



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 9 August, 2013

Bledisloe Cup Festival Bigger and Better in 2013

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, George Souris, has launched this year's Bledisloe Cup Festival with just over a week to go before the highly anticipated match between the Qantas Wallabies and the All Blacks at ANZ Stadium.

"The Bledisloe Cup Festival was born in 2012 out of a ten year deal between the NSW Government, through its tourism and major events agency Destination NSW, and the Australian Rugby Union. The deal sees Sydney host an annual Bledisloe Cup match for the next decade and that will add an estimated \$90 million to the NSW economy," Mr Souris said.

Mr Souris was joined at the launch held at the Museum of Sydney by Australian Rugby Union CEO Bill Pulver, with Qantas Wallaby legend Joe Roff and current player Kurtley Beale.

Mr Souris said the Bledisloe Cup Festival 2013 includes a Bledisloe Cup Round of club games this weekend and a free exhibition at the Museum of Sydney called 'Magic of Bledisloe'.

"The Festival will feature a program of business, fan, school and community events across Sydney and will continue until the Bledisloe Cup Test match between the Qantas Wallabies and All Blacks is held on Saturday August 17th at ANZ Stadium.

"The 'Magic of Bledisloe' is a free exhibition at the Museum of Sydney showcasing timeless pieces from past Bledisloe Cup Test matches.

"The battle between Australia and New Zealand Rugby has a rich history dating back to the 1900s and the display captures some of the magic moments throughout the history, including the first time Australia won the Cup on Kiwi soil in 1949, a look back at dual New Zealand/ Australian Rugby international, Des Connor in 1962, Australia's thrilling victory at the SCG in 1979 and the try-saving tackle by George Gregan in 1994".

Mr Souris said the Bledisloe Cup comes hot on the heels of a huge month of sport in NSW including the British and Irish Lions Tour, two State of Origin matches and visit by Manchester United which have provided a \$100 million economic boost to the State.

"The Bledisloe Cup is another world-class sporting event on the NSW Events Calendar and with two out of the three Bledisloe Test matches in New Zealand this year, Sydney is the only city in Australia that will host the battle between Australia and New Zealand in 2013.

“I encourage Sydneysiders and visitors alike to celebrate Australian rugby greatness and join in the festivities of the Bledisloe Cup Festival as we countdown to the 17th August.”

NSW Minister for Sport and Recreation, Graham Annesley said the Bledisloe Cup Festival will build on the wonderful tradition of the Bledisloe Cup as one of the great sporting rivalries between Australia and New Zealand.

“The NSW Government is proud to partner with Australian Rugby to host this internationally acclaimed sporting event,” Mr Annesley said.

“We know that Sydney is the heart of Rugby in Australia and we want to ensure fans have the chance to not only see the match but be able to celebrate the passion and support that follows the historic game.

“Our global city is making the most of everything that surrounds the Bledisloe Cup and offering more opportunities to amplify and enjoy the experience.

“I look forward to seeing the Bledisloe Cup Festival progress into a week-long carnival of colour and pride and encourage everyone to be part of it in the coming week.”

Australian Rugby Union CEO, Bill Pulver, said: “The British & Irish Lions Tour demonstrated what international Rugby can and should be all about, exciting games and crowds of colourful fans enjoying the experience.

“I’m thrilled to be able to continue this trend with the Bledisloe Cup Festival offering plenty of opportunities to build up to this year’s opening clash between the Qantas Wallabies and All Blacks.

“The Festival is the ultimate opportunity to celebrate the unique culture, history and passion surrounding the annual battle for the Bledisloe Cup.

“The match on Saturday 17 August at ANZ Stadium is your one and only chance to see the Bledisloe Cup on Australian soil this year, so I’d encourage everyone to secure their tickets and get behind the Qantas Wallabies as they look to win back the coveted Cup for the first time in over a decade”.