

**Perspectives on the Sporting Links of the Members of the Parliament of Western
Australia: 1890-2009**

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Preface

This monograph entitled *Perspectives on the Sporting Links of the Members Parliament of Western Australia: 1890-2009* is a more detailed version of Chapter 10 'Sport: the Real Religion' which appeared in a 2007 publication *Parliament: Mirror of the People? Members of the Parliament of Western Australia 1890-2007*. The book, which was a Parliamentary History Advisory Committee project, was authored by Phillip Pental, David Black and Harry Phillips.

In keeping with the format of *Parliament: Mirror of the People* an account of a parliamentarians experiences constituted the opening segment. For the sport chapter the introduction focused upon Ross Hutchinson a legendary footballer and coach who rose to be a Minister in the Brand Government before completing his parliamentary service as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in Sir Charles Court term as Premier from 1974.

The scale of publications about the origins and development of Australia's and Western Australia's parliamentary system is stupendous. The influence of the Westminster model is given much weight. A leading political historian, John Hirst, who has also examined Australia's sporting culture has said 'the British were a sporting nation and ran a sporting empire, which had its effect on Australia'.¹ Hirst has cited David Malouf who has contended:

Sport as we understand it was an Anglo-Saxon invention of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The English made it central, both as a physical activity and as moral training, to their whole system of education.²

Some focus in this monograph will be given to sport's place the Western Australian polity. More central will be the participation of Members of the Parliament of Western Australia in the sporting culture. An Appendix listing the names of the Members of Parliament who have played league football has been included. A name index of parliamentarians, and authors, mentioned in the chapter has also been prepared.

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¹ John Hirst (2007), *The Australians: Insiders and Outsiders on the National Character Since 1770*, Melbourne: Black Inc., p. 110.

² Cited in John Hirst (2007), *The Australians: Insiders and Outsiders on the National Character Since 1770*, Melbourne: Black Inc., p. 110.

Ross Hutchinson: A Football Hero

More than five decades after the scarring effects of the Great Depression of the 1930s, Sir Ross Hutchinson, former Speaker of the Western Australian Parliament, claimed in an interview that teenage football had been his saviour, the one element which shaped and moulded his opportunities, and ultimately led first to his membership of the Cabinet of Sir David Brand, throughout his record term of power from 1959 to 1971, and then to the Speakership of the Legislative Assembly.³

After showing potential at Wesley College and for the small south west country town of Jardee, the young Hutchinson had been sought by the East Fremantle and Swan Districts scouts to play League Football in 'the big smoke'. He chose to try his luck with 'Old Easts' because they had a more successful record. After traveling from nearby Manjimup on the back of a truck 'after the pubs had shut one [cold] Friday night' he stripped for a scratch match for East Fremantle against East Perth. The description of what soon transpired is told by Hutchinson himself:

...the ball was bounced to open the game and the ball came down from the bounce and I saw there was a chance for me to get through and pick it up on the run. This I endeavoured to do. But...as I bent over, someone kicked at the ball and kicked me in the face and broke my nose. I was unconscious there for quite some time. I wakened to find myself almost off the ground being carried off by two of the trainers. There was no such things as stretchers in those days [or interchange reserves]. I came to consciousness and said, "What are you doing?". They said, "Oh you've got a bit of a knock and you've got to go off". I protested most volubly. Anyway they let me go and play the rest of the game, because if I hadn't it would have meant that I was just no longer a footballer. Perhaps at some subsequent time I might have had another chance, but the first chance is always the best chance. So I finished off the game with my nose splattered over the side of my face and fortunately they put me in the half forward line. I managed to kick three or four goals and helped get a few of the others. East Fremantle was very warm in their reception of me when I came in and said, "We'll fix you up. We'll transfer your employment up to Perth with the Education Department". Anyway there I was, on my way.⁴

Ross Hutchinson was on his way to an outstanding playing and coaching football career which led to his installment in the Western Australian Football Hall of Fame. His record

³ Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p. 9.

⁴ Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p. 9.

indicates that he played a total of 127 games with East Fremantle (1935-1939), West Perth (1946) and South Fremantle (1947-1948) together with five interstate games from 1936 to 1939. In his first two seasons (in 1935 and 1936) he won the Lynn Medal, the award for the fairest and best player for the club. Bob Lynn had been a patron of the East Fremantle Club who had been a Liberal, then Nationalist, MLC for Metropolitan Province between 1912 and 1924.⁵ After distinguished service in World War 11, and more football, Hutchinson was elected in 1950 as the Member for Cottesloe. Keeping his sporting links he later helped to establish the Veterans Tennis Association (later known as Tennis Seniors) and became a champion veteran, even winning a national title with Arthur Marshall, who was later elected to Parliament. Hutchinson became a Minister in the Brand Government before completing his political career as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly during Sir Charles Court's first term as Premier from 1974 to 1977. Ironically, whilst Ross Hutchison was a State football captain, premiership captain coach at East Fremantle and later premiership coach at West Perth and South Fremantle, he sometimes found the behaviour of parliamentarians more difficult to contain than footballers in top teams. In his view a few parliamentarians lacked a sense of 'fair play'. Particularly during bitter electoral reform debates he complained about the aggressive style of Labor members Arthur Tonkin and Mal Bryce who in their quest for 'one vote one value' had become incensed by the maintenance of vote weighing which they depicted as a 'Charliemander' to liken the States' electoral law to the notorious 'gerrymander' concept. Although he doubted whether legally it was possible to prevent members from being bad mannered,⁶ he requested the Attorney General to investigate furnishing the House with more adequate powers to deal with future transgressions on the floor of the Chamber.⁷ In fact Arthur Tonkin himself coached schoolboy sporting teams in cricket, football, athletics, basketball and softball and played competitive chess, including state championships. For many years, too, he was President of the Chess Federation of Western Australia.

When Ross Hutchinson made his inaugural speech in 1950 he recognised the immense contribution to sport and society by volunteers such as Arthur Tonkin. He called on the Treasurer to address the totally inadequate grant to the Surf Life Saving Association of WA for their 'splendid, selfless service to the people of the State'.⁸ Years later he probably needed the votes of a few surf life saving members when he went within one vote of losing pre-selection for his safe Liberal seat of beachside Cottesloe for the 1974 election.⁹ From sport he understood a narrow win was sufficient but as he was deemed to be losing his zest he retired at the next election before facing, in football terms, the sack. Although football credentials may have assisted Hutchinson's public profile they were initially not sufficient for him to be elected to Parliament after he had succumbed to a

⁶ Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p. 55.

⁷ WAPD (LA), 30 November 1970, p. 4785.

⁸ WAPD (LA), 27 July 1950, p. 11.

⁹ Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p. 67.

request 'to consider having a go with the Liberals'.¹⁰ Interestingly, a Fremantle football great Steve Marsh who believed that Hutchinson was 'as good a coach as any', also recorded the observation that he never got involved in the politics of the game'.¹¹

Hutchinson's first quest for a seat in 1948 was unsuccessful when he stood for the South Province in the Legislative Council, covering in part the environment of his former football base of South Fremantle. However, during the campaign when addressing wharfies at Fremantle he faced the threat of physical harm by an enormous and angry crowd.¹² Not all was lost as the election results indicated that he had improved the Liberal vote. This led Hutchinson, with Liberal Party endorsement to stand two years later, with success, for the seat of Cottesloe where he could claim 'my war record and my teaching record and my football record, all seemed to gell pretty well'.¹³ The war record reference was to his distinguished and decorated career with the Royal Air Force Bomber Command and the awarding of his DCF.

Sport the ultimate super religion separate from politics.

Reflecting upon his career Ross Hutchinson recognised the centrality of sport to his success, particularly in his youth. As he had a special interest in literature *Hansard* would nevertheless reveal that Hutchinson's speeches would uphold a seminal essay finding about the Australian language that 'something like one in thirty of the words we use is a sporting word-and that of these sporting words, perhaps one in five is a sporting Australianism'.¹⁴ As Vamplew has contended 'this leads linguistic support to those who have argued that Australians are besotted by sport: that they are possessed of an obsession which lasts from the cradle to the grave, from the wearing of nappies in their team colours to the scattering of ashes at a favourite sporting venue'.¹⁵ Keith Dunstan, who authored a major work titled *Sports* has contended that sport has almost a divine influence on the Australian psyche, due to its status as 'super religion', that transcends class, gender, race and ethnicity, which guides its public perceptions of a shared national bond.¹⁶ Henry Lawson, it can be recalled, once wrote verse to say that in our land 'sport is sacred'. To play, watch and talk about sport is to uphold the nation and build its character. It is deeply rooted in the consciousness of the people.¹⁷ Writing just after the

¹⁰ Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p. 6.

¹¹ Anthony J. Barker (2004), *Behind the Play: A History of Football in Western Australia from 1868*, Perth: Western Australian Football Commission, p. 94.

¹² Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p. 5.

¹³ Sir Ross Hutchinson (1986), Interview with Ronda Jamieson: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p.22..

¹⁴ Cited in Wray Vamplew (1994), 'Australians and Sport' in Wray Vamplew and Brian Stoddart (eds) (1994), *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, p. 11

¹⁵ Wray Vamplew (1994), 'Australians and Sport' in Wray Vamplew and Brian Stoddart (eds) (1994), *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, p. 11

¹⁶ Keith Dunstan (1973), *Sports*, North Melbourne: Cassell, p. 1.

¹⁷ Harry Phillips (1985), 'Sport: A Winner for the Commonwealth', *Social Sciences Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 1.

federation one writer observed 'that this country thinks about sport and nothing else'.¹⁸ For many citizens even federation was not an event of great moment.¹⁹ The founding fathers when formulating the Australian Constitution, the framework of the federation, debated the parliamentary and governmental structure, matters such as defence, trade, tariffs, taxation as well as the significant representational principles. Sport, though, was presumed to be above or separate from politics. One cartoon published at the time probably captured the public mood. A person was penciled watching an Australia versus England test cricket match. The spectator was to claim: 'who cares about federation [I] can only watch one game at a time'.²⁰

The whole realm of sport, recreation, leisure and artistic pursuits were not included in the list of Commonwealth powers, nor were they even categorized in the literature as likely 'residual' powers. There was no need for the jurist to define sport 'as a human activity requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill' which by nature and organization is competitive.²¹ Sport and other recreational pursuits, being essentially non-utilitarian, elective and private pursuits were not considered appropriate areas for government involvement. The organization and financing of sport was regarded as the responsibility of the local community. It meant voluntary labour, club fundraising, and liaison with local government for the use of facilities. There has been widely accepted belief that 'sport and politics should not mix'. This was the understanding of sport and recreation that parliamentarians traditionally had to comprehend to 'mirror the people', with election and re-election requiring their commitment to voluntary labour and fundraising of the community club scene.

Sport and Politics

The popular cliché about sport and politics not mixing only makes sense if it refers to a dislike of the intrusion of professional politicians and government in the running of sport. Yet even before federation governments inadvertently did assist in the promotion of sport. By legislating for shorter working hours workers were given the freedom of Saturday afternoons, releasing them for half a day from a life divided between the obligations of employment and the rules of the Sabbath. For the majority Saturday afternoon became a chance to watch or play sport. Later when sport became recognised as the major religion Sundays were also freed for sport. But even when sport mostly limited its involvement to the local community, government support was not inconsiderable. Municipal governments helped to create many ovals, and other facilities such as public tennis courts, golf courses and swimming pools. Facilities essential for inter-club competition were heavily subsidized by ratepayers. Creating an oval and maintaining a turf wicket, was (and remains) very costly and beyond the resources of a suburban cricket or football team.²²

¹⁸ Gordon Inglis (1912), *Sport and Pastime in Australia*, London: Methuen, p. 1.

¹⁹ L.F. Crisp (1983), *Australian National Government*, fifth edition, Melbourne: Longman-Cheshire, p. 12.

²⁰ See Gordon Inglis (1912), *Sport and Pastime in Australia*, London: Methuen, p. 12.

²¹ John Bloomfield (1978), *The Development of Sport in Western Australia*, Perth: The Community Recreation Council of Western Australia, p. xii.

²² Richard Cashman (1995), *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p. 114.

The recognition of indirect government involvement in the major and minor sports has also been aided by the more recent publications of authoritative histories, including those in football,²³ cricket,²⁴ bowls,²⁵ surf lifesaving²⁶ and tennis.²⁷ This observation was formulated by Keith Dunstan, scarcely a sports fan himself as the founder of the Anti-Football League, in his book *Sports*, in which he asserted that the earlier absence of academic interest in sport had left the sporting field open to folklore and a journalistic approach.²⁸ This judgement was also made in the mid 1980s by historian and educationist Glen Bennett who observed ‘despite Western Australia’s sustained, intense, even obsessional interests in sports, historians have neglected or trivialized its importance in the past’.²⁹ At the time in his seminal essay Bennett was making the point that ‘organised sport now enters most people’s lives at six or seven years of age, with little athletics, tee-ball, minkey, junior netball or football, and stays with them until they no longer have the strength or energy to roll a bowling ball down a grass rink’.³⁰ Bennett, too, did not limit his essay to the aforementioned major sports as he provided a coverage of the beginnings of a range of sports which at various periods have played ‘an active role in shaping society and values in such important ways as reinforcing class differences, promoting sex-role stereotypes, and developing community identity’.³¹ This required consideration of horse-racing and trotting, athletics, swimming and surf lifesaving, rowing, yachting, soccer, cycling, rifle-shooting, netball, basketball, golf and bowls.

A search of the Biographical Registers of Western Australian parliamentarians attests the multifarious links of the Parliament to the major and minor sports, although much of the involvement has understandably been at the electorate or district level. While much sport is still conducted within the district or municipal framework it has increasingly become an important policy area for governments. Sport and politics have become closely linked in a host of ways. The 1956 Melbourne Olympics and 1962 British Empire Games in Perth marked the beginnings of where the public could observe more governmental sporting involvement. Sport, too, was sometimes an instrument of foreign policy with South

²³ Anthony J. Barker (2004), *Behind the Play: A History of Football in Western Australia from 1868*, Perth: Western Australian Football Commission.

²⁴ Anthony J. Barker (1998), *The WACA: An Australian Cricket Success Story*, St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.

²⁵ Gil McDonald with W.S. Cooper and J.R. Hall (1998), *Bowls West: A Century History of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association 1898-1998*, Perth: Royal Western Australian Bowling Association.

²⁶ Edwin Jaggard (1979), *A Challenge Answered: A History of Surf Life Saving in Western Australia*, Perth: Vanguard Service Print. Ed. Jaggard is currently (June 2009) writing an updated version of surf life saving in Western Australia.

²⁷ Harry Phillips, *Tennis West: A History of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association from the 1890s to the 1990s*, Sydney: Playright Publishing.

²⁸ See Wray Vamplew (1994), ‘Australians and Sport’ in Wray Vamplew and Brian Stoddart (eds) (1994), *Sport in Australia: A Social History*, p. 11

²⁹ Glen Bennett, ‘Sport’, in *On This Side: Themes and Issues in Western Australian History*, Perth: Bookland, p. 105.

³⁰ Glen Bennett, ‘Sport’, in *On This Side: Themes and Issues in Western Australian History*, Perth: Bookland, p. 105.

³¹ Glen Bennett, ‘Sport’, in *On This Side: Themes and Issues in Western Australian History*, Perth: Bookland, p. 105.

Africa being banned from the international sporting area for two decades until 1991 in protest against its apartheid policies. The election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972 has been described as 'a watershed in government involvement in sport, recreation and other forms of culture'.³² A Capital Assistance Program provided funds for sporting facilities while a Sports Assistance Program allocated travel, coaching and administrative resources. State governments, including Western Australia, followed by creating their own departments of sport which were variously allied to recreation, tourism and the arts. In nearly every instance the holder of the ministerial portfolio was a person who had a sporting background.

The Departments of Sport and Recreation, together with the Arts was the product of two different, almost contradictory directions. On the one hand there was a new emphasis on sport for recreation, health and self-fulfillment; on the other there was the rapidly growing professionalism in certain sports, the development of sport as 'big business', combined with a desire for national pride partly satisfied by sporting performance. The recreational aspect included 'new' pursuits such as aerobics, jogging, bush and power-walking and cycling. There was also a realization that the rapidly escalating community health bill might be partially offset by the diversion of more resources into recreation-based preventative health programs such as 'Life Be In It'. The other trend, toward sport as 'big business' was occasioned by the intrusion of television into sport led by the emergence of entrepreneurs who recognised that public thirst for sport could create substantial profits. This development made sports, particularly those with marketing arms, attractive to sponsors. Leading players, too, could benefit in the new age by demanding secure contracts and range of fringe benefits.

By the 1980s the promotion of sport in one form or another, had gained bi-partisan support. Institutes of Sport were established at the national level in 1981 and State level (Western Australia-1984), as the growing professionalism of sport had to be accommodated. Politicians could win votes in supporting bids for hallmark events such as the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, World Swimming Championships, car rallies and the Hopman Cup. Invariably government grants for venues were part of the political budgetary process although in percentage terms these outlays were always comparatively low. Interstate competitions in a wide range of sports were established. The West Coast Eagles (1987), and later the Fremantle Dockers (1995), became teams with big business infrastructures in the Australian Football League (AFL). Both sides captured broad public support with membership bases beyond 30,000, including a vast number of past and present parliamentarians. An extensive daily media coverage, has accompanied both teams with leading identities including Governors and Premiers often vying as candidates for the honour of No.1 ticket holder.

Government involvement in sport also came in the form of taxation and health regulations. The loathed Commonwealth entertainment tax that had been introduced in 1917 was repealed in 1953, with the state equivalent being lifted in 1961 after being introduced in 1925. In more contemporary times, generous taxation concessions were

³² Richard Cashman (1995), *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p. 115.

made for sponsorship outlays by business firms. Governments also effectively moved to limit smoking at sporting venues with sporting clubs also coming within of duty of care and health and safety regulations.

