



Prime Minister John Howard drops in at the Commonwealth Games athletes village where he meets some cheerful Games volunteers.

PICTURE: PAUL HARRIS

PM scores new tracksuit

By **PETER KER**
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THE temperature was well above 30 degrees, but there was no way Prime Minister John Howard was giving up his newest Australian team tracksuit.

Mr Howard and wife Janette were presented with their official Commonwealth Games team tracksuits by athletes yesterday on a tour through the Parkville athletes village.

Having shown a remarkable ability to appear whenever

Australian gold was won at the Sydney Olympics, Mr Howard's tour through the village suggested nothing has changed over the past six years.

"It's the role of a Prime Minister on these occasions to cheer for Australia. I did it at the Olympic Games and I intend to do it at the Commonwealth Games," he said.

The bustling dining hall was where Mr Howard looked most at home. There he hugged Nigerian athletes and talked cricket with several Pakistanis.

"I'm very impressed with

the variety of food that is offered," he said, as he strolled past the goat curry on offer in the African cuisine section.

Mr Howard will be in Melbourne for Wednesday's opening ceremony and the bulk of the Games period, but will spend Thursday and Friday in Sydney with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"I'm looking forward obviously to the swimming, and I like the traditional track and field events. I love relays, I think relays are fantastic to watch," he said.