

# Brunswick Junior Football Club

## 2020

### Annual Report



**BRUNSWICK**  
• JUNIOR •  
FOOTBALL CLUB

*Respect & Inclusiveness*  
*Striving for Excellence*  
*Family and Community focus*  
*Leadership*  
*Honesty, integrity & openness*

*With these values the club aims to provide a positive learning environment  
for all players, parents and supporters.*

# **BRUNSWICK JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **11th ANNUAL REPORT – SEASON 2020**

On behalf of the President and Committee, I present for the consideration and approval of the members, the Annual Report, including the Financial Report, for the year ended 30 September 2020, of the Brunswick Junior Football Club Incorporated.

**Angela Grozos**

**HON. SECRETARY**

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## 1. President's Message – Beth Scott

This annual report provides an overview of the achievements and challenges of the Brunswick Junior Football Club in 2020.

2020 was an extremely challenging year due to the coronavirus (COVID-19), which meant that for the first time in the 11 year history of the Brunswick Junior Football Club, the season did not occur. We had a year of player number stabilisation, forming 18 teams again as we did in 2019. Some teams were of significant size and there were wait lists for a few teams to ensure that the playing and coaching experience was optimised. Once again, the need for good systems and processes and a variety of talented volunteers has been crucial to our successful management of a very different and challenging year.

Even though we never got to hear the first or final siren for the season, volunteers worked harder than ever to get kids safely on the ground for training by planning, researching and running information and education sessions to inform parents and volunteers of the BJFC COVIDSafe Plan.

This year's Committee had new members Angela Grozos as Club Secretary and Jacob Murray-White as Vice President. It is fair to say they had no idea what they were signing up for!!

Club Secretary duties were extremely challenging, and Ange did a great job jumping in and adapting to the madness of what was unfolding. Jacob showcased his Webex facilitation skills brilliantly for a long series of online meetings and forums to keep everyone up to speed.

The other Committee members, Nicole Minihan (Treasurer), Domenic Perrone (Football Operations), Lucy Jenkins (Team Manager Coordinator), Kon Athanasopoulos (Registrations) and Tony Steindl (Social/Canteen), did an amazing job leading the planning and implementation of many things across the club. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee members and their families for their commitment to the club this season. We certainly would not have been able to do it without the dedication of the Committee.

To our other amazing volunteers, including our sensational Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Trainers, Child Safety Officers, Apparel Coordinators, Umpire Coordinator, Orange Coordinator and all of the regular volunteers who support the club each year, I thank everyone for the unique role you all play in the club. Your passion, honesty and commitment are highly valued.

Thank you for your contribution!

## Values

The club values – **Respect & Inclusiveness – Striving for Excellence – Family and Community focus – Leadership – Honesty, Integrity & Openness** – really came into their own this year. With the many challenges that were thrown at us, it was good to keep going back to our values, to tackle each one head on.

## Preseason

The preseason ran smoothly, with the Colts commencing training in November 2019. Marcus from Reload Physio, along with James Parker, delivered a successful preseason running program to improve fitness ahead of the season commencement. These sessions were run in November 2019 and then again in early 2020. The running group was funded by the club and was well attended. It would be valuable to deliver these sessions again, if COVID-19 restrictions permit.

Sadly, the enormous amount of work completed by Tony in the preseason to celebrate and bring our community together through a range of season events did not come to fruition, but we hope to see this effort realised in the 2021 season, with some changes to the canteen and club events.

## Training & Playing

Due to the volume and diversity of our playing group and families, there were varied views and mixed emotions about training and playing in the ever-changing COVID-19 environment. As a club we were considerate of and responsive to this changing landscape. Not seeing people in person as often as we would normally made things more challenging, with the Committee moving to an online format for meetings and discussions which occurred over the phone and via Zoom or Webex.

Player experience was first and foremost for the club, with discussions and decisions revolving around the players and their needs and experience, with the primary focus being on keeping kids safe, active and engaged.

As President, I was relieved to be contacted with offers of support for the club as the Committee started planning for training, working through how the COVIDSafe protocols would be managed. There was a mandatory requirement to have a COVIDSafe Officer in place and we were fortunate enough to have Kim Tully generously step into that role.

In addition, Melissa Seto and Kylie Moreland took a lead to support the COVIDSafe requirements as well to work with Moreland Council on ground allocation for training. Coaches and Team Managers also took on extra responsibilities and provided additional assistance through the recommendation of extra volunteers.

When Brunswick West became one of the first suburbs to be categorised as a hotspot, we were already well informed with data on how many players were impacted and which schools they attended (we had players from over 60 schools registered in 2020). This

information was extremely useful, and we were able to proactively keep the YJFL and Moreland Council informed of these statistics.

In the end, the club managed to get a very short training season off the ground, which officially ran for a period of 2 weeks. There was an extensive effort put in by many volunteers to ensure that each team was COVIDSafe and that they complied with the safety protocols as set by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Whilst I don't like to single people out, I do want to take this opportunity to thank Melissa Seto, Kylie Moreland, Gen Fox, Lucy Jenkins and Kim Tully for their enormous efforts on the COVIDSafe front. This was a curveball sent to us on top of an ordinarily very busy part of the season where our volunteers work incredibly hard to finalise teams and other player matters leading up to the competition.

### Refunds

COVID-19 impacted many components of running a successful junior football club in 2020, with refunds being in the forefront of the thoughts of many families and the Committee.

Decisions regarding refunds were guided by a focus on our current financial position and ensuring that the club could remain in a strong position financially into the future. Although players did not get to commence competition this year, planning for 2020 commenced in late 2019, with costs to get players on the field not being exclusive to competition commencement.

I believe we reached a reasonable balance and are extremely grateful to those families who were in a position and willing to forgo their refund this year to put the club in a better position for next season. The increased generosity from our families both on this front and in volunteering this season was reflective of the great club that we are. Refer to Section 7 for the Treasurer's update.

### Summary

It was a busy and ambitious year and there are many learnings that we can take away as we grow as a club. We remain a passionate community that puts the players first by valuing wellbeing, participation and friendship. We have a bright future with a talented playing group, great volunteers and a good reputation, and we are in a stable financial position due to good governance.

Some of the key areas that have been focused on to improve the club in 2020 include:

- Clubroom works and Brunswick Community Sports Club strategy - \$1m grant from the state government
- Club rebranding with the new BJFC logo
- Introduction of team sets of club-owned playing jumpers
- Girls football development

- Player pathways
- Grants, diversity and inclusion
- Child safety & wellbeing
- Strong relationships with the YJFL, other clubs, Moreland Council and the local community
- Registrations and grading advocacy
- Sponsorship development

Planned but did not get off the ground this season due to COVID:

- The first siren for the season
- The footy season that we know and love
- Start and end of season celebrations
- Parent stand up cocktail night at Little Mess, organised by Tony Steindl
- 10 year anniversary celebrations
- Football development sessions
- Child safety workshop
- Tackle and Takedowns sessions by Malcolm Bangs
- Dynamic Football Skills school holiday sessions
- Sponsorship income (refer to Sponsorship section for more detail)
- Auskick growth by 20% last year, thanks to Jenny Wishart and her outstanding team. Auskick was unable to commence this year and we are still seeking a new Auskick Coordinator
- The hosting of two interstate teams; initial conversations occurred but did not continue
- Continuing our relationship with Carlton Football Club: The Carlton Respects program pilot (1 of 10 clubs in pilot) was planned but did not commence
- Goal and boundary umpiring afternoon
- A sporting chance, let's support and enhance – cross-code, cross-club breakfast
- Player talent visits to promote some of our strongest talent at the older end of the club
- Volunteer thank you event

A nomination for Melissa Seto was also submitted by the Committee for Moreland's Community Award in recognition of her leadership and the enormous effort she put in to getting our club COVID ready.

