



The Hon Graham Annesley MP

Minister for Sport and Recreation

MEDIA RELEASE

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ARTHUR BEETSON - PASSING OF A TRUE LEGEND

Minister for Sport and Recreation, Graham Annesley, said he was shocked and saddened to hear of the death of rugby league football legend Arthur Beetson.

“Arthur was an exceptionally gifted and talented sportsman who made a great contribution to rugby league both on and off the field throughout his extraordinary life,” Mr Annesley said.

“During my long career in Rugby League as both a referee and an administrator I came to know Arthur courtesy of his distinguished playing, coaching and administrative career.

“Arthur was an engaging and down to earth character who always called a spade a spade. Often controversial in his views but nobody could ever doubt his love for the game or his desire to see it grow and succeed.

“He is one of Rugby League's official immortals and was named in the Australian team of the century by the ARL and NRL to celebrate the code's centenary year in 2008, and he almost single handedly put State of Origin on the map in 1980 as the inaugural Captain of his beloved Queensland.

“But I believe Arthur's greatest gift to the nation has been what he has done to benefit the lives of his people in the Aboriginal community.

“He has always demonstrated a strong and genuine desire to use his experience and profile in the sports sector to serve the Aboriginal community throughout his life.

“I recently spoke to Arthur when we were on the Barefoot Rugby League Show together. As usual he was larger than life and doing everything he could to promote the game and the indigenous cause.

“Arthur Beetson's legacy will continue to live on in the rugby league world for as long as the game is played.

“Our thoughts and sympathies are with his family and the many Australians who will mourn the loss of this truly great Australian icon,” Mr Annesley said.

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