

Hon Stephen Pratt; Hon Samantha Rowe; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Sandra Carr; Hon Wilson Tucker; Hon Kyle McGinn; Hon Shelley Payne; Hon Lorna Harper; Hon Dr Brian Walker; Hon Peter Foster; Hon Martin Pritchard; Hon Darren West

SPORT — FEMALE PARTICIPATION

Motion

HON STEPHEN PRATT (South Metropolitan) [1.05 pm]: I move —

That the Legislative Council —

- (a) acknowledges the importance of female participation in sport, as highlighted by the FIFA Women’s World Cup; and
- (b) recognises the investment by the Cook government into the new State Football Centre, along with other sporting facilities across the state.

How good is this? We get to spend the next couple of hours talking about a topic that is very close to my heart—sport—and, in particular, focusing on investing in women’s sport across Western Australia. This motion is taking place at the perfect time, with the Matildas playing in the semifinal of the FIFA Women’s World Cup this evening.

I am thrilled to stand before you today, President, especially at this exciting moment, when we are all eagerly awaiting the kick-off between our Matildas and England. It is a special time for Australian sport, and I am proud to be part of the Cook government’s efforts to support female participation in sports. It is not just about tonight’s semifinal; it is about giving more women the chance to shine in the sports they love. I look around the chamber today and I notice a few Matildas scarves in the room. I also note that some members have likely not been able to source any as they are sold out in most shops across the metropolitan area.

Perth has played host to five FIFA Women’s World Cup matches, thanks to the support of the Cook government and the hard work of Minister Templeman and Deputy Premier Saffioti. As the clock counts down to 6.00 pm, we are all getting ready to watch our Matildas take on England. Of course, I am hoping for a victory. But win or lose, the dedication of these players is truly inspiring. They are setting an example for our young ones, showing them that getting active and involved in sport is a wonderful path to take. I would not be surprised if record numbers of children decide to sign up at their local soccer club next season after this event concludes.

I note that, as highlighted by Ben Smith in today’s *The West Australian*, Perth and WA have a very strong connection with the Matildas side. Back in 2014, Sam Kerr, Caitlin Foord, Mackenzie Arnold and Alanna Kennedy all spearheaded one of Perth Glory’s most dominant seasons ever, and now here they are together at this year’s Women’s World Cup, all playing in what we hope will be a successful winning side.

I know that my two girls, Imogen and Phoebe, one of whom let me borrow their scarf—there has been a mix-up, because I got this from Imogen, but I notice that it says “Phoebe” on the tag, so there is something going on there—are displaying a strong interest in the world game, with regular backyard soccer matches, and I note that they are already quite competitive. I take this opportunity to say that I want them to have the same opportunities as their brother in playing sport as they get older—the same level of interest and the same level of investment and support.

With the growing popularity of women’s sports, there is a need to upgrade facilities right across Western Australia and the country. It is a good challenge to have. It means that more and more women are getting involved in sport. I know that the Cook government has a strong focus on delivering the infrastructure needs to meet the demands of the future—and it is a big task.

The guidelines of the community sporting and recreation facilities fund, which we all often refer to as the CSRFF, that focus on female participation reflect our commitment. Allocating \$1 million—up from half a million dollars—to enhance female facilities is a step towards making sport even more inclusive. I also note the eight women’s teams that received funding in January this year to assist with the cost of competing nationally. They include Hockey WA for the Women’s Perth Thundersticks; Basketball WA for both Perth Lynx and Perth Wheelcats; Football West for Perth Glory; Ice Hockey WA for Perth Inferno; Netball WA for West Coast Fever; Volleyball WA for women’s volleyball Perth Steel; and Water Polo WA for the UWA Torpedoes and Fremantle Mariners women’s teams.

The Cook Labor government also allocated \$400 000 towards sending the Australian national field hockey teams to Paris for the 2024 Olympics. This includes the women’s team, the Hockeyroos. That funding will also go towards the team competing in the Oceania Cup. In December last year, the government, Hockey WA and the Western Australian Institute of Sport were successful in their joint bid of \$135 million to maintain Perth as the host city of the Australian high performance program. Curtin University, where the program will be housed, will be transformed into a world-class hockey facility, with three international hockey pitches, a specialist goalkeeper training facility, an indoor hockey centre and gym and support facilities.

Extract from Hansard
[COUNCIL — Wednesday, 16 August 2023]
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We are witnessing history in the making and it is a pretty special feeling. There is a buzz around town. Many would have heard from Matildas' players during the FIFA Women's World Cup that they all started playing soccer in boys' or men's teams. It is an exciting time to know that our daughters and the next generation of female soccer players will have the opportunity to play in all-female sides from a young age.

For me, sport is more than just a game; it brings people together and creates opportunities. Whether it is building skills, making friends or staying healthy, sport plays a big role. Our Matildas' captain, Sam Kerr, is a prime example. Born and raised right here in Perth, she is inspiring young people, not just in our state, but across the country and the globe. About six weeks ago my two girls lined up for over an hour at Garden City just to get her signature on one of their books. It is a big ask for two young girls to line up for that long.

We recognise how important female participation in sports is for physical and mental health, as well as social wellbeing. On numerous occasions in this place I have touched on the important role that community sport can play as it brings a real sense of community and inclusion for people across the board. A report from SportWest tells us about the impressive impact organised sports can have, not just economically, but also on our wellbeing and communities. However, there is a lot more to it than just numbers.

As I mentioned, this motion comes at the perfect time to reflect on the strong investments the Cook government has made in soccer and sport overall. A prime example is the State Football Centre in Queens Park. Its \$46 million funding from both state and commonwealth governments, with close to \$30 million from the Cook government, is a clear testament to our commitment. It is not just a facility; it is a place where players can train, teams can strive for success and dreams can take shape. It is an investment in the future of sport right here in WA.

I recently had the pleasure of speaking at a citizenship ceremony in the City of Cockburn, where I encouraged new Australian citizens to support our Matildas, who were playing on the same evening. It is a small way to bring people together and share the joy that sport can bring. As a father of three, I see firsthand how excited my daughters are about sport, especially the women's soccer and their role model, Sam Kerr. I know many families across the country feel the same. We are giving our children more chances to be part of something positive, to learn important values and to lead healthier lives.

The support our country has shown for the Matildas during the FIFA Women's World Cup is truly heartening. On 20 July, the Cook government announced the FIFA Fan Festival at Forrest Place—a dedicated space where Western Australians can come together to enjoy the games, music and excitement of the World Cup. It is a wonderful initiative that brings people closer and lets us celebrate a historic moment for our state and our nation. I also note the initiative for tonight's match with the game being broadcast on big screens at HBF Park. I know this will be a very popular event.

I acknowledge the outstanding work of one of my colleagues, Jane Kelsbie, MLA, who played a vital role in building connections between the Denmark WA women's soccer team in her electorate of Warren–Blackwood and its FIFA counterparts, the national Denmark team. It is about unity and inspiration, giving regional women the chance to shine and inspire the next generation.

I take this opportunity to touch on some of the successful projects this government has funded over the previous few years, some of which I have been lucky enough to either visit or have seen in action. The good news is that a lot of these are in the south metropolitan region. In the City of Rockingham, a community sporting and recreation facilities fund project was to upgrade and provide female-friendly facilities at Koorana Reserve. The total project cost of over \$4 million was significant, but CSRFF was able to provide \$650 000 towards that.

Rather than rattling off a number of dollar amounts—they are substantial—I will note those that I am aware of and that have had a real impact in the community. In the City of Kwinana, money has been allocated to upgrade the Medina Oval change rooms and to the development of a pavilion at the local Honeywood sportsground. There have been upgrades to the toilets at Kardinya Bowling Club, and in the City of South Perth there were upgrades at Manning Bowling Club and Como Bowling and Recreation Club, and at Marmion Reserve in the City of Melville. I could spend a while going through the last list, but I know that other members would also like to contribute today.

In the end, this motion is not just about sport; it is about empowerment and unity and creating a better future through sport. Let us stand together, celebrate our Matildas, and keep working towards a more inclusive and vibrant sports community.

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.17 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to make a contribution this afternoon to the motion that was moved by my friend and colleague Hon Stephen Pratt and to formally give the government's response to that motion. I will get to my formal response in a moment, but I just want to take some time to reflect on the significance of the event that will take place tonight. For me, it is probably one of the most exciting sporting events that I have looked forward to for quite some time. I say

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that as someone who is not usually a sporting enthusiast. I try my best to get involved and behind female sports teams, and I really want to promote female sports teams, because it is important on so many levels. I would not say I am a naturally sporty individual, but I am really excited about tonight's game. This morning, I was thinking back on something I could compare tonight with. I have the same sort of excitement and anticipation, and almost nervousness, that I had in 2000—I am sure many members did as well—when Cathy Freeman ran her 400 metres race at the Sydney Olympics. For me, I had the same sort of feeling then, and the anticipation of, "Is she going to win?"

I was looking at ABC online news this morning, as I often do over coffee. Patricia Karvelas posted an analysis this morning. Her article is much more articulate than anything I could deliver. I thought I would share it with members in the chamber before I turn to my formal government response. I think she wrote it this morning. It is titled, "The rise and rise of the Matildas is about more than one team. It's a feminist cultural reckoning for our daughters." It states —

The year 2000 was a year of magic.

