Welcome from Paul Hamilton

Welcome to the mid-year edition of the AFL Central Victoria newsletter. The first half of the year has been a productive time for football and netball in our region. We have seen some great games played and we have seen a wonderful community spirit through the many social and fund raising functions held throughout the season. The number of people playing the game in our region continues to grow. Clearly this is in areas of population growth such as Bendigo. In the BJFL this year we welcomed 10 new sides to the competition. Whilst our focus has been on growing the game at grass roots level, it has been encouraging to introduce the Central Victorian Junior Academy in 2015. This has undoubtedly been a huge success and we thank Rick Coburn, the coaches and the administration team that have made this possible.

Early in the year La Trobe University released a study that proved what many of us have known for a long time – that football/netball clubs provide a wonderful service to our communities. The research program showed that for every dollar invested in a community football/netball club there would be a return of a minimum of $4.40 in social value. This is in the form of social, health, community and economic outcomes to the community. This is great information for clubs to take back to their members and sponsors and is a testament to the great work being conducted by our clubs throughout the region.

In March we held our first ever Football/Netball expo at La Trobe University. It was a great success and provided an opportunity for all clubs and leagues to come together to discuss the common problems we share across the region. It also was time for us to learn that we are not alone and that when our clubs and sport work together there is a lot we can achieve. The expo is something that will become an annual event and will be a way of launching the year ahead with a sense of uniformity for our code but also with more assistance in tackling our individual concerns.

At the expo we touched on two social issues that we were keen to tackle in 2015. The first was the battle against illicit drugs. To this end we have formed a relationship with Vic Police and Sports Focus and we are running education sessions at 14 clubs in year 1. We hope to extend this program in 2016 both in terms of the number of clubs we get to but also the depth of the programs that we will run. The second topic was the issue of violence against women. Every week 1 to 2 Australian women are murdered through domestic violence and many others are left physically and mentally scarred. We have teamed with the CFA and the Loddon Mallee Women’s health group to run education programs on the problem and to look at long term solutions.

Over the past 12-18 months we have visited all clubs and have heard many great community stories and have seen so many wonderful people who run and contribute to our clubs. We have also heard of the many challenges clubs face. Some are faced with diminishing juniors due to the demographic changes of towns and regions. Most clubs are faced with the challenge of raising the funds to put competitive teams on the park on a weekly basis. A direct result of these consultations and the player payment surveys conducted last year has been the Club sustainability program. The initial draft program was detailed at the forums we ran in Boort and Bendigo. The program is ambitious and represents the biggest change to the game in recent memory. The objectives of the program are fourfold:

- Assist in the equalisation of competitions
- Stop the inflationary nature of player payments by discouraging the movement of players
- Promote player loyalty and junior development
· Support the role volunteers undertake in managing their clubs

By the end of July we hope to have received all the feedback on the proposed system. By the end of August the working party will finalize the system for 2016 that will be a mixture of a points system and a salary cap. There will be further consultation on the program over the next 2 months. Overall, we have been buoyed by the general support for the program. There is no doubt that the final solution will require work and time to achieve the results the game wants. What is also abundantly clear is that to do nothing is an option our clubs believe is not conceivable.

Whilst the club sustainability program will be central to assisting our clubs in the future there are a number of other pieces of work that will be imperative. The largest will be a futures plan for Central Victoria that will be developed over the next 12 months. Included in this plan will be a facilities plan for our region which will involve partnerships with our shires and councils. There will also be a continued look at our junior pathways, structures and competitions across the region. The main focus in all this will be the future sustainability of clubs. In the coming weeks we will also unveil the Central Victorian Sports Foundation. A lot of work has been put in to this vehicle that will assist all sports in our region through raising funds through tax deductible donations to programs and facilities.

Whilst there are some clear strategic challenges ahead, it is important that we continue to work on some of the most important basic tenants of our sports. Fundamental to this is our coaching and we will continue to look at ways to educating and improving the levels of coaching that we offer to all our players across the region. Junior coaching will remain a focal point as we continue to educate coaches and parents that junior sport is about developing players and creating an atmosphere that is enjoyable and educational. We will also continue to build on our indigenous and multicultural links that will be important to the continued growth of football and netball in the region. Tony McNamara is driving some of these outcomes. There is no doubt that sport plays an important part in welcoming people to our region. In the end if we have welcoming inclusive clubs then the clubs will prosper and so will our codes. Our work in schools and our linking of the schools to our clubs is another area that has seen positive results and will remain a focal point into the future.

We recently attended the ‘What’s your decision night’ run by the BUA. It was an enjoyable night with David Parkin as the guest speaker. There is no doubt in my mind that Australian Football is certainly one of the harder games in the world to umpire. There is no doubt that we are seeing improvements in our umpiring coaching and it is imperative that we work together create a culture where we can actively recruit and retain quality umpires to the game. This can only happen if we create a positive atmosphere for them to work in. This is certainly one of our game’s greatest challenges.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Col Brady and the Commission for the wonderful support and guidance they have shown to the team at the Hub. I would also like to acknowledge the support we have received from the boards of the BFN, BJFL, NCFL, LVFN and the recently formed HDFNL. I know that we have built a wonderful team of workers at the Hub who put tireless hours into instigating the plan to build a better football and netball community. I admire the hours they put in and the dedication they have to the cause. In recent weeks we have welcomed Partnership and BFN manager, Carol Cathcart as well as Umpiring development and BUA administrator, Sharon McColl-Neilson to the team. They have already shown a passion and aptitude for their roles that will serve our sporting communities well into the future. Finally I want to thank the wonderful group of volunteers that provide such a wonderful service to our community by continuing to ensure our clubs both survive and thrive in difficult times. I have said many times before that our game cannot exist and our communities cannot prosper without the wonderful contributions of all of you that make up our wonderful football and netball communities.

