

UPDATE

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SPORTS PARK
HAWKE'S BAY

Message from the Chair

▶ WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF SPORTS PARK UPDATE.

During the Park's development we'll be using this newsletter to keep you abreast of progress. The Regional Sports Park is arguably the most significant and beneficial project the Bay has ever undertaken. It is unlike anything else in New Zealand and in our view will provide a blueprint for future sport and recreation in this country.

The Park is different because it is not just a set of facilities. Our management will be linked into all sectors of our society from kindergartens to rest homes, from at risk groups to high performance sport and so on. There will be programmes in place to cater for all these sectors.

The East Coast region has social issues and is one of the country's worst 'performers' when it comes to health and crime statistics. We're more likely to smoke and die young than anywhere in the country and we have a poor record in violent crime. The Sports Park is part of the solution. As Principal Youth Court Judge Andrew Beecroft puts it, 'kids in sport keep out of court'.

But it's important to remember that projects of this scale only succeed with ongoing public support. Currently we have a small group – a Land Protection Society consisting of about 5 people – who want to rip up the athletics track and locate it elsewhere. The track is the best in



Hundreds of parents and kids attend weekly junior club nights at the new track.

New Zealand and as I write this is being used by 600 school children at the East Coast North Island champs. Attempts to rip it up are bizarre but this group has initiated a legal process which could delay construction of the grandstand. It's important they realise the public won't stand for this so if you haven't already done so, I urge you to join Ian Smith's supporters' club.

Lawrence Yule
Chair, Regional Sports Park Trust

Three Stages

▶ THE THREE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE 30 HECTARE SITE INCLUDE:

- ▶ **STAGE ONE:** A world class athletics track (see far right) and 2500 seat grandstand - construction is due to start in April 2009.
- ▶ **STAGE TWO:** Eight football fields, 16 tennis and 18 netball courts – expected completion late 2010.
- ▶ **STAGE THREE:** Indoor cycling velodrome, and central building housing gymsports, retail and office space – expected completion late 2011.



BEFORE



AFTER

A map showing all three stages of the 30 hectare site.

The Percival Road site is one of fourteen that was investigated for the Park's location. Above left shows the original site and alongside it is the all weather athletics track as it now appears.





Individuals object to grandstand construction

▶ CONSTRUCTION OF A 2500 SEAT GRANDSTAND ALONGSIDE THE RECENTLY COMPLETED ATHLETICS TRACK IS DUE TO COMMENCE IN APRIL 2009

"There's an urgent need to get construction under way. In some weeks we've had thousands of kids using the Park with no seating, limited shading, and inadequate toilet facilities," says deputy chair of the Sports Park Trust, Rex Graham.

"We had hoped to be well underway by now but a small group of individuals has filed for a judicial review of the

consent process for the athletics track and grandstand. I'm not fazed by this because we'll carry the day, but it's frustrating that this group can hold the thousands of park users to ransom in this way."

Mr Graham said construction of the grandstand will take approximately 12 months.

Artist's impression of the 2500 seat grandstand



"It's a fast track"

▶ ... SAID A BEAMING ALLAN POTTS, CHAIR OF HASTINGS ATHLETICS, FOLLOWING THE SYLVIA POTTS MEET AT THE END OF JANUARY.

"We had 57 performances that were added to the national rankings following the meet. This means we had 57 excellent performances from track and field athletes on the night. It's hard to compare with previous years because the ranking system has changed but I'm confident this is comfortably more than we have achieved before," he says

"The track has a lot of bounce and overwhelmingly the athletes tell me it's fast. When the grandstand is up and we get more shelter from the wind, we'll have even faster times being posted," he says.

Mr Potts said he hoped to attract international athletes at future Sylvia Potts meets with discussions being held with agents based in Australia and the UK.

"Having a class II track – you can break a world record here – puts us on the international radar screen," he says.

Allan Potts





Ian Smith leads supporters

▶ "IF YOU'RE NOT YET A 'SPORTS PARK SUPPORTER,' THEN I URGE YOU TO JOIN ME" SAYS IAN SMITH

New Zealand's premier wicketkeeper of his era, TV and radio commentator and President of the Sports Park supporters' club said he was happy to take on the role because he was a passionate sporting advocate.

"But this isn't just about sport. Despite our fantastic climate the East Coast region has a poor record in health and our crime stats aren't flash either.

The Sports Park is part of the solution. It will have

programmes for all ages and cultures.

I think it's a fantastic project. It's the type of thing that will be a blueprint for the country but projects of this scale require vision, commitment and public support. So if you're not yet a supporter, join me. There's no cost, you just need to send an email to sportsparksupporter@gmail.com

Thanks, Ian

Kelt Capital Magpies join NZ Black Sticks representatives in launching Supporters' Club.



Ian Smith launches the Supporters' Club



Q&A COLUMN

Q How much is it going to cost and where will the money come from?

A The cost of the full project is \$56m. Some of the money has come from funds received from the sale of Nelson Park which will mainly fund the athletics track and grandstand. The balance will come from corporate and charitable trust sources, individuals, sponsorship, central and local government. As an example, the annual funding cost to an average Hastings ratepayer is \$30 or about 60 cents a week.