When Cathy Freeman lit the flame at the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games, she lit something bigger in the national psyche, something intangible but transformative.

Ten days later she won the gold medal in the women's 400 metres, a moment seared into the nation's collective memory as one of the greatest and most pivotal points of pride and joy in our history.

The anticipation of that race, the weight we put on Freeman—that understated powerhouse athlete—to unify us and change our own story about who we were was unprecedented.

Her victory was a symbol of so much: it went beyond her relentless work ethic and talent—it represented the promise of a reconciled nation that could move past the pain of racism in our history.

Since then we've had other times, other moments of great Australian achievement and national unity in sport and beyond.

But it is hard to think of a greater moment to parallel the magic of 2000 than the one we are in—the year 2023, where we've witnessed the rise and rise of the Matildas in the national consciousness.

This is so much bigger than one team, at one point in time, in one FIFA World Cup. This is the story of triumph against a backdrop of toxic rhetoric about women and their capacity for sporting greatness.

The tropes have been put to rest. Women don't play as well, we've been told. They don't have as much physical power. They lose their competitive edge after pregnancy. The men are just better. These have not been fringe views—they have been said to women their entire lives.

For girls and women the rise of the Matildas is a feminist cultural reckoning. It is the evidence that what once seemed like a farfetched dream was achievable. It is evidence that we have the capacity to change habits steeped in sexism.

...

When Matilda Ellie Carpenter got emotional reflecting on the growth of women's football I cried. She spoke to the invisibility of women not only in sport but in other areas seen as the domain of men.

"I didn't have a girls team," she said. "I watched the Matildas when I was 12 and there were 300 people there."

Carpenter and her teammates are experiencing what Matildas who came before them didn't. They have been seen. They have been celebrated. They have been loved.

And so this moment is about more than this group of women, incredible as they are. It's about the generations—still with us—who had their dreams dashed by a culture that dismissed and diminished women's achievements.

And this is for little girls like mine who play in the local under 12 girls soccer team: If you back yourself and the girls around, magic can happen. Optimism is infectious.

And it can prevail over division if we choose to let it.

As I said, that was a much more articulate version of events than I could ever portray in this chamber, but I thought worth sharing during the debate on the motion brought to this house by Hon Stephen Pratt.

I also wanted to look at the different type of research that has been done over the years on the importance of investing in women's sport. If members google "the importance of investing in women's sport" or something similar, they will find numerous papers and reviews that have been conducted here in WA—I know Hon Stephen Pratt referred

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to a paper that SportWest put out not that long ago about the social and economic benefits of investing in sport— interstate and overseas from universities and corporations. We can take a lot of information from those papers because, as we all know, we can do so much more, even though as a government we are investing in sport, particularly women’s sport, through investment in infrastructure—change rooms and the like.

One of the papers that I came across was written by the University of Victoria. I cannot quite work out the date that it was put together; I think it was 2019 or 2020, so it is relatively current. Some of the statistics may have changed since then but they are probably somewhat similar. I wanted to share some of those stats with members this afternoon. There are quite a lot of statistics, so I will not go through them all. One that stood out was that male sport makes up 81 per cent of television sports news compared with just 7.4 per cent of women’s sport. I thought that was an incredible difference. I wonder whether that is still the case. I certainly hope it is not. Events like the FIFA Women’s World Cup will hopefully change that television coverage. Under the heading “Reimagining equality in sport”, the paper has a little box which states —

MYTH: Women’s sport doesn’t engage audiences, and therefore sponsorship, pay and coverage should not be equitable.

FACT: Demand for women’s sport is growing worldwide. The US Women’s National Soccer team’s 2019 World Cup victory ranked was one of the most watched sporting events in history. Closer to home, the 2018 Women’s T20 International cricket match saw a peak audience of 1.3 million and the 2019 Australian Open Women’s final reached a domestic peak TV audience, a record attendance at the arena and became one of the most watched tennis matches, male or female, in history.

That is fantastic. I really hope that sporting events such as the FIFA World Cup enhance and encourage more people to tune in and support our female sporting teams.

Hon Stephen Pratt also commented on some of the social and economic benefits that occur when we invest in sport and the importance they play in our communities. The paper continues —

Communities benefit when more women and girls are engaged participants in sport. Millions of Australians volunteer their time to sport, creating a bank of social capital as well as improving community cohesion, wellbeing and connection. Studies show that children who participate in sport are more likely to return to education, go to university and become employed.

Sport is also a powerful catalyst for social change; it can help shape community attitudes and perspectives and plays a crucial role in advancing gender equality and challenging gender stereotypes. Sport teaches that women and girls can be strong, powerful and competitive, and paints these traits as healthy and normal, helping to redefine gender norms. Additionally, strong, powerful female role models increase the interest and participation of women in sport. For example, when Australian cricket star Meg Lanning was younger, she played on the boy’s cricket team as there were no cricket opportunities for girls in her region. Meg’s persistence and the success of the women’s cricket team have ultimately led to a rapid expansion of interest from young women and girls, with Cricket Australia witnessing a 700% increase in community groups that offer an all-girls competition.

That is fantastic. I am really pleased that is happening so young girls and young children can play sport and be involved in games that they are really passionate about and love, whether it be at a community grassroots level or whether they aspire to be elite sportspeople.

It is fair to say that the FIFA Women’s World Cup is probably the largest sporting event in the world, and one of the biggest events that Perth has been involved in. It is also safe to say that football fever has taken hold. The Matildas quarterfinal match against France became the most watched sporting event since the Sydney Olympics, which is just incredible; indeed, 7.2 million people tuned in to the quarterfinal win on Saturday, which is amazing for not only the sport of football, but also women’s sport. Of course, we have all heard the saying that you can’t be what you can’t see. Our female football players, our heroes, are now on the front and back pages of every major newspaper across the country, which is so well deserved. Everyone is getting behind the Matildas, which is really exciting for Australia because it unifies us and brings communities together. I am sure that a new record will be made tonight with the number of people tuning in to watch the Matildas versing England. I cannot wait to hear about the viewing stats.

In WA, more than 40 000 women are involved in all forms of the game. There was consistent strong growth in organised women’s football in 2021–22 and we expect that increased significantly in 2022–23. The state government recognises the importance of female participation in sport. It is committed to continuing to drive and grow the development of women’s football in WA, which is why we have invested significantly in the State Football Centre, which will be a centre of excellence. It will help with the growing demand of people who want to play football in WA.

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We have to make that investment; we have to invest in infrastructure and make sure it is appropriate for girls and women to participate. It is a really significant driver to make sure that we encourage young girls to start a sport they want to become involved in and continue to play that sport. Statistics suggest that as girls turn into teenagers, they drop away from playing sport, for whatever reason. We want them to continue to play and be given all the opportunities to continue to play sport well into their teens. Australia's hosting of the FIFA Women's World Cup will provide a lasting legacy for women's football in Australia and will further boost participation in the sport, which is great.

The government also invested \$35 million in the Perth Rectangular Stadium, which is where the five FIFA Women's World Cup games were played in WA. I do not know whether members had an opportunity to attend those games. I was lucky enough to go to the Haiti versus Denmark match and the Morocco versus Columbia match. Since receiving upgrades to its lighting, pitch and player amenities, HBF Park has never looked so good. The facilities for spectators are quite incredible and added to the atmosphere of the games. There was a huge amount of excitement during both the games I attended. They were both packed; I believe 80 000 or 85 000 people attended the five games that were held in WA. That is a fantastic result for WA, and it goes to show that people do want to see women's sport. Both matches had a wonderful family atmosphere. I was very pleased to attend those two events.

I finish by saying that the government will continue to invest in female sporting upgrades to make sure that the right facilities are available for girls and young women. That is an important part of making sure that they fully participate in sport. I wish the Matildas the best of luck tonight. We are very proud as a nation to watch them in their exciting match versing England. Regardless of the result, we are super proud. Go Tillies!

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan) [1.34 pm]: I stand to make a few comments on behalf of the opposition. Normally when I stand, I use every opportunity to bring down the government, but because Hon Stephen Pratt is one of the good guys, I will not bother today! Having said that, the opposition pretty much agrees with the intent of this motion. It is not particularly enamoured with paragraph (b). I could move an amendment, but I will not do that. If a member wants to move an amendment to a motion, they should move their own motion. We should not amend motions on the notice paper. I will not be doing that.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Because you've never done that before!

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, I have never done that, and I will not.

Having said that, I have a confession to make. As an unapologetic compulsive obsessive, I almost did something sacrilegious last Saturday night—I was almost late to a function. I am never late; those who know me know that all too well. Sir Charles Court used to tell me, "If you're not 10 minutes early, you're late." I could not draw my myself away from the television; I had to watch the penalty shootout. I reckon I speak for all Australians when I say what an extraordinary moment in our history. It was absolutely compelling; I loved every second of it. I cannot put into words—articulate—how magnificent that moment was in our sporting history. I am not exaggerating. It was one of the most wonderful moments in our nation's sporting history. Suffice to say, I got to the Joondalup Business Association's Business Awards night just as people were arriving for dinner. I went with Hon Tjorn Sibma. I got there just in time for pre-dinner drinks. I think I winged it; I do not think anyone realised I was, in fact, pushing being late.

