

HAIR RAISING FASHION ADDS SOME SCRUNCH TO NRLW'S CRUNCH

TAMARYN MCGREGOR

THE NRLW season is officially under way, and apart from footy boots and mouthguards, the must-have piece of equipment for many of the game's stars are sports scrunchies.

Scrunchies have long been a fashion accessory for female athletes in many sports and now a Sydney-based small business is cashing in on the rising popularity of women's sport and especially the NRLW.

Since starting in 2018, Scrunchiko has scored the backing of NSW Blues, Kiwi Ferns and now Parramatta Eels star Nita Maynard alongside a number of other NRLW players.

Founded by Katie McCarthy, the brand creates bold coloured, spandex and Lycra sport-specific scrunchies, used by players at all NRLW clubs. The sweat resistant scrunchies are practical enough to hold hair up in a tackle, but are also fun and bright.

"Not only is it fashion, it's function. You have to look good,

to feel good, to play good," McCarthy said.

The first line of Scrunchiko scrunchies were even named after NRLW players such as Kezie Apps with the 'Kezie' and Corban Baxter with the 'Corban'.

"My brand was created to celebrate female athletes, to give them a statement piece of fashion that they can proudly call their own, and wear as a team, a united front to show that they mean business," McCarthy said.

Maynard doesn't play without a sports scrunchie in her hair.

"I just love that the scrunchies are nice and bright and in our team's colours, and the fact that it's something that is just for the girls to wear," she said.

Round 2 of the NRLW season this weekend features a triple header at WIN Stadium in Wollongong on Sunday.

The Newcastle Knights play Brisbane at noon, followed by the Sydney Roosters against the Gold Coast Titans and St George Illawarra Dragons taking on Parramatta.



Parramatta NRLW player Nita Maynard never plays a game without a fashionable and functional Eels blue and gold Scrunchiko scrunchie in her hair. Picture: Justin Lloyd

They've all gone potty

CLARISSA BYE

A SYDNEY women's health centre has removed an essay by Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling from its social media pages and issued a grovelling apology, after being called "transphobic" over the issue.

However, some women's rights advocates have raised concerns over "censorship" silencing women's services.

Pro-trans Facebook group LGBTI Rights Australia branded Ms Rowling as having "fascist views" and campaigned MPs and NSW gov-

Women's group bans 'transphobic' J.K. Rowling

ernment health services to black-ban her essay from the inner-city health service.

The Leichhardt Women's Community Health Service also removed a reposting of a Sydney Morning Herald news story that had reported on mounting concerns by medical researchers that "inclusive language" dehumanises women.

"Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre is sincerely sorry for the offense (sic), distress and hurt to the

trans community, caused by the uploading to Facebook of the JK Rowling article on Sex and Gender. This article has been retracted. It was inadvertently uploaded to Facebook without approval."

In the 2020 essay, Ms Rowling writes about her concerns with trans activism and recounts her own experiences of being a domestic abuse and sexual assault survivor.

LGBTI Rights Australia said: "It is a well-known fact

that J.K. Rowling is transphobic and has used her platform to incite harm against the transgender community globally. We cannot sit by and allow any NSW Health funded public service to engage such fascist views and put our trans community at risk," it posted.

Women's sports rights advocate Katherine Deves said the Leichhardt centre, which is 80 per cent taxpayer-funded, had been subjected to the "usual modus operandi of a

vicious social media pile-on". "It appears we have lost women's rights for this generation," Ms Deves said.

"This is yet another disproportionate response by activists against women, and an egregious incursion into freedom of speech and freedom of belief by a not-for-profit, non-governmental community women's clinic."

Feminist Legal Clinic solicitor Anna Kerr said it was "tragic and shameful to see another



Author J.K. Rowling.

women's service capitulate to bullying by the trans lobby".

"Women must stop apologising and start defending the right of their sisters to freedom of expression," she said.

APOLOGY

In our Smashing Prices catalogue on sale 3/3/2022, we have advertised the Samsung Galaxy S22 phone range as out on 4/3/2022. Due to higher than expected demand, shipments have been delayed. Stock will be arriving soon and customer orders can be taken instore and online.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

JB HI-FI

Spend \$20* at Romeos and get a FREE paper.

Participating stores only.
Scan the QR code to find your nearest participating outlet.

9 March - 5 April 2022



*One copy of The Australian, The Weekend Australian, The Daily Telegraph or The Sunday Telegraph per transaction of \$20 or more, excluding cigarette & tobacco products, eBay and Golden Casket purchases. Limit one free paper per person per day. Offer only available at participating stores, while stocks last. Some participating stores may offer customers a free paper with \$20 spend-check in store advertising to confirm.