

COMMUNITY SPORT

Motion

HON STEPHEN PRATT (South Metropolitan) [11.24 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house —

- (a) recognises the important role that sport plays in the Western Australian community; and
- (b) notes the McGowan government's strong commitment to community sport through its investment in infrastructure projects and initiatives such as KidSport to encourage involvement in sport across Western Australia.

I am very glad to be able to take the opportunity to speak about an area in which the government has a strong record after what we witnessed this morning in more of a negative light.

I would like to start by inviting members to cast their minds back and think about some of the sports they may have played when they were kids. If they are lucky and the body is willing, they might still play some of those sports. Personally, that is not the case for me! When I played sport, I played Australian Rules football. My schedule revolved around training multiple nights during the week and then playing games that could sometimes go across both days of the weekend, not to mention the social aspects of hanging around at the local footy club long into the night, whether we won or lost. Now as parents and with most of our playing days behind us, we spend our time driving our own kids to and from training and volunteering at games over the weekend, whether that involves scoring, handing out pieces of orange or working behind the barbeque on the weekend. Rain, hail or shine, we are all there to support our kids. Why do we do this? We make this commitment to our kids, as our parents did before us, because we know the importance of community sport. We not only know the physical benefits, but also the mental and social benefits, particularly in an era when kids are more inclined to spend their time sitting inside with devices. This is why the government wants to have local sporting grounds, clubs and facilities to help foster the talents of our kids, who have the passion to play and be involved in community sport.

Today I would like to talk about the importance of community sport and how the McGowan government and the hardworking Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hon David Templeman, have provided infrastructure and programs to encourage physical activity in the South Metropolitan Region and across Western Australia. Sport is an important part of life in Australia, in particular, and in our own great state. It improves our physical and mental health, benefits the economy and helps to strengthen our state and national pride. Sport and recreation play a huge role in the physical and mental health of our communities and should be a part of every person's life regardless of where they live.

To get people more involved, we need to make sure we have the right facilities in place and, where needed, these facilities should be useable both day and night. The community sporting and recreation facilities fund is a valuable ongoing infrastructure program that every year helps local governments and sporting clubs improve their facilities. This in turn enables them to welcome new members and users, expand their club's membership and give existing members the chance to use modern facilities. The McGowan government has committed over \$265 million to community sport and recreation facilities through election commitments and the WA recovery plan. During the 2017 election, 15 large commitments were made, ranging from \$100 000 to almost \$7 million, totalling \$32.4 million. In 2020, as part of the WA government's response to COVID-19, 14 projects totalling \$115 million were supported through the WA recovery plan.

In addition, the McGowan government continues to provide funding through the CSRFF, the Club Night Lights program and the KidSport program. Funding for community sporting infrastructure, such as soccer fields, change room facilities, accessibility upgrades and storage is provided by the state government through this program. It is obviously a hotly contested program. Over the years there have been calls for that amount of funding to increase. I was very glad to hear the minister's announcement recently that this funding will increase. It will now have an uplift in funding, increasing to \$20 million for the 2023–24 and 2024–25 financial years, up from \$12.5 million a year. Combined with the Club Night Lights program, there will be \$22.5 million in total funding available per annum through these funds.

Investing in quality infrastructure to support the growth in community sport is vital to the economy. It contributes to the health and wellbeing of all Western Australians. One of the government's most important initiatives, which I touched on in the motion's wording, is the KidSport program. This program provides financial assistance to families to help cover the cost of the children's sport and recreation fees. It is a fantastic initiative that ensures every child in Western Australia has the opportunity to participate in sport regardless of their financial circumstances. Sport is about more than just physical activity. It is about building resilience, developing teamwork and leadership skills, and providing mental health and wellbeing. It is also about fostering a sense of pride and belonging in our communities and promoting healthy lifestyles and social inclusion.

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As a community, we should be proud of the role that sport plays in our lives and grateful for the support that the McGowan government has provided to help us grow and thrive. By continuing to invest in community sport we can ensure that WA remains a great place to live, work and play. Under the current government we have seen a renewed focus on community sport, with a number of key infrastructure projects being delivered to support local sporting clubs and associations. These projects are helping to create inclusive and welcoming spaces, and people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can come together to enjoy the benefits of sport.

