



Macedon Cats – Football Netball Club

‘Our Club, Our community’

October 2021

Annual General Meeting Reports

President’s Report

Introduction

Recently I wrote an article for the Gisborne Gazette, titled, ‘We Salute You’. The same applies to this report, which is, in the main, an acknowledgement of the debt of gratitude to a whole range of people and organisations that have all performed outstanding work for TWO years.

With this support, our club has continued to train our Netball and Football players, provide the opportunity to play approximately half a season of RDFNL games and a few more, including practice matches. The committee have continued to provide responsible governance through challenging and unpredictable times.

This report highlights many of the achievements during the season, on and off the field, and the value and importance of Macedon Cats Football Netball club to the community as part of a wider group of sporting opportunities to the people in this region.

On the Field

Our players

When it came to playing, our players gave everything. They were skilled and professional, and put in some huge performances at all levels. In overall terms, the performance of all teams were on a rising plane of high and improving standards; and our opposition all did exactly the same.

In acknowledging the opposition in a close league like the RDFNL, there is a strong culture of respect. Of course we battle it out on the field, but who could forget the first match of the season where we played Riddell for the Puka Up Cup. It was a great day, where all teams, before their matches, stood in silence remembering those who couldn’t be with us. This reminds us of the importance of what we are doing in supporting 7 teams each week, all playing for their club.





The next match was against Diggers Rest on ANZAC Day. It was very moving to see the Macedon Primary School children singing the national anthem. The players had the opportunity to hear from a Senior Ex Military Officer about the value of mate-ship.

At the same time, there were some brilliant matches on the field with some very close encounters.

This is what community sport is all about – striving for excellence on the field and developing as people on and off the field too.

Our senior Coaches

Our senior coaches, Alistair Meldrum and Ciara Stewart, together with their assistants at all levels, have prepared, planned and maintained motivation for two full seasons of play. They, and their teams have done an outstanding job. Thank you.

Netball

Ciara Stewart, as senior coach, had a new support team comprising Megan Geary and Janelle Birch. Pre-season training with selection trials and regular training was yet again extremely thorough. The teams probably got off to a slower start this year, however, if the season had progressed, the teams would have been well placed for a chance in the finals. Another great year – thank you.

Football

Alistair Meldrum, as senior coach was ably assisted and supported by Jo Gooch as the Football Operations Coordinator. Alistair and Jo are hugely invested in everything they tackle, and this season was no exception. The assistant coaches were brilliant, and it was so pleasing to see Wayne Sanders lead the Reserves and Richard Blake lead the U19.5's. It was an excellent result having the U19.5's perform this year, even though there was a degree of disruption that the coaches and players managed very well.

We wish Richard Blake the best possible recovery from his injuries and look forward to him being there again next season. We thank Bevan Uren for stepping into the role to take Richard's place during his recovery. Thank you Bevan.

Sport under lights

This was the first season with Football and Netball being played under lights. This was an outstanding success from the perspective of entertainment and crowd engagement, with excellent crowd attendance and social connectivity during the games and after.





Riddell District Football Netball League (RDFNL)

The new and independent RDFNL Team were outstanding in their first season; now as part of the Melbourne Metropolitan League as opposed to AFL Goldfields.

The core team of Jordan Doyle, Aaron McLean and Grace Bibby have excelled in terms of effort, outcomes and excellent communication. We are grateful for your leadership and that of all the others in the wider team.

Off the Field

'Off the Field' is a critical part of the Club. Without the 'Off the Field' governance, club management and support, there can be no 'On the Field' play.

Events

A number of events were planned for the year. It was disappointing to have held so few due to COVID restrictions, however, there was a notable launch to the season and re-launch of our Coterie events and the welcome of our coterie members. The new lights were on show to the various members and guests which was also a highlight of the evening.

