

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Friday, 7 May 2021

INTERNATIONAL SPORTING EVENTS RETURN TO AAMI PARK

The Andrews Labor Government is bringing the best of world rugby to Victoria with the Wallabies to take on France at AAMI Park on Tuesday, 13 July – continuing Melbourne’s major events resurgence.

The match is part of a three-Test series between the two national teams, which is set to delight local rugby fans and Melburnians eager to enjoy the thrill of a live international sporting contest.

“Les Bleus” last toured Australia in 2014, when the Wallabies were victorious in Melbourne and went on to claim the Test series 3-0.

The match marks the first game in a package secured by the Labor Government for Melbourne to host five major Wallabies Test matches over five years, including the 2025 British and Irish Lions tour. The package will deliver the best action for fans, boosts jobs in the visitor economy and reaffirm Melbourne’s status as the sporting and events capital of Australia.

Rugby Australia will work with the Government on its COVIDSafe event plan in accordance with the Public Events Framework – to ensure the event can be enjoyed by as many people as possible in a safe way.

Sparked by the Australian Open in February and continuing with the resumption of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* at the Princess Theatre, the successful running of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, and AFL, NRL, Super League, A-League and NBL matches drawing growing crowds, the efforts of Victorians to combat coronavirus has meant that people are getting to enjoy big-ticket events more like they used to.

Rugby league’s blockbuster State of Origin returns to the MCG on Wednesday, 9 June when Queensland takes on New South Wales in the first match of the 2021 series, in a further boost to the state’s major events momentum.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

“We’ve got France and the Wallabies here in July – and guaranteed Wallabies Test-match action in Melbourne for years to come.”

“We’re Australia’s major events capital because we make it our business to secure the big events that attract crowds, create jobs and bring a real buzz to the city and state.”

Quote attributable to Rugby Australia chief executive Andy Marinos

“We can’t wait to get back to Melbourne and AAMI Park in July for the Wallabies Test against France. Melbourne is a sports-mad city and AAMI Park is perfect for a midweek Test match for those attending after work.”