

# Brunswick Junior Football Club 2021

## Annual Report



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**

## **12th ANNUAL REPORT – SEASON 2021**

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 2021, of the Brunswick Junior Football Club Incorporated.

**Angela Grozos**

**HON. SECRETARY**

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## 1. President's Message – Andrew McKinnon

Well Dragons, what a year it's been!! After not seeing any football in 2020, there was a lot of excitement and anticipation in the lead up to this year, and how good it was to see our players out there when the season kicked off.

On the field, there were just so many highlights this year! The club added to its tally of three premierships, with two premierships this season. We had players make the YJFL representative team, and we had YJFL Best and Fairest winners and podium placers.



One of the highlights for me was seeing our many first-year players, and players new to the game just giving it a go.

Behind the scenes there was so much great work done to make this all happen. We are privileged to have such great people that contribute so generously to volunteering their time. Football isn't a winter sport for our committee and committee support roles, who work all year round to grow and develop our club. Thank you! You are the backbone of this great club.

To the coaches, team managers and all game day volunteers that help each week, thank you! No matter how big or small the part you have played this year, it has all contributed to growing kids, as footballers and as people, and creating an experience and memories that they will cherish forever.

I'd also like to acknowledge the generosity of our sponsors, many of which have been significantly impacted by COVID. In trying financial times, your support is graciously acknowledged.

Finally, I'd like to thank all club members for the spirit and mindset with which you participate, spectate, and support your kids and our club. In a year when I have seen and heard about some quite abhorrent behaviours from other clubs within the YJFL, it is with a great deal of pride that I call Brunswick Junior Football Club my home. The values of our club are real, and they are practiced weekly by our players, families, and volunteers.

Thanks for a great 2021, and I'm looking forward to 2022 already!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Andrew Mackinnon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Andrew Mackinnon  
President

## 1.1. Awards and Achievements

The club proudly acknowledges and congratulates the following individuals and teams for their awards and achievements in 2021.

### PREMIERS

U13 Purple Mixed

U16

### YJFL REPRESENTATIVE PLAYERS (U13 TO U15)

Harriet Brown

Sophia Carr

Isobella Hishongwa-Gibb

Avaa Hishongwa-Gibb

Lucille O'Neill

Dahli Pestinger

Cristian Athanasopoulos

Ruben Powell

### YJFL TEAM OF THE YEAR

Oscar Watt (Colts)

### YJFL BEST AND FAIREST VOTES RECIPIENTS

Abbey Somerville	Harper Exton	Oscar Watt
Albie Fredrickson	Harrison Douglas	Phoenix Balaam Gunderson
Alexandra Brown	Harry Mclennan	Poppy Dohrman
Alistair McQuire	Isobella Hishongwa-Gibb	Riley Wilton
Archie Liddell	Jack Papadimitropoulos	Ruben Powell
Ari Paevere	Jaekob Duvnjak	Samuel McIlroy
Avaa Hishongwa-Gibb	Jethro Lalor	Savah Gus McDonald
Benjamin Marchionna	Joel De Vos	Sheila Jim
Bianca Broadbent-Siciliano	Jonah Allan	Tessa Berryman
Campbell Brain	Joseph Watson	Thomas Ayres
Cassius Allan	Julian Castelli	Thomas Bannan
Chloe Haritopoulos	Kristian Cavallo	Thomas Cairns
Cristian Athanasopoulos	Leonardo Briganti	Thomas Koutsofrigas
Curtis Powell	Leonard Cornelius	Thomas Sweetman
Daisy Fredrickson	Lewis Bonney McKenzie	Tilda Sinclair
Daniel Clough	Lola Sleeth	Tom Varley
Dashiell Spencer White	Luca Dryden	Tyler Rogerson
Eleanor Scott	Lucille O'Neill	Vilohith Patha
Ella Thomson	Luis Garnaut	Will Aldridge
Ellie Sbeghen	Max Varley	Wilson Riley
Euan Carter	Michael Chiaramonte	Xavier Di Scala
Ezra Geary	Milosh Vasic	Xavier Lalor
Fletcher Neale	Mohammed Allouche	Zac Dunphy
George Raymond	Nicolas Staniscia	Zac Trampuz
Gokulan Kobby	Noah Robertson	Zachary Duff

### **BEST AND FAIREST PLACEGETTERS**

Chloe Haritopoulos	3 <sup>rd</sup> – Youth Girls (3)
Luca Dryden	3 <sup>rd</sup> – Under 12 Mixed
Max Varley	1 <sup>st</sup> – Under 14 Mixed Blue
Oscar Watt	1 <sup>st</sup> – Colts Boys (4)
Riley Wilton	2 <sup>nd</sup> – Under 13 Mixed Blue
Samuel McIlroy	1 <sup>st</sup> – Under 16 Boys (3)
Tilda Sinclair	1 <sup>st</sup> – Under 12 Girls Green

### **AWARDS**

Erin Maclatchy, AFL Victoria Female Coach of the Year

## 1.2. Volunteers Acknowledgement - Andrew McKinnon

The club warmly thanks all who have volunteered in any capacity during the 2021 season.

The club is run by its members for its members, so volunteers are the heart that keeps this great club ticking. The club acknowledges those that have contributed through formal volunteer roles in 2021.

Name	Role	Name	Role
Adam Grant	Coach	Jacob Murray-White	Vice President
Adrian Marsili	Runner	James Parker	Coach, Child Safe Officer
Alida Spittle	Trainer	James Scott	Trainer
Alison Matthews	Trainer	Jen Wishart	Coach
Andrew Johnson	Runner	Jimmy Mastorakos	Coach
Andrew Light	Coach	Jodie Thomson	Canteen Coordinator
Andrew Mackinnon	President	Joe Costa	Runner
Andy Saunders	Coach	John Murphy	Coach
Angela Cole	Trainer	Jon Savaris	Runner
Angela Grozos	Secretary, Team Manager	Jonathan Ayres	Trainer
Anthony Hudson	Coach	Jonathan Quilty	Coach
Bart Sbeghen	Runner & Trainer	Jude Allan	Coach
Belinda De Vos	Team Manager	Judy Campbell	Team Manager, Trainer
Beth Scott	Sponsorship, Coach	Julie Avotins	Team Manager
Beth Turnbull	Team Manager	Justine Sayers	Trainer
Brendan Allman	Coach	Justine Sayers	Trainer
Brendan Geary	Coach, Brunswick Sports Club Representative	Kate Treloar	Trainer
Brian Teague	Team Manager	Kelvin Butler	Runner
Bryn Davies	Trainer	Kevin Passmore	Coach
Callum Willis	Director of Umpiring	Kim Anderson	Team Manager
Cath Flower	Oranges Coordinator	Kylie Moreland	Registrations, Team Manager
Chris Millington	Team Manager	Lachlan Kidd	Coach
Clayton Veltman	Runner	Leanne Meli	Team Manager
Clinton Lubcke	Runner	Peter Yeates	Coach
Craig Leversha	Coach	Phil Bennett	Coach
Damien Connell	Trainer	Priscilla Ennals	Trainer
Daniel Minihan	Runner	Robin Trampuz	Coach
Daniel Morgan	Coach	Rod Neale	Coach
Daniel Phillips	Team Manager	Sally Parkinson	Trainer
David Jackson	Trainer	Sally Siega	Junior Teams Coordinator, Team Manager
David Sartori	Team Manager	Sam Carter	Trainer
Dean Anderson	Trainer, Runner	Sarah Terrill	Child Safe Reference Check
Dee Bryant	Webmaster	Sasha Dougherty	Coach
Domenic Perrone	Director of Football Operations	Scott McDermott	Trainer
Duncan Imberger	Coach	Sean O'Toole	Coach
Eanna O'Duill	Team Manager	Shane Leversha	Coach
Emilia Rubin	Team Manager	Shannon Orbons	Coach
Emma Wearmouth	Trainer	Simon Fredrickson	Coach
Erika Hellstrom	Coach	Simon Gibbons	Trainer
Erin Madatchy	Coach	Sophie Fraser	Runner
Felicity Smith	Coach	Steve Brown	Runner
Filomena Rispoli	Trainer	Steve Brown	Runner
Freya Purdey	Trainer	Steve Sinn	Coach
Gavin Campbell	Trainer	Steven Honey	Runner
Gef Senz	Trainer	Stuart Berryman	Team Manager
Gen Fox	Covid Safe Officer, Property Steward, Trainer	Telis Keramaris	Trainer
George DiScala	Runner	Tia Stewart	Team Manager
Georgie Kanizaj	Team Manager	Tim Macrae	Runner
Giselle Harris	Trainer	Tom Dobson	Runner
Glen Ross	Runner	Vicki Bucher	Trainer
Jaci Blumhagen	Apparel	Will Duff	Coach



## 2. Sponsorship – Beth Scott

2021 was another tough year for our Sponsors and subsequently, not all of them were able to contribute during the season but we were still in touch with them over the season to support their business and maintain a positive relationship given our history with them and our focus on supporting local businesses.

The club continued to work with the Seniors which supported the last 2 years sponsorship strategy and it also aligned to our “One Club” philosophy. We continued with a new structure to determine the level and value of each sponsorship; however, we were more fluid this year and more promoting of businesses occurred on our social media platforms to support our sponsors and local employment.

Continuing to build relationships and listening to our sponsors to meet their needs and understand how we can support them has been vital. As a result, we have some great relationships with our sponsors.

