

MEDIA RELEASE

BASKETBALL ACT ANNOUNCE HEAD COACHES FOR COLES EXPRESS NBL1 EAST DEBUT SEASON

With the Canberra Gunners and Canberra Nationals recently confirmed for the debut season of the Coles Express NBL1 East in 2022, Basketball ACT (BACT) is excited to announce Head Coach appointments for both teams.

Natalie Hurst (Canberra Nationals) and Peter Herak (Canberra Gunners) return to their respective Head Coach roles in 2022, after a successful, but interrupted, 2021 Waratah League season.

Natalie Hurst, former Canberra Capital and current WNBL Assistant Coach with Adelaide Lightning, will once again look to find the perfect balance between a host of young, exciting local talent and proven top-tier stars. In the 2021 Waratah League season, the Canberra Nationals showed positive signs that this approach was working with a 7-2 (77.8%) win/loss record prior to the 2021 season being shutdown due to COVID, and border restrictions. When asked about how the Nationals are looking to take the step up to the Coles Express NBL1 East competition, Hurst said, *"We are excited to be part of the Coles Express NBL1 East for the upcoming season as it brings a lot of excitement for our girls to see us playing in the top league. Our philosophies and mindset won't change, because as a team we want to be the best we can be in whatever league we play in. Our playing style will obviously depend on the final squad, but as the girls know, I like to play a quick style offensively with lots of ball movement and an attacking mindset for everyone. We will also be looking to keep the team roster as local as possible, as I believe we have the talent in the region to compete in NBL1 East."*

Peter Herak, entering his second season as Head Coach of the Canberra Gunners, saw the team rise to a strong position in 2021 with a 7-5 (58.3%) win/loss record prior to the season shutdown. When discussing the move to the Coles Express NBL1 East, Herak said *"The players and coaches are all very excited about stepping up to NBL1 East for the 2022 season. We are looking forward to challenging ourselves against some of the best up and coming players in the country. Our squad is starting to come together in preparation for next season and we are looking to try to recruit a number of our high performing former local players to come home and play for the Gunners in 2022."*

Both the Canberra Nationals and Canberra Gunners are in the process of finalising their playing squads, with player announcements expected in the near future.

With the Coles Express NBL1 East competition joining NBL1 North, NBL1 South, NBL1 Central and NBL1 West, and all games being livestreamed across the season, it is set to be one of the biggest years of basketball in the ACT.

For further information, please contact BACT Communications and Media Officer, David Lane at david.lane@basketballact.com.au

End