

Bolwarra Lorn Junior Soccer Club

2017 Season Presidents Report

To the playing members thank you for a largely trouble-free season from a disciplinary perspective; the way you conduct yourselves is exemplary. The small sided teams provide a great future for the club and I hope that they have enjoyed participating. Congratulations to the inter district sides; most made the semis, some the grand finals and congratulations to the U14's who broke their grand final drought. To the men's teams, both zone league and Friday night comp's well done.

None of the teams would be anything if it wasn't for the enthusiasm, dedication and generosity of coaches, managers and helpers. Our club is solely based upon volunteer effort and the club will only be as strong as the sum of this effort, so if you haven't gotten involved, get involved, we need all the help we can get

I would like to recognise the young inter district players who assisted with refereeing small sided football this season.

I would like to earnestly thank Steve Moate who generously "club refereed" many adult and inter district fixtures this year. I cannot emphasize enough the benefit of this to the club.

As a largely junior organisation the club currently operates with some 336 registered players coming from approximately 275 families. The club desperately needs more parents/carers to play a more active role. It is no mean feat to operate a club of this size and the more people who share the burden the easier it is. Presently, if you exclude coaching and managers, the brunt of running the club has fallen to less than a dozen people with some of dozen coming from the same family/s. It would be tragic for Bolwarra Lorn to cease being a universal club, welcoming all comers, to being one where only if the team is self-sustaining will it be registered.

2017 saw an ever-increasing regulatory impost, and I believe 2018 will do nothing to change this dynamic, from the parent organisations of which we must be affiliated. My personal opinion is that I am not a supporter of a model which sees money from grass roots or community football siphoned away for more elite levels of the game administered by tiers of structure next to useless in providing support to grass roots clubs while enjoying million dollar bank accounts and asset bases. Don't just blindly accept what you pay to HVFA, NNSWF and the FFA is reasonable and to the benefit of the game, particularly your game. Challenge and if necessary complain to them and to your local politicians. If I have a disappointment from my time at Bolwarra is that I have failed to make the HVFA more accountable to its members and return some of the money to the people who contribute it.

This is my final report as I am stepping away from the Club's committee after more than a decade involved in one form or another. I understand the nature of a cliché but it would be remiss of me not to say that I have been privileged to be part of small group of volunteers who have been without peer in my experience. There may be some other groups as good out there, but none that I know of that are better. Big thank you to Scott, Adrian, Tom, Laura, Nick, Paul and Phil for their time, effort, guidance and sanity.

In closing, remember we are not the world cup squad and that the thing that will best reinforce participation and retention of members is enjoyment; I believe that most members are enjoying their participation. Best wishes and thank you to all who have made my time at the club enjoyable.

I urge you to get involved in your club.

John O'Connor
President (outgoing)