

MEDIA RELEASE
20 JUNE, 2011

DISABILITIES IN FOOTBALL WEEK KICKS OFF

A rainy morning didn't dampen the spirits of the participants and officials involved in Football West's opening of WA Disabilities in Football Week.

Three programs were on show with the Opening Day of WA Disabilities in Football Week; WA Paralympic Football, the Special Olympics program and Equal Footingball. The opening ceremony featured speeches by Football West Board Member Liam Twigger and Special Olympics WA State Development Manager Di Bruce, as well as a couple of inaugural awards presented for player achievement and contribution as an official for the previous year.

WA Paralympic Football player Chris Barty was awarded the 'David Cantoni Player Achievement Award' for his efforts.

Cantoni, adjudicating and presenting the award said: "There were so many worthy nominations and it was a tough decision that I can only see getting harder as the sport progresses with both mainstream clubs and the Equal Footingball program taking a hold in helping those with a disability achieve their dreams.

"Chris (Barty) is a fine example to many of what can be achieved when a player commits themselves to their goals and dreams. From Chris's nomination it is obvious that Chris has put much into the sport since taking it up and it is great to see his dreams coming to fruition."

Since taking up the sport less than six months ago, Barty has signed with a mainstream senior men's team as a goalkeeper, attended additional goalkeeper specific training sessions and has won a Bronze medal at the National Paralympic Football Championships in Adelaide earlier this year. Barty was also very close to being selected in the National Paralympic Football Team (The Pararoos) that will compete in Holland in the hope of earning a place at the 2012 London Paralympics.

As a show of strength in the efforts of the people behind the WA Paralympic Football Program, the award for Contribution as an Official went to volunteer Paralympic Football Coach David Cantoni.

In 2010-11 he completed Football Federation Australia's Youth Licence and the C-Licence course to join an elite group of advanced coaches in Western Australia. Cantoni also volunteered his personal time on Saturday mornings throughout the year to conduct the WA Paralympic Football sessions at every opportunity and helped propel the program from three to 15 regular participants with a potential squad to represent WA at the 2012 National Championships.

As for the participation activities of the day, Football West's Inclusive Development Officer Gordon Duus said: "Some budding young stars were in attendance showing that there is a bright future ahead for the WA Special Olympics team as well as the WA Paralympics Program. It was girls as well as boys who put in a great show of skill, learning and enthusiasm for the team game.



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“Presently there is a Special Olympics national football team in transit to Athens to play without any Western Australian players, but judging by the capability shown by a few of the players, we will see quite a few local players in coming years representing Australia.”

For more information on WA Disabilities in Football Week, please click [here](#)

-ENDS-

2011 Disabilities in Football Week Schedule

Coaching Course

Gain a greater understanding of coaching players with disabilities

Wednesday 22 June
Tuart Hill JSC's ground
Woodchester Reserve
Woodchester Drive,
Nollamara

6.00pm to 9.00pm
Supper included

Refereeing Course

Learn how to adapt to refereeing players with disabilities

Wednesday 29 June
Tuart Hill JSC's ground
Woodchester Reserve
Woodchester Drive,
Nollamara

6.00pm to 9.00pm
Supper included

Schools Soccer Skills

Fun Day

Our primary school students come together for a fun day

Friday 24 June
Herb Graham Rec Ctr
Mirrabooka

9.30am Session A starts
11.30am Lunch for all
12.30pm Session B starts
2.30pm Day concludes
Lunch/Fruit/Water provided



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**Every Bodies Goal
Unified Game**

Come along to join in the
fun of our unified game of
Special O and Para athletes

Saturday 25 June
Gibbney Reserve
Mephan St, Maylands

9.30am to 10.30am
Cheer on our players as they take to the field.



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