



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, December 29, 2022

### **Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee and Team PNG – Year in Review**

We are half-way through another Olympiad (4 Year Cycle of Games). The excitement and momentum of a packed calendar of games and events commenced in late January with Papua New Guinea receiving and hosting the Queen's Baton Relay in the mighty East Sepik region. The Queen's Baton Relay is a precursor event to the Commonwealth Games which sees the baton carrying the Queen's message passed across all 72 Commonwealth Nations before ending up in the host country and read by the Queen at the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games.

We would like to acknowledge the Honorable Governor of East Sepik Allan Bird, his team, and the people of East Sepik for receiving the Queen's Baton and showcasing one of the many unique cultural environments in Papua New Guinea to the watching global community.

February saw the hosting of a media briefing to advise the local media of our calendar of events. We acknowledge the role that media plays, in all its forms, in telling our stories to the general public and wider global audience. In addition, the Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee (PNGOC) in its capacity as the PNG Commonwealth Games Association announced and congratulated Vavine Yore on being selected as one of 25 women from the Commonwealth, and as a first successful recipient from Papua New Guinea to be awarded the Commonwealth Women's Leadership Program Scholarship in 2022.

Under the Athlete Excellence Program, IBS University renewed its educational sponsorship for Team PNG athletes to take up studies with the IBS College of TVET and IBSU enabling our athletes with formal certification in their chosen field for life after sport. An extremely important partnership for Team PNG which we are grateful for, for our local elite athletes to prepare them for life after active sports and national representative duties.

In March we were fortunate enough to hold our annual Trukai Fun Run auctions in both Lae and Port Moresby. The auctions and Fun Run are key fundraising events of Team PNG where every shirt sold goes towards funding Team PNG's participation at the international multi-sport events for the calendar year. Unfortunately, the world and PNG were still recovering from the devastating effects of the COVID19 pandemic in the early part of 2022 which prevented the staging of the physical Fun Run event for another year. Despite this we are grateful towards event and naming rights sponsor Trukai Industries, local business houses and Papua New Guinea for throwing their support behind Team PNG and purchasing a t-shirt in 2022. We were able to raise K375,000 from both the Lae and Port Moresby auctions.

We are indebted to Trukai Industries for their continued partnership over the last 22 years as the mainstay sponsors of the Trukai Fun Run since 2000. Whilst we look towards future collaborations with Trukai Industries, we would also like to acknowledge the steadfast support with the retail sales

of the t-shirts by the City Pharmacy Group of Companies and Trophy Haus Limited through their respective retail outlets.

On the working front the Secretary General – Auvita Rapilla, along with the Manager for Games and Programs – Asiani Vagi and Senior Accounts Officer Laisani Samson attended the Oceania National Olympic Committee (ONOC) Secretary General's workshop with the theme being enabling effective leadership in Oceania. The capacity building workshop largely consisted of a female orientated audience (90%) signaling the growing trend and intention of increased female leadership, enhancement and equality in the sporting space culminating with the celebration and advocacy of International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

By April we had firmed up our two major fundraising initiatives with the conclusion of the Prime Ministers Corporate Golf Challenge in both Lae and Port Moresby. The major event sponsor The National continued its long term support with 352 branded Polo t-shirts and 300 pieces of microfiber towels for the traditional dual corporate challenges in Lae and Port Moresby. The National has been one of the mainstay sponsors of the event over the years.

We also acknowledge the on-going support of minor sponsors from Toyota, Coca Cola Euro Pacific Partners, Brian Bell, Air Niugini, Coral Sea Hotels, Theodist Ltd, Media Partners, Blue 7 Team and others including supporting sponsors prize Sponsors this year. Thank you to the 26 corporate teams that took part in the Lae leg whilst 46 teams took part in the Port Moresby tourney to bring the total to 72 teams that supported our fundraising event this year and enabled us to raise a total of K240, 000 for Team PNG.

As we ramped up preparations for our first multi-sport event of the year being the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini-Games, we were fortunate enough to have the ongoing support of our family of corporate sponsors such as the major contributors to Team PNG – Kumul Consolidated Holdings with its three-year investment towards Team PNG equivalent to K1million/year, K50,000 commitment from Theodist through to the K150,000 cheque presentation from SP Brewery towards Team PNG before the games.