I have given this a lot of thought. Sport, primarily tennis, has been a part of my entire life. Over the last 20 years or so, I have dealt with the Western Australian Institute of Sport and others doing mental strength work with a number of athletes. I love it. Getting the best out of an elite athlete is a wonderful experience, particularly women athletes. A lot of the athletes I have dealt with have been women, particularly in tennis. There are three memorable moments in sporting history that I would like to reflect on; significantly, two of them involve women. The first is our America's Cup win, which will be 40 years ago in about a month. I was in my second year of teaching; Hon Michelle Roberts and I had just started teaching together at John Curtin Senior High School. I stayed up all night to watch *Australia II* come back from 3–1 down to catch *Liberty* and win the next three races to win 4–3. That was an extraordinary and unbelievable moment. It even got people interested in sailing—I am not. All of a sudden, people knew what a winged keel was and a raft of other things. The second one is what Hon Samantha Rowe mentioned; that is, Cathy Freeman's extraordinary 400-metre win at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The whole nation ran that race. I promise members that no matter what else happened at the Sydney Olympics, such as the cauldron going up and becoming stuck, everyone will remember Cathy Freeman's 400-metre race.

Do you know what I reckon, President? I reckon everyone will remember that moment last Saturday night of the penalty shootout. I really do. Believe it or not, in my heart of hearts, I am not that enamoured with soccer. I know that I am a sporting philistine, but I have never been really that stuck on soccer, but after last month, I am now a fanatic, and it is all because of the Matildas. They have done an extraordinary thing. They have done more than any politician could hope to do. Do members know what they have done? They have united the nation. The Matildas have united Australia; we are at one. The 23 magnificent young women who have made the cut and the 11 who will

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run out tonight or be substituted on, out of the 23, are magnificent for not just their sporting prowess but also their commitment to a cause and their relentless desire for improvement, day in and day out. The message they have sent to every young woman and to every individual, not just in Australia but globally, is that if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything. That is just a magnificent—dare I say it—legacy for those young ladies. Congratulations, girls. This is just the start; the best is yet to come. I know full well what they will be thinking at the moment. They will not be talking about public holidays or the final or the cup; they will be thinking about one thing tonight, I promise you, and that will be being the best they possibly can be. That is what they will be doing: being the best they possibly can be. If they win, so be it. That will be good. Elite athletes do not focus on the outcome; they always focus on the process of being the best they can be. Good luck to the Matildas. They are magnificent.

I would quickly like to comment on a few things about other sports, particularly women in sport. Not just in Western Australia but also nationally, we have such a proud history. This tiny little island nation of 25 million people now beats the rest of the world at pretty much everything we aspire to. Everything we compete in, we win. We are magnificent.

Hon Dan Caddy: Especially the Poms.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Pardon? Yes, that is always good. It would be really, really good to beat the Poms tonight.

Everyone, let us not forget the Diamonds, the wonderful netball team. The Diamonds won the World Cup medal in Cape Town last week for the twelfth time. Let us not forget the Diamonds. Let us not forget our Opals, who are ranked third in the world. The team won three silver and two bronze Olympic medals. In world championships, the team has won silver, bronze and gold medals. Let us not forget the Opals.

Let us not forget the multiple world record holders and gold medal winners in athletics from this tiny little island nation of ours. Let us not forget wonderful women such as Marjorie Jackson, my beautiful friend Betty Cuthbert—may she rest in peace—Maureen Caird, Glynis Nunn, Debbie Flintoff-King, Sally Pearson and Cathy Freeman, of course. All are great champions who did our nation well and inspired athletes, particularly young girls, throughout our nation. In swimming, we are second to none. We are like dolphins when we get in the pool. I am not remotely negating the athleticism and the successes of men, but we are talking about women. In this instance, we have such a proud legacy. Dawn Fraser was a magnificent athlete. Just to name a few, Susie O'Neill, Ariarne Titmus, Emma McKeon, Kaylee McKeown, Stephanie Rice, Leisel Jones, Libby Trickett and Petria Thomas have won gold medals representing our great nation.

With that in mind, we have a great deal to be proud of as a nation. Tonight, we will just be a little bit better. If we win, that would be extraordinary—there will not be too much happening in Australia on Sunday night. If we lose, so be it. The magnificent Matildas will have done us proud. Good luck, girls.

I will mention a couple of things that bring it home to Western Australia. I acknowledge the comments of Hon Stephen Pratt and Hon Samantha Rowe about what has been occurring over the last six years of the McGowan–Cook government. I will provide a bit of sincere advice about ways we could perhaps further enhance and improve sporting opportunities for young girls in our society and our community.

Netball is a massive sport, particularly for young girls. The facilities here are very good. A former Liberal government built the Matthews Netball Centre in Wembley, which is a great facility, but successive governments to a large degree have not ignored but have not given sufficient attention to regional netball players. The six regional offices have three part-time roles each to try to assist, but the broad expanse of the state makes it very difficult. We went into the last election committing to increase the participation officers to full-time roles. That has not occurred, although in some instances they have been able to do it through other means. It is a way to try to enhance support for netball in the regions in Western Australia.

The Shooting Stars program for Aboriginal girls is a wonderful program. It is in eight communities at the moment. It would be really good if we could expand it to more Aboriginal communities and towns throughout the state to provide all Aboriginal girls with an opportunity to participate in netball.

Basketball is a very high participation sport with both boys and girls, but particularly with girls. Both sides of the Parliament need to commit to assisting our facilities so we can provide opportunities in basketball for young boys and girls. The Bendat Basketball Centre, which the former Labor government built in Floreat, still has six courts. The state basketball centre has had six courts since 1962, and it needs at least two more courts. Basketball WA tells us that, and that would provide an avenue for areas of excellence to be further enhanced.

A backlog of improvements and enhancements is needed to basketball facilities in Western Australia. Basketball WA has been calling out for a contribution from the community sporting and recreation facilities fund, which has now been increased. I would highly recommend that the government uses that new \$20 million. I take on board

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the fact, mentioned by Hon Stephen Pratt, that the amount was increased to \$20 million, but it was reduced to \$12 million for the entirety of this government. The Liberal government had it at \$20 million, the current government reduced it to \$12 million, and now it has been improved. I am pleased to see that, but now there is a lot of backlog from the \$8 million that was cut every year. This is not a criticism; it is a fact or an observation. The community sporting and recreation facilities fund is a very good program, and I know that Basketball WA wants that money to be used for the backlogged facilities.

Also, it would be really good to have some sort of working group with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Basketball WA and the Department of Education on using the basketball facilities at schools. Some do, but there is no formal arrangement. It would be really good to have that to enhance the formal use of those basketball facilities. There is no formal arrangement.

Finally, I come to tennis. I have been on this for a number of years, and I will stick with it. As I have said on numerous occasions, I coached tennis for decades, right down from bubs and groups up to elite levels. I loved it. I coached for 25 years with Margaret Court and by myself, and I loved every second of it, including when I coached a number of elite Western Australian players.

We have a wonderful track record in tennis and the number of grand slams—both men’s and women’s—that we have won in Australia. We are probably second only to the United States, and that is about it. Just the number of grand slam singles won by Margaret Court, Evonne Goolagong Cawley and Ash Barty is extraordinary. At the local level, some members will remember my good mate Liz Sayers, who is now Liz Smylie. She won a few grand slam doubles titles. Has anyone ever heard of Storm Sanders? She is now Storm Hunter. Let me tell members who she is. She is 29 years old and made the final of Wimbledon doubles this year. You know what? At 29 years old, she is number four in the world. Isn’t that fantastic? She is a Western Australian woman, but she really has to spend a lot of her time over east or overseas because of the lack of opportunities or, more so, facilities, here in Western Australia. I will go through that in a moment.

Some members may remember Brittany Sheed. Brit is a great young lady. She played on the tour for a few years. She did not quite make it, but she is a very handy player. Of course, she is Dom Sheed’s sister. She did very well. There was a young lady named Jenny Byrne who I coached all the way through. That was a wonderful experience. She got within a quarter of an inch of winning a Wimbledon mixed title. I will never forget it. I was sitting there in the coaches box back in 1989. She was with Mark Kratzmann and they lost to Jim Pugh and Jana Novotná 6–4 in the third match. Do not coach tennis if you have a blood pressure issue; do not sit in the coaches box and watch because it does not do your blood pressure much good at all.

Having said that, we have done well as a society and state in terms of tennis. However, yet again, our tennis centre is in desperate need of repair at the moment. The government’s minister will acknowledge that. As I said before, the old tennis centre was at Kings Park. It was a wonderful facility. We used to have Women’s Tennis Association tournaments, Davis Cups and Federation Cups there. There is a plethora of high-level tennis that we cannot really attract anymore because the tennis centre is dated. Our government put it there—we had bipartisan support, I am not having a go at the government. It has reached its use-by date. It has concrete cancer; the courts are sinking. It is stuck out there without a centre court. High-level tennis is not going to be attracted there, apart from the boutique tournaments over Christmas held at the arena. If we want to get circuit tournaments back here in Western Australia and give young girls an opportunity to show their wares and how good they are and provide good opportunities, a mix of services, some new indoor court facilities and a new gymnasium, we are going to have to put our hand in our pocket.

