

## **ROCKINGHAM BMX CLUB**

### *Grievance*

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe)** [9.52 am]: I thank the Minister for Sport and Recreation for taking my grievance. My grievance relates to the Rockingham BMX Club, which I recently had the pleasure of visiting during the Rockingham by-election campaign. The club invited candidates for the by-election to visit the facility to explain its concerns about its future. I visited the club with our candidate, Peter Hudson, to listen to its concerns. The club was disappointed that we were the only major party to take any notice of its request for a visit to hear its issues.

The Rockingham BMX Club was established in 1979 and is a not-for-profit sporting club located on Ennis Avenue in Rockingham. BMX racing is a year-round sport and is suitable for all ages and skill levels. Rockingham BMX Club holds race nights every Thursday during school terms, and it hosts state events once a year. Many competitors train at the facility on weekday evenings and during the weekend. The club is entirely run by volunteers. Rockingham BMX Club currently has over 200 members, both male and female, who range in age from two years to 50 years, with new members joining regularly. It is a keen grassroots club that provides many avenues for development in the sport of BMX. There are competitions at the club at state and international level.

It may surprise many in this chamber that BMX racing is an Olympic sport, and Australia is producing some male and female world champions. The Rockingham club has produced a number of international champions in the sport. Although BMX may not attract the glamorous following of some other sports, the competitors racing is an exciting spectacle to watch. With a little assistance, Western Australia could become an even more dominant force in this Olympic event. The Rockingham BMX Club even hosted a state super series in May this year and has been nominated to run the event again next year, plus the state championships. Interclub events typically attract over 500 visitors to the club and bring in people from all over the state.

Peter and I had the opportunity to meet the excellent volunteers who run the club, see competitors training and watch some races. It was extremely impressive to see fine male and female athletes of all ages competing in this sport.

As I am sure the minister knows, activities such as BMX, which involve healthy outdoor exercise, are a critical resource in our community. They give children and adults alike a healthy outlet and, critically, connect people socially. I am a great believer that the Act Belong Commit mantra is one of the key solutions to the mental health crisis affecting our society, especially for children. It was wonderful to see the volunteers and athletes interacting at the Rockingham BMX facility. The adults provide wonderful role models for the children, especially the young men. It is about much more than just sport; it is about commitment, responsibility, respectful behaviour and supporting each other and the club.

However, some 10 years ago, the club was informed that it would have to move to a new location, with a new track and facilities. To date, this has not happened, and it is in an area the state government has allocated for a railway terminal for the port of Fremantle. The City of Rockingham has always classified the club as a funded club, but recently the club was informed that it has now been put in the non-funding category to make room for more football ovals. This has left the club in limbo, and it is unsure of its long-term future.

The Rockingham BMX Club is consequently seeking assistance from the state government to ensure its future by allocating funding for a new Australian Olympic competition track to be built in the City of Rockingham. Currently no Olympic-standard facilities are in the southern hemisphere. BMX is an Olympic sport, and a venue such as this would bring riders and their support crews from other states and countries, injecting tourism into both Rockingham and Western Australia. Top athletes from Western Australia are forced to move interstate to continue their careers due to the lack of an Olympic-class facility in WA. This type of facility would put Rockingham on the map for all BMX enthusiasts globally and make it a must-visit destination, nationally and internationally. Rockingham is a beautiful part of Perth. I believe that this region is a hidden gem in our city and that this facility would bring a whole new group of tourists into the region and enhance tourism when tourists get to see the area.

The club's intention is to encourage more people to join the sport and lead an active and healthy lifestyle. Accordingly, I respectfully ask the minister to do everything he can to ensure that the future of the Rockingham BMX Club is secured so that the substantial benefits the club provides to the community are not lost. I also encourage the new member for Rockingham to visit the club to understand what it does for her community and see what she can also do to help it secure its future at a new location. Thank you.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Sport and Recreation)** [9.58 am]: I am happy to respond to the grievance, but I want to put on record a couple of important matters. It is great that the member for Cottesloe finally made his way down to Rockingham. I am sure that the member for Cottesloe is starting to get out from his perhaps enclaved existence.

