



## PRIME MINISTER

19 November 1979

### OPERATION TENNIS

I very much regret that I have been sidelined by doctors and am unable to attend the launching today of Operation Tennis.

As you know, I have been involved in the project since its very beginning and it is most encouraging to know that from today action will move from around the table on to the tennis courts.

The initiative represents a significant attempt by the Government, Custom Credit, the L.T.A.A., John Newcombe and Tony Roche to reassert Australia's tennis supremacy. I believe that sport is important to all Australians. So is achievement.

It has been a source of concern to many Australians for some time now that our once seemingly bottomless pit of tennis players, guided by great men like Harry Hopman, have suddenly dried up. This special pilot scheme aims to redress this position.

Talent identification at national level whether in sport, scholarship or the arts is a difficult but important goal. Talent identification and the realisation of potential is what this scheme is all about.

All young Australians now have a chance, that for some time has been denied to them, to join the list of illustrious men and women players of the past.

I am excited by this prospect and shall take an active interest in the continuing development of Operation Tennis. I look forward to meeting its first champion.

The initiative of the Government's Sport and Recreation Department and its Minister, Mr. Ellicott, have been of great help in getting the scheme off the ground.

With Custom Credit and the Lawn Tennis Association of Australia we have organisations whose dedication to tennis development is already proven. I commend them on their sponsorship.

I congratulate John Newcombe and Tony Roche in New South Wales, Ashley Cooper in Queensland and Alan Stone in Victoria not only for the pleasure that they and other Australian men and women have given us on the tennis courts of the world but also for now agreeing to pass on their knowledge and enthusiasm, through this project, to tomorrow's champions.

This is the spirit and the sense of challenge that we must capture in all Australians in the 80s.

I know it will bring new achievements in the Australian tennis world and I join with all Australians in wishing you early success.

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Government's Sport and Recreation Administration

...and Alan Stone...  
...and other Australians...  
...courts of the world...  
...knowledge and...  
...champions.