We went into the last election with a \$20 million commitment that, at the time, the federal government committed to. Tennis West was going to put in the rest. We were never going to win the election, so I like to think that I was going to flush out the Labor government going into that election to say, “We will match it!” I said to Tennis West, “See if we can try to get the government to commit to the new facility”. If the government commits to the new facility, it could be at that centre there, but to be honest, I would really like to see it back at Kings Park. That is a wonderful area to put a good centre court. A good centre court is desperately needed to attract good tournaments. They are not going to do it anywhere else. Brisbane, Adelaide and Sydney have done it and now they get all the tournaments. We do not get any. I really implore upon the government to please encourage its ministers to go down that path. Under no circumstance must they still countenance the notion of Whiteman Park. Whiteman Park will kill tennis in Western Australia. I continue to ask questions on that every now and again and get non-answers, so I know it is still being considered, which would be such a shame.

Having said that, that was shooting the breeze a bit on sport, but it is not about that today; it is about acknowledging female participation in sport; commending those involved and encouraging young girls to get involved in sport, which really is a life-enhancing process, and saying to the mighty Matildas that they really have done our nation

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proud. Win, lose or draw tonight, they are magnificent. For each and every one of you, this is just the start. The best is yet to come.

HON SANDRA CARR (Agricultural) [1.55 pm]: I rise to support my friend, colleague and dad of three, including two daughters, for this beautifully timed motion. I do not think he could have timed it any better if he tried. It is fantastic that it has landed on the day the Matildas will be playing in the semifinal against England this evening. I cannot wait for the game. As has been suggested by other speakers this morning, it has been a significant moment for women's sport in this country. I would say that it is not just a game; it is a game changer. The number of people in this country who are so engaged, passionate, enthused and have perhaps even been converted to soccer or footy, as it is commonly known in the rest of the world, and to women's soccer, no less, has come as quite a surprise to me.

I will quickly relay an experience that I had of the last game that saw the Matildas make this semifinal. I was at a meeting. It was packed full of men. The game was on. The thing that I found really shocking was that all of them were wanting the TV on or they were on their phones watching the women's soccer. These were blokey-blokes. I was absolutely gobsmacked and I just was not expecting it. It was the first time I had really seen how engaged the men—who I would traditionally expect to be watching football and dismissing large proportions of women's sport, particularly women playing what they would view as a traditionally male sport—were, with my own eyes. They were engaged, enthused and literally unable to think of anything else. It was really quite an eye-opener for me.

However, I really should not be surprised, I guess, because soccer is the game that I could finally convince my son to play as a great team sport. He really did not enjoy many other team sports. He had quite a good few, but soccer is the one that really caught his heart and mind and continues to do so in his late teens now, as he is about to turn 20. I think I have mentioned this before when we have talked about sport in this place, but what really caught me was as a young player was that the teams were a mix of male and female players. They were also a mix of cultures from all across the town. I found that to be a really fantastic aspect of the game.

One of the teams that were playing as he progressed through the game and his years was a team of all girls who played against all the boys and mixed teams. They were formidable and a unified and disciplined group. In this group were some twin girls that I used to teach. Their surname was Kerr. Thinking about Sam Kerr for this motion reminded me of those two girls playing soccer. They were really intrinsic to the success and cohesion of that team. I thought that was an interesting parallel, which I noticed as I was thinking about this motion today.

I want to go back to this: it is not just a game; it is a game changer. It has really brought women's sport to the fore in terms of its value, spectator participation, the respect that it has garnered, women's participation, and the level of professionalism and skill it brings, as well as the national pride it can generate. If we look at some recent statistics about participation in sports across Australia, 41 per cent of Australians aged 15-plus will participate in some form of sport. Of that group, 50 per cent are male and 32 per cent are female. There is a significant disparity. It has not changed much. I suspect that that will change as a result of what we are witnessing—the interest generated by the great skill and sportsmanship shown by the Matildas, and also the way that they have captured the hearts of the nation. Women are under-represented in organised sport, as well as in other aspects of sport, not just as participants, but as coaches, officials, administrators and board members when compared with the male cohort. There remains work for us to do. It remains an important motion if we are really going to harness the full benefits that sport brings to a community.

A variety of strategies are being implemented across a whole range of groups and organisations, but nothing really captures the market like putting out there the success that can be seen; it really captures the hearts and minds of people. Sport has a lot of benefits for people. It improves health and wellbeing and mental health. It improves social connection. It brings communities together through a shared experience, and that is what we are witnessing right now. It also improves social inclusion. When people are brought into and made a part of sport, no matter where they come from, what they do or what they believe in, it improves cohesion and inclusion. I am going to paraphrase Nelson Mandela because he said it particularly well. He said that sport has the power to unite people in a way little else can and that sport can create hope; it breaks down racial barriers, laughs in the face of discrimination and speaks to people in a language they can understand.

Women's involvement in sport, therefore, is crucial, because if we do not lift them up to the same levels of participation, we are not harnessing the full scope of opportunities that people's participation in sport brings to us as a whole community, as a whole state or, indeed, as a whole nation. Participation in sport has been shown to bring economic benefits. It improves work output for individuals. It results in decreased health costs to the whole community. It results in events like the Women's World Cup and has an impact on tourism. It provides employment for people. It prevents at-risk behaviours for people when they participate in sport. It also increases the uptake of green transport options like walking, cycling and scootering—all those things that get people out and

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moving. Therefore, it has roll-on benefits in reducing pollution and our overall ecological footprint. It increases our appreciation of environmental features, with people getting involved in hiking trails and that kind of thing. I note that the WA government has the *WA strategic trails blueprint 2022–2027*, which is a fantastic development for creating policy around sport and activities that can be appreciated and participated in by all people, if we really think about what that looks like structurally.

I am going to hit members with a little bit of feminism for a moment, but it is not something that I will delve into too much. I will paraphrase an important part of a text I read called *Invisible women: Exposing data bias in a world designed for men* written by a researcher named Caroline Criado Perez in 2020. She talks about what she calls a one-size-fits-men default in our research and data and some of the structural presentations in the way that we operate as a society. She looks at a range of data omissions that impact on both the lives and safety of women. One of the examples is the use of crash-test dummies in cars that represent the male physiology. Therefore, the safety design or engineering of the vehicle is already fundamentally flawed, because half of drivers are women. Their safety is not necessarily being provided for in the design because it is relying on a default biased set of data and records.

The same applies to sport. I would like to look at some of the ways that the Labor government is addressing this. It might not be with intent, but it is important. In the midwest in particular, we are investing over \$3 million in sporting upgrades and facilities. Firstly, I want to talk about lighting. Without lighting at sporting grounds, women do not feel safe. Without lighting, women cannot necessarily participate at the times of the day when they can be available to participate in sport. The Cook government has contributed amounts ranging from \$20 000 to almost \$200 000 to put lighting in places. Forgive me, but I am talking only about the midwest and some of the Agricultural Region, but significantly more funding for lighting has been provided. Funding has been provided for lighting at the Eighth Street precinct and the Woorree Park BMX Club in the City of Greater Geraldton; floodlights at the sports oval in the Shire of Quairading; lighting at the sports oval in the Shire of Coorow; and lighting at the tennis courts in the Shire of Wyalkatchem and at the bowling green at the Wyalkatchem community club. Lighting allows people to feel safe within the community.

Secondly, a lot of funding is being contributed for change rooms. Women cannot participate in sport if they do not feel safe. They need an environment in which to change, communicate, cry, yell or whatever they need to do; they need a space specifically designed for them that has the resources and things they need. That is why investment in change rooms is also really important. There are places where those facilities have not been available for women who want to participate in sport, so that is a really important investment and development. Considerations such as providing structural facilities to include women in sports need to be addressed. We have provided just over \$100 000 in funding for the Shire of Dalwallinu, nearly \$250 000 for the Rover Football Club, just over \$250 000 for the Shire of Koorda, and the list goes on. Funding is being provided across regional WA and the whole state to make sure that all women can participate in sport.

There have also been some significant contributions for netball. Perhaps this is something that Hon Peter Collier was not aware of: there is this place that exists outside of the City of Perth called regional WA. We have contributed amounts ranging from \$6 000 to over \$100 000 specifically for netball courts in the Shires of Coorow, Northampton, Mingenew and Morawa. I will also add that we have contributed \$3.5 million to upgrade and add additional courts at the Geraldton basketball stadium to provide for the vast number of young men and women who want to play basketball. There have been significant upgrades in basketball facilities; it is just that they are happening outside of Perth in this mythical place called regional WA, honourable member!

I would also like to mention one omission. It is always very telling when someone neglects to mention a woman. I will mention that other fantastic WA tennis player Casey Dellacqua. She was a Wimbledon finalist, made over \$4 million in her tennis career and also reached number 3 in the world at one stage of her career. It was a significant, and rather telling, omission from Hon Peter Collier.