Paul Hamilton
AFL Central Victoria

Commission: Col Brady (Chair), Leon Holt, David Joss, Greg Westbrook, Chris Harrington, Meagan Keating, Andrew Cooney, Mark Johnston

Staff

Regional General Manager – Paul Hamilton
AFL Victoria – Football Development Manager – Rick Coburn
AFL Victoria – Football Development Manager – Tony McNamara
AFLCV Junior Operations Manager – Norm Sheahan
AFLCV Partnerships Manager and Bendigo Football Netball League Manager – Carol Cathcart
Bendigo Football Netball League Netball Manager – Melissa Ryan
Bendigo Umpires Association Manager – Sharon McColl
Finance and Loddon Valley Football Netball League Manager – Laura Naughton
Football Operations and Heathcote District Football Netball League Manager – Trevor Arnel
North Central Football Netball League Manager – Lance Standfield
Trainee – Administration – Amy Kenyon
Trainee – Administration – Dylan Murphy

Contacts

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Mark this date on your calendar

AFL Central Vic
Leadership/Wellness Breakfast

When: Thursday 30th July, 7:30am-9am
7:15am arrival for a prompt start
Where: The Bendigo Club
Cost: $30 per person
RSVP: Wednesday 29th July

Guest Speaker - Frank Hunt

Frank, who volunteered for the Vietnam War, was the soldier depicted in the famous Redgum song ‘I Was Only 19’. Frank will relay his story including dealing with pain, mentoring, mateship and the military.

RSVP to: Amy Kenyon on 5434 2400 or at amy.kenyon@aflcentralvic.com.au

Frank Hunt

The line ‘Frankie kicked the mine the day that mankind kicked the moon’ is a well know lyric from Redgum’s song ‘I Was Only 19’. The song’s story is one shared by many veterans, part of the story belongs to Frank Hunt.

He grew up in the Mallee, Frank was not conscripted by the infamous ballot but volunteered to go to war. Life in the 45 years since Vietnam hasn’t been easy for Frank. His days are full of physical and mental pain, but in Frank’s words “He is a glass half full person”. He has counselled and mentored countless individuals.

He is an inspiring orator and will relay his story including dealing with pain, mentoring, mateship and the military.

Second Guest Speaker

Second guest speaker on the leadership of prevention of illicit drugs to be advised.
In an effort to address and assist in the development of the talented players across the region, the AFL Central Victorian Commission decided to establish the **AFL Central Victoria Junior / Youth Academy**.

The AFL Central Victoria Academy (Bendigo & North Central Squad) is designed to be an elite development program for approximately 300 young footballers from across the region (male & female) from across the BJFL, LVFNL, HDFNL & NCFL.

The players involved in the Academy have received an elite level training program weekly, involving approx 40 young footballers at each of U12, U13, U14, U15, U16 and Youth Girls level (North Central Squad involved U13s and U16s).

Players trained weekly at Epsom/Huntly Reserve on Mondays (U12s, U13s) & Tuesdays (U14s, U15s, YGs and U16s). The North Central squads trained weekly on Mondays at Boort, Donald and St Arnaud on the rotation basis. The North Central/Mallee U15 Squad also trained once a month at Birchip and Wycheproof.

**Overview of Operation:**

The AFL Central Victoria Junior Academy was directly under AFL Central Victoria Commission through its Regional General Manager – Paul Hamilton, Junior Operations – Norm Sheahan and the Football Development Manager – Rick Coburn. The academy is connected to and supported by Pioneers Region Talent Manager – Steve Sharp and Pioneers Coach – Brett Henderson.

The program was delivered by coaches with previous interleague experience, or by coaches identified as appropriately skilled to aid and assist in Junior Development. Specialist Coaches with certain skills were also involved, along with external assistance from representatives from TAC Cup.

The Bendigo Bank and La Trobe University Bendigo have proudly sponsored the establishment of the junior academy and their support has been vital to the success of the program.

Part of the academy program has also included the Bendigo Bank Academy of Sport Education Unit. The Bendigo Sports Academy provided athlete educational services on topics including; nutrition, sports psychology, injury management and social media.

A trial communication system for players and parents was used for the Bendigo Squad. This communication tool named – ‘**Team App**’. The function was of great assistance to program managers and will be used for all squads, both Bendigo and North Central in 2016.

**The objectives of the junior academy program were:**

- Increase the depth of talent within the BJFL, BFNL, LVFNL, HDFNL and NCFL Junior competitions through exposing more players to a higher level of coaching and participation.
- Increase the standard of competition within the various junior leagues through up skilling players, giving them confidence to play at a higher standard.
- Expand the opportunity for more players to be considered for interleague representation
- Develop an elite talent pathway link for prospective inter-league players.
- The Academy is designed to complement the various Inter-league Programs in the same way that the Inter-league Program complements the elite programs within the TAC pathways.
- At representative level we strive to influence the on-field behaviour of young players. Through the Academy we hope to extend this influence.
- Extend and improve the quality of coaching within the BJFL, BFNL, LVFNL, HDFNL & NCFL junior competitions by involving more coaches in the Academy than can typically be catered for at club level. In doing so we aspire to –
  - Provide a forum for coaches to be exposed to and mentored by more senior and experienced coaches, ideally influencing their behaviours in a positive manner when coaching at local or representative level.
  - Provide a forum for coaches to interact and build relationships between clubs so the competitive nature of coaching can be tempered by the experience of coaching together. Collaboration and co-operation is a better outcome than conflict.
  - Promote appropriate behaviour from coaches to players.
  - Develop strong links between Central Victoria Australian Football Coaches Association (AFCA) to academy coaches.
Academy Philosophy:

• Young participants play football for a variety of reasons but primarily for fun, enjoyment and a sense of camaraderie. It is a privileged position to assist young players to achieve these goals. This is not a role to be taken lightly as their experience at your junior football club or in the case of the AFL Central Victoria Academy will have a strong bearing on whether or not they will have the confidence and skill to progress to senior football at some time in the future.
• The Coaching Philosophy at the AFL Central Victoria Academy is all about player development and enjoying the process of this development. We must continue to build upon these foundations through maintaining a positive learning environment at all times.
• Team sports have long been recognized for their ability to help mould the values and work ethic of young people for future years. Whether or not children continue to play team sport as an adult, are often the lessons they learn about teamwork as a young participant in sport that stand them in good stead for the workplace and life in general. It helps teach the importance of never giving up irrespective of the circumstances, always striving for one’s personal best.

