

This is Calisthenics

Thank you to our Cali Community for your efforts in sharing, promoting and celebrating This is Calisthenics over the past two weeks.

Our aim through this show is to give people a glimpse into our sport and inspire them to find out more, because our role is to explore, create and deliver innovative ways to promote calisthenics to help grow our sport. We couldn't pack our entire sport into less than 90 minutes of free-to-air time, enticing new audiences to tune in, so we put our trust in our highly skilled production team (who specialise in creating sporting TV) and listened to them about how to reach new audiences in a new way... and they were right, we have.

We are excited to share that last week's episode was watched by nearly 60,000 Australians on TV (not including 7plus viewers), our website traffic has increased by nearly 200% and our social media activity has reached more than 300,000 individuals – an increase of more than 1000%. We know that clubs from a range of divisions have received enquiries during the week and our office has certainly received numerous calls and emails.

We have appreciated the generative discussions on social media and feedback provided via email, phone and private messages this past week. We know that there are a number of questions about the content of the show – including why some specific elements of our sport have not been included – and understand that some people had expectations of a documentary style show. We are confident that our FAQs address many of your questions and hope you take the time to read them, and we are certainly happy to discuss any further questions via phone and email, as we have done already.

Through our extensive research over the years we are confident that there are three overarching things that make calisthenics the wonderful sport it is; the sense of confidence it builds in our performers, the variety it offers, and the lifelong friendships it creates. So our show, against the backdrop of a reality TV competition, tells the story of confidence and resilience through the performer stories, of variety and inclusion through the community stories, and of friendships and respect throughout.

We know that you already know the sport and love it, and we thank you for helping us in our quest to share a glimpse into our wonderful sport of calisthenics, by watching, sharing and encouraging your friends and family to do the same. Together, let's continue to work towards more Australians knowing and loving calisthenics.

Frequently Asked Questions

How did the show come about?

Calisthenics Victoria was presented with an opportunity, born out of the global pandemic where television stations had gaps in their programming and were approaching tier 2 and 3 sports to create programs at a reduced rate.

With the pandemic also creating a 'gap' in engagement with our members, with no classes being held and competitions being cancelled, the Calisthenics Victoria Board and CEO made the bold decision to seize the opportunity as an investment in our future, and bring calisthenics to the TV screens of Australians.

What is the purpose of the show?

This show aims to build awareness of our sport, in line with our strategic vision for more Australians to know and love calisthenics, starting conversations and inspiring people who don't know about the sport to 'find out more'.

We are seeking to inspire future performers across Victoria as well as new partnerships, that could support us to continue to reach more people and share the benefits of our sport with them.

Is the show a documentary?

No. The show has been created in line with modern viewing habits and is a 'reality TV show' loosely based around the concept of a solo competition. These shows have worked to increase interest in other sports and activities, like cheerleading, dance across many genres and gymnastics, and we were keen to engage with audiences through this style of program.

The show may challenge some of our existing community members as it is different to what we know, however we are confident that our community will celebrate the project and see it for the gift to our sport that it is, and see beyond their own experiences and perceptions.

With the 2 x 43mins of airtime, we were able to share just a glimpse into calisthenics, working against a backdrop of strict restrictions, but hopefully, if we succeed, we can create more TV, delving even deeper into the richness of our sport.

Are team performances included?

As the show was filmed during COVID, we were limited in our ability to showcase team performances, not just from a restrictions perspective, but from the perspective of having team performances ready for TV in the 2 week turn around we had from securing talent to filming.

Whilst solos are the fastest growing area of our sport (15% annual increases in Victoria over the past 3 years), we knew how important it was to show an element of teamwork, which is the core of our sport, so this is included in episode two.

Our 15 talented performers showcase a team performance, which gives new audiences a small insight into the team element of the sport, as well as our communities' strengths in creating a sense of 'team' and 'community' through adversity, as they worked through challenging circumstances. We are extremely proud of these great ambassadors of our sport.

How were the 15 performers selected?

Due to the restrictions around the COVID-19 crisis, and the quick timeframe of this project, we were unable to go through our usual process of an open audition. As such, we developed a rigorous set of criteria which identified 30 of our high performing Intermediate and Seniors soloists. 15 of these performers were then selected by the Crocmedia production team, supported by a selection panel, to be part of the show.

The selection criteria were shared with all clubs in the early stages of the project, to help our community better understand the process.

Are any other areas of the sport being showcased?

Some grassroots members from across our community will also be featured on the show to share their stories and help build a strong, positive picture of our sport in the hearts and minds of Australians.

Apparatus features in the teamwork section of the show, as well as through one of the community stories, however, there are not complete sections based around each element of our sport. Again, this is a sample to inspire people to know more.

How did you come up with the show's name?

Calisthenics Victoria has undertaken extensive research over the past 5 years, particularly through the rebrand project in 2016-2017.