So Parliamentarians face a polity in which at least for many 'sport is the ultimate super religion' which commands massive media attention. The State's two major newspapers, the *West Australian* and the *Sunday Times*, devote as much space to sport as to State, national and international politics. In this equation the pages of print given to horse-racing, trotting and greyhound racing can be regarded as a substantial extra although some would argue that this realm does not comfortably come within the ambit of a definition of sport. To complicate this question is the modern separate existence of a Ministry for Racing and Gaming, which carries an extensive responsibility for an industry which has many of its facets regulated by legislation. Sporting personalities are better known than most parliamentarians with the possible exception of the Premier. What is apparent, too, is that many sporting stars are more universally admired than most parliamentarians.

So how many parliamentarians have been able to ride into Parliament on the back of their sporting reputations? Has this strategy failed for some? Are there others, too, who have been sporting journalists and sporting administrators, who may have been able to use the medium of sport for political advancement? An attempt will be made to identity the most obvious examples of such parliamentarians. However, there is one real difficulty in making calculations of this nature-the curriculum vitas of many members do not differentiate between those who are actively involved in sport and those who, because of their duties and expectations as parliamentarians, are simply nominal participants, holding positions such as club patron. Even more difficult is the identification of those who have been able to apply recreational and artistic attributes to their political careers. What can be said, though, is that of over 850 members (by June 2009) elected to one or other Chamber (and, in some cases) following responsible government in 1890, almost half have been documented as having been associated in some form or other with sport.

Halls of Champions

The list of parliamentarians in Western Australia over the years who could be classified as sporting stars or even champions is comparatively limited. One measure of classifying such members is to tabulate the number who have been inducted into the Western Australian Hall of Champions or its Australian counterpart. However, others deserve consideration because they have been entered into the annals of sporting associations as State representatives, winners of major events, members of prominent teams and even key office holders. Of course there are vast differences between the sports as to how they have recognised their champions, founders and administrators.

By nearly every measure, the most exulted sportsman to have entered the Western Australian Parliament has been billiards champion, Bob Marshall. He was world champion in 1936, 1938, 1951 and 1962, and on 22 occasions between 1936 and 1990 he was Australian amateur billiards champion of Australia. At various times he was the

holder of a host of amateur billiards records. As late as 1993, at the age of 83, he won Masters billiards and snooker titles. In recognition of this, Marshall was admitted as a foundation member of the Western Australian Hall of Champions in 1985 and in the same year he was made a member of the Australian Hall of Fame. In June 2000 he carried the Olympic torch just four years before his death. Earlier his name had been honoured by placing his name on a plaque in the footpath of St. George's Terrace. He was the foundation President of the Western Australian Division of the Sportman's Association of Australia.

Yet, while Marshall was at the top of his sport for decades he only had one term in the Legislative Assembly between 1965 and 1968 as the Liberal member for Maylands. In 1968 he again contested Maylands. Having won the seat from Labor in 1965, he sought re-election in 1968, but even though the Brand government was again returned to power, Marshall lost his seat to future Labor Speaker John Harman. His best billiard days were behind him but he had been an active business man having owned a dry cleaning service before becoming a squash court proprietor. Moreover, he could boast a war record in the RAAF and valuable support to the Maylands Royal Institute for the Blind. Politics, though, is obviously a different contest which requires a 'different 'game plan'. At the same time it has to be conceded that billiards is not a major sport with a huge public following.

The same could not have been said about Australian Rules Football and the profile enjoyed by Jerry Dolan who was inducted into the Western Australian Sporting Hall of Champions. A schoolteacher by profession, Dolan taught in schools in the Fremantle area for forty years, and after winning a by-election for the Fremantle-based West Province in June 1963, Dolan remained an MLC until his retirement in 1974, serving as a Minister in the Tonkin Labor Government for the last three years of his term. A tall, slender centre-half forward and ruckman, Dolan played sixteen seasons in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) from 1923 to 1938, 11 with East Fremantle and five with East Perth. He played a total of 199 league games and 10 games for Western Australia. Even more illustrious was his record as a premiership captain and later coach for seventeen seasons. Dolan also achieved three successive wins against arch rival Victoria and took East Fremantle to a record 35 straight wins, including an unbeaten 1946 season, the only time this feat has been achieved. Ironically, when Dolan's team held for a narrow win in the 1946 grand final, the defeated West Perth coach was future Liberal politician Ross Hutchison. It was also the year that William Kitson, who had been a Labor MLC from 1924, was awarded life membership of the East Fremantle Club before his departure in 1947 to become Agent General for Western Australia.

Whether Kitson had much political association with Dolan is unknown. Dolan joined the Labor Party at 19 years of age, even before he had completed his teacher training at Claremont Teachers College in 1922 and 1923. In a long teaching career, beginning in Kalgoorlie but mostly in the Fremantle area, he taught both Kim Beazley (senior) and Kim Beazley (junior). As a long time secretary of the East Fremantle branch of the Labor Party, he rarely missed a meeting and in the fulfillment of these duties he had frequent contact with John Curtin and as early as 1933 he was the campaign manager for John

Tonkin. When the latter became Premier in 1971 at 69 years of age, the one year older Dolan, was appointed to the Police and Railways portfolios, before a short period as Education Minister.

After his WAFL career Dolan coached football at Aquinas College. Moreover, despite his commitments to football and education he was a devoted Catholic, rarely missing the Sunday 7 a.m. mass. In his maiden speech on 14 August 1963 Dolan, called for greater investment in education and presented a strong case for smaller class numbers. In this speech he also underscored his teetotaler approach to life when he complained that outlays on liquor consumption greatly exceeded those for education.³³ Upon leaving the political arena Dolan was reported as saying 'I've never really been a politician in the true sense of the word'.³⁴ Knowing the value of team spirit and unity he attempted to avoid political in-fighting but he began his first portfolio as Police Minister controversially. He caused a furor, and censure from the ALP State Executive, when he crossed the floor in December 1971 to vote for an Opposition amendment to exempt police officers from investigation by the Ombudsman. Interesting, too, despite his long service to the Labor Party and his reputation as a fine footballer and doyen of coaches his election to Parliament was twice thwarted by his failure to gain Labor Party pre-selection. Dolan's football profile probably assisted in his by-election victory as this took place just before universal franchise and compulsory voting in the Legislative Council, but it did not appear to 'cut much ice' within in the Labor Party. In his Obituary published in *The West Australian* it was labeled 'Minister, Football Hero and a Man of Integrity'.³⁵

When Jerry Dolan coached Western Australia to two home victories against South Australia in 1946 with Stan ('Pops') Heal as captain they probably did not realise they would be in the same Labor Party team in Parliament some 17 years later. Heal was eventually to win entry to the Western Australian Sport Hall of Fame after having been inducted into the Western Australian Football Hall of Fame. In March 2009 he gained legend status. Back in 1940 Heal was runner-up in the Sandover Medal and in 1941 he had the remarkable fortune of being a member of winning grand final sides for Melbourne and then a week later for West Perth. This feat, never achieved by another player, was made possible by war-time regulations. After the war between 1947 and 1952 he was captain-coach of the strong West Perth team which won premierships in 1949 and 1951. In 1950 he was captain-coach of the State team for the Brisbane Carnival. However, Heal was not to continue as a football coach although he assumed committee responsibilities at West Perth. Unlike Dolan he stepped almost immediately into politics winning the seat of West Perth as early as 1953. At only thirty-three years of age Heal's public profile was a formidable factor in his defeat of incumbent Liberal MLA and Lord Mayor of Perth, Sir Joseph Totterdell. However, although Labor was in power from 1953 to 1959 Heal was not able to gain appointment to the Ministry, although in any case rapid promotion was rare in those times. He moved to the seat of Perth in 1962, and was initially able to resist the swing to the Coalition but eventually he lost his seat at the 1965

³³ WAPD (LC), 19 August 1963, pp. 270-275.

³⁴ *The West Australian*, 27 December 1986, p. 30.

³⁵ *The West Australian*, 27 December 1986, p. 30.

election. Football helped his entry into politics but it did not mean enough for him in the longer term for him to retain his place in the Parliament.

As with Bob Marshall, a beneficiary of the improved Liberal Party performance at the 1965 election was Ross Elliott, who like Heal was a Western Australian Football Hall of Fame member. However, as was the case with colleague Marshall, Elliott was to serve one term in the Legislative Assembly as he was unsuccessful in defending Canning at the 1968 poll. Elliott played only two league games for West Perth in 1949, but it was as prominent sports journalist rather than as a player that he made his name.

As a sports features writer Elliott was widely known in the sports industry with his work including coverage of the Commonwealth Games in 1962. His founding of the *Football Register*, which was published virtually continually from 1964 to the 1990s, was a boon for football followers through those years. However, it was perhaps his role as a television panelist that gave him a public profile and once he was elected to Parliament, he lost the advantage of this exposure. In this sense, ironically, his election to Parliament reduced his profile, but he suffered with other Liberal candidates, including Rhodes Scholar and future Commonwealth Attorney General Peter Durack, who won marginal seats in 1965 when the Brand Government peaked in popularity but lost them in 1968 when the Brand Government progressively lost ground in the lead-up to its narrow defeat in 1971.

Maybe, though, Elliott was cast as being a sports spokesperson without possessing the prestige of being a champion in his own right. Very few sports writers, even political writers, have made the transition to Parliament, although in 2005, John McGrath, a renowned and award winning sports' journalist at the *West Australian*, won the seat of South Perth. This victory had followed the retirement of the high profile 'Independent Liberal', Phillip Pandal, himself a respected journalist-but of the political mould having worked at one stage as press secretary to Sir Charles Court and other Ministers before entering Parliament in 1980. Interestingly, in his Inaugural Speech McGrath evoked the memory of John Curtin as a former journalist and was proud that his two children, David and Erin, were both journalists. Given his journalistic background, it is not surprising that in referring to facilities in his electorate, he mentioned the Clontarf Aboriginal College, currently running programs in driver education, creative arts, general studies and sports skills, including a first class Australian Football Academy, with graduates of which sometimes entered the Australian Football League .³⁶

Sporting Packages

One parliamentarian whose record as a sportsman, as well as a sports business proprietor, professional coach and publicist, was sufficiently broadly based to make a public impact was Arthur Marshall. He first entered Parliament in 1993, defeating the sitting Labor member for Murray by a few hundred votes after having cut his political teeth in the 1990 by-election in Fremantle that launched the parliamentary career of future Attorney General Jim McGinty. Following an electoral redistribution, Marshall was comfortably

³⁶ WAPD (LA), 31 March 2005, pp. 184-185.

re-elected for the new seat of Dawesville south of Mandurah in 1996 and 2001. Throughout his years in Parliament, Marshall invariably maintained a sporting perspective in his parliamentary speeches and from 1997 to 2001 served as a Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation.

Although Marshall played league football for East Fremantle, was a state table tennis player and an A grade squash player, tennis was his forte. Marshall was a state ranked tennis player who played at Wimbledon in 1955 and 1956. His playing tennis days never really finished and as a veteran he was still able to win his share of trophies. For the East Fremantle Tennis Club he was a past president and life member, having also been past president and life member of the Veterans Tennis Association (now called Tennis Seniors) and the Tennis Professionals (Coaches) Association. Again he was awarded life membership of the East Fremantle Football Club and played a role as founder and Chairman of the Peel Football Club. His awards included an Australian Sports Medal in 2000 as well as a Centenary of Federation Medal in 2003 and an Order of Australia award in 2006. Before entering Parliament Marshall ran a sport's business and was widely known as a tennis coach for many schools, including Wesley College which he had attended as a schoolboy. For twenty five years he worked on the sporting panel for Channel Seven and for a similar period wrote a newspaper tennis column. Marshall, could be epitomised as the sporting package, perhaps like no other Western Australian parliamentarian.

Another Western Australian parliamentarian who was the recipient of the Australian Sports Medal in 2000, and whose life was encompassed with sport as both a player and administrator, is Terry 'Tuck' Waldron. Educated at Hale School, he later farmed at Kojonup, and became a sports development officer with the Western Australian Country Football League. He played league football for Claremont (twenty-nine games) and South Adelaide and was a first grade cricketer with Claremont-Cottesloe, Willetton and Kensington in South Australia. Apart from his exploits as a country footballer and country cricketer, particularly at Kojonup he became widely known for his performances as a member of the Western Australian Country Cricket X1 for twelve years and captain of the Australian Country X1 for three years.

Given his profile as a sportsman and sporting administrator it was not surprising that the National Party sought his endorsement for the seat of Wagin in the Legislative Assembly when it became known that Bob Wiese, a former National Party Minister, was to retire and would not stand for the 2001 election. Waldron succeeded and comfortably won again in 2005, after which he became Deputy Leader of the National Party and not surprisingly one of his parliamentary roles to that date was experience as a Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation. Then when the National Party formed an 'Alliance' to gain government in 2008 Waldron was named as the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Not surprisingly, too, around the Parliament he soon became known as a 'good bloke' and a 'good team-man', attributes that are often associated with country team sporting people. Sport, though, had been his main avenue to Parliament, rather than long stints in country shires fighting country causes.

The Football Factor (and Sometimes Cricket and Tennis)

Apart from attempting to identify champion footballers of the past who have gained election to Parliament an additional question is frequently asked 'Who has played league football? Two researchers, Steve Davies and Greg Wardell-Johnson, have compiled detailed statistics on records of league footballers in Western Australia (see Appendix One). Wardell-Johnson has specifically focused on the topic of parliamentarians and football. Of course the prestige associated with playing league football was not as great when the Western Australian Football Association was first formed on 8 May 1885 with the first quartet of teams being Fremantle, Rovers, the Victorians and a schoolboys team. However, the early years of the competition were characterised by several changes in the structure and the league and its teams. Like the colony itself its course of development was uncertain.

Some members of Parliament in the early years were associated with the administrative establishment of the sport. However, there were several other members who actually played some 'league' games in the early years of the football association. For instance Fred Monger, the MLA for York from 1890 to 1914 (with two short breaks), played for the Rovers for two seasons in 1885 and 1888. He had probably learnt his football in his school days at Wesley College in Melbourne. Of course his father John Monger, who was a nominated member of the Legislative Council from 1890 to 1892, after previously been an elected member of the Legislative Council from 1870 to 1875 in pre-football times, was interested in sport, holding the distinction of being a foundation vice-president of the Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA). Other parliamentarians who played for Rovers in the late 1880s, were Ernest Henty briefly an MLC in 1894 and 1895; Edward Angelo long serving MLA for Gascoyne from 1917 to 1934 and then MLC from 1934 to 1940, and Joseph Langsford, an MLC from 1904 to 1911. It is also thought Arthur Gull, an MLA for Swan from 1905 to 1908, played for Rovers as well as Victorians.

In the category of parliamentarians who played for the teams that later became long established in Western Australian league football are 'Jack' Hardwick and Alexander McCallum. Hardwick, an MLA for East Perth from 1904 to 1921 (with a break from 1911 to 1914), played for West Perth in 1891. He has also played for Metropolitans and the Western Australian Football Club. McCallum, an MLA for South Fremantle from 1921 to 1935, had earlier played sixteen games for the Fremantle Football Club in 1899, before representing West Perth and then South Fremantle. Thomas Duff, who was briefly an MLA for Claremont from 1918 to 1921, also played two games for West Perth in 1899.

There is little evidence to suggest that the early band of league footballers were able to convert their football exploits into political gain. In fact, early biographical registers of parliamentarians does not reference such experiences. This contrasts with a contemporary parliamentarian, Trevor Sprigg, a local league football hero and competent cricketer who was able to utilize his football profile to help win the Legislative Assembly seat of Murdoch for the Liberal Party at his first try in 2005. Although Sprigg had long retired from the game after 152 games for East Fremantle and six more State games for Western

Australia from 1967 to 1970, plus a stint in Tasmanian football he effectively retained his football links as a radio broadcaster. He also was also Chairman of Selectors for the West Coast Eagles in their first 1992 premiership. In his Inaugural Speech Sprigg even likened the floor of the Parliament to the charged atmosphere of the coaches' box at an AFL match. In the same speech Sprigg gave special mention to Simon Black and Ben Cousins, who had both won Brownlow Medals in the AFL, as they were products of his district and the East Fremantle Football Club. He expressed delight at being allocated the role of Shadow Spokesperson for Sport and Recreation and told the Chamber that sport had taught him 'the life values' that 'he held dearest': this is, loyalty, passion, mateship and working towards a common goal'. Moreover, he said 'no one should be denied this'. At the same time Sprigg contended that with the aging population community facilities were needed for recreational facilities 'so that people can have a swim, a gym work-out, a game of badminton, tennis or squash, or even just walk the dog in some circumstances'.³⁷ Tragically Sprigg, despite his commitment to recreation and fitness, was to suddenly die of a heart attack at Fremantle Hospital on 17 January 2008 at 61 years of age. Later on the same day his presence in the Liberal Party room had been expected to vote in a party leadership challenge.

On the other side of the ledger in terms of a possible electoral advantage flowing from football, Peter Spencer, a prominent and highly successful league footballer was unable to convert an illustrious football career into winning a parliamentary seat. Spencer had won two Sandover Medals in 1976 and 1984, as the fairest and best player in the Western Australian Football League. He had also played in the Victorian Football League (VFL) in 1981 and 1982 and represented Western Australia on several occasions. Spencer retained his football profile as a radio commentator of league football. However, for all that Spencer was unable to dislodge Independent Phillip Pandal from the South Perth seat when the two went head to head in 1996 with Spencer as the official endorsed Liberal candidate.

Spencer is not alone in failing to win a seat in Parliament after winning prominence in avenues of sport. Brian Foley, a champion West Perth premiership ruckman who was a Sandover medalist and a Football Hall of Fame member was a Liberal Party candidate for the seat of Mount Hawthorn in 1974. Although the Coalition was returned to government with Sir Charles Court as Premier, Foley was unable to win despite the fact that the district could largely be considered as the supporter base of the West Perth club.

Similarly, another big name in football during the same era, Perth premiership football coach Mal Atwell, sought to win the seat of Clontarf for the Liberal Party at the 1971 election. However, on that occasion the general swing was towards the Labor Party. On that occasion, though, the general swing was towards the Labor Party. A few years later at the 1977 election, prominent sports broadcaster, George Grljusich, who played a dozen games for South Fremantle, was an unsuccessful candidate for the seat of Cockburn.³⁸ The Grljusich family were well known in the Cockburn area but as a Liberal Party

³⁷ WAPD (LA), 31 March 2005, pp. 186-187.