The playing jumper branding strategy, which didn't get to go live the previous year, was welcomed by the club and players wore them with pride. Hopefully we can bring more sponsors on board next year to build on this jumper branding strategy, which has not been previously delivered before at the Dragons.

We have been successful in driving club traffic through the businesses that sponsor us. We gained two commissions on house sales through Nelson Alexander this year which was an improvement on last year and was potentially helped by the bag and drink bottle branding that had been coordinated last year but only realised this season as we distributed them at the start of the season.

BlueRock, Welcome to Brunswick, Welcome to Group were our largest sponsor this year. We are extremely grateful for their contribution to our club. Additionally to the cash component of their sponsorship, they also provided Round Sponsorship giving the club Mr Burger vouchers for two of the 10 rounds that were played. Proactive promotion of the range of restaurants owned by this sponsor will continue as well as for the promotion of BlueRock. The club purchased several vouchers from the Welcome to Group as thank you gifts.

With the Presentation Day not being able to be run due to restrictions we are also encouraging teams to host their end of season event at Welcome to Brunswick with the club providing some funds to support this activity.

Round Sponsors Welcome to Group, Green Refectory, Bellboy Café and Harper and Blohm were well received by players. Lining this up for season 2022 would be recommended.

La Manna's normal sponsorship of oranges for each round didn't occur due to COVID-19 protocols however La Manna was happy to become a Round Sponsor as well as support a raffle. As the season was shortened due to lockdowns these plans didn't occur.

Clothing the Gaps provided some items for raffle, however with COVID-19 disrupting this raffle, the club ran a player draw and club members were encouraged to donate to the Victorian Aboriginal Health Services as part of our celebration of the Indigenous Round.

RDP Plumbing, who are a shared sponsor with the Seniors, sponsored the Dragons again this season. Network Capital sponsored the club for the first time this season.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns, the Grandview Hotel was not able to deliver the Colts dinner.

The Dynamic Football Skills sponsorship needs to be reviewed for the 2022 season as the work required against the subsequent return needs consideration. The club only gains incentive payment for players from the Club who remember to include the club code when registering, even though they have to disclose the club as part of the registration process. The Club will negotiate a different approach for next season as we are not currently maximising our sponsorship from this company.

We have increased our brand awareness and achieved sponsorship momentum with a big effort, including the work between the juniors and seniors and it would 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. We've done well given the challenges of the year.

A key strategy for the Club next year should be sponsorship and therefore a team of volunteers will be required to optimise our sponsorship potential for next season.

Coterie membership and social club membership were part of the structure however were not able to be fully realised in 2020 or 2021. There is an opportunity to reignite this in season 2022.

#### **Season 2022 Recommendations**

- Continue with the Round Sponsors format for the 2022 season as these were well received from players and helped support our Sponsors throughout the season
- Review the Dynamic Football Skills sponsorship
- Build on the 'One Club' format to maximise sponsorship opportunities
- Build on the Club's volunteer base, looking at a sub committee, to ensure sponsorship is optimised
- Reignite the Coterie membership as well as the Social Club membership in 2022, restrictions permitting

## 2.1. Strategy – Andrew McKinnon & Brendan Geary

2021, as with 2020, saw several COVID19 impacts with 3 lockdowns throughout the season ultimately stopping the season in its tracks with lockdown 5. Even though the season was impacted, 10 rounds eventuated and the Committee were kept on its toes with numerous interactions throughout the season with the YJFL and local councils (Moreland and Melbourne City) due to the need to continue to update the COVIDSafe Plan and protocols.

Active participation in workshops with Moreland Council included:

- Getting Kids Back to Sport webinar
- Club Development webinars
- Leading Change Beyond Gender Equality workshop
- Budget processes
- Vision for the Brunswick Central Parklands
- Plastic Wise Policy online workshop
- Strategic Planning Club Development series

Relationships with other clubs associated with the YJFL were strengthened throughout the season with regular discussions at the President and Secretary levels as well as attendance of various workshops throughout the season.

The club continues to be an active member of the Brunswick Community Sporting Club. Over the course of the year the major activity undertaken was the oversight of the upgrades to the social rooms and change rooms.

Works on the new scoreboard are in progress and will be completed shortly. Submissions continue to be made for ongoing investment in upgrades to the Gillon precinct.

Support for the BJFC from the Senior club continues. Whilst COVID19 restrictions challenged the level of training and game day interactions, it is really pleasing that the junior club is seeing players from the senior club ranks offer their time to fill coaching positions in some of the junior teams. This provides the kids from the BJFC with great visibility of the pathway to continue their participation in our great game beyond their junior years.

## 2.2. Grants – Andrew Mackinnon

The club received two State Government grants this year:

- \$1,000 for COVID related cost recovery
- \$909 for equipment for girls football

## 3. Secretary Report – Angela Grozos

Administratively, the 2021 season was more complex than other years which were not impacted by the complexities brought upon us by COVID-19.

In addition to the usual core functions of the Secretary role which encompasses compliance, administrative and formal duties, the 2021 season had many more incidents than prior years, which were both physical (injuries) and behavioural (during and after play).

The management of the behavioural incidents required the immediate active involvement of the President of both clubs to work together to determine the best outcome. Timing was of the essence with a behavioural incident ensuring that the time provided to formally report an incident did not lapse should a mutually acceptable agreement not be reached by both clubs.

Ongoing coaching of values and respect across all teams within the League is needed to ensure that in future seasons, the focus is on our players enjoying the game.

### 3.1. Compliance and Record Keeping - Melissa Seto

This season, the Everproof system used by the YJFL for monitoring role credential compliance reached a compliance rate of 95% for the 106 volunteers who supported the 18 teams. Only 10 Volunteers were not compliant by the end of the season. Fourteen volunteers fulfilled multiple credentialled roles.

Roles were tracked for each team for compliance and reminders were sent regularly following up the gaps.

Coaches' credentials are now integrated between Coach AFL and Game Day. This means coaches are required to have their coaching qualifications to be valid to be selected for game day team sheets.

This season TeamApp was also aligned to have groups for each role such as Team Managers, Coaches and Trainers. This enabled group specific communications with members of the roles as volunteers came on board and minimised the need to maintain email lists.

The biggest challenge gap for compliance was for the Trainers. There was a time delay in provision of accreditation, especially the AFL Emergency Response Coordinator credential. Further, there were issues with the group configuration in Everproof impacting compliance numbers. Despite escalation to Everproof and the YJFL, there was no response.

### **Recommendation for season 2022:**

- Have teams nominate people that require credentials as early as possible at the beginning or prior to the season commencement
- Determine with YJFL the appropriate Everproof issue resolution path
- Determine COVID vaccination requirements, if any, for volunteers, and/or players? If vaccination proof is required, implement a tracking mechanism for compliance

## **3.2. First Aid – Concussion**

One of the more prolonged matters dealt with in 2021 were the new concussion protocols that clubs were required to adhere to. AFL Concussion Guidelines were received by each club however not having a 'game day' guide made it challenging for trainers and parents to know what was needed.

Confusion was also prevalent when advice from the Colbrow Medic on the day was that there was no injury however their report (after the game) outlined a head knock, requiring the immediate implementation of the concussion protocols.

This confusion prompted the club to produce a guide which stepped trainers and parents through the concussion protocols making it easier for everyone to navigate and manage, not only on the day but also after the game where medical review and clearance was needed by a medical practitioner prior the player returning to training and play.

Recommendations for 2021:

- Early understanding of the AFL Concussion Protocols to inform a 'game day' matrix to assist trainers and parents
- Incident report template to be improved to include concussion requirements
- Incident report template to be automated via a Google form allowing Trainers to enter the incident directly providing an option to send a copy of the incident to the parents for use by the parent when attending for medical review post the concussion
- Coordinate a time for the League to attend our Club to conduct Eye Guide Baseline testing enable parents to have their child/ren tested to obtain a baseline metric to reference in any future concussion incident

## **3.3. Child Safety – James Parker/Penny Harrison**

The proposed child safe activities for the 2021 season were once again disrupted due to COVID19 lockdowns:

From a training and awareness perspective the Child Safety Officers met with all coaches to brief them on the child safe roles and club expectations. This meeting occurred at the start of the season and included the theme for all teams to 'look out for each other'. This was necessary due to the disrupted 2020 season with a call on all players to bring positive energy to the ground, to support each other at all times and to look out for each other knowing the continual impacts of COVID on our lives affect each person differently.

A communications plan was initiated with a focus on BJFC continuing to be a fun and engaged community club. The Committee procured signage for home grounds to remind participants and spectators of expected behaviour and we look forward to using these again next season.

Advice and support was also provided to the Committee on the management of incidents impacting player wellbeing. Advice also related to policy compliances including Working with Children checks and references for all key roles.

Other planned activities did not occur and policy updates are due for next season.

### 3.4. Communications & Website

A 2021 report was not tabled.

### 3.5. Parent Survey Feedback

The results of the 2021 Parent Survey were not tabled.

### 3.6. Mouthguards

With COVID-19 being prevalent in our 2021 season, parents were asked to make their own arrangements regarding mouthguards as it was not possible to coordinate a date for a mouth guard supplier to attend.

### 3.7. Team Photographs

Team photographs were not possible in 2021.

