



WACA

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
CRICKET ASSOCIATION

WA FEMALE CRICKET REPORT

2019/2020 Season

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INTRODUCTION

The 2019/2020 cricket season has seen some tremendous milestones and goals achieved in the Female Cricket space. From Cricket Blast all the way through to the A Grade Premier Cricket Women's competition, cricket for women and girls in Western Australia is breaking new ground every season. The introduction of the U11s Perth Scorchers Girls League competition, Perth Scorchers Women's League competitions and the Premier Cricket Youth League competition have bridged the gaps that existed in the Female Cricket Pathway prior to the 2018/2019 season. We are now beginning to see the positive impact of these opportunities across the community.

This season we have seen the first ever Women's Big Bash League (WBBL) standalone season with 3,219 attendees during the opening weekend (1st, 2nd & 3rd November 2019). We were also fortunate enough to host five high-energy matches for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup over three action packed days from 24th – 26th February 2020 at the WACA Ground, and had the highest ever recorded attendance for a women's cricket event in WA with 5,280 people. Another season highlight was the '*Shaping Female Cricket in WA*' Forum which took place prior to the season start, allowing administrators, coordinators and coaches of female teams and clubs from both Community Cricket and Premier Cricket an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of developing female programs, network, and hear from leaders in Female Australian Cricket including Belinda Clark AM, Leah Poulton and Lisa Keightley.

The purpose of this report is to outline seasonal statistics for club-based semi-competitive and competitive cricket, as well as providing comparisons from last season to the end of the 2019/2020 season. It will be used to shape conversations into next season with clubs about approaches to growing the game for women and girls as well as assist in identifying trends and areas to focus on.

The following information details findings that were gathered impartially and through data accessible to WACA staff via the MyCricket database. Data collected throughout this period and provided in the following pages has been collected in such a way to not breach the Privacy Act. Only teams and competitions that were registered through MyCricket have been included in this data. Please also note that this is purely capturing pathway cricket – social cricket programs, school programs and other participation opportunities are excluded from this data.

CONTENTS PAGE

WA Female Cricket Competitions	Page 4
Community Cricket	Page 5
• Woolworths Cricket Blast	Page 6
• Perth Scorchers Girls League U11s	Page 7
• Perth Scorchers Girls League U13s	Page 8
• Perth Scorchers Girls League U15s	Page 9
• Perth Scorchers Girls League U18s	Page 10
• Perth Scorchers Women's League	Page 11
• Country	Page 12
Premier Cricket	Page 13
• Youth League	Page 14
• B Grade Women's	Page 15
• A Grade Women's	Page 16
Summary	Page 17
Future Planning	Page 18

WA Female Cricket Competitions

WA FEMALE CRICKET PLAYER PATHWAY 2019/20

EDUCATION/ YEAR LEVEL	AGE*	COMMUNITY CRICKET						PREMIER CRICKET	
		WWCB	U11	U13	U15	U18	PSWL (17+)	PCYL (U17)	A / B (16+)
Tertiary	18+	X	X	X	X		✓	X	✓
Yr 12/Tertiary	17	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Yr 11/12	16	X	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Yr 10/11	15	X	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	X
Yr 9/10	14	X	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	X
Yr 8//9	13	X	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	X
Yr 7/8	12	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Yr 6/7	11	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Yr 5/6	10	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Yr 4/5	9	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X
Yr 1-4	5-8	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

COMMUNITY CRICKET

The growth of girls and women participating in cricket in the 2019/2020 season has been extremely positive, with some incredible highlights along the way. Starting the season off at the end of the PlayCricket week was the All Girls Can Carnival which saw over 450 community members stream into the WACA Ground to celebrate girls and women playing cricket. Similar events have managed to spread awareness of opportunities for women and girls, with some detailed planning having gone into a Term 1 Master Blaster Girls Program (which unfortunately did not run due to COVID-19) as well as trialing some innovative concepts that were created at the Girl Jam national workshop in May 2019.

The Perth metropolitan area has seen a huge growth in junior girls' teams, up from 65 teams in the 2018/2019 season to 97 teams this season, and 856 girls playing across the region. 234 girls only played in boys or men's community competitions across WA this season, 101 of who played in metropolitan WA (remaining 133 in the country). Of these 234, 191 are 18 years or younger (83 of the 191 are from the country and 108 are from the Perth metropolitan area). Country WA is yet to see a female-only junior club competition, but this will continue to be the primary focus into next season. The senior women's programs in both the Perth metropolitan area and the country have seen some excellent success, with country growth being seen particularly in the Mid-West, South West and into the Great Southern; the hope is to see this momentum transfer into the junior girls' space into next season. Another participation involvement opportunity for senior women is the Sunset Scorchers social cricket program. This season saw three centres (Perth CC with 96, Midland Guildford JCA with 48 & Quinns Rocks CC with 32), giving a total of 176 participants.

