



## OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NEW TRAINING ACADEMY Bernard Laporte and Jean-Jack Queyranne

**Lyon, 13 November 2008**

The new Olympique Lyonnais training academy was officially opened on Thursday 6 November 2008 in the presence of Bernard Laporte, Secretary of State with responsibility for Youth, Sport and Community Life, Jean-Jack Queyranne, President of the Rhône-Alpes Region, Thierry Braillard, Lyon City Councillor with responsibility for sport, Michel Havard, parliamentary member for the first constituency of the Rhône département and Jean-Michel Aulas, Chairman of the Board of Directors of OL Groupe.

Work on this new training academy, located next to the OL Groupe head office, began in January 2007. This new high-quality ultra-modern building, of 2,000 square metres, meets High Quality Environmental (HQE) standards and is equipped with state-of-the-art technology. The training academy opened its doors in July 2008 and is able to accommodate 140 youngsters, including 30 or so trainees, under excellent conditions. The total cost of the OL Groupe's investment in the facility was €4.6 million. This new training academy reinforces OL Groupe's position as an elite training club at the European level. Young talented players such as Benzema, Ben Arfa, or Remy are all OL academy graduates. In 2008 Olympique Lyonnais was voted, for the third time in four years, *"the best club for player development"*.

Jean-Michel Aulas commented *"The project for a new academy was launched in 2006 with the dual objectives of an elite training facility and complementarity with the professional squad. It is based on joint sporting and pedagogical principles and the implementation of human values and resources so that the best talents come here and succeed."*

Jean-Jack Queyranne, President of the Rhône-Alpes Region, that contributed €0.9 million to the joint financing of the new training academy echoed his message. *"Here we are at the core of our competency role, which is the training of top-level sportsmen and also the training of people."*

Finally Bernard Laporte pointed out *"there isn't a single major club that doesn't have a major training academy"*. The Secretary of State also took advantage of the opening ceremony to reiterate his desire to help professional clubs. He revealed that he fully agrees with the findings of the report presented on 5 November 2008 by Eric Besson, Secretary of State with responsibility for forward planning, on the competitiveness of French professional football clubs stating *"I'm going to bring members of parliament together to implement these measures as we want to give a new boost to French sport."*

He also spoke in favour of the setting up of a Football Management Oversight Authority at the European level.

It should be noted that the Besson report presented on 6 November provides encouragement for the construction of privately owned stadia by classifying them as public interest facilities so that local government authorities may finance public access infrastructure required to service stadia.



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**Next event:**

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