The following were planned events:

- Season Launch & Launch of New lights – to be opened by our local MP & Proudly sponsored by Bendigo Bank.
 - Cats Golf Day
 - Ladies Day Lunch
 - Annual Ball in conjunction with Macedon Tennis Club
-and other events too with a social and fundraising focus

The Lights were launched at an event held at Tony Clark Oval with the local MP and now Minister for the Regions, Mary-Ann Thomas. It comprised the Football Oval, Netball Court and Tennis Courts in addition to the Cricket nets upgrade. This was an event where it was a pleasure to be able to acknowledge the input of Bendigo Bank as a key sponsor of the project.





Sponsorship

Last year, Andrew Meldrum kindly took up the role of sponsorship coordination. It is incredibly pleasing to see Andrew's dedication to this role, the results achieved and his specific focus on this important area. This, combined with Andrew's innate engagement skills and a knowledge of our local community, local residents and businesses, together with skill and determined focus, has been an enormous benefit to the Club.

Ontime Delivery Solutions led as a major sponsor, and this continued with the securing of a number of sponsors. Thank you to the following for their support. All our sponsors are also proudly listed on our website, and the list is growing!

www.macedoncats.com.au

Our valued Sponsors:

Ontime Delivery Solutions
Town Coast & Country Realty

Kyneton Toyota

Bendigo Bank

Digital Freak

NEM

Sign Obsession

Macedon Ranges Family Law

Macedon Developments PTY LTD

Gisborne Power Products

Macedon Nursery and Garden Supplies

Gisborne Tyres

Sports Physio & Active Rehab

Metro Pipe Services

Telstra Store Gisborne

NULEAF

Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Index Painting and Decorating

Gisborne Collision Centre

Leecare

Macedon Ranges Health – supported by
Benetas

Dental House Group – New Gisborne

The Fibre Bible

Office National – Keilor Park

Quantum Homes

Fund-raising

The highlight of our fundraising efforts was the first-ever MAJOR raffle, with first prize being a Toyota Hilux. The net funds raised by the Club were substantial. This ensured club viability and sustainability during a very challenging period. Thank you to the major sponsor for this raffle – Kyneton Toyota. The club purchased the vehicle and a sponsorship component was secured. We thank our other prize providers also – Gisborne Power Products and Gisborne Tyres. Third prize was a much welcomed donation – thank you ALL for your generous support.

The participation in this initiative was excellent, however, not without a lot of hard work from the committee, led by Andrew Meldrum as the raffle nominee and co-ordinator, together with Yasna Meldrum and Jo Gooch. Thank you to Alistair Meldrum for his substantial contribution along with Jason Cooke and his business partner for their assistance with sales via social media. Thank you team, and indeed the whole club and community for your support.

Coterie

MFNC reactivated the Coterie Group for the 2021 Season. While the pandemic seriously disrupted planned events for the Group, their financial and material support contributed substantially to the viability of the club during a difficult time. A well deserved thanks to all those who participated, and in particular Rob Stary for promoting the idea throughout the community. We look forward to more opportunity for Coterie participation through a full Season in 2022.

The Committee – Responsible Governance and our Volunteers

Once again, the committee has been very committed to their roles and work this year. Committee meetings were regular and attendances were high. The results have been evident. COVID presented many challenges that needed to be incorporated and worked around. Committees are dynamic, and we always welcome any new members to assist with some vibrant and ever-growing roles.

It is pleasing to report that some members (other than our current committee) have expressed an interest in joining the committee at this next AGM. And...importantly, some current members are renominating. This is important for



continuity and the sharing of current club knowledge and history. This is a sign of the increasing support from volunteers outside a core number of people.

The requirement for more volunteers is evident and front-of-mind. The team was certainly very reliant on so few this year. This needs to change. Volunteering has always been a challenge, however, it was further accentuated this year by the COVID circumstances. The Club would benefit from more volunteer recruitment, retention and an exploration of the workload. Breaking the tasks down into smaller components ensures no-one is overworked and burnout is minimised. 1 hour of assistance offered by each person is 1 hour less for an already over-worked person to do.