I would like to highlight some of the great projects that have been delivered in the South Metropolitan Region, and a lot of these have come about due to the hard work of the local members in those areas. One such facility that has recently opened is the Baldivis Sports Complex. Reece Whitby is very proud of this project. I encourage anyone who has not seen it to check it out. It is in its infancy, as it has just been opened, and further stages will come online as the years go on. It was opened in March by the member for Baldivis, Reece Whitby, the Premier and the Mayor of the City of Rockingham, Deb Hamblin. Mayor Hamblin is just full of energy and enthusiasm. You have a really positive feeling as you walk away after meeting her. She is doing a great job as the Mayor of Rockingham. This complex is home to the White Knights Baldivis Cricket Club and the Baldivis Brumbies football club. This development also has a range of indoor sporting facilities, which include basketball, netball, volleyball and indoor soccer. Baldivians should be pretty happy with the facilities they are receiving in their locality.

Another election commitment that I think is underway will be transformational for the East Fremantle Football Club. Through the strong advocacy of Lisa O'Malley, the member for Bickton, there is a \$23.6 million allocation for the redevelopment of "Shark Park". Although these projects can be disruptive while they progress, the football club is certainly happy. I went to the bowls club during the election campaign when this announcement was made, and if members had seen it, they would have wanted the club to get a commitment pretty quickly because it was certainly due for one. Although the greens at all bowls clubs are always in immaculate condition, the club's function rooms definitely needed an upgrade. This will be transformational for the area. It will obviously have the modern requirements that people want to see in these things, like a cafe, health club and community facilities. I look forward to seeing that come together over the coming months and years.

Kim Giddens, the member for Bateman, obviously has a keen interest in sport, like me, because she is already delivering, even though she has been the member there for only a short while. One of the projects I have seen opened in that short time is the Shirley Strickland Reserve community and sporting facility, which is fantastic. If members want an example to follow from an area like that, that is a pretty amazing place for community sport.

Also, Kim Giddens was able to provide over \$100 000 to have some bitumen netball courts attached to Brentwood Primary School re-paved, and they look just amazing. The photos show how well that is being used. I went there for the primary school graduation last year and it was just packed. That is a great community facility that Kim Giddens has delivered.

I have been lucky enough to open two sporting facilities in Kwinana and Warnbro over the past couple of years representing Minister Templeman. One such facility was the Frankland Park Sporting and Community Facility, where I joined the Mayor of the City of Cockburn, Logan Hallett, who is a good friend of mine. Together we opened the facility there. That is home to the Hammond Park Junior Football Club and the Braves Baseball Club. The club was certainly happy to move there from where it was previously because it had outgrown its facilities. That just shows how well the club is performing, and it should be very proud of how quickly it has grown. Now it has a great new home to play games at. It has a new kitchen and it puts on dinners that are pretty well attended.

The other facility I was lucky enough to open is in Warnbro, in Paul Papalia's electorate—the Koorana Reserve sporting facility. I think one of the Port Kennedy soccer clubs will play there. That is another really lucky community to have a great sporting facility delivered by this government. Again, I was lucky enough to open that with Mayor Hamblin and the deputy mayor.

They are just a couple of examples of facilities. I was speaking to Dr Jags Krishnan, the member for Riverton, before coming here this morning, and he said to mention the upgrades at John Connell Reserve and that the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club was very happy with what we have delivered there. Yaz Mubarakai, the member for Jandakot, and Dr Jags have delivered. Labor members in the South Metropolitan Region are really delivering for their communities, so we have a lot to be proud of.

I want to touch on the SportWest report, *Sport in Western Australia: Social return on investment*, which found that organised sport in Western Australia generates significant economic and employment benefits, benefits to physical and mental health, and broader social benefits. According to the report, sport returns \$4.85 billion in economic and employment outcomes, \$3.2 billion in physical and mental health benefits and \$2.39 billion in personal wellbeing and broader social benefits per annum. That is a little snapshot of how important local community sport is in the WA community and another reason why we should speak in a positive way about the government's investment in

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this space. Investing in sport not only delivers health and social benefits but also fosters more than \$7 of economic and social benefit for every dollar of investment. Therefore, the Western Australian government's commitment to funding community sport and recreation facilities is not only a vital investment in the health and wellbeing of Western Australians but also a smart economic decision that benefits the state as a whole.

In conclusion, investing in community sport and recreation is not only good for our physical and mental health but also has significant economic and social benefits. I look forward to seeing in today's budget what further investment will be coming. The government of Western Australia understands the importance of community sport and is committed to providing the necessary infrastructure and programs to encourage physical activity across Western Australia. By continuing to invest in quality facilities and programs, we can ensure that community sport and recreation remain a vital part of our way of life, both now and in the future.

I take great pleasure speaking on this topic in the chamber. In my inaugural speech I earmarked sport as an area in which I have a keen interest, and I know many of my colleagues share the same view, so I look forward to hearing some contributions today about some local facilities in some of my colleagues' areas. I look forward to seeing the government delivering even more facilities in this area.

