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**IWG Captain’s Lunch to honour women’s sport advocacy, with**

**the Rt Hon Helen Clark ONZ and the Hon Grant Robertson**

**Event:**

* IWG Captain’s Lunch 2019
* **Tuesday, 7 May 2019, 1.00pm - 3.00pm**
* Auckland Room, SKYCITY Convention Centre,

Corner Victoria and Federal Streets, Auckland

* Event Page: <https://womeninsport.org.nz/iwg-2018-2022/iwg-captains-lunch-2019/>

**Featuring:**

* Keynote address from the **Hon Grant Robertson**, Minister for Sport & Recreation
* Panel with the **Rt Hon Helen Clark ONZ**, **Dr** **Farah Palmer**, **Scott Bartlett** & **Melodie Robinson**
* Over 20 “Captains” (table hosts) including **Beatrice Faumuina**, **Honey Hireme**, **Adine Wilson**, **Louisa Wall**, **Holly Robinson**, **Maia Jackman** and coaches **Luisa Avaiki** and **Raylene Bates**
* **Nicki Nicol**, Chief Operating Officer of New Zealand Rugby, will be introduced at the event as a newly appointed Board Member for Women in Sport Aotearoa

**Media:**

* Please register attendance with Morgann Price:

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6 May 2019: Tomorrow, the **Rt Hon. Helen Clark ONZ** and the **Hon Grant Robertson** will headline Aotearoa New Zealand’s largest event to date honouring the athletes, coaches and leaders currently working together to create equity of opportunity for women and girls across sport and recreation.

The inaugural IWG Captain’s Lunch has sold-out at a capacity of 220, with attendees including leaders from across sport and business, including **Sport New Zealand**, **High Performance Sport New Zealand**, the **New Zealand Olympic Committee**, **Paralympics New Zealand,** plus **ANZ, Vodafone and Sky Sport**.

Staged in partnership with the Trans – Tasman Business Circle, the luncheon will be hosted by over 20 “Captains”, including Olympian and Commonwealth Games legend **Beatrice Faumuina**; Paralympic silver medallist **Holly Robinson**; Kiwi Ferns Co-Captain, **Honey Hireme**;former Silver Ferns Captain, **Adine Wilson;** former Football Ferns Captain, **Maia Jackman**; and former Black Fern, **Louisa Wall MP.**

The event will raise awareness and funds for leading advocacy and research body, the not-for-profit agency, **Women in Sport Aotearoa, Ngā Wāhine Hākinakina o Aotearoa**. It will also mark a unique anniversary: 25 years since the establishment of the **International Working Group (IWG) on Women and Sport**, the world’s largest network dedicated to empowering women and girls and advancing sport. The IWG Secretariat & Conference 2018-2022 is currently hosted by New Zealand, with Women in Sport Aotearoa as the delivery agent. The Rt Hon Helen Clark is now Patron of both organisations.

**The Rt Hon Helen Clark said:** “Women and girls continue to be underrepresented across all facets of business and sport. Now, more than ever, our nation Aotearoa New Zealand must work together to include everyone, no matter their gender, ethnicity, faith or beliefs, sexual orientation, or their physical abilities. Our leaders must support the drive toward greater diversity and inclusiveness.”

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**Raewyn Lovett, IWG Co-Chair New Zealand, said:** “It is a privilege to be able to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the IWG while it is being hosted by New Zealand. Today also marks exactly 3 years until New Zealand will stage the quadrennial IWG World Conference, 5-8 May 2022, which is expected to attract well over 1,500 global experts on gender equity in sport and physical activity to Auckland.”

**Sharron Lloyd, General Manager New Zealand, Trans-Tasman Business Circle, said:** “SportsConnect is very proud to partner with Women in Sport Aotearoa on this special event to celebrate the IWG. SportsConnect is dedicated to elevating high-performing workplaces and sporting codes and contributing to the business and sport agenda in a supportive and collaborative environment that unites both – which this event will provide for both athletes and the business community attending.”