## 4. Treasurer's Report – Nicole Minihan

- The basis for the Club's financial activities is the budget determined at the start of the season.
- Due to the potential impact of Covid-19 on families and the higher than budgeted profit made in 2020 the Committee decision was to not increase BJFC membership fees for 2021.
- Due to anticipated lower 2021 player numbers and uncertainty around season commencement the Committee allowed for a profit of \$10,000 however were comfortable with breaking even dependent on season outcome. A budget was then constructed based on expected income & expenditure. If any shortfall arose the Committee were in agreement that the Club would utilise the retained profits from 2020 rather than increase membership fees.
- The Club has achieved a net profit of \$30,790 which is \$20,000 higher than budget expectations. This is largely attributable to the gaining of sponsorship income and canteen/bar profit which was not provided for.

### Recommendations:

- Recommend a budget be struck for 2022 based on current membership base and current expenses adjusted for CPI.
- Recommend that there is no increase to the BJFC registration fees based on 2021 profit (if feasible). Treasurer to prepare projected outcomes for various fee options.

### Income:

Major Income is Membership Fees - \$52,600. This was higher than budgeted with player numbers not falling due to the impact of Covid as anticipated.

- Sponsorship - \$13,498. Major sponsor – Bluerock/Welcome to Group - \$10,000, RPD Plumbing & Network Capital Consulting - \$500 each, Nelson Alexander house sale commission kickback - \$2,270. Exceeded budget expectations. Branding of jumper costs - \$682
- Canteen/Bar/Coffee – Canteen ran most Sunday game days played throughout the stop/start season as well as various Fuss Free Friday nights which resulted in a combined profit of \$7,224. No paid canteen manager in 2021 resulted in significant savings to the Club.
- Grants Received –amounted to \$2,000. \$1,000 for Girls Equipment, \$1,000 from Community Sport Covid-19 short-term survival package.
- Apparel & Merchandise – Net Profit of \$3,017.
- AFL Raffle – \$2,145.
- Club Events – No Club Events in 2021 due to Covid restrictions

### Expenditure:

- All expenditure was incurred in the course of ordinary club operations, within the budget limits and under committee approval guidelines.
- Major expenses within budget include equipment (\$8,541), Trophies (\$4,772), Utilities (\$3,758), Team Allowances (\$5,932), Storage (\$2,366), Cleaning (\$1,760),
- 2020 membership refunds that exceeded the provision booked in prior year amounted to \$1,906.
- Depreciation expenses for Plant & Equipment including Clifton coaches' boxes and team jumper kits (3 year write-off) amounted to \$1,927 and \$4,772 respectively.
- Covid safety costs lower than anticipated due to less games played and utilisation of unused 2020 stock.
- Junior umpiring costs (\$1,490) are under budget due to various lockdowns & no finals.

- All Councils waived ground hire fees for another year which resulted in a significant saving of approximately \$5,000.

**Recommendations:**

- General Expenditure for 2022 be established. All areas requiring monies submit anticipated expenditure for review against expected income.
- Review of capital expenditure requirements and additional Footy Ops expenditure (additional training/fitness options) for 2022 to utilise higher than expected profit and cash position.

**Balance Sheet**

Assets at 30 September 2021 total \$201,826 including: NAB Bank Balance - \$171,122, Apparel & Merchandise Stock Balance - \$13,623, Team Jumpers - \$5,062, Plant & Equipment - \$10,918 (note no asset purchases this year).

- Liabilities at 30 September 2021 total \$23,958 including: Sundry Creditors (\$18,063 being \$5,848 to BFC for cost reimbursements, \$5,700 y/e presentation provision, \$6,584 to various suppliers), GST - \$895.
- \$5,000 grant from 2019 still unacquitted due to various lockdowns during the season prevented "Women in Sport" session to be run. Postponed until 2022
- The Club achieved a very healthy profit of \$30,790 and is in a sound financial position to commence 2022 with Net Assets of \$177,868

**Recommendations:**

- Look at increasing footy operations expenditure to generate more training opportunities & upgrade equipment.
- Committee Discussions around utilisation of excess funds available.

The Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statements for the Club are included at the end of the document



## 5. COVID-19 – Genevieve Fox (Covid Safety Officer)

COVID-19 continued to have an unprecedented effect on Australia, including our Brunswick Dragons players, volunteers, sponsors and overall community. The excellent work established in 2020 on COVID-19 policies and protocols and over and above this communications and practices, meant that the club was well positioned to continue to respond to an ever-shifting environment.

Our Committee continued to work closely with the YJFL, Moreland & Melbourne City Council and other clubs to ensure the club was always compliant with Department of Health and Human Services guidelines. The clubs covid safety plan was reviewed on each necessary occasion to ensure it accurately the responsibilities of all club members and was commended by Melbourne City council for its clarity. More importantly the Club's Covid Safe Plan was actioned with diligence and enormous thanks in particular goes to the team managers, coaches, parents, volunteers and players who modelled compliance, reminding people to social distance, mask up, engage in extra necessary hygiene activities, keep records and stay safe. Most recently this has included communications encouraging our club members to help bring vaccination levels up to the thresholds necessary for a safe return to community sport.

## 6. Football Operations Report – Jacob Murray-White

2021 again proved to be a challenging year for BJFC with the ongoing effects and disruptions caused by COVID-19. At least this year we did get 10 rounds in of home and away games but unfortunately no finals games as such.

Congratulations to all the teams, coaches, players and parents, for making this happen.

Special congrats to Matt Watson and his U16 Boys team for being awarded the Premiership for finishing on top of the ladder. It was fitting that Matt's team defeated their nearest rival for top spot (Ivanhoe) by 2 points to claim top spot from them in the final game of the season.

The club will need to enact a new policy in 2022 inline with the league's mandate for clubs to enact a streaming policy when they have more than one team in an age level. This policy will need to be active for the new season.

In another disrupted season we did manage to have a "Coach the Coaches" seminar/meeting at the start of the year hosted by the Senior Club's Head Coach Tom Hunter. Whilst we only had one such seminar in 2021 we will aim to have at least 3 similar meetings in 2022 to assist Coaches.

We have also started compiling a "Coaches Curriculum" using both official AFL provided material and IP contained within the Club.

The club would like to thank Luke O'Connell for his continued support as Director of Coaching and all the Coaches for their efforts in 2021. Matt Watson, John Murphy & Kon Athanasopoulos stepped up to assist with specific roles and activities whilst having heavy involvement in their teams.

In 2022 and beyond we hope to increase the resources in Team & Player Development within Football Operations.

Also thanks to the General Committee in particular Mel Seto as Coaches Co-ordinator, Sally Siega as Team Manager Co-Ordinator and Kylie Moreland in Registrations/Team Logistics for their efforts. Callum Mills (non committee/non club parent) answered the call to become Junior Umpires Co-Ordinator so thanks Callum.

## 6.1. Player Development

In season 2021 the YJFL had representative teams for Under 13, 14 and 15 age groups. The following are Club representatives in each group.

### U13 Girls

- Harriet Brown

### U14 Girls

- Sophia Carr
- Isobella Hishongwa-Gibb
- Avaa Hishongwa-Gibb
- Lucille O'Neill

### U15 Girls (Coached by the Brunswick Football Club's Senior Men's Coach)

- Dahli Pestinger

### Youth Girls (Assistant Coach by the Youth Co-coach- Sasha Dougherty)

- Sheila Jim

### U13 Boys

- Cristian Athanasopoulos
- Ruben Powell

### U16 Boys

- Jonah Allen

Also for the 2021 season a number of the players were nominated for YJFL Best and Fairest awards for age groups Under 11's and above voted on by the Umpires after each game.

BJFC had the following teams with B&F contenders and placers.

### Under 11 Mixed Black 2021

- Harrison Douglas                      6 Votes

### Under 11 Mixed Blue 2021

- Jack Papdimitropoulos              7 Votes

### Under 12 Girls Green 2021

- **Tilda Sinclair**                      **16 Votes**              **1st place**
- Alexandra Brown                      7 Votes

Under 12 Mixed Black 2021

- **Luca Dryden**                      **14 Votes**              **3rd place**
- Thomas Bannan                      9 Votes

Under 13 Mixed Blue 2021

- **Riley Wilton**                      **22 Votes**              **2nd place**
- Cristian Anthanasopoulos              14 Votes
- Ruben Powell                      6 Votes

Under 14 Mixed Blue 2021

- **Max Varley**                      **13 Votes**              **1st place**
- Tom Varley                      8 Votes

Under 16 Boys (3) 2021

- **Samuel McIlroy**                      **18 Votes**              **1st place**
- Zac Dunphy                      6 Votes

Youth Girls (3) 2021

- **Chloe Haritopoulos**                      **9 Votes**              **3rd place**
- Sheila Jim                      8 Votes
- Elie Sbeghen                      6 Votes

Colts Boys (4) 2021

- **Oscar Watt**                      **16 Votes**              **1st place**

## 6.2. Girls Football Development

We had a total of 6 female coaches this season to coach 79 female players of which 4 played in mixed teams. The Club managed to field 4 female teams this season, U10G (modified rules), U12G, U14G, U18G (Youth Girls). All teams recruited new players this season (34 in total) which given the Covid environment, was very impressive.

- Jen Wishart (U10W)
- Beth Scott (U12G)
- Erin Maclatchy (U14G)
- Erika Hellstron (U16B)
- Sasha Dougherty (U18G)
- Felicity Smith (U18G)

Thank you to Erika for being our first female coach in a boys (not mixed) team.

Given the constraints of the season most efforts were put into getting players into representative programs. Players were put forward for U18G, U15G, U14G and U13G rep teams based on age. Due

to COVID lockdown timing, not all nominated players were able to attend however those who did participate enjoyed the experience.