In addition, one of the YJFL board members recognised the BJFC as Best Practice in the COVIDSafe space, which was reflective of the enormous effort and our collaborative work.

It is hoped that, throughout the tumultuous year that it was, all of the players and their families that joined us in 2020 got to see what a great club we are and that you will rejoin us again in 2021 when we truly hope to show you what our club and community is really all about.

We also hope the players and families who have been part of our rich fabric for a while return next year to celebrate footy in its usual glory.



Finally, I want to thank the players for their resilience, flexibility and their Dragons spirit during this extraordinary time. When the players needed their friends and the chance to play footy more than ever, it was complicated and at times seemed as though there was no end in sight.

The players and their positivity kept the club going.

## 2. Sponsorship – Beth Scott

2020 was a tough year for our Sponsors and, subsequently, all of them were not able to contribute during the season.

Continuing to build our work with the Seniors had increased our sponsorship income for Season 2020 and it also aligned to our 'One Club' philosophy. We continued with a new structure to determine the level and value of each sponsorship. Building relationships and listening to our sponsors and potential sponsors has been crucial in coordinating our approach and we need to keep working in this way.

A total ~\$20,000 in sponsorship was lined up with over 50% of our new playing jumpers scheduled to be branded with our sponsors' logos. The jumper branding was postponed once the first round of COVID-19 restrictions were in place, resulting in sponsorship payments being postponed. The playing jumper branding strategy meant that each team's jumpers would be produced at a cost of ~\$500. Due to the uncertainty, it made complete sense to pause this activity.

As part of my role as President, I understand the value of sponsors and have maintained a strong connection with our sponsors during this year. Our sponsors have also featured heavily in our communications throughout the season where we have continued to promote each sponsor.

Had the season been a regular season and not disrupted by COVID, we would have significantly increased our sponsorship as a club since 2018, from \$2,000 to \$20,000. This would not have included the 'in kind' contributions that the club benefits from, such as the contributions from Green Refectory and Nelson Alexander.

We have increased our brand awareness and achieved sponsorship momentum with a big effort, including the work between the juniors and seniors. It will be beneficial to further build on this next season, albeit in a different way which will be in tune with the current climate at the time.

A key strategy for the club next year will be sponsorship and, therefore, a team of volunteers will be required to optimise our sponsorship potential for next season. A new creative way of thinking and a focus on our social media to promote our sponsors, support local businesses and build community will be key drivers of our success.

Coterie membership and social club membership were part of the structure but were not able to be fully realised in 2020. Only one social club membership was sold after the season was cancelled and no Coterie memberships were purchased this year. Off the back of last year's success, there was a plan to promote the Coterie event and improve on the event from last year's feedback. Having Coterie members present the Coterie awards at the Presentation day in 2020 would have been beneficial to both promote the Coterie and the 'One Club' approach.

### 3. Strategy – Beth Scott

Even though the year was impacted by COVID-19, the Strategic Plan was revisited several times throughout the season to see what, if any actions could be completed without a season occurring. This kept the Committee focused, ensuring that key strategic items were completed, and relationships were maintained with stakeholders.

Active participation in many discussions were had with local council members and at diversity and female participation forums, and strong relationships continued with several clubs within the YJFL as the season unfolded.

Brendan Geary continued to be actively involved in our overall strategy by assisting with council and by representing the club and working with other members of the Brunswick Community Sporting Club to improve the facilities and to gain equitable access to storage within the facilities. Brendan has worked diligently with the BCSC and Council and engaged in discussions with local developers to explore potential facility enhancements across our two main ovals.

### 4. Child Safety – James Parker/Penny Harrison

As with many other aspects of club life this year, juggling lockdown, there were few opportunities to sustain the club's work on child safe obligations and wellbeing more broadly. The club is committed to child protection and to promoting the participation of all players in culturally respectful, engaging and fun ways.

Two activities did take place. First, heading into the second phase of lockdown we tested a series of health and wellbeing messages through TeamApp with the goal to support families and players with information, ways to keep active and connected with the club. Penny and Anna put together some great health and wellbeing resources for our players that were available online. Some teams made their own videos or ran virtual team meetups, including fitness and skills drills.

Second, during the downtime, to reflect on the process to report child safety and wellbeing concerns, we picked up some ideas that will be integrated into the planned information sessions next year.

In 2021, the club's Child Safety Officers will focus on continuing to build on the safety and wellbeing for all participants including:

- Signing of the Child Protection Code of Conduct as part of the registration process
- Continuing to ensure Working with Children Checks are in place for all key roles
- Getting out and about conducting 'meet and greets' with all teams early in the season to say 'hi' and to point out useful information pertaining to child safety
- Run short sessions with Coaches and Team Managers
- Run a whole of club session with an external expert
- Engage players to ask them what else the club can do to continue being a great place to play footy

## 5. Stakeholder Relations & Community Development – Beth Scott

Efforts continue to further strengthen our connection and relationships with Moreland City Council – councilor's, female participation, diversity officer, the surrounding local AFL clubs in the YJFL and the EDFL, other clubs, the Carlton Football club and the cricket club – and within our own club to continue on the 'One Club' journey. These relationships should continue to be nurtured and built upon in 2020.

The President's role involves building relationships and advocating for the club. This is vital as we grow, as is keeping our finger on the pulse in relation to contemporary football practices for girls and boys. The focusses once the impact of COVID-19 was emerging were:

- YJFL – with a focus on chasing up and advocating on issues such as player exemptions, responses to our enquiries throughout the season, COVID-19, the Brunswick 'hotspot' classification by DHHS and fee refunds. Although COVID-19 was an unprecedented challenge, it revealed cracks in the YJFL's capability and responsiveness to players that were already registered but now exacerbated by the challenges of the year and the year to follow
- YJFL Board – to discuss a range of issues that the club was not satisfied with, including their response to COVID-19, to the Brunswick 'hotspot' classification by DHHS and to fee refunds
- Volunteers
- Local MPs and Peter Khalil, attending forums and communicating with them about our challenges and triumphs as a club
- COVID-19 Moreland Sporting Committee to raise sporting issues at Moreland Council
- Local sponsors
- Parents and players
- Other YJFL clubs, with a focus on Fitzroy, Parkside and Preston this year – sharing COVID-19 safe planning and advocating collectively on some items with the league.

## 6. Secretary's Report – Angela Grozos

### 6.1. Compliance and Record Keeping

2020 was a year that was significantly impacted by COVID-19, resulting in several challenges for the Secretary role. While the Secretary is normally the main communication channel between the club and the YJFL, COVID-19 meant that 'it was all hands on deck' with all Committee members actively involved in many of the YJFL interactions as decisions were made given the constantly moving environment.

The year commenced smoothly with the submission of teams' entries to the YJFL in February 2020. The Annual Operations Plan was updated to reflect the commitments defined for 2020 and submission of Moreland Council requirements in relation to grounds, teams and associated player numbers as well as training schedules was completed.