As a region we define success not necessarily in our win/loss ratio, but in the endeavours of our players and the support structures that clubs put in place around each of their teams. We define success in terms of skill mastery as well as making a contribution to the broader personal development of our players.

AFL Central Victoria Academy goals are for each player to exit our academy program a better player & a better person!

Academy Philosophy & Values
1. Team 1st
2. Encouragement and Team Spirit
3. Responsibility (ready to train/play)
4. Achievement (best effort/performance)
5. Enjoyment
6. Respect and Discipline
7. Work Ethic (assists achievement)
8. Continual Improvement

Benchmarking & Testing – The focus of the AFL Central Vic Academy was skills and game sense development. Fitness tests has included; Speed, Agility Tests and a Time Trial to gage where each players fitness strengths and weaknesses are at. This testing is also completed as a developmental experience to prepare for later elite talent pathway testing.

Game Day Footage – As a teaching tool, footage was taken and cut using the Sports-clip-maker program of player’s individual performance during games. This technology has been used for analysing team components including; kick-ins, stoppages etc...

Feedback & Goal setting – An important part of the Academy program has been feedback and goal setting. Coaches and players have consistently set goals and reviewed progress throughout the program after skills testing and games. Some of this feedback has been informal, however all players will receive a formal feedback and goal setting ‘Exit Booklet’ report at the conclusion of the program.
Central Victoria Academy Program – Match Schedule:

Bendigo Squad – The Bendigo Central Vic Squad played the following games followed by recovery sessions:

U12 –
- Rochester (May 17th) at Rochester AFL CV
- Shepparton (May 31st) in Bendigo BJFL
- Ballarat (June 13th) at Ballarat BJFL
- North Central Academy (July 5th) at Wedderburn AFL CV

U13 –
- Rochester (May 17th) at Rochester AFL CV
- Shepparton (May 31st) in Bendigo BJFL
- Ballarat (June 13th) at Ballarat BJFL
- North Central Academy (July 5th) at Wedderburn AFL CV
- Barwon (July 12th) in Epson AFL CV

U14 –
- Rochester (May 17th) at Rochester AFL CV
- Shepparton (May 31st) in Bendigo BJFL
- Ballarat (June 13th) at Ballarat BJFL
- Barwon (July 12th) in Epson AFL CV

U15 –
- Rochester (May 17th) at Rochester AFL CV
- Shepparton (May 31st) in Bendigo BJFL
- Ballarat (June 13th) at Ballarat BJFL
- Regional V/Line Cup V Central Murray, Sunraysia & North Central Mallee (29th June to 1st July) at Mildura AFL CV
- Barwon (July 12th) in Epson AFL CV

U16 –
- Rochester (May 17th) at Rochester AFL CV
- Shepparton (May 31st) in Bendigo BJFL
- Ballarat (June 13th) at Ballarat BJFL
- Barwon (July 12th) in Epson AFL CV

Youth Girls – Shepparton (May 31st) in Bendigo, Ballarat BFL (June 13th)

NCFL, HDFL & LVFNL
- U15 & U17-18 – LVFNL V HDFNL (June 14th) at Elmore
- U12, U14, U16 – NCFL V MFL (August 2nd) at Birchip

Please Note:
U15 Pioneer Squads & Youth Girls – selected players from the Bendigo U15 Squad & North Central/Mallee will play in 2 Regional V-Line Cup team with representatives from Central Murray and Sunraysia in the U15 Boys and one Pioneers team in the Youth Girls.

On behalf on AFL CV I would like to thank all coaches and support staff for their outstanding work with the academy program in season 2015. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the fantastic support of the players and particularly the parents and local clubs.

Thank you,
Rick Coburn
AFL CV FDM
ricky.coburn@aflvic.com.au
It has been a busy year in the local football world, particular for coaches association (AFCA). I’ve been lucky enough to witness some great coaching, across Victoria, within our own leagues and also within the academy programs, well done CV AFCA!

With finals approaching, this time of the year is a great period for reflecting on our own coaching practices, and teams and individual performances thus far.

The Coaching Environment is Critical! Are we as coaches, creating an environment of:

- Learning, fun and enjoyment? Does this environment allow for rotations of interchanges & positions?
- Is the clubs coaching environment assisting in individual, team and club development? Are junior coaches mindful of avoiding score blowouts? As this is not good for development!
- Is your coaching environment promoting a sense of individual ownership (buy-in) and a sense of belonging for all players and officials?

At this year’s National Coaching Conference, we heard the importance of the environment and culture in our organisations and clubs from a range of high profile coaches. We as football coaches are coaching a tough game. It’s a hard game to play, umpire and coach so well done for taking on the challenges involved.

Enjoy your role at your club and keep in touch throughout the remainder of the year with myself and AFCA. Keep an eye out for the ‘Coaching Expo’ in Bendigo during August (Wednesday 12th), information to follow in the coming week.

Rick Coburn
0438410315
twitter-@RickyCoburn
ricky.coburn@aflvic.com.au

Coach of the Year

Thank you to our Coach of the Year sponsor – David Bicknell, ‘Bicknell’s Independent Sports’.

Over the last few months some outstanding coaching performances have been rewarded with ‘Coach of the Month’ nominations. If you know of and/or have seen some great coaching by our regional coaches please nominate them to Rick Coburn at our local coaches association (CV AFCA). All coaches nominated should consistently demonstrate good development and coaching behaviours. They should not be in breach of any of the below coaches code of conduct principles.

AFL COACHES’ CODE OF CONDUCT

I hereby commit, to the best of my ability, to uphold the AFL Coaches’ Code of Conduct.

I understand that as an integral component of my accreditation, I must maintain a standard of behaviour and conduct in the best interests of the game and the players/staff in my care.

In representing myself in an honest manner, and without bringing the coaching profession or the Game into disrepute, I will endeavour to uphold the following to the best of my ability:

1. I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of all individuals within the context of my involvement in Australian Football, by refraining from any discriminatory practices including, but not limited to, discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, ethnic background, special ability/disability or sexual orientation, preference or identity.
2. I will abide by and teach the AFL Laws of the Game and the Rules of my Club and League/Association.

3. I will be reasonable in the demands I make on the time commitments of the players in my care, having due consideration for their health and well-being.