Come May we finalised our 92 athletes and officials that will be traveling and competing in five (5) of the nine (9) available sports at the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games, with those sports being Athletics, Golf, Tennis, Va'a and Weightlifting. Within the same month, in collaboration with the Australian High Commission through its PacificAus Sports Program we were able to launch and carry out a two-part Sports Science and Sports Medicine Masterclass series. The masterclass series aims to address the critical gap in Sports Science and Sports Medicine in Papua New Guinea by building up the capacity of local sports science and sports medicine practitioners, in particular sports physiotherapists, sports doctors, rehabilitation therapists and strength and conditioning coaches, as part of our 2021-2024 Team PNG Performance Strategy.

In the latter part of May we held the 30<sup>th</sup> Edition of the SP Sports Awards which saw local jump queen and Team PNG elite athlete and Olympian Rellie Kaputin being awarded the Female Athlete of the Year, Male Athlete of the Year went to PNG's Weightlifting sensation Morea Baru, Kumul Petroleum Holdings Limited sponsored PNG Barramundis consecutively winning the Team of the Year award, and National Performance of the Year going to athletics legendary renown Nelson Stone club NEST Athletics.

The Other winners included:

Community Sports Initiate	Gymbad
Junior Male Athlete of the Year	Joshua Porter
Junior Female Athlete of the Year	Amity Alcos
Best Sports Person with a DisAbility	Morea Mararos
Sports Official of the Year	David Yaroeboinen
Sports Media of the Year	The National
Sports Photo of the Year	Wasari Fidelis, Spots Tok Magazine's
People's Choice Award	Papuan Compound Ravens

Mid-Year June started off with our Annual General Assembly (AGA) where we reported on our funds used, progress against our 2021-2024 strategic plan and activities for the previous year as part of our good governance practices. Our key sponsors and stakeholders were present to assess and critique our reports in an open and transparent manner whilst special thanks is accorded to Transparency International representative Bill Doa Neil and PNG Sports Foundation Legal Officer Hannah Singut who independently scrutinized the elections for the positions of Senior Vice President, Female Vice President and Male Vice President. Athletics PNG President Tony Green was re-elected Senior Vice President un-opposed whilst Olympian, PNG Sports Hall of Fame Inductee and Kungfu Wushu Secretary Iammo Launa OBE was re-elected Female Vice President and Badminton PNG President Kinivanagi Karo was elected Male Vice President. All three voted executives will serve a term of four (4) years – up until 2026.

During the June AGA, the Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee launched its inaugural National Olympic Committee order of merit awards. The awards ceremony was delivered as part of the PNGOC's 60th Anniversary celebrations, and will be an annual event, as part of the AGA. We acknowledge and thank the International Olympic Committee for the provision of six (6) trophies which were presented to the six inaugural winners for their outstanding services to the PNG Olympic Committee, Team PNG, and the sports movement nationally and globally. The awardees included Sir Henry ToRobert (Posthumous Award), the longest serving President of the PNGOC (29 Years); Sir Mick Nades, for his passion for education, sport and support for athletes' life after sport which has seen IBS support PNGOC and Team PNG for almost 2 decades; Mel Donald, former Shooting Athlete, current President of Shooting PNG, served on the PNGOC Board from 2004-2020 and saw the successful bid of the 2015 Pacific Games; Tamzin Wardley former PNGOC Treasurer from 2022-2020, former President of PNG Yachting and Sailing, Chef de Mission to multiple Team PNG games, Vice President - Finance of the Pacific Games Council since 2016, and current PNG Weightlifting Treasurer and member of PNGOC Audit & Investment Committee; Sydney Yates, former swimmer and PNG representative, former President of PNG Swimming, former Chairman of Fundraising for the PNGOC for 22 years and current PNGOC Audit and Investment Committee member and advisor; and Sir John Dawanincura, instrumental in building the image, and sustaining the growth of the PNGOC since 1984 as its first paid employee, Secretary General for 26 Years and serving as President of the PNGOC since 2012 until his final term in June 2024.

June also marked the ongoing delivery in country of the Oceania Sports Education Program (OSEP). OSEP is a Pacific led sports education program that aims at increasing the capacity and capability of all those involved in sports through a portfolio of courses ranging from Sports Administration, Community and Development Coach, Advanced Sports Management, Team Management, Strength and Conditioning and Training. In preparation for the 2022 multi-sport games we ran the OSEP Team Managers course to ensure all traveling Team Managers were competent in carrying out their respective responsibilities whilst on Team PNG duties as part of our capacity building responsibilities.

