

DOCKLANDS SPORTS PAGE

Icehouse to be in world spotlight

Docklands newest attraction, the Icehouse, will next year host its first international event with Melbourne winning the bid to host an international ice hockey championship.

Competing against Serbia, Ice Hockey Australia won the bid for the Ice Hockey Federation's second division championships, which will be held from April 3-10.

The Icehouse's advanced sales co-ordinator, Matt Kennedy, said the facility was really excited about hosting the event.

"Securing this event is another example of how the Icehouse has tapped into the exponential growth this sport has enjoyed in recent months," Mr Kennedy said.

Ice Hockey Victoria president Andy McDowell said it was a very exciting time for the sport in Victoria and that they were ready and welcomed the event.

"We are absolutely thrilled this event is in Melbourne and we are confident that, especially when Australia plays, we will be swinging from the rafters," Mr McDowell said.

Mr Kennedy said the Icehouse, which can seat 1000 and accommodate a further 500 standing, had been experiencing sell-out crowds at the Melbourne Ice games, showing that Melburnians were getting behind the game.

"A number of the games have been sell-outs, reaching 1000 plus spectators. This is a five-fold increase from previous years when games were held at Oakleigh and averaged

roughly 200 spectators each game," Mr Kennedy said.

Ice Hockey Victoria committee member Brent James said it was likely that Melbourne Ice players would represent Australia in the championships.

"In view of Melbourne Ice's strong showing in the Australian Ice Hockey League, currently sitting atop the ladder, the prospects of Victoria having a strong player representation in the national team looks good."

Australia will compete against Serbia, Belgium, New Zealand, Mexico and Korea and is currently rank second behind Serbia, but Mr James believes Australia can win the gold.

"Australia should do well and, with home rink advantage, could repeat its efforts of 2008 when we won gold when the championships were held at Newcastle, NSW," he said.

Mr James also expects tourist numbers to increase during the championships.

The division II championships were played in Mexico last year and next year's championships will be the first time Victoria has hosted the world championships.

For more information please visit www.ihv.com.au and www.ihv.com.au



Peter Kelly practises tossing a coin ... in training for the big day at the MCG on July 10.

Peter gives a toss

It is well known that people act strangely when it comes to footy.

But Peter Kelly has gone over the top this time!

He's spent a small fortune for the privilege of tossing the coin to start the Cats versus Hawks game at the MCG on July 10.

Peter bid for the "very expensive" package at a Geelong fundraising dinner on June 26.

But he is adamant that getting his business's message on the back of the team "run through" banner as well as super screen advertising in front of 70,000 fans is great value.

The package also includes the opportunity to meet both captains, view the warm up and nominate a mascot to run out with the team.

Sorry Peter, it says here that the mascot has to be aged between 6 and 14. I guess you could try shaving off the moustache!

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