



Media release

The Place To Be

From the Minister for the Commonwealth Games

Sunday 27 February 2005

UP AND RUNNING FOR THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Justin Madden, today launched a new Commonwealth Games strategy to convert Victoria's passion for watching sport into healthier and more active lifestyles.

Mr Madden said the *Up and Running* initiative focussed on inspiring people of all ages and abilities to try a new sport or pastime.

"Major sporting events encourage people to get off the couch and try the sports at local clubs and centres," Mr Madden said.

"By bringing 4,500 elite athletes to town, the Commonwealth Games has the potential to do likewise – not only for those wanting to be the next Matt Welsh but also for those just interested in having a go.

"The \$6.5 million *Up and Running* strategy builds the capacity of the sports sector to meet this demand, and to put more active pastimes within reach of more Victorians."

With some activities already underway, the key initiatives of *Up and Running* are:

- hosting come'n'try events to give people of all ages and abilities hands-on experience of a new sport, including the Warming up for the Games Day, on 20 November 2005;
- offering specialist training to 1,000 Games volunteers to become coaches or officials at their local clubs;
- sharing the world-class sports equipment used at the Games among clubs and associations; and
- inviting coaches from developing Commonwealth nations to Melbourne in March 2005 to learn new techniques for helping Elite Athletes with a Disability achieve their best.

Mr Madden launched the strategy at one of 60 Future Athlete clinics also being held across Victoria this year. Part of *Up and Running*, these clinics will see up to 2,000 young hopefuls get specialist support to become tomorrow's elite athletes.

"A lot of students who show particular promise at school sports often can't take their ability any further because they don't have a clear idea of how to get to the next level," Mr Madden said.

"These clinics will help bridge that gap and give secondary students a more tailored pathway to reaching their potential."

Efforts to build a healthier community through the Games will link to the Bracks Government's *Go for your life* campaign.

The XVIII Commonwealth Games will be held from 15 – 26 March 2006 and will bring together 4,500 athletes from 71 nations. Copies of *Up and Running* are available from www.dvc.vic.gov.au/commonwealth_games.

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