



MEDIA RELEASE

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TAB Sport kicking AFL ‘full forward’ in New Zealand

Kiwi punters who bet on the Australian Football League with TAB Sport are helping grow a game that’s scoring some big wins in New Zealand.

The TAB contributes a commission to every New Zealand national sporting organisation on each bet taken on domestic or international fixtures within their sporting code.

For bets placed with the TAB on the AFL, funding goes to AFL New Zealand, the body that promotes and grows the sport on this side of the Tasman.

With more than 30,000 Kiwi schoolchildren giving AFL a go each year through the KiwiKick programme and more than 500 registered competition players, “Aussie Rules” has found a strong outpost in New Zealand.

And with tomorrow night’s historic Anzac Day clash between St Kilda and the Sydney Swans in Wellington, the AFL will get another big kick forward in New Zealand.

It will be the first AFL competition game played outside Australia and a huge crowd will pack Westpac Stadium to witness a slice of sporting history.

AFLNZ Board member Tim Stevens said the sport had huge growth potential in New Zealand, with a strong focus on getting kids involved in the game.

“We’ve got more than 30,000 kids aged eight-12 involved each year in our KiwiKick programme, which is delivered to schools throughout the country by 80 casual staff. We’re really looking to increase our contact with junior participants and get to kids playing AFL as an activity and for exercise.”

AFLNZ is funded primarily by the game’s governing body in Australia, New Zealand regional sports trusts and the TAB.

“The TAB is a great partner for us because when Kiwis bet on the AFL we get a share. With more people getting interested in the AFL and betting on it with the TAB, more funding comes to us to help us do more to grow the game in New Zealand.”

A former player himself with the New Zealand Falcons, Stevens is excited by the prospect of watching the AFL's best go head-to-head in a full-blooded match at Westpac Stadium.

"Given this is an actual competition game it'll be no holds barred, and it'll be great to get big names like Nick Reiwoldt (St Kilda) squaring off with Adam Goodes (Sydney) on our turf. This will be a beauty."

The TAB has Sydney as red-hot favourites for tomorrow night's game at \$1.20 for the win, with the Saints – the "home" side for the Wellington match – longshots at \$4.20.

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