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## SP AusNet encourages excellence in Gippsland

Gippsland is set to produce some of Australia's next soccer stars after local coaching program MC Football this week received sponsorship from the area's electricity distributor, SP AusNet.

SP AusNet General Manager People and Safety Geraldine Leslie said she was pleased to hand over a \$5,000 cheque to MC Football in the power company's head office in Melbourne.

"MC Football does a great job of bringing professional coaching skills into the Gippsland area to encourage excellence in soccer and in life," she said.

"We're looking forward to seeing this sponsorship enable MC Football to expand and motivate more young people to achieve their best.

"As a large regional employer in Gippsland, with a commitment to 'skilling for the future', we believe it's important to give young people in regional areas these sorts of opportunities," Ms Leslie said.

Mark Cassar, founder of MC Football has more than 20 years coaching experience working in a variety of roles during his coaching career, including positions in the National Soccer League, Victorian State League and the Gippsland Sports Academy. During this time Mark has played an instrumental role in the development of players such as John Hutchinson, Archie Thompson and Mathew Spiranovic.

Mr Cassar said he was delighted to receive the sponsorship and was excited at putting the money into action.

"SP AusNet is our first principal sponsor, so the difference this money will make to the program is huge," he said.

"The sponsorship will enable us to improve and develop our coaching program further, while also enabling us to pass on the benefits at the grassroots level of the sport.

"Professional coaching can make a big difference to a young person's development and motivation and can teach them about striving for excellence on so many levels," Mr Cassar said.

MC Football was formed in April 2009 in Morwell and aims to create a coaching environment that exposes young people to quality coaching on a regular basis. It offers player development programs, which are designed to improve players' skills, tactical awareness and physical and mental development. The organisation also offers coaches mentoring to improve and further develop the skills of volunteer coaches.

During the last 12 months MC Football has seen more than 65 players participate in the club's development program and the organisation has conducted a number of school coaching clinics. 2010 has seen a number of motivation and goal-setting sessions delivered with Lavalla Catholic College. MC Football is also currently delivering its second coach mentoring program with Traralgon City Soccer Club.

Each year SP AusNet sponsors a large number of grassroots community initiatives that have wide-reaching positive benefits for communities in which the company operates.

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