Overall compliance across coaching accreditation, Working with Children Checks and AFL and BJFC Codes of Conducts was managed well as the season progressed ahead of COVID-19 impacts, which started to hit the club in March 2020. Emily Myer did a great job of keeping our club compliance up to date for the second year running. It's an important job that ticks along behind the scenes at our club and works alongside the Club Secretary, sharing the load.

COVID-19 presented many challenges, primarily associated with strict and specific compliance controls enforced for Coaches, Runners, Team Managers and Trainers, all of which required Working with Children Checks.

Every team role was tracked for compliance, with regular reminders being sent.

All the 35 BJFC Coaches were fully compliant. For the teams with Team Managers, all were compliant and held a current Working with Children Check.

In addition, COVID-19 Infection Control training became a mandatory component for all volunteer roles as outlined by the AFL and the YJFL, with 183 BJFC members being recorded as completing this training and becoming compliant.

Recommendations for 2021:

- Due to the 2020 season being cancelled, there was no opportunity to provide a succinct briefing to all club volunteers to outline the expectations of being a volunteer at the BJFC. This will be a key focus for the 2021 season
- Clarify Trainer requirements with YJFL early and how Colbrow fits into the Trainer compliance outlined in Everproof

## 6.2. First Aid

The biggest challenge from a compliance perspective was for the Trainers.

There were significant delays experienced with the Colbrow Medic courses moving online due to COVID-19, resulting in several of the club Trainers not completing their training. The newly formatted Colbrow Medic course meant that Trainers would complete an online component and then attend a face to face training session to demonstrate their knowledge.

The conversion to the online Colbrow Medic course coincided with the newly identified COVID-19 'hotspots'; therefore, several Trainers were hampered in completing this training.

Recommendations for 2021:

- Early identification of Trainers for each team
- Potential to negotiate an arrangement with Colbrow for Trainers to complete the online course and then have Colbrow come to AG Gillon Oval to accredit the Trainers with the final component.

## 6.3. Communications & Website

Planning for communications started well this year with a full events calendar planned very early (thanks to Tony Steindl and the Committee), providing a structure for events communications. Provision of the Welcome Day graphics/content as part of the event planning was especially helpful to ensure clear communication to members.

After the advent of COVID, the focus of communications changed to player motivation and helping our community to stay connected to the club, as well as providing updates on the moving targets of resuming practice and matches. Anna Small, Kylie Moreland and Beth Scott all helped with communications and Dee Bryant continued looking after the website. After the second lockdown, our Player Safety Officer Penny Harrison provided some wellbeing and mental health-oriented communications that ran over several weeks. The materials provided to players received very positive feedback and were especially valuable given the disappointment for many players of being so close to resuming the season.

Anna Small has led the club's communications for the past two years and she has taken it to a new level with her word craftsmanship and her keen eye for photography. We didn't get to read her *Round the Grounds*, a weekly in season wrap of the round, because we didn't get a game in but that was a highlight for many players and families at the club reading about players and teams across the club. Anna has decided to hand on the baton for season 2021. We would like to thank Anna for her significant contribution to our club and look forward to continuing to see Anna and her family around the club.

In 2021 we hope to return to a more normal program with the chance to implement some of our 2020 goals like consolidating communications to share more information in fewer posts, having designated sponsor promotion slots and ways to incorporate sponsors in our regular communications. When confirming sponsors for 2021 it will also be helpful to discuss their

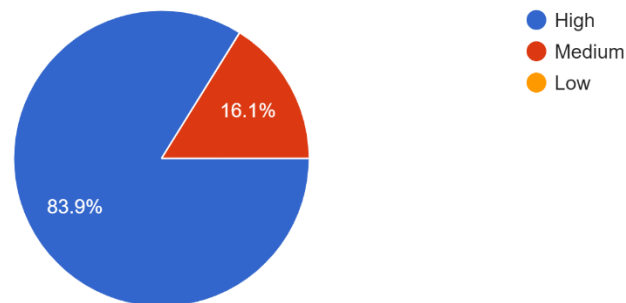
preferred club messaging and obtain images/logos so that content is easily ready for use allowing sponsors to have their preferred messages promoted. Lucy Jenkins has taken over the communications role for 2021 and we hope for a return to more playing-oriented communications!

## 6.4. Parent Survey Feedback

Even though we didn't proceed with a season in 2020, we still surveyed the BJFC members as it was vital that the club received feedback from parents on how the 2020 season was managed by the Committee. Below is some feedback captured as part of this survey:

How would you rate your child's enjoyment being associated with the Brunswick Dragons?

31 responses



*Dragons have been fantastic this year in adapting and compliance to a rapidly evolving footy season. Congratulations to all who have worked so hard.*

*This was our first season at BJFC and while devastating that there was no footy this year, I feel the club did everything in its power to get teams on the field! We enjoyed our brief time here!*

*Excellent guidance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you.*

*It was a challenging year with all the COVID rules but that is not anyone's fault. I did volunteer as a coach and it was definitely enjoyable and would be interested in assisting again*

*Thank you to the coaches, TMs and other volunteers - what an impressive effort in very difficult and changing circumstances.*

*It was just such a shame the kids couldn't play!! Bring on 2021!*

*Great club - keep up the good work!*

## 6.5. Other

**Mouthguards:** As Green Apple was one of our sponsors, they were initially approached at the start of 2020 to determine if they wished to continue with their sponsorship in 2020 and, therefore, be the main mouthguard provider. However Green Apple made the decision not to continue with the sponsorship.

The Committee contacted the Mouthguard Man to confirm their involvement with the Season Kick-Off as was done in 2019. Due to the long delays at the 2019 kick-off with the Mouthguard Man, discussions occurred to allow families to make an appointment with the Mouthguard Man and benefit from the same discount that would have been provided if they attended the Season Kick-Off and had the mouthguard fitting. With COVID-19, this offer to families did not proceed.

**Photos:** Due to COVID-19 and the 2020 season not proceeding, photos were not coordinated.

**Hosting Finals:** Due to COVID-19 and the 2020 season not proceeding, finals were not hosted.

## 7. Treasurer's Report – Nicole Minihan

### 7.1. Overview

The basis for the club's financial activities was the budget determined at the start of the season.

Due to a healthy profit in 2019 and a significant increase and change in fee structure of the YJFL League fees, the Committee decision was to reduce the BJFC membership fee for 2020. To ensure comparability with 2019 amounts, this amount was tiered for age groups.

The Committee's decision was to allow for a yearly profit of \$10,000 so a budget was then constructed based on expected income & prior year expenditure adjusted for team number increase & CPI. Expenses also allowed for the purchase of Team Kit Jumpers in 2020.

Due to COVID-19, the club reviewed the budget and adjusted it for the current financial situation. Upon notification of the cancellation of the season, the club decision was to, at best, break even for 2020.

This resulted in an 'opt in' refund of 70% to all members and a full 100% to those suffering financial hardship. Members were asked to consider donating this balance to the club for future sustainability.

The club achieved a net profit of \$16,128, which is a decrease of \$25,945 from 2019. The resulting profit is largely due to the take up of refunds being less than anticipated and ground hire expenses being waived for 2020. With limited sponsorship and no canteen/bar profit, this is a positive result and assists in ensuring the financial stability of the club.

