

A Stadium Full of Benefits for All

AFL is the biggest sporting organisation in our country with TV rights from 2025 amounting to \$643m per season with a great deal of this money coming back to clubs as well as supporting football/community growth at many levels nationally – what a success women’s football has been! The AFL is an elite competition where clubs are required to be highly professional and showcase the sport in the brightest light and that’s a key reason why we need a stadium of excellence. Now that we have been accepted into the AFL why shouldn’t we have first class facilities like the other states to ensure we maximise our success in the competition in addition to providing our state with so many positive outcomes?

It’s incredibly disappointing when so many ‘no stadium’ individuals make judgments about the team/stadium when they have limited knowledge and understanding about the wide range of benefits in being a club in the AFL national competition. Here is a snapshot of some of these benefits:

Economic

- we will own the stadium and be in the same situation as Geelong which makes approximately \$1m for each home game
- membership at a conservative level of 30 000 members will provide the club with \$7.5m annually. Please note this figure would be the second lowest in the competition. However, it is expected that membership will soar above this number substantially. Many Tasmanians will keep membership with their current AFL team in addition to becoming Tassie members. Furthermore, there will be Tasmanian supporter groups in each state of Australia
- the club will be aiming initially for sponsorship from various corporate partners around \$10m like St Kilda. Again, a conservative figure when you look at West Coast and Collingwood making over \$20m.
- through the AFL Equalisation Scheme each club gets a dividend each year as some clubs are disadvantaged with smaller membership numbers and moderate attendance. In 2023, the range of dividends is \$10.5m for the strong clubs while small clubs like GWS receive the maximum of \$25m. Our team would receive the higher amount each year.
- The naming results could provide \$5m – the same as Optus Stadium in Perth. MONA Stadium sounds perfect.

- Then there is merchandising and other commercial interests – maybe a hotel in the stadium like The Oval in the Adelaide Oval with a revenue of \$11m each year.

The revenue streams flowing into AFL clubs are enormous. What makes our situation so appetising and unique is that we will be a one team state.

Community Partners

Each AFL club forms partnerships with community groups/programs and provide enormous financial support and recognition for it's partners. For instance Melbourne's four main community partners are Reach, Fight MND, Breast Cancer Network Australia and Melbourne City Mission. Richmond's main charity is the Alannah and Madeline Foundation. With a Tassie club we could partner Ronald McDonald House, the Beacon Foundation and women's shelters around the state as an example. However, there are numerous considerations we could make as a state to support our people. What charities would you suggest?

I encourage people to check out AFL club websites to become aware of the range and number of charities being supported.

Training and Administration Facility

Regardless of what location is selected for this facility, please be advised that it will have many other users enjoying the benefits. All other AFL clubs have sport and recreation groups, schools, the general public, charities and community programs use their facilities. As two examples, St Kilda has the Danny Frawley Centre for health and wellness support and North Melbourne has The Huddle for inclusion and acceptance programs. Our facility will provide multiple benefits for multiple users and build on health and social capital and continue to build community.

Other Benefits

Too numerous to mention but let's start with the economic boon from tourism around the state; the input of approximately \$680m from the Federal Government and the AFL; football and general sports growth; the start of the development of the Macquarie Point precinct for all the community to use; state pride; health, fitness and well-being, business confidence and opportunity; improved transport infrastructure, increased employment; more concerts and entertainment and so much more.

Some people say we can't afford the team/stadium. I confidently say we can't afford not to be a part of the AFL competition with our own team playing out of a brilliant stadium located perfectly for Tasmanians and interstate visitors.

I would encourage all 'no stadium' people including some parliamentarians to understand this incredible opportunity for our state with the provision of so many benefits and take a positive approach to be unified with other Tasmanians who have waited decades for this dream to become reality. This moment will be a very significant chapter in our state's wonderful history. Let's benefit together with vision, courage and high expectations.

Steven Hay is a recently retired principal, former footballer and passionate football person.