



MEDIA RELEASE

10 January 2018

10 Days to Go!

We are now 10 days away until the XVIII Australian Deaf Games opens in Albury and Wodonga on 20th January 2018. The Games Organising Committee is pleased to announce over 850 people attending this exciting event, many of whom are Deaf, hard of hearing, parents, educators, interpreters, and many more. The Organising Committee has been working very hard with AlburyCity and Wodonga Council to seamlessly welcome athletes, officials, referees, sponsors, families and friends to the Games.

Over 80 volunteers hailing from all over Australia, many of whom are local, will also be joining us for the week to ensure the Games runs smoothly. Albury and Wodonga will also welcome visitors from New Zealand and Fiji to the region, with over 50 participants from our Pacific neighbours expected to attend the Games.

More than 60 local community members have had the opportunity to access Deaf Awareness Training presented by Vicdeaf with Conexu, Deaf Sports Recreation Victoria and the Games Organising Committee. This two-hour training covered basic Auslan (Australian Sign Language), the Deaf community, deaf culture, the do's and don'ts, and communication strategies with deaf and hard of hearing people. This training is still on offer for local community members on 16th January at Wodonga and on 18th January in Albury. This training is in addition to the Auslan classes provided by Vicdeaf through Albury local Will Taffe, made possible through a generous grant by Australia Post.

We are also thrilled for the first time to offer deaf athletes to participate in a local aquathlon and triathlon with the help of Albury Wodonga Triathlon Club (AWTC), Triathlon Victoria, and Triathlon Australia.

Jo Homer from Albury Wodonga Triathlon Club said, "The Albury Wodonga Triathlon Club is extremely excited to be part of the Australia Deaf Games. It is a great honor to be included as one of the twenty sports that will be on show during January. The AWTC has always promoted an environment of encouragement and inclusion and the positive lifestyle that sports offer. It will be great to showcase the local region and all it has to offer to both competitors and supporters alike."

The Games will kick off at the Opening Ceremony on Saturday 20th January at the Albury Entertainment Centre at 6.00pm. Shirley Liu and Michael Parremore will be MC'ing the event, which also includes the National Anthem translated by Auslan Stage Left signed by the 1st Wodonga Scout Group, a special dance performance by Anna Seymour and Amanda Lever, Mobile Love Duets, and more.



The Games will deliver a fun-filled week including a social and cultural program to entertain visitors of all ages with events such as Yoga, Auslan Storytimes, Auslan interpreted theatre show, AuslanX, Sunday Service in Auslan, an exhibition at the LibraryMuseum, Australia Day celebrations, and much more!

Deaf Sports Australia is also excited to announce John Kearney as the winner of the 500th person to register for the Games. John is a Victorian resident and is a well-known and long-time deaf sports and Games' participant in soccer and futsal. Congratulations John for winning your free registration to the XVIII Australian Deaf Games.

The Games would not be possible without the support of the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW, Sports Recreation Victoria, both AlburyCity and Wodonga Council; and our sponsors Australian Hearing, our official Games "Superfan", Ai-Media, Vicdeaf, The Deaf Society, BeerDeluxe Albury, LaTrobe University, Commercial Club Albury, Conexu, JobCentre Australia, BioRevieve, and Oceania Australia Foundation. With their support, deaf and hard of hearing athletes are able to participate, succeed and enjoy sports on many different levels at the Games.

Local businesses have also been very busy behind the scenes to make sure our medals and trophies, program book, posters and banners are ready in time for the Games.

The Australian Deaf Games have been held around the country since 1964 and it is the first time this multi-sport event is being hosted in two cities, and Albury and Wodonga are very excited to be welcoming athletes, spectators, sponsors, families, and friends to the region.

The 2018 Australian Deaf Games will kick off on Saturday 20th January 2018 and conclude on Saturday 27th January 2018.

Sports on offer at the Games include: athletics, futsal, tennis, triathlon, netball, lawn bowls, beach volleyball, and many more.

Alex Jones, Chair of 2018ADG Organising Committee said, "We're so pumped about this being 10 days away to the kickoff of the 2018 Australian Deaf Games. So much has been happening and we are so fortunate to have local businesses helping us to make sure everything is ready in time for athletes and our arrival. The Committee and I wish athletes the best of luck at this year's Games and encourage them to enjoy the beautiful cities of Albury and Wodonga!"

For more information about the 2018 Australian Deaf Games, please contact Sherrie Beaver, Marketing and Communications Coordinator at sherrie.beaver@deafsports.org.au

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