
Embargoed: 7.00am AEST – Sunday, 22 April 2018

SYDNEY THE PLACE TO BE AS THE CITY HOSTS MEN'S AND WOMEN'S STATE OF ORIGIN ACTION

This year, Sydney will host both a historic standalone State of Origin encounter on Sunday 24 June, when the NSW Blues face rivals QLD Maroons at ANZ Stadium in Game Two of the 2018 Series, and the first ever Women's State of Origin game played under the Origin brand on Friday 22 June.

To add to the anticipation, the men's Game Two in Sydney could be the 2018 Series decider; with either the Brad Fittler led Blues creating history in claiming just their second Series victory since 2005 or the Maroons continuing their decade long dominance of Australia's most watched sporting event.

This clash will also be the first time in 17 years that a State of Origin game will have been played on a Sunday and furthermore, there will be no NRL Premiership games contested that weekend, allowing State of Origin Game Two in Sydney to take centre stage.

NSW Minister for Tourism and Major Events Adam Marshall said the State was proud to host the first Sunday State of Origin encounter in almost two decades and the Women's State of Origin on the same weekend, providing fans with a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a long weekend in the Harbour City.

"NSW is the country's number one state for tourism and major events, with the annual State of Origin Series one of Sydney's key sporting events both in terms of visitation and exposure via broadcast audiences.

"In 2017, Sydney hosted Game Two of the Series which attracted 19,000 overnight visitors, delivered \$12 million in visitor expenditure to the NSW economy and was watched by 3.5 million people across Australia.

"Fans attending this year's Game Two in Sydney could witness history in the making, with the fixture a potential Series decider, adding further significance to this Sunday encounter.

"History will also be made in Sydney that weekend when the first ever Women's State of Origin game will be contested under lights on Friday night, showcasing the passion, skill and determination of the country's finest players.

"We look forward to welcoming supporters to Sydney for these must see events and to enjoy an extended break in NSW," Mr Marshall said.

In partnership with the NRL, Queensland State of Origin legend, Cooper Cronk features in a short video, personally urging fans to visit Sydney for Game Two of this year's State of Origin Series.

The dual Dally M Medallist was filmed in locations across Sydney, where he highlights some of his favourite activities, attractions, food destinations and hangouts.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW COOPER CRONK'S TOUR OF SYDNEY \(YouTube\)](#)

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD COOPER CRONK'S TOUR OF SYDNEY \(Vimeo\)](#)

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD IMAGES OF COOPER CRONK'S TOUR OF SYDNEY](#)

Having retired from representative rugby league at the end of 2017, Cronk is a firm fan favourite in both Queensland and Victoria having played for the QLD Maroons on 22 occasions including seven series wins and 323 NRL games for the Melbourne Storm.

This year, Cronk will join 83,000 fans in the stands at ANZ Stadium on Sunday 24 June as State of Origin fever grips the nation.

“As a rugby league player you aspire to play State of Origin football. There is nothing like it. It’s more than just a sporting contest, it’s an event that means so much to so many,” Mr Cronk said.

“This year I’ll be experiencing State of Origin as a fan for the first time in a long time. And while I’m sure I’ll have the same nerves as my playing days, I’m looking forward to being part of a passionate crowd in Sydney.”

Cronk, who now plays for the Sydney Roosters, said Sydney has so much on offer for travelling fans.

“I love Sydney, it’s a special city with so much to see and do,” Mr Cronk explained.

“You can’t go past Sydney’s famous attractions and stunning beaches, its world-class museums, theatres and festivals, plus Sydney has amazing cafés and restaurants.

“With Game Two of this year’s State of Origin being played on a Sunday night, what a fantastic opportunity for fans to rally up their friends, teammates or work colleagues for a few days of fun and excitement in Sydney,” he concluded.

For information go to Sydney.com

Tickets are now on sale for the 2018 State of Origin Game Two at ANZ Stadium, Sydney on Sunday 24 June, and the 2018 Women’s State of Origin game on Friday 22 June from NRL.com/tickets.

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