Further, Sasha Dougherty, BJFC Youth Girls Coach worked with Penny Cula-Reid, YJFL Ambassador for U16G YJFL Representative team. Erin Maclatchy, U14G coach was awarded with the AFL YJFL June 2021 Female Coach of the Month given her extra efforts of maintaining online training sessions during lockdown.

Season 2022 Recommendations:

- Explore the appropriateness of female cut playing shorts
- If restrictions allow, conduct a Girls Come and Try session

### 6.3. Outstanding team and individual performances

Season 2021 YJFL had representative teams for Under 13, 14, 15, 16 & 18s age groups. The following individuals were Club representatives.

- U13 Girls
  - Harriet Brown
- U14 Girls
  - Sophia Carr
  - Isobella Hishongwa-Gibb
  - Avaa Hishongwa-Gibb
  - Lucille O’Neill
- U15 Girls (Coached by the Brunswick Football Club’s Senior Men’s Coach)
  - Dahli Pestinger
- Youth Girls (assistant coach - Youth Girls Co-coach Sasha Dougherty)
  - Sheila Jim
- U13 Boys
  - Cristian Athanasopoulos
  - Ruben Powell

Also for season 2021 a number of the players were nominated for YJFL Best and Fairest awards for age groups Under 11’s and above. Umpires vote for the best players after each game.

BJFC had the following teams with B&F contenders and placers.

Under 11 Mixed Black 2021

- Harrison Douglas 6 Votes

Under 11 Mixed Blue 2021

- Jack Papdimitropoulos 7 Votes

Under 12 Girls Green 2021

- Tilda Sinclair 16 Votes 1st place
- Alexandra Brown 7 Votes

Under 12 Mixed Black 2021

- Luca Dryden 14 Votes 3rd place
- Thomas Bannan 9 Votes

#### Under 13 Mixed Blue 2021

- Riley Wilton 22 Votes 2nd place
- Cristian Anthanasopoulos 14 Votes
- Ruben Powell 6 Votes

#### Under 14 Mixed Blue 2021

- Max Varley 13 Votes 1st place
- Tom Varley 8 Votes

#### Under 16 Boys (3) 2021

- Samuel McIlroy 18 Votes 1st place
- Zac Dunphy 6 Votes

#### Youth Girls (3) 2021

- Chloe Haritpoulos 9 Votes 3rd place
- Sheila Jim 8 Votes
- Elie Sbeghen 6 Votes

#### Colts Boys (4) 2021

- Oscar Watt 16 Votes 1st place

## 7. Registrations – Kylie Moreland

Registration numbers have remained stable since 2019. The ratio of girls to boys has remained constant from 2019 to 2021, with approximately 20% girls and 80% boys.

- 2018: 340 players (59 girls & 281 boys)
- 2019: 398 players (86 girls & 312 boys)
- 2020: 370 players (72 girls & 298 boys)
- 2021: 392 players (79 girls & 313 boys)

Returning players in 2021: 300

New players in 2021: 92

### Player Numbers

	Team	Players	Girls	Boys	New players
1x U8 Mixed		17	0	17	16
2x U9 Mixed	Purple	16	0	16	4
	White	17	0	17	6
1x U10 Girls		12	12		6
2x U10 Mixed	Purple	24	0	24	9
	White	24	0	24	5
2x U11 Mixed	Purple	26	2	24	2
	White	26	1	25	6
1x U12 Girls		22	22		9
1x U12 Mixed		24	0	24	3
2x U13 Mixed	Purple	21	0	21	3
	White	21	1	20	1
1x U14 Girls		19	19		3
1x U14 Mixed		25	0	25	1
1x U15 Boys		28		28	2
1x U16 Boys		26		26	3
1x U18 Girls		22	22		7
1x U18 Boys		22		22	6
		<b>392</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>92</b>

### Composition of Teams

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Expected 2022
U8 Mixed	1	2	2	1	1-2
U9 Mixed	3	2	2	2	2
U10 Mixed	2	2	2	2	2
U11 Mixed	1	2	1	2	2
U12 Mixed	2	1	2	1	2
U13 Mixed	1	2	1	2	1
U14 Mixed	1	1	2	1	1-2
U9 Girls					0-1
U10 Girls		1	1	1	
U11 Girls			1		1
U12 Girls	1	1	1	1	
U13 Girls		1			1
U14 Girls				1	
U15 Girls	1	1			1
U16 Girls			1		
U18 Girls				1	1
U15 Boys	1	1	1	1	1
U16 Boys				1	1
U17 Boys	1	1	1		
U18 Boys				1	1-2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18-22</b>

### Junior and Senior Teams

Team age range	Number of teams	Number of teams	Number of teams	Number of teams
U8-U12	9	11	10	10-12
U13-U14	6	7	8	8-10

As the number of senior teams grows, it becomes more challenging to accommodate teams for training and game day at our home grounds, particularly Gillon Oval.

### Recommendations for 2022

- If we have the numbers for two teams, stream U14 Mixed into U14-1 and U14-2 and Colts into Colts 1 and Colts 2. There will most likely be one U13 team in 2022, but moving forward, U13 teams should be streamed into 1s and 2s and no longer grouped based on friendships or the previous year's teams.
- Reduce the caps for some age groups:
  - Reduce U10–U14 teams to 24 players (except when there are two teams streamed into 1s and 2s). Player availability for U8–U12s is generally very high and having to roster off players each week in U10–U12s is challenging for coaches and team managers.
  - If there are two streamed teams (from U13 up) and more than 24 players are available on game day in one team, there is some capacity for players to play in the other BJFC side, as long as this is done following the YJFL rules (e.g., re maximum number of games a player can play in another grade).
  - Cap of 28 in U10–U18 Girls is unnecessary. A cap of 24 is recommended for U11–U14 and 26 for U15–U18 Girls.
  - From U15s, player injuries and absences are more common.

### Recommended Caps for 2022

	Team size	Current cap	Recommended cap for one team or two teams up to U12 (friendship-based)	Recommended cap for two streamed teams (1sts and 2nds)
U8 Mixed	12 + 4 interchange	18	18	-
U9 Mixed	15 + 5 interchange	21	21	-
U10 Girls	15 + 5 interchange	23	21	-
U10–U12 Mixed	18 + 6 interchange	26	24	-
U11–U14 Girls	16 + 8 interchange	28	24	-
U13 & U14 Mixed	18 + 6 interchange	26	24	26
U15–U18 Girls	16 + 8 interchange	28	26	-
U15–U18 Boys	18 + 6 interchange	26	26	26

## 8. Apparel – Jaci Blumhagen

The shortened 2020 season impacted the intended launch of the new BJFC logo on player jumpers with sponsors logos on the back, but we were able to resume those plans in 2021.

### PLAYING JUMPERS

Team kits of playing jumpers were distributed to Team Managers and Coaches in March 2021. The selection of sizes for each team kit was loosely based on the previous year's sizings. Teams were encouraged to line up their players from smallest to largest (but not necessarily shortest to tallest) and work from the ends of the line to the middle of the line. This allowed for swapping or changing to get the best fit. Approximately half of the teams requested an additional size or swapped with other teams to get the proper fit for a handful of players. In general, this process seemed to work quite well and most importantly, the players wore their jumpers with pride, regardless of their playing number!

We purchased jumper/jersey kit bags for each team. They arrived too late to distribute with the jumper team sets but will be used for storing the jumpers over the summer and then utilised for the 2022 jumper team set distribution.

The sponsors logos that had been printed in 2020 were used this year along with printing more to accommodate the additional teams which needed to have a sponsor logo. Half of the teams (9) had sponsor logos attached this year.

COVID19 caused some short delays for suppliers at the start of the season but for the exception of one team only, jumpers were ready in time for the first round of games. The U18s/Colts required larger sizes than what was anticipated in 2020 so an additional order with larger sizes was placed late in the process. Additionally, the supplier made an error on that late order and did not provide the largest sizes that were needed. That mistake was remedied in April and sponsor logos were added to this team after the May COVID lockdown.

With approximately half of the team jumpers now having sponsor logos attached, additional costs may be warranted in 2022 if the sponsors change or if the sponsorship level changes the number of teams that are covered.

#### PLAYING SHORTS

A new By Law regarding playing shorts resulted in the white shorts no longer being required for away games. In the 2021 season, there was only one team (Templestowe) that had a similar jumper and would therefore be considered a clash with our new jumpers. Team Managers and Coaches were advised that if their team was to play away at Templestowe, they were required to contact the YJFL and arrange for a set of replacement jumpers to be collected and worn by the BJFC team for that game. No adverse effects to that plan were reported to the Apparel Coordinator.

As a result, we have approximately 100 pairs of white shorts that are no longer required for games. The intent was to sell these shorts for \$5 at the end of season celebration, but that did not occur due to COVID19 lockdown 6.0. They will be made available to purchase as practice shorts in 2022.

#### PROMOTIONAL APPAREL SALES

Overall, 2021 apparel sales did not match or surpass 2019 (pre COVID19) levels. The promotional items (hoodies, caps, beanies, scarves) have been impacted the most. In particular, beanies and scarves would often sell more during the coldest months of July and August and also during finals, but with COVID19 lockdown 6.0, those games did not occur again in 2021.