Finances & Risk management

Another major highlight of this financial year was realising a major goal and achievement – the complete absence of any debts (aged or current) by end-of-season. This is an outstanding result and stands the club in good stead for the 2022 season.

The challenge into the future is establishing a base level of funding so that any difficult years can be mitigated. This will always be a risk in a sporting club where commitments are normally made to players and coaches for the next season before the previous season has even been completed! This is not a preferred or sustainable funding model to manage. The committee is working towards an improved model where the finances are secured very early in the season where income and expenditure is more accurately planned.

Improved risk management procedures have been implemented to ensure the future sustainability of the Club.

The Club has also been very successful in the area of grant applications. Craig Hildebrand has continued in this valuable role with professional, timely applications and the reporting and following up of same. Thank you Craig, and to Andrew Meldrum also for actively assisting with and overseeing grant submissions. The area of Grants is a prime example of a specific and focused role that adds so much value to the club.

Facilities and support of Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC)

Throughout the last two years, there has been considerable contact with MRSC. Their team has been a major point of reference in a number of areas, but in particular in the area of COVID management and the use of the facilities. We thank them for their support and Dom Andreacchio for his role as our excellent club COVID Marshall.

As indicated above, the new lights have been an enormous success in the first year of operation. This project has been an example of MRSC being able to facilitate strong outcomes for our sporting clubs - in this case the Junior Football Club in addition to our club, where we have improved lighting for both netball and football.

Last year, at the commencement of COVID, we were presented with the opportunity by MRSC to substantially improve the surface of the Tony Clark Oval. The result of the innovative drainage works has been there to see us through the wet winter where the surface held us up during other years. This is a great outcome and we thank MRSC and their relevant teams for their support of the Club, especially during the past two years.





The Future

Networking and collaboration with the Junior Football Netball Club and AusKick

Throughout the year, and as a follow up to some initial conversations with the Macedon Junior Football Club, there has been an increased level of collaboration. Anzac Day was a great example of a collaborative event with a very positive outcome.

Another joint planning session was held in August, involving the Junior Club and AusKick. All 3 clubs were supportive of the closer collaboration or possible unification of the clubs over the next three years.

This will require further focus and networking over the next year to define exactly what 'unification' means and how this might be operationalised. There are many synergies and advantages that can be gained from improved collaboration as has already been realised in the past year.

For future sustainability, it would be beneficial for all clubs to further explore and find the optimal model which can be agreed upon going forward.

An expression of gratitude to some of our key stakeholders

It remains for me to thank again the many stakeholders, sponsors, coterie members, club officials, volunteers, members and supporters, who have actively assisted the Club this year.

Perhaps we can hopefully and more confidently look forward to a full season in 2022



Andrew Dick
President
Macedon Football Netball Club
October 2021





And...a few words from our Senior Coaches

Senior Football Coach 2021 Report – Alistair Meldrum

2021 has not panned out the way anyone planned

2021 was another extremely challenging year in the context of a community sporting club.

The circumstances were definitely more disruptive than in 2020, when we didn't even get started. The stop/start nature of the season made it difficult for the club officials, volunteers, players and coaches to maintain drive and motivation throughout.

That being said, I cannot fault any of the collective in maintaining the optimism as every speedhump presented and as such, I am extremely proud again of everyone involved. You were all a pleasure to work with and I hope that everyone gets clear air to have a clean run at 2022 on and off the field.

The tireless work of the committee was outstanding, particularly in stabilizing the finances through our highly valued sponsors and the successful Toyota Hilux Major Raffle – well done to all for volunteering your time to ensure the sustainability of our club.

The supporters and members got a taste of play during the season with some strong crowds for ANZAC Day, night matches, twilight matches and what turned out to be our last home game of the year against Woodend/Hesket. Thanks for getting behind your community club and supporting us.

My thanks and appreciation to the Football Coaching Group during another trying year. A great bunch of people who have the Club and Player interests front of mind. I really enjoy working with you all every week.

