



## MEDIA RELEASE

**Embargoed:** 8.00am AEST, Wednesday 27 May 2020

### 2020-21 CHEMIST WAREHOUSE WNBL SEASON STRUCTURE

*Tip off scheduled for November 2020*

Basketball Australia can today confirm that the 2020-21 Chemist Warehouse WNBL Season will comprise of 21 regular season games per team, with the opening round scheduled for 20 – 22 November 2020 and the final round to be contested 3 – 6 March 2021.

Following the regular season, the Semi Finals Series will take place across the period 12 – 21 March 2021, with the Grand Final Series to occur between 25 – 31 March 2021.

In consultation with the WNBL Commission, Basketball Australia made the decision to delay the commencement to the 2020-21 season to align with the expected state and federal governments COVID-19 restrictions regarding return to play guidelines for elite sport and public movement between states and territories. With the 2020-21 season scheduled to end in late March, this will also benefit the Chemist Warehouse Opals' preparations for the postponed 2020 Tokyo Olympics, now set to start on 23 July 2021.

As part of the financial modelling for 2020-21 Chemist Warehouse WNBL season, Basketball Australia can also confirm that it has planned on a scenario of games being contested without fans in attendance until Christmas, due to COVID-19 restrictions on mass gatherings.

On confirming the 2020-21 season structure, **Basketball Australia Head of Women in Basketball, Lauren Jackson** said: *"To enable the league and clubs to operate their businesses accordingly and to give fans and broadcasters clarity over the new season, we are prepared to start the 2020-21 Chemist Warehouse WNBL season without fans should current COVID-19 restrictions on mass gatherings remain in place.*

*"Should restrictions ease over the coming months, we will adapt accordingly with the view to our passionate members and fans being able to attend games when it's safe and viable to do so."*

With revenue set to be impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, a priority for Basketball Australia when confirming the financial model and season structure was to ensure the number of regular season games were not reduced and the current minimum player payment for Australian athletes was maintained.

*“Women’s professional sport in Australia has taken giant leaps forward over recent years and it’s extremely important to Basketball Australia that the WNBL doesn’t regress during these times of global adversity, in fact we want the opposite to occur,” explained Jackson.*

*“Australia is the envy of the basketball world for the quality of talent we produce both on and off the court. With an eye on the Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Women’s Basketball World Cup in Sydney, having a strong domestic league while providing opportunities for our current and emerging talent is our priority.*

*“Basketball Australia and the WNBL Commission are considering other initiatives to further support the league and teams during these unprecedented times, while ensuring the integrity of Australia’s longest-running elite women’s sporting competition is not compromised,” concluded Lauren Jackson.*

**2021-21 Chemist Warehouse WNBL Season Summary**

- Opening Round: 20 – 22 November 2020
- Final Round: 3 – 6 March 2021
- Semi Finals Series: 12 – 21 March 2021
- Grand Final Series: 25 – 31 March 2021
- Each team will play 21 x Regular Season games

Basketball Australia can also confirm that an End of Season WNBL Awards Dinner will take place in March, with city and venue to be announced.

Broadcast details and the fixture for the 2020-21 Chemist Warehouse WNBL Season will be released in due course.

END.

**Media contact:**

Terry Whitaker  
Head of Media & PR  
0405 100 796  
terry.whitaker@australia.basketball