



## Adjournment Speech

### Main Committee

27 May 2010

Sharon Grierson MP

**Sharon Grierson** (Newcastle) (12:45 PM) —It is the day after the first round of the State of Origin, and some of us in New South Wales are feeling a little bruised by the result. I would like to share with the chamber some of the good-news sports stories from my electorate of Newcastle. I start by congratulating Newcastle local Kurt Gidley for his fine performance captaining the New South Wales Blues in the origin last night—even if we did lose. We still have two games left, Kurt; I am sure you can turn the team around and steer them to victory. I wish you well.

I would like to recognise and encourage some of the many people in my electorate who have achieved some success in sport, and particularly the ones who have received a federal government Local Sporting Champions grant. These grants provide financial assistance for juniors towards the cost of travel, accommodation, uniforms and equipment when competing, coaching or officiating at an official national sporting organisation endorsed state or national sporting competition or a School Sport Australia national championship. The grants are not large, but they have a great impact.

I would like to register the names of those who have received those grants in my electorate since they began: Eleanor Ross, Dalton Dowden, Bronte Davies Russell, William Dawes, Connor Eyers, Leigh Halpin, Eliza Smith, Sydnee Knight, Jake Sylvester, Carly O'Toole, Hannah Trypas, William Salisbury, Megan Wright, Estelle Hughes, Philippa Anderson and Tia Brady. The teams that have received these grants are the Newcastle Little League Championship Team and the Newcastle Hunters Under 14 Women Division 1 basketball team.

I would also like to congratulate this year's inductees into Hunter Region Academy of Sport Hall of Fame: Grahame Baxter, Tony Pryor, Peter Horton, Ron Meadows, Gary Banks, Jack Hutchinson, Marguerite Jenkins, Marilyn Mills, Dick Osborn, Brooke Morrison, Hazel Ronay and Cheryl Salisbury. The hall of fame will be showcased at the Newcastle Regional Museum. I thank parliamentary secretary Maxine McKew, who came up to officially start the construction of that museum after the federal government assisted with an \$8½ million grant under the strategic Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program.

Sporting talent and sporting heritage abounds in my electorate. What is also significant is the sporting talent we are hoping to have visit us in Newcastle at

EnergyAustralia Stadium in support of Australia's bid for the soccer—or 'football', depending who you ask—World Cup. As one of 10 host cities, our EnergyAustralia Stadium is currently in the process of a \$60 million upgrade to increase its seating capacity to 33,000. If Australia's bid is successful, EnergyAustralia Stadium will expand its capacity by a further 7,000 to 9,000 spectators through temporary grandstands at the northern and southern end of the stadium.

If our bid succeeds, the Rudd government will undertake to build three new stadiums and upgrade and improve nine others, including Energy Australia Stadium in Newcastle, with estimates of the investment in the national economy ranging from \$2.3 billion to \$5 billion, which would of course provide a wonderful legacy for all sporting codes and generations to come. Hosting the FIFA World Cup would see Newcastle play an important part in that event, and that of course would be good news for our economy, bringing media attention and jobs, and inspiring the young people of today to become the champions of the future.

Finally, I acknowledge the good work of Minister Ellis and the Prime Minister. I do hope we are able to see Australia host the World Cup, and to win on our home turf would be a wonderful achievement. I would like to say farewell to this year's World Cup team, who flew out to South Africa just yesterday. It is a case of, 'Go the Socceroos!' but I congratulate all those who put themselves in the front line in sport for the pride of our country.