Item(s)	2019 Quantity sold	2020 Quantity sold	2021 Quantity sold
Playing shorts	279	209	155[1]
Playing socks	181	131	166



Long-sleeved purple tops (for underneath playing jumpers)	70	62	40
Hoodies	124	79	93
Bags, caps, scarves and beanies	138	58	62

[1] In 2019 and 2020, players were required to purchase at least one pair of *both* purple and white shorts, ie: two pairs. In 2021, only one pair of purple shorts was required.

### Season 2022 Recommendations

- Offer apparel sales at Welcome Day (pending easing of COVID19 restrictions) alongside apparel pick-up for orders already placed and also at Presentation/Celebration Day at the end of the season.
- Continue to keep all apparel in one location. It is currently all stored at Monash Storage, which works well and is secure. It is not expected that there will be enough space in the renovated Gillon storage room to accommodate the apparel.
- Continue with the process of allocating and distributing team sets of jumpers.
- The next process to be reviewed will be the return of the jumpers. The intent is to have Team Managers collect jumpers on the final game of the season, wash them, and return them as a team set. But with the 2021 season ending prematurely, this process is yet to be tested.
- Professional laundering of all of the playing jumpers will be required in early 2022. This process is yet to be tested.
- Planning and consideration for jumpers with sponsor logos will need to be undertaken. Additional resourcing at the start of the season may be required to manage this task.

## 9. Team Manager Coordinator – Kylie Moreland & Sally Siega

For the 2021 season, the role was shared between Sally Siega (Junior teams) and Kylie Moreland (Senior teams). Both were new to the role and there was a period of transition whilst Sally and Kylie navigated the roles. Some changes were made to the previous procedure as the season went on. These changes were needed due to there being quite a few new Team Managers for this season. These changes included but were not limited to, the following:

- New TM manuals were created and distributed to all TMs to have as much information as possible on hand. The manuals covered key aspects such as:
  - Rules and By Laws
  - Ground Set Up
  - Team Manager Responsibilities
- TM Kits were distributed between lockdowns at the start of the season however due to the rush to have the kits returned at the end of the 2020 season there was insufficient time to refresh some kits before sending them out. This meant that some kits were incomplete and had to be topped up as the season went along.

- The COVID-19 protocols added additional workload for the TMs this season however generally, these protocols were followed to a high standard.

#### **Season 2022 Recommendations**

- The TM manuals were a success and will be reviewed at the end of each season to ensure they are current
- To ensure the process of preparing kits is more efficient for season 2022, an audit of all kits upon their return, will occur when restrictions permit
- The ideal situation is for the retention of TMs over a couple of seasons due to the high investment required in training new TMs

## 10. Umpiring

2021 report not tabled

## 11. Club Community Engagement

2021 report not tabled

## 12. Facilities / Property - Genevieve Fox (Property Steward)

Despite only having 'limited' access to rooms in 2021 the club has greatly valued the refurbished facilities at Gillon Oval completed earlier this year. In particular the improved storage, bathrooms, umpire facilities and canteen.

#### **Storage**

The club continues to hold a lease on one storage room at Monash Storage for Apparel but has relinquished the second one temporarily required due to the renovation at Gillon Oval. Going forward the Junior Store-room along with locker boxes should adequately meet the storage needs for Team Manager Kits, Coaches Kit and other equipment.

#### **Property Steward**

Covid restrictions meant that an audit of equipment on return of kits was not achieved in 2020. Despite this most kits were returned in good order and as kit was issued in 2021 missing items were noted and arrangements to replace and distribute these were made. This included the purchase of a set of new first aid kits, as the existing first aid kits had served a number of years and had diminished supplies. The older kits have been retained to replenish unexpired supplies.

#### **Recommendations**

- Volunteers will need to be coordinated to conduct the audit of equipment as it is returned and orders placed.
- Team Managers, Coaches and Committee members have advocated for purchase of new equipment for 2021 my understanding is that spending for this have been approved at recent meetings

## Team Reports



### 12.1. U8 Mixed – Shannon Orbons

What a journey the 2021 season was! There were so many highlights throughout the year as the kids all learnt new skills and made new friends. The lightning carnival was a particularly fun day with the kids showing their passion for the game by continuing to play on the sidelines between matches and the parents getting to know each other better as well.

We saw enormous improvement across the whole team and I'm really proud of the players and the way they put into practice all the things we discussed at training and on game day. Their individual skills and understanding of how to play the game all improved dramatically from our very first pre-season training session, and the season culminated in a fabulous game at Heidelberg, which showed true teamwork and skill from everyone.

On a personal note, it was a real pleasure working with the kids this year and seeing them have so much fun - whether it was getting muddy, getting sweaty, improving their skills, growing their confidence, or making new friends. I think it's safe to say that the highlight for almost all the players was taking on the tackling bag - I've never seen such pent-up aggression and enthusiasm for a training drill! I hope that each and every player enjoyed the season as much as I did, and that they are all chomping at the bit for another chance in 2022.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the parents and volunteers who helped out this year. It's quite a logistical effort that relies on "many hands making light work" and without your support this season wouldn't have been possible at all. I'd especially like to thank Sally, Rob and Tony for all their support. Please accept our sincere appreciation for all that you have done.

Go Dragons!

## 12.2. U9 Mixed (Purple) – Peter Brunt

It was a pleasure for the U9 Purples to play their first underage footy in 2021 after 2020 saw no football for them at all. The smiles, enthusiasm, and thirst to learn from all the boys was great to see and brought smiles to all those involved in helping them achieve their first tastes of competitive footy. It was a year of firsts in so many ways from first footy boots, and footy jumpers, to the first time wearing a mouthguard for all the boys, they seemed to love dressing up like their footy idols. As a first-time coaching group, we were all a little nervous that we'd be able to live up to the expectations of the boys (and the parents of course), but we had such a great support from both the club, volunteers and all of our parents it was a great experience. We set out some team philosophies at the start of the year and were really excited that we achieved our main goal for the year which was to have every one of our players kick their first goal! Despite the joy at an individual level, the boys probably loved singing the team song together as a team after every single training session and game whatever the weather even more!!



And no summary of the U9 Purple season would be complete without mention of our parent reporters, who went over and above every week to write their match reports, which from firsthand experience was keenly anticipated every week by our players.

A big thank you to all the boys for giving it your best every single week, to the parents for your persistence and help along the way, and we would get anywhere without our dedicated coaching team of our Team Manager David Sartori, Assistant Coach Andrew Saunders (and stand-in Erika Hellstrom), and Trainer Natasha Wilby. Coach Peter Brunt.

### 12.3. U9 Mixed (White) – Phil Bennety

Our season started with training the first Friday after the Labour Day holiday. Our first session was at Wylie Reserve, and as we did all year we trained with the U9 Purple team. After the disappointment of not being able to play any games in 2020 it was great to see all the kids enthusiastically join in the drills, looking forward to the season ahead. After only a handful of training session in 2020 my first job was to learn the players' names. After a few more training sessions we played our first game, on the last weekend on the April school holidays. I remember meeting the opposition coach and asking, "have you done this before?" "Oh yeah," he replied. This was my first game as coach and every player's first proper game. They fought out the game, but we were unorganised and unfortunately, uncompetitive. We did not score a goal.

Fortunately, we had a well-timed coach meeting that week lead by Senior Brunswick Football Club coach Tom Hunter and Director of Coaching Luke O'Connell. Even though we had just one training session before the next game, all the players did incredibly well to implement our new plans. Not only did we kick our first goal the next week, but we kicked a lot of goals. We dominated the game.

From that point onwards we continued to play some very good football for the rest of the season. It was great seeing the players' skills and confidence improve as the year went on. The willingness to work as a team was evident, as players shared the ball around, and the goal kicking. The players continued to implement the things we worked on at training. I was always impressed with the players' attitudes. They tried hard but they rarely complained about the umpires, opposition, teammates or even their coach (as far as I know).

They are such a great bunch of kids and it was a pleasure to coach them. I would like to thank Leanne for being the Team Manager, Lachie Kidd as Assistant Coach and all the parents for their help and all those that work behind the scenes at the club to give our kids such a great opportunity to play Footy.

### 12.4. U10 Girls – Kevin Passmore

What a great year! It was incredibly satisfying to see the team go from having little skills to being proficient young footballers.

Such a shame we couldn't finish the year, but I am confident all of the players will go on to enjoy playing in a team and continue to build skills and fitness.

I would like to thank all of the parents for volunteering and the help at training and game day. Special shout out to Leisha and Gen for the extra time they put in.

### 12.5. U10 Mixed (Purple) – Adam Gant

After a false start in 2020, it was absolutely fantastic for the lads to get back out on the track in 2021.

Ably led by coach Paul "the Flying Dutchman" Atkinson and his loyal and unwavering assistant Peter "Yabby" Yeates, the Brunswick Under 10 Purples tackled the new season with an approach anchored around:

- Facilitating an improvement in skills
- Exposing each of the players to various positions in the team/on the field
- Building an understanding of some basic game strategies

- Bringing a determination to compete each week in the right spirit
- Celebrating victory
- Learning from our losses
- Ensuring every precious minute the players and coaches spent together was a fun time - because we never quite knew when the music was going to stop.

The team consisted of a large group of players from the 2019 Under 8's team and around half a dozen new players, a number of whom were very new to Australian Rules football. Not surprisingly after an 18 month hiatus it took a little while for the team to gel, and find a rhythm on the field. The opening few weeks of the season bore witness to some heavy losses, but at the same time everyone in and around the team just felt so privileged to be playing and watching junior football again.

