

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Tuesday, 6 July 2021

GWS AND GOLD COAST SUNS HEADED FOR BALLARAT

The Andrews Labor Government is bringing more AFL games to regional Victoria with Greater Western Sydney set to take on the Gold Coast Suns at Mars Stadium in Ballarat this Sunday 11 July.

With support from the *Regional Events Fund*, the match marks the first home game of an interstate team to be played at Mars Stadium and adds to the suite of home-and-away matches played by the Western Bulldogs at the venue.

It will be the first time Greater Western Sydney play at the Stadium while it is the second time for the Gold Coast Suns after their match against the Western Bulldogs at the venue in Round 4, 2018.

Mars Stadium has hosted six Western Bulldogs matches since 2017, attracting spectators from across Victoria and interstate and providing a significant boost to tourism and small businesses in the region.

It is one of Victoria's best sporting venues thanks to a \$38.47 million investment from the Victorian Government to redevelop the Eureka Sports Precinct, followed by \$6.6 million upgrade for new entrances, new ticket boxes and covered areas, and increased accessible seating in the Western and Eastern stands.

This weekend's match between Greater Western Sydney and the Suns kicks off at 12.40pm and will showcase Ballarat to fans watching on from home in New South Wales and Queensland and others tuning in from around the country.

While some AFL clubs continue to face challenges with playing at home due to restrictions, Victoria is at the ready to help the AFL keep the season going for players and lovers of the game.

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

"As the home of footy, Victoria is proud to support the AFL to keep the 2021 season going and it's great we can bring the excitement of the game to Ballarat this weekend when GWS take on the Suns in round 17."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"We look forward to welcoming GWS and Gold Coast Suns to Ballarat this weekend to play at our world-class sporting venue in the heart of regional Victoria."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"It's fantastic to see Mars Stadium not only benefiting our local clubs but helping to attract major sporting events to our city, which is great news for local businesses."

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"I encourage footy fans from across the region to head into Mars Stadium to cheer on our visiting teams and allow some extra time to enjoy the great hospitality that Ballarat has to offer."

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