HON KLARA ANDRIC (South Metropolitan) [11.40 am]: I begin by thanking the member for moving today's motion. Sport is a very important part of our society.

Hon Stephen Pratt: I should have acknowledged my wife in the chamber as well. I did not realise she was there!

Hon KLARA ANDRIC: How about I do that, honourable member! I acknowledge the honourable member's wife, Elena, in the chamber today. It is lovely to have you here.

As a young child, I, too, believe it or not, was quite active in sport. As with Hon Stephen Pratt, I am probably not as active as I once was. Certainly my body is not as willing as it used to be. Like Stephen Pratt, as I approached my 40s, sport became less of a thing. These days, if members see me running, I suggest they all run too, because I will not be running under any circumstances other than a threat!

As we all know, sport is one of the oldest pastimes in history. I have very briefly mentioned my previous sports activities as a child. A fun fact is that when I participated in athletics, I held the record for the 100-metre sprint in Western Australia. I was quite fast, in fact. That was something I loved doing as a child. I really struggled running past 400 metres or 800 metres, but I found running 100 metres fast and easy, and for a time I held a record in Western Australia for my age group. Another fun fact is that in 1993, when I was in year 7, I won the sports champion girl, primary school, at Our Lady of Lourdes in Nollamara, so sport was a big part of my life, as it is for so many members of our community. Whether it is football, basketball, tennis, surfing or volleyball, people all across the world partake in countless sporting options on a daily basis.

Sport plays an integral part in our lives, particularly during recreational downtime. Through sport, community members come together with a focus on health, positive competition and camaraderie. Sport connects people of all cultures and backgrounds to meet on an even playing field for friendly competition, which is why in Western Australia, where there is immense diversity, participating in sport should not be met with adversity. The McGowan government recognises the importance of sport and recreation, and this has resulted in extensive funding for initiatives and infrastructure to help engage the Western Australian community in those very healthy activities.

The youth of Western Australia represent the future of all facets of our great state, and this includes the future of sport. The participation of our youth in sport also creates a more positive and enjoyable school life for them. It certainly did for me. Other impacts include improvements to their physical and mental wellbeing, as Hon Stephen Pratt mentioned earlier, but it is not limited to that. It also improves self-esteem, social networking and the notion of community. However, not all children have an equal opportunity to take part in sport, due to financial barriers in accessing sporting clubs, which is why the McGowan government has addressed this with the hugely popular KidSport program. The KidSport program was first launched in 2011 and enables Western Australian families to receive a \$150 voucher that can be used at any KidSport-supported club. The voucher eases the financial strain of paying club fees and gets our children back onto the playing field. Since the program's launch back in 2011, KidSport has supported over 112 000 children not only here in the metropolitan area, but also in regional areas. That equates to \$42 million spent on our youth by the McGowan government through KidSport, and thousands of Western Australian children getting the opportunities that they rightfully deserve. With the program still alive and well, I am confident that it will continue to deliver the financial assistance aimed at keeping our youth not only engaged, but also active.

It is great to see our youth given opportunities. However, there remain other groups in our community who have experienced disadvantages in participating in sports—women being one of them—and had issues with sporting facilities not being accessible. Often, the change rooms at sporting precincts and clubhouses, certainly in some cases, are not equipped for women. However, the McGowan government recognised that women in sport face this

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issue and has delivered real solutions. One of the largest solutions is the female-friendly facilities initiative. That initiative was introduced in 2018 and provides funding for the construction of, and upgrades to, female-friendly change rooms, toilets and various other amenities at sporting and community facilities right across Western Australia. In December 2020, the initiative saw more than \$3 million allocated to the community sporting recreation facilities fund—the CSRFF—for infrastructure projects that included new and upgraded change rooms that are now suitable for women to use. I am sure that in the past, certainly before these initiatives, members have come across stories of women having to change in really awkward places such as car parks, behind fences and all sorts of things. Frankly, it was unacceptable and it is great to see initiatives like this put in place to make sure that women feel more safe and included in sport. This was, in fact, a record investment into women's sport, and the McGowan government and I are extremely proud of that. These grants programs enable not-for-profit sport and recreation groups or various community groups and local governments to develop the infrastructure to continue to increase women's participation in sport and recreation. I am pleased to see that the program prioritises projects that use a portion of the funding received to create environments where women can feel comfortable and therefore participate more regularly.

