

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for the Coordination of Jobs, Precincts and Regions – COVID-19

Minister for Racing

Minister for Jobs, Innovation and Trade

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events



Sunday, 7 June 2020

## VICTORIA PARK WORKS CONTINUE WOMEN'S FOOTY BOOM

The change rooms at Victoria Park used by teams visiting Collingwood's famous home ground in the 1970s, '80s and early '90s are being remade for use by the Magpies' new generation of AFLW stars.

Driven by a \$2 million Victorian Government investment, the work at Collingwood's spiritual home is on track for completion in September. The undercroft of the Sherrin Stand is currently being gutted in preparation for the construction of two female-friendly change rooms, a warm-up space and aquatic recovery facilities.

The project is part of the Government's \$45 million program to upgrade facilities for elite female footballers such as Collingwood AFLW guns Chloe Molloy and Jaimee Lambert following the establishment of the national competition in 2017.

Collingwood goalkicking legend Peter McKenna visited his old stomping ground last week, along with Molloy and Lambert and Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula, and recalled the tremendous advantage of playing in front of a roaring crowd of Pies faithful in the '60s and '70s.

Victoria Park had been Collingwood's home for more than 100 years before the Magpies began to move games to the MCG in the early 1990s – the club's last AFL match at the Abbotsford ground was played in 1999. The Sherrin Stand dates to 1969, its Lulie Street façade featuring the club's famous black and white stripes.

Collingwood's AFLW team has helped to breathe new life into the venue, with the Magpies playing their first match at the venue in February 2019 to allow them to accommodate a growing number of spectators at their games.

Construction at Victoria Park began in May with demolition of the old change rooms and social area.

The other AFLW projects being backed by the Government include a \$20 million upgrade at Ikon Park and the \$13 million second stage of the Moorabbin Oval redevelopment. A \$5 million upgrade of Casey Fields is under way while \$5 million improvements of match-day and training facilities at Whitten Oval was completed last year.

Women's football has made remarkable progress in Victoria with the state boasting more than 1,000 female teams in 2019, up from just 58 female teams in 2010. The AFLW started with eight teams in 2017 and this year became a 14-team competition when St Kilda, Richmond, West Coast and Gold Coast played their first games.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

*"Elite players deserve elite facilities regardless of their gender and it's great to see the progress being made in the transformation of these old rooms at this famous ground."*

*"This will help to drive the growth of the game and bring a new generation of supporters to Victoria Park."*

### Quote attributable to Collingwood Football Club President Eddie McGuire

*"Victoria Park will always be the spiritual home of the Collingwood Football Club and it's so exciting to have our AFLW side continue the black and white tradition at the ground in modern, state-of-the-art clubrooms."*

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