In talking about the data and the things that we miss, I would also like to mention that women in sport leadership and governance roles is also important. This is not to deride this organisation in any way, because it is outstanding, but the Midwest Academy of Sport has nine men and three women on its board. There is work to be done here. There are efforts that we can continue to make to keep improving the outcomes for women. If equity and representation is not included, often some people in those groups are missed and the procedures and structural requirements that are needed to make sure that those people come along for that journey are forgotten.

The department of sport and recreation's *Women in leadership: Targets for WA sport bodies* policy is to have 50 per cent female directors in sporting groups. I think that is a fantastic development. I would also like to note that SportWest has the Women of Sport Network, which provides a network for professional development opportunities for women who are volunteering and working in the sport industry. I think that is a fantastic piece of work that that group is doing.

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Before I finish—I have about six minutes—I would like to say that we often acknowledge the hugely successful people in sport, but none of those people gets there without all the grassroots sports opportunities that they are provided with. I am going to talk about some of the recent successes of midwest women in sport. Because we started the debate by talking about the Matildas, I will start with an amazing woman who has made some fantastic contributions to soccer. An awesome woman in Geraldton by the name of Tanya Amazzini was nominated for the administrator of the year award at the Geraldton and midwest sports awards in November last year. She was also selected to be the team support for the Australian Indigenous Roos at the National Indigenous Football Festival on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland so that she could use some of that knowledge and expertise to improve and develop the game of soccer in our region. Part of the coaching learnings that she came away with were imparted by former Socceroos player and coach Frank Farina. She was really lucky and brought back some amazing skills, and she continues to make incredible contributions to sport in the midwest.

I acknowledge Brooke Elward, Camryn McKoy, Lauren Newman and Holly Stubberfield, four of our women hockey players. These young women were part of a team that won at the State Hockey Championships and are now going on to represent the state. Congratulations to those legends. There is also Samantha Vanderford, a woman from Greenhead, down near Jurien Bay. She won the over-50 category in the twenty-fourth Whalebone Longboard Classics in Cottesloe. She is an absolute champion. Geraldton woman Sarah Butler is a boxer who won the state elite title. She will now represent the state in the national titles, an incredible achievement for a young woman who has only been boxing for two and a half years, but has shown really impressive prowess in a sport traditionally dominated by men.

I acknowledge two young midwest women competing in running. Both are school students who participated this year in the WA State Cross Country Championships. Christi Bestry won a silver medal for the 16-years 4 000 metres race in a time of 16 minutes and 35 seconds, which sounds impossible to me, but there you go! Christi managed to do that. Throughout the year, she also won medals in the National Junior Track and Field Championships, School Sports WA Cross Country Championships and the WA Open Track and Field Championships. This young lady is going places and we are really proud of her. Samaia Friesen is a young lady who ran in the 17-years 4 000 metres race, and finished with a bronze medal. This year, she has not finished outside the top 10 in any event. She is another amazing up-and-comer.

I mention a matriarch of the Geraldton softball community, their president, Denise Bell, who passed away earlier this year. She battled cancer for two years. Her contribution to building up the sport of softball in Geraldton was second to none. Women like Denise really drive clubs forward when they are placed in leadership positions, as she was for almost two decades. She also had a vision for a carnival in the region, and that softball carnival was hugely successful. Thousands of people were there; it was massive. This ongoing event is a legacy that she leaves behind as a fantastic contribution to the sport.

Lastly, I mention Mingenew farm kid Pippa McTaggart. Pippa plays in the NAB AFL Auskick. After submitting a video to them, she was chosen to present the medals to the winning football team this year. This quote from Pippa beautifully sums up what happens for young women when we highlight and celebrate women's success in sport —

“I'm a big Eagles fan, and when I grow up, I want to be a cricketer, a footballer or a scientist.”

Hand on heart, who can say honestly that they ever heard a young girl say that 10 or 15 years ago? It is an amazing development, and that right there says everything about the time and effort we are putting in to young women in sport. It speaks to what we see when teams like the Matildas excel and put themselves forward as great leaders. It is emblematic of how great women can be in sport. I will be watching the Matildas tonight. I have worn my colours today. I do not usually dress in such bright colours; I am usually a bit more conservative! I say to the Matildas that whatever happens this evening, from a woman's point of view, I feel we have already won. It is a significant win for women's sport, and a significant development for women's sport and valuing women's sport. I thank the Matildas from the bottom of my heart for all they have done for women in sport and inspiring the nation. I cannot wait to watch the game!

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [2.14 pm]: I have a few brief remarks. I support this motion, and I thank Hon Stephen Pratt for raising this topical motion today. We have heard a number of passionate statements from members about how we can boost participation in women's sports on the back of the wildly successful Matildas team. I know one way in which we can increase physical activity for women and men—which includes increasing the participation in sport in Western Australia—and that, of course, is the introduction of daylight saving time in WA. Members do not have to take my word for it. There are two reports, one which is backed by the Department of Health, and another created by the Premier's physical activity task force. They conducted scientifically-backed research during the daylight saving trial period from 2006 to 2009. What they found was very surprising—or perhaps not that surprising when acknowledging and learning more about daylight saving time. One of the benefits was an

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uptake in physical activity across the board in Western Australia. Of course, if physical activity is increased in the population, there are health benefits and flow-on economic benefits.

As well as the physical activity uptake and the upside of that, the two reports also found a change in behaviour when people engaged in physical activity. Daylight saving is essentially mortgaging or sacrificing some of the daylight time in the morning—when most people are not really using it, as they are getting ready for work—and moving it to the afternoon. It gives the population more time in the afternoon to engage in physical activity, get outside, run, play soccer, or whatever activity someone wants to do. We changed that behaviour. There were fewer people engaging in physical activity in the morning and more people engaging in physical activity in the afternoon. Hon Sandra Carr spoke about the need for lighting for women to feel safe when participating in sporting activity. Members, the biggest lightbulb out there is called the sun! I think members might be familiar with it. Daylight saving allows more people to engage in physical activity in the afternoon, and for women to feel safer when they do so. For me, it is an absolute no-brainer. If the Cook government was serious about increasing participation in women's sport, I know one tried and true, scientifically-backed method, and that is introducing daylight saving in Western Australia.

HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.17 pm]: Firstly, I thank Hon Wilson Tucker for that excellent speech. It is really great to see daylight saving is at the top of his agenda, and I am intrigued to see him weave it into more conversations, similar to Hon Dr Brian Walker's ability to weave marijuana into absolutely everything that we talk about in this chamber!

I thank Hon Stephen Pratt for bringing the motion to the house. I will be the first to admit that I am absolutely not a soccer fan whatsoever; never have been. Quite frankly, I cannot understand how it is such a big sport. I am a rugby league supporter through and through. I am an Adelaide Crows AFL supporter. However, members, this is where the turn of events will happen. Something I like in sport is Australia competing on the world stage. It is something that I have managed to get behind for any sport, even soccer. I have to say, one has to go back to when the men's team qualified for the World Cup for the first time in, I think, a very long time. However, the Matildas have always been a team that I have heard about and watched closely when it comes to Australia competing on the world stage. The absolute insanity of this World Cup is very, very difficult to hide from. I have to admit that, like Hon Peter Collier, I had an event that I had to get to by seven o'clock on Saturday night. At a quarter past six, I had not even had a shower because the penalties were absolutely enthralling.

Hon Samantha Rowe interjected.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: I did have a shower after that, Hon Samantha Rowe, just to be clear. I managed to have a shower before the event.

The game was unbelievable. The intensity of that game had Australians yelling and screaming at the TV. When we scored that last goal, we were jumping and dancing around the lounge room like lunatics. I saw this motion appear on the notice paper. For me, the World Cup was another sporting event to watch and see Australians doing well in sport. But when Sam Kerr handed her jersey to the young girl in the crowd, that was something I had never seen in women's sport on live prime-time TV. It went viral. To see the passion on that young girl's face and what it meant to her and her future in sport in this country really hit home for me how important this game is. I will absolutely be behind the Matildas tonight; I will be racing home to watch the game as soon as I can, despite the fact that I am not a soccer fan. I am absolutely in awe of what this team has done for people in this country, particularly young girls, who probably are not soccer, cricket or AFL players. All sports will be invigorated by what the Matildas have managed to achieve in this country during the World Cup.

I take members back to a true story of what happened to my sister when we were in the Northern Territory. There has been talk about young girls having to play with boys if they want to play a certain sport. My sister was probably a little crazier than others back then. She wanted to play rugby union, which is quite a big sport in the territory during the rugby league off-season. I played rugby union. I was a big kid then, like I am now; and my sister was a small girl then and still is today. My sister ended up in the under-14s rugby union boys' team. An iconic photo that gets around our family every couple of years is of my sister getting lifted up by me in the lineout. Her arms and legs were going everywhere. I look back at that now and think that although my sister wanted to engage in rugby union, there were no women's teams back then. It was a very physical sport, with players getting injured all the time. She played rugby union for only one season, but in the boys' team. The opportunities I had to play rugby league and rugby union were abundant. My sister did not get those same opportunities. During periods like this, I reflect on how women and girls are disadvantaged in the sporting space.

