



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **SYDNEY KINGS ANNOINT “BASKETBALL ROYALTY” AS HEAD COACH**

Another key component in the revitalised Sydney Kings franchise was unveiled today with the announcement of Australian basketball legend, Andrew Gaze as its head coach for a minimum of three years.

The appointment of the highly decorated Gaze, considered the greatest player in the history of the National Basketball League, follows the recent announcement that AEG Ogden, the operator of Allphones Arena, had taken a controlling interest in the Sydney Kings.

AEG Ogden Chairman and CEO, Harvey Lister said today that securing Gaze was a tremendous coup that would deliver a number of positive spin-offs not only for the Kings but for basketball generally in the Harbour City.

“Andrew Gaze is ‘basketball royalty’ in Australia not only for his feats on the court but as an ambassador for the game and is held in the highest regard both at home and throughout the world.

“Andrew was always our first choice to coach the Kings. Such is his standing in the game that we believe players will now want to come to the Sydney and be part of something new and exciting going forward.

His appointment is timely as the Kings, under Managing Director, Jeff Van Groningen begin recruitment preparations ahead of the 2016-17 NBL season. Together, Van Groningen and Gaze will begin building a playing roster that is ready to hit the ground running for round one in October.

While recognising his appointment as an exciting opportunity, Gaze is not underestimating the challenges that lie ahead.

“Sydney has a long history in the NBL with some wonderful contributors over many years. We will be looking to build upon those successes and re-establishing the Kings as one of the premier teams in the competition.

“The Sydney market is critical to the success of both the Kings and the NBL and I acknowledge the responsibility we have to represent Sydney to the best of our ability.

“Time is crucial as we have to rebuild quickly. But the change in ownership and playing out of a world class venue in Allphones Arena is exciting for both players and fans alike and I look forward to meeting those challenges,” he said.

News of Gaze's appointment as head coach has been greeted enthusiastically by former Sydney Kings legends – coaches Brian Goorjian and Bob Turner and players Damian Keogh and Dwayne "D-Train" McClain.

Goorjian, who coached the Kings from 2003 to 2008 and won three NBL titles in that time, said he had no doubt that Andrew Gaze would be a success as head coach.

"I was fortunate when I came to Australia in 1977 to be coached by Andrew's father, Lindsay Gaze at the Melbourne Tigers. With more than 600 games playing under his father, Andrew has learned from one of the best in the business about what is required to succeed as a coach in the NBL.

"More recently, I have coached against Andrew in a few pre-season games in China and have been very impressed by his game play strategies and team organization," Goorjian said.

Turner agreed, adding that Gaze has the respect of the entire Australian basketball community and the character to manage the expectations of a city that not only expects success but demands it.

"His appointment is a real coup and hopefully it won't be long before we see a return to the glory days of packed houses at Kings games," he said.

Keogh and McClain said Gaze would easily make the transition from champion player to champion coach.

"Andrew is the best basketball player this country has ever produced. I have seen his leadership skills at close range, having played against him in the NBL and with him in the Boomers for many years. He leads by example and commands respect from team mates who want to give their absolute best for him," Keogh said.

McClain added: "Not only is Andrew Gaze a champion player, he's an outstanding leader who has a great understanding of the game. He will demand respect and is just what the Kings need to revitalise the franchise, leading them into a new era. Andrew's a class act, a great bloke and I look forward to seeing the Kings play this season."

### **About Andrew Gaze**

In 20 years in the NBL, he played a total of 612 games for the Melbourne Tigers, 18,908 points at an average of 30.9 points a game. Along the way, he collected two NBL championships and was named the NBL Most Valuable Player seven times. He was one of only three players to have represented their country in basketball at five Olympic Games and was selected as flag-bearer for the Australian Olympic Team at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games opening ceremony. He was inducted in the Australian Basketball Hall of Fame in 2004 and the international FIBA Hall of Fame in 2013.

In 1988, Gaze paved the way for the number of Australians playing in the United States when he signed for college team Seton Hall where he helped his team reach the playoffs. He was to later return to the US where he played for the Washington Bullets during the 1993-94 NBA season and for the 1999 championship winning San Antonio Spurs.

Gaze has remained involved in basketball since retiring as a player in 2005. He has considerable experience coaching elite level teams in China where he enjoys a high profile and currently coaches the Melbourne Tigers SEABL men's team.

He has also carved out a successful media career commenting on the NBL on both SEN 1116 and Network 10, AFL on Fox Sports and an entertainment show on Channel 7.

### **About AEG Ogden**

AEG Ogden is an Australian controlled joint venture between Australian venue management interests and AEG Facilities of the United States.

AEG Ogden manages venues throughout the Asia Pacific region, including Sydney's Allphones Arena, the Newcastle Entertainment Centre, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre and the adjacent Sports Centre, Perth Arena, Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane, and major convention centres in Brisbane, Cairns, Darwin, Kuala Lumpur, Hyderabad (currently in design), Oman (opening by September 2016), and the International Convention Centre Sydney (opening December 2016) and the Sydney Exhibition Centre at Glebe Island. For more information visit: [aegogden.com](http://aegogden.com)

AEG Ogden also operates six venues that will be hosting NBL teams in the 2016/17 Season: The Sydney Kings at Allphones Arena and the ICC Sydney, the Perth Wildcats (current NBL champions) at Perth Arena, the Cairns Taipans at the arena at the Cairns Convention Centre, and the new Brisbane Bullets at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre and also at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre.

### **About AEG**

AEG is one of the leading sports and entertainment presenters in the world. AEG, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Anschutz Company, owns, operates or consults with a collection of companies including over 130 of the world's preeminent facilities such as STAPLES Center (Los Angeles, CA) and The O2 arena and entertainment district (London, England). Developed by AEG, L.A. LIVE is a 4 million square foot / \$3 billion downtown Los Angeles sports and entertainment district featuring Microsoft Theater, Club Nokia, and a 54-story, 1001-room convention "headquarters" destination. In addition to overseeing privately held management shares of the Los Angeles Lakers, assets of AEG Sports include franchises such as the LA Kings and LA Galaxy, Ontario Reign, Manchester Monarchs, Berlin Eisbaren's and the Hamburg Freezers, as well as the Amgen Tour of California cycling stage race. Along with AEG Facilities, a stand-alone affiliate of AEG which owns, operates or consults with more than 130 of the industry's preeminent venues, other global divisions include AEG Live, the world's second largest concert promotion and touring company comprised of touring, festival, exhibition and special event divisions, and AEG Global Partnerships, responsible for worldwide sales and servicing of sponsorships, naming rights and other strategic partnerships. For more information, visit: [www.aegworldwide.com](http://www.aegworldwide.com).

Across its network of managed arenas and stadia across five continents, the AEG Group hosts some 70 major sports franchises, including teams from NBA, NCAA, Euroleague, NBL, NFL, NHL and MLS

Date: 2 April 2016

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