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World Netball Congress 2021

Service Award Citation



Citation for Yvonne Willering, CNZM, ONZM

Netball New Zealand

Yvonne Willering is one of the genuine greats of the game - with her influence felt all around the globe.

From a world champion player, to Silver Ferns coach, umpire to international commentator and advisor to aspiring netball nations across the globe, Yvonne's relationship with the game spans beyond 50 years.

First spotted at school for her height, reach and leap, the girl born in the Netherlands quickly became a dynamic defender. She would go on to play for Auckland, and then New Zealand for a decade – playing at three World Cups, and winning the world title in 1979.

Taking all she learned on and off the court, Yvonne has poured that into an outstanding coaching career, including winning six national titles with Auckland.

At the helm of the Silver Ferns, first as caretaker coach then head coach, Yvonne led the Ferns in 51 tests, with 39 wins and one draw.

Her almost unrivalled knowledge is still sought after by teams throughout New Zealand and the world, called on to guide players, coaches and administrators.

She's been head coach of the Fiji Pearls, and has advised the national sides of South Africa, Australia and Vanuatu. She also worked with the Silver Ferns in their build-up to their 2019 World Cup victory.

She continues to develop coaches worldwide as a member of the INF coaching advisory panel.

No matter who she's helped over the years, Yvonne's motivation has always been to make the game greater.

Her latest well-deserved accolade is being made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit and a life member of Netball New Zealand.

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