## Recommendations:

- An amount be set aside for any late 2020 refund requests. An amount of \$5,000 has been provided for any refunds arising in the 2021 financial year
- A budget be struck for 2021 based on reduced membership base and increased costs resulting from Covid-19 safety protocols
- There is no increase to BJFC registration fees based on 2020 profit (if feasible). Treasurer to prepare projected outcomes for various fee options.

## 7.2. Profit & Loss

Income streams are as follows:

- Major Income is Membership Fees – \$38,114, down by \$29,569 from 2019. This amount has been adjusted for refunds of \$14,425 (which includes provision of \$5,000). Approximately 20% of members took up the refund option
- Sponsorship – \$4,552. All major sponsors withdrew due to Covid-19 financial impact. The club received a 50% share of the Bluerock sponsorship paid to BFC per the 'One Club' agreement (amounting to \$3,750). \$454 from Victoria Hotel (who generously did not request a return of funds even though there was no season) & \$347 as a kickback from Kangaroo Photos for 2019 player photos. 2019 sponsorship was \$17,186
- Canteen/Bar/Coffee – No income generated in 2020. 2019 combined income was \$14,232
- Grants Received – General grants amounted to \$2,362. \$1,362 received for COVID-19 safety costs. \$1,000 from AFL & TAC – Towards Zero grant which contributed to new player jumpers. An additional \$5,000 was received from Victoria Gov for Women in Sports Leadership Event, which was cancelled due to COVID-19. The \$5,000 was reallocated to creditors as it will need to be acquitted in 2021 or repaid
- Apparel & Merchandise – Net Profit of \$1,572. This is down \$1,735 from 2019 as no club jumper rental charges were received due to change in policy
- AFL Raffle – No raffle income in 2020. A small amount of \$53 received from a 2019 adjustment (2019 received \$2,120)
- No club events in 2020. 2019 income was \$1,811; however, with the club's 10-year anniversary night & other planned social events cancelled, it was anticipated to generate a higher 2020 revenue
- Received a donation of \$123 from 2019 u12G fundraising event.

Expenditure is as follows:

- All expenditure has been incurred in the course of ordinary club operations, within the budget limits and under Committee approval guidelines
- Major expenses within budget include equipment (\$6,801), insurance (\$1,830), coaching director - \$1,250, Coaches Accreditation - \$495
- Expenses not within budget – COVID-19 Safety Costs amounted to \$2,561, Additional storage and moving costs due to Gillon Renovation - \$2,768 & \$405 respectively
- Utilities were down due to limited clubroom usage (some part paid by Moreland Council due to usage for COVID-19 testing) & all local councils waived ground usage costs in 2020
- Limited training expenditure and no trophies or medals due to season cancellation



- Depreciation expenses for Plant & Equipment including Clifton coaches boxes purchase and team jumper kits (3 year write-off) amounted to \$2,267 and \$4,482 respectively

**Recommendations:**

- General Expenditure for 2020 be established. All areas requiring monies submit anticipated expenditure for review against expected income
- Review additional expected costs resulting from Covid-19 safety protocols.

# Profit and Loss

Brunswick Junior Football Club

For the year ended 30 September 2020

<b>Income</b>		
AFL Raffle Income		53
Apparel and Merchandise Sales	11,957	
Apparel and Merchandise:Opening Stock	(9,420)	
Apparel and Merchandise Purchases	(14,367)	
Apparel and Merchandise:Closing Stock	13,402	1,572
Donations		123
Grants Received		2,364
Membership Fees		38,114
Sponsorship Income		4,552
<b>Gross Profit</b>		<b>46,778</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Audit Fees		670
Bank Charges		543
Covid Safety Regulation Costs		2,561
Depreciation - Plant & Equipment		2,267
Depreciation - Team Jumper Writeoff		4,482
Equipment		6,801
Filing Fees		59
Gifts/Thankyou Expenses		453
Girls Day Costs		550
Insurance		1,830
IT Expenditure		578
Memberships/Subscriptions		250
Moving Costs		405
Postage		139
Printing and Stationery		174
Sponsorship Costs		441
Sporting Pulse Fees		2,077
Storage Expenses		2,768
Training - Coaching Director		1,250
Training - General		495
Trophies & Medals		35
Utilities		1,824
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		<b>30,650</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>		<b>16,128</b>

### 7.3. Balance Sheet

- Assets at 30 September 2020 total \$158,777, including: NAB Bank Balance - \$119,848, Apparel & Merchandise Stock Balance - \$13,403, Sundry Debtor - \$2,617, Plant & Equipment - \$6,377, Clifton Coaches Boxes contribution - \$6,468. Team Jumpers - \$8,964 & a bond paid for the postponement of the 10 year anniversary night - \$1,100
- Liabilities at 30 September 2020 total \$11,698, including: Sundry Creditors (\$6,527 being \$5,000 grant yet to be acquitted and YJFL fees of \$1,597), GST - \$101
- Committee decision to provide for an additional \$5,000 of refunds in 2021 for members who may require a return of 2020 fees
- The club, considering the current economic environment, achieved a profit of \$16,128 and is in a sound financial position to commence 2021 with Net Assets of \$147,079

#### **Recommendations:**

- Given the uncertainty of the 2021 season format and expected drop-off of membership numbers, the recommendation is that the club maintain current cash balances and limit non-essential expenditure in 2021

# Balance Sheet

## Brunswick Junior Football Club As at 30 September 2020

30 SEP 2020

### Assets

#### Bank

NAB Bank Account	119,848
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>119,848</b>

#### Current Assets

Apparel & Merchandise	13,403
Prepayment - Bond Deposit	1,100
Sundry Debtors	2,617
Team Jumpers	8,964
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>26,084</b>

#### Fixed Assets

Plant & Equipment - Coaches Boxes	6,468
Plant and Equipment	6,377
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>12,845</b>

**Total Assets** 158,777

### Liabilities

#### Current Liabilities

GST	101
Provision for Membership Refunds	5,000
Sundry creditors	6,597
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>11,698</b>

**Total Liabilities** 11,698

**Net Assets** 147,079

### Equity

Current Year Earnings	16,128
Retained Earnings	130,951
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>147,079</b>

## 8. COVID-19 – Kim Tully (COVIDSafe Officer)

COVID-19 had an unprecedented effect on the whole of Australia, including our Brunswick Dragons players, volunteers, sponsors and overall community. COVID-19 meant that the club had to pivot quickly and make many changes to accommodate the ever-shifting environment.

Understanding the COVID-19 protocols and what that meant for the club and players was a challenge. The Committee worked closely with the YJFL, Moreland and Melbourne City Council as well as other clubs to understand what was required and how everyone was navigating COVID-19. This was in addition to sourcing, navigating and clarifying the information provided by the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) and how this information related to community sports.

A directive from the AFL meant that each club was required to have a COVIDSafe Officer and this resulted in the appointment of Kim Tully. Kim was appointed in May 2020 and had to hit the ground running.

