

CDJFL President/Secretary's Report Season 2011

Season 2011 basically started where it finished in 2010. That is with distracting rumour, speculation and unhelpful confusion about the direction of some member Clubs and the viability of others. Despite this, the CDJFL remained an enviable and popular competition albeit without Maldon and an Under 15's team from West End. Good sense prevailed and a logical solution to the fixture was devised and every child enjoyed their year with us.

We remained financially healthy and also subsidised costs for our members. Our volunteer umpire, interleague and safety helmet programs were a fantastic success as was our finals series, Best and Fairest presentation ceremony, coaching accreditation, rules review and our ongoing ability to diffuse and solve the many issues that appeared during the year.

Again, we were successful applicants for Government grants which provided money for projects. The League's Executive with support from the Club delegates instigated many new initiatives, managed very successful events, proved that we have quality players in our League and also motivated volunteers running our member Clubs.

Unfortunately, forces more powerful than us have decided to drastically change junior football in our region forever and the new set of Club and Executive volunteers will need to energise and encourage all Clubs and their members to embrace these changes and see things from the VCFL's perspective. Most of the CDJFL Clubs, and certainly the Executive, were not in favour of the VCFL's Recommendations and during the consultation phase, strongly argued for a very different outcome.

We obviously saw things through different eyes and probably rose tinted glasses because the VCFL's Final Recommendations came as quite a shock given the amount of support for the status quo. It will be very interesting to see if those pushing the VCFL vision are still as active in Midlands Junior Football next year given their support for it or will they be involved at all?

Each Club will now experience a drastic loss of players, finances, sponsorship and volunteers as the League becomes a Primary School competition. We'll see 13 year old Junior children managed by Senior Football Clubs, parents will now be travelling further in all age groups and more often. Kids will stop playing and there will be a 5 person Board rather than a delegate structure amongst other changes.

We wish to thank the efforts from all Club volunteers, the players and their parents for making this League a very successful operation and an enjoyable place to play junior football to the best of your skills and in a safe, supportive and friendly environment with an enforced Code of Conduct and under the AFL's Junior Policies.

Congratulations to our U13 and U15's Premiership teams, our Best and Fairest winners and Runners Up who showed that we have a fantastic talent pool in the CDJFL. Congratulations to our interleague squads who showed we are competitive and have skills comparable to the best in the State. In junior football, with growth rates so variable, size does differ and matter and we did come up against some large opposition chosen from a much larger population of eligible candidates. Our coaches proved they were complete professionals and had the respect of all involved. Well done.

This will be our final report for the CDJFL and for us as President and Secretary as neither is seeking a position on the new Midlands Junior Football League Board. New, refreshed and enthusiastic people are required to see this new League become all that the VCFL says it must to meet the objectives in their Final recommendations for junior football in Castlemaine, Kyneton, Bendigo and Maryborough.

Highlights for Season 2011

- Maldon Under 10.5's Gala night at Maldon was a very successful evening.
- Under 15's Interleague Coach Lachlan Brown did a fantastic job in Bendigo carnival. Steve Comte assisted with coaching and Tim Matheson was runner. CDJFL defeated Heathcote and Loddon Valley League and we narrowly lost to Bendigo League.
- The U13's interleague Carnival in Swan Hill squad involved 27 kids. Michael Blake did a fantastic job with the squad and had many helpers and sponsors. They also played against Kyneton Junior League.
- The Under 11's interleague squad coached by Don Moran and Craig Ginnivan played Kyneton Junior League.
- Helmets were made compulsory in Under 13's and Under 10.5's competitions. The CDJFL received \$2,400 from a Government grant to assist with these purchases and all Clubs received \$300 to assist with costs.
- CDJFL subsidised 50% of Clubs League membership fees for the second year.
- Umpiring Information Night was attended by 25 people of mixed ages attended facilitated by Rod Threlfell.
- GrainCorp sponsorship of interleague carnivals, grant application form (\$250) and fixture.
- The proposed By-Laws were re-drafted by Des Heagney and adopted.
- CDJFL successful in receiving \$500 in a grant from Victorian Government Department of Planning and Community Development.
- The proposal from Maldon regarding Under 10.5 to play the Club with a bye on the Friday night was successful.
- Sponsorship with Bendigo Bank (naming rights), Sherrin and Castlemaine Fruit Supply continued.

Negatives

Happily, there are few negatives to report. However,

- West End stated that, after an enormous effort, they could not field Under 15's team
- There was a lack of certainty about the League's future for the entire year. Lots of damaging rumours and misinformation was spread.
- Maldon departed the CDJFL
- Breaches of the Code of Conduct, Bylaws and the VCFL Rules handbook by people / Clubs that should do and know better.

To conclude, we wish the children playing in the new Midlands League, the very best of luck and hope you enjoy playing football in this expanded but younger competition. To those leaving the CDJFL, thank you for playing your part and may your sporting and life journey be rewarding and successful. Often, we don't know how good we've had it until it's gone. Let's hope that's not the case with the demise of the CDJFL. Good luck.

Yours faithfully,

Dale Burton President

Jim Moran Secretary