The PNGOC with the support of ExxonMobil PNG was also able to commemorate the Olympic Week with the rest of the Olympic Movement was restricted to NCD, keeping in line with the three (3) Pillars of Olympic Day “Learn, Move and Discover”.

Coinciding with the Olympic Week, Games & Programs Manager, Asiani Vagi attended the 62<sup>nd</sup> International Session for Young Olympic Ambassadors held from 11 to 23 June 2022 in Athens and Ancient Olympia, Greece.

July saw our participation at the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games where Team PNG topped the medal tally with 33 Gold, 28 Silver and 19 Bronze for a total of 80 medals. Strategically participating in five (5) of the nine (9) available sports, we created history by winning the games on foreign soil for the third time ever and in the process were crowned the reigning Pacific Mini-Games Champions. The Pacific Mini-Games is a precursor to the main Pacific Games to be stage in Honiara in the Solomon Islands in 2023. We were able to witness the debut of future Team PNG superstars in athletics such as 19 Year Old 400m specialist Adolf Kauba, 19 Year Old middle distance runner Scholastica Herman, and 200m specialist Leeroy Kamau.

Several weeks after our July crowning as Pacific Mini-Games Champions we announced our merchandise partnership with Jacks of PNG as a corporate partner for 2022-2023. The PNGOC will provide its Team PNG trademark to Jacks of PNG to create an agreed range of Team PNG supporter apparel for the general public to purchase from all Jacks of PNG retail outlets. In addition, the Government of Papua New Guinea, through the PNG Sports Foundation (the government branch of Sports in PNG) came through with a timely cheque presentation of K626,980 prior to Team PNGs departure to the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games. Our continued collaboration and acknowledgements of the efforts of the PNG Sports Foundation, the Department of Treasury, and the Government of Papua New Guinea. Led by Chef de Mission Michael Henao and Morea Baru’s Silver in the 61kg Men’s Weighlifting division saw Team PNG placed 35 out of 72 Commonwealth Nations and had some of our elite athletes clock their seasonal best times at the games.

Apart from our major sponsors this year who supported us to the games, we would also like to acknowledge the support from multiple local businesses and entities such as the National Capital District Commission, OilMin Field Services for the food donation to our Team PNG athletes for both games, Tribe Media for the social media content production during the Birmingham Games, Carbine Club for the cash donation towards the athletes for the Birmingham Games. Our success in 2022 is also your success.

In early September after a heavy laden games focused year we turned our attention towards the upcoming games by announcing the appointment of current PNGOC Legal Advisor and AFL Development PNG Executive Faye-Zina Lalo as Chef de Mission to the 2023 Solomon Islands Pacific Games, Olympian and Female Vice President Iammo Launa OBE as the Chef de Mission to the 2023 Trinidad and Tobago Commonwealth Youth Games and Olympian, Athletes Commission Chair and PNG Swim Sensation Ryan Pini MBE, OL as the 2024 Paris Olympic Games Chef de Mission for Team PNG.

We staged a Games Review workshop on September 10<sup>th</sup> to review the performances from the two games in 2022 and realistically plan as to how to improve for 2023 and beyond based on the current timeframes and scarce resources at our disposal, whilst accounting for the key performance indicators in the Team PNG Performance Strategy of 2021-2024.

Also within the month of September, and after the consequent induction of the Eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) Papua New Guinea Parliament, the PNGOC was fortunate to have the opportunity to hold a welcome reception and orientation for the newly appointed Minister for Sports, Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology of Sports Hon. Don Polye to familiarise him with the work of the PNGOC with the PNG Sporting landscape and our ongoing collaborations with the PNG Sports Foundation and targeted games for the coming years.

In the latter part of September, we had representation of the PNGOC at the XVI Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) General Assembly in Seoul, Korea by President Sir John Dawanincura, Secretary General Auvita Rapilla and Female Vice President Iammo Launa OBE.

Throughout the weekends in the month of October we staged the OSEP Management in Sport Organisation (MiSO) Administration course for Executives and Athletes of member and affiliate National Federations as part of our on-going commitment towards capacity building and delivery of the OSEP courses in country. This specific OSEP MiSO course will specifically assist the development needs of the sport executives who are actively working with clubs or federations, to manage and administer sports in the country. It targets executives, paid staff, retiring elite athletes and volunteers. Special thanks and acknowledgement to Cricket, Weightlifting, Swimming, Hockey, Golf, Volleyball, Netball, Rugby League, Fencing, Body Building, Va'a, and Badminton for their participation in the MiSO course.