Following the season review, there were 2,500 Female Community Cricket participants in total this season across WA. The 2019/2020 season brags some tremendous milestones achieved in the Female Community Cricket space and is looking to see the fruits of this labour into the coming seasons.

CRICKET BLAST

The Woolworths Cricket Blast Program has seen some good growth in the girls' participation numbers from the 2018/2019 season to the 2019/2020 season. As evident in Table 1, both programs have seen a 27% and a 52% growth in player numbers respectively for the Junior Blaster and Master Blaster Programs across WA.

TABLE 1

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Junior Blaster Participants	569	727
Total Master Blaster Participants	388	592
TOTALS	957	1,319

Some new initiatives were planned to drive up participation in the Master Blaster program where historically female numbers have been less than satisfactory. As a fall out of COVID-19, most of these initiatives had to be cancelled but they will likely be carried over into coming seasons to continue to direct attention to this space.

The on-ground opportunities for Woolworths Cricket Blast participants at Big Bash games as well as the Test Match and the ICC T20 Women's World Cup throughout the 2019/2020 season provided an invaluable engagement opportunity both with the children and the parents involved in the program, and continues to be an effective incentive for ongoing participation in the program.

PSGL U11s

The U11s competition this season has been the age group with the largest growth from previous seasons since its inception in 2018/2019. As seen below, the 2018/2019 season was the first we saw an U11s competition established – this season, we now have three U11s competitions, 24 teams and 170 girls across the Perth Metropolitan area.

TABLE 2

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	6	24
Total Participants	58	170

This shows a 300% growth in number of teams from last season and we are expecting a steadier growth into next season. With the ages in this competition ranging from eight to 11 years old, the average age across all three competitions was 9.49 years, with the individual averages being 9.67 in Central Junior Cricket Association (CJCA), 9.24 in North West Metropolitan Cricket Association (NWMCA) and 9.48 in the South East Junior Metropolitan Cricket Association (SEMJCA).

There are six players participating in U11s who are also participating in another junior girls' competition – all six of which are also playing in U13s girls Perth metropolitan competitions. There are no players in U11s who are also participating in a Premier Cricket competition, as they are not eligible by age.

PSGL U13s

The U13s age group this season boasts the largest participation numbers, with 386 girls participating across the six competitions in the Perth Metropolitan area (each junior association administered their own competitions – Central Junior Cricket Association, Midland Guildford Junior Cricket Association, North West Metropolitan Cricket Association, Peel Junior Cricket Association, South East Metropolitan Junior Cricket Association & South West Metropolitan Junior Cricket Association).

TABLE 3

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	39	43
Total Participants	302	386

As pictured in Table 3, there has been a 27% growth in participation in the U13s girls' competition from last season to this season, with 25% of these U13s players participating in the NWMCA U13s competition. The ages of participants ranged from 8-14 years with the average age being 11.28 years (only two 14-year-olds participated, one each from the NWMCA and CJCA).

There are 32 players who also participated in another community competition, the breakdown of this is below in Table 4.

TABLE 4

	CJCA	MGJCA	NWMCA	PJCA	SEMJCA	SWMJCA	TOTAL
Total Participants in >1 Community Girls Competition in U13s	4	3	8	1	7	9	32

Of these 32 players, one player participated in the U13s competitions for both PJCA and SWMJCA. Six players participated in an U11s competition and 23 players participated in U15s as well as U13s.

There are no players in U13s who are also participating in a Premier Cricket competition, 12 year olds can be permitted by application only.

PSGL U15s

The WACA, SWMJCA and SEMJCA were the three associations to administer the U15s Perth metropolitan competitions this season, with a total of 278 players (139 in the WACA competition, 71 in the SEMJCA and 68 in the SWMJCA). With 13 teams in the WACA competition, seven teams in the South East and five teams in the South West, there was some growth from the 2018/19 season seeing some strong numbers come up from the previous season's U13s competitions. See Table 5 for a summary of the U15s numbers.