³⁸ See Don Hyde with Jim Main (2005), *Beyond the Call: Great Commentators of Australian Football*, Prahan: Hardie Grant Books, pp. 103-107.

candidate he faced a very difficult task in a Labor stronghold. Interestingly, years later Grljusich was to recall that but for an episode in which the militant action of a group of waterside workers had inflicted economic loss on his father's onions production, he may have been a Labor candidate.

A sporting profile, though, was also inadequate for by John Watts, from the East Perth club, when he unsuccessfully attempted to win the seat of Maylands as the endorsed candidate for the Liberal Party in 1962. Maylands, was in fact, won by Bob Marshall at the following election. Interestingly Watts made his his quest for Parliament before his football career was given a boost by being a member of the 1963 Geelong premiership team during a 52 game career in the VFL from 1963 to 1965. Upon his return to Perth Watts was also prominent in commercial radio and had business interests but his did not again stand for Parliament. In fact, though, very few Western Australian parliamentarians had VFL or AFL experience. Tom Fox played 10 games for Carlton in 1902. After moving to Western Australia and holding the posts of President and Secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation, Fox became the Member for South Fremantle in a by-election in 1935 holding the seat until his death in 1951. Surprisingly for such a long term sitting member with VFL experience he did not appear to play a prominent role in either the South Fremantle or East Fremantle clubs.

One short term country parliamentarian who had a fine football and cricket record was Dexter Davies who played fourteen games of league football for East Fremantle (14 games) and first grade cricket for Claremont-Cottesloe. Moreover, he played for the Country XI and for Wyalkatchem he had an outstanding record in cricket and football, also winning a state blazer in amateur football. In his final year at Wesley College in 1968 he was a state athletics champion. He later gained a Bachelor of Business and acquired extensive farming and business experience. In 1989, 1996 and 2001 Davies unsuccessfully sought a seat for the Agricultural Region in the Legislative Council, after having filled a casual vacancy in August 1998. It could of course be contended that, despite being President of the Party from 1990 to 1998 and holding other party posts, being a candidate on the National Party group ticket deprived him of individual electoral appeal. However, his big electoral opportunity came in 1993 when he stood as the National Party candidate for the farming seat of Moore. Alas! The experienced Liberal Party incumbent, Bill McNee, easily retained the seat. Davies, with formidable credentials including an impressive sporting career, could make no impression with the voters. However, at the 2008 election Dexter Davies' daughter, Mia Davies at the age of 29 years was to gain election to the Legislative Council for the Agricultural Region as a National Party candidate. Before Mia Davies could assume her seat on 22 May 2009 she had to survive a Court of Disputed Returns decision but she carried into the Parliament an interest in participating and watching sport, including membership of the Fremantle Dockers Club and playing social netball.

One former VFL player who did remain active in the football scene, and other sports, and then served twelve years in Parliament after moving to Western Australia was Tom McNeil. In 1951 and 1952 McNeil played eight games with St Kilda in 1951 and 1952 and subsequently played with and coached teams in Victoria, New South Wales and

Queensland and Western Australia. Interestingly in 1955 Tom McNeil attempted to form a union of players of the Victorian Football League (VFL) and the Victorian Football Association (VFA). It was called the Australian Football Players' Union. However, the union was disbanded following an unsuccessful attempt to gain registration before the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration.³⁹ First elected to the Legislative Council in Legislative Council in 1977 not as a Labor candidate but instead running for the National Country Party, McNeil defected to the breakaway National Party in 1978 and held the seat until his retirement in 1989. At one stage McNeil was secretary of the Great Northern Football League and played a founding role in the Western Australian Player's Association. His sporting memberships included the WAFL, WATC, WATA and the WACA and was patron of several Geraldton sporting clubs and Chairman of the Racecourse Development Trust. McNeil memberships were not confined to sport as he also very active in the fishing industry. In Parliament he was active in the emerging committee system of the Legislative Council and was Chair of the 1983-84 Select Committee on Sport and Recreation which had wide terms of reference moved by McNeil himself. Interestingly one of the Committee members was Liberal MLC Colin Bell who had a very different range of interests including the Capel Pony and Pollocrosse Clubs. Some of Bell's inputs to the Committee would have been derived from the understandings he had gained as the son of Florence Bell, who was a former State Ladies Golf Champion. For Bell, though, he did not convey a dedicated sporting perspective comparable to his colleague McNeil.

Ray McPharland, was another farmers' party member who was also a sportsman with strong football and cricket credentials, as well as being an 'avid golfer'. He was the MLA for Mount Marshall from 1967 to 1983. During his political career he was a member of a plethora of farming organizations and rose to be Leader of the Country Party. He was briefly Deputy Premier and Minister for Agriculture in 1974 and 1975. He played 28 games of league football with East Fremantle in 1938, 1939 and 1941. As the first grand final in 1938 against Claremont was tied, he had the unusual experience of also playing in the replay which his side unfortunately lost. During his war service he was on Carlton's league list in 1942 but was ill when his best chance came to succeed.⁴⁰ When posted back to Western Australia he played again for East Fremantle and later played many years of country cricket, having played pennant cricket for North Fremantle in the 1938-1939 season. As a 'stonewall' batsman he achieved outstanding batting averages in country cricket.⁴¹ Sport it seemed was always an important facet of his life. It is likely, too, that McPharland and Country Party colleague, Bill Young, who represented the seat of Roe from 1967 to 1974, would have swapped many football (and cricket) yarns. Young played a league game for Claremont in 1945 but was later a member, as well, as

³⁹ Brian Dabschech (1990), 'Out of bounds': the 1955 Australian Football Player's Union', *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 27, November, pp. 32-39.

⁴⁰ Walter Raymond McPharlin, Rona Edith McPharlin and notes supplied by Ian McPharlin (1992), Interview with Erica Harvey, WA Parliamentary Library Project and Library Board of Western Australia, p.7.

⁴¹ Walter Raymond McPharlin, Rona Edith McPharlin and notes supplied by Ian McPharlin (1992), Interview with Erica Harvey, WA Parliamentary Library Project and Library Board of Western Australia, p. 66.

Chairman of the Kondinin Road Board between 1954 and 1967. For a long time the Kondinin club was a force in wheatbelt football. Young, too, was a competent cricketer. Of interest is the record of a photograph of Bill Young and Ray McPharland opening the batting for the parliamentary cricket team in 1969 against South Australia.⁴²

Another league footballer who later played wheatbelt football was James McMillan (Jim) Brown who played three league games for South Fremantle in 1949 when that team was rising to greatness. First elected in 1971 as a Labor candidate for Merridan-Yilgarn Jim Brown was defeated three years later by future National Party leader and Deputy Premier Hendy Cowan. Thereafter he returned to hold a Legislative Council seat from 1980 to 1989. With recreational interests including bowls and golf, Brown was known as a 'people's parliamentarian', a label sometimes also given to Mick Nanovich, who played ten league games for Subiaco in 1952. Nanovich, who held Toodyay for the Liberals from 1974 to 1977 and Whiford from 1977 until his defeat in 1983, was, a champion amateur footballer winning the Essex Medal for the Amateur Association in 1951.

In still more recent times, Doug Shave, who won the marginal seat of Melville in 1989 and then after a redistribution remained in the Legislative Assembly until 2001 as the member for Alfred Cove, was a highly competent sportsman, having played three games of league football for Claremont in 1968 and A grade cricket with North Perth and represented Western Australia in table tennis. His numerous ministerial posts in Richard Court's Coalition government included Sport and Recreation but unfortunately his portfolio of Fair Trading led to his entanglement in what became known as the 'Finance Brokers Scandal'. It is speculated that Shave's loss of Alfred Cove in 2001 could largely be attributed to his handling of this issue. Shave, it should be remembered, had a reputation, second to none, for his energetic door knocking and local campaigning strategies. Perhaps his sporting days had provided him with an understanding of the value of 'personal contacts' although it could be contended that his extensive business background in real estate, insurance and the hotel industry were also significant.

One of Shave's senior colleagues in the Richard Court Coalition Cabinet was Hendy Cowan. As the long time Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1974 to 2001 Cowan did not reach the levels of league football or A grade cricket, but he was prominent in several sports in his Merriden-Yilgarn wheat belt district. He held various posts at Narambeen in football, tennis, golf and basketball clubs. As captain coach of the Narambeen Football Club he won several premierships and later awarded life membership. Sport undoubtedly gave Cowan prominence in his district but once he became leader of the National Party in 1978, and Deputy Premier in 1993, sport was of secondary significance to a politician with a statewide public profile.

Nevertheless, Cowan's experience is a further reminder that prominence in country sport can be significant in rural electorates. Indeed the list of parliamentarians who could be included in this category is comprehensive. At the same time it is difficult to be fair about

⁴² Walter Raymond McPharlin, Rona Edith McPharlin and notes supplied by Ian McPharlin (1992), Interview with Erica Harvey, WA Parliamentary Library Project and Library Board of Western Australia, p. 65. See also p. 61. Photograph of Ray McPharlin at Parliamentary Bowls Carnival 1988.

who should be tabulated in this group. Perhaps when Michael ‘Mick’ Murray won the seat of Collie for Labor by a mere thirty four votes over incumbent National, Dr Hilda Turnbull, at the 2001 election, it is likely that his election review would have attributed some weight to his comprehensive sporting links including his coaching premierships achievements of local football teams. As well, the thirty seventh Parliament which sat from 2005, included Murray Cowper, elected as the Liberal member for Murray. He could clearly point to his extensive involvement in sport as well as policing. Cowper in his younger days played for the Perth Football Club

Liberal MLC, Bruce Donaldson was another long serving rural parliamentarian, from 1993 to 2009) with a strong country sporting base. Donaldson, first elected in 1993 to represent the Agricultural Region, had been captain coach, and later president of the Koorda Football Club and was involved in the town’s bowls, golf and basketball clubs. Similarly, Murray Criddle, MLC, who represented the Agricultural Region for the National Party from 1993 and was Minister for Transport in the Richard Court Coalition Government from 1998 to 2001, had captained cricket and football teams in the Geraldton district. Sport was definitely one of his first stepping stones to community involvement which later also included the Farmer’s Federation and executive membership of the Course Grains Council.

Another Minister in the Court-Cowan government, namely, Paul Omodie, also had strong local sporting links, especially football. Before election as the MLA for Blackwood in 1986 Omodie was a very successful player and coach with the Southerners Football Club. Thereafter his plethora of community roles included the post of Manjimup Shire President and membership of the Manjimup Indoor Sports Pavilion Committee. An indication of the centrality of the Southerners Football Club to Omodie and his Warren-Blackwood electorate was his use of the ninety-second statement in the Legislative Assembly in September 2005 to congratulate the Southerner’s on their grand final success again underpins the store members place on their sporting involvement.⁴³ Elected eighteen months before Omodie was Barry House, a South West Region MLC who rose to be the President of the Legislative Council in 2009, who had been a member of the Australian school-boy cricket team that toured South Africa and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in 1967 and 1968, played first grade cricket for Claremont-Cottesloe and was chosen for the Western Australian Country X1. Later his administrative contribution to country cricket, including membership of the WACA Country Cricket Executive, was substantial.

One modern parliamentarian, with country origins who made a substantial contribution to sporting administration, namely football, was Ian Taylor. He was born in Kalgoorlie and following career as an economist and public servant won the seat of Kalgoorlie in a by-election in 1981. Taylor held this seat until 1996 during which time he held several ministries, became Deputy Premier and for nine months in 1994 was Leader of the Opposition after his Labor party lost office in the previous year. For a period in Opposition he was the Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation, as well as Racing and Gaming. At Eastern Goldfields High School Taylor began playing seniors with the Kalgoorlie City Football Club where his tall frame combined with a good leap gave him

⁴³ WAPD (LA), 22 September 2005, p. 5895

marking capabilities which when combined with running capacity made him a useful player. As the MLA for Kalgoorlie Taylor was Patron of the Kalgoorlie City Football Club and Board member of the Goldfields National Football League. Upon leaving politics he threw himself head-long into the football administration when in 1997 he was elected for a three year term to the Western Australian Football Commission (WAFC). At the conclusion of this term Ian Taylor was elected to the Board of the WA Country Football Executive League Authority after which in 2003 he was re-elected to the WAFC. Meanwhile from 2003 to 2005 he was Chairman of Indian Pacific Pty Ltd, as the company which was the principal shareholder on behalf of the WAFC for the West Coast Eagles. Thereafter in 2006 Taylor undertook the exacting task of chairing the WAFC Rezoning Committee for the Western Australian Football League (WAFL). This was the first occasion the entire State was zoned for WAFL Clubs. In 2008 Taylor completed his six year term on the WAFC but again served briefly on the Board of Peel Football Club when it ran into financial trouble at the end of 2008. Throughout this life time of football links Ian, with his wife Sandra, had been a member of the East Fremantle Football Club.

When John Hyde became the Labor Party member for Perth in 2001 after two years as Mayor of the Town of Vincent and president of the Australian Local Government Association it is doubtful that many voters in his district would have been aware of his sporting background derived from both his parents. Thus, his father John Hyde Senior, was a premiership player with Geelong in the VFL in 1951 and 1952, and subsequently had a term as captain coach of the WAFL team Claremont. While in the West he met and married Morna (nee Pearce), one of four sisters from a farming community in Moulyinning, all of whom played for Australia, and Morna herself captained both the Australian and Western Australian hockey teams.⁴⁴ Growing up in Victoria, the future Perth MLA was the 1967 junior hurdles record holder for that State and, in between fulfilling teaching, journalistic and theatre roles in Western Australia, John Hyde Junior proved himself to be a highly competent all-round sportsman and leader in football, cricket and tennis.

One dedicated and perceptive, cricket fan was Ray Young, who represented Wembley (later Scarborough) from 1971 to 1983. After resigning in 1976 as Cabinet Secretary when Sir Charles Court was Premier he eventually became a Minister in the Court and then O'Connor governments. Before entering Parliament Young played first grade and other grades for the University and Subiaco Cricket Clubs. Then when in Parliament he was the foundation President of the amalgamated Subiaco and Floreat Cricket Club. He was an immensely popular President who knew the game and understood the politics of cricket and sport. One of Young's predecessors as President of the Subiaco Cricket Club, was Hugh Guthrie. For most the span of Guthrie's time as the Member for Subiaco from 1959 to 1971, he was also President of the Subiaco Cricket Club. Of course from 1968 to 1971 Guthrie had risen to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Earlier, from 1950 to 1955, Guthrie was also President of the Royal Kings Park Tennis Club and had a shorter period as Vice-President of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association. Guthrie

⁴⁴Interestingly, the four Pearce sisters were not related to the five Pearce brothers who migrated to Western Australia from India. The brothers all achieved selection in Australian hockey teams and four of the five played for Australia at the Olympics.

who was renowned for the old style stump politics, accompanied by regular ‘door-knocking’, regarded it as vital to be administratively involved in his district’s main sports.

In reference to tennis very few Western Australian parliamentarians can boast of reaching ranked status although the case of Arthur Marshall has been mentioned. Perhaps, then, only June Craig is deserving of mention as a representative player. As June Lynn she was a member of the Wilson Cup team in 1948 and 1949, in that era the most prestigious junior State tennis team for women. In both 1947 and 1948 she had a State ranking as junior player.⁴⁵ After election to the Legislative Assembly in 1974 she was only the second woman in Western Australia to become a Minister.

The poor level of tennis honours is in contrast to the number of members who register tennis club membership and interest in the sport. A typical example in the register of members for the thirty seventh Parliament was Terry Redmond the National Party member for Stirling. He had been the tennis club captain in both Morowa and Denmark. In Denmark he was also a committee man at the golf club. As a recent national survey placed tennis second to AFL football in a measure of popular sports⁴⁶ it is not surprising to observe that many of parliamentarians, both ministers and backbenchers, attend sessions of the annual Hopman Cup tournament. In more recent Parliaments Rhonda Parker, a Liberal MLA from 1994 to 2001 and Minister for Children’s Services, Seniors and Women’s Interests as well as being the Minister responsible for Drug Strategy, was a competent tennis player. She was also interested in netball and basketball. Barbara Scott, a Liberal MLC, from 1993, who has held numerous shadow portfolios, was also a very capable tennis player. Prior to her election and during her time in the Legislative Council she was also very active in rowing administration, including a role as the founding chair of the Aquinas Boat Club from 1991 to 1993.

Two ‘south of the river’ Liberal parliamentarians who both became Ministers and who had close links to tennis were Richard Lewis and Mike Board. Lewis was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1986 and became a Minister in Richard Court’s government after the 1993 election. He was a member of the Applecross Tennis Club who was given the honour in 1995 of launching the publication by Harry Phillips titled *Tennis West: A History of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association from the 1890s to the 1990s*.⁴⁷ Other sporting interests which Lewis upheld included badminton, rowing, the East Fremantle Football Club and foundation membership of the West Coast Eagles Football Club. Colleague Mike Board was first elected in 1993 for Jandakot, then Murdoch in 1996, when he became a Minister. For three years, from 1978 to 1981, he was President of the East Fremantle Tennis Club during which time he captained winning pennant teams and won a trophy for the most improved player. However, this was just the tip of Board’s achievements in a range of sports. He had shown promise at school in New

⁴⁵ Harry Phillips, *Tennis West: A History of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association from the 1890s to the 1990s*, Sydney: Playright Publishing, p. 345.

⁴⁶ See *The Australian*, 12 January 2006, p.1.

⁴⁷ Harry Phillips, *Tennis West: A History of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association from the 1890s to the 1990s*, Sydney: Playright Publishing.

South Wales where he was a member of the first eleven cricket team and rugby team, in addition to being captain of the tennis team. He also won some boxing titles, played golf and was a later a member of the South Perth, then East Fremantle Yachting Club. Remarkably he also competed in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. For both Lewis, and particularly Board, participation and membership in sporting clubs was an important component of their electoral links.

In his days as a school teacher and principal in the Pilbara region Norman Moore was President of both Tom Price Tennis Club (1975) and Laverton Tennis Club (1976). First elected to the Legislative Council in 1977, and later holding the Sport and Recreation portfolio, together with a host of other portfolios in the Richard Court government, Moore played a role in the negotiations for the building of the Tennis Centre at Burswood in the central business district. Other sporting interests pursued by Norman Moore included golf and life membership of the Murchison Racing Association. Indeed when Norman Moore was Minister for Sport and Recreation he commissioned a review of physical education programs in Western Australian schools. When published in March 1994 the report contained a host of recommendations to enhance physical education and ensure the availability of resources and facilities for future physical education and sport.⁴⁸ In this portfolio Moore played a major role in the development of sport in Western Australia.