COVID-19 activities were as follows:

- Development of a COVIDSafe Management Plan
- Revision of ground allocation submission for Moreland Council
- DHHS COVID-19 Infection Control Training became a mandatory requirement for all volunteers
- Tracking associated with COVID-19 Infection Control training ensuring compliance
- Introduction of a Training Support role was required to support teams at training arrival and departure – 2 roles per team were required based on the entry and exit points of the training ground – the role focused specifically on ensuring compliance in relation to:
  - All hands, before and after training, being sanitised
  - Supervision of entry and exit points
  - Ensuring social distancing requirements were adhered to by all players and parents
- Introduction of a Training Attendance Register
- 'Return to Train' webinars conducted for 120+ parents over two sessions
- 'Return to Train' webinar conducted for all volunteer roles, including Coaches, Team Managers, Umpires and Trainers
- 'Return to Play' webinars conducted for 120+ parents over two sessions
- 'Return to Play' webinar conducted for all volunteer roles, including Coaches, Team Managers, Umpires and Trainers
- YJFL Amended Playing Conditions 2020 introduced to accommodate COVID-19 requirements
- Rescheduling of training sessions and ground allocations for COVID-19
- Hotspot suburb analysis providing a full understanding of each impacted player and volunteer and the associated impact on each team.

## 9. Football Operations Report – Domenic Perrone

In what turned out to be a very busy year around 'Football Operations' there was no actual football played.

The year started well with all teams set up and preseason training underway. There was an extra training allocation with Ransford Oval available to BJFC on Wednesday nights and practice matches were being arranged.

As we know, it all took a turn for the worse by mid-March 2020 when the season was placed on hold and never really got a chance to start again. There was a glimmer of hope mid-year that we could get 10 or so games in but that was extinguished by the rise in COVID-19 infections leading to restrictions that gave us no chance of games for 2020.

I would like to thank all the people involved in the tireless efforts in managing our club's Football Operations in 2020: Kon Athanasopoulos, Kylie Moreland, Melissa Seto, Lucy Jenkins, Ray McKenzie & Jacob Murray White. Special thanks also to Beth Scott and her Executive team for the great job they did with the club overall in a very difficult year.

### 9.1. Player Development

Given that all our teams at their age level missed an entire year, next year some thought will need to go into how to compensate for this during the preseason to bring the players up to the higher physical level they may encounter.

### 9.2. Girls Football Development

Female football continues to be strong with good representation. The 2020 season reflected girls' participation as follows:

- 4 female teams, U10, U11, U12, & U16 and other female players in 4 mixed teams
- 4 female coaches this season:
  - U12G Erin Maclatchy
  - U16G Sasha Dougherty (Renegade)
  - U16G Felicity Smith (Renegade)
  - U09M Jen Wishart
- Girls 'Get Around Footy' Day – with Jess Trend (North Melbourne), Gab Pound (Carlton) and Katie Brenan (Richmond) – AFLW opening round Carlton v Richmond
- Change to 5-6-5 ground configuration to align with AFLW player spread (2019 6-4-6)
- Carlton Club AFLW visit planned but cancelled due to COVID-19.

The 2021 Season will see challenges with the YJFL requirement to have players playing at age and fielding viable teams. BJFC teams tend to have a handful of top age players but

most are younger players. The YJFL had declared prior to COVID-19 that they will no longer exempt older age players to play down.

Recommendations for 2021:

- Opportunity to book specialist coaches, including umpiring, and AFLW players in advance
- Encourage more female coaches in both female and mixed teams
- Liaise with YJFL to seek recommendations on how to manage blended older age groups when players tend to drop out
- Keep abreast of female football trends

### 9.3. Coaching

All Coaches were in place including several first-year coaches, more female coaches and some coaches (and coaching support crew) that were not parents at BJFC.

Thank you to Luke O'Connell who once again took on the role of Director of Coaching in 2020. Luke was also up and running with an expanded program for coaches that was never able to be rolled out.

### 9.4. Football Operations Recommendations for 2021

The absence of having any season in 2020 will bring some challenges to planning for 2021. It is proposed that more people will need to get involved in Football Operations to help the growing number of roles required to run the football side of the club.

### 9.5. Outstanding team and individual performances

Not applicable due to no season in 2020.

### 9.6. Coaching Recommendations for 2021

Returning coaches and new coaches will need to be put in place early in preparation for 2021. As the 2020 season did not occur, many of the 2020 coaching recommendations still apply:

- Develop an agreement that sets out the goals of the club and coach for the season and how that will be reflected in rotations, selection etc. and get the parents (and players) to sign it. This clearly establishes guidelines for all involved and will help manage future conflicts should they arise.
- Build a culture of parents taking part in training and games. This will help the coaches immensely, but it also builds a deeper team environment and 'trains' parents.

Differentiate how Luke O'Connell and Football Operations works with the coaches based on relevant age groupings.

- U8s-U10s – the least engaged with the meetings over the last two years. Potentially due to challenges at home with younger kids, but they also have a different focus for their sessions/players.
- U11s-U14s – the most engaged with meetings and with questions etc. These coaches are looking for the next level in training drills, systems and game plans, while also managing more issues with player personalities etc.
- U15 and Colts – starting to prepare for senior football while managing talent gaps that are more obvious as the overall game standard goes up. Whilst the Colts have been in good hands, there is a need to start preparing a succession plan for 2022.
- Should a player development program (or pilot) be put in place, we should look at ways to integrate coach development in it, which will increase the practical component.

## 10. Registrations – Kon Athanasopoulos

Despite the uncertainty that surrounded the 2020 season, registrations were strong, and the club was able to field a list of teams across all the mixed/boys age groups including four all-girls teams.

The club was steady in maintaining the number of teams of 18 from the 2019 season.

### **Total Players:**

- 2019 – 399 players
- 2020 – 390 players – includes those that registered for training only. This was higher than usual due to, at the time, the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19

### **Male Players:**

- 2019 – 311 players
- 2020 – 310 players

### **Female Players:**

- 2019 – 88 players
- 2020 – 80 players – despite the slight drop, this is a strong result. Historically, girls register late once the season starts and friendship groups bring more players.

### **Recommendations for 2021:**

- U13 teams to be streamed
- With the desire to get as many children registered and playing as soon as possible, some teams were a little over the recommended team cap, posing what could have been a problem for some teams. Although it would be preferable for players to play in their correct age group, a stricter approach to late registrations will need to be adhered to and late registrations can be offered alternatives to play in a higher age group or be placed on a waiting list
- Player retention needs to be made a priority for the coming season



## 11. Apparel – Jaci Blumhagen

After a successful apparel transition in 2019 with phase 1 moving to jumper team sets, 2020 was going to be the year where a full overhaul was to be launched in respect of a new logo, player jumpers, team kits and sponsorship logos included on selected team jumpers.

At the start of 2020, sponsor logos were being created by the supplier for inclusion on BJFC selected team jumpers. However, as this work progressed, it was clear that COVID-19 was going to significantly disrupt the launch of the new logo and sponsorship promotion on the apparel.

Most of this activity had already been completed and, as a result, there are three sponsor logos from three sponsors that have been created and are being held by the supplier. They can be used in later years with regular contact throughout 2020 being maintained with these sponsors with a view to them returning in 2021 and beyond.

After attempting to collect anticipated 'outlier' player sizes from Team Managers and Coaches, a decision was made to have players try on the new jumpers prior to Welcome Day. This activity was completed with a few volunteers attending each training session during a week in early March to enable players to try on different jumper sizes so that sizes could be recorded. In late March, COVID-19 lockdowns occurred, and the jumpers were not distributed.

