

Tournament organisers hoping for more in future

By Dean Benson

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Those behind the scenes of the 2010 Athletes with a Disability National Table Tennis Championships are hoping for more tournaments of the kind to be held in Canberra over coming years.

The Chief Referee at this week's tournament, Maurie Poole, said it is important for the sport in this country that more elite level tournaments are held not just in Canberra, but across Australia.

"Yes I really would, I'd like to see more in Australia," he said. "It's one of the things that I, among other people, am really hoping to see happen down the track".

Despite the fact that any future events are yet to be locked down, tournament officials believe the quality of facilities has been of the highest standard.

"Yes, the facilities are marvellous," championship organiser Glenys Joliffe said.

"They're perfect for our clientele here at the championships. They provide everything they [the athletes] could possibly want," she said.

"The ACT volunteers are fantastic and have been working for three days without a stop. I only have the highest praise for the staff and the actual venue itself".

However, according to Mrs Joliffe, the coaches have also been working tirelessly to help the championships run smoothly.

"The coaches have been really great because when they haven't been coaching their own players, they've been quite prepared to knuckle down and help with umpiring and any other jobs that needed to be done," she said.

And Mr Poole agrees, saying that the volunteers and coaches are the ones who made the three day tournament possible.

"The volunteers really make the tournament," he said. "The thing that everyone remembers when they walk away is the efforts of the volunteers. The coaches have also been great".

However, the tournament has been a success for ACT Table Tennis in more than one way, with ACT representative Michael Louey picking up a gold medal in both the deaf singles and deaf doubles.

"It's very exciting news," Mrs Joliffe said.

As for the tournament overall, Mr Poole believes that everyone who has been involved will be leaving happy.

"It's been very successful, certainly in light of the fact that we've introduced teams for the first time," he said. "Everyone has played well and I think everyone will be very happy with it".