

Royalty among the gum leaves

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2006 Games reporter

STYLISTED athletic figures and the royal crown mark the 1334 medals for the Commonwealth Games.

And metal lanyards in the shape of gum leaves, designed in Kyneton and stamped in Cockatoo, will suspend the medals around athletes' necks instead of ribbon.

Premier Steve Bracks yesterday declared the medals stunning.

"They have that Australian character while recognising and acknowledging the traditions of the Commonwealth Games more broadly," Mr Bracks said.

The royal crown and the logo of the Commonwealth Games Federation feature on the front of the medals, which are 60mm in diameter and 5mm thick.

The CGF motto "Humanity, Equality, Destiny" is inscribed on the bottom.

The reverse has "Melbourne 2006", the Games logo and distinctive flowing lines.

Designer Richard Henderson said he first thought of using Melbourne icons such as a tram or the Arts Centre spire, but ruled them out.

"Athletes will take a lot of Melbourne memories in photographs and paraphernalia but this is beyond that," Mr Henderson said.

"This is about the essential quality of achievement and we hope people will look at it and think it has an intangible Melbourne style and feel."

Mr Henderson, who designed the Sydney Olympic, MCG, Telstra, BHP Billiton and Crown casino logos, said the project took him three months.

There are 245 gold medal events at the Games,



Richard Henderson

but including team events such as basketball and netball, 441 gold medals will be awarded.

The City of Ballarat paid \$100,000 to ensure Ballarat gold was used.

BHP Billiton has provided the silver.

Silversmith Flynn Silver, of Kyneton, won the job of designing the lanyards.

"I was just walking up to the workshop one day and I plucked two gum leaves and I put them on the table and started playing with them," Dan Flynn said.

The lanyards are made of bronze and are plated for gold and silver medals.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra has recorded a fanfare for podium presentations entitled *Heartbeat*.

Mr Bracks said he expected to be asked to take part in one or more of the medal ceremonies.

Sporting greats also get to take part.

The London-based Commonwealth Games Federation chooses the medal presenters.

Federal Sports Minister Rod Kemp said he didn't expect a fight with the State Government over medal presentation.

"There'll be a role for the State and a role for the Federal Government," Senator Kemp said.