

MEDIA RELEASE

Whangaruru volunteer named Coaching Legend after 28 years supporting community netball

By Bunnings | September 2026

Nearly three decades of volunteering

Whangaruru Netball Club volunteer Sophy Tua has been named Bunnings' latest Coaching Legends monthly winner, recognising 28 years of dedication to community netball.

Sophy Tua first experienced the importance of volunteer coaching as a five-year-old, when she was coached by her aunty. Years later, as a young mum, she followed that example by coaching alongside her sister. Her volunteering journey now continues with two of her daughters working beside her at the club.

Today, Sophy Tua coaches three teams, mentors new coaches and helps lead Whangaruru Netball Club. During the netball season, she dedicates more than 25 hours each week to supporting players, families and fellow volunteers.

The club now has 17 teams, creating opportunities for local tamariki to take part in sport, develop confidence and feel connected to their community.

"For us, the first win is helping someone become a good person. Enjoying netball comes second, and the scoreboard comes third," Sophy Tua said.

Helping players and coaches find their confidence

For Sophy Tua, the value of volunteering is found in seeing both young people and new coaches grow.

"Volunteering does not have to start with having all the answers. Sometimes it begins with saying yes, helping where you can and learning alongside everyone else," she said.

"If kids are enjoying themselves, learning new skills and feeling like they belong, then it's worth every minute."

Bunnings New Zealand General Manager Melissa Haines said Sophy Tua's contribution reflects what Coaching Legends was established to recognise.

"Volunteer coaches play an important role in helping young people learn, grow and feel connected to their communities," Melissa Haines said.

"Sophy's impact extends far beyond the netball court. For nearly three decades she has freely given her time to support local families, develop future coaches and create opportunities for young people to thrive through sport.

"The fact that her daughters now volunteer alongside her is a powerful reflection of the legacy she's created within her community."



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Celebrating volunteer coaches across Aotearoa

Coaching Legends is a nationwide Bunnings initiative that recognises the volunteer coaches supporting players, clubs and communities across Aotearoa.

Players, parents, clubs and community members can nominate a volunteer coach, with more than 100 coaches still set to be recognised during the programme.

[Nominate a Coaching Legend](#) or learn more about the programme, its recognition categories and rewards. The public programme page states that weekly winners receive a Coaching Legends kit, monthly winners receive a development experience and annual recipients receive support for their clubs