To round out the year we held a private Sponsors Cocktail reception at the 2022 award winning Grand Papua Hotel in Port Moresby in November to thank our sponsors for their generous and continued support in 2022 for a successful 2022 Team PNG games campaign which saw Team PNG participate in two international multi-sport events being the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini-Games, where PNG placed first and won the games, and the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham where PNG respectfully placed 35 out of 72 competing nations.

Our 2022 Corporate Sponsors include Kumul Consolidated Holdings (KCH) as the major contributor to Team PNG's Performance Strategy, the PNG Sports Foundation (PNGSF) as the key partner and government arm responsible for sports in PNG, Trukai Industries, the National Gaming Control Board, SP Brewery, IBS University, ExxonMobil PNG, Coral Sea Hotels, PacificAus Sports, Theodist, The National, Air Niugini, Trophy Haus PNG, Media Partners, Jacks of PNG and Blue7 Team.

A special mention to our support sponsors in 2022 the National Capital District Commission, Oilmin Field Services, Tribe Agency, Brian Bell Group, City Pharmacy Group Limited, Steel Industries, Carbine Club, Vanguard International and Pro Clean.

Following on from a successful 2022 games campaign we were fortunate to have Vanguard International sign on in the month of November for a two-year period as a Corporate sponsor. The leading employment agency will be providing in-kind support to the PNGOC and Team PNG in the areas of its existing service specialisations of visa, national identification, and passport processing, as well as consulting to the organisation on its existing HR policies, recruitment, athlete job readiness preparation and assisting athletes to seek traineeships and employment opportunities.

Kicks 4 Kokoda soccer tournament under the partnership between the Kokoda Track Foundation and Grassroots Soccer with the support of TEAM UP delivered three (3) tournaments in Oro Province throughout the year with the last tournament concluding in early December. The

program uses sport for development to empower adolescents, increase health-seeking behaviors and promote gender equality while strengthening passion for sport.

Our Games and Programs Division was able to hold and achieve some of its set events in 2022 with the delivery of a range of activities together with the support of our partners. These included the OSEP Community Coach & Official, Sport in Community Administration and Gender Equity Workshops in May, and the Oceania Sport Education Program (OSEP) workshops both delivered in Port Moresby, including the Olympic Values Education Program (OVEP) with Team PNG Athlete Heroes in Papa and Lealea through the support of Exxon Mobil PNG.

Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee was one of 50 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) invited to participate in the inaugural Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) NOC Technical and Sports Director Seminar. Chris Amini in his capacity as Team PNG Performance Coordinator attended the seminar in Lisbon, Portugal from 3 to 6 November 2022.

To cap off the year we held the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of the PNG Sports Hall of Fame event on December 8th after a one-year hiatus. Inducted into the 2022 Hall of Fame class was Tau John Tokwepota from the Sports of Athletics, Veitu Diro from the sport of Netball and Basketball, while a first from the sport of Football (Soccer), and awarded posthumously was Joseph Turia.

Our National Federations, sponsors, stakeholders, local business community and nation remain as key spokes in our venture for sustained success as we look to inspire Papua New Guinea through sporting excellence. We will continue to work hard to create a competitive and safe environment for all those involved in sport as we turn our attention towards the 2023 Solomon Islands Pacific Games and 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

We know our role and objectives within the PNG Sporting landscape and the broader Pacific Games, Commonwealth Games and Olympic Games movements we serve, and the next decade presents an incredible opportunity for Team PNG to excel and shine on the international stage.

PNGOC wishes everyone a wonderful New Year celebration.

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### **About the Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee**

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The Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee (PNGOC) is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation committed to inspire and unite Papua New Guinea through sporting excellence and success. The PNGOC is a believer of sport as an enabler for sustainable and inclusive development. We serve the three different global games movements, those being the Olympic Movement, Commonwealth Games Movement and the Pacific Games Movement. It is our responsibility to select, send and fund Team PNG to the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and Pacific Games. This is achieved by working with our member national sports federations and with the support of our sponsors and partners, through fundraising events and with the backing of the Government. To find out more visit our website [www.pngolympic.org.pg](http://www.pngolympic.org.pg)  
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