

Media Release Embargoed Until

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## DEANS STAND AT AMI STADIUM

### THE NEW EAST STAND AT CHRISTCHURCH'S AMI STADIUM WILL BE KNOWN AS THE DEANS STAND

Vbase Chief Executive Bryan Pearson says the decision is fitting recognition for one of Canterbury's foremost rugby families.

"The Deans name has been synonymous with rugby at AMI Stadium for more than a hundred years," he says. "Bob Deans is one of the most famous All Blacks (1905 - 1908) and captained the Canterbury rugby team.

"Bruce and Robbie Deans were stalwarts of the Canterbury rugby team which held the Ranfurly Shield for 25 challenges and also represented the All Blacks with great distinction. They both played in the 1985 Ranfurly Shield defence against Auckland, which became known as the 'match of the century', and Robbie has an unparalleled record as a coach and manager.

"Several other Deans family members have played rugby at AMI Stadium including Bob's brother Colin and, in the sixth generation of the family, Millie Deans is currently a member of the Canterbury women's rugby team. Bruce and Robbie's father Tony has played cricket on the ground too.

"The Deans Family is not only our first family of rugby, but also the first successful settler family of our province, with brothers John and William Deans having built their first house at Riccarton in 1843."

Bryan Pearson says the precedence for naming part of the stadium after one family has already been set, with the Hadlee Stand appropriately recognising Canterbury's foremost cricket family.

AMI Insurance Chief Executive John Balmforth says he is pleased with the selection of the name of the Deans Stand.

"The response by Cantabrians to the opportunity to suggest a name was excellent and AMI and Vbase appreciate the interest the public has shown. We also thank the Deans family and CRFU for their assistance and support."

The naming of the Deans Stand is accompanied by the announcement of intention to establish a museum featuring sporting displays and memorabilia within the stadium.

"Vbase and AMI have decided to establish what will be known as the Lancaster Park Museum," says John Balmforth. "It will display, and make available to the public, reminders of the many sports and events held over the 128 year history of the stadium.

"AMI will assist financially with the professional establishment of the Lancaster Park Museum and we are taking advice on how best to do that."

The Deans Stand is presently under construction and will be officially opened in January 2010.

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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