

MATILDAS — OLYMPIC QUALIFYING MATCHES

**650. Ms C.M. TONKIN to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the Cook Labor government's efforts to boost tourism by securing major events for Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house what the Asian qualifier matches for women's football at the 2024 Olympics, including three Matildas games, will mean for WA tourism?
- (2) Can the minister outline what is being done to help even more people see the Matildas in action?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. The FIFA Women's World Cup that just finished in Australia was an incredible success. We hosted five games in Western Australia that were nearly sold out or sold out, there was the FIFA Fan Festival and small businesses around the state hosted events to celebrate the Matildas. The Matildas gained a whole new following in the nation to become, I think, the most loved and respected team currently out there. We have seen people who never enjoyed the game of football now enjoy the game of football and women's football and very much support the Matildas.

It was with great pleasure that well before the world cup we landed the three Asian Olympic qualifiers here in Perth, to be played on 26 October, 29 October and 1 November. Since the world cup, the excitement and anticipation about hosting these games has grown significantly—so much so that the original plan to hold the three games at HBF Park simply will not cut it for the Western Australian community. Tens of thousands of Western Australians want the opportunity to see the Matildas live.

Therefore, it is with great pleasure that after a bit of negotiation with Football Australia and Optus Stadium, we have secured the Matildas game here in Perth on Sunday, 29 October to be played at Optus Stadium. I thank the Premier and the Minister for Sport and Recreation, who rallied to get that game moved. An extra 40 000 seats will be available on that Sunday. I believe that this game will be sold out. I think the Western Australian community will get behind it and support the Matildas. The opportunity to see our own Sam Kerr live at Optus Stadium will be an absolutely magnificent event. We hope and trust that people will take the opportunity to travel, whether from regional parts of WA or interstate, to see the Matildas live.

After hosting magnificent events most recently, including two English Premier League teams, now the Matildas and other key events that we will announce very soon, we will ensure Western Australia is on the map. This is a very exciting announcement. We have received massive feedback. There was already massive feedback when people could not get to the games because tickets were not available. I know that when tickets go on sale next week, first for those who have existing tickets for the HBF Park game with presale tickets next Tuesday, and then to the wider public on 28 September, it will be well supported. I hope to see a sellout crowd at Optus Stadium watch the Matildas take on the Philippines.