



P&O Pacific Partnership Supports Vanuatu Women's Beach Volleyball Team in Quest for Commonwealth Games Glory

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Vital support from the P&O Pacific Partnership has ensured that Vanuatu's women's volleyball stars, senior player Miller Pata and Linline Matauatu have the chance to make their Island nation proud by taking home a Commonwealth Games medal.

The Partnership, funded by voluntary contributions from P&O guests, stepped in to support the team's accommodation as they need to stay outside the Games Village in Coolangatta because athletes being accompanied by children are unable to stay in the village. Miller is a mum with a six month old baby.

Already ranked among the top four Commonwealth Games volleyball nations with Australia, Canada and New Zealand, the Vanuatu team is being supported with the cost of accommodation outside the village as a base to launch their Commonwealth Games campaign.

"Vanuatu is a small nation that is still developing and its sporting heroes are usually people from other countries," said Stuart Gist of Vanuatu Beach Volleyball.

"Miller and her competition partner Linline have a real opportunity to win the first medal at the Commonwealth Games for Vanuatu.

"It's actually the first real opportunity to make the finals of any Commonwealth Games sport.

"Currently, Australia, Canada, Vanuatu and New Zealand are the four top ranked teams in the Commonwealth and on any given day each team could beat the other.

"The P&O Pacific Partnership's support means a lot to us and has been pivotal in enabling Miller and Linline to represent Vanuatu in this international competition where they have a real chance of a medal.

"We feel that we are on the verge of creating our own small piece of history and there is no better company to do that with than P&O because you have seen our country grow and develop including hospitality staff from Vanuatu working on your ships.

"P&O was also there for Vanuatu after the devastation of Cyclone Pam in 2015 and you are continuing to support us in this emerging opportunity in international sport."

Sture Myrmell, President of Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises Australia, said supporting the Vanuatu team was an easy decision given the close bonds between P&O and Vanuatu.

"P&O Cruises has been cruising to the South Pacific for more than 85 years and our guests share our love and respect for the people of Vanuatu," Mr Myrmell said.

"We are delighted that through the P&O Pacific Partnership our guests have an opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder with Miller and Linline in their quest for Commonwealth Games glory.

"Our Australian and New Zealand guests now have the added bonus of each having two national teams to barrack for in the women's beach volleyball competition."

The P&O Pacific Partnership is funded by a one dollar voluntary contribution applied to P&O cruise bookings and is used to fund a variety of community programs in the South Pacific.

Working with Save the Children Australia, the Partnership has previously funded the construction of kindergartens and health aid posts in Vanuatu. The Partnership was also prominent in P&O's humanitarian aid response to the Cyclone Pam disaster.

In thanking the P&O Pacific Partnership, Stuart Gist said the whole of Vanuatu would be following Miller and Linline in the Commonwealth Games competition.

"Our hopes for them to be given the opportunity to perform at the highest level for their country has been realised thanks to the Partnership," Mr Gist said.

"Win or lose, they will be able to look their children in the face knowing that they did their best having had the opportunity to represent Vanuatu and to make us all proud."

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