

**BRIAN GRIFFIN — TRIBUTE**

*Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation*

**MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston — Minister for Sport and Recreation)** [12.17 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the passing of Mr Brian Griffin last Wednesday, 17 June 2020, and to pay my condolences to his family, including his daughter, Nadine, and his son, Scot, and his five grandchildren.

Brian was an esteemed member of the Sport Australia Hall of Fame, having played 30 years of senior lacrosse at the international, national and state level. Brian first represented Australia in 1962, and went on to represent Western Australia and Australia a record number of times, playing in more than 500 matches and scoring over 3 000 goals in his career. Making his A-grade debut for Nedlands–Subiaco in 1957, at just 16 years old, Brian became the youngest player to compete in a senior club team. When playing for the Western Australian under-21 side at just 17 years old, he was crowned the team's leading goal scorer, a title he held onto in local teams for the next 22 years straight. Brian later led Nedlands–Subiaco to its first ever A-grade premiership. Recognised as one of the greatest to have ever played, his style of play changed the game of lacrosse in Australia, and in fact around the world, as he was both the first player in the game to throw and catch with both hands and the developer of a back-hand shot that changed the way the game was played.

In 1967, Brian captained the Australian team at the Toronto World Championships, at which he was named the most valuable player in the entire tournament. Even the Americans could not get enough of Brian's skill, labelling him the best player in the world and inducting him into their United States Lacrosse Hall of Fame in 1972. Later in his career, in 1982, Brian introduced a modified version of the game called softcrosse, which was adopted through the Aussie Sports program and introduced into the sporting curriculum in schools around Australia.

Brian truly changed the sport of lacrosse, as a player, administrator, mentor and coach, and has left an enduring legacy through his revolutionary style of play. He is a legendary Western Australian athlete who will be sadly missed.