



IMPROVED FACILITIES FOR AERIAL SKIING AT MT BULLER ANNOUNCED

Tuesday 22 August

A new 20-year agreement to better support Aerial Skiing athletes has been announced at Mt Buller, making the alpine village an official Olympic Training Centre and Victoria's home for the development of future Olympic and World Champions in Aerial and Mogul Skiing.

Under the landmark agreement between the Olympic Winter Institute Australia (OWIA), the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS), Buller Ski Lifts, Mt Buller Resort Management Board and Ski and Snowboard Australia, Aerial Skiing athletes can look forward to improved facilities and access at Mt Buller that will enhance the effectiveness of athlete training programs.

The existing Olympic Training Centre activities based at Mt Buller were recognised by the Australian Olympic Committee in 1995 and have been crucial in helping to produce five Olympic and fifteen World Championship medals, including Olympic gold Medallists Alisa Camplin (2002) and Lydia Lassila (2010).

OWIA Chairman Geoff Henke AO paid tribute to the advances winter sports have made.

"Winter sports have had remarkable success over the past decade, and now sit only behind Swimming and Sailing on current Olympic Sport high performance rankings. We are delighted to announce this partnership with Mt Buller to help more Australians reach the pinnacle of winter sport success for years to come," Geoff Henke said.

Extended operations at Mt Buller include a 20-year lease of an accommodation facility of 20-25 beds for OWIA/VIS athlete and program staff, night training access for both the Aerials and Mogul Skiing courses, the development and access to a specialised acrobatic centre, gym access and a meeting/study room.

"The agreement will no doubt help us to continue to excel in a sport we've had so much success in over the years," said PyeongChang 2018 Australian Olympic Team Chef de Mission Ian Chesterman.

"Having won 10 World Cup medals and two World Championships medals this past season, along with a number of junior athletes coming through the ranks, we are sure to go from strength-to-strength in the sport in the coming years. It will be great that these athletes will be able to spend part of their year on home soil training."

On-site accommodation for Aerial athletes and program staff at Mt Buller make it the only resort in Australia where Olympic athletes can live on mountain and train both day and night.

Earthworks, snow making and lights installation for the Aerials site and Mogul course on Chamois Run will also provide more effective and productive training for OWIA/VIS and SSA athletes.

Under the agreement, 25 night-time jumping sessions per season, sport specific acrobatic training and more ski time for the athletes by living on mountain will be added to the existing VIS program.

“As part of this historic agreement, Buller Ski Lifts will be upgrading the snowmaking facilities on the Chamois Run and installing lights so that athletes can train day and night,” Laurie Blampied, General Manager, Buller Ski Lifts said.

“We’re also extending our arrangement to keep the tremendously successful Victorian Interschools Snowsports Championships at Mt Buller for at least another five years.”

A driving force to assist winter athletes has come from Rino Grollo and his family.

“Diana and our family have been partners with the Winter Olympic movement since Lillehammer in 1994,” Rino Grollo, Chair, Grollo Group explained.

“Buller Ski Lifts has been a partner of the Olympic Winter Institute of Australia since its inception in 1997, and we are very proud of the success that our winter athletes have enjoyed in the past and look forward to sharing the future successes that this new partnership will enable.”

For aspiring winter athletes, the opportunity to train alongside the best will be a reality.

“This is wonderful news for athletes, parents, children and visitors to Mt Buller. Young skiers will be able to watch their heroes train right beside the Village Square, then follow their dreams from ski school to the Victorian Interschools, involvement in Mt Buller Sports Clubs, and then on to an elite training program – all right here at Mt Buller. And the FIS dual moguls course will also be open to all skiers when it’s not required for training,” said Andy Evans, Director, Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management Board.

Aerial Skiing training has been a fixture at Mt Buller since the sport’s inception in the mid-1980s when Kirstie Marshall became Australia’s first international representative in the new winter discipline.

Marshall went on to become Australia’s first Aerial Skiing World Champion, paving the way for Jacqui Cooper, Alisa Camplin and the current all-World Cup medallist squad, which includes Olympic gold medallist Lydia Lassila, Olympic silver medallist David Morris, 2015 World Champion Laura Peel, 2016/17 World number two Danielle Scott and three-time World Cup medallist Samantha Wells.

Ski and Snowboard Australia has welcomed the increased support.

“Mt Buller has always been an important partner for our sport and in particular Aerial Skiing. We are delighted to partner with the Olympic Winter Institute of Australia and Mt Buller to extend their athlete training programs. We also welcome the long-term vision of Mt Buller in supporting winter

sport and are pleased to be extending the rights to host the Victorian Interschools at Mt Buller,” Dean Gosper, President Ski & Snowboard Australia said.

Formal contracts will be finalised in the coming months with the Centre expected to be up and running by winter 2018.

Further Information

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