The fact of the matter is this: we have been through a very important by-election. The former Premier Mark McGowan retired, and we have a fantastic new member for Rockingham, who was, of course, sworn in only yesterday.

I congratulate her on her election and acknowledge that she will make a tremendous contribution to Parliament. More importantly, she will, of course, represent the community that she has lived and worked in. She has been an active member of that community since she was a young girl. I know that because I visited with her only a few weeks ago to talk about the various sporting needs in that locality, including at the Mike Barnett Sports Complex.

The member quoted an email from the club, and I have a copy of it. He mentioned that the club had specifically invited various people to come. The club is actually asking for any support people are able to provide. There is actually no formal invitation, so the member was a little misleading with the initial comments in his grievance.

**Dr D.J. Honey** interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Well, if the member is going to perform these sorts of stunts, he should not be disingenuous or misleading. The message is actually more important, and I want to separate the member for Cottesloe from the club. The club is part of a very important network of BMX clubs throughout Western Australia.

BMX is, essentially, an urban sport that has grown in popularity through its recent inclusion in the Olympic Games, and there are actually some Australian BMX gold medallists. My local club, Mandurah BMX Club, has 12 young people competing in Scotland at the moment, I think in Glasgow, and a number of other Western Australian clubs are being represented there also. I want to applaud the tremendous work of the Rockingham BMX Club and its hardworking committee members and volunteers for the joy they bring to children and young people in that sport. I know it is a very popular sport because when I visited the Eastern Goldfields BMX Club in Kalgoorlie last week, I saw that it is a sport that is very much family oriented. Families come together and race together; quite often mums and dads race, as well as the kids, and it relies very much on volunteer effort.

I know that Rockingham BMX Club and other clubs in Rockingham will absolutely be represented by the new member for Rockingham because she has a great involvement in sport, having previously played netball before converting to football. I know that she is very well linked with the sporting community.

There are some potential future plans for the site at which the Rockingham BMX Club is currently located, and I want to briefly go through them. The Kwinana rail loop alignment reservation project is currently investigating potential options for freight rail pathways to connect the existing Kwinana freight rail infrastructure with the CBH balloon loop and the south west main line. The project is being led by the Department of Transport, working with Westport, the Public Transport Authority, Main Roads, the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and DevelopmentWA. As part of the ongoing alignment investigations, consultation is occurring with key stakeholders, including the City of Rockingham, to ascertain the feasibility of potential options and any amendments to these options that may improve their deliverability and community amenity.

At this point, there is no time frame for when the connection between the Kwinana freight rail system and the south west main line will be required, but I understand that clarity on that issue would give the Rockingham BMX Club a better idea about where it will need to be located in future. I understand that.

One of the options being considered is referred to as option A, which was developed in response to the City of Rockingham's rejection of the preferred option, which the City of Rockingham considered would have a negative impact on Rockingham residents. Option A is the City of Rockingham's preferred alignment and would travel over the former tip site between Patterson Road and Ennis Avenue, an area I know quite well. There are currently a number of community uses of that former tip site, including a BMX track, a golf driving range and an archery club. However, it is important to understand that no alignment has been decided upon and a number of considerations will still need to be focused on, including constructability and community amenity, which will decide whether any alignment will be selected as an option to progress towards a metropolitan region scheme amendment.

All affected parties will be included, and I will make sure that the BMX club and other clubs will continue to be engaged with. Along with the member for Rockingham and an officer of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, I will meet with the club to gain an insight into its aspirations, because it clearly has aspirations for a much bigger footprint and the impact that could have on the numbers of children and young people who can be involved in that sport and on the club's general amenity. I am committing to that, and I will work very closely with the member for Rockingham to work with the Rockingham BMX Club.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk):** Before the member for Scarborough brings his grievance, because it is easier to get grievances from the opposition, maybe the member for Cottesloe can grieve about my BMX club next week?