



2008 PACIFIC SCHOOL GAMES
CANBERRA

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2008 Pacific School Games Bunyip Mascot finally gets a name.

The 2008 Pacific School Games Bunyip Mascot was officially named at the *Less than 100 days to go Show* at Westfield Belconnen Mall last Friday.

Minister for Education, Tourism and Sport, Mr Andrew Barr, revealed the name of the popular mascot during the show, which also saw splendid performances by the Radford College Jazz Band, students from Gowrie Primary School dance group and a guest appearance from Prime Possum.

Over the last month, the 2008 Pacific School Games received over 900 entries for the Name the Bunyip Competition, making it the single most successful competition run by the 2008 Pacific School Games to date.

The name of the mascot, *Bidja*, which means 'mate' in Wiradjuri, will help to send the message of mateship during the Games and was affectionately chosen by Ziggie Vincent, a Year 2 student from Calwell Primary School. The popular bunyip, which had been nameless until last Friday, has captured the hearts and imagination of the Canberra community across all ages since its first appearance in July.

General Manager for the 2008 Pacific School Games, Ron Burns said, "Since the launch of Bidja last month, we have been inundated with requests for Bidja to visit schools around Canberra and the reaction of the students upon meeting Bidja has been overwhelmingly positive. The introduction of Bidja in schools has definitely changed the traditional perception of the bunyip from a scary swamp monster to a friendly and cuddly creature that people of all ages can associate with."



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