4. I will be supportive at all times and I will refrain from any form of personal or physical abuse or unnecessary physical contact with the players in my care.

5. I will have due consideration for varying maturity and ability levels of my players when designing practice schedules, practice activities and involvement in competition.

6. Where I am responsible for players in the 5-18 year old age group, I will strive to ensure that all players gain equal playing time. I will avoid overplaying the talented players aiming to maximise participation, learning and enjoyment for all players regardless of ability.

7. I will stress and monitor safety always.

8. In recognising the significance of injury and sickness, I will seek and follow the physician’s advice concerning the return of injured or ill players to training.

9. I will endeavour to keep informed regarding sound principles of coaching and skill development, and of factors relating to the welfare of my players.

10. I will at all times display and teach appropriate sporting behaviour, ensuring that players understand and practise fair play.

11. I will display and foster respect for umpires, opponents, coaches, administrators, other officials, parents and spectators.

12. I will ensure that players are involved in a positive environment where skill learning and development are priorities are not overshadowed by a desire to win.

13. I reject the use of performance enhancing substances in sport and will abide by the guidelines set forth in the AFL Anti Doping and Illicit Drugs policies.

I agree to the following terms:

1. I agree to abide by the AFL Coaches’ Code of Conduct.

2. I acknowledge that the AFL, or a body affiliated with the AFL, may take disciplinary action against me if I breach the code of conduct. I understand that the AFL, or a body affiliated with the AFL, is required to implement a complaints handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice, in the event of an allegation against me.

3. I acknowledge that disciplinary action against me may include de-registration from the AFL National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

Note: This “Coaches’ Code of Conduct” is to be signed and conformed to as part of the accreditation requirements of the AFL. Coaches should be aware that, in addition to this Code, they may be obliged to sign a further Code of Conduct/Ethics with their Club and/or League.

Coach of the Month Awards

June
- Senior – Matt Hawken (Leitchville/Gunbower Senior Coach)
- Youth – Darren Thompson (Eaglehawk U16s Coach)
- Junior – Brendan Blandford (AFL CV Academy U12s)
- Coaching Coordinator – Mick Shields (South Bendigo FNC)

May
- Senior – Christian Carter (Golden Square Reserves Coach)
- Youth – David Boyack (Elmore U17s Coach)
- Junior – David Meade (South Bendigo U12s Coach)
- Coaching Coordinator David Nolte (Kyneton)

April
- Senior – Matt Dillon (Newbridge Senior Coach)
- Youth – Brad Fawcett/Matt Scott (Pyramid Hill U18s)
- Junior – Wayne Maxted (AFL CV North Central Academy)
- Coaching Coordinator Phil Looney (Strathfieldsaye FNC)
Club Drug Information Sessions

As part of AFL Central Victoria’s ongoing club development programs, clubs are being offered the opportunity to participate in a Club Drug Information Session with both Football and Netball Players.

The session is designed for all senior football and netball players at a club, from Under 18 (in football) and Under 17 (in netball). The session will involve presentations from both a Victorian Police Officer and a Health Professional (from either Bendigo Community Health or Bendigo Health). The sessions are designed to provide information about the effects that drugs have on those taking them, their family and friends and the whole community. Each session runs for approximately 30 minutes.

At this stage 14 clubs across the BFNL, LFVNL and HDFNL have been scheduled for visits. Clubs include Strathfieldsaye, Sandhurst, Eaglehawk, Marong, North Bendigo, Elmore, YCW, Castlemaine, Kyneton, Maryborough, B/L Serpentine, Heathcote, Colbinabbin and Kangaroo Flat Football Clubs.

The Club Drug Information Sessions are the starting point in a larger program to equip clubs with policies and procedures on how to deal with any situation at their club involving drugs. This involves engaging the players and leaders from each club with the decision process and thus engaging everyone at the club to have ownership.

The next step will be a collaboration between AFL Central Vic, Sports Focus and City of Greater Bendigo.

Indigenous and Multicultural Reference Groups

As part of our ongoing community engagement, AFL Central Vic recognises that Australian Football has the capacity to bring people together from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Recognising this, the AFL Central Vic is working closely with state football bodies to build strong working relationships with indigenous Australians and many diverse communities to identify barriers and to develop strategies to encourage involvement.

The result of these efforts has been the establishment of the AFL Central Vic Indigenous Engagement Strategy Reference Group and AFL Central Vic Multicultural Engagement Strategy Reference Group.

Both of these groups are in the early stages of formation and we are engaging with different community groups looking for people to become part of these groups and help AFL Central Vic develop strategies that will allow our region to be leaders within the AFL Community. If you (or someone you know) are interested and would like further information please contact Tony McNamara on 0419 103178.
Female football in our region has continued to grow. Over the last five years the number of girls wishing to play football has grown from around 5% to nearly 10% (of total Auskick numbers in our region).

Continued good numbers of females at Auskick has led to a transition competition between Auskick and Youth Girls.

In 2015, an Under 12 girl’s football competition has been introduced in the BJFL. This season over 40 girls have played games. The competition is played every Friday night at Dower Park (in Station Street) Kangaroo Flat between 5 – 6 pm. The games are played under modified rules and teams are adapted each week to ensure every girl is provided with a game.

The Youth Girls Competition in the BJFL is again strong with a new team entering from Woorinen FC.

The long term strategy for Girls to play football in this region is:

- Start in Auskick
- Under 12’s
- Under 15’s
- Youth Girls (Under 18’s)
- Senior Women’s football at either the Bendigo Thunder or Kyneton’s Senior women’s team

If you know any girls that may wish to play on Friday nights at Dower Park please contact Kangaroo Flat, Strathfieldsaye or Kyneton FC’s for more information.

If your club would like to enter a team in either the Under 12’s or Youth Girls Competitions for 2016 please contact the AFLCV Hub on 5434 2400 for more information.
With the increase in the number of people accessing the online “social network” and the increase in inappropriate and misinformed comments posted online, either as text messages, tweets, or Facebook comments, etc., the community in general is becoming more concerned with the issues associated with cybersafety and cyber bullying.

Unfortunately, there have already been instances of inappropriate comments in the social media that have related to our sporting environment. AFL Victoria Country have developed a cybersafety policy which aims to protect all affiliated members of the WorkSafe AFL Victoria Country. That is players, officials, umpires, clubs, leagues and umpire groups as a whole.

