

**12 October 2001**

## **OLD ARMY GYM TO BE USED FOR LOCAL SPORT**

Once off-limits to the public, the gymnasium at North Head Artillery School will now provide a much-needed sporting facility for groups on the North Shore and Northern Beaches.

Executive Director of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, Geoff Bailey, said he was pleased to see this functional building being used after three years of lying idle.

“The groups will start using the gymnasium this week under a lease agreement for this sporting season,” Mr Bailey said.

“While the Harbour Trust is preparing a plan for the future of the entire Artillery School, we are considering short-term uses that make use of existing facilities.”

Last month the Harbour Trust called for expressions of interest from people wishing to use the gymnasium. Eight community sports groups responded and there are now three groups lined up to use the gymnasium for competitions and practice over the spring and summer seasons.

Jenny Herbertson from the Northern Schools Hockey competition said they had 29 teams using the gymnasium.

“Previously we had been playing at SCEGGS Redlands and when their gymnasium became unavailable we found it almost impossible to find an available or affordable alternative,” Ms Herbertson said.

“We are thrilled to be able to use the gymnasium at North Head Artillery School. It is a fantastic facility for indoor hockey, being a good size and with changerooms.”

Mr Bailey is quick to point out that the current use of the gymnasium by sporting groups does not determine that this is how it will be used in the future.

“In preparing a plan for the future of the entire site, the Harbour Trust is considering a range of options for the buildings and grounds,” Mr Bailey said.

“We are aiming for a balance between viable uses for the site that fit with its character and protecting the surrounding precious environment and minimising traffic implications.”

In the coming months, the gymnasium will be used for 5 to 10 hours each day.

Mr Bailey said he anticipated other sporting groups would want to use the gymnasium in the New Year once the season for existing users had finished.

“The Harbour Trust would like to see this facility used by a range of different sporting groups throughout the year.”

**ENDS**

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