A parliamentarian who shared with Norman Moore, the title of Father of the House and a life long commitment to sport was Colin Jamieson. The later was from the other side of politics and the 'other place', the Legislative Assembly. Elected as early as 1953 before retirement in 1986, Jamieson's main service was to tennis and football. In tennis he was a member of the Bayswater and then Belmont tennis club from 1953 for the period of all of his parliamentary service. He held a range of administrative posts and was a delegate to Tennis West even after he had been the Labor Leader of the Opposition from 1976 to 1978. In his youth Jamieson played amateur football with Midland as early as 1946. He then sustained his commitment to amateur football holding a number of executive posts and was honoured with life membership of the Western Australian Amateur Football League in 1958. Later, in 1971, Jamieson had been presented with a certificate of merit for his services by the National Football League. For such a football enthusiast, but lesser so for tennis, it may surprise some that Colin Jamieson was a member of several horticultural societies who had success exhibiting roses, dahlias and chrysanthemums. Sport, particularly tennis and football, together with flowers, were important to Jamieson maintaining his community links.

Another long serving tennis enthusiast in the Parliament was Liberal MLC, Bill Stretch. As a farmer at Moberup in the South West of the State, Stretch was both President and Secretary of the Moberup Tennis Club. At nearby Gnowangerup lived Monty House, to be a National Party Minister during his 1986 to 2005 span in the Legislative Assembly. In addition to tennis at Gnowangerup Monty House was also active in the Gnowangerup Bowling and Golf Club. Participation in golf days throughout the span of his rural

⁴⁸ A Report on the Review of Physical Education in Western Australian Schools (Les House, Chairperson) (1994), Perth: Office of the Minister for Education.

electorate were regarded by House as an effective means of broadening his electoral contacts. As a first eighteen footballer at Guildford Grammar School (and first eight rowing stroke) he supported the East Perth Football club in the WAFL. Then, like many of his generation who developed VFL affinities, House supported a Victorian Club Carlton when brilliant East Perth Aboriginal half forward Syd Jackson moved east in 1969 to play for Carlton.⁴⁹

Another National Party member who entered the Parliament in the same year as Monty House was Max Trenorden. He remained for longer and was very active in cricket and golf circles and was President of the Northam Recreation and Sports Advisory Council. In 2009 Trenorden moved to the Legislative Council but maintained his sporting interests including the regular attendance at West Coast Eagles' matches.

One tragic, and unexpected, intersection of politics and sport occurred in 1984 when the Western Australian Parliament lost Gordon Atkinson at forty-three still an active sportsman. As a farmer in the Dalwallinu district Atkinson had been president and captain of the Dalwallinu Tennis Club and Squash Club. He was also secretary and treasurer and later president of the Moore District Tennis Zone. And his sporting spread also included a secretary role for the Moore Cricket Club and committee man of the Dalwallinu Sports Club. Atkinson had been a member of the Legislative Council for only fifteen months when he died in August 1984 while playing squash, only hours after leaving a parliamentary session.

Atkinson did not live long enough for a sporting facility in Dalwallinu to possibly be named in his honour. However, long serving Tom Bateman the MLA for Canning from 1968 to 1986, had his service to sport and the community recognised by the Gosnells City Council with the naming of the Tom Bateman Sporting Complex at Canning Vale as the home for Western Australian baseball. Earlier he had been the first president and life member of the Thornlie Football and Cricket Clubs and later was a member of the parliamentary bowls team. Without doubt sport was an important means by which Bateman maintained contacts with his electorate although a listing of other community contacts exercised by the World War 11 veteran was quite exhaustive.

Another parliamentarian who had a sports facility named in his honour was Jack Hietman. First elected to the Legislative Council in 1963 Hietman was to die just before he was due to retire from Parliament in May 1977. One year earlier the Morawa football oval had been named the Jack Hietman Oval. He had been a long time president of the Moonyoonka Football Club and member of the Morawa Tennis Club and Bowling Club. Moreover, he regularly acted as a judge at local race meetings. Coalition colleague HW 'Mick' Gayfer had similar ties to the sporting community in another wheatbelt town of Corrigin although life membership was bestowed upon him rather than a pavilion oval or courts being given his name. As a member of the Corrigan Shire from 1955 to 1962 before in the same year becoming an MLA for Avon, followed by a long period as an MLC until 1989, Gayfer was an office bearer for many Corrigin sporting clubs. The list included football, cricket, tennis and golf. For the latter sport he held the presidency

⁴⁹ Comments by former MLA, Monty House, 11 February 2006.

before being granted life membership. In his later years he was President of the WA Goland Rowing Club and patron of the South Perth Bowling Club.

One high profile sporting administrator, awarded an Australian Sports Medal in 2000, was Andrea Mitchell. She had entered the Legislative Assembly at the 2008 poll. For more than a decade, from 1996, she had been President of Tennis West and had served on the Board of Tennis Australia for a similar period. From 2003 she had been a Hopman Cup Director. A physical education teacher by occupation Andrea Mitchell had held executive posts at the Department of Sport and Recreation. Tennis, too, gained another avid supporter on the same Liberal party side in 2008 with the Deputy Lord Mayor, Michael Sutherland, gaining a seat in the Legislative Assembly. Even as a Member he continued playing pennant tennis for the Mount Lawley Tennis Club in addition to other sporting links to the Royal Perth Yacht Club and both the Mount Lawley and Yokine Bowling Clubs.

Track and Field (Olympics)

While the first modern Olympics took place in Paris more than a century ago records indicate that only one member of the Western Australian Parliament has been an Olympian. Peter Watson, who first won the seat of Albany at the 2001 election competed in the 1500 metres 1968 Mexico Olympics. He was also chosen for the Commonwealth Games in New Zealand in 1974 after competing in the Pan Pac Games in Canada in 1973. As a measure of Watson's standing as an athlete his 1968 State residential record for the 1500 metres has not been surpassed. In 2005, after re-election for the Labor Party, he was made a Parliamentary Secretary assisting the Minister for Sport. This was not surprising given that Watson did not confine his sporting interests to athletics as he participated in local committees for tennis, cricket, basketball and netball. He was involved in other community activities and ran a newsagency business in Denmark for five years in addition to 35 years service for Australia Post. Prior to his election he had also conducted a recreation segment on local radio in Albany. Although not confined to sport it was integral to Watson's profile so much so that when the Liberal Party pre-selected their Albany candidate for the 2005 and 2008 election it was Andrew Partington, who played six league football games for Claremont in 1982 and 21 games for Swan Districts from 1987 to 1989.

Perhaps the most decorated Olympian in Western Australia's history was Shirley De La Hunty (nee Strickland). With eight Olympic medals, five of which were gold gave her virtual automatic entry into the Australian Hall of Fame and Western Australian Hall of Champions. In 2009 the stadium at the new athletics facility near Challenge Stadium was also named in her honour. On three occasions De La Hunty stood for the Legislative Council and once for the Legislative Assembly. Twice she also stood for the Senate and the House of Representatives. On most occasions these unsuccessful quests, which began in 1971 and continued for two decades, De La Hunty was an Australian Democrats candidate. She was a committed environmentalist with a very strong civic consciousness, who was prepared to criticise governments of all persuasions. A review of most of her election attempts, given that she did not occupy winnable spots on upper house tickets or

stood for a minor lower house party, would suggest that she viewed elections as opportunities to promote causes rather than holding realistic chances of gaining a seat in Parliament. As a well educated and articulate person De La Hunty recognised that her athletic prowess did give her status to play a civic role without necessarily being a parliamentarian.

One indirect link to the Parliament and Olympic glory was consummated at a by-election in March 2008 when Christian Porter became the MLA for Murdoch following the untimely death of Trevor Sprigg. Christian Porter, who within six months was to become Attorney General, was the son of Charles 'Chilla' Porter the Olympic high jump champion who competed for Australia at the 1956 Summer Olympics held in Melbourne winning the silver medal behind American Charles Dumas. He also won silver medals in the 1958 Commonwealth Games and the 1962 Commonwealth Games. 'Chilla' Porter also had a link to Western Australian politics as he was to hold the post of State Director of the Liberal Party. Christian Porter did mention this fact in his inaugural speech on 12 March 2008. Also highlighted was the fact that his grandfather had been State Director of the Liberal Party in Queensland, as well as being a minister of the Crown. Christian Porter made no claims to being an athlete.⁵⁰

Nevertheless there have been some other parliamentarians who could claim status as an athlete, without Olympic representation. At the same time it should be recognised that several champion schoolboy and schoolgirl champions elected to Parliament have probably not indicated the scale of their achievements. Just after federation Emil Nulsen who was a Member of Parliament for 30 years from 1932 was reputed to be a champion athlete. Anthony 'Lloyd' Loton, who rose to be President of the Legislative Council from 1954 to 1958, was the Public Schools Association 100 yards champion in 1921 for Hale School. Lloyd Loton it should be remembered was the grandson of Sir William Thorley Loton, who had served several terms as a member of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council before and after federation and had represented Western Australia at the constitutional conventions of the 1890s. He was a generous benefactor who gave Loton Park (Perth Oval come Equity Stadium) to the public as a major sporting ground. Joe Sleeman, the Labor Party member for Fremantle, for 25 years between 1924 and 1959, who was also Speaker for 12 years from 1939 to 1947, was a prominent athlete who later gave his patronage to the South Fremantle Football Club and became a life member of the Fremantle Trotting Club. Another parliamentarian, who had claims to be a champion athlete (and rower) was Robert Forrest, a nephew of John and Alexander Forrest, who had two terms as the Liberal Party member in the Legislative Council from 1946 to 1952.

One highly credentialed athlete who represented the State for a five year period between 1951 and 1955 on numerous occasions was Max Evans. This was after he had shone at Scotch College in athletics, hockey and tennis from 1943 to 1948, During the early fifties he was twice the 220 yards (200 metres) champion of the State. At the same time he won gold, two silver and three bronze medals in relay teams. Moreover, he was an A grade hockey player from 1949 to 1962, having later contributed administratively to hockey.

⁵⁰ WAPD (LA), 12 March 2008), p. 747.

Although national selection may have eluded the gifted Evans his son Peter was ironically a gold medalist at both the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow and the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane. For Max Evans, who was a Liberal Party MLC from 1986 to 2001 becoming a Minister for Finance as well as Racing and Gaming for much of Richard Court term as Premier from 1993 to 2001, it is nevertheless difficult to mount a claim that he could widely employ his record in sport for political advantage. Before he became a Minister he had a period as Shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation where his sporting links would have been useful. He was, however, a chartered accountant with the renowned Hendry, Rae and Court, had a lifetime of service to the scouting movement and an MBE for community service. These appeared to be the main pillars of Evan's political success.

Another parliamentarian who achieved state honours as an athlete was Philip Smith. For ten years, between 1983 and 1993, Phil Smith was the Labor MLA for the marginal seat of Bunbury. Turning to athletics in his youth Smith was prominent as a pole vaulter at the Bridgetown, University, Margaret River and Bunbury clubs. In 1964 and 1972 Smith was the State pole vault champion and then in 1982 he won the Australian veterans pole vault championship. At various stages Smith held virtually all the administrative positions in Margaret River, Bunbury and South-West Amateur Athletic bodies. He was an organizer, foundation president and life member of the Bunbury Districts Little Athletic Centre. Other sporting interests including playing, coaching and administration in hockey and participation in basketball and skindiving. In the later sport he was also a state and Australian champion and life member. Indeed Smith's sporting credentials were formidable. This was both as a champion in his own right and this was coupled with decades of service to sport. As a well qualified school teacher in several south-west schools, including the holding of many senior administrative posts, Smith's also had membership in a host of community organizations. Perhaps Smith's need to focus on holding the marginal and 'bell-weather' seat of Bunbury militated against him gaining ministerial ranks. Sport, though, was a key component of his contacts with his electorate.

One avenue for Olympic selection, which has since been modified, was to be a crew member of a winning Kings Cup rowing eight. However, no Western Australian parliamentarian had the fortune to be a member of such a crew but some could claim rowing success. North Fremantle MLA, Denis Doherty, who was a Forrest supporter during his term in the Legislative Assembly from 1897 to 1903, was reputed to be a champion oarsman. Thomas John 'Diver' Hughes whose parliamentary service spanned from 1922 to 1943, with a gap from 1926 to 1933 did row for Western Australia in the 1914 and 1920 Kings Cup regattas. In the same era, Henry Stephenson, a Nationalist MLC, was an active Fremantle rowing club member, who had been a one time champion sculler of Tasmania. In 1930 John Hearman, who later entered the Parliament in 1950 as the Liberal Party member for Blackwood, rowed in the Kings Cup after a very successful club season. Following distinguished war service and memberships in the Dairy Farmers Association, Farmers Union and Pastoralists and Graziers Association, Hearman rose to be Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for nine years between 1959 and 1968. However, despite Hearman's early commitment to rowing he did not return to a prominent role in the sport.

On the other hand, Barry MacKinnon was a parliamentarian, who rowed in the 1967 Kings Cup and then was a lightweight fours representative in 1969 and 1970, but later played a significant role as both a participant and administrator in a range of sports. Elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1977 MacKinnon was briefly a Minister before Labor won office in 1983 and then had a long stint as Liberal Party Opposition Leader from 1986 to 1992. As an accountant with C.P. Bird his involvement in community affairs was stupendous including roles in rotary, Wesley College Council, various committees on speech and hearing and inaugural Chairman of both the Disabilities Commission and the Fire Brigades Board. After retirement from politics MacKinnon had a major administrative role in Australian rules football. After a period as a Western Australian Football Commissioner from 1994 to 2001 he became Chairman of the Commission for two years. He was succeeded as the Chairman by Ian Taylor, a former Deputy Labor Premier, who was an MLA for Kalgoorlie from 1981 to 1996. While Taylor was an Eagles' fan Mackinnon was a 'Docker' and from 1994 to 1998 was Chairman of the Fremantle Football Club (the Dockers). Furthermore, MacKinnon's football involvement was always prefaced with membership of the Subiaco Football Club. Given that MacKinnon could also claim to be a keen sailor and surfer he could be described as a person who had an abiding interest in sport.

While MacKinnon had a stupendous interest in a spectrum of sports, both major and minor, as a participant and leading administrator John Caldwell was a parliamentarian who was deeply involved in the sport of rifle shooting but not in an Olympic category. The sport befitted his rural farming background and his period in the Legislative Council was as a representative of the Agricultural Region (1989 to 1993), preceded by South Province (1986 to 1989). Caldwell represented Western Australia on five occasions in rifle shooting, three times as captain. In 1979 he was captain of the WA Rifle Shooting team which defeated Great Britain and in 1975 and 1980 was the recipient of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. In the later year he also received the Grand Aggregate Award with his record also indicating numerous club champion titles. As well as being a leading performer Caldwell also gave many years as an administrator including the office as President of the Great Southern Rifle Association and President of the Albany and Wurgabup Rifle Clubs. It is also interesting to note that for 40 years John Caldwell engaged in concert and dance bands. Not many parliamentarians include this in their repertoire but it can be imagined that, like rifle shooting, it could be an asset, particularly in rural politics.

Rifle club membership for 57 years, of the Darkan club, was a credential that Country Party MLC, Tom Perry, could document during his twenty two years in the Legislative Council from 1965 to 1977. Like many country members Perry also held many positions in local cricket, football and tennis clubs. Long term membership of the Geraldton Rifle was also a feature of the career of Bill Sewell a long standing Labor member for Geraldton from 1950 to 1974. Sewell, as with Perry, had active links with a range of sporting organizations including cricket, football, bowling and the turf club. Both Sewell and Perry served in the Parliament before a comprehensive State shooting facility was built at Whiteman's Park in Perth's northern suburbs in the mid 1980s. Murray Nixon, a

Liberal MLC for the Agricultural Region, was a member of the Board of Management for the Whiteman's Park complex.

Cycling

Some cycling events are part of the Olympic calendar but no Western Australian parliamentarian has gained Olympic selection in this manner. Len Bolton, who was Mayor of East Fremantle during World War 1 before serving a long period as a Nationalist MLC from 1932 to his death in 1948 represented the State for 11 years at cycling. In addition Bolton was a State lacrosse player (1902) and later a State representative in bowls (1912). Stan Dellar, a Labor MLC from 1971 to 1977, was another parliamentarian who had been a road and track cycling competitor. He was also a champion yachtsman. Another Labor MLC, Claude Stubbs, who like Jerry Dolan was a Minister senior in years in John Tonkin's government from 1971 to 1974, was in his younger days an active cyclist who competed in road and track cycling. Stubbs did confess he 'wasn't very much at football and wasn't very good at cricket, so [he] thought at least [he] might be able to do a bit of good healthy sport, and also owning a bike would certainly assist [him] to get around...'⁵¹. Significantly, when speaking of his pre-selection at the age of 57 years before his election as an MLC in 1962 he indicated 'I think I was in everything: I was in aged care, I was in football, in cricket, I used to assist in the Police Boys Club, I was a foundation member of the club and a life member, you name it and I was in it. So that popularity got me through'.⁵² While Stubbs competed in the popular Beverley to Perth road race and won a big race in 1922, the Northam to Beverley and back, he did not win a 'State Guernsey'.

Richard Sampson, who was the Country Party MLA for Swan from 1921 to 1944, had close ties with cycling. His long service in Parliament was matched by his 21 years as Chairman and subsequently life member of the Western Australian League of Wheelers. Another more controversial figure who had links with cycling was Harry Marshall, who had his Legislative Council seat declared vacant in 1894 owing to bankruptcy. Marshall was also a committee member of the Fremantle Rowing Club and Fremantle Football Club. On one occasion he was involved in a riot at the Fremantle ground and was jailed overnight before being sentenced a few years later in Geraldton for larceny. Marshall's occupation as a publican and cordial manufacturer obviously made him a target as a patron for sporting clubs.⁵³

Basketball and Other Sports of the Past and Future

One sport which was not on the horizon at federation, but has grown in popularity, is basketball. The parliamentarian with the most credentials in basketball is clearly Don

⁵¹Robert Henry Claude Stubbs (1997), Interview with Criena Fitzgerald: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p.24.

