

Dianella Soccer Club 2018 AGM – President's Report.

The 2018 season has been one of consolidation for Dianella Soccer Club, operating again at near full capacity with over 300 players in 27 teams from under 6 to under 18, continuing our presence in all age groups of Junior football.

The committee has continued to work hard on maintaining the infrastructure and practices necessary to provide the opportunity for young people to play the game of football in an affordable, community based, family-friendly environment.

We are again indebted to the City of Stirling for allowing use of Yokine Reserve as our home ground. Following the wettest winter in decades the pitches have remained in excellent condition and having the third full size pitch allowed us to host this year's 6s and 7s with no issues. Our busiest Sunday this year saw over 540 players kicking a ball at Yokine, a wonderful achievement for all concerned.

We will continue to lobby the City of Stirling for additional lighting on the Oval, and more importantly increased lighting across the car park. With the addition of a cricket pitch in the middle of the oval around half of our squads are training in near-darkness, and the lack of lighting in the car park remains a major concern. I hope these issues will be addressed in good time.

I wish once again to thank our sponsors, Natalie Hoyer of Acton Realty, Caesar Aquino of Onside Sports and Colin Sanfilippo of Cameleon Coatings for their financial support of the Club. We are very fortunate to have them on board.

This year saw our players take to the field in the new club strip. If anyone out there in the community is interested in becoming our shirt sponsor we would love to hear from you. Your brand will be seen by an estimated 28k people from Yanchep down to Mandurah over the course of the season, and the community will instantly recognise and identify you as a key supporter of junior sport.

As our Treasurer will shortly report, the Club is in a sound financial position. I am satisfied the future of the Club is financially secure.

Dianella Soccer Club is an organisation that survives solely on the good will of volunteers who give up their time and energy to become committee members, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, referees, linespersons, line markers and many other tasks allowing children to play football. To these people I say thank you – this is your Club and we look forward to your continued contributions in 2019.

Beginning a long list of "thank you's" I firstly want to mention the following who gave up their time in helping prepare and mark pitches throughout the season. Mick Owens, Mario Zinni, John Griffiths, Chris Musca, Nic Petrillo, Barry, Morag and Max Irvine, Nic Wu, Andrew Stewart-Wynne, John Rocchi and Mark and Brad Norton. Apologies if I have missed anyone from our formidable line-marking squad.

For 2019 the club will explore hiring a professional line-marker to initially mark pitches for the start of the season. This will help smooth the process and remove the need for many volunteers to spend hours running around Yokine Reserve, covering themselves in paint before the season starts.

The enthusiasm on show from our Coaches this year was a joy to behold. Many coaches returned and we were joined by several new coaches who all took to the responsibility with great credit. I hope they have been “bitten” by the coaching bug and we see them back next year. I hesitate to mention individuals, but special thanks to Josh Dowling (10s) and Anthony Gileno (14s) whom have coached with no family connections to the club. But to all our Coaches, a special thank you for a job well done.

I wish to thank the 2018 committee for their tireless efforts. Each and every one of you should feel a sense of pride, knowing that your work goes towards making a fun experience of playing football a reality for so many kids.

I would particularly like to thank Mario Zinni and Maria Stella for taking on their new respective roles of Junior and Mini-roo’s Team Co-ordinators and being committed to doing the job well. You were the backbone of the playing side this season and I have lost count of the number of compliments received about your work.

Sonia Beros returned as our Secretary this year. You have more than fulfilled your role, organising, cajoling and reminding us all, me more than most, of the tasks in hand. Thank you for ensuring we stayed “on the ball”.

To my right-hand men, Akash Bisnath, Treasurer, and Mick Owens, Vice President, thank you.

Akash as always has controlled the purse strings, dealing with all the invoices, Football West, referee’s fees etc. and kept the clubs budget on track. Thank you, Akash.

Mick Owens is not just Vice President, but also our Coaches Co-ordinator. If this were not enough, Mick is also the Assistant Coach and Team Manager of the WA State Paralympic Football team. I have seen the team train and play at Yokine and I am in awe of the work Mick is doing, in conjunction with his own Dianella squad, in helping everyone play the beautiful game.

Dorina Martelli as always had us ticking like a Swiss clock for the Shirt Presentation Day and Trophy Presentation and Wind-Ups. Carmel deFillipis again had the teams kitted out and photographed, raising a tidy sum in the process. Because of the late arrival of our new strip we were forced into playing the first couple of rounds in our old colours, but Carmel and her team of helpers coped admirably.