Improvement on the track each week was evident, and Team Runner and former Geelong and Sydney ace Peter "Chalky" Baldwin was instrumental in guiding the players around the importance of elevating our pressure levels in the contest. The uplift in skills and pressure on the training track gradually translated on the field and it wasn't long before the team broke through for their first glorious win of the season.

Our club's theme song is a unique inner northern interpretation of Harry Lauder's Wee Deoch an Doris (as is North Melbourne's theme song) and boy was it a memory to savour to see the joy on the faces of the players and their parents as that memorable Scottish tune was sung with unprecedented gusto. Everyone in ear-shot with Brunswick Dragon blood could feel the pain of a year's lock down seeping out of their pores as the words rung loudly in their ears..."OUT WE COME, OUT WE COME, OUT WE COME TO PLAY!

The middle block of games was a little up and down, but the boys demonstrated in patches that our best was good enough to mix it with the strongest teams in the competition. The coaching and playing group stuck to the seven-point plan described and were collectively confident that the consistency we desired would come. In yachting parlance, it was a case of "spinnakers up" for the remaining games of the season. The boys absolutely played out of their skin with a game style constructed around pressure, their improving skills, and a deeper knowledge of each other and each other's game.

Season 2021 was a little briefer than we would have liked, however we got close to 10 games in, improved out of sight throughout the year, and finished with a 50% win/loss ratio. We will absolutely take that, there were so many great memories forged in such a short period of time: a deeper kinship amongst the players, an emerging appreciation of the importance of focusing on improving oneself both on and off the field, and the development of some fabulous relationships amongst the parents.

A big thank you to Chris "the Mailman" Millington who managed the team throughout the year with boundless energy and the precision of a Suisse watchmaker, not to mention his unique wit and eccentric prose. Amazing effort Chris, a genuine thanks goes to you. To Peter our Runner, thank you, it was a privilege for all of us to draw upon your football acumen. Coach Paul and Coach Pete nice work gents, your kids will treasure the time you invested in them and their football mates. To our trainers, scoreboard operators, goal umpires, the folks who put the pads on the goal posts each week, the volunteers who cleared the ground of canine obstacles, the parents, club administrators, the umpires and anyone I have missed – I extend my gratitude to all of you for helping make the fantastic spectacle that is junior football come to life.

To all the U10 Purple players, well done lads, you did yourselves, your teammates, your parents, and the club proud.

Go Dragons...bring on Season 2022 I cannot wait

## 12.6. U10 Mixed (White) – Duncan Imberger

The Under 10 Whites had a fantastic year – notable for the infectious enthusiasm of our players, significant improvement across the course of the season, and a very good run of home games.

With none of the boys having played any competitive footy last year and a bunch of new rules to contend with, it took us a little while to find our groove. As a result, we were one win and four honourable losses after the first five rounds. But we then found another gear and stormed home with five straight wins. If we can take that form into next year – look out!

Watching the rapid rate of development – often week on week – is one of the great joys of coaching at this level. Our boys demonstrated a real willingness to learn and to get better, both individually and as a team. As well as improving our basic footy skills, we also got a lot better at things like playing in position, getting numbers to the contest, running into space, and giving second and third efforts. The boys were also remarkably consistent for such a young group, rarely playing a poor quarter in the second half of the season. Above all, they really seemed to enjoy their footy and the company of their teammates. It was particularly pleasing to see the way they stuck fat during the various lockdowns, spending time together on scheduled zoom calls.

Special thanks to be the best Assistant Coach in the business, Jen Wishart, our tireless Team Manager, Ange Grozos, and a terrific group of parents, many of whom regularly helped-out on the track on Friday nights. Thanks also to the club committee for doing such a fabulous job under very trying circumstances, ensuring that the kids got the opportunity to run out in the purple jumper ten times this year.

I can't wait to see what this group can do in 2022!

## 12.7. U11 Mixed (Purple) – John Murphy

The team was looking forward to a great 2021 season given the Covid-19 horrors of 2020.

During the off-season we welcomed new Dragons into the Den with Dean, Harry, Nicholas, Sam, Guy and Lucas joining the squad. During the off season it was evident that several players skill levels had improved.

Jack T, Henry and Angus aerial skills had clearly improved. Luca, Leo, and Wilson continued to grow and develop in key position players, particularly when rucking. Max, Daisy, Zac and Arlo's kicking throughout the season was a result of their hard off-season work. Ben Aldridge, Jack, P and Chris continued their natural progression, and their teamwork and link play was a privilege to watch throughout the season.

Our "shadowing" took a bit longer than hoped to be part of the Dragon DNA, but naturally Eleanor, John G and Levi showed the way. Will's magic in weaving through the packs and evading opposition tackles was a joy to watch. Ben Adams and Andrew provided highlights when up forward, whilst Savah was a Bulwark down back, stopping many opposition attacks.

Overall, the season was unfortunately a stop start one, which impacted upon our momentum. Whilst we got off to a great start we were outplayed by several stronger teams over the next few weeks. When the side started to click and played to team tactics of "shadowing", "talking" and belief in their own and teams' ability the side really found their groove. Overall, we fished with 5 wins and 5 losses, and the % reflective of the fact that we played several stronger sides twice.

The highlight of the year was the game against Fitzroy when the team followed the game plan and began to believe in themselves and each other. Our final game against St Marys (ladder leaders), whilst a loss, was a great encounter and thrilling contest

On a personal note, I would like to thank Kylie, brilliant as ever in all of the gameday and off field management. Kate and Alicia provided great medical support, whilst Geoff, Nathan, Lachie, Bill Mc, Bill G and Ollie provided great support throughout the year at training and as runners. Naturally and as always Rob T provided a brilliant sounding board and a voice of logic and common sense throughout the year. Finally, the kids were supported by a wonderful and passionate band of parents who made the job enjoyable.

## 12.8. U11 Mixed (White) – Matt Vernal

Coming out of an abandoned 2020 season the U11 playing list was bursting with numbers, filling our quota of 26 and having one player registered to train only. Having only had the one season together in U9 and consisting of many new players we were correctly graded in U11 Black. Despite the enthusiasm of the group, our season started in difficult circumstances losing to Macleod by 132 points, the eventual premier in U11Brown! Round 2 against St Mary's was again very challenging but we managed three goals and took many positives out of the game. The season continued on from there with weekly improvement before we tasted our first victory in round 5. From there our confidence grew and we finished the season losing to top of the ladder (and eventual premiers) Camberwell by 2 points, who by their own coaches' admission, were outplayed for most of the match and were very fortunate to regain the lead very late in the game.

Having almost certainly been heading for finals and finishing in fourth place, we were left to dwell on what might have been. Importantly though we also had 10 games to be grateful for, providing an incredible amount of fun and enjoyment. The improvement both as a group and individually was remarkable, leaving the group with much to look forward to in 2022.

Thank you to Tia and Eanna who shared the challenging role of Team Manager. Both of them did an outstanding job and made my life easy.

### **Challenges**

#### Large Numbers

Whilst a full complement of players is a great problem to have, the management of the group proved to be stressful at times even after creating a roster. Players were often rostered out and then called back in at the last minute. Furthermore, we were exposed to the evening up rule in Round 3 which made for a very challenging morning where ⅓ of the team were left sitting on the bench. While the compassionate approach to this rule is understandable, it can be extremely unfair on a full list such as ours in ensuring a reasonable amount of game time for everyone. Furthermore the unsettling nature of so many rotations through the game eventually cost us the win, going down by five points.

#### ***Recommendation:***

Scrap the evening up rule. Happy to provide players if this option is re-introduced, but their problem shouldn't become my problem. If theYJFL don't remove it, we should explore running three teams in the current U11 age group as the evening up rule makes it very manageable from a player perspective. Volunteers to run all three teams would be the obvious issue.

#### Volunteers



Obviously a club wide problem, I was left coming into the start of the season with only myself in an official role. I managed to find two team managers, but never acquired a permanent assistant coach. Sean O’Toole filled the role when work commitments allowed and I was fortunate to have a parent who helped out at training on a regular basis. I am hopeful that, as a relatively new group, next season will see more parents being comfortable with committing themselves to a permanent role.

*Recommendation:*

Get involved people!

Racism

As a new coach I was stunned to realise that in 2021 racism still existed in junior sport. Having one of our players experience it directly led me to understand that it still happens on a regular basis, not only across football but other sports as well.

*Recommendation:*

It would be good to see the YJFL take the front foot on this and provide its community with a set of protocols for when it does occur. Upon reflection, I’m still not sure whether I handled the previously mentioned incident appropriately. One of these protocols should involve a register for every incident that does happen, in order for the league to be provided with a better understanding of how widespread the problem is.

## 12.9. U12 Girls - Beth Scott & Peter Crouch

The start of the 2021 season was met with the usual challenge of only a small number of players, so preseason involved coaching both the Under 10G and 12G players together. But with continued recruitment effort by the Coaches, Team Manager and the club, the team list grew steadily and within a few weeks the two teams were training separately. (A huge thank you to our Team Manager Kim Sollies who encouraged many from the Brunswick Cricket team to try footy, and a thank you too to Kevin who volunteered to coach the U10G team.)

Many of the players who registered this season had already played with the Dragons for a few seasons and their skills and knowledge of football were a great contribution to the team’s success over the season. We also welcomed many players this year who were new to footy, with some having tried other sports previously and some without any prior club sport experience at all. Needless to say, the team initially had a wide variety of fitness, footy skills and experience. And this extended to our coaches too. Whilst not new to footy or coaching, neither coach had been a head coach of a footy team before.