⁵² Robert Henry Claude Stubbs (1997), Interview with Criena Fitzgerald: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p.52.

⁵³ Geoffrey Bolton (2005), 'Harry Marshall: A Fremantle larrikin politics,' *Fremantle Studies*, Vol. 4, pp.1-7.

Taylor. As the Labor MLA for Cockburn between 1968 and 1984, a Minister, including a period as Deputy Premier, during the Tonkin government, Taylor was a member of the State Basketball team from 1952 to 1959. At a time when universities awarded full and part blues for excellence in various sports Taylor was the recipient of a full blue. Apart from his achievements as a player Taylor also dedicated time, from 1959 to 1961, as the organizing secretary of the Amateur Basketball Association of Western Australia. In the future it is likely that more basketballers, both men and women, will be elected to Parliament. Mike Barnett, a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from 1986 to 1993, who played a role in improving parliamentary recreational facilities during his Speakership, was active in basketball in his Rockingham electorate. In fact, John Bowler, is an example of a more recently elected member with basketball ties. Returned for the seat of Eyre in 2001, Bowler was a Minister in the Gallop Labor Government as early as February 2005 and by November of the same year he was the Minister for Sport and Education. In his home town of Kalgoorlie Bowler served as president, coach, committee man, and ultimately life member, of the Olympians Basketball Club. He was also a member of the Coolgardie Rifle Club from 1996. His sport would have assisted his local profile he was very active in a range of community groups. Importantly, too, he was a journalist with the *Kalgoorlie Miner* for a decade from 1970 followed by 17 years as an ABC broadcaster.

Both rugby union and rugby league are older sports which have more recently gained a much bigger share of the sporting market in Western Australia. Frank Moorhead who had the misfortune to lose his Attorney General post in 1901 as a consequence of defeat at a ministerial by-election, had the distinction of being a rugby international for Ireland, but it does raise the question if there any link to his sufferance after 1897 of locomotor ataxia. Distinguished Liberal Party MLC Ian Metcalf, who was also Attorney General between from 1975 to 1983, also played A grade rugby, including membership of the 1940 premiership team. Before his entry into parliament in 1968 and career as a barrister and solicitor Medcalf had also won a half blue for rowing and was later a member of the Cottesloe Golf Club. This sporting record would have pleased Medcalf's father, who at one stage was concerned that his son at Scotch College was turning into a 'book worm'.⁵⁴

Another Liberal Party member with an A grade rugby record with Cottesloe, University and Associates was Jim Clarko. He also played cricket, tennis and golf. Long time memberships included the WACA, the Claremont Football Club as well as Karrinyup Country Club as well as the surf clubs in his electorate. Sporting people would contend that Clarko had some 'real world' politics training to be a Minister and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from 1993 to 1996, with his term as a State Schoolboy Rugby Union selector. Undoubtedly known to Clarko would have been Kevin Minson, who was a member of the 1963 state schoolboys rugby team. Minson was later from 1989 to 2001 the Liberal Party Member for Greenough, and for a period a Minister in Richard Court's Government.

⁵⁴ Hon. Ian George Medcalf (1994), Interview with Erica Harvey: Battye Library and Western Australian Parliamentary Library Project, p.11.

Another parliamentarian with interests in rugby, and several other sports, was Gordon Masters. A Liberal Party MLC from 1974 to 1989, he held ministerial portfolios from 1980 to 1989. In his younger days Masters was involved in rugby, boxing and athletics and later became a keen golfer, fisherman and yachtsman. Indeed reference to yachting sports is a reminder that a sprinkle of parliamentarians have held an interest in the sport. One of the most notable was Sydney Stubbs, who was the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from 1930 to 1933. When he first entered the Legislative Council in 1908, before becoming an MLA from 1911 to 1947 he was very active in local government as both Mayor of Claremont and Mayor of Perth. One of his endeavours was a role in the founding of the Claremont Yacht Club. Another Presiding Officer who later had yachting links was Clive Griffiths, who in 1997 broke a 20 year record as the longest serving President of the Legislative Council. Griffiths was a most active member of the South Perth Yacht Club. Other sporting arena roles included being President of the WA Weightlifting Association and WA Gymnastics Association as well as life membership and patron of the Perth Football Club Junior Council.

When Phil Edman entered the Legislative Council as a Liberal Party member on 22 May 2009 for the same South Metropolitan Province that Clive Griffiths had represented it was unlikely that he would render the long service of the former President. What Edman did share with Griffiths was membership of the South Perth Yacht Club. In fact Edman had won a Club Championship at the Yacht Club. Also part of his record was a year as Treasurer of the Cruising Yacht Club. Another South Metropolitan Liberal who entered the Legislative Council on the same day was Nick Goran who was a water sports enthusiast. He had represented the Gosnells Club at the Aussie Masters' Swimming Championships in Canberra in 2006 bringing home silver and bronze medals.

Recently the Parliament has witnessed the election of members who have achieved State representation in Gaelic football. Paul Andrews, who was first elected for the Labor Party for the Legislative Assembly seat of Southern River in 2001, represented Western Australia in Gaelic Football in 1974, 1975 and 1977. Meanwhile, colleague John D'Orazio, also first elected in 2001, and then elevated to the Ministry in 2005 was a member of the all Australian Gaelic Football team in from 1977 to 1980. Indeed in 1978 D'Orazio was voted as the Sportsman of the Year at Curtin University of Technology and during the period from 1973 to 1979 was a member of the top cricket team from the same university in the Suburban Turf Association.

Some of the contemporary parliaments have included other members who were active in a range of sports beyond the more traditional football, cricket and tennis. One parliamentarian of the modern era who ensured that he maintained strong links with the sporting community in his electorate was Ernie Bridge. In 1986, six years after first being elected to the Legislative Assembly as the Member for Kimberley, he became the first Aboriginal Cabinet Minister in Australia. Despite being well known for a record number of bush ballad records and membership of the Stockman's Hall of Fame, he forged links with a range of sports. As a jockey at the age of 15 he won Halls Creek Cup in 1955. Later he was President of the Hall Creek Allsports Club and had maintained memberships of local golf and small bore rifle clubs.

Pharmacist John Bradshaw, who was a Liberal MLA from 1983 for long enough to be 'Father of the House' before retirement from the Murray-Wellington seat in 2005, was a keen amateur squash player. At the same time he did retain his links to football with a committee role in the Harvey-Brunswick Football Club. Liberal party colleague, Graham Kierath, a Minister, in the Court Government, was very active in squash as the captain of the Rossmoyne Squash Club and then a regular competitor in Masters Squash. While Kierath had many sides to his spectrum of interests, including executive membership of the WA Orchid and Study Conservation Group, one of his key contributions to community sport and health was the part he played as a minister in promulgating anti-smoking occupational health regulations. This policy of gradually extending the restrictions on smoking was continued by the Gallop Labor Government when it came to power in 2001. Mark McGowan, briefly Recreation and Sports Minister in the Gallop Labor Government in late 2005, in addition to a range of portfolios including Tourism and Racing and Gaming, shared with Kierath a commitment to eradicating smoking in public places. He was also a squash player who had participated in the 1982 Australian Junior Squash championships.

When there was a change of Labor premier in January 2006 from Geoff Gallop to Alan Carpenter the Sport and Recreation portfolio was transferred from Mark McGowan to John Kobelke. Questions were immediately asked about the sporting prowess and interests of the latter. In response Kobelke indicated that he was a member of the West Coast Eagles Football Club who attended matches when time permitted. He could, however, point to his period as both a secretary and player for the Associates Water Polo Club from 1970 to 1972, although this was long before his election to the Legislative Assembly in 1989. In the Legislative Council at the time of Kobelke's election was Mark Neville, another Labor colleague who had been active in water polo with membership of the powerful Melville Club as well as the Kambalda Club. As a Mining and Pastoral Member region member Neville had sporting ties to the Pink Lake Country Club (Golf) and the Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Norseman Race Clubs. Later, a Labor MLA for Kalgoorlie from 1996, Megan Anwyl, was a member of the Goldfields Women Water Polo team and Amateur Water Polo Association. Megan lost her seat at the 2001 election as did Mark Neville, who had during his last term resigned from the Labor Party to sit as an Independent.

Upon Neville's electoral demise John Fisher was elected in 2001 as an MLC for the Mining and Pastoral region for the new One Nation Party. Fisher also brought to the Parliament a keen involvement in polo having been President of the WA Polo Association from 1996. During an Asian business sojourn he was coach of the Singapore Polo Club from 1989 to 1991 and then General Manager of the Royal Pahrang Polo Club. As a competitor Fisher captained Singapore in several international polo tournaments as well as captaining WA in the Australasian gold Cup polo competitions. Fisher was to resign from One Nation and subsequently lose his seat in the Legislative Council in the 2005 election. An earlier MLC from 1965 to 1971, who like Fisher went to Guildford Grammar School and also had polo credentials, was Edward House. A farmer at Gnowangerup, with extensive service in the RAAF, House was a member of the State

Polo team in 1956. Nevertheless, the records also indicate that Michael O'Connor the MLA for Moore from 1901 to 1904 as a prominent polo player who was captain of the Perth Polo Club. O'Connor was also described as a prominent cricketer. Later Sir William Bovell, a long time Liberal Party south west MLA and Minister, was Patron of the WA Polocrosse Association (a modified version of polo), in addition to being a life member of the Bunbury Race Club and member of the Geographe Bay Yacht Club.

Generally, though, polo and polocrosse has not been a pastime pursued by many parliamentarians. What is surprising, though, is that a higher number of parliamentarians in Western Australia have not recorded more ties with surf life-saving given that this sport has such a tradition of service and is so closely associated with ideals of a healthy bronze Aussie appearance. In fact surf life saving was not classified by many as sport but rather as a humanitarian and volunteer safety service with an assumption of 'duty of care' for surf bathers. Many parliamentarians who have been elected to local government authorities, or represent electorates in coastal areas of the State have made contributions to the surf life saving cause. Long serving George Cash fits into this category. As both a Liberal MLA and MLC, who was both a Minister and President of the Legislative Council (1997 to 2001), he was a strong supporter of the Western Australian Surf Life Saving Association. The Alexander Tennis Club was also in his sporting patronage which was centred in his Mt Lawley seat when he first entered Parliament in 1984.

Alan Carstairs was another Liberal MLC from the same North Metropolitan region as George Cash. Carstairs sitting time in the Legislative Council was confined to early 1997 but his sporting ties were extensive over a life time. While in Parliament he was a member of the Mullaloo Surf Club although in his younger days he had an impressive record as a football player and coach. At one stage he won a fairest and best award in the Sunday Football League. In the Legislative Assembly Chris Baker was another northern suburbs Liberal party member who was a patron of the Surf Life Saving. Indeed his one term in Parliament from 1996 was featured by membership of numerous sporting clubs including wrestling, rowing and rugby union. A similar record of sporting club membership, including active participation and featuring surf life saving, was held by Murray Montgomery, a South West Region National Party parliamentarian from 1989 to 2001. Montgomery's sporting resume included the Albany Surf Life Saving Club and the Narrikup Cricket Club. Later he had links to the Albany Netball Association, the North Albany Football Club and the Fremantle Dockers.

Reference to the Fremantle Dockers is a reminder of a Western Australian team that has often struggled for success. However, the story has been very different in both men's and women's field hockey. National championship victories have been common place with many Western Australia's also gaining national and Olympic selection. One of the great players and decorated coaches produced in Western Australia was a medical doctor Dr Ric Charlesworth. In fact in the hiatus between his playing and coaching days Charlesworth was a Labor member of the House of Representatives between 1978 and 1985. The Western Australian Parliament, though, has never had amongst its ranks a state or Australian hockey player. For a sport with a formidable participation rate it is surprising how few parliamentarians record links with hockey. Interestingly Florence

Cardell-Oliver, the MLA for Subiaco from 1936 to 1956 as the first women minister in Australian politics, as part of her formidable range of community activities had ties with the Western Australian Women's Hockey Association. As mentioned Max Evans, MLC, was an A grade hockey player. Bill Marmion elected as a Liberal member for Nedlands to the Legislation Assembly in 2008 was also able to indicate that he had been President of a city hockey club for five years.

Fred Riebeling, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly from 2001 to 2004 was first elected to Parliament in 1992 as the Labor MLA for Ashburton, played high standard hockey and was very active in the administration of the sport. At one stage he was the President of the Nickel Bay Hockey Association. Riebeling's sporting prowess was well known in the corridors of Parliament. For instance challenging him to a game of pool was a recipe for defeat. Moreover, Riebeling's successor to the Speakership, National party member Grant Woodhams, had a sporting bent. First elected for the seat of Greenough in 2005, before winning the redistributed seat of Moore at the 2008 poll, he had the remarkable record of completing ten marathons. One unusual interest has been dirt track racing, for which he has acted as a photographer, written stories and undertaken some commentary in keeping with his radio broadcasting past. He has also been involved in an official capacity at some State and Australian Championships. Another of Woodham's sporting interests has been his support for the Subiaco Football Club. The club recognized this following by nominating him as a Vice-Patron. Yet another MLA sharing the Subiaco Vice-Patron role was Dr Graham Jacobs who had become the Minister for Water and Mental Health in the 'Alliance' government led by Colin Barnett. Jacobs, too, like Woodhams, had been a long distance runner in the past.

The holder of one of the longest records as both a player and administrator in hockey was Ivan Manning, who was also a Liberal Party MLA of long duration between 1950 and 1974. Manning was a life member of the Harvey Men's Hockey club with a playing record that spanned from 1946 to 1970. In addition he held a long association from 1950 to 1968 with the Uduc cricket team and links with other sporting teams including the Murray Rifle Association. And another country MLA who had extensive sporting ties, based on life membership of the Marist Hockey Club, was David Smith, the ALP member for Mitchell from 1983 to 1996. As a junior Smith won State representation as an athlete and later also held membership of both the South Bunbury and Carey Park Football Clubs.

A Labor MLA, John Troy, who only served one term as the Member for Fremantle from 1977 to 1980, was an active hockey player with the North Fremantle Hockey Club. He was also a member of the Fremantle Sailing Club and Sea Kayak Club. In terms of sailing Troy had followed in the footsteps of Harry Fletcher his predecessor in the Fremantle seat from 1959 to 1977. Fletcher was a member of the Swan Yacht Club and Fremantle Yacht Club. Fletcher was also a member of the South Fremantle Football Club. Some years later in 1990, Jim McGinty was also to hold South Fremantle membership, to which he added the Fremantle Dockers Football Club which first fielded an AFL team in 1995. McGinty, like Troy, could also speak of hockey origins as he had played the sport at University. In the Parliament from 2001 McGinty was to be a leading

Minister and in the same parliament a new One Nation member in the upper house Paddy Embry also could speak of his hockey (and cricket club) membership in the country town of Boyup Brook. It is a reminder that sport readily crosses party, religious, country and metropolitan boundaries.

Surprisingly a resume of the sporting links of Western Australian parliamentarians provide very few references to netball. In part this can be explained by the past absence of women in Parliament. Indeed, despite the scale of netball participation the sport does not have a major facility beyond the Matthew's Centre in Wembley. However, Janine Freeman, elected as the Labor member for Nollamara in the Legislative Assembly at the 2008 election had been a member of the Smith's Crisps under 16 State Netball team in 1980. Sponsorship, even on a small scale was very rare in the 1980s for women's sport, but the introduction of a Trans Tasman women's netball competition including the the West Coast Fever team just prior to Janine Freeman's entry to Parliament may help change the sponsorship situation and possibly lead to the eventual building of a netball stadium.⁵⁵

Another newcomer to the Legislative Assembly at the 2008 election was Lisa Baker. Before winning the seat of Maylands for the ALP Lisa Baker had a high profile as the Chief Executive Officer of the Western Australian Council of Social Service. She brought to the Parliament the experience of being the past President of the Dressage Committee of Western Australia and membership of the Equestrian Federation of Australia (WA). Moreover, she had credentials as a dressage judge according to National Judging Accreditation conditions.

Parliamentarians, though, across the political spectrum have rarely had strong links with the sport of boxing.⁵⁶ However, one parliamentarian who was said to be 'a pretty handy boxer' was Tom Butler who was an MLC from 1986 to 1995 and President of the ALP from 1980 to 1990. The authority on his boxing credentials was Ray Clohessy, a colleague from the Building Workers Union, who also sought to emphasise that when the pair joined up in some action against employers, 'he was the good conciliator, I was the abrupt one'.⁵⁷ Another former Labor colleague who was the State ALP Secretary and future Senate President, Michael Beahan, also recalled that Tom Butler was 'a top lawn bowler and a stalwart of parliamentary bowls competitions' organized by the Parliamentary Sports Club.⁵⁸

Parliamentary Sports Club

The interest that parliamentarians held in sport was reflected in the formation of the Parliamentary Sports Club. Its foundation date is not known as it operated for many years

⁵⁵ Janine Freeman's father, Arthur Freeman, played 32 games of league football for West Perth between 1962 and 1964, See Brian Atkinson (2008), *A History and Comprehensive Statistical Analysis of the West Perth Football Club 1885-2009*, Joondalup: West Perth Football Club.

⁵⁶ One rare link to sport was Joe Francis, who was elected in 2008 as a Liberal Party member to the Legislative Assembly for the seat of Jandakot. He played ice-hockey for New South Wales.

⁵⁷ Len Findlay (2006), Trade Union Official Rose to Presidency of ALP, *West Australian*, 6 June, p.51

⁵⁸ Len Findlay (2006), Trade Union Official Rose to Presidency of ALP, *West Australian*, 6 June, p.51.

on an informal basis and was known as the Parliamentary Sports and Social Club. There is evidence that cricket matches between parliamentarians and members of the Press Gallery were played as early as the 1930s. Regular interstate parliamentary bowling carnivals were held in the 1960s as the availability of free rail travel for members and spouses meant that such visits could be conducted at a low cost to the Members participating.⁵⁹ Occasional tennis and golf matches have been organized against leading clubs. There are also records of yachting days and ten-pin bowling evenings. Billiards, too, has sometimes been organized although this game was often played informally within the Parliament's facilities.

