

THOUGHT
YOU KNEW
PHIL
SHELLEY

THE BOOMERANG EFFECT

WORDS: ANTHONY ROBERTS

Phil Shelley lives, breathes, and bleeds the game of basketball and he has the resume to prove it. Over fifteen years of playing hoops in the tough SEABL competition for Gippsland, coaching at the ABA, VBL and National U-18 Country Championship levels and providing sports science consultancy to Basketball Victoria's Intensive Training Centre Program for the past five years, Shelley has become a premier basketball authority in Victoria, teaching shooting skills and managing "Shoot'n Hoops", an enterprise designed to help clubs and players bump up their performance through video analysis and coaching workshops. Last season, Shelley was snapped up by the Tigers' Al Westover to become the team's specialist shooting coach. The results were evident, as Melbourne enjoyed its second best start in franchise history and ended up celebrating its second title in three years. It also, much to Shelley's delight, led the league in free throw shooting percentage. Even better, David Barlow and Stephen Hoare decimated the Breakers one magical night, shooting a combined 21 of 21 from the field. This master shooting coach, so well versed in sports science and biomechanics, has created what he hopes will become the defining ball return shooting innovation – often called a "rebounder" – in this country. "Over the years, I was always looking at a way to get more shots up," he says. "I knew [other devices] existed but I'd never used one. There are downfalls with other gadgets out there, particularly in size and price, but I was conscious of making mine a shooting aid as well as a rebounder." Enter the Boomerang, Shelley's patented ball return system. A large, lightweight and affordable mechanism has to be seen to be understood. A large mesh net sits under the hoop to catch the ball, which then funnels down a metallic slew and is returned to the shooter. Aside from a very quick return, its true value lies in the fact that the Boomerang teaches correct technique. "Its circular halo-shaped net has been designed at a perfect height to encourage players to shoot with optimum trajectory," Shelley explains. "After successfully trialling the device with the Tigers and Dragons, and with Dandenong in the WNBL, many players have commented about how good it is for returning the ball, but the best part is that the shape of the net subconsciously lifts your shot." The Boomerang is destined to become an innovative tool in teaching shooting, not just for clubs playing high grade basketball, but also for schools and rec leagues. It's also a specifically Australian piece of equipment – iconic name aside. "Most of the schools that have bought rebounding devices in the past [in the US] have owned their own gym, which is exclusively used for basketball. So when the thing is not in use, they just wheel it into the corner and leave it set up," Shelley says. "In Australia, when the basketball is done they have to get off the court quickly because netball or volleyball have to use the space. The clubs and schools needed something that could be taken down quickly, and that was foremost in my mind while designing the Boomerang. I'm a basketball person through and through – an entrepreneur second – I want to contribute positively to the game. I'm really proud of this gadget and this can be my legacy to Australian basketball. The more people use it and the more kids benefit from it, the better a shooting nation Australia can become." **For more information about the Boomerang visit www.boomerangbasketball.net**



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