

21<sup>st</sup> July 2008

## Under 18 Country Men Adopt A Player



Last week during the heat of the Basketball Australia U18 National Championships in Ballarat, each team was allocated a local representative player to be a team mascot. It was the mascot's duty to ensure there was plentiful water for the manager, and that the court remained free of water spillages. However for little Thomas Sullivan assigned to the NSW Country Men's team, the week was not full of boring lackey jobs, instead Tom grew to be one of the U18 Men's Country coaching and managing staff as well as one of the players.

Becoming a crucial part of the Men's Country side, Tom was invited to accompany the team to dine with their parents at the beginning of the week. After a few days in, Tom was initiated into the New South Clan when he received a NSW Country State Team tracksuit jacket. Immediately Tom made sure that his newfound role models signed what would become a material reminder of an amazing week.

On the second last night of the Championships, Thomas 'T-time' Sullivan's representative U14 side played a match against local rivals Werribee. Here was the Country boys chance to demonstrate how much T-time meant to them, and how the contribution made to the team was greatly appreciated. Turning up to the deserted stands at Wendoree Sports Centre, the Country

boys completely transformed the atmosphere stadium, lifting T-time's game so much that he hardly came off the court. Fitted with their fixated determination for Tom to have a good time, the team arranged special signs which were held up high with pride whenever T-time's game shone. In fairness and good sportsmanship, the team also congratulated the opposing side where credit was due, displaying the true Country spirit.

By the end of the week, the strength, dignity and compassion shown by the NSW Country Men's State team won the respect and admiration of little Thomas and his family, and converted a possible rival Victorian Country player into a NSW Country player through and through.

*Courtesy of Simon Cross*

**BASKETBALL NSW PRESS RELEASE**

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