In the CSRFF's 2022–23 funding round, a total of \$12.5 million was invested by the McGowan government to give applicants a chance to improve our state's sport and recreation centres, with \$1 million of that \$12.5 million allocated to the improvement of female facilities alone. The priority requirements to receive a portion of the \$1 million include things such as lockable individual showers and more toilet cubicles in lieu of urinals, which is fantastic. This funding program is a shining example of the McGowan government's commitment to not only women's participation in sport, but also sport and recreation in general. Since its launch in 2017, grants have been awarded totalling \$88 589 441, and of the 441 grants, 81 were awarded to the metropolitan region, equating to just over \$50 million.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan) [11.49 am]: I must say that I have been waiting for a couple of years to do this, and I am delighted that Hon Dr Brian Walker is in the chair. I am not the only practising doctor in the Parliament, but I think I am the only qualified and experienced tennis coach in the Parliament. So there we go. I can say that with my hand on heart. I do not know whether there are any others, but I still regard myself as a tennis coach. I still do a little bit on the periphery. It is a part of my life that I do not regret, and I stand to support this motion. I support anything we can do to encourage participation in sport in our community and assist the community both physically and mentally. That is very important in today's society. Anything we can do to encourage community sport should be enhanced. I will make a couple of comments about tennis—my love—to start.

As I said, I am a lifelong tennis player and coach. I spent many years coaching both at the community level and elite players. I spent several years on the women's tennis circuit. I have coached three top 50 players and one top 10 player. I loved every second of it. I was a former coach of the year. Therefore, I have a bit of experience in that area but also at the community level. The one area that I will make a little bit of comment on is the tennis facilities at the Burswood peninsula. They are outdated and they desperately need refurbishment. The government knows it, and we support any move that the government does. What we will not support is moving the State Tennis Centre to Whiteman Park. It is under consideration from the government. I urge government members not to do that. That will destroy tennis in this community. Do not do it. Tennis West does not want it and the tennis community does not want it, because it would destroy the fabric of the sport. It should never have been at Burswood. We put it there, so I make no excuses for that. That was during the Court government.

I was intimately involved with what happened. Richard Court was the Premier at the time. I coached with his sister-in-law, Margaret Court, for 30 years—and was coaching Richard's children at the time the government was looking at where to put the State Tennis Centre. I said to put it at Kings Park. It has a great avenue there. There are grass courts. There is a wonderful facility for a centre court. There are great access routes for transport. That is where a lot of the tennis community wanted it. At the time, Arthur Marshall was the member for Dawesville. Arthur got into Richard's ear and pushed for Burswood, and there were a few people in the business community who wanted it over there on the Burswood peninsula, and that is where they built it. It is a wind tunnel! I do not like it, and a lot of tennis people do not like it. It is stuck out there. Everyone knows where it is; it is near Optus Stadium. The area used to be an old dump. Optus Stadium is magnificent. They managed the foundations there, but the courts at the tennis centre keep collapsing and cracking. There are big cracks between the courts and the facility. The facility is old. It was built in the early 1990s. It is desperately in need of refurbishment. We used to have the ATP Tour, Women's Tennis Association tournaments, the Federation Cup and the Davis Cup here at Kings Park. We do not have any of those things anymore.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes, but don't you agree that part of that is because those tournaments have been ruined by the —

Hon PETER COLLIER: No. There are still satellite tournaments that could be played here but are not being played here. Sorry, I have only 10 minutes.

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Hon Matthew Swinbourn interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Sorry, I just do not have time. We desperately need a facility that will bring back those tournaments. At the moment, the facility itself is the single most significant deterrent to having those tournaments play here. I have asked numerous questions on this in the chamber, so I ask members opposite to please do anything they can to discourage it going to Whiteman Park. Tennis West does not want it, the tennis community does not want it, and it would destroy tennis and any hope of having international tournaments back here again.

I want to talk about another thing, although there are a number of things I could talk about. I am the Liberal Party spokesperson for sport and recreation; I am not the opposition alliance's spokesperson for sport and rec, but I was the opposition's spokesperson going into the last election. I had a lot to do with all the various sectors. The community sporting and recreation facilities fund is a wonderful program. It is such a good program. It facilitates a lot of the things that are the low-hanging fruit, such as the lights, change rooms, fencing—those sorts of things. It gets the clubs active and energised. The CSRFF provides one-third of the funding and the rest comes from the local government and the clubs themselves, so it gets everyone active. What I will say, however, to the honourable member is that it was funded up to \$20 million until 2017, when it was reduced to \$12 million after you guys came to power. We went into the last election committing to returning the fund to \$20 million. Well, we got smashed, so that did not happen.