I would like to reflect on another sporting team that I am a huge fan of—the Australian women's national cricket team. I want to put on record that I think it is probably the greatest Australian sporting team in history. It has won every single trophy. It has absolutely dominated the world stage. For years, it was totally under represented given

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what it achieved. I want to thank the Australian women's cricket team for keeping my faith in Australian cricket after Sandpapergate. I want to put this on the record: Australian cricket was in turmoil after the men's team was caught cheating with sandpaper. The Australian women's cricket team was out there winning fairly and squarely, playing with integrity, which I believe the men's team has now garnered. Both teams recently returned from England, retaining the Ashes; the Australian women's cricket team retained the Ashes and the Australian men's team retained the Ashes. We gave the English men and women something to think about in Australian sport by winning on their home soil. Let us hope, as cricketer David Warner said today, that if the English want to change the soccer ball tonight, we should not let them because on day five of the Ashes, they changed the cricket ball and all of a sudden, the ball was swinging and they got 10 wickets. Be careful, Matildas; watch the Poms tonight because they have a sneaky way of trying to achieve their goals with some dodgy tactics. Let us not forget that the English keeper does not know the rules of cricket about staying in the crease.

Alyssa Healy is among the amazing cricketers in the women's team. They were called the Southern Stars before they were properly named the Australian women's cricket team. They have always done Australia proud in the Women's T20 World Cup and the 50 overs game. The biggest shame about the women's Ashes is that they only play one Test match. This disadvantages all women's sport as they do not get the same number of opportunities as the men. There are five Test matches, each played over five days, in the Ashes. The women's Ashes Test match is played over one five-dayer. That one five-dayer went down to the last hour of play. It was an absolute nailbiter. It was one of the first women's cricket Test matches that was not a draw. When we think about it, I think they play one Test match every two to three years. It was really good to watch. A lot of my friends absolutely love watching the Australian women's cricket team.

I saw something pop up for people in Perth today. I believe that cinemas are offering free tickets to see the Matildas play tonight. People should get on to Google or *The West Australian*. I had not heard of that before. Cinemas will be giving away free tickets to sit down and watch the Matildas play.

Hon Darren West: *Barbie* isn't going to cut it tonight.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: *Barbie* and *Oppenheimer* will be outdone by the Matildas, which is fantastic.

I also want to talk about Kalgoorlie, and how proud I am that Kalgoorlie punches well above its weight, particularly in women's sport. One of the great teams in Kalgoorlie is the women's AFL league. The women who play are tough. The teams absolutely give it their all every weekend. I was down at the Railways Football Club cooking pancakes for charity a couple of weeks ago. The women's game was being played right in front of us. It was really good to see the women's team competing with a crowd because the game was on at the same time as the under-18s and the A-grade team were about to play. It was really good to see them incorporated. Kalgoorlie has been a real fast mover in that space.

The women's teams—Kalgoorlie City Football Club, Mines Rovers Football Club, Boulder City Football Club and Railways Football Club—are very competitive. The game that was being played in front of us went down to the last minute, and was won by three points, which was very impressive. Members would not see me out there because a lot of crutches and ice packs were being used after the game. The quality of the football was spectacular and well worth watching. I want to thank the Goldfields Football League for how it has incorporated the women's game into where the men's game is played. The advantage of the men's game is that it was established with the infrastructure that other members have spoken about that the women's game does not quite have yet. It is important to tie it all together because at the end of the day, we are passionate about watching football, and everyone should be given the same opportunity in that space.

I want to turn to some sporting facilities and clubs that the local member, Ali Kent, has done a spectacular job on delivering for local sporting clubs in the goldfields region. She is very passionate, not just about the Matildas—I have to say that she has been very passionate about the Matildas—but also about the Dockers and local sporting clubs, ensuring that they get the little things they need so they can cater to the wider community. Some of the projects that Ali Kent, the member for Kalgoorlie, has delivered since becoming elected in 2021, which I am very proud to see, include an upgrade to the Kalgoorlie Bowling Club, worth over \$25 000. South Kalgoorlie Primary School received a nature playground. The Kambalda United Junior Soccer Club got over \$2 500 worth of equipment. The Norseman Swimming Club received funding for training equipment. The Salvation Army's Youth Shed got artificial turf and its basketball court concreted. I think it is fantastic to have basketball courts scattered around the electorate. The Boulder City Football Club got a commercial oven to allow parents and volunteers to produce food and fundraise. The Gold Rush Cheer mob got some equipment. They are very proactive out in the Goldfields region; we very often see them at events. We have seen over \$100 000 go towards basketball court upgrades in Leonora, a small town that really needs that sort of stuff. Leonora Bowls Club had a shed put onto its area. The Laverton Dirt Kart Association has a dirt go-kart track. It is awesome to think we could see people travelling out to Leonora to race go-karts around the racing track out there.

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Other funding recipients include the Kambalda nature playground at the Harry Steinhauser Reserve, the Goldfields Tee Ball Association received over \$2 000 worth of equipment. There is the Nullarbor Links upgrade. The Nullarbor Links is an 18-hole golf course that stretches right across the Nullarbor. Players play the whole way across, ending up at Kalgoorlie Gold Course. There was some really good participation with that. I would like to give a big shout-out to the Eastern Goldfields BMX Club. Ali Kent worked very closely with the BMX club to ensure we could get an upgrade to its track. The BMX club has both boys and girls participating. It is very good for young kids. I have noticed that families get involved. The club has more than 20 parents running the organisation and holds state title events once a year during the WA Day long weekend. I want to give a shout-out to all of the volunteers at that BMX club who have worked tirelessly, advocating to Ali Kent and me to get upgrades to that track, which is now done. The club is steered by some very good leadership, so I want to give a shout-out to president Eddie and vice-president Nicole. They did a fantastic job lobbying Ali and me for as many things as they possibly could get for their club. The club has also started come-and-try days for women so that the women can get their confidence up without being in a big pack of men who have been doing BMX since they were kids. The club has found that mums are giving it a fair go. I have to say that mums are pretty much the lifeblood of a lot of sporting clubs in regional WA, and probably across WA. In BMX, they are the ones behind it, pushing it as hard as they can so their kids get the opportunity to participate in BMX the same way someone would in Perth. I give a big shout-out to them and a big shout-out to Ali Kent, who I know donates regularly for Indigenous rounds for football clubs, for jerseys and for catering events. Ali Kent does a fantastic job supporting the local sporting clubs in the Goldfields and I believe she will continue to do so. I know that she will be absolutely ecstatic tonight watching the Matildas, just like I hope the rest of Australia will be. This is a great motion by Hon Steve Pratt. I thank him for bringing it forward, and, just like everybody else—go Tillies!

HON SHELLEY PAYNE (Agricultural) [2.33 pm]: It gives me great pleasure today to talk on this motion. I thank Hon Steve Pratt for bringing it forward so we can acknowledge the importance of female participation in sport and also recognise the Cook government's investment in sporting facilities. More recently there has been investment in facilities to assist and encourage women to participate in sport. A couple of members have talked about the investments we have made in the lead-up to the World Cup. There was \$29.7 million for the State Football Centre and \$35 million to revitalise the Perth Rectangular Stadium. This is a really great investment for our state in order to be able to host these events. I am really looking forward to tonight's game. Many members have talked about that.

I would like to talk about a few people in the regions who are doing great things. I have wanted to talk about this girl for a while; her name is Dakota Watts. She is probably around 16 years old. She is from Pumphreys Bridge. If you go down the Albany Highway and turn off at Wandering—it is a beautiful drive through there—just to the east is a little place called Pumphreys Bridge. It is just north of the new Dryandra Woodland National Park that we announced last year, where visitors can go and see numbats, woylies, echidnas and other animals that you cannot usually see anywhere else. Dakota took up steer riding. Her goal was to become the first woman to win a title for steer riding. Sometimes we see women barrel racing or in rope competitions, but she decided she wanted to do steer riding. Last year she became the first woman ever to win a national title—that was for under-14s steer riding. She has a goal that once she becomes an adult she wants to go to national competitions. There have not been any women qualify for them yet. I wish her lots of luck. I guess a lot of these kids who grow up regionally, grow up pretty tough and can do these kinds of things. They have the opportunity to do things that maybe people in the city do not.

I found out about Dakota at the Western Australian College of Agriculture in Narrogin where she attends school. When I went there last year, I found out about what she is doing. I note that one-third of students at Narrogin agricultural school are now women, and that is increasing. It is a great school. It is possible to agist a horse there; spread the word for some of these city kids who might want to come to a really great ag school and experience a bit of rural life.

This weekend is the Coolgardie Rodeo, which Hon Kyle McGinn might know about. Interestingly, my daughter told me the other week, "I'm going to Coolgardie for the weekend." I said okay, and then later she said, "I'm going to the Coolgardie rodeo." She has her swag ready and she is going with a bunch of 20-year-olds from the city. I thought, "Great for you guys, getting out into the country." I told her to look out for Dakota.

