



*GUNNEDAH basketballers are making good use of the new facilities at the local stadium, along with other local sporting groups.*

# Stadium bounces back with new facilities

**THE Gunnedah Basketball Stadium is benefitting from a long-awaited upgrade that has breathed new life into the facility.**

The stadium has been making good use of new, flexible backboards that are operated by electronically-powered winches to allow junior players to shoot at the ring, as well as new netball posts.

Funding of \$26,000 from the Shenhua Watermark Community Fund helped pay for the upgrade, along with \$14,500 from the Gunnedah Basketball Association and a grant of \$16,500 from the State Government.

"It can now be used as a multi-purpose centre for several sports," Gunnedah Basketball Association Junior Director Sharon Boyd said.

The upgrade has directly benefitted various local sporting and

recreational groups, which include the Gunnedah Netball Association, Gunnedah Show Society, Midnight Basketball, a key youth off the streets program, Gunnedah Physical Culture, Namoi Valley Aviculture Club, Gunnedah Pony Club and local high schools and primary schools.

NIAS and the state netball league also use the stadium for training along with the rugby league and soccer clubs.

The Gunnedah Show Society made good use of the facility to display its photographic competition and host a fashion parade at the show, and it has also been used for the annual poultry sale.

One season of the local basketball competition has been played at the new and improved stadium, which has received positive feedback.

"The kids are loving it. We can wind down the backboards for the

Kindergarten and Year 2 kids who can now score baskets," Ms Boyd said.

"They move from 10 feet down to seven feet which make it a lot easier for the little kids to throw."

The basketball stadium was one of nine projects approved by Shenhua Watermark Coal that shared in \$1 million.

Shenhua Watermark Project Manager Paul Jackson said the upgrades will have a direct impact on increasing the scope of use for this prominent community asset.

"The installation of new backboards will enable basketball matches for all ages to be hosted at the stadium, as well as providing a venue for Netball NSW's State League – the premier netball competition in the state," he said.

The next upgrade earmarked for the stadium is the floor.