A member interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I know, but just let me finish. For the last two years it has been \$12 million. I was delighted to hear the honourable member say that funding will return to \$20 million. Can I suggest, though, that members opposite keep pushing for it because any more money that the government can put into that fund will be used gratefully. Members do not need me to tell them that. Members opposite are out there in their communities. All people want is \$20 000 for a change room upgrade or something or \$50 000 for some new lighting so they can train in the evenings at Widgiemooltha or wherever they might be. That fund is fantastic; I really like it.

I am glad KidSport got a mention from Hon Klara Andric; thank you very much for mentioning that. It was a great initiative of the Barnett government. Members will also be aware that that fund has been reduced since you guys came to power. It is a very good program, and I would like to think that it can be brought back to not just its previous level but also be increased. As members, we will be a unity team on KidSport and the CSRFF. Let us collectively work on those ministers to see whether we can get more funding so that more members of the community can be actively involved in local sport. That is so important.

I could do a speech for all the disciplines, I have to say. I would love to touch on football. I have worked with a number of footballers, a number of Eagles, over the years. I work primarily now with the Falcons. It is all in the mind. It is all mind work, and I love doing that with them. It is the same even at the local level. It is all in the mind. If you get the kids active, it changes their mindset. Basketball is a huge one. It is a great sport. The Bendat Basketball Centre is a great legacy of the previous Labor government out there at Perry Lakes. It still has eight courts. The basketball centre has had eight courts since 1962. Please give it two more courts. It would cost \$2 million, and we went to the last election with that commitment. It is \$2 million for two more courts that are desperately needed. But at the local level what is needed even more significantly are courts for local kids to play on, because, believe it or not, they are not there. Do members know where they are? They are in a lot of our secondary schools, yet no protocols exist between local government and the Department of Education. I am not having a go at the Leader of the House here; I did not know about it either. I was aware, of course, that a lot of local communities play sport at those high schools—for example, I opened the new basketball facility at Woodvale Secondary College, as well as a number of other facilities—but there are no protocols with local government. What happens is that a lot of the schools are a little bit reluctant to engage with the local community on the use of those basketball courts. Therefore, if there could be a protocol between local government and the Department of Education, that would be good. Kids love basketball; they really do. It is for all genders and all ages. It is like tennis; you can play until they plant you! It would be really good if we could get more kids out there playing basketball, a really good team sport.

We have massive netball facilities, although there is a problem in the regions. I am not sure whether the parliamentary secretary has anything on that, but I could give her some information and Netball WA could give her some insights about the recruitment agents and the facilities.

These are the sorts of sports that we, as a Parliament, need to embrace because they cover both sides. Ultimately, we are all in here for the benefit of our constituents. If we can start engaging kids in sport when they are young, as I said, it will help them personally—both physically, with their physical welfare, and, just as significantly, mentally. Sport engages them with not just adults, but also their peers of all genders. They can go out there, enjoy themselves, become more resilient and develop their self-esteem. With that, I will finish where I started and say that we will be supporting the motion.

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HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.59 am]: I do not think anyone in the chamber could deny just how important the role of sport is in our communities, particularly in Western Australia. I want to thank my colleague and friend Hon Stephen Pratt for bringing this important motion to the house today so we can talk about the role of investment in community sport, how sport activates our metropolitan community and the important role sport plays in our regions.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the opposition spokesperson, Hon Peter Collier, for his support of today's motion. I know that he is a very keen tennis supporter and follower, and he is very active in sport in WA.

I, myself, am not what anyone would probably describe as sporty. I am the first to admit that I have little to no sporting ability. I like to exercise, but team sport has never really been my thing. However, having said that, I fundamentally understand the important role that sport plays in our community and how it makes sure that young people, in particular, are active, involved and connected. I absolutely understand the important role of community sport.

I think the recent wins of my beloved football team, the Essendon Football Club, have certainly been a —

Several members interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Calm down, everyone! I grew up in Essendon. That is my team, and I am not changing. The team's recent wins have certainly rekindled my love for the AFL.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Boo! I could not boo while I was standing.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: To be booed by my colleagues! This is outrageous, Acting President! Honestly!

I know it is not cool to be talking about a Victorian AFL team when I live in Western Australia, but that is my team, and I am sticking with it. It has been a woeful decade or so as Essendon was not performing well; however, it is making a huge comeback, and I am very keen to be supporting my beloved Bombers.

At a community level, sport is really important, particularly for young people, as I said. As my colleagues have said, it improves not just physical health, but also mental health. As we see an increase in mental health issues, particularly among young people, it is really important to make sure that we, as a government, invest in good facilities in our communities across the state to try to encourage more people to play sport. I think that is really important.

