



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

\$1.6M “BIRTHDAY” PRESENT TO MANUKA OVAL CENTRAL IN COMMITMENT TO SPORT AND RECREATION

The 2004-05 Budget sets aside \$1.6 million in the capital works program for Manuka Oval, which will provide improved spectator comfort with undercover seating for an additional 4,000 fans.

“Manuka Oval, which celebrates its 75th birthday this year, remains a key facility for both AFL and cricket, hosting a large number of community and elite level events each year. Key facility hirers and spectators have long lamented the lack of covered seating, which severely impacts on spectator numbers and comfort in the advent of wet conditions or extreme heat,” said Treasurer and Minister for Sport, Ted Quinlan.

“In a move that will no doubt please major hirers, this budget allocation will provide increased weather protection, making two-thirds of Manuka Oval’s seats under cover. Furthermore, a third major access gate will be created to improve crowd access control and safety. This is part of a broader project to undertake new perimeter fencing to upgrade venue security and further enhance the Oval’s visual appeal in harmony with the surrounding Manuka precinct.”

The Budget has also made an \$8 million provision for the development of a drag racing facility for the ACT, aiming to replace the former site at Pialligo that ceased operation under the Liberal Government in late 1998.

“The Canberra drag racing community has been actively calling for a dragway for over five years and we made a strong commitment to investigate available options. We have not been idle in exploring these options. This Budget makes a provision towards development costs in the event that we can successfully locate a site that meets the needs of, not only drag racers, but considers the range of environmental and community concerns that would be implicit in any development of this nature,” said Mr Quinlan.

The Budget continues Government’s support for elite sporting teams to be a key part of the local community, recognising the importance of an “on-ground” presence in promoting and developing participation in physical activity.

“The Budget provides \$7.3 million over four years to ensure that the ACT Brumbies and Canberra Raiders play all home matches at Canberra Stadium and maintain their active involvement in assisting junior sporting development in the community.

“These new *performance fees* are entirely transparent and replace the confusing and out-dated agreements entered into by the previous Liberal Government. In part, having both teams play all home matches at Canberra Stadium, where they account for more than 80 per

cent of revenue, will help guarantee the revenue flow of the Stadium. This also ensures that we have both teams locked in for a combined minimum of 19 matches at Canberra Stadium every year, with the potential for more with finals or international fixtures.

“From agreements like this, and Government’s support of other national league teams in the ACT, we not only help ensure that Canberra continues to be represented on the national sporting stage and receives the associated promotional benefits, but importantly, we ensure that our elite athletes are actively involved in the community within junior sport and schools.”

It is not only elite sport that is to prosper from this Budget, with significant funding also allocated to continue community level development and broader participation programs.

“As outlined in the *Canberra Social Plan*, physical activity participation is a major catalyst in creating a healthier, more cohesive Canberra community,” the Minister stated.

“We have continued to increase the Sport and Recreation Grants Program inline with CPI to \$2.58 million in 2004-05. This program is providing participation opportunities and further developing our sport and recreation industry. In 2004 we have supported well over 100 local sport, recreation and community organisations from this program alone.

“From the grants program we will again be targeting women’s participation and increasing their opportunity for industry leadership; the Women’s Grants Program offering \$60,000 for women’s initiatives, and a further \$20,000 to provide pathways for women to progress into the high performance coaching environment through the ACT Academy of Sport.

“Additionally, \$383,000 has been provided over four years for the further implementation of the successful Canberra Active Living Model (CALM), part of this Government’s Actively Ageing initiative. The CALM pilot program, implemented last year in North Canberra, has already proven a winner in recruiting sedentary older people into an 18 month modified physical activity program. This injection will allow the program to be rolled out beyond the initial pilot area and provide direct participation opportunities for more older people.

“This Government recognises the central place of sport and recreation within our community and is committed to ensuring that we have places to play, role models to follow, and programs and opportunities to enable us to be active,” Mr Quinlan concluded.

Highlights

- **\$1.6m for Manuka Oval to provide more covered seating, a third major entrance and new perimeter fencing;**
- **\$8m provisional allocation for dragway facility providing a suitable site can be found;**
- **\$7.3m over four years to guarantee that the Raiders and Brumbies play all home matches at Canberra Stadium and continue their community activity involvement;**
- **\$2.58m for Sport and Recreation Grants Program to fund community level sport and recreation development activities;**
- **\$383,000 over four years for the broader implementation of the successful Canberra Active Living Model to recruit more sedentary older people to regular physical activity.**