



Moss Vale Magic player Chris Tyler has been accepted to the University of Wisconsin-Superior on an academic scholarship. Photo by Lauren Strode



**Above:** Chris Tyler checks out a basketball game during his time in America at the start of the year.

**Left:** Chris Tyler and some of the others training at Impact checking out Las Vegas.

Photos supplied

# Chris courts college ball

By Lauren Strode

AFTER months of hard work, Chris Tyler's dream of playing college basketball in America has come true.

The Moss Vale Magic representative player travelled to Las Vegas earlier this year to train for four months at Impact Academy.

The end goal was to gain a place at an American college where he could continue his basketball training and perhaps end up playing professionally one day.

He was recently accepted into the University of Wisconsin - Superior on an academic scholarship, where he will be studying exercise science.

His four month stint at Impact has certainly prepared him for the tough competition he will

face. "It was tough but I couldn't have asked for a better experience," Chris said.

"When I first got there, just (with) the different style of game, I could not keep up. They were so much more physical and faster. I was in shock and I was just getting thrown around so a big thing for me was to put on some weight."

In a bid to buff up, Chris did plenty of gym work.

At one stage he would work out up to five times a day, including an extra morning and night session.

"I was dying but it only did me good," he said.

When he arrived in the US he weighed 67 kg and by the time he left, he was up to 78 kg.

Chris trained with some incredible basketball players,

including the sons of past NBA players.

"The competition certainly didn't lack any talent," he said.

Impact Academy played games against high schools and prep schools. Chris said it was competitive in all matches.

Chris stayed in an apartment with Australian and New Zealand players and for those four months the group became a tight knit "mini family" whose lives revolved around basketball.

"When you're over there it's purely basketball. Nothing else is on your mind apart from basketball. You train all day, you go back to the apartment and everyone's talking about basketball," Chris said.

When he returned home, Chris sent out countless emails

to American colleges with his game footage and a reference from his coach David Amata.

"It all happened pretty suddenly, but I'm over the moon about it. I sent out that many emails, it didn't come easy."

Chris will leave Australia on August 23, which is just weeks away, and said it would be both exciting and sad for him.

"I'm going to miss my family and friends so much but I couldn't say no to this opportunity. It'll be tough but my family's shown so much support. They've just kept me going," he said.

Chris thanked David Amata for his support, the coaches at Impact and everyone he has been involved with at Moss Vale and District Basketball Association for helping him over the years.