



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES KICK OFF WITH STUNNING OPENING CEREMONY IN TURKEY**

Swimmer Jeff English has led the Australian Team onto the track at a glittering opening ceremony of the World University Summer Games in Izmir, Turkey.

The Australian Team of 86 athletes and 42 officials marched with more than 9500 participants from 180 countries before the cultural ceremony took the capacity crowd of 55,000 at the Ataturk Stadium through a journey of Anatolian Civilizations using music and 858 dancers.

The ceremony also promoted the Games' main theme – “World Unity on the Aegean Blue.”

Australian team captain English, a Commonwealth Games gold medallist in 1998, had joined former Olympic champion Jon Sieben in addressing the Australian Team the night before the Ceremony kicked off eleven days of competition in 14 sports.

Just hours before the opening ceremony the Australian women's basketball team won their second game in as many days, easily defeating Thailand at the Ataturk Sports Hall.

The 80-50 thumping of basketball minnows Thailand came less than 24 hours after the Australian women defeated Slovenia in overtime, 80-78, thanks largely to a Lauren King three-pointer that leveled the scores with seconds to go in the fourth quarter.

The Thailand match was a far different affair with speedy guard Rachael Flanagan running the Australian offence with authority, allowing centres Marita Payne and Rachel Warren to dominate their smaller opponents.

Flanagan was awesome at both ends of the court and checked out of the game in the dying seconds to a standing ovation with 4 points, 8 rebounds and an incredible 8 steals while Warren (21 points) and Payne (16 points) were the top scorers.

With the women's basketball competition starting early, the Australian's now sit undefeated atop of Group B in the four group, 20 team tournament – all before the rest of the Australian team compete.

The Australian's next game is tomorrow against Turkey while the men's basketball team, led by captain Ben Hunt and the University of Arizona's Daniel Dillon, kick off their campaign against Lebanon.

The women's volleyball team plays Poland and the swimming competition starts at the Manisa Swimming Pool.

## **AUSTRALIAN RESULTS**

### **Day – 2**

Women's Basketball - Australia 80 defeated Slovenia 78

### **Day -1**

Women's Basketball - Australia 80 defeated Thailand 50

PHOTO ATTACHED: For high resolution photo please contact Kate Robinson (details below).

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**Australian Government**  

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**Australian Sports Commission**