



# GAMES NEWS

## GAME ON!

Tonight I had the great pleasure of attending my first Opening Ceremony for a Special Olympics Australia National Games and what an exciting and emotional event it was. To see almost 1,000 athletes with an intellectual disability proudly march into the stadium in their state/territory uniforms to the roar of the crowd of over 4,000 people will be something that I will treasure forever. [Click here](#) to view some photos from the Games journey so far. Good luck everyone! The 2014 National Games are officially open and I look forward to a wonderful week of sport.

Nicola Stokes, Chief Executive Officer  
Special Olympics Australia



The Games are officially underway! Special Olympics Australia mascot Soey the Joey can't wait to see our athletes competing in Melbourne!

## OPENING CEREMONY HIGHLIGHTS



## TAKE ACTION

**DONATE** to the team.  
**ATTEND** an event.  
**PROMOTE** our news.



Please share our news and pictures via your own personal or business channels. All content is media cleared for the promotion of Special Olympics Australia. For enquiries please contact [media@specialolympics.com.au](mailto:media@specialolympics.com.au)



## SELFIES OF SUPPORT

At the end of the Opening Ceremony MC's John Deeks, announcer and game show host, and Sara James from NBC encouraged fans to send selfies of support to @SOAustralia which sent our Twitter account into overdrive. Send your message to @SOAustralia and support our athletes as they strive to achieve their personal best this week. You can follow us on:

[Facebook](#)  
[Twitter](#)  
[Instagram](#)

## Parade of Athletes

Athletes made their way through the stadium – delegation by delegation – to great applause. Of course the loudest cheers were for the home team of Victoria, but The Hon. Dr Naphthine, Premier of Victoria enthralled the crowd by leveling the playing field. He thanked each delegation, with a speech that welcomed them for something that made them stand out:

- Team NSW for being the biggest team
- Team SA for being the most colourful
- Team NT for being the specialists
- Team WA for travelling the furthest
- Team Tasmania for travelling overseas!
- Team ACT for being the first delegation in the parade
- Team Queensland for being the toughest (by still wearing jumpers in the heat)
- Team Victoria, for being from Victoria.



## Raising of the Flags

As each delegation made their way around the stadium, a flagbearer carried the state/territory flag at the front of the team. Each flagbearer placed their flag ceremoniously in the ground near the cauldron in preparation for its lighting and the official opening of the Games.

## National Anthem and Oaths

The national anthem was sung by Special Olympics Australia athlete Ty McGill who showcased his powerful voice. His rendition of the national anthem was powerful and emotional and Ty will spend the rest of the week working with the Athlete Leadership Team of which he is a part.



## Torch Entrance and Lighting of the Cauldron

A torchbearer from each delegation, accompanied by a local law enforcement officer, brought the Flame of Hope into Lakeside Stadium to thunderous applause from the crowd before Deputy Commissioner Nolan and Special Olympics Australia athlete Mark Hutton (VIC) ascended the stairs to stand in front of the cauldron. Mark was given the honour of lighting the cauldron, and after a Cathy Freeman moment of anticipation, it roared into flame and Premier Naphthine declared the Games open...and that's when the dancing began.

## IN THE NEWS

Thanks to the Herald Sun today for a terrific piece about Special Olympics Australia athlete Anna from the perspective of her mum. [Click here](#) to see the story.



## THANK YOU

Thank you to the official party who took part in the Opening Ceremony:

- Senator The Honourable Mitch Fifield, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Senator for Victoria, officially representing The Honourable Tony Abbott MP, Prime Minister of Australia
- The Honourable Dr Denis Naphthine, Premier of Victoria
- The Honourable Damian Drum, Minister for Sport
- The CEO of Special Olympics Australia, Nicola Stokes
- The Chairman of the Special Olympics Australia National Games, Donald McGauchie
- The Board of Special Olympics Australia National Games
- Deputy Commissioner Nolan
- Wurundjeri Elder, Joy Murphy
- Representatives of BHP Billiton, Principal Partner of Special Olympics Australia National Games
- Australian Sports Commission, Principal Partner of Special Olympics Australia
- IGA as Gold Sponsor of Special Olympics Australia

## MERCHANDISE



National Games merchandise is proving very popular amongst supporters. You can grab yours [online here](#) if you're in Melbourne look out for stands venues.

## SCHEDULE



Sports competition is underway tomorrow! Check out



what is happening by viewing the [sports schedule here](#).  
Look out for results during the week!

## SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

Take a peek at our social media resources which include Facebook avatars, cover photos and videos to share. We have added some great images to show your support for your state or territory team!

[Click here to visit the Social Media Resources page.](#)

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[www.specialolympics2014.org.au](http://www.specialolympics2014.org.au)

Game On! | 20.10.14

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