will get her chance to flourish this season, all reports have been talking up some quality imports for the Hawks, and it would take a very brave person to tip against them in this opening game. Hawks to win.

Diamond Valley vs Eltham  
 Sth Peninsula vs Sunbury  
 Hume City vs Bulleen  
 Waverley vs Knox  
 Sunbury vs McKinnon  
 Warrandyte vs Ringwood

Sat 6pm  
 Sat 6pm  
 Sat 8pm  
 Sun 12:30pm  
 Sun 2pm  
 Sun 2:30pm

Diamond Valley Sports & Fitness  
 Hillview Stadium  
 Broadmeadows Basketball Stadium  
 Waverley Basketball Centre  
 Boardman Stadium  
 Warrandyte Sports Complex



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