When we asked our community what their biggest frustrations were, they told us that people didn't know what it was they spent so much time doing. When we asked people from outside our community what calisthenics was, they had either no idea, or a perception that didn't reflect our sport accurately.

So, whilst the creative process took us down all sorts of paths when looking for a name for the show, the CaliVic team and Crocmedia decided on a name that was short, sharp and straight to the point, 'This Is Calisthenics.'

Hopefully, this is the first of many projects under this title, that help dispel misperceptions around our sport and work towards more Australians knowing, and loving, our sport!

What are we expected to do with this show, as a community?

We hope that our community will trust in the people who have created the show, step outside their own perceptions and experiences of the sport, and rally behind the initiative by sharing it beyond their calisthenics networks so that it reaches more people.

Think about the physio you've been seeing for years and talking about calisthenics to, think about the local butcher or baker who supports your club's concert and events each year, think about the different communities your family connects with, and [share the show's 7Plus link](#) with them. **Let's keep the conversation going.**

Together, we can play a role in helping reach more Australians, sharing the benefits of our sport and helping to develop more strong, confident performers both on and off the stage, right across the country. Let's dare to dream!

Who were the show's specialists? Are they adjudicators?

When building our cast, we looked at our community and beyond, for people who had experience and skill in front of a camera.

The two female specialists are faces we are sure that our community will be familiar with, and our male specialist is a man who needs no introduction in the dance world. Read their full bios on the following page.

Why have closed captions not been applied?

This was unfortunately missed by CaliVic and the production team, and closed captions will be added when the episodes are uploaded to YouTube at a later date.

I find the vision really different to what I'm used to. What is the reason behind this?

Whilst we normally film our calisthenics performances from a wide camera angle to capture and analyse the performance as a whole, when creating this TV show, the crew use various camera angles, overlay speaking, and cut and edit the performances to ensure they are keeping audiences interested and engaged – telling a story in the short amount of time we have.

Georgie Ward

Georgie's love of performing began like most dancers at a very young age and spanned across many different dance genres including classical, jazz, contemporary, musical theatre and calisthenics.

As a calisthenics performer, Georgie enjoyed many successful years as a Championship competitor and graceful soloist winning at both State and National competitions, and in 2015 she was appointed as an inaugural ambassador for Calisthenics Victoria.

Whilst there have many memorable moments, as a young dancer, a highlight was achieving the highest score in VCE dance which resulted in her receiving the Victorian Premier's Award.

In addition to dancing and performing generally, Georgie also enjoyed many years of modelling, acting and presenting both in Australia and overseas including multiple print and television commercial campaigns for brands such as Nike, Toyota, David Jones, Just Jeans and L'Oréal.

Professionally, Georgie is a partner in a law firm which specialises in the Local Government sector where most of her performances these days are in the Court room or in the Council chamber where she regularly provides training as well as speaking at various industry events.

But her most cherished role is as mum to her two little boys Charles and Grayson who are teaching her lots of different skills including how to kick a football and swing a golf club!

And whilst having two little boys keeps her pretty busy, Georgie still enjoys being involved with Calisthenics as host of the annual State Championships at the Palais theatre along with other speaking and training engagements which allow her to remain connected to the Calisthenics community.

Natalie Bond

Commencing her theatrical stage performance journey at the ripe old age of 2.5 with her mother's Championship calisthenics club Robynmore - where today, as a Principal, Nat continues to coach and choreograph – Nat graduated DanceWorld Studios with a Diploma of Dance & Performance in 2004.

Following her passion for performing, she currently works as a professional Voice Artist, Stage and Screen Actor, Writer, Presenter and Choreographer. Nat will feel very familiar to Australian audiences as she was the imaging voice of Kiis FM for many years and her tones can be continually heard throughout the waves across countless radio stations, television networks, animated series and game apps across Australia and the world. As an animation

character voice specialist, she has adopted many personas in Nickelodeon's Kuukuu Harajuku, Exchange Student Zero, Freddo & Friends and plays several voice roles in the upcoming Aussie 7Mate animation from Stepmates: Regular Old Bogan

In 2019, Nat was welcomed into the writing/acting team of award-winning production company 'Cameralla' - a team of creatives who create and shoot original content.

Nat's work on television include stints on MetroSexual, Neighbours and Thank God You're Here to name a few and she is thrilled to be part of 'This is Calisthenics' as she can finally share with the country the sport that she is so passionate about and that has connected her with so many talented performers.

Robert Sturrock

Robert trained at the Victorian College of the Arts. His television credits include the Simon Galleher series, The Saturday Show, Countdown with the ABC, the Don Lane Show, Hey Hey It's Saturday and the Logies.

Robert worked at the Swagman Theatre Restaurant before moving on to theatre in such shows as Dynamite and Dancing Dynamite with David Atkins, A Chorus Line and Aida with the Victorian State Opera to name a few.

After working in the corporate, commercial and fashion world for the past 20 years he has found a new passion in teaching and choreography. Robert performed in Oklahoma with The Melbourne Production Company at the State Theatre in 2005.