Others have said that we have committed \$265 million to community sport and recreation facilities, and that is through both state election commitments and the WA recovery plan. I am really proud of the work that the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hon David Templeman, has done in making sure that we continue to invest in community sport across our state. A number of members have brought up the community sporting and recreation facilities fund, the CSRFF. As a government, we also invest in the Club Night Lights program and the KidSport program. Those investments are critical to some of the communities that we represent. I know that in the East Metropolitan Region, the local football clubs—the AFL clubs and others—are so very thankful for the investment in night lights so they can train and play games at night. In particular, if the female teams are training at night, having lighting not only means they can see to play, but also offers a greater sense of security for our female players.

In the seat of Belmont, we had a huge investment in the Belmont Netball Association, which received \$513 000 from the CSRFF and was able to upgrade the netball courts at Wilson Park. Around 500 members use those courts on a regular basis. It is important for this area of East Metro to have the high-quality facilities that it, quite frankly, deserves and that some other communities receive. Of course, that applies across the entire state. In the regions, we want to make sure that we are investing in really good-quality facilities and upgrading our change rooms to make sure that we are encouraging more people to play sport.

WALGA is also very supportive of the CSRFF, knowing that we can share the costs three ways—between local government, state government and the community clubs. It is important that we have buy-in from everyone to make sure that the facilities go, hopefully, where they are very much needed.

We have seen new change rooms; upgrades to sporting storage; new turf and irrigation upgrades; the resurfacing of tennis courts, which is always needed; netball courts; and the construction of pump trucks. These facilities mean that local clubs can not only go out and attract some new members, but also encourage existing members to continue to participate in their local clubs.

We have spoken about the huge investment that the state government is putting into the CSRFF. I think my colleague Hon Stephen Pratt mentioned that it will now be \$20 million a year, which is fantastic. In addition to that uplift of funding in this year's budget, the CSRFF application process for projects up to \$500 000 will be streamlined, and the existing annual grants category for projects between \$300 000 and \$500 000 will be consolidated with a small grants category to open up access to the scheme. This will start with the next round of CSRFF small grants of up to \$500 000, which is due to open on 1 July 2023. As part of the revised program, the state government will also

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increase the maximum grants available through the fund from \$2 million to \$2.5 million for major projects. That will be a very welcome uplift.

The other area that I think was mentioned in the member's motion is the support program for KidSport. That program is really important. It makes sure that vulnerable families have the ability to access \$150 so their child can participate in community sport. I am really pleased that we, as a government, have offered that opportunity for children aged five to 18 years to participate in their local clubs. It is very much supported by local communities and is something that I hope we will continue to support in the future.

Speaking of children and young people, we know how important the connection to sport is and what some of the flow-on effects can be. Children who participate in team sports have been reported as staying longer in school. That is a good thing. We want our children and young people to be in school for as long as possible. If sport plays some small role in that, then that is a great thing. It is something that we should all be supporting to make sure we continue to have strong community sports programs right across the state. It is important to Western Australians and it is important to the government to make sure that we support community sporting facilities and sport and recreation facilities right across WA.

HON SANDRA CARR (Agricultural) [12.09 pm]: I rise to support the motion moved by my colleague and friend Hon Stephen Pratt. I thank him for raising this particularly important motion that provides the opportunity for an important discussion. I echo the sentiment of Hon Samantha Rowe when I say that sport and our investment in sport, both early intervention spending and social investment, is really important. I say this based on not only my observations as a teacher and a parent, but also a story that my uncle shared with me recently when he visited Geraldton after having travelling around regional Western Australia.

He explained how he had found himself being roped into coaching the Southern Cross men's football team, much to his wife's disgust, because they were probably in Queensland at the time and he was going to be gone for a long time. He explained to me why he made that choice and why he felt it was important. My uncle and my dad, his brother, are two of 14 children in their family, nine of whom are boys. When they were young boys living in Southern Cross, they were a big rough-and-tumble rabble of boys. Their dad was relatively absent for his own reasons. What my uncle shared with me was that he believed that football saved those boys from a life in which they could have got into a lot of trouble. One of the coaches of the local footy team spotted the boys running around, like fit, wiry, rough-and-tumble lads do, and decided to bring them into the fold of the local footy club and teach them all to play as part of a team—to operate collectively, support the group around them and be taught discipline. My uncle credits that sport with a significant change in the trajectory of the lives of my dad and his brothers, and he really rates the importance of that.