With hopeful expectations, in mid-June, the jumpers were painstakingly allocated to teams and bagged up for collection. Immediately following most team kits being collected, lockdown 2.0 occurred, resulting in half of the teams (the younger ones who did not have another practice) never having distributed the jumpers to their players.

Apparel sales continued even with the COVID-19 pandemic cancelling the 2020 season but were well below the 2019 levels:

Item(s)	2020 Result (approx)
Playing shorts	↓ 27%
Playing socks	↓ 30%
Long-sleeved purple tops (for underneath playing jumpers)	↓ 11%
Hoodies	↓ 43%
Bags, caps, scarves and beanies	↓ 67%

### Recommendations:

Some of the apparel recommendations from 2019 are still relevant for 2021 given the cancellation of the 2020 season. Below are some learnings and recommendations from the limited 2020 season that can be implemented:

- Continue to offer apparel sales and pick-up for online purchases during Friday night training alongside Fuss Free Fridays

- Offer apparel sales at Welcome Day (alongside apparel pick-up for orders already placed) as well as at Presentation Day at the end of the season. This worked well in 2019 and should be attempted again in 2021 as it assists to reduce stock at the end of the year.
- Having new storage at Gillon Oval, under the grandstand, was anticipated to be of assistance with inventory control but was untested due to no season occurring. However, Monash Storage remains the more secure option due to there being one key for the gym at Gillon Oval, which is also used for our storage door. Renovations at Gillon Oval may change this for 2021.
- Continue with implementation of jumper team sets. Jumper Policy to be re-issued in 2021 to ensure thorough understanding in respect of jumper numbers as well as regular communication with TMs and Coaches, as to how the distribution of jumpers will occur.
- Whilst having sponsor logos on individual team jumpers has significant sponsorship value, it adds an extra complication to ensuring the team kit, with accurate jumper sizes for the players, has the correct sponsor logo attached. There needs to be consideration of what happens, for example, if a sponsor only sponsors one team, but due to swapping jumpers to ensure correct sizes for players, a jumper with a different sponsor must be included in that team.

## 12. Grants – Andrew McKinnon

There were two grants which were initiated in 2019 and fulfilled in 2020 after being finalised. These were as follows:

- Coaches boxes installed (Clifton Oval) – funds received last season and club contribution
- A Sporting Chance – cross club/cross code breakfast session all planned and scheduled for May 2020 and postponed until further notice.

Andrew worked on several grants during 2020 as follows:

- COVIDSafe – hand sanitiser
- Equipment grants – currently pending
- Vic Health – the club was successful in attaining Vic Heath funding in 2019 and are now ineligible for funding for a further 2 years. This will be a focus as we start work on the new season
- Sports & Recreation Victoria Sporting Club grants – this is the second round for the same funding category we applied for in February 2020:
  - A grant application of \$1,000 for equipment will be submitted after our grant application of \$5,000 from the capacity building stream in February 2020 was unsuccessful
  - Focusing on the equipment stream next time around would be better, even though it's a lower value
  - The submission cycle for SRV seems to favour summer sports starting in the September round. This cycle (submission in February for September) is a much

better time to apply for grants rather than at the start of the football season when everything is a mad rush

Andrew MacKinnon has done an amazing job on grants and has also provided valuable guidance on other issues and challenges faced by the club this season.

### 13. Diversity

The club had many plans to continue our commitment to diversity this year but none of it was actualised due to the season being impacted by COVID. Imogen had planned to share stories and incorporate some new programs to appeal to different cohorts at the club.

We were able to deliver the recommendation from the previous year of having a dedicated Diversity Officer and it was looking to be an exciting year. Looking forward to delivering further on this next season.

### 14. Umpiring – Ray McKenzie

The BJFC Junior Umpire Program provides central umpires for U8-U10 home games and is a great way for players to improve their fitness, their understanding of the game and their appreciation of the difficult job umpires do for them when they are playing in their own games. It is also a great way for them to contribute to the football club.

The main features of the program are:

- Expressions of interest to join the program are issued early in the preseason
- Applicants must be turning 14 or older during the season but there are no other requirements
- Priority is given to those who have umpired in previous seasons and to those who are also players at the club
- Each year non-playing umpires have also contributed to the umpiring group
- If enough numbers are obtained from returning umpires, applications may be closed as it is necessary to manage umpire numbers to be commensurate with the number of games to be officiated each weekend during the home and away season
- Prospective umpires attend a training session at the YJFL Headquarters at Bulleen Park at the beginning of the season
- Other online accreditation endorsed by the YJFL is also required to be completed for new umpires
- New umpires shadow experienced umpires during practice matches at the start of the season and during the grading games in the first four home and away rounds
- Shadowing for 4 matches is normally considered the minimum to obtain enough experience and confidence before officiating a full game on their own
- Supplementary training is provided as required throughout the season. One avenue for this is umpiring the scratch matches for the U8-U10 teams at Friday night training
- YJFL Umpires Manual, Supplementary Rules and Guidelines, updated each year, are provided via the Umpire Manager, including updates throughout the season

- The Umpire Manager regularly attends U8-U10 matches to observe umpires and provide feedback throughout the season
- Junior Umpires may also express interest in participating in the YJFL umpiring program either directly or via the Junior Umpire Manager. In this case they will umpire higher age division games, which may or may not involve a Brunswick team.

## 14.1. Umpire Program 2020

### Umpire Numbers

In season 2020 there were 10 returning umpires for the junior program, including 2 umpires still undergoing shadow training. This was considered an ample number of umpires to ensure all games (expected 2x U8, 2x U9, 2xU10 and 1x U10 Girls, home games only), were covered each weekend while only having a few umpires who missed each weekend.

The program had 2 female umpires who had commenced for the first time in 2019, a significant step forward for the program. Expressions of interest had also been received from several new potential umpires but given returning numbers and the subsequent difficulties with the season start, these were recorded but not engaged for the new season.

### Umpire Training, Rostering and Performance

Initial planning for attendance at YJFL training sessions, U8-U10 preseason training, and preseason practice matches were underway when COVID-19 restrictions applied to the 3055 Brunswick West 'hotspot' postcode which initially prevented any further umpiring activity.

As the season start was delayed several times, the stage 4 restrictions in Melbourne commenced and finally the full season was cancelled, no further umpiring activities were conducted. This was a disappointing outcome to a promising season. It is hoped that continued engagement with the umpiring squad during the off season and early 2021 pre-season will result in significant retention of numbers in the umpire squad.

## 14.2. Umpire Program for 2021

For 2021, the current umpire manager will step down from the position as the associated junior player graduates to the senior club. Filling the umpire manager role is a key priority in preparation for the 2021 season.

The outline in the introduction of this report will form the basis of a position description and transition document that the current Umpire Manager will provide to the Committee before leaving the club role. The transition document will also provide key dates, contacts at the YJFL for umpiring matters and links to training resources.

Overall, the role is not very complex or technically difficult but does require some time commitment and organisational skills in developing the roster to meet disparate requirements of umpiring availability, junior age match times and umpire playing

commitments. Good communication with the umpiring squad, club football operations and the junior parent cohort are also important.

The current manager can commend the role as a great way to be involved with the fantastic Dragons community and especially the umpire squad members as great ambassadors of the club's reputation for good sportsmanship and as a place to develop quality young people.

