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MEDIA RELEASE

Queensland Firebirds warm up at pre-season tournament

The Queensland Firebirds will begin their mission into the 2010 ANZ Championship this week when they travel to New Zealand for the first of two pre-season tournaments.

The team will travel to Queenstown tomorrow to compete in the tournament from Friday February 19 to Sunday February 21.

The Firebird will join New Zealand contenders the Central Pulse, Northern Mystics, Canterbury Tactix and Southern Steel for their first match against ANZ Championship competitors as the new-look team in 2010.

The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) will also field a team in the weekend-long competition.

Firebirds coach Roselee Jencke said after months of intense pre-season training the team was looking forward to putting their skills to the test against New Zealand's best.

"At this stage of the season without playing any of the opposition teams it's very hard to tell where we stand but I'm very happy with the preparation the team has done leading into this pre-season competition," Jencke said.

"They've been training extremely hard and I'm very pleased with their strength and conditioning and their match play."

The pre-season event will showcase some of the world's best netballing talent including Silver Ferns players and the Firebirds new and more experienced talent.

Due to Australian Diamonds commitments Firebirds Laura Geitz and Natalie Medhurst will not be travelling with the team to Queenstown.

The Australian duo will return home for the second pre-season tournament, the SOPA Cup, to be held in Sydney from Friday March 5 to Sunday March 7.

The SOPA Cup will feature all five Australia teams and New Zealand's Southern Steel.

Please find full Queenstown draw attached.

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