Interestingly in 1997 when the Club received an invitation letter from Soccer Australia to participate in a Parliamentary Soccer Carnival, it was agreed to respond in the negative.⁶⁰ Very few parliamentarians had registered an interest or involvement in soccer (football) with Sam Piantadosi an outstanding exception. As a Labor (then briefly Independent) MLC from 1983 to 1996, Piantadosi had membership at various times with the Azzurri Soccer Club, Victoria Park Soccer Club, Rosemount Juventus Soccer Club and the Bayswater Inter Soccer Club. It is likely, though, that the growth of soccer (football) on an international and national scale will lead to more members having links with the so-called world game. One sign of this development was the election of Tony Krsticevic for the seat of Carine at the 2008 election. He indicated he had held several administrative positions in 'football' including President of the Gwelup Croatia Soccer Club, the Balcatta Soccer Club and the Carine Football Club.⁶¹

Nevertheless the annual meetings of the Parliamentary Sports Club over several decades were not always well attended as clearly some parliamentarians preferred to focus their sporting links with their constituents or found the demands of parliament left limited time for their own sport. Sometimes, though, the parliamentary teams have been bolstered by parliamentary staff who have often held the post of secretary of the club and played leading roles in the administration of events.⁶² The minutes of the club reveal that it has often toyed with adopting a suitable tie, blazer pocket, hat-band or club badge. Regular concern has been expressed about the poor standard of the surface at the Parliamentary Tennis Court. At one stage in 1990 a motion was passed which sought the upgrading of the tennis court's grass surface to an all weather hard surface. At the same time an investigation was to be made as to the feasibility of lighting the tennis court and cricket practice pitch areas and whether a basketball goal post could be provided for members for both practice and exercise. At one stage the parking area near the grass court was an area where lawn bowls could be played.⁶³ Such facilities did not materialize although

⁵⁹ Bruce Okely (1991), 'The Fraternity of Parliaments', in David Black (ed), *The House on the Hill: A History of the Parliament of Western Australia 1832-1990*, Perth: Parliament of Western Australia, p.467.

⁶⁰ Parliamentary Sports Club Minutes, 23 October 1997.

⁶¹ Tony Krsticevic also became a Vice Patron of the Subiaco Football Club a role fulfilled by Katie Hodson-Thomas, his predecessor in the seat of Carine.

⁶² According to the available Minutes book secretaries of the Club are as follows: 1978-Ian Allnut; 1979/80-T. Howard; 1981-Ian Allnut; 1982/83-A.C. Rogers; 1984/85-A. Liveris; 1986-B.S. Calderbank; 1987-1990-John Mandy; 1991-Kirsten Williams; 1992-1996-Keith Kendrick; 1997-1998-Tamara Fischer; 1999-2002-Nigel Lake; 2003-2005 Kathy Hoare; 2006 onwards Andrew Lewis.

⁶³ The present Parliamentary Bowls Club (2009) uses the South Perth Bowls Club as its 'home ground'.

Parliament a few years earlier in had been provided with a gymnasium.⁶⁴ However, after the 1987 budget allocation for parliamentary improvements criticism was forthcoming in the media after it was revealed that a spa and sauna had been planned for the gymnasium complex.⁶⁵

With the onset of the 38th Parliament in 2008 the club had developed a structure whereby the President of the club is the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and the bowls captain position rests with the President of the Legislative Council. In August 2006 the jurisdiction of the Parliamentary Sports Club was transferred from the Legislative Assembly to the Parliamentary Services Department. The administration of the club is the responsibility of the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer which from 2006 had resided with Andrew Lewis, a senior member of the Library staff known for his support of the Western Bulldogs in the AFL and Claremont in the WAFL.

An Annual General Meeting of the club is held with the Honorary Secretary Treasurer responsible for completing an annual report with a financial statement for the benefit of all members. Such members are able to attend the meeting, and to suggest activities for the club to pursue. Regularly on the agenda is the parliamentary versus press cricket match, members golf days, tennis matches and various bowls fixtures. In 2007, a pool competition took place with the then Speaker, the Hon. Fed Riebeling MLA, winning the competition.

One of the features of the club's history has been its attempt to cater for the gradual increase in the number of women parliamentarians. Several of these women were demonstrating links to sport. Winifred Piesse, a National (Country) Party MLC from 1977 to 1983 was President of the Wagin Golf Association and member of the Wagin Bowling Club. Another MLC from 1993 to 1997, Labor's Val Fergusson was a committee member for netball, swimming and football clubs. Labor MLAs Jacquie Watkins (1983-1999), Diana Warnock (1993-2001) and Michelle Roberts, as a Minister and ALP State President (2000-2005) could all document numerous patronships with sporting clubs. At the annual meeting of the Parliamentary Sports Club on 4 December 1991 it was noted that the Hon. Beryl Jones MLC had become the first WA lady member of an Interstate Parliamentary Bowls Carnival team. At the same meeting Beryl Jones, supported by future Richard Court government minister Cheryl Edwardes, asked the club to investigate the possibility of having scarves available for lady members. Cheryl Edwardes, in the interests of greater participation by members of the Parliamentary Sports Club, asked that power-walking, pool-billiards as well as tennis be added as events.⁶⁶ In fact she was in favour of the conduct of an annual parliamentary tennis tournament. After retiring from Parliament at the 2004 election Cheryl Edwardes was a candidate for election in 2005 to the Western Australian Football Commission. This was very much a man's sphere of sport although some women had gained executive administrative posts in Australian football. Indeed much of the foundation of the sporting

⁶⁴ Parliamentary Sports Club Minutes, 29 June 1990.

⁶⁵ Harry Phillips (1991), 'The Modern Parliament', in David Black (ed), *The House on the Hill: A History of the Parliament of Western Australia 1832-1990*, Perth: Parliament of Western Australia, p. 220.

⁶⁶ Parliamentary Sports Club Minutes, 4 December 1991.

structure of the State had been associated with the predominantly male bastion of Parliament.

Sporting Association and Club Founders

As the founding of Western Australia's sporting associations often required negotiation with political authorities, particularly for the allocation of grounds and facilities it is not surprising the members of the Western Australian Parliament figured prominently in such histories, often playing a role for more than one sport. In the era when parliamentary duties were typically part-time as members were not paid until 1900 it was obvious that the men who exercised influence in the developing sports were also those who were prominent in the governance of the colony. Many also had a very keen interest in the various sports. The first secretary of the Western Australian Football Association (WAFA) in 1885, Walter James, was eventually between 1902 and 1904 Premier of the State. English born Edward Keane, an MLC who was also Mayor of Perth in 1891 and 1892, and Vice-President of both the WAFA and the Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA), was also prominent tennis court owner. In its first decade the WAFA had four holders the post of President were to be elected to Parliament. Apart from Keane, the first President was Barrington Wood, the Mayor of Fremantle who gained the seat of West Perth at the beginning of responsible government. Another parliamentarian to hold the post was E.F. (Everard) Darlot, who also endowed the Darlot Cup for interschool cricket between the prominent private schools, sat in the Legislative Assembly as the Member for Murchison. Remarkably at the same time he played league football the Rovers in the 1890 and 1891 seasons.⁶⁷ Another President of WAFA was Arthur Diamond, a South Australian businessman, who had earlier played a role in the establishment of the Norwood Football Club, became very prominent in the sporting, cultural and social life of the colony. Diamond's activities included the Presidency of the Fremantle Cricket Club, a committee member of the Fremantle Rowing Association and was one of several business men who were seeking the establishment of a racing club in Fremantle. Not surprisingly, after two unsuccessful attempts in 1894 and 1894, Diamond was elected to the Legislative Assembly seat of South Fremantle in 1901.

Another business man from South Australia was James Gardiner, reputed to be a highly competent cricketer. Two years after his arrival in the West in 1895 he was elected President of the WACA. After two years Gardiner stepped down as President, but later from 1906 to 1915, and then from 1917 to 1924 he was again President, having deservedly been awarded life membership in 1918. Gardiner was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1901 but lost his seat in 1904 before returning to Parliament in 1914 as the first leader of the Country Party. As Gardiner suffered from a hearing defect his brief period as Speaker in 1917 was fraught with difficulties. He was then appointed as Treasurer for two years, a Ministry he also remarkably held between 1902 and 1904. Clearly Gardiner's reputation as 'an iron-headed man of business'⁶⁸ was as useful to cricket administration as it was for the government of Western Australia. Cricket authorities must have believed that Gardiner's parliamentary attributes and influence in

⁶⁷ Correspondence with Steve Davies and Greg Wardell Johnson, 24 January 2006.

⁶⁸ Cited in Harry Phillips (2004), *Speakers and Presidents of the Parliament of Western Australia*, Perth: Parliament of Western Australia, p. 134.

the community were beneficial to cricket because Members of Parliament were prominent long term Presidents of the Association. For instance Thomas Draper, who was President of the WACA from 1924 to 1938 had been an MLA for West Perth and was Attorney General from 1919 to 1921. Then George Miles, who was an MLC from 1916 to 1950, was also President of the WACA from 1939 to 1951.

In fact for the first 65 years of the WACA's history from 1885 men with parliamentary experience held the post of President for 50 years of that time span. This statistic does not include the role of Harry Gregory, both a State and Federal Member of Parliament from 1897 through to 1940, who was the WACA representative on the Australian Board of Control for International Cricket from 1918 to 1931. For three seasons 1919-1920, 1922-1923 and 1926-1927 Gregory was Chairman of the Board, an interesting position for a journalist who published a tract in 1933 titled 'Why Western Australia Should Secede'. However, for a long time Western Australia was the 'Cinderella State' of Australian cricket. Western Australia did not enter the Sheffield Shield, the nations leading domestic first class cricket competition until the 1947-1948 season. It surprisingly won the tournament in its first season, although it played on a restricted program, contesting only four matches to the other States' seven.

The early history of the WACA does make reference to the reputation of Robert Bush who was a nominated conservative MLC member from 1890 to 1893. From 1875 to 1877, before coming to Western Australia Bush had played county cricket with WG Grace at Gloucestershire after being a champion school-boy cricketer and upon return to England held administrative positions in County Cricket. For a time he was Vice President of the WACA with his links to the local sporting establishment being cemented by his second marriage to the daughter of physician Dr Edward Scott, a Mayor of Perth from 1889 to 1891 and briefly an MLC. Scott, too, was himself a noted athlete, boxer and swimmer, who was also a WATC steward and one of the mainstays of the Turf Club Committee. Bush, shared his father-in-law's interest in racing and was a foundation member of the WATC. Of later relevance to the sporting culture of Western Australia was the fact that Dr Scott was a member of the Aborigines Protection Board from 1891 to 1897, but Robert Bush was criticized for his treatment of Aborigines. This is not mentioned to judge Bush by the standards of a latter era but to suggest that the founders of the sporting structure of Western Australia rarely appeared to embrace Aboriginal sportspersons. In recent decades this outlook has been dramatically reversed.

One of the early Presidents of the WACA (from 1901 to 1906) was Walter (later Sir Walter) Kingsmill. Later, too, he was twice President from 1911 to 1912 and 1914 to 1922 (and then life member in 1923) of the Western Australian Lawn Tennis Association (WALTA). In his younger days he even played a few games of football for the 'Victorians', a foundation team in the 1885 Western Australian Football Association. Kingsmill for a short time in 1902 was Acting Premier and later became President of the Legislative Council (1919 to 1922) before eventually becoming President of the Senate (1929 to 1931). Kingsmill was a strong believer in the payment of members as he thought that government and politics should never be looked upon 'as one of the recreations of

the rich'.⁶⁹ It followed that if Parliament was to 'mirror the people' its members should be adequately recompensed. In his view 'we cannot pay too much for good government' and he once pondered 'is there any career which should demand a higher type of intellect'.⁷⁰ Kingsmill probably thought that both cricket and tennis were sports that developed character, as well as health and fitness, common justifications for their inclusion in school curriculums. Tennis, in some of the capital cities and provincial towns of Australia was sometimes regarded a Protestant pursuit, surrounded by the business ethic, but in Western Australia the sport was very strongly promoted with a more egalitarian tone particularly in Catholic Schools and the WALTA, in both the metropolitan and country areas. In fact the founding father of the WALTA was Roland Kelsey, who was a *Hansard* reporter with the Parliament of Western Australia, not a leading landowner or business executive. It may also account for the fact that Kelsey was keen to promote competitive rather than social tennis.⁷¹ Later, it would have been a disappointment to him that Parliament itself had drawn into its ranks so few leading tennis players.

It was noteworthy, however, that Kelsey as the early Chairman, recognised the need for the political establishment to be a necessary component of the creation of a viable WALTA. The founding committees of WALTA included influential parliamentarians such as: Sir George Shenton, Septimus Burt (also a WACA trustee and former capable cricketer), Dr A.J.S. Saw (a leading surgeon), Dr Winthrop Hackett and S. H. Parker. Of Shenton it was said late in the nineteenth century no board or committee was complete without him.⁷² Of Hackett, as editor of *The West Australian*, it was contended 'he was a tireless propagandist for the role of sport' in fostering 'the vigour of the English nation... of which we are all justly proud'. Although Hackett was parsimonious with regard to government outlays for facilities it was his judgement that organized sport in the West was languishing behind the levels achieved in other colonies.⁷³ However, the real driving force for a range of sports was the popular S.H. Parker, who was also a champion for self government. Known as 'the people's Harry,' he was a champion amateur rider who won the 1865 Queens Plate and several other important races. Parker was the Honorary Secretary of the Western Australian Turf Club (WATC), a founding Vice President of the WACA and was a keen advocate for tennis. *The Morning Herald* newspaper, which had emerged during the economic and social transformation of the colony in the 1890s, gave coverage to sports such Australian football, cricket, cycling, lacrosse, swimming, athletics, soccer, rugby, lawn bowls and tennis, described Parker as 'the grand supporter of sport'.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ WAPD (LC), 5 September 1918, p. 176.

⁷⁰ Harry Phillips (2004), 'Sir Walter Kingsmill', in Ann Miller (ed), *The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate*, Vol. 2, 1929-1962, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, .p. 28.

⁷¹ Harry Phillips (1997), 'Tennis West: Conservatism in the Cinderella State', in Edwin Jaggard and Jan Ryan (eds), *Perspectives on Sport and Socie; Studies in Western Australian Studies*, Vol. 18, p. 99.

⁷² Brian de Garis (1979), 'George Shenton: The Merchant', in Lyall Hunt (ed), *Western Australian Portraits*, Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, p. 66.

⁷³ Cited in Anthony J. Barker (2004), *Behind the Play: A History of Football in Western Australia from 1868*, Perth: Western Australian Football Commission, p. 6. See also Anthony J. Barker (1998), *The WACA: An Australian Cricket Success Story*, St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, p. 19.

⁷⁴ *Morning Herald*, 23 May 1896, p. 2.

Some historians suggest that S.H. Parker was the only serious rival to John Forrest as Premier after responsible government was gained in 1890. John Forrest prevailed and even with the establishment of sporting organizations in Western Australia the Forrest name can not be ignored. Alexander Forrest, who was twice Lord Mayor of Perth in the 1890s as well as representing a Kimberley seat in the Parliament, was a very active committee man at the WATC which had been established in 1852 under the patronage of Governor Charles Fitzgerald. Alexander Forrest was responsible for the first Perth Cup in 1887 which he celebrated by buying a Melbourne horse, First Prince, which then picked up the stake money of 250 pound. By the 1890s it has been observed that the WATC had become a meeting place ‘for those in the colony who had social, economic and political power...the established colonial families who were often organized by marriage into tight social networks’.⁷⁵ Indeed ‘it was a frequent complaint...that it was more difficult to enter the WATC than to enter parliament.’⁷⁶ While the social exclusiveness claim may have been exaggerated some 20 per cent of the members of the first parliament in 1890 had links with the racing industry at a time when the male franchise was restricted for the lower house and the upper house was a nominated chamber. By 1930 the racing link of members had fallen to 15 percent with universal franchise the law for the Legislative Assembly and some property qualifications for the vote in the Legislative Council. By 2005, although there was now a separate portfolio for racing and gaming, encompassing, horse racing, trotting, greyhounds as well as lotteries and casinos, the number of parliamentarians suggesting racing ties had been lowered to some five per cent of the members.

When Premier, Sir John Forrest and his wife Lady Margaret, often went to the races. John had previously been a steward of the WATC for nearly twenty years.⁷⁷ However, his most direct and significant impact on sport was his recommendation to Governor Broome with the outcome published in the *Government Gazette* of 2 January 1890, just before his decade as Premier began, that the WACA be given a long lease on their playing field just east of the city. Later the WACA were able to convert the 999 year lease to freehold. A home ground, so close to the central business district, was a much more advantageous beginning for the WACA than other sports. Lady Forrest, was a leading patron of tennis and often played in the Government House handicap events and attended tournaments and functions. But the only tangible evidence of Lady Margaret Forrest’s support for tennis, was a ‘tenants at will’ arrangement for the Mount Tennis Club, later the Royal Kings Park Tennis Club. A century later some government assistance was granted to tennis for the creation of the Tennis Centre in 1994 at its Burswood location.

The emergence of tennis clubs in the 1890s, seeking grass courts, was closely associated with bowling clubs, which also sought grass rinks. The formation of the first bowling

⁷⁵ Richard Cashman (1995), *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p. 117.

⁷⁶ Richard Cashman (1995), *Paradise of Sport: The Rise of Organised Sport in Australia*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, p. 117.

⁷⁷ Frank Crowley, *Big John Forrest 1847-1918: A Founding Father of the Commonwealth of Australia*, Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, p. 75.

club in the central business district, which preceded the creation of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association in 1898, also witnessed the hand of Sir John Forrest as he was the inaugural President of the Perth Bowling Club. When the club was opened on 1 April 1896 on the Perth Esplanade, after having obtained a 99 lease, it was Lady Forrest who delivered the first bowl.⁷⁸ The clubs Patrons, Sir Alexander Onslow and Henry Saunders MLC, were in attendance.⁷⁹ Onslow was the Chief Justice of the Colony and had briefly, between 1881 and 1883, been Attorney General when he was a member of the Legislative Council. Henry Saunders was an MLC who had married into the influential Shenton Family, and between 1895 and 1897 was also Mayor of Perth. Saunders was also a member of the WATC, an interest he shared with both Sir John Forrest and Alexander Forrest.

