

# Booming basketball makes the cut for SWAS

By LEIGH RITCHIE

**BASKETBALL:** Training programs run locally might eventually eclipse those run in Perth now that the sport has been taken under the South West Academy of Sport umbrella.

The sport continues to boom at a grass roots level, with every court filled by an ever increasing number of players.

The number of local players in the nationwide Intensive Training Centre program will jump from seven to 25.

Local players in the ITC will receive individual weight training and access to specialist speed coaches.

Development director of South West basketball Steve Hawkins said SWAS would make a marvellous difference to players aged between 13 and 17 striving to take their game further.

"It will increase the numbers of our upper echelon level, but I think we'd eventually go further with than what ITC offers in Perth," Hawkins said.

ITC is run across the country by regional coaches and delivered locally by Hawkins and Trina Worthington.

There are also currently 60 players enrolled in a secondary program run at a local level.

## Donovan in State U16s

**BASKETBALL:** Bianca Donovan is one young local player who will benefit from her sport being linked to the SWAS.

The 15-year-old point guard will play in the State U16s team for the second time this weekend in Perth.

Donovan, who was also a promising netballer, has made basketball her sporting focus and wants to see how far the sport will take her.

"I want to try to go as far as I can," Donovan said.

"I haven't really made a plan as such, just take it one step at a time."

Donovan said being a regional player required plenty of travelling, but also meant a strong camaraderie with coaches, team mates and training colleagues.

And after the long wait between major events, she was thrilled to make the State team again as a second year player and will suit up for WA's first game against Tasmania this Saturday.



Bianca Donovan will play for WA U16s again this weekend.