TABLE 5

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	18	25
Total Participants	203	278

The average age for the U15s girls across the Perth metropolitan was 13.11 years with the youngest player and oldest player being 10 and 16 years respectively. The breakdown of the cross over between players and associations is below (the WACA administered a central competition which included teams from CJCA, MGJCA & NWMCA (the SWMJCA had one team from PJCA):

TABLE 6

	CJCA	MGJCA	NWMCA	PJCA	SEMJCA	SWMJCA	TOTAL
Total Participants in >1 Community Girls Competition in U15s	3	2	5	0	10	10	30
Total Participants in U15s Also Playing Premier Cricket	6	9	10	7	13	9	54

Of the total cross-age group participants, 23 also participated in an U13s competition, six also participated in the U18s competition, and one player played for two separate clubs in the U15s competition (Ellenbrook Rangers CC & Bassendean-Mt Lawley Inglewood). 54 players participated in both an U15s competition and a Premier Cricket Competition (50 in Youth League, three in B Grade and one in A Grade). There were 13 over-age players (twelve 15 year-olds and one 16 year-old) who were granted dispensations to play in an U15s competition.

PSGL U18s

The U18s girls age group continues to be where we see the highest percentage of young girls withdrawing from community sport, and this will be a continued area of focus into coming seasons. With five teams across the Perth metropolitan area, the WACA administered this competition centrally, with the following clubs and numbers represented in the competition – Whitfords JCC (11), Wembley DJCC (10), South Perth JCC (11), Ascot JCC (11) & Bicton JCC/Bateman JCC (12).

The competition involved two different formats being played, with all pre-Christmas matches being the standard Stage 2 T20 girls' rules. Following Christmas, the U18s girls played a 30 over format and data gathered from this will be used by the CJCC to shape conversations about any updates or changes to this age group moving forwards. Table 7 highlights the breakdown of the year on year growth for the U18s girls' competition.

TABLE 7

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	6	5
Total Participants	62	55

With the ages in the U18s competition ranging from 13 to 17 years old, the average age came in at 15.33 years – there were only two 13-year-olds, one each from Whitfords JCC and South Perth JCC. Regarding cross-level participation, there were the six girls who also played in an U15s community competition. There was a substantially higher proportion of players in this competition who also played in a Premier Cricket competition, as laid out in the table below. Of the 40 players who also played in Premier Cricket, 10 of them played A Grade.

TABLE 8

	Whitfords JCC	Wembley DJCC	South Perth JCC	Ascot JCC	Bicton/Bateman	TOTAL
Total Participants Also Playing Premier Cricket	8	9	9	8	6	40

PERTH SCORCHERS WOMEN'S LEAGUE

As the Perth Scorchers Women's League (PSWL) has now completed its second full season, the competition has had huge exponential growth in a short period of time. The completed season ran in split competition format with Spring and Summer competitions fixtured to run for six weeks with two weeks of finals. Both competitions were divided into a PSWL North and PSWL South competition, with 11 teams in the North and 10 teams in the South. Out of the 292 players who participated in the 2019/2020 PSWL season, 70 of them were between the ages of 23-28 with the average age being 37.14 years in the PSWL North competition and 21.90 years in the PSWL South competition, therefore giving an overall average age of 29.87 years. The ages ranged from 14 years to 62 years old (the 14-year-old was not played legally – the youngest legal player was 15).

TABLE 9

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	7	21
Total Participants	95	292

Players who also participated in other competitions are outlined in Table 10 which identifies overlaps with Female Premier Cricket A and B Grade players (out of two players who also participated in A Grade matches one did not return to the PSWL competitions after playing for A Grade and the other started their season in A Grade and made the move to PSWL for the remainder of their season).

TABLE 10

PREMIER CLUB	Subiaco-Floreat CC	Midland-Guildford CC	Perth CC	Melville CC	TOTAL
Total Participants Also Playing Premier Cricket	8	1	9	1	19

There were seven players who also participated in junior girls' community cricket, from either U15s or U18s competitions.

COUNTRY

Regional WA is beginning to see some steady growth in the female space. Although there remain no junior girls-only competitions, there are more girls playing in the country now than ever before and we are seeing substantial growth in the senior community women's competition.

TABLE 11

Number of Players	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Mid-West	15	87
Wheatbelt	19	22
Great Southern	17	18
South West	99	122
North West	62	87
Goldfields	15	12
*Peel	51	104
TOTAL	278	452

**Only Peel CA senior women's numbers (all junior numbers are counted in metropolitan data for the Peel JCA).*

Of the 452 female players in the country this season, 289 were 18 years or younger with the remaining 163 players sitting in the 19 to 59 age bracket. With all the girls aged 18 or under participating in either junior boys, senior men's and/or senior women's competitions, there are currently four official senior women's competitions to participate in with either no minimum age limit or a loose age limit of around 13 years old (Mid-West, South West, North West & Peel).

