

THE CONCEPT



The spark for *Run for the Willow* came at the start of April this year. Professional sprinter Chris Tuohy was visiting Daylesford for some rest and relaxation following a super run in his third successive Stawell Gift final. Chris stumbled upon the Tinetti's Cricket Willow and was blown away by the picturesque setting and impressive facilities. Chris chatted with Adrian Tinetti about the prospect of staging an athletics meeting at this unique venue. Both agreed that it was a fantastic concept, particularly in the lead up to the Melbourne Commonwealth Games.

Since that time Chris and Adrian have set about bringing this idea to reality. They have rounded up a team of willing helpers and have recently gained approval from the Victorian Athletic League to stage the inaugural *Run for the Willow* on Saturday 19 November 2005.

THE VENUE



Nestled in the hills just north of Daylesford is the township of Shepherds Flat. This town has been the home to five generations of the Tinetti family. Willow trees for cricket bats have been growing at Shepherds Flat for over a century. In recent years the Tinetti family have created Cricket Willow as the only venue in the world where visitors can witness the complete process from bud to bat.

With plenty of hard work the Tinetti family has transformed their rocky front paddock into a picturesque oval, complete with picket fence. The oval is irrigated throughout the summer to preserve the lush surface. The Pavilion complements the oval and houses a museum, café and billiard hall. Willow trees surround the oval and the boccé court is a tribute to the Tinetti's Swiss-Italian Heritage. Overlooking all of this is the Cricket Gallery which displays the traditional craft of bat making. The facility is ideal for an athletics meeting with plenty of viewing space for spectators from the Pavilion veranda and 'the Hill'. Mount Franklin, an extinct volcano, provides the perfect backdrop to all of the above.

Cricket Willow is located only a stone's throw from Daylesford and Hepburn Springs and a short drive from most of the major Victorian cities. Please refer to www.cricketwillow.com.au for further details of our unique venue.

For more information please phone Cricket Willow on (03) 5476 4277 or email runforthewillow@hotmail.com.

THE EVENT



Armed with an exciting concept and a unique venue, we are now fully focussed on creating a very special event.

We are planning a full card of professional races ranging from a 70m dash to a 1600m mile. The feature races for both men and women will be run over the 100m Olympic distance. All races will be sanctioned by the Victorian Athletics League and there will be special events for veteran and junior athletes.

Given that the Melbourne Commonwealth Games is just around the corner, we are confident of drawing some of the biggest stars in Australian track athletics. Names like Josh Ross (dual Stawell Gift winner and Australian 100m representative), Daniel Batman (Australian 200m representative), Tamsyn Lewis (Australian 800m representative) and Lauren Hewitt (Australian 100m & 200m representative) could all be in the mix.

We hope to attract hundreds of participants and spectators to a happy and healthy event for all ages. A series of community relays will be conducted on the Gift track and an undulating 7km fun run through the Wombat State Forest will finish with a marathon style lap of the oval. We are also planning a little athletics program for the next generation of stars.

A number of activities will take place on the day to create a carnival atmosphere. Victorian Touch Rugby is conducting a demonstration and there will be added attractions like wine tastings, massage, face painting, jumping castle, farm animals, bowling machine sessions, wood working demonstrations, bocce tournaments, fly fishing demonstrations and live music.

We hope to create a happy and healthy day for all ages. Our commitment to the local community is demonstrated by our pledge to donate a substantial portion of the gate takings to the appeal for the new Activities and Recreation Centre in Daylesford. We have commenced discussions with several prominent media agencies and expect to obtain significant State-wide coverage before, during and after the event.

Help us explode from the blocks by joining in the *Run for the Willow!*

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