My admiration for the players is huge. The core group who kept driving each other despite the uncertainty week to week will not be forgotten. You deserve every success that WILL come your way in the future. Congratulations to those players who were recognized at the RDFNL Awards event and also to those whose performances were rewarded at the Club Awards.

Pre-Season Training for next year begins on Monday November 22, 6pm @ Tony Clarke Reserve. Sessions will be each Monday and Wednesday nights through to Wednesday December 15. We all hope for a return to normal settings to get back involved in local sport. Everyone has missed it.

Alistair Meldrum

Senior Football Coach

Macedon Football Netball Club

October 2021



Senior Netball Coach 2021 Report – Ciara Stewart

2021 saw the appointment of Karlee Bruno as the 19 and under coach, Sally Brennan as the coach of C grade and Ciara continuing her contract as the B and A grade coach. We had a new appointment with Janelle Tate and Megan Geary co sharing the Netball Operational Coordination role after Jo Gooch stepped down after several years in the role. The Macedon Cats playing and training uniform was also rebranded this year, adding to the list of innovations and upgrades occurring in the club.

After mid-November trials, we had selected a strong B, and C grade team and a developing 19's team. 2021 season was the first time that we offered contracts to A grade players prior to trials under the condition that they committed to training. With all players but Hayley Matthews returning, A grade had 2 positions available for aspiring A grade players. Georgia Fearn, Brooklyn Anderson and later Shanae Brundell and Maddy Brennan joined the senior A grade team.

Preseason training began in December followed by another successful training camp weekend. A guest speaker on 'A winning mindset' and some team building activities were some of the highlights the players participated in. The players all came together on this weekend and decided that FIERCE and COMPETITIVE was our trademark for 2021.

The coaches met before the season started to discuss the plan for the 2021 season. After just falling short across the board over the past 4 years, we decided that we needed to do something different this year to give us that extra edge. The strategic plan was to use the front end of the season to try different playing combinations and move

away from a 'starting 7', regardless of the affect this would have on getting that 4 points. The idea of strengthening our teams so that when we were in the back end of the season we would have a variety of strong playing combinations and be unpredictable and unbeatable. We were building these combinations in all senior teams, while developing the 9 players we had in our 19's.

At round 10, all senior teams were sitting 3rd and our 19's were just out of the 5. There was another round played (round 11) which saw Macedon with a bye. This had a huge effect on our position on the ladder, with all senior



teams dropping to 4th position but having played one less game than their opponents. We were pretty confident that all senior teams were going to finish strong and possibly in the top 2 position by the end of the season.

Looking forward to the 2022 season with optimism, we will review the strategy applied this year and discuss whether we achieved the goals we set out to achieve. Ciara and Sally have signed on for another year, and we await to hear if Karlee will continue in the role as the 19 and under coach (baby due in February).

With the potential of Gisborne Giants joining the competition, this may affect our resources, and we foresee this to be a possible challenge (or opportunity) for the future of our 19's and under.

We are working towards offering an academy program, in an attempt to attract players for the future of our 19 and under team. This is a 'work-in-progress' and is proving challenging to make firm plans due to COVID restrictions.

We are extremely excited with the plans of a new 'shelter' being built at our homecourts. This has been made possible by a generous grant. It will be wonderful to have somewhere we can store our resources and make our home court a more inviting playing space.

We plan on having trials in late November/early December at our home courts to secure the strongest playing list possible, and building our 2022 club culture from there.

We would like to thank the committee, executive committee, coaches, scorers, stats persons, trainers, volunteers, players and supporters who made our 2021 season as successful as it could be. We hope to keep this momentum going for 2022.

Ciara Stewart

Senior Netball Coach

Macedon Football Netball Club

October 2021



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AGM report contributors:

Andrew Dick – President

Andrew Meldrum – Vice President/Treasurer/Sponsorship Coordinator

Yasna Meldrum – Secretary

Ciara Stewart – Senior Netball Coach

Alistair Meldrum – Senior Football coach