The policy was developed by the VCFL rules committee in conjunction with Susan McLean, who is a leading cybersafety expert. The policy outlines the rationale and underlying principles involved as well as the responsibilities of WorkSafe AFL Victoria Country affiliated members, definitions of cyberbullying, procedures to be followed if a member believes they are victims of such misuses of technology and finally penalties which may be imposed. Part of the policy states that cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, racially vilifying or threatening another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, phone messages, digital images, or Web site postings (including social network sites e.g. Facebook or blogs) and the sending, receiving and/or possession of naked or sexually explicit images of a person. Club members must also be aware that postings from their individual accounts, whether done by themselves or another person will remain the responsibility of the account owner.

All reports of cyberbullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully in accordance with WorkSafe Victoria Country Rule 5.0 and may result in a notification to Police where the WorkSafe Victoria Country, league or club is legally obliged to do so.

If the evidence indicates, then charges will be laid and the complaint will be heard by the independent tribunal. Any proven charges will automatically lead to a minimum of a two (2) match suspension for a registered player. In the case of a non-playing club member being found guilty of any such offence, then the club shall be deemed to be vicariously liable for the conduct of this person and shall pay to the League a penalty as determined by the league.
Football and netball leagues play an important role within the community. The league and clubs rely on volunteers and in return, we make a contribution to communities through providing opportunities for social connectedness, social participation and economic value. To increase awareness and profile various community organisations, we have recently had a number of themed matches. Golden Square and South Bendigo promoted the Blue Ribbon Foundation in memory of former player who was a policeman while Strathfieldsaye FNC hosted a fundraiser for ‘Give me 5 for kids’. Gisborne and Golden Square have held luncheons and high tea to fundraise for breast cancer research. This year South Bendigo and Strathfieldsaye played for the Wirama Shield, during the Indigenous Round focusing on reconciliation and harmony through a smoking ceremony at the start of the match. Traditional rivals and co-tenants South Bendigo and Sandhurst competed for the Graeme Wright Memorial Cup, held to honour a South Bendigo clubman with members of the Wright family competing in football and netball and participating in the presentations. A number of other community events are coming up including the headspace round promoting mental health awareness and the annual Leadership Breakfast, this year featuring guest speakers Frank Hunt and Mark Eustice. Thanks also to the Commission for conducting the education sessions on illicit drugs particularly ice to several of the BFNL clubs.

As we pass the half-way mark of the season, it is important to thank league and club sponsors and volunteers. Many thanks to the coaches, medical and training staff, team managers, runners and time-keepers who were part of the interleague contingent who went over to Ballarat in June. Thanks to our sponsors Workforce XS for their interleague sponsorship. Congratulations to the U17 netballers who won their interleague match. The 17 and under netball team coached by Hayley Bolten and Melissa Dillon also who won the Netball Victoria’s Association Championships. All interleague games were played in great spirit, giving players an opportunity to compete at a higher level. Congratulations to those footballers picked in the Vic Country squads – Jack Geary, Harry Conway, Josh and Lachlan Ryan. The BFNL will also be represented by trainer Pam Nicholson and Dr Rohan Molenaar when the Vic Country teams plays the Victorian Amateur Football Association teams on Saturday 13th July at the QEO.

Recently the BFNL welcomed a new manager of our league. While many in Bendigo will know of her significant achievements, Carol Cathcart (nee Byers) has extensive sports management and elite coaching experience having worked at the Australian Institute of Sport, Netball Australia and Netball Victoria and recently at Bendigo South East Secondary College. She is a great fit with the AFL Central Vic team and will assist our league to implement our strategic plan. One of the league’s aims is to increase participation and build the U18 competition. As a major league, we strive to attract the best U18 players. To do this, our clubs need to be recognised as major league clubs. In conjunction with the Commission, we will be rolling out club minimum standards that will follow on from last year’s club healthchecks to identify areas for improvement. Club facilities are also a major area of attention and a project will commence in the near future identifying physical facilities that need improvement. Recent announcements of funding for lighting for Kyneton and Castlemaine grounds was very positive news. Having the facilities to meet the needs of players, officials, spectators, sponsors and media is important in sustaining the future our clubs. Attracting families to football and netball matches will bring support, not only financial but also in the form of volunteers, therefore our matches need to be family friendly.

Dr Carol McKinstry
BFNL Chair
Volunteer of the Month – Shirley Wallis

Shirley Wallis has been a volunteer timekeeper for Eaglehawk Football Netball Club for 13-14 years. On arriving at the ground she assists in the canteen and then completes her timekeeping duties for the Reserves and the Seniors.

Shirley has previously been a member of the committee.

In addition to Eaglehawk FNC, for the last nine years, Shirl has been the Property Steward and Timekeeper for Bendigo Senior Secondary College.
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- are worried about work or study or if you’re having money trouble

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You can also find us on facebook, headspace.org.au and eheadspace (eheadspace.org.au) or 1800 650 890.
The BJFL 2015 season all of a sudden is up to round 12 coming off the school holiday break of 2 weeks. It was a great opportunity for our players, coaches and all of our helpers to have a break before the final 5 games of the home and away season recommence this weekend of 18/19 July.

The grading of teams into divisions has been a major talking point throughout the league. This being my first year involved in the process, there is an enormous amount of time and effort put into the grading of teams into appropriate divisions. It is difficult to get this 100% correct and at times during the grading, the committee had to make decisions that were very difficult. I thank all the volunteers who participated in the grading process, in particular Tony Gundry and John Hewitt and of course the team at AFL Victoria, led by Norm Sheahan. Once the grading was finalised, AFL Victoria’s Trevor Arnel was able to take on the onerous task of completing the draw. There is a significant amount of work required to cater for all divisions with the process further complicated by home ground splits, fixture requests and team availability only at various times. Thanks very much to Trevor for his work here.

Thanks to all clubs for their patience with the grading process. There is a need for the BJFL executive to continue to look at options to making the annual grading process more streamlined and this will be part of the executive's strategic decisions over the next 12 months.

