



11 MAR, 2020

## Scoring a better life

Sound Telegraph, Rockingham

# Scoring a better life

## ■ Holly Thompson

Life is a Sport, a program aimed at providing financial assistance to allow children to play a sport they love and push them towards a better life, is now well and truly off the ground.

The idea came from Kwinana Police Station Sen. Const. Paul Carmer, who saw the need for such a program.

Officer-in-charge Sen. Sgt Anthony Thompson said Sen. Const. Carmer had initially identified a child who was in a bad situation in his family life and saw his sporting ability might be a good way to push him into a better life.

“He bought this idea forward and we got talking about how we could improve this idea and make it bigger,” he said. “Kwinana Rotary Club gave us a good donation at the

start to help us get started and then we brought the idea forward to Kwinana Industries Council and they put up money to help out, too.

“Through that, we were able to give a presentation to WA Police and from there police officers, Gilmore College chaplain Linda Liddelow and some other City of Kwinana members then formed Life is a Sport.”

Sen. Sgt Thompson said children were identified through Ms Liddelow at Gilmore College, through police officers and through a youth program run by the City of Kwinana.

“Once a month, we meet together and we form a spreadsheet with a list of kids we are concerned about and we see if sponsorship through sport might help them,” he said. “We do not always pick

at-risk kids. There are some who have shown initiative and a real passion in sport but just may not have the means to progress forward without assistance.”

Kirralee Vollmann, 16, and Jimmy Stidworthy, 17, are two students from Gilmore College receiving support through Life is a Sport.

Kirralee plays in the WAFL while Jimmy does powerlifting.

Both love their chosen sports and said the program had helped pay fees for training and coaching costs as well as uniforms.

“This help takes a lot of stress off trying to find the money to pay for the fees that come with taking part in sport,” Kirralee said. “I was playing in the junior football league and have just been asked to continue for the

senior team.” Jimmy said his inspiration for powerlifting came from his family.

“I originally started doing CrossFit but my aunty was a powerlifter and that inspired me to take that up instead,” he said. “The program has covered training and coaching fees and that has helped me to continue to get better and train consistently.”

Ms Liddelow said four children were sponsored through Life is a Sport and there were five pending sponsorships.

“For some of these kids, the funding is instrumental and it makes a huge difference to their social and mental well-being,” she said. “It leads into them making new friends and fitting in with a group and for some also helps provide a place to escape from day-to-day challenges they may face.”



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**Kirralee Vollmann, 16, Jimmy Stidworthy, 17, Gilmore College chaplain Linda Liddelow, Kwinana Police Station officer-in-charge Sen. Sgt Anthony Thompson and Kwinana Industries Council director Chris Oughton.** Picture: Holly Thompson