

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2023

**502. Ms J.M. FREEMAN to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:**

As the proud patron of the Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club in Balga, I refer to the impending announcement as to who will host the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023. Can the minister outline to the house how the McGowan Labor government has supported the Australian and New Zealand bid to ensure it is in the best possible position to secure this world-class sporting event?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:**

I thank the member for that question and for her support of teams out that way, which we have been out to look at a couple of times. Firstly, I must point out the small-mindedness of the National Party in not recognising the Australian colours of the Matildas and our Australian teams. What a small-minded mob they are! They remind me of a bunch of Lego tools—all bits and pieces that do not fit anywhere. They have different colours and are all bundled into one bag and thrown out the door! They are all Legos that do not fit anywhere. And they do not understand about sport either, although at times they profess to do so!

**The SPEAKER:** Minister!

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that call!

Tonight's decision on the rights to host the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 is very important to Western Australia, Australia and New Zealand. We have done everything in Western Australia and Australia to make sure that our bid has been up-front and is very much in the forefront of being announced tomorrow. We do not have the final say, of course—FIFA has the final say. We have done everything possible in Western Australia to make sure that we have put ourselves at the forefront. We recently announced a \$16 million grant towards the construction of a world-class state football centre at Queens Park. The Premier was out there having a kick. His skills alone probably ensure that we will get this here! There is no doubt about that whatsoever.

Let me get back to the real issue. This is about women's sport as well. That facility out there is for both males and females, and juniors. Do not forget that—it is not just a one-sided facility. Women have been underestimated in sport for many years. There has been no greater change to the sporting fraternity than recently with the AFL, with women having their own competition. That is something that every league association in the state has adopted, and adopted very well. It is great to see that. But again, with a round football, they have been doing it for years. They did not have to be pushed or shoved, because they showed leadership. That also gives us a chance to host the upcoming World Cup. That World Cup will bring huge benefits to Western Australia. If we get a couple of games here, associated industries will be party to that, along with of course the tourism promotions that that will get worldwide. Sooner or later, we know that those borders we have been very carefully monitoring will be open to the world. Those people will want to move very quickly. If things turn out properly tomorrow, we will be on the front stage.

The venue itself will be completed in time for the World Cup in 2023. It will have a training facility, a place where the Australian team could be based, along with training facilities for other teams. We have made sure we have done our best to promote Western Australia as a place to play sport.

The actual promotion and the funding that has come in is certainly something that makes sure that we are there. I take my hat off to the federal government, which has also put its hand in its pocket to help us along this line. If we do not have those facilities, where will we get the next Sam Kerr from? We need women in leadership roles to aspire people to be one of them. What a wonderful woman! That young lady has no pretentious issues about her. She works very hard promoting her sport, and women's sport in particular—and Western Australia, I must say. She is a credit to her mother and father, who are great people as well, for what she has done for this sport.

We have other stadiums around the place, such as the world-renowned Optus Stadium. It has been magnificently promoted by this government. We have done so much to bring that through. Look at what happened this week. Someone who said they would never come across wants to play there! We are going to allow them to play AFL there. We encourage them to come over and play there. Again, Western Australia will get economic benefits out of that stadium. I am sure the National Party would be very happy to hear about that stadium opening because 2 500 tonnes of beef goes into the pies at Optus Stadium! We cannot forget that 2 500 tonnes of beef goes into those pies!

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Wrap it up, minister!

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I am sorry, Mr Speaker, but I have to take up some time here because I never ever get a question from the other side! I have to get the question coming from my side and get rid of my frustrations about those people over there. They are really not set on doing a very good job, but I understand that.

**The SPEAKER:** Can you take your frustrations outside?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I will finish, to be quite honest, in thanking the people who have worked very hard in ensuring that our bid is up-front and has a very good chance of being successful. Along with that is the local soccer community, including Football West. We know how hard they have worked in that area in not only promoting the World Cup, but other areas as well. Let us hope it turns out right and we are able to promote Western Australia to the rest of the world.