Onto the on ground action though, there is over 2300 players taking the field at various times over each weekend within the BJFL competition. It certainly is enjoyable watching all the action and I congratulate our young players on the way they approach playing games. I urge all players, helpers and supporters to participate in the right spirit, adopt a duty of care and fairness for their opponents and to accept the decisions of our umpires.

We have just completed the final interleague challenge this season, and I would like to thank everyone involved especially the players and parents. I would like to also thank all the volunteers involved and to the Central Vic Academy for looking after this element of our completion and for providing the opportunity to our players in this extended training program.

On Sunday 19 July 2015, the BJFL will be conducting a Headspace Gala day at the QEO with 3 games being played in the Under 16 competition. This is a wonderful chance for our senior group of players to play on the premier oval within our region. Full details for the day are available on the BJFL fixture and the day will also be used as an opportunity for some fund raising for Headspace.

Good luck with the upcoming games and remember that the BJFL is about participation and enjoyment of our great game.

Mark O’Farrell
BJFL President
After many seasons racking up kicks, marks, one per centers and more, several former footballers have tackled a key role as umpires.

Scott Baxter, Tony Keating, Jason Maher and Ben Matthews are among the former players now officiating at various levels with the BUA. The quartet were all keen to stay involved with the game, once they called an end to their playing days.

In recent seasons the BUA has called on former players to "have a go" at umpiring. Baxter and Matthews are in their first season, Maher his second, and Keating his fourth.

Baxter played a lot of senior football in stints at Castlemaine, Sandhurst, Newbridge, Birchip-Watchem and Nullawil.

In his debut season he has umpired Bendigo reserves, youth girls and several junior matches. "I thought I would get involved and have a go," Baxter said of taking up umpiring after son, Bailey started as a boundary umpire last year.

Maher previously played football at Mitiamo and has progressed to being a central umpire in Bendigo, Loddon Valley and North Central matches.

"Fitness and positioning are two of the biggest challenges. "I didn't realise how much running an umpire does."

The most experienced of the quarter, Keating originally joined the BUA to officiate in junior matches. "I was keen to give back to the juniors," said the former North Bendigo and YCW player.

With encouragement from umpires coach Dean Goodridge, Keating has kicked on to be umpiring Bendigo FNL seniors.

Matthews' past clubs as a player include North Bendigo, Lake Boga and Charlton. His debut season has included under-18, and various levels in the Bendigo Junior Football League.

"There's a lot to learn, especially about positioning."

BUA chairman and long-time central umpire John Norton said the influx of ex-players was a huge plus for the association.

Other recruits who have retired in recent seasons include Jeff Turpin, Mick Galvin and Stephen Korp.

"It is never too late to start umpiring," Norton said.

"Ex-footballers know where to run on the field and know the rules, so they are already halfway to knowing the basics of umpiring."

Article reproduced from the Bendigo Advertiser
B.U.A. News – A word from the umpires

This season has been very busy with a lot happening down at BUA headquarters. At the start of the season we changed our uniform colour to align with the AFL and make it easier on all clubs so that we didn’t clash with any teams.

We have had over 45 new umpires to the BUA, which is fantastic, but to negate this great result achieved from a strong marketing campaign, we have lost about 40 umpires from last season due to varying reasons, the number one reason being umpire abuse.

Our operations have been restructured slightly to align and partner closer with the Leagues, with the recent appointment of Sharon McColl as Umpire Manager spending half of her role at the Central Victorian Administration Centre.

We recently had our annual “Laws of the Game” Presentation at Weeroona Oval, this was again a very successful event that brings coaches, players, media and umpires together in an open forum to review various umpire decisions in a local environment.

Former Carlton Coach David Parkin was our guest joint host on the night. David a scholar and legend of the game, made many profound quotes around the role of umpiring on the night with this following quote sticking in everyone’s mind “We are a football family, and the umpires tend to be looked at as an outsider and a necessary evil, rather than being included in that family, so we’re trying to bring people together.”

The BUA are also very proud of signing up 4 Indian men this season, in what has been a first for umpiring in Central Victoria. BUA chairman John Norton said the four recruits were all welcome additions to the umpiring ranks.

"The BUA understands that we need to continue to grow umpiring numbers throughout our region," Norton said.

"We believe that umpiring offers a fantastic opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to get into the game.

Anyone wishing to become involved in umpiring at any level is encouraged to get on the website, www.bendigoumpires.vcfl.com.au or call us on 0418 569394. Training is held every Tuesday and Thursday at Weeroona Oval, starting at 5:30pm. Everybody is welcome, come and get fit, get involved in footy, and get paid well.

Like Football Clubs, we couldn’t function without our sponsors. We would like to thank our major sponsors for 2015, EyeCare Plus - Bendigo, Bendigo Bank, Inglewood & District Community Bank and the Bendigo Stadium.
It’s finally official. As of 30 June 2015 the Heathcote & District Football League and the Heathcote & District Netball Association have been approved by the Department of Consumer Affairs to be amalgamated into one incorporated body. We are now officially known as the Heathcote District Football Netball League. While we have had a board of management in place since November 2014, it is only recently that the paper work has been finalised and now the way is clear to develop a constitution and set of by-laws that are relevant to a combined football netball league.

The current board consists of Leo Demeo (Chairman), Raelene Baker, Bruce Embleton, Claire Lowe, Gerard McCormick, Anita Runnalls and Paul Weller with Trevor Arnel as the ex-officio General Manager.

Interleague success

The HDFNL has experienced success in the football interleague commitments for season 2015 with our senior team defeating the higher ranked Central Murray FNL at the annual WorkSafe AFL Victoria Country championships on 23 May at the QEO. As a result, the league is now ranked 15th and will take on the 16th ranked Bellarine League in 2016.

From this game, three players were selected for the Victoria Country squads which competed in the recent Challenge games against the VAFA also at the QEO in Bendigo.

The three players were Grant Weeks and Lachlan Sirret both from Colbinabbin and also Jye Keath from Leitchville Gunbower. Grant played in the successful AFL Vic Country division 1 side and showed his talents by kicking 7 goals and being named 2nd best for the Vics. Jye played in the division 2 side which were also successful and he also did himself, his club and the league proud being named in the best players for the team. While Lachie was named as emergency for the div 2 team he has shown a great deal of commitment to improving his game and is one of the great success stories in our league.

