

hoop dreams



Teenage basketball sensation Patrick Mills is all set to take on the world.

The World Select team was made up of players from countries such as Greece, Russia, Spain, Brazil, China, Belgium, Senegal and Nigeria. Patrick was proud to be the lone Australia representative in the side. The US team featured top high school players. Playing in his first Summit match, Patrick score eight points, grabbed two rounds and led the side with eight assists.

"When he first arrived at the AIS, Patrick was a player who needed to score a lot of points in every game," Marty says.

"Now he has a greater understanding of the responsibilities of the point guard role, organising and leading the team and getting people the ball.

"At the junior level, players can get away with being really good in just one area, but as they progress they need to develop a more rounded game, and Patrick has done that. His containment on defence, his ball handling and his perimeter game has certainly improved as well as his ability to shoot off the dribble."

Last month, basketball prodigy Patrick Mills took another step closer to his dream when he was included in the Australian men's basketball team training camp – the first of three in the lead up to the International Basketball Federation World Championships.

Selection in the World Select and the Boomers training squad have been just rewards for Patrick's rapid rise through the basketball ranks. In 2003 he won a scholarship to the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), and since then his game has risen to new heights.

Off the court, Patrick has also impressed his coach, who has plenty of faith that Patrick will go on to achieve great things.

The Boomers' 22 man squad attended a training camp held at the Australian Institute of Sport. The camp gave Patrick the opportunity to rub shoulders with the nation's top basketballers, including National Basketball Association (NBA) star Andrew Bogut, and was just the latest in a series of extraordinary achievements for this talented young Indigenous player.

Late last year, Patrick was a part of the AIS men's team which toured the US, playing nine college teams across California. In Game One against Fullerton College, Patrick was the top scorer for Australia, scoring 20 points.

"He is an extremely coachable," he says. "He listens and he's open to suggestions. He's the kind of person people like to be around. He's very charismatic and tries just as hard in the classroom as he does on court."

Earlier this year, Patrick was part of the World Select team which took on the USA at the Nike Hoop Summit in Memphis. The Summit is considered the premier world basketball contest, featuring leading players from around the world aged 19 and under.

Born in Canberra, 17-year-old Patrick comes from a basketball-mad family. His cousin is former basketball star, Danny Morseu.

Patrick now has his sights set on earning a place in the Australian team for the World Championships. And despite only being a teenager, his dreams are closer to becoming a reality than ever before.

Marty Clarke has coached Patrick for the last two years at the AIS, and during that time he's watched Patrick develop into what he believes to be the number one basketball prospect in the country.



ACTIVITY 1: SKIMMING FOR MAIN IDEAS

Look at the heading on page 10 (Hoop Dreams) and the sub-heading next to the heading (Teenage basketball sensation Patrick Mills is all set to take on the world).

Read the first few paragraphs in the report and look at the graphics.

1. Whose “hoop dreams” does the title refer to?

2. How did Patrick Mills take “another step closer to his dream” last month?

3. What opportunities did attending the Boomers’ 22 man training camp give Patrick?

ACTIVITY 2: SCANNING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Read the rest of the report. What were Patrick’s statistics in his first Nike Hoop Summit match?

2. How has Patrick developed as a player after being part of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) men’s team?

3. What aspects of Patrick’s off-court behaviour impress his coach most?



ACTIVITY 3: UNDERSTANDING WORDS IN CONTEXT

Write your own meaning for the words from the article in the boxes below.

(Read the words from the article as well as the sentences around them).

Words from the article	My words that mean the same thing
“basketball prodigy”	
“The camp gave Patrick an opportunity to rub shoulders with the nation’s top basketballers...”	
“Selection in the World Select and the Boomers training squad has been just rewards for Patrick’s rapid rise through the basketball ranks.”	
“He is extremely coachable...”	

ACTIVITY 4: FOLLOWING YOUR DREAMS

Patrick Mills is well on the way to achieving his dream of playing for Australia’s Boomers.

1. What are some of your dreams for the future?

2. What are some things that you can do to help you to achieve them?

FURTHER READING:

Read more about the Boomers, go to Basketball Australia’s website:

www.basketball.net.au