

LATEST NEWS FROM THE ASCOT PARK HOTEL SOUTHERN STEEL

MADE OF STEEL



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On the home stretch

With just four rounds of the 2014 ANZ Championship remaining, we are on the home stretch – quite literally for the Ascot Park Hotel Southern Steel. The final stages of the competition will be played on OUR turf with each of our games scheduled at home.

After taking on the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Magic in Invercargill on Monday night, we will enjoy a long-awaited bye weekend before preparing for clashes against the Tactix in Dunedin on May 25 and the table-topping Melbourne Vixens in Invercargill on May 31.

Spearheaded by Silver Ferns captain Casey Kopua and defender Leana De Bruin, the Magic feature as the highest-ranked New Zealand team in this year's ANZ Championship. But it takes more than that to intimidate our team. We're Made of Steel – and that was certainly evident in our 73-61 domination over the star-studded Northern Mystics last Sunday night.

Traditionally, Invercargill hasn't proved a successful hunting ground for the Magic with upset wins the last few seasons – the 4-2 statistic is a trend we are intent on continuing!

As fabulous as it is to be back in our home at the rebuilt ILT Stadium, that inaugural win has proved elusive so far this season. So Stand Behind the Steel and help us chalk it up this Monday night.

After unveiling our magenta strip for the Mystics game, social media has been rife with praise for the striking kit. Even award-winning New Zealand Herald reporter Dana Johannsen has chimed in with her latest column:

"The Steel may have found the answer to their poor home record this season. The southerners have yet to win a game at their newly rebuilt Stadium Southland, which re-opened this year after the roof collapsed in 2011 following a heavy snowstorm. One solution still under discussion is to wear their away strip for Monday night's match against the Magic in Invercargill. The Steel were first alerted to the powers of the eye-catching magenta strip in their win over the Mystics last week, with Jodi Brown's side producing one of their best performances of the season to oust their northern rivals from playoffs contention. Inner Circle was privy to high-level talks following the match, in which senior players raised the possibility of sticking with the magenta dress for the remainder of the season. Now out of the running for a top four spot, if the play proves successful, the Steel will be ruing their decision to stick with powder blue for so long."



Steel a Secret from ... Shannon Francois

Which team do you look forward to playing the most and why? *I love playing every team, because each team consists of a different set of challenges and arch rivals and I just love winning no matter who it is against.*

Do you have any secret party tricks? *I definitely think I am pretty good at dancing so love to pull out some sweet moves.*

Who has had the most influence on your career? *My high school coach Nik Kelly – she made me believe that I could play netball at the highest level and taught me the basic skills that I have today.*

Growing up who was your all-time favourite player? *Laura Langman has definitely been someone I have looked up to since*

high school and started to be a middle. Before that I loved Belinda Colling at GA.

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Steel Yourself for ROUND 11

Ascot Park Hotel Southern Steel v Kia Magic

Monday 12 May, 7.40pm

ILT Stadium Southland, Invercargill

Broadcast Live - FOX SPORTS 2 (AUS); SKY SPORT 1 (NZ)

Umpires: Jono Bredin & Yvonne Morgan, Reserve: Ann Hay

The Facts:

LAST MEETING: Round 3, 2014: Magic 61 def Steel 57, Claudelands Arena, Hamilton.

- When the teams last met in Round 3 this season the Magic defeated the Steel 61-57 in Hamilton.
- The Magic lead head-to-head with 10 wins and four losses in 14 previous meetings.
- The Steel and Magic have met in Invercargill on six occasions with the Steel leading with four wins and two losses.
- The Magic was held to their lowest score in 2014 when they shot just 44 goals against the Pulse in Porirua in Round 10. The Magic previous lowest score was 50-goals against the Mystics and Thunderbirds.
- The Magic has the second best attacking record in the ANZ Championship after Round 10 with 55.33 goals per match while their defence is ranked third with 48.89 goals per match being scored against them.
- The Steel has the best attacking record in the ANZ Championship with 60.3 goals per match but they have the second worst defensive record with 62.8 goals per match being scored against them.
- The Steel has the best shooting accuracy in the ANZ Championship with a return of 89.2 percent accuracy while the Magic has the third best record with a return of 87.1 percent.
- Magic shooter Malia Paseka made her debut for the Magic in Round 10 when she took the court in the final quarter at goal shooter against the Pulse. Paseka played four matches for the Mystics last year but all were in defence.
- Steel centre Philippa Finch will play her 80th ANZ Championship match in Round 11 against the Magic.
- Steel midcourter Wendy Frew will play her 75th ANZ Championship match in Round 11 against the Magic.
- Steel defender Rachel Rasmussen will play her 60th ANZ Championship match against the Magic in Round 11. Rasmussen has played for three ANZ Championship sides; Mystics, Pulse and Steel.
- Magic shooter Ellen Halpenny will play her 60th ANZ Championship match against the Steel in Round 11.
- Magic midcourter Courtney Tairi will play her 50th ANZ Championship match in Round 11 against the Steel. Tairi has played for three ANZ Championship teams; Swifts, Steel and Magic.



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Ascot Park Hotel Southern Steel - PO Box 6034, Invercargill North, Invercargill 9841 NEW ZEALAND Telephone + 64 3 217 1303