Our family has a beautiful photo of all boys after they moved to Kalgoorlie where they played for the—I think they are called Kalgoorlie Miners; is that right, Hon Kyle McGinn?

Hon Peter Collier: The Mines Rovers.

Hon SANDRA CARR: That is it! I knew it was something like that. I knew it had the word “miners” in there. Sorry, I apologise. I will probably get in trouble for that, too. In the photo they are all standing around in the footy pose, popping out their biceps, and my nanna and pop are sitting in front of them looking incredibly proud of these young blokes who played footy. Please do not strike me down, members, but I do not watch football that much. Sport does not really resonate with me, but I totally grasped the significance and importance of sport as my uncle shared that story with me. My son ended up playing soccer and that has been a challenge for some in the family to accept. It is a fantastic game and it was a fantastic sport for him. It not only taught him discipline, but also, at the time that he engaged in that sport, because it was played by all the boys and girls together from a range of cultures and ethnicities in the midwest region, it provided a wonderful exposure to that diversity and inclusion that sport can represent. I was really pleased that he ended up playing soccer and got to experience some of its beautiful and unexpected benefits.

Before I get into some of the McGowan government's fantastic spending and investment in sport that is part of that great early intervention and social investment, I would like to make a plea to all those who have young people playing sport: please do more than get your kids to the game. Please participate in the club. Get involved in coaching, running the lines in soccer and learning to umpire to support those kids. These clubs cannot exist without the involvement and participation of people. I also encourage people to consider volunteering for St John Ambulance, which provides ambulances and volunteers at some of the significant sporting events. None of those things can happen unless we, as parents or guardians of kids or nephews playing sport, join in and help by supporting those services. It is an important investment that people can make by just giving up their time.

I would like to talk about some fantastic investment in Geraldton. Local member Lara Dalton, as part of her election commitment, has delivered \$3.5 million for the Geraldton basketball stadium upgrade. This was a really important

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upgrade for Geraldton. The Geraldton Amateur Basketball Association had more players than it could cater for. Hundreds of kids were missing out on playing basketball. It is a hugely popular sport in Geraldton. When everyone is not playing footy, they are all playing basketball. I believe that the association currently has nearly 2 500 members. The extra funding that has gone into that stadium upgrade to provide additional courts has meant that we can cater for the huge number of people who want to get involved in that sport. It will also support the community's more diverse needs in running the Aussie Hoops program, a Midnight Basketball program for Indigenous youth, and a wheelchair basketball competition. Fantastic things are happening on those courts and it was a fantastic \$3.5 million investment from the McGowan Labor government. I really commend local member Lara Dalton for securing that brilliant investment for the midwest.

I have more to say on the great work of the McGowan government and Lara Dalton with the \$4.2 million investment in the Geraldton cycling network expansion, something else that encourages activity around the region. It does not necessarily have to be an institutional-type of sport that gets people moving. Stage 1 of the expansion is to the north of Geraldton and stage 2 is to the south. The expansion will link some of those outer communities to the main part of Geraldton and allow people to walk, ride or scooter into central Geraldton. It is really great to see that expansion being delivered within Geraldton and I commend Lara Dalton for her work in bringing those things to the attention of the government and making sure that they are delivered. Every year, Lara donates a bicycle to every school in Geraldton to encourage activity and participation in sport. She is very committed to sport. She also helped to secure some funding for hockey to provide a synthetic turf upgrade. Lara has done some other great things in Geraldton, but I would like to list some things that have been funded in the Agricultural Region.

Funding has been provided to the Geraldton Yacht Club and the Geraldton Rovers Soccer Club—go soccer! Rovers do a great job in Geraldton as well. Funding has also been provided to the Geraldton Bowling Club through the Club Night Lights program and to the Geraldton Softball Association. The Backroads Fields of Gold gravel cycling event has also received some funding. It was first held last year and it is on again in August. It is a beautiful event that runs through the canola fields around Geraldton when they are flowering and literally look like, as the title of the event suggests, fields of gold. People participate in this cycling competition that runs through the Shire of Chapman Valley, which brings some great funding into that region. People can go to the Nabawa Valley Tavern for a great pub feed and a coffee or a beer. It is a very well-respected and appreciated venue that has been newly refurbished, so I encourage people to get out there. I also encourage all cyclists to participate in the Backroads event in Chapman Valley in August.

Regional events scheme funding was also provided to the Mullewa Muster and Rodeo coming up in June. I cannot remember the name of some of the events at the rodeo—is it called barrel racing when they ride around the barrels? I attended and saw that event for the first time last year because the Mullewa Muster and Rodeo had a bit of a hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is another fantastic event. I got to do some linedancing, which was really active and there were thousands of people there. That is just another great way we are supporting sport and activity in the regions.

