

Friday, 15 August 2008

PARA WEST WINS FIRST ABORIGINAL POWER CUP

The inaugural Aboriginal Power Cup has been taken out by Para West High School in both the boys and girls divisions.

The grand finals were played a curtain raiser to the Port Adelaide v Collingwood Magpies game at AAMI Stadium tonight, after competition between 12 teams at Alberton Oval yesterday.

The Aboriginal Power Cup is joint initiative of the Attorney-General's Department and the Port Adelaide Football Club in response to Monsignor David Cappo's *To Break the Cycle* report.

"The boys from Para West High School secured a convincing win (11.12.78) over rivals Ceduna Area School (3.2.20). It was a fast-paced game with players showing off their great skill with the ball,"

"The girls were newcomers to the code but showed the boys a thing or two in a physical game marked by tough tackling. Para West again took the title (9.3.67) over John Pirie Secondary School (3.2.20)," Mr Atkinson said.

The Premier Mike Rann presented each of the winning teams with an Aboriginal Power Cup and each finalist player also received a medal.

"Playing at AAMI Stadium is a great privilege and these students have earned it. They've been committed to the sport and have absorbed the good advice on offer from Power players," Mr Atkinson said

"Congratulations to the winning schools and all 140 students who participated in the Cup. Their football skills, team spirit and enthusiasm for all aspects of the Cup program is inspiring," he said.

Since the Aboriginal Power Cup program was launched on Anzac Day, past and present Aboriginal Power players have hosted school-based sessions teaching students football skills and giving advice about making positive life choices.

"The Aboriginal Power Cup is based on a successful U.K. project in which the Charlton Athletic Football Club tackled youth crime in south-east London.

"This model demonstrates that engagement with at-risk youth through sport can break the cycle of crime and anti-social behaviour. It shows students they can lead happy and healthy lives, and they don't need to break the law," Mr Atkinson said.

The finalists were chosen based on on-field performance in competition on Thursday as well as team spirit, school attendance, uniform designs and commitment to training.

The participating schools were: Para West Adult Campus, Kaurna Plains School, John Pirie Secondary School, Ceduna Area School, Port Lincoln High School and the Wiltja Program (students mainly from the A.P.Y. Lands attending Woodville High School).

The boys' team from John Pirie Secondary School at Port Pirie took out the **Tandanya Deadly Team Spirit Award**. Even though they didn't win a game, the boys sang 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough' as they played their last game.

"This is the kind of good character, self-confidence and community spirit we're trying to grow in these youngsters. This is one early sign that the Aboriginal Power Cup is getting results."

The State Government will continue to support the Aboriginal Power Cup with \$200,000 already allocated for the next two seasons. It is supported by the Port Adelaide Football Club, the South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy (SAASTA) and the SANFL.

"I look forward to seeing new schools and new students participating in the Aboriginal Power Cup next year."