The key focus for the start of the season was basic skill development and fitness whilst making the experience fun and encouraging the team to work together to build skills. On game days, the plan at the start of the season was to rotate players regularly and give them opportunities across all positions. Then, once the season got under way and the coaches got to know the players better, a more strategic plan was developed to hone specific skills, build confidence across the field, and play to players’ strengths and interests.

The Grade was extremely varied in skill, with two very strong teams that had high skill levels and very competitive attitudes. The other teams were more evenly matched and this resulted in quite a few tight (and thoroughly enjoyable) tussles throughout these season. Our Dragons were really hitting their straps at the back end of the season, and it was so very rewarding to see the evolution of the players both individually and as members of a team. This included two players who joined

quite late in the season but were welcomed by all players and immediately became integral members of the team.

Basic, repetitive skill building was a key approach at training as many of the players don't necessarily kick the footy between training and games. Seeing some of the drills done at training play out on the field on match days was always very rewarding for the coaches. Luke O'Connell attended a few training sessions and Schmiddy from the Renegades attended to demonstrate kicking on the run and some other key tips. This high level insight really was appreciated by our players. Most of the team attended the Malcolm Bangs session and we saw the benefits of this on the field, particularly for those a bit tentative with tackling and for those players who tackle without fear but need some tips to refine their tackling prowess.

Over the season, and despite the disruption of lockdowns we observed significant improvement across the playing group and also a strong sense of teamwork and belonging to our great club. Many of our players continued to practice and challenge each other during the lockdowns and this was great to see. We were positioned third on the ladder when the most recent lockdown occurred and the performance and development over the season was definitely finals worthy. Two players were nominated for the YJFL season Best and Fairest.

A huge thank you to all our volunteers but particularly our amazing Team Manager Kim who recruited beautifully, welcomes everyone and made joining the team seamless. Kim also built volunteer capability and created a great atmosphere for parents. James as Trainer, Luke as Goal Umpire, and other regular volunteers throughout the season make it all possible. A special mention goes to two of the players' brothers Ollie and Archie who volunteered as Boundary Umpire and Runner for the season - great for the players to have older siblings supporting the team. A special mention also goes to Ella's family for taking on the Canteen for the season - first season at the Dragons and they are fully emersed.

Next season is looking bright and we are hopeful that players will return and that their experience will be fuller and less disrupted next year. Go Dragons!!!

## 12.10. U12 Mixed – Craig Leversha

Although the season ended early, the Under 12 Mixed team made fantastic progress in developing individual footy skills, playing together as a team and building camaraderie.

At the start of the season the coaching group asked for players to bring 100% effort and good behaviour to footy. The response from the team was excellent and the effort and enthusiasm the players demonstrated really drove the enjoyment they got from the season. It certainly also made coaching the team a pleasure.

Although we sought to focus on how we played footy rather than the result, to finish second was a testament to the way the team approached the season and their willingness to take on feedback to improve. Some of the coaches of teams we played against had great insights into the keys of our season. They talked about link up play, contributions across the field and a willingness to take the game on as standout attributes of the team. We also know that the rapport and friendship built up by the players over a number of years now helped bind the team together in the face of both success and adversity. It was pleasing to see plenty of laughter at training.

Our season wouldn't have been possible without help from so many adults, particularly Judy and Julie as team managers. The efforts of Steve, Rod and Shane in coaching at training and on game day were invaluable. For several of us who were novice coaches, the handover and insight from Dan and Steve made the transition smooth. A huge thanks for all your contributions!

Well done to every one of the players and bring on (a hopefully uninterrupted) 2022 season!

### 12.11. U13 Purple – Premiers – Jimmy Mastorakos

Following the lost COVID season of 2020, Under 13 Purple had a turnover of 4 players, and welcomed 4 new recruits, three who were playing their first season of football and one who moved down from under 15s. It proved to be a great mix with the returning players showing a commitment and eagerness to embrace the new recruits, work on their technical skills and also displaying a high level of maturity to consistently deliver team strategies learnt at training on game day.

We focused on three key aspects of the game that included , outnumbering opposition both in and outside the contest to allow us to win the ball, quick movement of the ball through handball and run from behind the contest, and when going forward lowering our eyes and kicking to leading targets. Our training drills were based around these strategies and they boys were able to deliver time and again on game day. The season could not have gone any better, we were placed in a lower division but following three huge wins including a record high score (at the time) for BJFC against Kew Rovers on Anzac Day where the boys piled on 24.17 161 we were effectively graded up two divisions. In our new division although we faced tougher opposition but we were still able to win 5 games in a row quite convincingly, with a loss coming in our last game following the mid season school holiday/ COVID lockdown break. We had two players play representative football at the YJFL Cristian Athanasopoulos and Ruben Powell, with Cristian declared best on ground in his representative game. Riley Wilton has an extraordinary first season with the team after moving down to play with boys in his own age group, he kicked 43 goals in 8 games and was a real leader for our team.

Following the cancellation of the season we were two games clear on top of the ladder having played one less game than others, and declared Premiers which was thoroughly deserved. It would have been great to play in a finals series which this team had not done in the previous 6 years , but the team had come so far, in our style of play and the boys commitment to the plan and each other, that there is no doubt in my mind that we would have prevailed.

### 12.12. U13 White – Jude Allen

So once again, Covid has wreaked havoc on yet another football season. Last year, they had missed out on the much needed fun, competitiveness, camaraderie and sense of achievement that comes with being a member of a Brunswick Dragons football team. We all thought that it would be different this year. But unlike last year, we were able to put together some semblance of a season. Although it was stop/start, on a positive note, we were able to play 10 games for the season. Not a full season and not what we know our kids need, but it was something. The YJFL should be congratulated for making this happen. The coaches could sense the frustration from the kids and as a result, when we were able to train, we trained twice per week. More often than not, we would have a full list attending both training sessions. This just shows how important the football season was to kids and parents alike.

We were really proud of the kids and how they handled the adversity. They played some really exciting football. Some games and passages of play left us speechless. The improvement across the

group was really noticeable. This ensured that we won our fair share of games this season. I can honestly say that in the games we lost, it was not as a result of lack of skill or desire. We played short or with no bench for most of the season. The kids were simply exhausted. The effort, the desire and the never die attitude shone through brightly. They should be very proud of themselves.

Thanks to Will for stepping up and taking the role of Assistant Coach. He is an amazing addition to the coaching ranks and hopefully he sticks around! Thank yous also go out to Belinda who took on the role of Team Manager. As we all know, Team Manager is the role that keeps the whole show together. In the season we have had, the degree of difficulty has increased tenfold. The season could not have happened without you. Thank you to you both

### 12.13. U14 Girls – Erin Maclatchy & Marius Smith



Heading into the season, the under 14 girls hadn't experienced the thrill of a win since 2018, and victory probably seemed a long way off when they lost the opening round comprehensively. But this team was determined to improve and bounced back for a narrow loss against Glen Iris in a game that they easily could have won. That day, they showed the grit and determination that would be a hallmark of the side throughout the season. It seemed that most of our players loved tackling more than anything else!

The girls improved steadily over the next few weeks, learning the game plan and greatly improving their skills, and it all came together in round six when they kicked ten goals in a dominant display against Northcote Parkside. The amazing thing about this team over a number of years is that they've loved playing, no matter the result. Even when the scoreboard suggested a lopsided result, they always came off the ground smiling. They would be excited for the next week and train as hard as they could - they really did play for the love of the game. But make no mistake, winning feels good and the girls celebrated their victory with gusto. The video of them singing the song after the game is something that everyone at BJFC should see!

Having trained online every week during the 2020 lockdown, the girls did not let anything get in the way of their training sessions this year either, with training continuing online twice a week whenever we were faced with a lockdown - including an intense fortnight of home quarantine for many of our players (and some parents!) after one of our training sessions overlapped a tier 1 exposure site. We have seen so much resilience from these girls, it's been outstanding.

The next two weeks saw an incredible draw against Aquinas and a narrow seven-point loss to Balwyn, who had easily beaten the girls earlier in the season. After that game, you could tell how the girls had changed - there were no smiles in the rooms. They were disappointed to lose a game that they had led for most of the day.

A tough loss the next week to Bulleen turned out to be the last game for the season. There was one more round in between the two lockdowns, but unfortunately, we had the bye that week. The players made the most of our 8 days of freedom by training 4 times and enjoyed the specialised tackling session and a kicking on the run session with our Club President.

We then resumed the familiar rhythm of Zoom training sessions, always looking for new activities that the girls could do in small backyards, or even in their living rooms. The Olympic themed session was probably the highlight, and the girls loved the chance to see familiar faces twice a week.

The girls showed an incredible amount of improvement across the season, but most of all they just loved the opportunity to play. We had a number of debutantes this year, but after the disaster of 2020, all of the girls played like they'd just discovered a new sport this year. It was a joy to be a part of.

## 12.14. U14 Mixed – Brendan Allman & Simon Frederickson

Another Covid disrupted year, another Runner Up.

U14M had third-year coaches Brendan and Simon and 25 players this season. The 25 included a number of boys who had dropped back to their age level as the U15 sides combined, and one player completely new to the club and sport.