There are other young women doing great things in sport in the great southern, particularly Aboriginal women. We know Aboriginal people are very talented with their sport, and it is great to see our government is doing a lot to support that. An honourable member spoke about the Aboriginal All Stars program run by Netball WA. It gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls exposure to the netball pathway and an understanding of the practice involved to progress to professional sport.

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I would like to mention Caroline Minter, a proud Goreng woman from Gnowangerup. She was first selected for the under-14s All Stars program to go to Perth. I do not know whether members have heard about Gnowangerup and the great southern and the Horsepower Highway. It is a fantastic scenic drive. If members ever go to Albany and do the scenic drive from Gnowangerup through the Stirling Range, they have old, renovated tractors. Just south of Gnowangerup there are old water tanks that have been painted pink with portraits of women. Caroline is up there with her netball shirt. We went there to open the Bloom Festival with Hon Alannah MacTiernan in 2021 and checked it out.

Aboriginal people from across the regions are very talented, but there are a lot of challenges with some of these young girls, and the young boys as well, participating in sport. For example, Gnowangerup and Tambellup have high Aboriginal populations, with lots of kids who are really great at sport. Tambellup Shire is now working with the Tambellup Aboriginal Corporation to get a bus, because a lot of the girls travel to Katanning for netball. Many of the boys travel to Mt Barker for football. It is difficult for parents to transport their kids to allow them to participate in sport. Sport is important for people's mental health and making them feel good about themselves.

I will mention Katanning's Lara Rodney who has just been selected to play in the under-12s netball team at the upcoming national championships being held in Perth in September. Kira Phillips is an Aboriginal girl from Gnowangerup who has had a great football career. She was first drafted by the Fremantle Dockers and played for Peel over eight years in the WA Football League.

I also want to mention BMX racing; I am glad that Hon Kyle McGinn referred to BMX racing. It is a great sport. It is a sport that my kids have been involved in. Girls have always participated in that sport and have been treated equally. The facility in Kalgoorlie is fantastic; I am glad that Hon Kyle McGinn was able to get some money for that. It hosted the world BMX championships. Some great money has gone into other BMX facilities in Wanneroo and Bunbury. We all know of Lauren Reynolds from Bunbury, a BMX racer and two-time Olympian. That is a great outcome for WA.

Hon Peter Collier mentioned the regional athletes support program. I commend the government because between 2021–2023, it invested more than \$3 million in the regional athletes support program, which has helped regional athletes continue their development while they continue to live at home in the regions. The Great Southern Sports Talent Association in Albany, which is transitioning to the Great Southern Academy of Sport, has done a great job in not only Albany, but also the small towns of Katanning, Tambellup and Gnowangerup in the great southern to help students and young kids develop their sporting talent while they live in the regions. Most recently, the government gave \$30 000 to the regional academy of sport in Albany to help with the development of the netball pathway for young people in communities across the great southern.

Last month, Esperance hosted the great southern netball championships, which comprised 33 regional teams from Albany, Denmark, Narrogin, Katanning and other towns across the great southern. It was great because Esperance finally got an opportunity to showcase its new indoor sports stadium, which, thanks to our government, was built with the assistance of money from royalties for regions. The stadium is a great outcome. I remember when my daughter Emily started the netball program; the kids were using the same courts that their parents used when they were younger. For more than 40 years, there has been no funding for women's sport, whereas four football fields down there are maintained by the local government. A huge amount of money goes into maintaining those grass fields, but we could not get upgraded netball courts for the kids of the parents who had used the courts years before. It was a great outcome. Netball girls in Esperance are using this new sports stadium, which is a great outcome.

Hon Sandra Carr acknowledged all the people who are involved in organising sport for young girls. I want to acknowledge all those people like Melissa Rowe in Esperance who help to make sure that young girls in the regions get the same opportunities as people in the city.

Last week, the West Coast Fever Primary School Cup was held in Katanning. The competition involved 400 students from 20 different schools. The great thing about this netball cup is that both boys and girls played. Netball is becoming increasingly popular with boys, which is why so many schools took part in the competition. This was the biggest carnival in 10 years, with both boys and girls playing. It is great that boys can grow up knowing that it is okay to play netball. They do not have to play the stereotypical male sport. We have talked a lot today about women wanting to participate in sport, but it is great that males can participate in netball without feeling that they should not. Last week's primary school cup competition was great, with boys and girls playing netball and with boys knowing that it is okay to play netball.

I want to mention the Olympic Unleashed program. Hon Samantha Rowe is one of the conveners of the Parliamentary Friends of the Olympics. Earlier this week, two female Olympic athletes, Sally Hunt and Georgia Wilson, toured the wheatbelt, including Narrogin. It is great that these two women role models are inspiring young female athletes. Usually we see male football players going to the regions to talk about sport so it was fantastic that these female

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Olympians talked to our kids in the regions. That program is being delivered across more than 2 000 schools; indeed, more than 300 000 kids have had connection with the Olympic Unleashed program.

I turn to the state government’s community sporting and recreation facilities fund. It is such a fantastic program for improving sporting infrastructure across the regions. As we came out of COVID, one of our recovery projects was putting \$12 million into fast-tracking the CSRFF grants. One of the things we did was prioritise projects involving facilities for women—those that would make women feel more comfortable to participate in a sport—such as change room upgrades, lockable showers and more toilet cubicles in place of urinals. I note also our announcement in April to boost the CSRFF program with an additional \$7.5 million a year over the next two years and increasing the amount of the maximum grants, noting there has been quite a big increase in the cost of construction and things like that. We are doing our bit to streamline the application process and, most importantly, the amount we quarantined for projects that encourage female participation. In 2020–21, half a million dollars was quarantined; in 2022, the amount quarantined for projects that encourage female participation increased to \$1 million. Since 2018, the government has invested nearly \$30 million in projects to support women’s participation.

If members drive down Albany Highway to Albany, they will go through Kojonup. With the help of a CSRFF grant of \$309 000, Kojonup now has great netball facilities, with new courts and covered, all-weather courts. Regional competitions can now be hosted there, which is really good. I am currently working to help the Esperance Ports Football Club because it has had a massive increase in the number of girls who want to play football. It has no toilet facilities for females so I am helping it get its plans together to access some funding. CSRFF is a great program that helps to improve facilities across the regions.

Getting back to tonight, good luck to the Matildas! I note that this FIFA Women’s World Cup has broken attendance records; it has far exceeded expectations with ticket sales. It has been great for WA to be part of hosting the biggest female sporting event in the world. We can never forget that half of our population is women. There is so much potential for women’s sport these days. Interestingly, the Matildas victory over Canada was the most watched program on the Seven Network in 2023, with a viewing audience of more than 5.3 million people. I bet that record is broken tonight.

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [2.47 pm]: As a woman who used to play sport—I am glad that all members are sitting down—I am honoured to speak on this wonderful motion moved by my colleague Hon Stephen Pratt. It is amazing to be talking about it. As a young person a long time ago, I played football. I will say that again so that Hon Kyle McGinn knows that it is called “football”. Where I come from it is called “fitbaa”.

Hon Darren West: Did you have daylight saving?

Hon LORNA HARPER: Yes, we did have daylight saving.

Hon Wilson Tucker interjected.

Hon LORNA HARPER: I understand Hon Wilson Tucker’s comments about the sun. However, as a woman, I like to stay in the shade because I do not want to get wrinkles, and I like ceilings in changing rooms because it gets a bit cold. It was an amusing point.

As a young person in Scotland, I played football, badminton and hockey. We played hockey in the winter, in the snow, wearing knicker shorts, and we used a bright orange ball. That will tell members why I am not a big sports person now. I also played netball; my position was shooter. I used to take shots at goal.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon LORNA HARPER: Really! I was a shooter up until I stopped growing and everybody else kept growing. I then played the position of centre. I stopped playing when I was playing against Irvine Royal Academy, which we nicknamed IRA. The other centre threw the ball straight at my face and split my lip and I thought, “That’s it. I am too vain for this”, and I stopped playing. We were encouraged as young women to play sport.

Earlier this year, I was very excited when the Matildas played Scotland. Members knew I had to get up and say it. I am so excited for tonight and I was cheering and hiding behind my hands on Saturday, but when Scotland and the Matildas played and Scotland won that game, I was so excited. I thought, “Oh, Scotland is coming to Australia for the World Cup. I’ll get tickets.” Then I realised that Scotland was not in the World Cup and I was devastated. But I am so glad that tonight I will be supporting the Matildas.

What I thought I should talk about right now is the connections of members in the chamber to women in sport. Members in the chamber have strong connections to professional sportspeople. We cannot forget the wonderful Hon Ayor Makur Chuot who is away on urgent parliamentary business and her sister—apologies for the pronunciation—Akec, who plays for Hawthorn in the women’s Australian Football League. She comes originally

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from the wonderful mighty Swan Districts, a beautiful club in the great suburb of Bassendean. She has moved to Melbourne and she plays professional sport. That is just one. How about Hon Jackie Jarvis's daughter Ashlee, who plays hockey? We have really good connections in this chamber to women playing sport. It is because some of the things that the Cook government is doing that will allow future women like young Phoebe and young Immy, to go forward and to play sport.