The **Hon Grant Robertson** will kick off the IWG Captain’s Lunch with a keynote address,followed by an interactive panel moderated by former Black Fern and recently appointed TVNZ General Manager, Sport and Events, **Melodie Robinson**. The panel mixes business and sport leaders together and will include the **Rt Hon Helen Clark**, former Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and former New Zealand Prime Minister. It will also feature **Dr Farah Palmer**, also a former Black Fern, now current Board Member of Sport New Zealand and New Zealand Rugby;along with **Scott Bartlett,** CEO of Kordia, theNew Zealand government-owned telecommunications and broadcast company. The theme of the discussion will be “diverse leadership and its power to drive high performance”.

Women in Sport Aotearoa will also introduce its newest Board Member during the event: **Nicki Nicol**, **Chief Operating Officer of New Zealand Rugby**. Nicol will take her place alongside other leading sports administrators who will “Captain” (host) a table. Since joining New Zealand Rugby in early 2017 as the Chief Financial Officer, Nicol’s role has expanded to reflect a wider organisational focus in the role of Chief Operating Officer. This seeks to ensure that New Zealand Rugby has the right people, capability, tools and frameworks to support the growth and development of Rugby across Aotearoa New Zealand. Nicol also leads the nationwide implementation of the Respect & Responsibility Review findings from 2017, which seeks to create a more respectful and inclusive culture across all of Rugby.

**Nicki Nicol, Women in Sport Aotearoa Board Member, said:** “It is very energising to be involved with Women in sport Aotearoa at a time when we are seeing such growth in women’s sport. The role that it can play to accelerate opportunities for women and girls through sport is very exciting. The IWG World Conference in particular will be a fantastic opportunity to showcase New Zealand’s leadership in women and girls in sport. This is also a catalyst to continue to invest in this key area.”

**Julie Paterson and Sarah Leberman, Co-Founders and Co-Chairs of Women in Sport Aotearoa, said:** “We are very privileged to have attracted a Board Member of Nicki Nicol’s calibre. Women in Sport Aotearoa has grown exceptionally fast in the two years since it was established and much of this has been due to the skill-set and ongoing dedication of our Board Members. Women’s sport has never before had such focus and we are determined to make positive change now for the next generation.”

>> ENDS

**Pictures: Beatrice Faumuina.jpeg:** *NEW DELHI, INDIA - OCTOBER 11: Beatrice Faumuina competes in the women's discus final at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium during day 8 of the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games on October 11, 2010 in New Delhi, India. (Photo by Getty Images)*

**NickiNicol.jpeg:** Nicki Nicol, Chief Operating Officer of New Zealand Rugby, has been newly appointed as a Board Member of Women in Sport Aotearoa.

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**About the International Working Group (IWG) on Women and Sport**

The IWG is the world’s largest network dedicated empowering women and girls and advancing sport. Established in 1994, the IWG advocates for gender equity in sport and physical activity year-round, partnering with key agencies, including UN Women and UNESCO. It developed and remains guardian of the Brighton plus Helsinki 2014 Declaration on Women & Sport, which now has 550+ signatories, and delivers the well-respected IWG Progress Report at the quadrennial IWG World Conference. The IWG administrative function moves every four years and is being hosted by New Zealand 2018-2022.

www.iwgwomenandsport.org

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**About Women in Sport Aotearoa**

Women in Sport Aotearoa, Ngā Wāhine Hākinakina o Aotearoa (WISPA), is Aotearoa New Zealand’s leading research and advocacy group, established in late 2016. It exists to transform sport, ensuring women and girls gain equal opportunity to participate, compete and build careers in sport. Its vision is to see ‘Women and girls valued, visible and influential in sport.’ WISPA is led by Chief Executive Officer, **Rachel Froggatt**, with the support of a Board made up of WISPA co-founders **Sarah Leberman** (Professor, Massey University) and **Julie Paterson** (CEO, Tennis New Zealand), with **Louisa Wall** (former Black Fern and Silver Fern, and MP for Manurewa), **Kirikaiahi Mahutariki** (Executive Manager, Maori Financial Solutions, ASB), **Liz Dawson** (Part owner, Hurricanes), **James Gibson** (CEO, Sir Peter Blake Trust), **Pauline Harrison** (Programme Lead, Women's Sport Leadership Academy) and now **Nicki Nicol** (COO, New Zealand Rugby). WISPA officially became global delivery agent for the International Working Group (IWG) on Women and Sport Secretariat and Conference 2018-2022 in October 2018.

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