



MEDIA RELEASE

22nd June 2005

Major Tennis Events Secured for Next Year

Tennis in Gippsland has received a significant boost with Tennis Australia awarding Tennis East Gippsland two Australian Money Tournaments to be staged in April 2006.

The tournaments will be held at Sale and Bairnsdale Tennis Clubs over successive weeks prior to Easter and are the first significant senior events attracted to the region, encompassing the Wellington and East Gippsland shires, following the recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two shires earlier this month.

East Gippsland Mayor Cr Jane Rowe said news of the two new tournaments was fantastic "It will provide a great boost for tennis in the region and provide an opportunity for our community and an expected influx of visitors to see extremely high grade competition on our own courts," she said.

"It will also be extremely beneficial for our own young players to get close exposure to this level of player."

Cr Rowe said that the timeframe of just nine months before the tournaments was fairly tight.

"Work in Bairnsdale should start now so that we can properly showcase these events and the region," she said.

"The MOU and support of the shire councils played a significant part in the negotiations to secure these events," said Tennis East Gippsland president, John Glynn, who has been appointed tournament director by State Circuit Coordinator, Tennis Victoria.

The concept of Australian Money Tournaments was developed by Tennis Australia and its Member Associations in conjunction with local tennis clubs and businesses, with the aim of providing players with invaluable additional opportunities for competition as part of wider moves to help grow the sport.

A total of 12 tournaments for both men and women will be held in three states beginning in August 2005 and running through to April 2006. The tournaments will complement and act as lead-in events for the Kia Tour – Australia's Futures and Challengers circuit.

"With each of these events offering \$A15,000 in prize money, the two new tournaments are at the highest tier of money events in Australia conducted along the east coast through Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria," said Brian Beers, General Manager of Tennis Victoria.

"The allocation reflects the high standing of tennis administration in Gippsland, which already boasts the Loy Yang Power International Tennis Federation Victorian Junior Championships at Traralgon in January. We are confident that player and business support of these new events will lead to an upgrade to Kia Tour status in the very near future," Mr Beers added.

The Kia Tour sits directly below the ATP Tour (men) and WTA Tour (women) events and comprises six months of men's and women's international tennis tournaments annually across Australia in two distinct periods from September to November and February to April.

Enquiries as to sponsorship opportunities should be directed to the Tournament Director on email at manager@tenniseastgippsland.com or telephone 0409 529 167.