

South West academy calls for partner sports

PLANNING to have the South West Academy of Sport up and running continues to gain momentum, with calls for expressions of interest from potential partner sports going out this week.

Academy chairman Don Punch said the facility would provide top-level training for promising regional sportsmen and women, saving them arduous travel to the metropolitan area and raising the level of excellence of local sport.

"We are looking for up to four initial sports we can partner with and support through the South West Academy of Sport," Mr Punch said.

"The academy will partner with these sports through local associations to provide specialist coaching and training for emerging athletes, similar to what the West Australian Institute of Sport does."

Mr Punch said the academy board was keen to hear from local sports groups interested in being involved.

"The obvious benefit of their partnership with the academy is that it will raise the level of excellence of their sporting code locally," he said.

"The academy will not only provide skills training by professional coaches, but education in sports injury prevention and management, movement techniques and general life skills such as career advice."

Mr Punch said apart from the four chosen sports, individual sports scholarships would be provided for up to 50 athletes to help their development.

"The academy will expand the number of sports it supports as it establishes itself in the region," he said.

Collie-Wellington MLA Mick

Murray said the State Government had thrown its support behind the academy concept and he hoped local sports took advantage of the new initiative.

"This is an exciting development for South West sport," Mr Murray said.

"The State Government has already contributed around \$160,000 towards the establishment of this initiative through the South West Development Commission.

"Local businesses are also throwing their sponsorship support behind the concept.

"By early next year the academy should be operational."

Submissions from sports interested in being involved with the academy close on November 26.

For expression of interest application forms call 9792 2000.