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GNFL signs up OPR

The Great Northern Football League (GNFL) today welcomed Oakajee Port and Rail (OPR) as the major sponsor of the League and the 2008 Country Week Championships.

The partnership was facilitated by Fremantle Football Club as part of its ongoing support to football in the mid-west of the state, and builds on OPR's recent signing as a strategic partner with the Fremantle Football Club.

The GNFL was chosen as the ideal vehicle for the partnership because of its links to the broad football community in the mid-west.

OPR is seeking the right to design, develop, construct and operate a new port business to transport iron ore from mines in the mid-west to a new deepwater port to be built at Oakajee, north of Geraldton.

At the GNFL season launch on Thursday night in Geraldton, Mr Peter Fiorenza, League Vice President said the GNFL welcomes OPR as a major sponsor of the League and their commitment in the sponsorship is indicative of OPR's desire to become part of the mid-west community.

Mr Fiorenza went on to say; "in an attempt to move forward the GNFL is keen to embrace industrial and commercial changes in the region to further foster and promote our sport. It is hoped this new partnership with OPR is a significant step in the right direction. The League is confident that this attitude will ensure its future prosperity."

Fremantle player Paul Hasleby was in attendance to cement the three-way partnership between the GNFL, OPR and Fremantle Football Club.

"Fremantle is delighted to support Oakajee Port and Rail's efforts in the mid-west," said Mr Hasleby.

"Fremantle is proud to be West Australian and part of the local community.

"We endorse the OPR bid and encourage all West Australian's to get behind OPR.

"It's great to see OPR supporting local footy and we are confident that the mid-west is in safe hands with OPR."

OPR Chief Executive Officer Christopher Eves said today that the sponsorship with the GNFL symbolised the company's commitment to the broader mid-west.

"Whilst we plan to build a port to help underpin the future development of the mid-west, what remains important to us in terms of ensuring the success of the project is a real commitment to people and to community," said Mr Eves.

"Our commitment will become more evident through community benefit projects, recreation programs, local business opportunities, indigenous programs, training and employment opportunities and support for our youth.

"We have decided to make the commitment upfront with the GNFL and also with the Fremantle Football Club, because we want people to understand that we are committed, that we intent to be with you for the long haul.

"Our partnership with the GNFL and with Fremantle will support development activities for up coming players in the mid-west.

"You will be in safe hands if you back us on this project to build the new port at Oakajee," said Mr Eves.

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