

1st August, 2009

ROLLERS CLAIM GOLD AT WORLD CHALLENGE- WEST SYDNEY RAZORBACKS REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR ON FIRE

It was the Beijing Paralympics all over again as the Australian Rollers downed Canada to take the Gold, 77-48 at the Rollers World Challenge at Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre tonight.

Rollers Captain Brad Ness led all scorers in tonight's final with 21 points while West Sydney Razorbacks representative Nick Taylor added 14 points in just his fourth game for Australia and Eveson bagged 13 points and grabbed a game high nine rebounds.

The Australians' dominance of the event was rewarded with two players named to the tournament All-Star Five; forward Justin Eveson and guard Michael Hartnett. Japan's big destroyer Reo Fujimoto and guard Shingo Fujii, and Bronze medallist Great Britain's Captain Jon Pollock rounded out the five.

Eveson's night was capped off with the prestigious 2008 Sandy Blythe Medal for International Wheelchair Player of the Year for his efforts in leading the Rollers at the Paralympic Games in Beijing.

Rollers Head Coach Ben Ettridge said the Canadians put up a tough fight.

"They went away and did their homework after our first game and it made us make the adjustments and go to plans B and C which is why we're here," Ettridge said.

"It was just an outstanding effort all the way through."

Ettridge went with his most experienced side when selecting the final twelve players to take the court tonight but had a new-look starting five.

"We went back and had a look and that new combination worked really well for us. We also knew that Canada would be preparing for the usual suspects so we thought we would throw a curve ball and the boys did really well," Ettridge said.

Ettridge gave Bill Latham, Tristan Knowles and Brett Stibners their first start and the Canadians took advantage of the younger line-up to steal a quick seven point lead.

The young guns worked hard to get back within two points before Brad Ness, Justin Eveson, Shaun Norris and Michael Hartnett were brought on. The rest of the quarter went all the Aussies' way as they forged a five point lead by the first break, 20-15.

Eveson and Ness lit up from the outside in the second quarter as the Australians worked hard to get their big men free. Despite losing the rebound contest for the quarter, the Rollers had extended their lead to nine points at halftime, 39-30.

Canada came out in the third quarter firing with David Durepos opening the scoring in with a huge three. Yvon Rouillard put up his own long bomb and the Canadians had closed the gap to just three points.

Australia's guards took on the Canadian forwards, frustrating Adam Lancia and getting crucial turnovers and rebounds as the Rollers took charge again and raced away to a 14 point lead at the last break, 58-44.

Ness kept a cool head in a tough situation as he barrelled through the paint to get a hard-earned basket and buried Canada's hopes of a comeback.

Five-time Paralympian Troy Sachs came back on with five minutes remaining to fire up the Aussies and from there it was too easy for the Rollers. The Australians strolled home 33 point victors.

Earlier in the Bronze Medal Game Great Britain overpowered Japan 76-58 led by Pollock with 26 points.

Quarter by quarter:

1: AUS 20 CAN 15
H: AUS 39 CAN 30 (19-15)
3: AUS 58 CAN 44 (19-14)
F: AUS 77 CAN 48 (19-4)

AUSTRALIA 77 (Brad Ness 21, Nick Taylor 14, Justin Eveson 13) bt
CANADA 48 (Yvon Rouillard 14, Adam Lancia 10, David Eng 7)
At Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre

[Rollers World Challenge Official Website](#)

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