



New academy to open for South West athletes

South West Sporting Academy

SPORTING locals will benefit from four new sports to be run at the new South West Academy Sport.

Australian Rules football, soccer, hockey and basketball are the sporting codes the academy will partner in its first year of operation.

South-West Minister Mark McGowan said the academy would provide talented athletes in four sports with the training they needed to follow their dreams of competing at the next level without leaving home.

"Traditionally, young people from the South West pursuing a career in sport would have been forced to spend an enormous amount of time travelling between Perth and their home town, placing considerable strain on families," he said.

"The academy has been designed so participants can benefit from an elite level of coaching and education without leaving their support network in the South West.

The centre will be based in Bunbury but will offer training throughout the South West region.

Collie-Wellington MLA Mick Murray said the academy would play a crucial role in boosting opportunities for sport in the region.

"The project had been well received by Western Australian sports authorities who see great possibilities for participants in the partner sports programs," he said.

"They have signalled the academy could provide the springboard for a number of promising projects, including the development of South West teams participating in the annual WAFL 15s and 16s development carnivals."

Mr Murray said talented athletes who were not catered for in the initial partner sports programs had not been forgotten.

"The South West Academy of Sport is about giving young people the opportunity to pursue their dreams, regardless of their chosen sport," he said.

South West Academy of Sport board chairman Don Punch said it was heartening to see the planning stages of such an exciting project head toward the finish line.

"Regional WA has a strong history of producing quality athletes," he said.

"The academy is an outstanding project which will provide increased opportunity for young talents to rise through the ranks and become State, national and international champions."

South West Academy of Sport board member Tom Busher said the academy will equip participants with the skills they need to compete in the next level of their chosen sport.

"Support will be given to participants through specialist training as well as through education in subjects such as fitness and nutrition," he said.

"This holistic approach to sports tuition will help provide participants not just with the training they require to be competitive at an elite level, but also the life skills they need to ensure a long and rewarding career."



Former Olympian Kelvin Poole and his wife Sally.



Brian Zanich and Des Lehmann.



Dave Hearnden-Hall and Colin Richardson.



Rolf Stene and Rob Thompson.



Louise Fitzroy and Pippa Doyle.



Ron Alexander, Griffin Coal general manager Wayne Trumble and South West minister Mark McGowan.



Denise Jenkins and Steve Lawrence.



Ern and Snookie Manea.