

## ***Telkom Netball League Gears Up for Action in Johannesburg!***

The City of Johannesburg is set to host the Telkom Netball League (TNL) from 26th April to 19th May 2024 at the Standard Bank Arena.

This announcement was made during the league's launch event on 11 April 2024, where the 16 participating teams were unveiled.

In his address, Cllr Lubabalo Magwentshu, Member of the Mayor's Committee for Community Development, hailed Johannesburg as the epicentre of Netball. This announcement follows the recent Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Johannesburg and Netball South Africa, underscoring a commitment to women's sports.

MMC Magwentshu stated, "We advocate for equal pay, sponsors, endorsements, and media exposure for female players. Together with the Gauteng Provincial Government, we pledge our support to netball."

The collaboration between the City of Johannesburg, the Gauteng Provincial Government, and Netball South Africa underscores a strong dedication to fostering women's sports. With an emphasis on providing equal opportunities, support, and recognition, the TNL aims not only to facilitate competitive platforms but also to nurture future talent for the national team.

This league isn't just a casual event; it's a prestigious affair that gathers the top provincial teams, all striving for glory and recognition. Every moment on the court counts, with each match offering players the chance to leave a lasting mark. With scouts keenly observing every play, the competition promises intensity, with potential future proteas poised to shine.

The TNL, which began in 2017 with 10 teams representing South Africa's provinces, has seen remarkable growth, expanding to accommodate 16 teams. This milestone stands as a testament to Netball South Africa's commendable efforts and achievements in advancing the sport. The participating teams are:

1. Limpopo, Baobabs
2. Limpopo, Lilies
3. Free State, Crinums
4. Free State, Sonobomo
5. Northern Cape, Diamonds
6. Gauteng South, Fireballs
7. Gauteng North, Jaguars

8. Mpumalanga, Sunbirds
9. Western Cape, Stings
10. Western Cape, Tornados
11. KwaZulu-Natal, Kingdom Stars
12. KwaZulu-Natal, Kingdom Queens
13. Eastern Cape, Aloes
14. Eastern Cape, Comets
15. North-West, Flames
16. North -West, Tsukudu.

All 16 Teams are set to gather in Johannesburg, creating an atmosphere of anticipation and excitement for what promises to be an exhilarating league. It is within this gathering of Teams that the future Proteas, the pride of the nation, will emerge and display their exceptional talents.

In appreciating the impact of TNL, coach Jenny Van Wyk said, "I have loved TNL. It has assisted to create sustainability of the product. Now we have players that prepare for the whole year because the TNL is going to happen." This gives players assurance and consistency to keep on playing.

The City of Johannesburg is urging all individuals to come together and show their support for women in sports, particularly in the realm of netball. It is essential for the community to unite in championing the cause of female athletes and promoting gender equality within the sporting world.

Dr Karabo Semenya