There are 232 women and girls participating in a senior women's competition across country WA, with 72% of them being 18 years or younger. There are also three country female players who travel to play in a Premier Cricket competition as well. With seven girls participating in both a senior women's competition as well as a boys or men's competition, this means there are 225 female country cricketers with senior women's competitions as their only involvement. There are approximately another 204 female numbers participating in club programs who are not captured on MyCricket (inclusive of Sunset Scorchers as it is a dominant female program in the country).

PREMIER CRICKET

The Female Premier Cricket competition held another successful season in 2019/20. All three grades (A Grade, B Grade & Youth League) had a fixtured split competition with T20 taking place from October through to December and the One Day (50 Over/40 Over) competition from January through to March. Seven clubs were involved this season with a total of 16 teams participating across the three grades.

The T20 Competition saw its first ever Super Over, occurring in the B Grade final, as well as funded livestreaming of all three grand finals being a huge success. Unfortunately, due to the events following COVID-19, the A & B Grade One-Day Grand Finals were unable to be played, however the inaugural Youth League 40 Over Grand Final went ahead.

2019/20 saw an overall growth in the competition of 24%, whereby 313 players participated across the three grades compared to 253 in the previous year. Perth Cricket Club was added to the B Grade competition which allowed for a four team A Grade competition, six team B Grade competition and six team Youth League competition.

Further data was explored and has been outlined throughout this report identifying that all seven Premier Cricket clubs have at least one link with a Community Cricket club, with some having up to five or more across Junior Community Cricket and the PSWL. It is critical these links continue to be encouraged to allow for an effective flow of players between the competitions, ensuring all female players are captured in an age and skill appropriate competition.

Of the 15 WNCL contracted players, 14 participated in A Grade Premier Cricket with one player also playing one Youth League match. Of the 16 WBBL contracted players, nine played A Grade when available (no clashes with state matches), with six of the interstate players filling in for one to two games.

YOUTH LEAGUE

The establishment of a full season competition in 2019/20, with both T20 and 40 Over formats being played, enabled girls in this age group (12-17 years of age) a primary Premier Cricket competition to play in, providing regular competitive cricket matches against their peers (see Table 12). This not only developed their game but also best prepared them for representative cricket and extension opportunities.

TABLE 12

Season	2018/19 Matches	2019/20 Matches
T20 Format	5 Rounds + Finals	10 Rounds + Finals
40 Over Format	0	5 Rounds + Finals

Table 13 identifies that the Youth League competition experienced a participation growth of 16% in the 2019/20 season despite no increase in the number of teams participating.

TABLE 13

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	6	6
Total Participants	94	109

Of the 109 Youth League players there were 32 players who also played in the A/B Grade competition, 91 players who played in the PSG (U18s & U15s only) and 17 players who played in boys/mixed Community Cricket. The average age of players participating in the T20 Youth League competition was 14.36 years of age and 14.13 in the 40 Over format. Both formats saw the 14-15-year-olds representing the greatest percentage of players at over 50%. There were seven players whose only involvement in cricket was Youth League (either 40 over or T20).

B GRADE WOMEN'S

B Grade saw the addition of a new female team from Perth Cricket Club in the 2019/20 season. There were still six teams in the competition with both the T20 and 40 Over formats having 10 rounds and a Grand Final fixtured. Table 14 below identifies that the B Grade competition experienced a participation growth of 11% in the 2019/20 season, despite no increase in the number of teams participating.

TABLE 14

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	6	6
Total Participants	176	195

Of the 195 B Grade players there were 85 players who also played in another Premier Cricket competition (A Grade or Youth League), 20 players played in the U18s PSG, two players played in the U15s PSG and 17 players played in the PSWL. Last season there were no players that participated in both PSWL and Premier Cricket. Table 15 highlights where links evolved in 2019/20 season.

TABLE 15

Club Links (B Grade & PC)	Ascot CC	Warwick Greenwood CC	Wembley Districts CC	Applecross CC
Melville	-	-	-	1
Perth	9	-	-	-
Subiaco-Floreat	-	5	2	-

The average age of players participating in the T20 B Grade competition was 24.18 years of age and 24.61 in the 40 Over format. Both formats saw the 16-18-year olds representing the greatest percentage of players, followed closely by the 23-30 year olds, both at around 25-30% of players.

