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NEW THOROUGHBRED POOL OFFICIALLY OPENED

Minister for Racing, Gaming and Licensing Syd Stirling will today join with Darwin Turf Club members, trainers, jockeys and horse owners to celebrate the officially opening of the Territory’s first ever equine swimming pool.

Mr Stirling said the Turf Club had invested around $360,000 into the new exercise and injury-recovery facility for thoroughbred horses.

“Trainers and owners have been asking for an equine pool for many years. It will be an important facility for our thoroughbred horses who can suffer in the tropical heat.

“Often southern trainers won’t bring horses up here because of the heat – having this facility may make them think again about competing up here.”

Local contractors constructed the swimming pool on time and on budget including: HB Group, NT Kerbing, Custom Pools, Figleaf Pools, Clay Miller Electrics, Carrodale Plumbing, Mark Jungfer Landscaping, Trojon Fencing, and Smith Paving.

Mr Stirling said the racing industry was an important part of the great Territory lifestyle, as well as contributing to the economy, creating local jobs and supporting the tourism industry.

“The Martin Government has boosted funding to the industry to help it keep moving ahead,” he said.

As part of the new deal, base operational funding for the industry will be indexed by 5% each year from 2004-05. This means that base funding will rise to more than $5.8 million in 2004-05 and there will be a one-off injection of $1.05 million for capital.

The equine pool has been funded out of this capital injection.

From 2005-06, there will then be ongoing capital funding of $350,000 a year on top of the base funding. This will see over $6.46 million in total provided to the industry in 2005-06, rising to over $6.8 million in 2006-07.

The equine pool will be officially opened at 3pm today.

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