Bowls still has close links to the Parliament as members from the various Australian Parliaments have for several decades conducted an inter-parliamentary bowls carnival during the Christmas festive season. This has drawn many parliamentarians into bowls who otherwise would not have links with the sport. Moreover, until recently the majority of leading State bowlers have generally been more senior in age this would preclude incumbent parliamentarians from devoting the necessary time to achieve championship status. One MLC who was known for his bowling credentials at the Cottesloe Bowling Club was Doug Gawler. In his younger days he had 12 years as the captain of the Fremantle Rowing Club and held interests in the Fremantle Hunt Club as well as the WATC. As a barrister and solicitor he was elected in a by-election for the Liberal Party in 1910 but died in 1915. In Parliament he was a driving force for the introduction of the proportional representation voting system⁸⁰ but it was not an era when sporting matters appeared in *Hansard*.

Other parliamentarians who have recorded a club interest in bowls include former Deputy Labor Premier Herb Graham and party colleague and Minister, Don May. Graham was a life member of the Osborne Park Bowling Club and the Forrest Park Bowling Club. May was President of the Manning Memorial Bowling Club and after retiring from Parliament in 1977 became an administrator of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association. Significantly, both Graham, who first entered the Legislative Assembly in 1943 and May later in 1962, held life long interests in football. Graham became a life member of the East Perth Football Club while May was at one time captain-coach of the Railways Institute team and an active promoter of junior football. Liberal Doug Cash, who had one term in the Legislative Assembly from 1968 to 1971 after also having one term in the House of Representatives from 1958 to 1961, was a founding patron and active member of the Yokine Bowling Club. He was also active in cycling, football (particularly as an umpire), horse racing and trotting. Another bowls enthusiast who had his service as a Labor MLA from 1953 to 1974, broken by an electoral wilderness from 1959 to 1968,

⁷⁸ Gil McDonald with W.S. Cooper and J.R. Hall (1998), *Bowls West: A Century History of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association 1898-1998*, Perth: Royal Western Australian Bowling Association, p. 2..

⁷⁹ Gil McDonald with W.S. Copper and J.R. Hall (1998), *Bowls West: A Century History of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association 1898-1998*, Perth: Royal Western Australian Bowling Association, p. 2.

⁸⁰ WAPD (LC), 6 August 1912, pp. 845-853.

was Stan Lapham. At various stages he was a member of both the North Perth and Doubleview Bowling Clubs.

One parliamentarian who deserves recognition as a sports founder was Hugh Leslie, a Country Party member who served for long periods from 1943 to 1961 in the Legislative Assembly and House of Representatives. As a co-founder and State President of what was previously known as the Spastic Welfare Association. Leslie then became President of the British Commonwealth Games Paraplegic Games Council and Chairman of the Organising Committee for the first Commonwealth and Empire Paraplegic Games, for Perth in 1962. Leslie, as a World War 11 veteran and active member of the Returned Serviceman's League (RSL) was injured at Tobruk in May, 1941 before he was forced to come back to Australia and have his right leg amputated. Despite this disability it was said 'he gave boundless energy to fishing, shooting and golf'.⁸¹ In 1976 he deservedly awarded an OBE in 1967 with his foundation work in disabled sports an obvious element of the honour.

Some Premiers and Sport

Sir John Forrest as Western Australia's first premier had links with sport. Some of the sporting activities of Walter James, a Premier soon after Forrest's departure have also been canvassed. After leaving Parliament James appeared to be more focused on the learned scene with the establishment of the University of Western Australia and the formation of the Law Society being two of his key projects. One source suggests that James played four seasons with Rovers from 1885 to 1889.⁸² However, Ken Tregonning in his Hale School history indicated that James 'had been an early member of the Metropolitan, later named Perth Football Club, and was cited by *The West Australian* (on 25 August 1890) as a former player of great skill and courage'.⁸³ On this basis Tregonning thought that James was perhaps the only Premier to have played league football, but this assertion overlooks a later Premier, namely Ray O'Connor, played for both South Fremantle and East Perth. George Leake, who was twice Premier for short periods before dying in office in June 1902 at the age of 43, was a keen cricketer who had a term as a Vice-President at the WACA. He was also interested in football and was an active member of the Turf Club.⁸⁴

The first Labor Premier for a year from August 1904, namely Henry Daglish, was not only a patron and supporter of the Subiaco Football Club, but he was also an active official. He had arrived from Victoria and was residing in Subiaco just as the club was established in 1896. The success of the club was important to him particularly as he was the MLA for Subiaco from 1901 to 1911 and was twice Mayor of Subiaco (1902-1904

⁸¹ David Black, 'Leslie, Hugh Alan', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 15: 1940-1980, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, p. 85.

⁸² Correspondence with Steve Davies, 25 January 2006.

⁸³ Ken Tregonning (1993), *Young Hearts Run Free, Hale School 1858-1988*, Wembley Downs: Hale School, p. 33.

⁸⁴ Anthony J. Barker (2004), *Behind the Play: A History of Football in Western Australia from 1868*, Perth: Western Australian Football Commission, p. 8 and Anthony J. Barker (1998), *The WACA: An Australian Cricket Success Story*, St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, p.24.

and 1907-1908). Daghlish, who served two separate terms as the President of the club 1903 to 1906 and 1911, and when Premier even starved off a bid to eject Subiaco from the WAFA competition.⁸⁵ By 1909, Daghlish's name had become synonymous with Subiaco to such an extent that a writer with *The West Australian* referred to the 'maroons' (the Subiaco colour) as 'Daghlishville', the team from the Daghlish suburb.⁸⁶ Apart from football it should be noted that Daghlish was also the foundation treasurer in 1899 of the Subiaco Bowling Club.⁸⁷ Years later when the Subiaco Football Club chose to honour what it termed its 'Diehards', Henry Daghlish was listed along with another State Premier, John Scaddan. The only other parliamentarian to be so recognised was Dr Tom Dadour, the Member for Subiaco from 1971 to 1986. Dadour was the club doctor and was made a life member in 1970 and club Patron from 1995.

As the second, initially Labor Premier, to be recognised as a 'Diehard', John Scaddan's passion for Subiaco matched that of Daghlish. Like Daghlish he had originated from Victoria and they were of a mind on football. Scaddan, known as 'Happy Jack', was said to be never happier than when talking 'footy in Suby', despite the fact that he did not represent Subiaco in the Legislative Assembly. This interest was undoubtedly magnified by the fact 'Happy Jack's' brother Joe, who had played 21 games for Collingwood, then played 74 games for Subiaco between 1911 and 1915. In 1909, before Scaddan had become Premier he was elected to the committee of the Subiaco Club and significantly was one of the two club delegates to the WAFL. Even when he became Premier in 1911 he still chose to hold his position on the committee although he relinquished the delegate role. Remarkably, in 1912, he stepped up to be President, a position he held, with the exception of 1920, until 1922. This was beyond his term as Premier which concluded in 1916, having also held various ministerial posts for either the Labor, Nationalist (Liberal) and Country Parties. During much of Scaddan's Premiership the Western Australian community had been afflicted with the deprivations induced by the World War 1. One issue was whether the WAFL league competition, and other sporting fixtures, should continue during hostilities. Speaking in his capacity as Premier at the opening of Leederville Oval in July 1915 Scaddan urged that the game should be played as 'young people needed an outlet for their energies, and he did not know a better sport for the purpose'.⁸⁸ Interestingly, at the opening ceremony Scaddan, a very capable footballer in his youth, bounced the ball to commence the game between Subiaco and West Perth. This practice has not been continued but it surprising that some publicity keen Premiers have not considered reviving the practice, even if the first bounce has to be considered symbolic.

⁸⁵ Ken Spillman (1998), *Diehards: The Story of the Subiaco Football Club, 1896-19945*, Subiaco: Subiaco Football Club, p. 33.

⁸⁶ Cited in Ken Spillman (1998), *Diehards: The Story of the Subiaco Football Club, 1896-19945*, Subiaco: Subiaco Football Club, p. 45.

⁸⁷ Gil McDonald with W.S. Copper and J.R. Hall (1998), *Bowls West: A Century History of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association 1898-1998*, Perth: Royal Western Australian Bowling Association, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁸ Cited in Ken Spillman (1998), *Diehards: The Story of the Subiaco Football Club, 1896-19945*, Subiaco: Subiaco Football Club, p. 74.

Scaddan's successor as Premier in 1916 was Frank Wilson, who had also been Premier before Scaddan had defeated Wilson's Liberals at the 1911 election. Wilson, too, was a staunch supporter of sport, but it was athletics and long distance cycling. However, as a long term parliamentarian for two decades from 1897 he was not on record as strongly promoting these causes probably on the basis of adhering to the adage of the separation of sport and politics. A similar outlook was likely with Henry Lefroy who became Premier in 1917 when Wilson lost office. Lefroy's education, however, included some years in the early 1870s at Rugby in England, where he was outstanding at sport, especially cricket. Then, when MLC Hal Colebatch was Premier for a month in early 1918 he could claim that he was Western Australian chess champion in 1900-1901. Colebatch was also at one time a Vice President of the WABA. In 1905 he chaired a meeting of those interested in forming a bowling club in Northam.⁸⁹

Indeed few Premiers for long periods appeared to closely align their office with sport. When Bert Hawke was the State's Labor Premier from 1953 to 1959 he spared parliamentary time to play billiards. At luncheon breaks he often played tennis on either the nearby Hale School hard courts or the Parliament's grass court, which he reportedly played a role in having constructed.⁹⁰ In his younger days Hawke has been described 'as an excellent footballer, having few peers as a ruckman'.⁹¹ It has also been claimed that his prowess as a footballer helped him settle in the town of Peterborough from which he vaulted into the South Australian Parliament. When he was Premier Hawke played a great deal of emphasis on physical fitness and at the weekends in hometown Northam he played tennis as frequently as he could. In fact Hawke believed that he should not make himself 'an absolute slave to the premiership'⁹² as he recalled the unacceptable pressure that he, and other ministers, endured in the Wise Labor government after World War 11.

This was a different approach to office which was later adopted by Sir Charles Court. As Premier he developed a reputation for very long hours 'on the job'. Although Sir Charles supported the Claremont Football Club after he moved to Nedlands in 1936⁹³ he did not have a sporting image but instead was well known for his champion cornet playing skills and his strong commitment to the music community. Sport wise he was sometimes in the public eye as he became the father-in-law of Wimbledon and grand slam singles champion Margaret Court. Before her marriage to Barry Court in 1967 she had made her name as Margaret Smith. Later Margaret Court was to be singled out for special praise by North Metropolitan Liberal, Peter Collier, in his inaugural speech to the Legislative

⁸⁹ Gil McDonald with W.S. Copper and J.R. Hall (1998), *Bowls West: A Century History of the Royal Western Australian Bowling Association 1898-1998*, Perth: Royal Western Australian Bowling Association, p. 42. WABA-Western Australian Bowls Association.

⁹⁰ Phillip Pandal (1974), *Son of Labor: A Biography of A.R. G. Hawke*, South Perth: Phillip Pandal Publications, p. 209.

⁹¹ Phillip Pandal (1974), *Son of Labor: A Biography of A.R. G. Hawke*, South Perth: Phillip Pandal Publications, p.14.

⁹² Phillip Pandal (1974), *Son of Labor: A Biography of A.R. G. Hawke*, South Perth: Phillip Pandal Publications, p.208.

⁹³ Kevin Casey (1995), *The Tiger's Tale: The Origins and History of the Claremont Football Club*, Claremont: Claremont Football Club, p.vii.

Council in 2005. As Collier said when he explained to the Council how he had combined school teaching with coaching:

To this end, having a strong and valued bond with the world's greatest ever woman tennis player, Margaret Court, has provided me with endless opportunities, including coaching numerous state and national champions and spending time on the international women's tennis tour. That in itself was a tremendous period of my life. I thrived on the daily challenges provided by the tennis circuit – the endless desire to be the best one can be and the constant accountability through performance and results, not unlike politics. Having said this, the single most significant element to emerge from my association with tennis has been my relationship with Margaret Court – my mentor in life. I recently traveled to Sri Lanka with Margaret to conduct a series of tennis clinics for victims of the tsunami and the underprivileged. It was a deeply moving and spiritual experience that has been a deeply moving and spiritual experience that has been life changing for me. I acknowledge Margaret Court for all that she represents, and I thank her for all that she is to me.⁹⁴

The Premier with perhaps the best individual sporting record, who maintained lifelong links to the industry was Ray O'Connor who was Premier for 14 months after Sir Charles Court relinquished office from New Year's Day in 1982. At 17 years of age he was a State Athletics Champion for hurdles and discuss. Between 1948 and 1950 he then played 14 games of league football for East Perth, also winning the 1950 Prendergast Medal for the fairest and best in the Reserves Competition. Later as Maylands Amateur Football Club player he was selected in that club's team of the century. Following his election to the Legislative Assembly in 1959 he was for five years, between 1969 and 1974, the President of the Western Australian Sportsmen's Association. In 1978 and 1979, when he held a range of ministerial portfolios, he was active in the East Perth Football Club Businessmen's Association. To these activities can be added membership of the WATC and Nedlands Golf Club.

When Brian Burke came to office in 1983 he did not attempt to market himself as a sportsman. At school he played lacrosse with the strong Wembley Lacrosse Club.⁹⁵ However, his government was closely associated with the increased role of government in the development of sport. From the beginning of his five year term as Premier Burke had for the first time a designated Sports portfolio which was occupied by Keith Wilson. The Western Australian Institute of Sport was created in 1986 although it was not given parliamentary status as a statutory authority. Challenge Stadium was opened in 1986 and other sporting facilities were given assistance, some through Healthway grants which had been created to distribute an excise tax on tobacco. Much of Burke's period as Premier was dominated by the 1983 America's Cup victory, followed by its failed defence in 1987 at Fremantle Harbour. Even when Leader of the Opposition he was aware of the public thirst for sporting achievement when he moved a motion in late 1982 seeking to congratulate John Sanders for his epic feat in twice sailing single-handedly around the

⁹⁴ LC Debates, 25 May 2005, p. 2261.

⁹⁵ John Hamilton (1988), *Burkie: A Biography of Brian Burke*: Perth: St George Books, p. 65.

world. Richard Court then said ‘this is moving event and one which has restored Western Australia’s faith in mankind. I support the motion.’⁹⁶

In fact, the Premier with yachting credentials was Richard Court. Before entering the Legislative Assembly in 1982 by winning his father’s Sir Charles Court’s Nedlands seat in a by-election, he had gained a reputation as champion yachtsman. During the 1960s and 1970s, as a member of the Nedlands Sailing Club, he had won several State Skate Yachting Championships. During his period of Premier, which spanned the years from 1993 to 2001, he attempted a significant feat twice competing in the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. Unfortunately in 1994, the yacht ‘Second Term’ upon which he was a crew member, was forced to retire due to high seas before the completion of the race. The following year, though, in the classic race he was to finish 39th with ‘Second Term’ an omen for his future as Premier. Richard Court never held the Sport and Recreation portfolio although he was briefly the Tourism and also the Youth minister. While he was regarded as supportive of sport and recreation, continuing the grants for sports facilities and seeking in 1996 to win the bid for the 2006 Commonwealth Games, it was not a major facet of either his entry or eventual exit from the Parliament.

When Dr Geoff Gallop became Premier in 2001 he was the first Rhodes Scholar to gain the post, carrying with it the public perception of an outstanding student and capable sportsman. As a schoolboy in Geraldton cricket was a major interest, but he also played a range of sports, including Australian rules football and tennis. When he moved to Perth to commence his tertiary studies Gallop played cricket for the university, then for Nedlands in the WACA competition, and later for Murdoch in the suburban turf competition. In addition he was a member of the volleyball and table tennis associations. His interest in Aussie rules was continued, and as Premier he became the No.1 ticket-holder for Swan Districts in the state league coupled with membership of the West Coast Eagles. Moreover, he pursued an interest in soccer (to be known as football) with support of the Perth based Glory team. Back in 1996, before Geoff Gallop became leader of the State Labor Party and leader of the Opposition, he briefly held the Shadow Ministry for Sport and Recreation. In fact from his school days to his hold on the Office of Premier genuine interest, knowledge and participation in a wide spectrum of sports has typified Gallop’s image. When Gallop surprisingly resigned as Premier in January 2006 there was some public discussion about whether the current Fremantle Dockers captain, Peter Bell, be approached by Labor Party officials to contest Gallop’s safe seat of Victoria Park and serve in the parliamentary team under another ‘Freo Diehard’ namely Alan Carpenter, the new Premier.⁹⁷ Bell resisted the temptation but the strategy promulgated by Labor was surely testament to the pervasiveness of football in the Western Australian polity.

The 28th Premier of Western Australia, Alan Carpenter, could also be depicted as a sport’s enthusiast. In fact he was a talented footballer who played in the 1974 premiership team with the Albany Rovers, in his hometown. At Albany Senior High School he had shown sufficient promise as a footballer to attract the interest of the Claremont Football Club. Older brother, Greg, was a football champion who played in two league

⁹⁶ WAPD (LA), 2 November 1982, p. 4514.

⁹⁷ Mark Drummond (2006), ‘Docker offered Gallop’s seat’, *The West Australian*, 24 January 2006, p. 4.

premiership sides for Subiaco in 1986 and 1988. On both occasions Greg played on the wing and was acting captain for the 1988 Grand Final. Apart from brother Greg's association with Subiaco, Alan's barracking for Subiaco can also be explained by the fact that their dad, Graham, played two league games for Subiaco in 1951. Jack then gained a reputation as a top country footballer in the Albany area. He was also a fine country cricketer who in his younger days was chosen to play for the Western Australian colts against the English cricket team when they toured Australia in the 1950/1951 season. When the Fremantle Dockers came into the AFL in 1995 Alan Carpenter was a founding member and remained an enthusiastic supporter. Notoriously, when the Dockers had a famous victory of St Kilda late in the 2005 season he even went as far as to 'crow' in the Legislative Assembly. 'I was back in time on Friday night to go to the football and see the hands of God, as Justin Longmuire's thin arms outstretched from his purple jumper, capture the ball and deliver a moment that will be remembered forever. It was better than sex, there is absolutely no doubt about it'.⁹⁸

From his election to Parliament in December 1996 one of Carpenter's shadow portfolios was Sport and Recreation then when Labor won office in February 2001 Sport and Recreation was one of his Ministerial portfolios. Sport, for Carpenter and his family, was an important dimension of Western Australian life. Ironically, as Premier, one of the major decisions faced by his government was how to satisfy the need for major sporting stadiums for Western Australian sport. However, before resolution of the stadium question Carpenter had, in sporting terms employed a surprise tactic of an early poll, which resulted in the defeat of his Labor government at the September 2008 State election.