The junior football teams have also been successful with the under 17 team retaining the Neville Strauch Challenge Cup against an under 18 team from the Loddon Valley FNL and the under 15 team also victorious against the under 15 Loddon Valley boys. These games were played at Elmore in the annual Gala Day against the LVFNL. There were also 3 netball games played with the 13 & under winning in a thrilling game which went into extra time. Unfortunately the 15 & under and the 17 & under team weren’t quite able to match it with their respective Loddon Valley girls.

Also at the Country championships, an under 18 team took on a stronger Central Murray under 18 team and, although not successful, the boys acquitted themselves well only going down by 5 points in a highly skilful game.
Umpire Assessment Evening 2015

Loddon Valley FNL Netball Umpire Assessment Evening held on Friday 19th June 2015 at the Flora Hill Stadium was indeed another successful evening. A total of 16 umpires were involved from three leagues within our region. 17 testers spanning across four of our leagues were also involved. In total, 10 umpires received their C Grade Badge, 2 umpires were successful in obtaining their B Grade Badge and 4 umpires receiving written assessments. Congratulations to all.

Nights like this allow us to all work together and provide an opportunity to all our aspiring umpires not only within the Loddon Valley Football Netball League but also our surrounding Leagues. Umpires receive official accreditation and assistance in improving the standard of their skills. As always, we encourage anyone interested in umpiring to begin the work now, go on-line and complete your theory and level 1 umpire courses, and start umpiring. This is a great way to be ready for 2016.

Thank you to the following:

Loddon Shire: For the funding to enable us to run this event on indoor courts at Flora Hill.

Netball Victoria: For helping set testing panels to ensure correct accreditation

Testers: For making yourself available and playing a vital role in the development of our umpires

Clubs: For supporting our Umpire development and allowing two matches to be played at a neutral venue

Players: For the willingness to change their games

Spectators: For coming along and supporting the games being played.

Gala Day 2015 - Sunday 14th June at Elmore against Heathcote & District Football Netball League

13&Under - Netball

With a slow start the LVFNL girls were a bit tentative with their passing. HDFNL defenders covered the LVFNL attack end, making it difficult to get the pass into the circle. A low scoring first quarter saw LVFNL down by four. LVFNL 2 to HDFNL 6

The second quarter again began slowly. Great defence work for LVFNL contained HDFNL early in the term, before they broke away. Our smaller players contested each pass but couldn’t stop HDFNL flow. LVFNL 4 to HDFNL 11.

A few changes at half time and LVFNL produced much better play. More drive thru the mid court and into the attack end gave LVFNL many opportunities to score. A great quarter as the LVFNL girls matched the HDFNL girls in each position and with some more confident and determined play outscores HDFNL by two to bridge the gap. LVFNL 11 to HDFNL 16.

LVFNL had gained the momentum and a big fight back by LVFNL made for a very exciting finish. Good positioning with strong passing down the court from defence and into the goal circle, allowed LVFNL to take control to shoot 7 goals to HDFNL 2. With more spectator involvement to encourage the LVFNL girls to get over the line, they delivered. At the final whistle the LVFNL had fought back hard to draw the game, 18 all. An awesome result. Extra time was needed to achieve a winner.

The extra pressure by both teams saw HDFNL score just one goal for the first half during extra time. LVFNL came back with a goal early in the second term of extra time. With play seesawing from end to end it took some time before the next goal. HDFNL intercepted a couple of passes to record the needed result.

Final scores LVFNL 19 lost to HDFNL 21 in extra time.

Best on Court (LVFNL) – Ashlee Bowen (Bridgewater)
15&Under – Netball
A bit of a sluggish start by our 15’s to be down by 4 goals at the first change. A couple of position changes saw Loddon Valley hit their straps and outscore their opponents by 6 goals, to be 2 ahead at the main break. Third quarter the girls outplayed Heathcote by stacking on 19 goals to 4 to lead by 17 goals at the last change. Final quarter saw a great display of netball and great sportsmanship from all our players. Finals Scores LVFNL 47 defeated HDFNL 28.

Best on Court (LVFNL) – Sidney Nieman (YCW)

17&Under – Netball
A tight first quarter between the two teams, going goal for goal. LV managing to get a two goal lead at the end of the first quarter. Second quarter saw some great passages of play and amazing intercepts by the LV girls. Jules and Abs working hard in defence while Carly and Morgan shooting the goals. Team changes took place at half time which made no difference to the style of play of the girls (such an amazing versatile group). Loddon Valley continued their dominance in the third and fourth quarters to run out winners by 13 goals.

Best on Court (LVFNL) – Julie Twigg (Mitiamo)

15&Under – Football
The 15 boys started the game well but were blown away by the speed of the Heathcote team outscoring Loddon Valley 8 goals to 1 in the first half. Second half of footy saw the LV boys work together more and outscore Heathcote by a point. Although the score line didn’t show it, players played in a fair and competitive way. Final Score LVFNL 4.6.30 lost to Heathcote 11.10.76.

Best on Ground – Jordan Woodfield (Inglewood)

18&Under – Football
A great hit out by all the boys. Heathcote kicked a couple of quick ones in the first half which had our LV boys behind the eight ball. After half time our boys stood up and took the challenge, gelled together and played for one another, but unable to peg back the difference. Final Score LVFNL 7.6.48 lost to Heathcote 10.11.71

Best on Ground – Jake Ede (Marong)

A huge thanks to our Coaches – Emily Holland (13&Under), Lizzie Wiggins (15&Under), Kym Childs & Liz Gray (17&Under), Team Managers – Tayla Clark (13&Under) and Lisa Langley (15&Under), Football Coaches - Matt Christie (Under 15) and Leigh Lamprell (Under 18). Special mention to Darren Turnbull and Wade Roberts for also helping pull the teams altogether.

