

# Coollest Girl' GDAA nominations recognise important role of women gamers

A mobile game that encourages girls to “Lie, bitch, and flirt your way to the top of the high school ladder” has been nominated for four major awards in the Game Developers Association of Australia (GDAA) Annual Awards, which are recognised as the Oscars of the gaming industry.

Adelaide-developed Coolest Girl In School is in a lineup that includes major game titles such as The SIMS, Looney Tunes and Fast & Furious.

The game was nominated for its unique Australian approach, its often biting sense of humour, and its recognition that more than half of mobile gamers are women.

Producers Holly Owen of Champagne for the Ladies and Karyn Lanthois of Kukan Studio were shocked and delighted when they learned their mobile game was nominated for awards in the Best Game, Best Mobile Title and Best Graphics categories. Additionally, Champagne for the Ladies has been nominated as Best New Start Up (Adam Lancman Award).

Ms Lanthois said: “To be nominated in the company of products that are household names across the globe like The Sims 2 Pets, Need For Speed Pro Street and Looney Tunes Acme Arsenal is amazing – and it shows what can be done from here in South Australia.”

Founded in Adelaide, Champagne for the Ladies is one of just two companies in the world focused solely on creating mobile entertainment for female audiences.

“Coolest Girl In School is the world’s first mobile RPG (role playing game) made specifically for girls and the potential audience is huge,” said Ms Owen, who co-produced, wrote and directed Coolest Girl. “Unlike other areas of gaming, well over half (60%) of casual mobile gamers are women but very few games are made specifically for female audiences.”

Coolest Girl In School uses uniquely Australian vernacular and is inhabited by bush pigs, bogans, and footy players not “hos, red necks or quarter backs”, Ms Owen said.

The game’s unique look has been recognised by its nomination for Best Graphics and this aspect of the game once again shows remarkable innovation. Adelaide abstract painter and illustrator Jo Kerlogue’s gorgeous graphics combine real and drawn elements which create a visual style that is a departure from the pixelated graphic style common in gaming.

“In a market saturated with ad-branded offerings, patronisingly pinked puzzles, mobilised board games, retro console rip-offs and movie licenses, giving girls a different gaming option made specifically for them is what Coolest Girl In School is all about,” Ms Owen added.

Players with a sound knowledge of coordinating a hot outfit, an expertise in popular culture and even first-hand live experience of being popular aren’t assured of a high score, let alone survival. Just like in the real world, high school in Coolest Girl In School is painful, defies logic and is totally unfair!

“Our aim was never to create something that would achieve the status of Halo 3 but when it comes to fantasy, Coolest Girl in School is like Grand Theft Auto for girls,” Ms Owen continued.

A game it might be – but these local girls have proven they have what it takes to be among the Australia’s best.

Ms Holly Owen, Producer

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Champagne For The Ladies

[www.coolestgirlinschool.com](http://www.coolestgirlinschool.com)