A GRADE WOMEN'S

The A Grade competition reduced to four teams this season. 2018/19 statistics identified an insufficient size of the player pool to sustain a talented and competitive A Grade competition, therefore highlighting the need to reduce the size.

Moving to a four-team competition allowed for a nine round fixture which saw each team play each other three times, followed by a Grand Final decider in both the T20 and 50 Over formats. Table 16 below identifies that the A Grade competition experienced a reduction in total number of players by 8% from the 2019/20 season, but when taking into consideration the loss of one team, there was a 6% increase in the number of participants per team.

TABLE 16

	2018/19 Season	2019/20 Season
Total Teams	5	4
Total Participants	115	106

Of the 106 A Grade players there were 66 players who also played in another Premier Cricket competition (B Grade or Youth League), 11 players played in U18s PSGl and two players played in the PSWL. One of the players who participated in the PSWL started in A Grade but finished her season in the PSWL, whereas the second player began her season in the PSWL and ended the season playing A Grade. Both situations are positive examples of how Premier Cricket and PSWL Clubs can work together to guide players to find the best competition to suit their age, skill level and intent.

The average age of players participating in the T20 A Grade competition was 21.28 years of age and 21.54 in the 50 Over format. Both formats saw the 23-30 year olds representing the greatest percentage of players at around 33%, followed closely by the 16-18 year olds at around 25-30% of players.

SUMMARY

The review of the 2019/2020 season has seen a large data mapping project as a joint Community Cricket and Premier Cricket undertaking in order to take a combined approach to growing cricket for women and girls across the full Female Cricket Pathway in WA. These statistics have been analysed and shared to continue to enhance the competitions and assist in future decision-making. Table 17 below provides a summary of the 2019/2020 season data for all Female Cricket Competitions in WA.

TABLE 17

CATEGORIES	FEMALE CRICKET NUMBERS
Female cricketers who played in 18/19 but not in 19/20	473
Female cricketers who are new to cricket in 19/20 (have not played in past 5 years)	856
Female cricketers who were retained from 18/19 to 19/20	793
*Total Female Cricket Players in WA in the 2018/2019 Season	2,222
*Total Female Cricket Players in WA in the 2019/2020 Season	2,813

**Inclusive of Woolworths Cricket Blast girls' numbers – other categories exclude WWCB girls' numbers.*

The 2019/2020 season has seen some wonderful highlights as well as some difficult challenges, none much bigger than the Coronavirus pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 will remain for some time, with the consequences including a shortened 2019/2020 season (predominantly cancelled finals and final rounds), the cancellation of end of season events, club wind-ups and end of season review meetings cancelled, the upcoming 2020/2021 season shortened, and more. As a community we have adapted as best we can, utilizing online platforms and video conferencing where possible to adhere to government and WACA requirements. Although it was not the end to the season anyone had anticipated, cricket volunteers, players and staff across the whole of WA will look to the future to create new opportunities and maintain the momentum that has been building throughout this season.

FUTURE PLANNING

Whilst the review of the 2019/20 data set shows a healthy level of participation growth in Female Cricket within Western Australia, the WACA cautions stakeholders to be too optimistic about growth of Female teams in organised competitions.

For growth and expansion to be truly achievable, a measured approach needs to be taken to ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of Female Cricket. Moving into the 2020/21 cricket season, the WACA will be looking to create a Female Premier Cricket Expansion plan as well as a Community Cricket long-term growth and sustainability plan that would allow for Female Cricket in WA to grow sustainably over the next five to 10 years.

Female Premier Cricket needs to provide the stretch opportunity for the most talented community cricket players; finding the right balance in levels of participation and both standards of Female Cricket are crucially important to providing the optimal experience for these participants. Too many participants at a Premier Cricket level will dilute the experience and not foster the development of participants – too few will see Premier Cricket become far too elitist and create a bottleneck, not allowing talent to develop.

Female Community Cricket will increase its focus towards the entry level programs and points of entry into the Female Cricket pathway in which we see a large influx of players new to the sport. This focus will ensure that in five to 10 years' time, the WACA will be in the best possible position to make highly informed and data-supported decisions with sustainability and development of the Female Cricket Pathway at its heart.

The WACA is committed to working with the Community Cricket Junior Council and the WA Female Cricket Council to ensure Female Cricket grows appropriately in the future.