

Thursday, 1 October 2020

## FUNDING RELIEF TO HELP KU-RING-GAI'S LITTLE ATHLETES STAY ON TRACK

Ku-Ring-Gai Little Athletics Centre has been given a much-needed funding boost for its upcoming season thanks to a \$4,200 grant from Coles.

The Little Athletics centre in Pymble is one of 158 grassroots sports club across Australia to share in \$521,000 for sports equipment from the latest round of the Coles Little Athletics Community Fund.

It is the single largest round of grants distributed to Little Athletics centres since the Coles fund was established two years ago to support little athletes hoping to follow in the footsteps of Aussie champions like Sally Pearson and Brandon Starc.

The grant comes amid research from the Australian Sports Foundation in July which estimated that over 16,000 local sports clubs were at risk of closing due to reduced revenues and increased costs arising from COVID-19<sup>1</sup>.

Ku-Ring-Gai Little Athletics' President John McFadden said the grant to purchase new marquees will help get its athletes and volunteers back on track after a tough year.

"The grant will have a huge impact to our centre. Our current shades are damaged and cannot be repaired. These new marquees will provide sun protection for athletes and officials and help to provide a safe environment for our members," he said.

Commonwealth Games high jump champion and Coles ambassador Brandon Starc is among the Aussie athletes who have been affected by disruptions and restrictions caused by COVID-19. The former western Sydney little athlete said he hopes the funding will encourage kids to get back on track this season.

"As a former little athlete, I know how much new equipment mean to kids who are starting out their athletics careers. It gives kids a chance to compete and train at their best and reach their full potential," he said.

Coles State General Manager Emma Bridges said Coles was pleased to continue its support of NSW's budding athletes and parent volunteers.



***Olympic & World Champion Sally Pearson and little athletes with the Coles Community Bags that funds new sports equipment***

<sup>1</sup> "Impact of COVID-19 on Community Sport," Australian Sports Foundation, July 2020  
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"We know it's been a difficult six months for everyone involved in community sport, particularly little athletes. We hope these grants will give athletes, families and volunteers a morale boost ahead of the new season," she said.

"Coles is passionate about helping kids lead healthier, happier lives. That's why we're delighted to have raised more than \$543,000 in NSW and \$1.68 million nationally for local sports clubs through the Coles Little Athletics Community Fund in just two years."

Funds for the grant are raised through the sale of specially marked chiller bags designed by Aussie kids, with ten per cent of every bag sold directed to the Coles Little Athletics Community Fund. Coles has raised more than \$1.68 million to 376 Little Athletics centres across the country since November 2018.

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**For further information, please contact**

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