## 15. Club Community Engagement

### 15.1. Canteen

Due to not having a season in 2020, the canteen services were not available.

2020 did result in the commencement of the refurbishment of the clubrooms, kitchen, umpires change rooms, new flooring as well as a new scoreboard. This refurbishment was possible with a \$1m grant which was promised by the state government in 2019. The grant was included in the 2019 State Budget and was allocated to Moreland Council to facilitate the refurbishment.

A detailed scope of work for this refurbishment was managed through the Brunswick Community Sports Club. The project commenced in July 2020 and is expected to be completed by November 2020.

The canteen is a major asset and provides the club with a great opportunity to generate additional income.

#### **Recommendations**

For 2021, recommendations remain the same as proposed at the end of the 2019 season:

- Increase in the number of volunteers who assist with serving/cash handling – this specifically applies to Friday nights, which can see large volumes of hungry mouths to be fed after the end of each training session
- Additional volunteers required to assist with the cleanup at the end of the night
- Continue with a paid Canteen Manager who has also taken responsibility for the food purchasing and collection.

### 15.2. Bar

Due to not having a season in 2020, bar services were not available.

#### **Recommendations**

For 2021, recommendations remain the same as proposed at the end of the 2019 season:

- Continue with the arrangement with West Brunswick Cellars to supply alcohol stock for the bar.
- Set up a roster system to utilise the number of volunteers who now hold the RSA qualification so that the same volunteers are not required to attend every Friday night
- Purchase a new industrial fridge for alcohol (and some food) stock. Volunteers have been required at times to taxi stock from their homes to the clubrooms on a nightly basis which is not sustainable.
- Set up a roster for helpers to assist with the cleaning up of the clubrooms or if not possible review the cost/benefit of a paid cleaner

### 15.3. Coffee Cart

Due to not having a season in 2020, the coffee cart was not required. However, arrangements had been made with a local social enterprise that uses ethically sourced produce, provides local jobs and puts their profits into social projects.

#### **Recommendations**

- Continue with an external local and ethically sourced supplier for season 2021.

## 16. Facilities

Access to grounds is a significant constraint for the club and one that requires careful planning and focus. Facilities used by the club are as follows:

1. AG Gillon Oval – Moreland Council – used for training and games
2. Clifton Park – Moreland Council – used for training and games – restricted to younger teams as it is a smaller oval
3. Ransford Oval – Yarra City Council – used for training and games
4. Fleming Park – Moreland Council – used for training only (games not available due to Lacrosse commitments).

#### **Clifton Park West**

YJFL rules stipulate that shelters must be provided for the coaches' bench during games. This resulted in the club's temporary shelters having to be carried back and forth across Victoria Street to be set up and put down each Sunday. After a failed grant submission to install permanent coaches boxes at a cost of ~\$20k, the club applied for another grant for 50% of the cost which was approved in early 2020.

The coaches boxes were installed in March 2020.



### **Storage**

The club faced storage issues during the year due to the closure of the clubrooms for renovation. All equipment and stock had to be removed to allow for the building works to commence and therefore, additional costs were incurred due to needing to increase our storage unit capacity at Monash Storage.

## 17. Team Reports



### 17.1. U8 Mixed (Purple and White)

At the beginning of the season there were enough players for our first U8s team. The squad had their first training immediately after the Labour Day long weekend, and Phil Bennett put the squad through their very first underage training drills. Phil had his hands full for the entire session! Unfortunately, this was our one and only training session before the initial COVID-19 lockdown.

Before the teams recommenced training the squad grew enough to split the numbers into two teams of approximately 12 players each. The team's leadership were able to fill the required roles, with Peter Brunt stepping up as coach of the Purple team.

Numbers were good at training for the three or four sessions that were conducted, with lots of enthusiasm and fun, only a couple of players absent. Players were very enthusiastic. Everyone involved missed training with the squad and look forward to seeing the players in the U9s in 2021!

A big thank you to all those helpers that gave their time to provide a first taste of underage footy in a very challenging year.

- Purple coach – Peter Brunt
- Purple Assistant – Steve Sinn
- Purple Team Manager – Brett Logan



- Trainer – Natasha Wilby
- White coach – Phil Bennett
- White Assistant – Lachie Kidd
- White Team Manager – Christian Wilmsen
- Trainer –Yvonne Perry/Bryn Davies
- COVID officer – Geoff Lamb

## 17.2. U9 Mixed (Purple)

Nil report.

## 17.3. U9 Mixed (White)

After four sparkling training sessions, the Brunswick Dragons U9 Whites were poised to take the YJFL by storm this season ... but alas, it wasn't to be. The team had a great bunch of kids – a mix of returning players and new ones – full of enthusiasm and keen to improve their footy.

I really hope most of them return to the club in 2021 for a proper crack at it. Special thanks to Jen Wishart (Assistant Coach) and Gill Ward (Team Manager) for their stellar efforts to ensure we were all CovidSafe on those few occasions we were able to come together as a group.

## 17.4. U10 Mixed (Purple)

It was great to see the whole team from 2019 return to play in 2020. We also welcomed four new players to the group: Nicholas, Lucas, Sam and Harry. Everyone was disappointed not to play a game this year but enjoyed getting back together to train for a few sessions. Even over those few weeks, we saw some skill improvement, which was encouraging. We're looking forward to U11s next season and stepping up from modified rules to full rules. Thanks to the Committee for your efforts throughout 2020. Thanks to all the Purple parents and family members for your help and support again this year. Go Dragons!

## 17.5. U10 Mixed (White)

Nil report.

## 17.6. U10 Girls

Whilst 2020 certainly wasn't the season that any of us hoped for, it was still great to see so many young girls keen on playing footy. Our numbers only increased as the season went on (despite all the uncertainty we faced), so the future of girls footy is in good hands.

It was a real pleasure working with the girls this year and seeing them have so much fun at training – whether it was getting muddy and sweaty, improving their skills and growing their confidence or making new friends. I think it's safe to say that the highlight for almost all the girls was taking on the tackling bag – I've never seen such pent-up enthusiasm for a training drill! I hope that each player enjoyed the season as much as I did despite the lack of game time. I know all the players are chomping at the bit for another chance in 2021.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the parents and volunteers who helped this year. It's quite a logistical effort that relies on 'many hands making light work' and without their support, the 2020 season would not have been possible. There are too many of you to name here, but on behalf of all the girls, please accept our sincere appreciation for all that you have done.

## 17.7. U11 Mixed

Nil report.

## 17.8. U11 Girls

The stop/start nature for season 2020 was tough going for sure, but the one thing that stood out as a constant throughout was our U11G enthusiasm to get out on the park and run around with a footy. The U11G coaches are super excited to see the same energy in 2021.

Congratulations to all involved with U11G in 2020 – parents, volunteers, and, of course, the players. Enjoy your summer and see you next year!

## 17.9. U12 Girls



It was a pretty normal season for the coaches of the U12 Girls. Every training session would begin with a sea of eager faces looking back, ready to work on their skills and talk tactics.

Admittedly they were tiny faces in a series of squares on our computer screens, and each of them was standing on a little patch of backyard or in their living room, but other than that, it was the same!

There were the two summery training sessions back in March 2020, and the three weeks of training in two separate groups in June 2020, but other than those face to face sessions, all other training sessions were held through the wonders of modern technology.

