

ALBANY ROLLER DERBY LEAGUE

Statement

HON DIANE EVERS (South West) [9.58 pm]: I would like to pick up from where Hon Darren West left off last week when he spoke about the success of the Albany Roller Derby League in winning the leadership and innovation award at the 2019 WA Regional Achievement and Community Awards. Celebrating its fifth year in May 2019, the Albany Roller Derby League is a community not-for-profit organisation run by women in Albany and focuses on supporting strong women of all ages, and supporting gender diversity. With team names such as Dread Pirate Rollers, Sin City Rollers and Cabernet Savages, we know right away that this is something out of the ordinary. The Albany team, Great Southern Breakers, is excited to host its final game of 2019 when it will play Team Indigenous Dreaming on 16 November. Team Indigenous Dreaming is a borderless mob bound together by the colonisation of ancestral lands throughout the Southern Hemisphere.

Team Indigenous Dreaming represents players from across Australia, Aotearoa, Fiji, Mauritius and Singapore. Team Indigenous Dreaming has never played in Western Australia and the Albany club is excited to host it. This special event will raise funds for the Baldjamaar Foundation, a local Aboriginal service that provides programs for at-risk Aboriginal youth.

Roller derby is a full contact sport played on quad rollerskates. The highly skilful and energetic game is played across the world and is one of the fastest-growing women's sports. Players aim to score points against the opposing team by the jammer passing the hips of the opposing team's players as they circle the track.

The Albany Roller Derby League also hosts roller discos, the "Skate Like a Girl" program, swap meets and the Boom State Clash Roller Derby Competition, playing teams from Margaret River, Bunbury, Geraldton, Perth and Kalgoorlie. Albany Roller Derby League members are positive role models for all women and girls, and are an example to all people of women who are powerful, assertive and able. In its short history, the Albany Roller Derby League has been the deserving recipient of a series of significant awards. In addition to the recent win mentioned above, it received the bronze medal in the Boom State Clash 2019, was the winner of the Clubs WA Marketing Award 2019, and was a finalist for the Clubs WA Special Project Award 2019. It was the Triple M Sports Club of the Year 2018, a semi-finalist for RAC Volunteer of the Year 2018, and a finalist for the Clubs WA Amateur Sport Award 2018 and the Clubs WA Special Project Award 2018. It was also the winner of the award for the Boom State Clash After Party 2016. Roller Derby is a sport in which awards can even be won for having the best afterparty! That seems very thoughtful to me.

In 2018, Albany Roller Derby was inducted as a member of the international body—the Women's Flat Track Derby Association—and became a Skate Victoria affiliate. This all began at The Track. The Track was opened in February 2018 as a community space managed by Albany Roller Derby League volunteers. The league also trains and plays at this venue and welcomes other sports or the community to use The Track for events. The Track has an 825-square metre playing space, and is the result of successful negotiations with a local builder, creating not only the best dedicated roller derby track in Western Australia—or perhaps Australia—but also a most valuable asset that is available to the Albany community. The surface of the playing area is concrete and suited to high-impact sports such as rollerskating, wheelchair rugby, street roller hockey and much more.

The club has achieved all this without external funding. As a new sport, it did not qualify for the usual grants or subsidies from governments or sporting bodies, so it collaborated with local individuals and businesses to produce a truly inspirational outcome. This is the power of community. A few women formed a team, saw a need and worked to achieve their dream. The wider community is now the beneficiary. Having three teams in my electorate, I feel proud to represent them, knowing that a new generation of young women is gaining strength both in their bodies and in their minds.

House adjourned at 10.02 pm
