



GLOBALLY POPULAR WOMEN'S SPORT OF NETBALL DEBUTS AT THE STAPLES CENTER

Top Netballer's from the East and West Coast Square Off As NETBALL AMERICA presents "A Night With The Sparks"

(August 25, 2009 – Los Angeles, CA) - On Friday, Sept. 11th from 3:30 p.m to 5:30 p.m. Staples Center will host an exhibition of one of the most popular women's sports in the world as **NETBALL** takes to the court prior to the L.A. Sparks last, regular-season home game of the year.

Netball is a form of basketball that was created in the U.S. and is played by more than 20 million women and girls throughout the world.

As part of basketball superstar **Lisa Leslie's** final, regular-season home game of her illustrious career, "**Netball America Night With The Sparks**" (www.netballamerica.com) will present some of the nation's top Netballer's from the East Coast against a team of West Coast stars in a full game in addition to a ten-minute exhibition prior to tip-off.

An official hoop will be set up in the Concourse for fans to take a shot along with sign-up's for a Netball camp to be held at Carson's regulation court in October. A giveaway contest will also be held for 40 girls to attend the camp for free.

"The Sparks have given us a wonderful opportunity to introduce this great sport to their fans," said **Sonya Ottaway**, President of Netball America Inc. "For many of us who grew up playing Netball we're hoping to encourage young girls and women to learn more about the sport and we're sure they'll fall in love with it like we have."

Netball is similar to basketball although there is no dribbling, the ball and basket are slightly smaller, there is no backboard and players are designated to certain areas of the court. The game is fast, fun and can be played by women, men, boys and girls of all ages, sizes and skill levels. Netball is recognized by the International Olympic Committee and a strong push is underway for it's inclusion as a participation sport.

Netball is widely popular in countries such as England, New Zealand, Australia and the Caribbean but is quickly catching on here in the United States with regulation Netball courts scattered throughout the Southland. "The great thing about Netball is that you don't have to be tall or fast to play it," says Ottaway. "And with the sport growing so quickly throughout the U.S. it's giving a lot more women and girls a chance to participate in a sport that relies more on teamwork than natural physical skills."

Tickets for Netball America Night With The Sparks are \$15 / \$24 /\$55 and include the Sparks game. Tickets are available at www.netballamerica.com. For additional details call **(949) 307-4455**.

Netball supporters expected to attend the Staples Center event include five-time Olympic Gold Medalist and Australian swimming legend **Ian Thorpe** and "American Idol" /"So You Think You Can Dance" producer and judge **Nigel Lithgoe**.

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About Netball America Inc.

Netball America is a not-for-profit (501c(3)) association committed to the promotion of netball throughout the United States. Netball America currently has teams located in 15 States across the country and is committed to Netball's development and growth with an emphasis on participation, individual progress, team unity and good health. Netball America seeks to have Netball included into the core curriculum of educational systems throughout the nation.