There were upsides, to be sure: no leaving work early to make it to training on time, and no lugging heavy bags full of balls around, and it was definitely a little hard for the girls when all of their hand passes went straight up in the air and the way they were paddling the ball around the back yard to themselves. Even with those challenges, the video training sessions were a good way for them to improve their skills: lots of repetition with the coaches giving tips, and fun races: first to 50 handballs, most kicks to yourself in a minute, who can hold a plank the longest!

Amazingly, many of the girls have kept logging onto the Zoom link at 5pm every Wednesday all the way into September. It's been nice for them to have a little time exercising and seeing their friends. It's not the same as playing and training together, but it's kept the bond alive. Here's to long kicks, length of the ground drills and – oh yes! – playing games in 2021.

Thanks to all the parents for giving over your computers every Wednesday. Thanks also to Mel Seto and Emilia Berryman for their incredible support and – of course – to those rambunctious girls for showing up and putting a smile on our faces!

### 17.10. U12 Mixed (Purple)

U12P were looking forward to a great 2020 season. This team has been together since U8s, with a few great boys joining along the way to complement the team. Unfortunately, COVID-19 had different plans. The team was only able to train a handful of times, but it was great to see the friendship, teamwork and fun of the boys out on the field. They are a great group of kids, each bringing their own uniqueness to the team and the game.

Thanks to Jimmy and James for their coaching, the skills and the encouragement offered to the boys. Looking forward to season 2021.

### 17.11. U12 Mixed (White)

The season that wasn't! As a parent and as a coach, I feel sorry for all those involved with season 2020. We all know how keen our kids are (as well as the parent group!) on their footy. They have missed out on the much-needed fun, competitiveness, camaraderie and sense of achievement that comes with being a member of the Brunswick Dragons U12 Whites.

They may not know it yet, but they have gained resilience and perspective and, as such, they will come back in season 2021 with a renewed enthusiasm and spirit that will be unmatched.

### 17.12. U13 Mixed

U13M had great numbers and enthusiasm on the track. In the little time available, it was obvious the boys had maintained fitness and skill levels over the intermittent training availability. Five new boys were welcomed into the team. It is hoped to see all boys for preseason training later in the year.

### 17.13. U14 Mixed

2020 was a season that promised so much and delivered so little.

First up, the newly mixed Purples and Whites were shaping up to be genuinely formidable premiership contenders in their respective divisions. Possibly any stray old-school spectators at Monday night trainings at Fleming may have muttered about the warm-up arabesques and grapevines, but, unfortunately, for the U14s the chance for even fancier footwork was lost with the sad departure of Anthony Balmain to take on COVID-19 in SE Asia.

But the old-schoolers would have perked up at the efforts of the U14s over the next 90 minutes of run-throughs, circle work, burpees and push-ups. The team were set to grab season 2020 by the scruff of its footy cliché.

A second highlight was seeing the coaching team come together. It was great to see the week to week improvement in skills, commitment and focus by everyone (and a welcome relief to the wear and tear on the coaching vocal cords). Fantastic to hear laughing at training - even in a sub-arctic blizzard!

Sensational new talent in Eamonn, Euan and Sam – a real shame that they didn't get a chance to strut their stuff. And neither last nor least was the fabulous family support. Many thanks to the parents who stepped up at short notice.

But without any doubt the BIGGEST highlight for season 2020 was seeing all the U14s coming together as a single, happy unit. These guys are a genuine delight to be around: they love the game, they enjoy each other's company, they've got tons of heart and they play with real joy. Every one of them is an ornament to the game. Bring on season 2021!!

### 17.14. U15 Boys

The Under 15 preseason started with plenty of vigor with training sessions at Princes Park on weekends and at Clifton during the week. A large squad of 30 provided plenty of energy with some new faces and some players coming back from the age group above. The team has come back bigger and stronger and kicking noticeably longer, so the team focused on switching the ball across the ground in our training.

In lockdown the team have been doing some online training with popular workouts from Zues Fitness, the 7M app, and with some lockdown jealousy, a global tour with Joe Wicks to places like Marina Bay Sands Hotel rooftop in Singapore and San Francisco Bay. A big thanks to Rod Aldridge for assistant coaching and Johnathan Quilty who also helped with the coaching sessions and keeping the energy up in the online sessions with the team.

### 17.15. U16 Girls

2020 the season that was never to be. After an impressive preseason and solid commitment from the U16G team, I was looking forward to coaching the team into my first season as a coach.

In lieu of COVID-19 taking over our season and lives for most of this year, Flick Smith created another platform for the team to bond and also get outside and do some form of footy training. Flick held weekly Zoom footy sessions, included skills and just a catch up. It was attended by most of the team and it kept all our spirits up during the unknown.

The 2021 season can't come soon enough for not only the Dragons but the Renegades also. I look forward to putting my hat in the ring next year if all the stars align.

## 17.16. U17 Boys (Colts) – Steve Sinn

A standout from the Colts 2020 season was the overall attitude of the older Colts players. Their previous coaches deserve a big congratulations.

The older Colts were enthusiastic, hardworking, and open to new challenges. They brought a positive and friendly approach to being in a team environment. The older Colts were great role models to the younger players. It was noticeable how much the younger players really looked up to the older Colts for guidance. It was a great shame that this group did not get the opportunity to play footy together as a team.

Another key aspect of the Colts season was our preseason training. Joe Costa was asked to help Andrew (Assistant Coach) run the preseason training. Joe works as a personal trainer and he was good at working with young people. Joe brought to the Colts some knowledge about personal fitness, health, strength building and conditioning. At the Colts level, the players are keen to learn more about how to build their overall fitness and they benefitted from having access to Joe's professional knowledge. Joe was able to adapt and respond to individual needs and to the challenges of having two different age groups. He was positive and good natured. Both Joe and Andrew were as interested in the players general wellbeing as they were in helping to develop their strength and fitness (at the end of one warm down session, Joe had the boys giving each other shoulder massages. There were also moments of meditation. Which was fantastic). With his knowledge and ability to work with young people, Joe is a great asset to our club.

At Colts level, the players can be hungry for ways to improve their footy. As coach, I did feel that it was important for me to involve other voices and different expertise. I also felt it was important to listen to the opinions and ideas of the players and give the older players some level of responsibility (I found that when given different responsibilities, this can be a great learning experience for the older players). For the coach, this approach of being open, receptive and responsive can be difficult. It can be a tricky balance between involving different expertise and having a consistent message. The players are still young. They need specific guidance as well as clear and consistent messages.

Another key part of 2020 was that we attracted new players from another league. As a club we are doing well to maintain the key values of being a family club, of prioritising participation and, at the same time, providing many different opportunities for young people to improve their footy. Footy clubs are about people, and I feel that we have some great people in key roles.

I thought that the club was fantastic at maintaining a consistent, researched, diligent, prudent and serious approach toward COVID-19, as well as seeking to provide opportunities for young people to play team sport. That was a great achievement.

As Team Manager, Georgie was a fantastic support to me, the players and parents. Through the difficulties of COVID-19, Georgie showed just how valuable she is to our footy club. I feel it is important that we maintain support for our Team Managers.

Well done to the BJFC. One of my joys this year was to see so many Brunswick residents wearing their purple and green, which I think demonstrated a support towards our club.