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ADELAIDE TO HOST GOLDEN OLDIES WORLD CRICKET

Hundreds of amateur cricketers from around the world are set to descend on South Australia in 2012 after the State won a successful bid to host the Air New Zealand Golden Oldies World Cricket Festival.

With the assistance of the South Australian Cricket Association, the Festival brings together cricketers aged 40 or over to play matches at 30 cricket grounds in and around Adelaide.

The week (between 25 November and 1 December 2012) will include three playing days, an opening ceremony on the banks of the River Torrens and welcome party at the Adelaide Oval, picnic day in the Barossa and Grande Finale Dinner and Air New Zealand Awards function at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

Tourism Minister John Rau says the hugely popular event is expected to attract more than a thousand visitors to South Australia, resulting in a boost to the local economy and highlighting the State's tourism profile.

"Off the sporting field, the participants and accompanying visitors will have the opportunity to tour our State and experience the very best that South Australia has to offer," Mr Rau says.

Adelaide is a popular stop for Golden Oldies World Sporting Festivals, having hosted the Netball in 1998, Rugby in 1999 and Hockey last year.

Manager, Air New Zealand Events, Keith Robinson says the 2012 Cricket Festival builds on the success of the three previous events.

"South Australia is a great location for the Festival, both in terms of facilities to play and also as a superb city and region for the participants to enjoy their time away from the sports arena," Mr Robinson says.

"Cricket holds a very special place in the history of this city and the minds of those who live here. Central to that is the Adelaide Oval, an iconic cricket venue, and, of course, as the home of the legendary Sir Don Bradman.

"This is a wonderful cricket area and it will be a cricketing pilgrimage for the Golden Oldies fraternity," Mr Robinson says.