

Media Release

McAvaney takes the lead for SBS' Coverage of the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo in September

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The doyen of sports commentators Bruce McAvaney will lead SBS' broadcast of the World Athletics Championships Tokyo 25, which is shaping as an historic event for an exceptional Australian athletics team.

McAvaney has been the voice of athletics in Australia for more than three decades, and has made some of the most revered calls of the sport in history, going back to the 1991 World Championships 100m final in Tokyo when Carl Lewis broke the world record, and topped by his iconic call of Cathy Freeman's 400m triumph at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

His ability to put viewers in the stadium is legendary, the result of his unparalleled knowledge of the sport, famous attention to detail and unbridled enthusiasm for the performance of the athletes. Over the years he has brought major athletics competition, from Olympic and Commonwealth Games to world and national championships, vividly to life for generations of Australians.

McAvaney said he was delighted to be guiding Australian audiences through this year's World Athletics Championships (September 13-21), which is regarded as the third-biggest sports event in the world in global reach (over one billion) behind the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup™.

"We'll be bringing the best in the world to an Australian audience, and highlighting our great Australian athletes," McAvaney said. "I've never been more excited by the prospects of the Australian athletics team, not even before the Sydney Olympics. This team has everything – established champions, great young sprinters and incredible middle distance talent.

"And then there's Gout Gout – a generational talent who has become a global phenomenon in the last year. I can't wait to see how he goes, racing against the big names of world sprinting for the first time. He's just at the start of a fantastic journey, which seems destined to go all the way to the summit of his sport. I urge all Australians



to get on board now and be part of what will be an amazing ride towards the Brisbane Olympics in 2032."

"It's a privilege and an honour to commentate on the World Championships and I'd like to thank SBS for giving me that opportunity, and the Seven Network for their support. You might have heard me say this before, but this is going to be special."



National 200m record-holder Gout Gout with renowned athletics commentator Bruce McAvaney. Picture courtesy of Casey Sims.

SBS Director of Sport Ken Shipp said: "SBS has broadcast ten editions of the World Athletics Championships since 2001 and we're thrilled to have a commentator of Bruce's stature join us for this year's historic championships in Tokyo. We have a well-earned reputation for broadcasting outstanding global events, including the FIFA World Cup™ and the Tour de France, and we're looking forward to adding the McAvaney magic to our comprehensive coverage of this year's World Championships."

Every session of the nine-day World Athletics Championships (14 sessions of arena and road events) will be broadcast live and free across **SBS VICELAND**, and the **World**



Athletics Championships Hub via **SBS On Demand**, which will also feature daily extended highlights, short clips and full replays of each session. There will also be extensive coverage across SBS' social media platforms.

The magnificent 67,000-seat Japan National Stadium, which was built for the pandemic-affected Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, will finally come alive with a full house for athletics, as originally planned before Covid-19 intervened. Such is the interest in the event internationally, that several of the evening sessions have already sold out.

The quality of the likely Australian team for Tokyo, taking on the best from 200-plus nations, will make this event compelling viewing for Australian sports fans.

With seven medals (one gold, two silver, four bronze) won in Paris last year, the Australian athletics team is coming off its most successful Olympic Games since Melbourne in 1956, and appears to have found another level this year.

The emergence of an exciting generation of sprinters, led by 17-year-old Gout and 21-year-old Lachie Kennedy, who won Australia's first ever 60m medal (silver) at the World Athletics Indoor Championships in Nanjing last month, missing gold by just 0.01sec, has added an extra layer of intrigue to what was already a highly successful group.

They will join the likes of Olympic pole vault champion Nina Kennedy, Olympic silver medallist Jess Hull, world indoor high jump champion Nicola Olyslagers, discus maestro Matt Denny, recent national 800m record-breaker Peter Bol and teenaged middle distance tyros Cameron Myers and Claudia Hollingsworth in a national team that exudes class across the range of disciplines.

See the full schedule for SBS' broadcast of the World Athletics Championships here: <https://www.sbs.com.au/sport/article/how-to-watch-world-athletics-championships-live-on-sbs/peqspg2lv>

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