GOLD FOR THE ARAFURA GAMES

The Arafura Games has won its own gold medal after receiving International Olympic Committee “Sport for All” patronage.

Chief Minister Clare Martin said the endorsement will provide publicity, sponsorship and support from the Olympic community.

“It will boost the status of the Arafura Games on the world stage - it’s a great accomplishment for the athletes, the community and organisers.

“The Games showcase Darwin as a prime location to host sporting competitions.

“This event is an important part of the Territory’s unique lifestyle and no doubt this year’s will be one of the best ever,” Ms Martin said.

Minister for Sport and Recreation Kon Vatskalis said IOC patronage is one of sports’ highest honours, with only three events per continent receiving patronage each year.

“I am very proud of what the Games have achieved so far in providing a strong ground for engagement with our Asian neighbours and with a focus on athlete development.

“The quality of competition is always very high and provides a friendly, competitive sporting environment,” Mr Vatskalis said.

Craig Phillips from the Australian Olympic Committee said he couldn’t go past the Arafura Games.

“The Games offer good quality international competition in 23 sports to 3000 athletes from 30 nations. It has become an important event for the Asia Pacific in particular,” he said.

Contact: Gemma Buxton 0401110064