



The inaugural Melbourne Vixens Indigenous dress was designed by Nakia Cadd, a proud Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung and Bunitj woman, around the theme Strong Women.

The design features four branches of the native flora golden wattle to represent the Vixens' team values.

Ten footprints along the side panel signify each player wearing the dress. The pattern with each footprint is unique to represent the different roles of each player, and walking and playing on sacred land. Regardless of what court they play on, it is sacred land that holds many stories.

The Minglip star replaces the PKNC (Phoenix and Kestrels Netball Club) initials on the back of the dress, representing the story of the seven sisters coming together, adapted differently across Aboriginal nations.

The story aligns with the Vixens' value of 'stronger together' and symbolises the history and impact on and off the court of the two teams, Phoenix and Kestrels, coming together as one.

"I spoke to my nans and mum about possible themes and ideas, cultural appropriation and symbols; and that's where we came to agree that 'strong women' was a theme that represented the Melbourne Vixens," Nakia said.

"It's a great privilege to be able to design the first ever Melbourne Vixens Indigenous dress. We still need to come a long way in terms of acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this country, but I think it's a step in the right direction in acknowledging and presenting our culture and doing that in such a respectful way."

Nakia was approached by Netball Victoria through the Korin Gamadji Institute program, which Netball Victoria has partnered with on the Lagunta Sisters program since 2015. Lagunta Sisters is dedicated to developing talent and industry pathways for young First Nations women while strengthening connection to culture.

Nakia started playing netball at 14 years old for Moomba Park at Darebin Netball Association, and she has also played with Fitzroy Stars Football Netball Club.

She joined her first team with her best friend at the time, who was also Aboriginal. The club embraced them both and celebrated their culture.

"They always encouraged me to show up and attend the games – netball is a place where I felt like I belonged," Nakia said.

Nakia Cadd