Local community members have also made some contributions in this area. Recently, I had the opportunity to support Khyan Townsend by partnering with the JK Foundation. Everyone knows of Josh Kennedy, another fantastic athlete from the electorate of Moore in the Agricultural Region. I partnered with the foundation to sponsor Khyan Townsend, who will be representing Australia at the twenty-second International Taekwon-Do Federation's World Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan. I hope that Khyan does really well. I would also like to mention the academy that he comes from in Geraldton because it is run by a coach called Jason Bradley, a primary school physical education teacher in Geraldton and a bit of a local legend. He has been supporting kids through sport in every conceivable way. He is a really outstanding local citizen and Khyan is his nineteenth student in 19 years to represent Australia at the international championships. It has been an absolutely fantastic performance and I congratulate Jason Bradley for his fantastic work and all the young people whom he has supported and encouraged to love and participate and excel in sport.

Following cyclone Seroja, we also provided \$78 500 to the Northampton community to hold a West Australian Football League match for both the men and the women. That injection of funds provided some positivity for that community after cyclone Seroja.

HON SHELLEY PAYNE (Agricultural) [12.19 pm]: I, too, would like to speak on this motion and thank Hon Stephen Pratt for bringing today's motion on sport. It is great that we have an opportunity to talk about everything that we are investing in sport, especially through the community sporting and recreation facilities fund that Hon Stephen Pratt mentioned. We have now increased it by \$15 million—\$7.5 million a year—which will go up to \$20 million a year. That is fantastic. Hon Klara Andric mentioned the quarantining of some of this money for female facilities, which is fantastic. I want to mention an interesting story. Horse racing and jockeying is not really classified as a sport, although it is for jockeys. I went to Wandecle Races outside Kojonup. It is interesting that most of the jockeys in the regions are women. I think there were about seven female jockeys and two male jockeys,

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which is fantastic. More recently I went to the races in Esperance, which also had a lot more female jockeys than male jockeys. I spoke to committee members about it and they said they had to switch the change rooms so that females now use the male change rooms and males use the female change rooms. I want to give a shout-out to all those female jockeys out there and the great job they are doing in the regions.

While I have a couple of minutes, I want to give a shout-out to the Shire of Pingelly and its great Pingelly Recreation and Cultural Centre. It has won so many awards, including a WA Architecture award, as well as international awards. It won at the INDE.Awards, which is for the whole South Pacific, with over 700 entries. It is the biggest timber civic construction since World War II, using sustainable timber from Manjimup. Pingelly has done a great job. The great thing about the CSRFF, which it has been able to do in a lot of cases for small towns, is that it brings a lot of sporting facilities together. It makes sense to coordinate activities in a small town, and it makes financial sense. Pingelly has done a great job, but places like Katanning have also done this with its country club. Our election commitment of \$100 000, plus the CSRFF commitment of \$160 000, has helped bring this whole club together. Go to the Katanning Country Club; it is a great place to have a wedding. The golf club and the bowls club have moved there. There is tennis and squash; it is a great hub for the community. I give a shout-out to Kojonup, which also received \$260 000 to upgrade its netball courts. What Kojonup has done with its football, netball, play equipment and everything is great. It has created a great hub for the community.

Condingup is another place, just outside Esperance. I want to acknowledge Lotterywest and its commitment as well, and also how some of these projects have huge input from the local community. In Condingup, farmers put in 50¢ a tonne, plus there was the CSRFF grant of \$260 000 and a bit of help from Lotterywest. That really helped the community bring in and centralise its tennis and bowls clubs into its whole community centre. This makes it a lot easier for kids to use these facilities after school rather than them being located outside town as they previously were. Hon Peter Collier also mentioned tennis, and the CSRFF has been great for places like the Bremer Bay Tennis Club, which received a smaller grant of \$45 000 to help upgrade its tennis club. The Bremer Bay community put in 225 hours of volunteer labour to make this project happen. It is really great. I would like to commend them on that.

Quickly, it is great to see in the great southern that Albany is transitioning its talent academy to a new academy of sport. That will really help a lot of those great southern communities. It will help Katanning as well, by helping some regional athletes who want to go further with their sport. That has been really fantastic, as well as the night lights program and our recent election commitment on this. The program is helping the Esperance Football Club with its lights. We were pleased to do a couple of night light projects through election commitments in Narrogin for the hockey, as well as Esperance's Ports Football Club, which improves safety for the kids as well.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.