

21 November 2023



2023 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Season 2023 was another stepping stone in the progress of the club on and off the pitch to ensure its long term sustainability. The club registered 997 playing members which is 17% above Season 2022 and comprises over 52% under the age of 13 and 25% are female.

The logistical challenge to accommodate all our members this year was made even harder with the condition of Dorothy Laver West Reserve (DLRW) and High St Oval. Along with the perennial poor surface conditions at Warner, Watson, and Markham Reserves the club took significant financial hits in additional ground hire costs, lost canteen revenues, and damage to our reputational capital. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank everyone for their understanding and patience throughout this time.

The good news is that you have been heard! Council reallocated funds in the 2024 budget forecast to bring forward ground renovations at DLRW and High St Oval (\$3M) and is working on funding for Watson in 2025. I would like to thank all the members who helped with the lobbying campaign and thanks to Mayor Felicity Sinfield, Cr Victor Franco, and Cr Garry Thompson who listened and responded to our concerns. This proves that orderly community action can work.

Now for the big challenge – funding approval for a significant **Warner Reserve Upgrade for 2026**. The Committee is working hard in the background and more information will be provided to our members in due course.

The season on the pitch yielded some great results. Both our women's and men's first teams finished in their highest-ever ladder positions and both are planning a promotion push in season 2024. As a football club, we need to recognize the important role that our first-team players play in representing our club at the highest level and what they can do to bring together the community off the pitch. I was extremely proud of the way our players and coaches conducted themselves this season. This filters into every part of the club.

Our JBNPL program continues to strengthen with improvements across the board and three of our community junior teams (U12 Lions, U16C girls, and U18B boys) all made finals this year. Our kick-off and Miniroos programs continue to grow as does our Masters cohort.

This year we continued to fine tune our processes and look to improve our communications channels. We also established our senior and female football sub committees and look to build on this model to get more members to help with the logistics of running one of Melbourne's largest sporting clubs.

The club relies on a committed and skilled committee and staff. This year we say thank you to our departing members;

- Melissa Butler. Mel has put in a massive shift over four seasons as Club Secretary. Her commitment, good counsel and excellent record keeping will be missed.
- Martin Holt. Marty has been the enthusiastic driver of the performance pathways and special event organizer for the last three seasons.

Both will be missed on the Committee, but they remain active supporters of our club (and no doubt will help with the odd job!).

We also welcome our newest committee members in Brianna Kotzapavidis, James Tan, Florian Osang, Ben Duan and Craig Little, who join Sunita Tudor, Alan Cubbon, and Paul Crisp to make a great team for Season 2024.

We are still lucky to have Lesley Gemmell (Club Administrator) with us again for season 2024 along with Matt Dutton (Operations Manager) and Marcelo Koslowsky (Technical Director). Pati Salwa will be our Assistant Technical Director focusing on female football.

A big thank you to all our sponsors. Without their support there is a lot we could not do, so please make sure you support them where you can.

Season 2024 will be the clubs 45th year serving the local community by providing opportunities for "players of all abilities" to play the beautiful game. I look forward to celebrating this milestone with you all over the course of the year. It will be my last season as President and I am committed to "pass the baton" in the best condition possible.



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