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The Bulletin

Hockey trio to play in NQ side

Jenna Johnstone | 16th December 2011

Tags: hockey, indigenous, jasmine cleland, lucretia willie, shyneal saunders

MEET the smiling faces of Jasmine Cleland, Lucretia Willie and Shyneal Saunders, three Rockhampton hockey players selected in Queensland's first recognised indigenous hockey team.

Cleland, 16, along with Rockhampton teammates Willie and Saunders, are set to represent the North Queensland Rubies on their inaugural tour to Singapore early next year.

The young hockey players were thrilled upon their selection.

"I was so happy, it's such a great opportunity to gain experience," said Cleland, who plays for Southside United.

"My goal is to go away play my best, show my talent and hopefully score some goals," she said.

Cleland hopes to follow in the footsteps of fellow Rockhampton hockey star Jordan Edwards who recently toured Fiji with the Australian under-21 women's hockey team.

Former coach Scott Deeth said the side was set to improve and develop players such as Cleland to higher representative honours.

"Jas previously made the under-18 outdoor Queensland squad and this side gives her the opportunities to get her to the next level," Deeth said.

The Rubies line-up is set to come together for a training camp in Cairns before they depart to Singapore on February 28.

The Singapore 6s competition has an impressive field of teams attending from Europe, Asia, America and Australasia.

"The girls have been completing a six-week program so far and already they have improved so much, this opportunity has definitely given them an incentive to train hard," he said.

The North Queensland Rubies team is a celebration of the work and achievement of Hockey Queensland Remote and the Indigenous Hockey Program.

The program is primarily aimed at creating playing opportunities and development pathways for participants.

"The selectors are trying to achieve a pathway for players who are just outside normal selections,



Rockhampton trio Shyneal Saunders, 15, Lucretia Willie, 13, and Jasmine Cleland, 16, are all smiles after being selected in first official Hockey Queensland Indigenous team.

Sharyn Oneill

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