



## ISL 2012 Semi Finals – Preview

(Sunday 25th November 2012)

### WOMEN'S LEAGUE

The top 4 have been set for some weeks but their performances have certainly swayed the outlook of the semi-finals. We all know from past years that the regular season means nothing comes finals time. Expect this year's series to be the best ISL finals to date.

**10:30am (TSS Centre Court) – The Allstar Group (9-1) v Celtics Basketball Club (5-5)**

**Preview:** On season form, The Allstar Group will start heavy favourites to win this game and rightfully so, but they can't afford to underestimate the talent and experience, especially in finals of the Celtics team.

Izzy Chilcott has been a superstar all season and her teams loss coincided with the only game she was unavailable for so with her available (before scooting down the highway to Logan for a WNBL game) coach Stuart Allen has to be feeling good about his team's chances in his first ISL final series as a coach. But it hasn't just been Chilcott that has led to the Success of the Orange Bombers, they have a young talented roster that love to get out and run and scrap for every loose ball they can. It may actually be youngsters Wallace, Durham and

Beede that cause the most trouble for the Celtics if they are given too much freedom.

The Celtics season has been up and down. They looked like serious contenders early on and then hit a lull, however last week they pushed the Allstars to the limit and Jade Davis is starting to look like her usual dominant self again and you can be sure she will have another big ISL finals game as she thrives off the pressure. Her team mates are not exactly slouches either....Bree Griffiths has been the Celtics most consistent offensive threat and if given space could be a game breaker for the Celtics. Celtics will also need to get more out of there inside game and find a way to slow this game down to do so...if they can and can hold the Allstars to 65 points or less than they may have some shot at an upset.

**Prediction:** The Allstars are just too well balanced across the floor and it is hard to see the Celtics slowing them down for four quarters. Allstars by 14.

**Key Factors:** Game tempo! If this turns into a running shoot-out, lookout this could get out of hand and The Allstars will run away with the game. On the flip side, if this game can be controlled and slowed down by the Celtics and turned into a half-court game, then they have a chance at an upset.

**Match-up to watch:** Izzy Chilcott v Jade Davis – The two big guns are always the ones to watch in the big games. Last week they scorched each other for 29 and 30 points respectively. For the Celtics to win, Jade needs to win this battle.

**Odds:** The Allstar Group \$1.28 v Celtics Basketball Club \$3.50

### **12:00pm (TSS Centre Court) – Harvey World Travel Tweed Heads (7-3) v Diego's Tortilla Factory (5-5)**

**Preview:** This is a re-match of the round 10 season game in which Diego's won by 6, however the stakes are much higher this week and you can expect both teams are going to do whatever they can to get the win. Harvey World Travel are the defending champions but have not looked anywhere near as dominant as they did in their 2011 campaign. They have a very well balanced team and

while they suffered a loss last week, they appeared to still have plenty in reserve in a game that had no impact on their final ladder position.

Diego's are rumoured to be missing star guard Marney George (formerly Marney Lee) for the finals and this is going to be a major dint in their hopes as she had controlled the team brilliantly all season.

For Diego's to topple HWT they will need a dominant performance by their twin towers; Reimink and Varcoe and will need to try and control the tempo of this game, especially without George.

**Prediction:** HWT are too deep and have too many game winners in their team to let this one slip. They will be pushed for most of the game, but expect them to come up trumps. HWT by 11.

**Key Factors:** No Marney George...who will run the point for Diego's and can they do it effectively in the semi-final?

**Match-up to watch:** Heidi Freeburn v whoever tries to shut her down. Heidi has been the most consistent women's player in ISL's three year history and has yet to experience an ISL Championship, she will be desperate to change that this season. If Diego's don't find someone to shut her down then this game could be over quicker than anyone expects.

Tammy McGregor up against Carine Reimink will also be fun to watch!

**Odds:** HWT \$1.40 v Diego's \$3.00

## **MEN'S LEAGUE**

After ten weeks of battle, we go to war in the semi finals of the Men's ISL. All four teams have the squads to win it all, it's going to come down to who steps up at the right moments, who makes the right adjustments and who plays with true heart.

**1:30pm (TSS Centre Court) – Celtics Basketball Club (7-3) v Somerville Smash Repairs (6-4)**

**Preview:** The two hottest teams in the semi's go at it first. Celtics have been fantastic to watch over the last 7 rounds (6-1), Simon Stevens has been an offensive force during this stretch and after scoring 45 last week will be looking to break the game open with another hot streak. Marquee Jason Aucoin will be locked in and will look to patrol the paint defensively and look to score inside and out. Andy Harrison has been the Celtics barometer since he joined the team and 'Chief' will be working tirelessly as usual. The Celtics look to see who's playing well out of O'Brien, St. John and Lomakin, who can all hit from deep when it's their day. I'm also loving Dylan Kay's game the last few weeks, he plays desperate (which suits him with his homeless man-style facial hair). They'll also need Justin Laws and Cameron Crawford to provide some basket protection.