To John Griffiths our Equipment Manager, thanks for ensuring every team had the necessary gear before and during the season and a big thank you for insisting we invest a tidy sum in the new goals for our 6s and 7s. The feedback has been overwhelming and the goals are an asset for the whole club. John is currently recovering from his second knee reconstruction in as many years so we wish him a speedy recovery.

Pina Ricci worked closely with Nicky Walmsley and her team in the canteen. The team kept us fed and served much needed teas and coffees over the cold and wet winter mornings. Your cheery service kept us going. We introduced a couple of Training Night Dinners towards the end of the season, this is an initiative we may expand upon next year.

Mark Oliver continues to manage our IT space and kept us all updated via Facebook and the website.

This year we welcomed Vince Bell to the committee as our Perth Glory Liaison Officer. Vince will continue to cement relationships with Perth Glory and we look forward to working closely with the new look Glory Community programme. It was good to see George The Gorilla at our Minirooms wind up last week.

Allison Stephens provided us with our first club-wide survey of members. The response was very strong with just under 50% of members completing the survey. We will sit down over the coming months, take-away the key findings and use them to further build the club. Following the survey, I can confirm we are committed to maintaining the affordability of our registration fees and the community aspect of the club. Two good reasons why we will not be joining the ranks of 'NPL' clubs in the foreseeable future.

To the committee, those already mentioned and those not mentioned who have worked behind the scenes, thank you again for making this Club a true, community asset.

On the field, as in all sports there were success stories and the not so successful. Whatever the story, our aim was to make the experience for every player an enjoyable one. Worthy of note however once again were the successes of our Juniors (13s to 18s). Of the seven Junior squads, five finished inside the top 4.

The 18s, 15s, 14s and 13B squads finished as runners up in the league. In their final season at the club our 18s went on to win their Top 4 Final 5-2 and the 14s won their Top 4 Final via the dreaded penalty shoot-out. Commiserations to our 16s team who lost out in two penalty shoot-outs this season, firstly in the third round of the knock-out cup and then in their Top 4 Semi-Final.

In the absence of recorded scores for Minirooms (6s to 12s) it is difficult to highlight achievements, but in our 10s, 11s and 12s we had teams competing at the highest Metro level and each squad performed admirably against the so called "bigger clubs."

However, I have always believed that children's sport is about so much more than winning, so thank you to every squad for playing the Dianella way this season. Regardless of playing ability, from the fiercely competitive Metro league's to the more 'social' levels we are very proud of our players. Well done to all those involved.

Our Club Person of the Year for 2018 is someone from outside the committee. Anthony Gileno has only been with the club for a relatively short period of time, 3 years this season. But in this time, he has acquired almost a cult status amongst the players he coaches and the parents who support him every step of the way. His enthusiasm for the game is second to none and he throws himself into everything with a cheerful grin.

Quite simply he cannot do enough for the club. He has a great team working alongside him (his dad and brother) and I can safely say, as he coached my daughter in the 12s three year ago, every player flourishes as the weeks go by.

Your committee also decided to honour Morgan Aquino with Life Membership. Morgan started her footballing journey at Dianella, plays as a goal-keeper and has gone on to currently represent the State's elite girls NTC team, Perth Glory Women and she recently played for the Junior Matildas at the ASEAN Football Federation Women's Championship in Indonesia. Morgan is a credit to the game, she comes back every year to support us, coach our Junior keepers and we wish her all the best in the future.

It was great to see the Clubs Parents Bowling Night back on the calendar and a fantastic night was had by everyone at The Rosemount Bowl in August. Thank you Dorina for a fun evening.

In a first for the club, our 10s Team 1 hosted a tournament towards the end of August. Balcatta, Perth Soccer Club, Bayswater City, Curtin University and Stirling Lions sent their 10s Metro teams to compete on the day. The tournament was the brainchild of Chris Musca, our 10s Team 1 Coach. He secured sponsorship for everything from the trophies (The Meatball Bar in Mount Lawley) to the sausage sizzle (Carne Cucina Quality Butcher of Ballajura and Musca Autos of Northbridge). The sponsors covered the costs, no entry fee was charged and with the help of all parents the event was a huge success. Chris, you really should be on the committee!

On that note, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage others to become part of the Dianella Soccer Club story, by getting involved at either Committee level or at grass roots level where the teams are. We are always on the lookout for new ideas and areas of expertise. Dianella Soccer Club is a friendly, welcoming place that offers a rewarding experience. Please give it some thought, we would love to hear from you.

2018 has had its challenges, but in a year that saw a fabulous World Cup in Russia highlight the good of the game, the number of children playing football continues to outstrip all other sports in WA and across Australia. With the help of the committee and every other member I would be delighted to get on with building this Club into an even stronger force for the community.

Thank you.