Congratulations to all Junior players who represented LVFNL during Season 2015. It has been an amazing opportunity for you to further your football and netball talents. Thank you to all parents for their commitment over the past several weeks. LVFNL has a very bright future and we look forward to watching them grow and develop their sporting talent in the future.
Season 2015 in the Goldacres North Central Football League has produced the closest senior competition in many years. Clubs ladder positions are changing week by week and this has created a great deal of interest and as we get closer to our finals series with six sides vying for four spots some clubs are going to be unlucky to miss the final cut. St Arnaud Football Club who leads all divisions in our football look the team most favoured to be there in September but for the other five clubs they will need to win as many of their remaining games to give themselves the best chance of being involved deep into our finals series.

The Goldacres North Central Football League has had a successful year both at local level and also when being involved in Rep footy, winning our Inter-League game over the Geelong and District Football League down at Geelong. This was a great reward for our group which was made up with a blend of youth and experience and who had only two training runs prior to their match with some players due to work commitments not being able to make any of the training sessions, so this makes the win an even better achievement for the group and we thank all those involved in the inter-league program for their commitment. We did have one point that we cannot let go without comment, we were only able to attract one trainer from the North Central clubs to assist in Geelong after many attempts to seek support from local trainers failing, we made enquiries from outside the league for assistance which also did not come up with a positive result. With all avenues exhausted we turned to the Geelong & District Football League who having a great number of Trainers involved offered us the use of some of those trainers to act on behalf of our players which we greatly appreciated and have passed on our thanks to those trainers from Geelong. If we are to remain as a professional unit and remain involved in inter-league we would like to get a better commitment from our local trainers and clubs and we do appreciate that many of those involved are volunteering their time and look to have a break from the long season’s commitment. Fortunately the leagues issue has been now rectified for future representative football with three trainers already committing to be part of our program going forward.

Junior Academy introduced into our league for the first time on this larger scale was a huge success with over seventy junior players in different age groups committing to be involved.

Our Academy program under the guidance of AFL Central Victoria Regional Development Officer Ricky Coburn and North Central Junior Development Officer Alistair Egan received plenty of positive feedback from both players and parents who commented on how the program had lifted the skills of players who were then able to put them to good use when participating for their respective clubs in their various age groups. The program also gained solid support from junior mentors in Wayne Maxted and Tony Cashin with the under thirteen age group and North Central Assistant Junior Development officer in Ricky Allan and Charlton Junior President John Cossar assisted with the under sixteen age group. Club supported to the Academy was also fantastic with the St Arnaud, Boort and Donald football clubs being the venues selected for the sessions for the two age groups and the Birchip-Watchem and Wycheproof-Narraport football clubs offered their facilities to our under fifteen V/Line Cup squad members to conduct their training sessions. With some travel time extending beyond an hour all clubs...
made available at their clubs cost to supply eats and drinks for both the players and parents. This gesture from clubs was well accepted and appreciated by all concerned and we thank those clubs for their efforts over the entire Academy program, just another tick to the support our North Central football clubs give to our junior programs.

Ahead for the North Central is a busy time with more junior programs scheduled with the first on the local front being our Charlton and District Community Bank Lightning Premierships for the three codes we play in the North Central in football, netball and hockey. These lightning premierships are for under 12’s in football, netball and hockey with hockey also staging an under 10’s competition but with the dwindling numbers perhaps this should go back to the original format at under 12 in all codes.

Our next fixtured event is the Worksafe AFL Country Victoria Game of the Month to be played at Wedderburn between Wedderburn and Charlton on Sunday July 26th. The Wedderburn Club have been working closely with the league, AFL Events Manager Dana Reddick and the Charlton Football Club in their preparation of this major event to be staged in the North Central. On the day the three codes will be involved under the Worksafe banner with a dinner to precede the senior football and netball, where there is a large crowd expected to attend the luncheon. Many past players and officials will join with club sponsors from both clubs in making up a large part of the guests which will also have members of the North Central Football Leagues Board, Netball and Hockey officials along with members from the AFL Central Victoria Commission, Regional General Manager and members from the Bendigo Umpires and local community groups.

Following on we have the final Mallee Challenge for our under 12’s 14’s and 16’s in football against the Mallee Football League. The North Central and Mallee Football Leagues have conducted this challenge for a number of years but with the Mallee Football League to be wound up at seasons end this will bring down the curtain on this event that has been run annually and all players in these age groups from both leagues looking forward to making the final squads to play for their respective leagues, this year’s final Mallee Challenge will be run in the North Central at Birchip on Sunday August 2nd.

From here we head towards our finals which will only be preceded by our Feeny Medal Vote Count night to be staged at Boort on Wednesday 26th August.

The Goldacres North Central League finals series kicks off on Saturday August 29th with the Grand Final to be played on Saturday September 19th with all finals venues yet to be decided, but clubs in the mix to host this year’s finals will be from St Arnaud, Charlton, Boort and Wedderburn. With this season being one of the most evenly contested years it will create great interest, with any side finishing in the final four being able to take out the Grand final and take home the much sought after Halfhide Cup.
State Titles 2015

The NCNR which covers a geographical area from Deniliquin to Gisborne and from Maryborough to Echuca, recently held selections trials for 15U, 17U and Open teams as well as a contingent of 3 umpires. 77 players tried out for 15U team, 38 tried out for our 17U team, 21 trialled for the Open team with 9 umpires vying for the 3 umpiring positions.

The NCNR were overwhelmed with the applications for coaching personnel and after an interview process have selected the following very strong panels:

15U – Betty McCoomb (Echuca), Sue Boserio (BFNL) and Tamara Gilchrist – Manageress (HDFNL)

17U – Carol Cathcart (BFNL), Jannaya Webb (BFNL) and Jan Mannes – Manageress (BSNA/Independent)

OPEN – Jannelle Hobbs (BFNL), Jody Warfe (HDFNL) and Fay Linford – Manageress (HDFNL)

To complement such strong coaching panels there is an equally strong administration team behind the scenes making sure all is in place for our tilt at the titles including Gill Davey (Regional Liaison Officer), Joan Hartley (Treasurer - Maryborough), Meagan Keating & Kylie Pearce (Umpires), Melissa Ryan (BFNL), Rose Buckley (Echuca), Vanessa Saunders (Castlemaine) and Annie Bimpson (GCNA).

The 2015 State Titles will be held in Bendigo over October 10th and 11th at the Golden City Netball Association courts where the NCNR hopes the community comes out to support our elite netballers in action!