

### **National Sports Museum celebrates 30 years of the AIS**

The National Sports Museum at the MCG is proud to host an exciting new exhibition commemorating 30 years of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), opening tomorrow, January 26, 2011.

The Australia Day launch of the exhibition coincides with the 30<sup>th</sup> birthday of Australia's leading sports institution, which opened its doors on January 26, 1981.

The exhibition celebrates the role of the AIS in the success of elite Australian sport. Established in response to Australia's failure to win any gold medals at the 1976 Montreal Olympics, the AIS has produced such sports superstars as Rob De Castella, Alisa Camplin, Michael Milton, Clint Robinson and Lauren Jackson.

Highlights of the exhibition include:

- The recently banned LZR Speedo suit that saw many swimming world records tumble.
- The first letters to the original AIS scholarship holders.
- Examples of high-tech sporting equipment developed by the Institute.

General Manager of the National Sports Museum, Margaret Birtley said: "We are excited to bring this exhibition to our many visitors, reminding them of the important role the AIS has played in developing our country's sporting stars and building a strong profile for the industry, both in Australian and abroad."

AIS Director Peter Fricker says the exhibition marks an important milestone in AIS history.

"The AIS has a history of producing world champion athletes and as we push further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century our goals remain the same," Professor Fricker said. "The display in Melbourne will showcase some of the highlights of the Institute's existence and I encourage people to enjoy a taste of Australia's sporting history."

In 1981, the Institute welcomed 152 athletes in eight sports. It now offers 26 sports to more than 700 athletes each year.

The Olympic medal tally for athletes who have held AIS scholarships now stands at 37 gold, 50 silver and 62 bronze since the 1984 summer games, and 101 gold, 87 silver and 68 bronze since the 1988 Paralympic games.

Visitors can continue their journey down memory lane with a tour of the National Sports Museum's *Ashes to Ashes* exhibition, which pays homage to one of cricket's oldest and most famous rivalries with a unique collection of memorabilia.

The AIS exhibition runs until June, 2011 and entry is included in the National Sports Museum general admission price.

***Thirty years of the AIS***  
National Sports Museum, January 26 to June 2011.  
*Entry is included in general museum admission*

-ends-

#### MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Belinda Phillips  
Haystac  
03 8689 2274  
0411 101 804

Shane Brown  
Communications Manager  
Melbourne Cricket Club  
0418 353 431

#### Quick links:

Website: [www.nsm.org.au](http://www.nsm.org.au)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nationalsportsmuseum](http://www.facebook.com/nationalsportsmuseum)  
Twitter: [www.twitter.com/NSMNews](http://www.twitter.com/NSMNews)