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# Tennyson facility on track for big event

Paul Malone

THE new state tennis centre will be opened for practice in December next year, less than a month before the first Brisbane combined men's and women's tournament is played there.

Steve Ayles, Tennis Queensland's executive in charge of management of the Tennyson centre, said the handover date to TQ from developer Mirvac was scheduled for December 1, 2008.

Under current tour programming, the first men's and women's tournament at Tennyson would start on December 28 and the finals would be January 3, 2009.

"The intention is that all surfaces will be ready from December 1," Ayles said.

"What takes place until the first event will involve potentially a junior tournament to test out the facility and involve the major launch at the state tennis centre very close to the tournament and some of the greats hitting tennis balls."

Graeme Brimblecombe, TQ's athlete development manager, said the projected stage at which player access would be possible had remained fairly constant.

"We're told Tennyson will be ready about this time next year, that we'd have a reasonable amount of time at Tennyson (before the Brisbane tournament)," Brimblecombe said.

Unless there are construction delays, Queensland entrants in the Brisbane tournament and also the state's best teenagers will be able to hit in December, 2008 on all the centre's 23 courts, which include 17 plexicushion hardcourts, four clay and two double grass courts.

The reopened Suncorp Stadium was delivered on time in 2003 with some construction being carried out at night in the weeks before it.

Ayles said Tennyson would have a 5500-seat centre court, and two showcourts with temporary seats of up to 2000 per court.

A decision on the type of clay or grasscourt surface will be made soon.