The C's come up against the back from the dead Smash Boys. Three weeks ago, their season was on the line. They've rattled off some huge wins and with the addition of Jake Jones look to have found the right balance at the right time. Dave Gurney will be shouldering the scoring load as always, Dave is the all-time leading scorer in ISL history, but this will be his first final. He'll be getting plenty of thundering screens set by Andrew 'Big Dog' Waite, Ben 'Ratbomb' McKay, Jake 'double J' Jones, Dillon 'Psycho' Bensted and if he plays, Steve 'Guns' Weiland. This frontline has plenty of strength, but will need to work hard to keep the Celtics off the O glass. Remy Lawyer is a massive x-factor in this game, he needs to be aggressive in transition and not only look to find shooters, but bigs under the hoop. Jesse Hockey needs to re-find his confidence when on the court and Josh Bacon-White might see the floor and should back himself. The biggest factor for SSR will be Captain/Coach Darragh – AD has had another great season in ISL and has accepted being the second option to Gurney all the way. If Dave is getting too much attention, AD will have to step up and lead by example.

This game is going to be fantastic. Plenty of great players, mates, and enemies are going to be going at it for the chance to make it to the final.

**Prediction:** Not surprised either way with this, but I think the Celtics are playing too well over 4 quarters. 8 points.

**Key Factors:** Coaching – Wheels has been able to step in as coach, but I think he will be suiting up to play. AD will be looking to continue his strong flow on the floor and will have to keep one eye on the team rotations. Doug Garvie would be feeling pretty good right now and is staring down the barrel of being the only active ISL coach to make two ISL Men’s Grand Finals (besides McInnes of course). This game will be ultra-physical. Who keeps their cool will be crucial.

**Match-up to watch:** Harrison v Gurney. I assume these two will match up on each other. Chief will look to use his supernatural wingspan to deny Dave the ball and harass him when he does have it. Dave will look to get to the basket and draw contact. Andy is a workhorse on offense and will have Dave working hard on both ends (something he usually doesn’t do). If Gurney gets it going early, Celtics are in big trouble.

**Odds:** Celtics Basketball Club \$1.85 Somerville Smash Repairs \$1.95

### **3.00pm (TSS Centre Court) – Bowler Bar Battlers (5-5) v Dickfos Dunn Eagles (7-3)**

**Preview:** Semi Final # 2.... This could get ugly. The Battlers scraped into the finals only because Western Star Trucks lost by 30 points. They’ve got a record of 1-5 in their last five games! They can’t play against zone and have been infighting and bickering for the last 4 weeks. Yet because they started 4-0 they’ve managed to jag a semi spot.

They play against the ISL favourites Dickfos Dunn Eagles. The Eagles dominated the regular season and even rested star players the last few weeks, giving their bench players more burn, getting ready for the semi finals. They’ve had some bad news with James Legan having to pull out due to stress fractures in his foot, but they’ve been allowed to have their marquee replaced with Shaun Gleeson. Gleeson, a former Marquee in the ISL, was in the all-star 5 of the QBL this season and has had a few cups of coffee in the NBL as well. Gleeson is a Gold Coast Junior and used to run layups and shoot dice down at palmy in his formative years.

He fits in with the run and gun Eagles and will look to get out on the break with his good mates Hughy and Smooth. I hear Dickerson will be right for the game and having him and Ty Davidson running the Battlers big men off their feet should give Coach Cameron plenty to smile about in this game.

If the Battlers regain their mojo, it will have to come from their veteran group – McGregor, Smith, Gill, Swindles. These four need to make sure they are playing tight and let their younger dynamic group of Burns, Whitby, Strebl, Allen and Tom use their speed to stay with the lightning Eagles. Scotty Mac needs to get himself involved as much as possible in this game and will look to score inside and out and be a monster on the glass.

**Prediction:** Battlers to go down swinging by 12.

**Key Factors:** Who comes off the bench and changes the game? Is Wayne Smith playing this week? Look for him to throw some sweet passes and generally get in the middle of any action. Darren Legassick has been easing himself back into game shape and will look to have an impact too. Can the Battlers find their stroke? They've been bombing away against zones and haven't got it together. If the Battlers do make a game of it, all the pressure will be on the Eagles.

**Match-up to watch:** McGregor and Cassidy. It's quite simple. If Mac doesn't get to impact the game, Battlers lose heavily. Cassidy has shown how strong a player he is throughout the season, but he'll have to play tough and smart against McGregor who was my clear MVP early in the season. Reece needs to be aggressive on the offensive end and try to get McGregor in foul trouble.

**Odds:** Bowler Bar Battlers \$3.35 Dickfos Dunn \$1.40

## **2012 Grand Final Day Schedule:**

12.00pm – Women’s Grand Final

2.00pm – Men’s Grand Final

3.30pm: 3-Point Contests (prelims during half-time of Grand Finals)

4.15pm: Men’s Dunk contest

5.00pm: Buffet Dinner (must rsvp to [wendy@gccrba.com.au](mailto:wendy@gccrba.com.au), free for all players and \$10 for all spectators).

5.30pm: Grand Final winners presentation and season awards

- Entry is just \$2
- Canteen and bar will be open throughout the day
- Buffet dinner is \$10 for all non players/staff, RSVP is a must to be a part of it. Players/Staff who RSVP are free. RSVP to [wendy@gccrba.com.au](mailto:wendy@gccrba.com.au)
- Great raffle prizes available
- Don’t miss the most exciting day of basketball on the Gold Coast!