

WEST AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE— GRAND FINAL

Statement by Member for Fremantle

MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle) [12.53 pm]: This weekend an important football team, South Fremantle, will play an important match and I want to take this opportunity to let the team know that it has friends in this house who will be hoping for a win to redeem what has been a rough season in my neck of the woods. I do not pretend to have any particular football expertise or pedigree of involvement in football, but I know a good community when I see one, and I have been impressed with the Bulldogs' passion for their sport, their rich history, their track record on fostering Indigenous talent and, of course, their team colours.

The club was formed in some haste at a meeting held in April 1900 at the old Club Hotel, where the Orient Hotel now stands. Haste was needed because the once invincible Fremantle Football Club was in debt and disarray. The new season was only a month away. It was unthinkable that sport-mad Fremantle would not be represented when the season started in May, so a plan was hatched. The old club would simply be abandoned and a new one formed in its place. The Bulldogs were born. Today the challenges of the club have changed but they are challenges nevertheless. Our West Australian Football League teams are working hard to secure their place in the current century. The East and South Fremantle clubs have taken the difficult but necessary decision to co-locate at Fremantle Oval, but they will need support and the Dockers will need to do the right thing and get out of the way. But this weekend the Bulldogs' sights are firmly set on sorting out Peel Thunder. We will be barracking them along.