

Monday, 11 May 2009

QANTAS WALLABIES COACH WARNS “BEWARE OF ITALY”

Qantas Wallabies coach Robbie Deans is on alert for an Italian ambush when the two nations do battle twice next month as part of the Bundaberg Rum Rugby Series.

The Australians will open their 2009 Test campaign against Italy at Canberra Stadium on 13 June, with tickets for the series opener going on sale to the general public through Ticketek from 9am tomorrow.

Qantas Wallabies skipper Stirling Mortlock and assistant coach Jim Williams – a former favourite son in Canberra from his time with the Brumbies – joined ACT Minister for Tourism, Sport and Recreation, Mr Andrew Barr MLA, to announce tickets going on sale for the first Test to be played in the national capital since 2000.

“Make no mistake, the Italians will provide tough opposition,” said Deans.

“They have one of the strongest forward packs in Europe and a backline that is willing and unpredictable.

“You only need to reference our last match against them to know that the Tests in Canberra and Melbourne the week later will be challenging assignments.”

Australia played Italy in Padova last November in their opening match of the European Spring Tour.

Inside the final 10 minutes the scores were locked 20-all before Qantas Wallabies utility back Quade Cooper, on debut, scored a brilliant solo try to put the tourists in front.

Australia went on to win the match 30-20.

Australian Rugby Union is offering an affordable range of ticket prices for fans wanting to attend the Wallabies’ long-awaited Test return to Canberra.

Tickets for the BRRS Test against Italy will start at \$17.50 for children.

Four-ticket family packages will be available from just \$70*.

The best seats in the house – in the platinum category – have been set at \$69 while gold category tickets cost \$59.

Silver category will be available at \$45 for adults, \$22.50 for children and \$90 for a family of four*.

Mr Barr encouraged the Canberra community “to get their tickets early and not miss out on this exciting sporting event for the ACT”.

“We are privileged to be hosting this international match here in Canberra at our elite sporting facility – Canberra Stadium,” he added.

“This match is yet another demonstration of the versatility of Canberra Stadium and the outstanding facilities that the Stadium has to offer.

“I’m calling on Canberra sporting fans to come out in large numbers to support our Australian side.”

When the Wallabies were last in Canberra for a Test nine years ago, they defeated the Argentine Pumas 32-25, with Joe Roff, Stirling Mortlock and Chris Latham scoring the three Australian tries.

Mortlock also kicked five penalty goals and a conversion.

The crowd was 15,002 and 1999 World Cup winning captain John Eales was named man of the match.

“We would like to think in 2009 we will fill Canberra Stadium,” said ARU Managing Director and CEO John O’Neill.

“There is no doubt the time is right to take a Test back to the nation’s capital.

“Canberra has had a major presence in Australian Rugby since the advent of professionalism.

“The Brumbies have been the most successful of our Super Rugby franchises and, with two titles, remain the only Australian team to have carried off the most coveted provincial championship in the game.”

Attached is a full rundown of ticket prices for the Qantas Wallabies’ seven Bundaberg Rum Rugby Series matches against the Barbarians (Sydney), Italy (Canberra and Melbourne), France (Sydney), New Zealand (Sydney) and South Africa (Perth and Brisbane).

** A family of four means two adults and two children or one adult and three children, with*

a child considered to be 16 years or under.

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