Training was held twice a week this year allowing boys to work in their other commitments. Even though it was interrupted, training was well attended and concentrated on game skills, game sense and game plan. Training was much more competitive with game sense activities that provided a pressure of expectation on maintaining possession and developing skills for sharing and release of the ball from the contest.

As previous start Runners Up (2019), U14M were graded up a division. In the first two games we played a team that was then promoted to a higher division, and the eventual division Runner Up. By Round 4 we were in a lower grade. YJFL U14Blue provided many even games for the boys. In U14Blue, we achieved a 6-2 record including winning our last five games to finish second on the ladder.

Our last game celebrated eight boys playing their 50th club game. And what a way to celebrate, 2 goals in the last two minutes to snatch a never say die victory. Our previous year's 1st, 2nd and 3rd (voted) best players played limited games this season leaving a whole new batch of players to rise and perform. In fact, we had seven new boys take out this year's club awards.

Finally, we would like to thank our again "punching above their weight" parent group for their support during the season.

### 12.15. U15 Boys – Paul Robertson

Last year's lock-down made it feel like pre-season started around October '76, so to freshen up for this year the brain's trust turned to sporting greats from every code for advice. Sure enough, the U15s in 2021, lived up to Kevin Keegan's assessment of the '98 World Cup: "Chile have three options – they could win or they could lose."

The boys started the season looking a treat, Bart Cummings could have been describing any of them when he said: "He's wide between the eyes; he's got a bright outlook; he's an honest type and he works like he looks." (actually the King was talking about Leon Corsten, his stable foreman, but clearly a good thing is a good thing no matter how many legs its got). Everything was going right for the Brunswick boys at the start of season, as Jack Dyer said:

"The ball chased them for a couple of quarters." We started with a scrappy win against Banyule that was good on the scoreboard (15.18.108 to 5.3.33) but didn't showcase the classy play that we knew we were capable of.

The champagne footy came over the next three weeks, Capt'n Blood summed it up perfectly: "The opposition couldn't catch 'em, and couldn't mark over 'em. They were regular tarantulopes!" We won by just short of the magic 100 points against the Bullants (98), demolished Ashie by 145 and then landed what looks like the new all-time record winning score for any BJFC team: 33.19.217 vs 0.1.1, against an out-gunned Parkside at Gillon.

The big worry for the brain's trust was the risk of catching a bad case Greg Norman syndrome: "I'm not one who tends to boast but I was in awe of myself". The next game was the high point my association with BJFC. Bumped up to higher division and Beverley got the jump on us from the opening bounce. Five goals to zero down at the end of first quarter and we were looking like a "chook out of water." (Jack Dyer), then the Dragon's channelled their inner Rex Hunt to rip into the second quarter like a "hot cross bun in the hands of an ape." Spectators from both teams were "literally electrified and glued to their seats" (Whispering Ted Lowe) when we not only closed the gap but kicked to a clear lead despite two broken arms, a concussion and series of questionable umpiring decisions (but as Ron Atkinson said in the '98 World Cup "I've never commented on referees and I'm not going to break the habit for that pratt."). However, "it's the old allergy – a week's a long time in football." (Simon O'Donnell). As Yogi Berra put it: "even Napoleon had his atergate" -we had a string of injuries on and off the ground and just as we started to find our mojo again, we were squashed by lockdowns and an unfortunately timed bye. Now we were on the

receiving end of the scores we were dishing out at the start of the season and we came out of lockdown feeling like Brian Johnston was talking about us: “Welcome back, you’ve just missed Barry Richards smashing Basil D’Oliveira’s balls clean out of the ground.”

But as England’s soccer manager, Stuart Pearce, once said “there was a carrot at the end of the tunnel”. The U15s finished the year with another season highlight: aided by freakishly straight kicking from their star forward Ivanhoe were hammering us on the scoreboard but the Dragons gave it all they had right to the very last siren even with the game well out of reach. For me it was a bigger achievement than any of the wins at the start of the year and a proud finish to season 2021.

Every player in the U15s can hold their heads very high – every player improved, and every player gave it their best. Gracious winners and courageous losers they are a credit to the club and to themselves. Personally, it has been a weekly highlight to see them bonding as a team, laughing at training and always encouraging of each other – even when the wins dried there was NOT EVEN ONE negative comment between team-mates.

Many thanks to the U15’s brain’s trust and to the parents who have done so much and been so supportive for the last two years. Most importantly a big thank you and a huge WELL DONE! to the players – it has been a privilege and a delight to coach you. I couldn’t put it any better than big Sam Keckovich when he said: “I’ve run out of expletives to describe these guys.”

### 12.16. U16 Boys – Matt Watson

The Under 16 boys had a great year, finishing on top of the ladder and being awarded premiers for 2021 with 8 wins and 2 losses. The players seemed to really enjoy their time together off the ground, they trained hard, and this translated to some terrific on field performances. We welcomed some new players and families to the club with the McIlroy, Kavallo, Matthews, Dunphy and Farrelly families all involved for their first season. The team also had several players come back from playing out of age group and it was great that everyone combined so well as a group, particularly given the team had a full list of 26 players. There was no shortage of enthusiasm amongst the players and it was great after a season off to see the team literally getting in the thick of the mud on a few days with heavier conditions. A big thanks to the contributions of all families in making a successful year, on and off the field.

### 12.17. U16 Girls – Flick Smith & Sash Dougherty

Despite not getting to finish the season out, the Youth Girls had a fabulous season finishing in fourth place.

It is with definite confidence that Sash, Mon and I know the team would have been in finals contention and pushed a number of teams to their limit in the finals.

We had 22 players, 7 of which were completely new players to the club. This is credit to the club and the girls with their recruitment drive.

More often than we would like, we had to play with reduced numbers, but the Dragons handled it well and were very patient with our player rotations. Juggling almost an extra team of numbers was not easy, but they were supportive and never complained.

We are extremely proud of this team and the way they supported and guided the new players. Game days were so much fun, and we absolutely loved seeing their passion and commitment to footy and their teammates. The playing group has a strong bond and with the majority of players still able to compete in Youth Girls next year, we are excited to see what 2022 will bring.

A massive thank you to Brian our Team Manager. We love your work! Thank you to Mon our fabulous runner, statistician, warm up guru and fill-in coach, as well as all the parents that supported us and volunteered throughout the season.

It was fun, and genuinely a really great experience coaching the Youth Girls, they each showed their unique football talents, and it all came together for season 2021. It was a joy to see the team bond and get to the top four.

### 12.18. U18 Boys (Colts) – Steve Sinn

The main achievement for the Colts in 2021 was how well this group formed together as a team. This was a fantastic achievement of their own and something very wonderful to witness. This forming together as a team is something that they should be very proud of. They formed a team that was both inclusive and supportive. They developed a game style that was very team oriented. A number of players played specific team roles. They looked out for each other. They trained hard for each other. They were always there to support each other.

Team Manager - Georgie, Assistant Coach - Andrew and Strength/Conditioning Coach - Joe, played an important role in helping to support this sense of team togetherness. For this season, training at Clifton worked well. Gillon would be a better option for the U18s if available. Especially if we have great numbers next season. Gillon is a bigger ground and the facilities at Gillon can allow for great opportunities for after training get togethers. Ground allocation is very difficult, and Kylie Moreland did a fantastic job in being alert to our needs. She was also fantastic at finding spaces for us to do our preseason training. In 2021 our pre-season started in late November. We started the season in Division 2 which was too high for us. The YJFL did do well to finally get us into our correct division. The U18s as a playing group can be very independent. They can have school and work demands that can affect their full availability for training. Despite the playing groups independence, the parents were still very involved in volunteering for all game day roles. With the speed of play in this age group, it can be quite demanding to ask parents to run the boundary. Thankfully we had two parents share this role on game day. For our older players that decided to stay in junior footy whilst in Year 12, this decision worked very well for them. For a number of different reasons, this group of players were not quite ready for Senior Football. Whilst being independent, many of them were still young. They were still growing and developing. They were open to support and care. Junior Football was just that little bit smaller for them. They benefitted from the close contact they had with school mates and other teammates from their age group. They benefitted from the support and guidance that can be given at a more personal level in a junior footy club. They benefitted from the smaller environment of Junior Football. Rather than the greater expanse of a Seniors team.

From their experiences in 2021, our players from Year 12 are now more likely to play Senior Football next year. After having an interrupted 2021 season, all of our younger aged players are expecting to play U18s next season. This will be a fantastic opportunity for their football, for their Year 12 studies and for their growth and development more generally. There is the slight possibility that we could have two teams in U18B next season. We are a safe, supportive, and caring club and I feel that we should be open to this challenge. One keyway to attract new players to our club is through a well organised pre-season programme.

Some Key developments for the U18s:

- From the 9 top age players in 2021, 7 are expected to play senior football next season



- Of our 13 bottom aged players in 2021, all are expected to play U18s next season
- In the U18s we attracted 3 players who were totally new to football. 1 other new player had not played since U10s. All 4 of these new players joined because of the opportunity to play footy with their school mates. Of the 4 new players, 3 were in Year 12
- We attracted 2 new players from other clubs.
- U18s in the YJFL created opportunities for young people not in private schools to participate in team sport.
- Our U18s team was made up of players from 7 different schools. For both our Year 11s and 12s, the joining together from different schools created opportunities for more general growth and development.

In many ways this generation has been dealt a difficult hand. For our club the U18s provided a space for young people to gather together, to train, to compete, to challenge themselves, to work hard for each other, to laugh, to build friendships, to develop and grow a supportive and inclusive team.