Alan Carpenter's disappointment at the loss of the election may have been slightly cushioned by the success of his former Chief of Staff, Rita Saffiotti, winning the seat of Eastern Hills in the Legislative Assembly. Saffiotti had been one of the candidates Carpenter had controversially backed for pre-selection as part of his policy of party renewal. Upon gaining pre-selection Rita Saffiotti resigned her position and between April 2008 and July 2008 became a strategic consultant at the Fremantle Dockers. In fact when documenting her biographical details for entry to Parliament she specified one of the items of 'special interest' was her enjoyment of AFL football as she was a 'huge supporter of the Fremantle Dockers'.

Colin Barnett became the new Premier as leader of an 'Alliance government'. Well known as a formidable Resources and Energy Minister Barnett also held other portfolios but in neither Government nor Opposition was the Sport and Recreation portfolio (or shadow role) one of his responsibilities. Barnett, though, was keen on sport. He was a capable footballer with the Claremont Football Club although he did not reach league level. For many years, too, he had been a regular tennis player at the Cottesloe Tennis Club. Upon ascension to office the State, nation and world was soon to be constrained by the emergence of a financial crisis which was global, national and local in scale. One important matter for decision by the Premier was the fate of sporting stadium(s) for Western Australia.

⁹⁸ WAPD (LA), 23 August 2005, p. 4357.

Stadium (s)

After decades of discussion and blunders the shortage of major sporting facilities in Perth became a 'hot topic' as the twenty first century dawned. In May 2005, Bob Kukera as the Labor Minister for Sport and Recreation, who was very much a friend of sport with patronships across all fields,⁹⁹ announced a Stadium Task Force. This was to be headed by John Langaulant, Chief Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and formerly the State's Under-Treasurer, to examine Perth's stadium requirements for the next 20 years and beyond. A key reference for the taskforce, was to be an assessment of the merits of investing more public funds in Subiaco, the home of football, and the WACA Ground, the home of cricket against the cost of building a stadium for at least 55,000 spectators from 'scratch'. Other conundrums facing the government were a suitable rectangular stadium for the emerging spectator sports of soccer (football), rugby union and rugby league. At the same time the State was facing a potential problem in keeping Perth on the international tennis map with the Burswood Dome, the 20 year venue for the Hopman Cup, earmarked for demolition. This venue problem, was overcome with a commitment to construct an indoor Perth Arena sporting facility in West Perth at the old Entertainment Centre site, suitability near the railway line. Apart from the Hopman Cup it was planned for the Arena to accommodate the West Coast Fever for netball and the Perth Wildcats for basketball.

The Langaulant task force, which reported in May 2007, provided the government with options for a multi-purpose stadium at either Kitchener Park in Subiaco or in East Perth. Eventually the Carpenter government of the day announced that it would support the Kitchener Park option. However, confronted with a luke-warm attitude to the proposal delays meant that it became a decision for the Barnett government as to whether to proceed. Barnett supported the need for a new stadium but was also prepared to consider renovations for Subiaco. In early 2009 it was announced that the government would delay for two years a decision on the stadium. Meanwhile, 'pressure' began to emerge for the construction of a rectangular stadium at what was once known as Perth Oval or Loton's Park and later as Equity Stadium in East Perth. There were also cost overruns at the Perth Area and delays but it was proceeding.

Without doubt, sport, from either a participant, spectator or administrative perspective is a key element of the life of great numbers of Western Australians. For many it is their very religion. Almost half of the parliamentarians who have served in Western Australia have recorded links with sporting bodies, although very few have been inducted into sport's Hall of Champions. Obviously, though, contemporary parliamentary parliamentarians and Governments now face crucial political decisions about the allocation of resources to this integral facet of life. More than a century ago Winthrop Hackett warned that Western Australia was lagging behind the other colonies in the provision of sporting facilities. Was an opportunity lost to alleviate the stadium situation

⁹⁹ In July 2009 Bob Kukera accepted an invitation to join the board of Football West, the peak body of Western Australian football, still widely known as soccer. See Jonathon Cook (2009), 'WA soccer body lures Kukera to board', *The West Australian*, 31 July, p.56.

when the State experienced an economic boom? There is another chapter to be told before the stadium situation is solved. In the mean-time, as community representatives, the parliamentarians and government will have to assess the demands posed by sport. It will be an important policy domain of their role. Whether sporting credentials will be an even more significant factor enabling election to Parliament is yet to be determined. To date, although enhancing profile, it has not been a decided advantage.

INDEX OF NAMES

		Major Sporting Focus
Allnutt, Ian-Officer (Parliament)	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Andrews, Paul -MLA	30	Gaelic football
Angelo, Edward-MLA, MLC	14	Football, Appendix 1
Anwyl, Megan-MLA	31	Water Polo
Atkinson, Gordon-MLC	23	Squash
Atwell, Mal-Candidate	15	Football
Baker, Chris-MLA	3	Multiple 'minor' sports
Baker, Lisa	34	Dressage
Barker, Anthony-Author	42	Football, cricket
Barnett, Colin-MLA	47	Football, tennis
Barnett, Mike-MLA	29	Basketball
Bateman, Tom-MLA	23	Football, tennis, cricket
Beazley, Kim-MHR (Sen)	10	
Beazley, Kim-MHR (Jun)	10	
Bell, Colin-MLC	17	Pony and pollocross
Bell, Florence	17	Golfer
Bell, Peter-Footballer	47	Football
Bennett, Glen-Author	7	
Black, David-Author	2	
Black, Simon-Footballer	14	Football
Bloomfield, John-Author	6	
Board, Mike-MLA	21	Tennis, cricket, rugby, golf
Bolton, Len -MLA	28	Cycling, lacrosse
Bovell, Sir William	32	Polocrosse
Bowler, John-MLA	29	Basketball
Bradshaw, John-MLA	30	Squash, football
Brand, Sir David-MLA	2,3	
Bridge, Ernie-MLA	30	Bore rifle, golf, racing.
Brown, Jim-MLA, MLC	18	Football, Appendix 1
Bryce, Mal-MLA	4	
Burke, Brian-MLA	45	
Burt, Septimas-MLC	39	Tennis, cricket
Bush, Robert-MLC	38	Cricket
Butler, Tom-MLA	34	Boxing
Caldwell, John-MLC	27	Rifle shooting
Calderbank, B.S	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Carpenter, Alan-MLA	31, 46, 47	Football
Carpenter, Greg-Footballer	46	Football
Cardell-Oliver, Florence-MLA	32	Hockey
Carstairs, Alan-MLC	32	Football, Surf Life Saving

Cash, Doug-MHR, MLA	41	Bowling, other sports
Cash, George-MLA, MLC	31	Surf Life Saving, Tennis
Cashman, Richard-Author	6,7	
Charlesworth, Ric.-MHR	32	Hockey
Clarko, Jim-MLA	29	Rugby Union
Clohessy, Ray-Union Official	34	
Collier, Peter-MLC	44	Tennis
Cooper, Bill-Author	7,40,42	
Couper, Murray-MLA	19	Football
Court, Margaret-Tennis Player	44	Tennis
Court, Sir Charles-MLA	2, 4	
Court, Richard-MLA	7, 19, 43,44	
Cousins, Ben-Footballer AFL	14	
Cowan, Hendy-MLA	18	Football
Craig, June-MLA	20	Tennis
Criddle, Murray-MLC	19	Cricket, football
Curtin, John-MHR	10	
Dabscheck, Brian-Author	17	
Daglish, Henry-MLA	42,43	Football, bowling
Davies, Dexter-MLC	16	Football, cricket
Davies, Mia-MLC	16	Interest in sport
Davies, Steve-Author	13	Appendix 1
Darlot, Everard-MLA	36	Cricket, football, Appendix 1
De La Hunty, Shirley-Athlete	24	Athletics (Shirley Strickland)
Della, Stan-MLC	28	Cycling, yachting
Diamond, Arthur-MLA	37	Football, cricket
Dolan, Jerry-MLC	10-11	Football, Appendix 1
Donaldson, Bruce-MLC	19	Football, bowls, golf.
Doherty, Dennis-MLA	26	Rowing
D'Orazio, John-MLA	30	Cricket, various sports
Draper, Thomas-MLA	38	Cricket
Duff, Thomas-MLA	14	Football, Appendix 1
Dunstan, Keith-Author	5,7	
Durack, Peter-MLA, Senate	12	
Edman, Phil	30	Yachting
Edwardes, Cheryl-MLA	35-36	Parliamentary Sports Club
Elliott, Ross-MLA	11	Football, Appendix 1
Embry, Paddy-MLC	33	Hockey, cricket
Evans, Max-MLC	25,33	Athletics, hockey
Evans, Peter-Swimmer	25	
Fergusson, Val-MLC	36	Netball, swimming, football

Freeman, Janine-MLA	34	Netball
Fischer, Tamara-Parliamentary Officer	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Fisher, John-MLC	31	Polo
Fitzgerald, Charles-Governor	39	Horse racing
Francis, Joe-MLA	35	Ice-hockey
Foley, Brian-Candidate	15	Footballer
Forrest, Alexander-MLA	39,40	
Forrest, John-MLA, MHR	39,40,41	
Forrest, Lady Margaret	40	
Forrest, Robert	25	Athletics, rowing
Fox, Tom-MLA	16	Football, Appendix 1
Gallop, Geoff-MLA	31,46	Cricket, other sports
Gardiner, James-MLA	37	Cricket
Gayfer, HW(Mick)-MLA	23	Tennis, cricket, golf
Gawler, Doug-MLC	40	Bowls, rowing
Goran, Nick-MLC	29	Masters swimming
Graham, Herb-MLA	40	Bowls, football
Gregory, Harry-MLA, MHR	38	Cricket
Grace, WG. Cricketer	38	
Griffiths, Clive-MLC	29	Yachting, junior football
Grljusich, George-Commentator	15	
Gull, Arthur-MLA	14	Football, Appendix 1
Guthrie, Hugh-MLA	20	Cricket, tennis administration
Hackett, Sir Winthrop-MLC	38	Sporting facilities
Hall, J.R.-Author	7, 40, 42	
Hardwick, Jack-MLA	14	Football, Appendix 1
Harman, John-MLA	10	Football
Heal, Stan (Pops)-MLA	11	Football, Appendix 1
Hegney, James		Appendix 1
Heitman, Jack-MLC	23	Football, tennis, bowling
Henty, Ernest-MLC	14	Football, Appendix 1
Hirst, John-Author	2	
Hoare, Kathy-Parliamentary Officer	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Hodson-Thomas, Katie-MLA	35	Football Patron
House, Barry-MLC	19	Cricket
House, Edward-MLC	31	Polo
House, Monty-MLA	22	Football and other sports
Howard, T. Official	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Hughes, John-MLA	26	Rowing, Appendix 1
Hutchinson, Sir Ross-MLA	2,3-5	Football, tennis, Appendix 1
Hyde, Don-Author	15	
Hyde, John-MLA	19-20	Athletics and other sports
Hyde, John-Footballer	20	Football

Inglis, Gordon-Author	5,6	
Jacobs, Graham-MLA	32	Distance runner
Jackson, Syd-Footballer	22	Football
Jaggard, Edwin-Author	7,38	
James, Sir Walter-MLA	36,41	Football, Appendix 1
Jamieson, Colin-MLA	21-22	Football, tennis
Jones, Beryl-MLC	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Keane, Edward-MLC	37	Cricket, football, tennis
Kelsey, Roland- <i>Hansard Officer</i>	38	Tennis
Kendrick, Keith-Parliamentary Officer	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Kierath, Graham-MLA	30	Squash
Kingsmill, Sir Walter-MLA, MLC, Senate	38	Tennis, cricket, Appendix 1
Kitson, William-MLC	10	Football
Kucera, Bob-MLA	48	Multiple sports
Kobelke, John-MLA	30	Water Polo
Krsticevic, Tony-MLA	35	Soccer, football
Lake, Nigel-Parliamentary Official	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Langsford, Joseph-MLC	14	Football, Appendix 1
Lapham, Stan-MLC	41	Bowls
Lawson, Henry-Author	5	
Leake, George-MLA	42	Cricket, football, racing
Lefroy, Henry-MLA	44	Cricket
Leslie, Hugh-MLA	41	Paraplegic sports
Lewis, Andrew-Parliamentary Library	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Lewis, Richard-MLA	21	Tennis
Loton, Sir William Thorlie-MLC,MLC	25	Loton Park
Loton, Anthony 'Lloyd' -MLC	25	Athletics
Lynn, Bob-MLC	3	Football
MacDonald, Gil-Author	7,40,42	
Mackinnon, Barry-MLA	27	Rowing, football, other sports
Main, Jim-Author	15	
Malouf, David-Author	2	
Mandy, John-Parliamentary Officer	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Manning, Ivan-MLA	33	Hockey, cricket
Marmion, Bill-Author	32	Hockey
Marsh, Steve-Footballer	4	Football
Marshall, Arthur-MLA	4,12,13	Tennis, Appendix 1
Marshall, Bob-MLA	9,11,16	Billiards
Marshall, Harry-MLA	28	Cycling, rowing, football
Masters, Gordon-MLC	29,30	Various sports
May, Don-MLA	41	Bowls, football

McCallam, Alexander-MLA	14	Football, Appendix 1
McGinty, Jim-MLA	12, 38	Football
McGowan, Mark-MLA	31	Squash
McGrath, John-MLA	12	Sports Journalist
McNee, William 'Bill', MLA	16	
McNeil, Tom-MLC	16,17	Football, Appendix 1
McPharland, Ray-MLC	17-18	Cricket, golf, Appendix 1
Metcalf, Ian-MLC	29	Rugby union, golf
Miles, George-MLC	38	Cricket
Minson, Kevin-MLA	29	Rugby union
Mitchell, Andrea-MLA	23	Tennis
Monger, Fred-MLA	14	Football, Appendix 1
Monger, John-MLC	14	Cricket
Moore, Norman-MLC	22	Tennis, golf, racing
Moorhead, Fred-MLA	29	Rugby union
Montgomery, Murray-MLC	32	Surfing, cricket, football
Murray, Mick-MLA	18	Football
Nanovich, Mick-MLA	18	Football, Appendix 1
Neville, Mark-MLC	31	Water polo, golf, racing
Nixon, Murray-MLC	28	Rife shooting
Nulson, Emil-MLA	25	Athletics
O'Connor, Michael-MLA	31	Polo
O'Connor, Ray-MLA	42,44	Racing, golf, Appendix 1
Omodie, Paul-MLA	19	Golf
Parker, Rhonda-MLA	21	Tennis, netball, basketball
Parker, Sir Stephen	39	Racing, cricket, tennis
Partington, Andrew-Candidate	24	Football
Pearce (Hyde), Morna-Hockey Player	19-20	
Pendal, Phillip-MLC/MLA	2,12,15	
Perry, Tom-MLC	27	Rifle shooting
Phillips, Harry-Author	2,5,7,21,35,37	
Piantadosi, Sam-MLC	35	Soccer
Porter, Charles-Party Official	24	Olympian
Porter, Christian-MLA	24	
Redmond, Terry-MLA	21	Tennis, golf
Riebeling, Fred-MLA	33, 35,36	Hockey, billiards/pool
Roberts, Michelle-MLA	35	
Rogers, AC-Parliamentary officer	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Ryan, Jan-Author		
Sampson, Richard-MLA	28	Cycling
Sanders, John-Yachtsman	45	

Scaddan, Joe-Footballer	43	
Scaddan, John-MLA	43	Footabll
Scott, Barbara-MLC	20	Tennis, rowing
Scott, Edward-MLC/MLA	38	Rowing, athletics, swimming
Sewell, Bill-MLA	27	Cricket, football, tennis
Shave, Doug-MLA	18	Cricket, Appendix 1
Shenton, George-MLA	35	Tennis, racing
Sleeman, Joseph-MLA	25	Athletics, trotting
Smith, David-MLA	33	Athletics, football
Smith, Philip-MLA	26	Athletics, hockey, basketball
Spencer, Peter-Candidate	15	Football
Sprigg, Trevor-MLA	14-15	Football, Appendix 1
Stretch, Bill-MLC	22	Tennis
Sutherland, Michael-MLC	23	Tennis
Stephenson, Henry	26	Sculling
Strickland, Shirley-Candidate		see De La Hunty
Stubbs, Claude-MLC	28	Track and road cycling
Stubbs, Sydney-MLC/MLA	30	Yachting
Taylor, Don-MLA	28,29	Basketball
Taylor, Ian-MLA	19	Football
Tonkin, Arthur-MLA	4	Chess
Tonkin, John-MLA	10	
Totterdell, Sir Joseph-MLA	11	Football
Tregoning, Ken-Author	42	
Trenorden, Max-MLA/MLC	23	Cricket, golf, football
Troy, John-MLA	33	Hockey
Turnbull, Hilda-MLA	19	
Vamplew, Wray-Author	5,7	
Waldron, Terry-MLA	18	Cricket, Appendix 1
Wardell-Johnson, Greg-Author	13	
Watson, Peter, MLA	23	Athletics
Watts, Jack-Candidate	16	Football
Wiese, Bob-MLA	13	
Williams, Kirsten-Parliamentary Officer	35	Parliamentary Sports Club
Wood, Barrington-MLA	37	Football
Woodhams, Grant-MLA	33	Marathon running, dirt track
Young, Bill-MLA	17-18	Cricket, Appendix 1
Young, Ray-MLA	20	Cricket

