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Title:
Miss Soccer Ball 1975

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Thank you for inviting me to your Ball and to watch the crowning of Miss Soccer, 1975. I see my colleague, Tom Casey, has arranged that pleasant task for himself.

Not so many years ago it would have seemed almost impertinent for Soccer followers to hold their annual ball on the day of the Australian Rules Grand Final, but the growth of your sport has been so spectacular that I feel many of you soon expect to eclipse the local game. I don't know if you ever will displace Australian Rules, but

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certainly soccer has become a very popular game in South Australia.

And after a good year like 1975, I expect more people will be attracted to the code. The Federation can be pleased with this season and, of course, it has been especially satisfying for Polonia, who won the League title for the first time in 20 years and who next week meet in the grand final of the Coca-Cola Cup. I won't take sides, so good luck to both teams.

I think most of your clubs can feel pleased with the season. All the competitions have given us exciting soccer - and that always makes a game worthwhile, even for the losers.

The South Australian State team showed they are a squad to be reckoned with, playing marvellous games against the overseas teams which came to Adelaide. Those matches, apart from showing the very good standard of play, showed how soccer has lost its foreign image and is now as much an Australian sport as Australian Rules, Rugby League or Rugby Union.

My Government certainly recognises the importance of soccer, and will encourage its growth through our schools and by assisting your Federation whenever possible.

But I don't want to take up any more time with speeches, except to hope that next Saturday's match is true grand final football.

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