I stood today to say that tonight will be great; I am so excited, and it is a shame Scotland could not be there because it could have got there. I hope Australia absolutely hounds the English tonight. Again, I commend Hon Stephen Pratt for moving this motion.

HON DR BRIAN WALKER (East Metropolitan) [2.52 pm]: I will spend a few minutes speaking on the motion from a medical perspective. I have noticed with great interest the wonderful motion from my colleague Hon Stephen Pratt and I could not commend it more. I think everyone in the house shares that point of view, not just because Australia will be playing a wonderful game here against our archenemies, if you like, but also because it demonstrates the way for us as a people. We need sport at all levels for all people and we ought to be managing that better.

We could list the advantages of whichever government is in power and how much money has been given, but it really depends on the mindset of the people. I refer back to my childhood in Perth in the 1960s, when there was a very much stronger sporting tradition because we were outside all the time. We did not have our handheld toys or things that kept us at a computer or in a darkened room playing games. We were outside and engaging with our friends. In my sphere, I was doing surf-lifesaving and swimming a mile out into the ocean. I really ought to trial for the Rottnest Channel Swim, but I am a bit too lazy for that now. We did racing and small marathons to raise funds. Everyone was out playing in the sunshine. We were not that frightened of the sun so, therefore, we were doing more things outside, such as tennis and golf.

As a medical practitioner, I am very used to the idea of recommending nature and good food, of course, and having good mental health and engaging in good exercise, because as human beings we are designed to be exercising and moving. If we are not tilling the land with our hands, we should certainly be out having a good game of whatever we happen to want to play. We need this. I look at the benefits here for parents as they stand on the sidelines and cheer on their children developing themselves and learning not only the skills of the game but how to treat one another, how to treat victory, and how to treat defeat as a mental process for how we manage life.

We can also look at a state level at how we support those who are gifted at sport to receive the greatest rewards. One memory of mine is seeing a long time ago at the Munich Olympic Games the wonderful Olga Korbut receiving her score of 10 in gymnastics and the way she threw her body through the air doing what we thought was the impossible at the time. We have admiration for her skills, but then we look at how she is now. She is wracked with arthritis having damaged her joints and having been abused by the trainers to force her body beyond the limits of what a human could endure. We need to balance our pride in the nation with our care as custodians of our people. We are doing what needs to be done not only for pleasure for our country but also our wellness, and not driving this too far. Sport not only is useful for personal development but also serves as a way of bringing people together.

That may be not be the case for Eagles and Dockers fans who fight over who is the better team. The bottom line is that they are both good teams—maybe in other years.

Hon Stephen Dawson: But the Dockers are better.

Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER: We could probably discuss that over a beer or two, I think.

But I am also thinking of those who go into sports who are less well known but also bring people together. Especially in light of the recent comment from my good friend the Deputy Leader of the House, I look at the work in Ireland and Scotland to bring together and combine the hurling and shinty teams. They are very similar sports. They have a blast at the time. They are just having a good time together. It is about two countries coming together and sharing a whisky or a beer after the game in the spirit of good fun, but all the while caring for a broken wrist or a banged head. One of the benefits of sport is that it brings people together not only within the nation but between nations. It should be a proxy for our discomfort with others. The need for wars with other peoples is perhaps something we could forget because sport could bring us together and let us share our common humanity.

We are not looking just at the beauty of the Matildas tonight, and may they win. I am hoping with all my heart that they do play at least a wonderful game, as I know they can, and if they win, so much the better. Of course, they are going to win, but should they not win, we shall still be proud of them for having done themselves and ourselves proud. I look at our gifts with sport. We ought to be blessed with supporting sport at every stage for every person.

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Whether it is team sports or individual sports, we are given the opportunity for developing ourselves physically, mentally and even spiritually, and thereby we may become a better society.

HON PETER FOSTER (Mining and Pastoral) [2.57 pm]: I did not intend to jump up and make a contribution but I will just make a short contribution on this investing in sport motion. I was particularly interested in the comments of Hon Samantha Rowe, who quoted Patricia Karvelas's article about women's participation in sport. It triggered a few memories in me, because last year for International Women's Day I spent some time with Ashburton Thunder, which is a women's football team based in Tom Price. The purpose of the catch-up was to understand the barriers that women in that team faced to participate each week.

Ashburton Thunder is a small team of about 20 women. Unfortunately, there are four strong men's teams so they often do not get the most favourable draw. They often had to play their games at four o'clock in the afternoon, whereas the men's games were at seven o'clock at night. This posed a problem for those women, because they were caring for their children. Often the team, unfortunately, had to forfeit a lot of games because the mothers in the team could not access babysitting or child care and were unable to play. It was ironic because the men who played in the evening were always able to play. They would never forfeit because the children were always being cared for. An important thing that we need to point out in this debate is that a lot of women do not participate in sport because their sport is not prioritised. I acknowledge that was definitely my takeaway when I caught up with the Ashburton Thunder women's team in Tom Price. The team often had to forfeit games because they could not access childcare arrangements.

Not all women were in that situation. For some, their husbands came home early from work to accommodate them playing sport. For other women, their neighbours pitched in to help care for the kids as well. The women said that their number one barrier to participating was childcare arrangements.

I know that time is running out, but I wanted to also quickly talk about the pleasure I had to attend the Tom Price Netball Association presentation evening last Saturday night. There was one male—me—and 109 female netballers in the room. It was quite a unique experience. It was a fancy dress evening, so each of the teams got to come in fancy dress. I attach myself to a team called the Rookies. They went as Barbie and I went as Ken. If members are friends with me on Facebook, they will see a photo of that. It was a really great evening to celebrate netball. In Tom Price netball is quite popular.

I will just take another minute or so. It was a fantastic evening. It is really great to see that netball is so popular in Tom Price. We did the numbers, and we reckon that easily five per cent of the population of Tom Price play netball. I know it is only a small town, but five per cent is quite a large number. It was really great to see all the women at the event celebrating their games over the year.

I want to acknowledge the Shire of Ashburton and Rio Tinto. Earlier this year, they upgraded the courts in Tom Price. Tom Price is quite hot. Believe it or not, our courts were not covered. The shire, in partnership with Rio Tinto, embarked on a project to upgrade the netball and basketball courts—they are multipurpose courts. The courts now actually have a cover over the top, which is fantastic because now in the summer, the sun is out of people's eyes. They also have an electronic scoreboard now, which is really great. Previously, they had other systems. It is great that the courts have been upgraded so that both men, women and our children in Tom Price can participate.

That is my short contribution. I want to commend Hon Stephen Pratt for moving this motion. I think we should do absolutely everything that we can to encourage participation in sport, particularly for our women.

HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan) [3.02 pm]: If I can, I will just take one moment. First of all, how can we not admire women's sport in Australia at the moment with the Opals, the Australian women's cricket team, the Diamonds and now, of course, the Matildas? I think Hon Kyle McGinn indicated that he had a preference for watching women's sport. I share that. By far, I think they are leading the guys in the way they play their sport in every way.

The other thing that I wanted to say is that I am wearing a jacket that is given to volunteers for the FIFA grounds. It was given to me by a young deaf lady who offered her services to some of the games in Perth. She needed some assistance, which I gave her, so she gave me this jacket. I want to commend all the volunteers who assisted. I know we have spoken about the people who organised the games and of course the Matildas. I wish them all the luck in the world. In Australia, most sport relies heavily on volunteers and I just wanted to give them a shout-out.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.04 pm]: In the time that is available, I would like to commend the member for the motion. It is one that we all agree with. It has been a fantastic month for Australian sport, particularly Australian women's sport. I wanted to take this opportunity while there was some time left to reiterate the comments of Hon Martin Pritchard, who is wearing a particularly loud jacket today—I am told it is FIFA approved. By golly, it can be seen from a long way away, member!

Extract from *Hansard*

[COUNCIL — Wednesday, 16 August 2023]

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There have been some big winners from what has happened. The state government has done a tremendous job and I acknowledge the words in the motion moved by Hon Stephen Pratt. It has been a great week for women's football, or soccer—whatever people like to call it. However, I think it really has the greatest impact when it trickles down to the grassroots. There is not a young girl in Perth at the moment who would not want to be kicking a soccer ball around like Sam Kerr. I think that enthralls and inspires the next generation of players. In 20 years' time, this will have its greatest effect—whether that be in netball, women's Australian rules, rugby, basketball, swimming or whatever it might be. It is tremendous to see the Matildas inspiring young women and getting them involved in sport—the benefits of which have been discussed today.

On that point, to have children and young people playing sport there needs to be volunteers—thousands of volunteers. People across the state put up their hand every weekend to be engaged in women's or kids' sport. They get up early and cut the oranges. There are referees, people who prepare ovals and officials. Most of them do it out of their own time. Again, I want to reiterate Hon Martin Pritchard's point and say that this is going to create a lot of work for volunteers who will willingly and lovingly do it, because for someone who is involved in children's sport, there is no greater thrill than seeing them succeed, progress and grow. Well done to all the volunteers for helping to make our kids' sport and community sport happen.

Question put and passed.