

FROM THE PRESIDENT



It seems like only yesterday that I was making preparations to attend my first AGM to be elected president of the great Caulfield Cricket Club.

As I write this report, I regard it as an honour and a privilege both to have been elected to such lofty heights and to have been in a position to contribute for and on behalf of the club in another eventful and, for the most part, successful year.

It would be remiss of me to neglect to fail to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of our previous president, Shaun Richardson. The view would no doubt be unanimous that Shaun has been an exemplary club person from the moment he first set foot on the hallowed turf of our club.

He has enjoyed unparalleled success as a player, captain, coach and for the past five years as president. His efforts culminated in him being the standout choice for the HW Little award for season 2014/15. His contribution, (together with that of Simone and his family), over many years cannot be underestimated and the club owes him a debt of gratitude that I envisage will be difficult to ever repay. I trust that Shaun and his family will enjoy a break albeit that from my perspective, as a first year president, his efforts continue to earmark him as the standard bearer for professionalism and application at our club.

In my first year, I was conscious of, inter alia, achieving two main goals. Principally, I was

keen to ensure that we maintained and concentrated our commitment to onfield success. This is paramount.

As I have observed throughout my many years as a committee person, player and clubman, I believe that a club of our standing and stature must achieve onfield success.

Those who have been involved in the club for a long time and over many years will recognise that the club invests substantial time, resources and effort into ensuring that we have success and particularly in the First Eleven.

Whilst recent years have, to a large extent, been frustrating in that we have not secured the First Eleven premierships we had hoped for, it is not through want of trying. I am extremely proud of the ongoing resolve to achieve these outcomes. In this regard, immediately post the finalisation of the last finals campaign, preparations were undertaken to ensure that our recruiting and management structures are implemented such that we give ourselves every chance of securing a First Eleven premiership flag for the forthcoming season.

This is not to in any way denigrate from the significant achievements of the club from an onfield perspective over the past year. The Fourth Eleven won yet another premiership reinforcing a culture that has now existed for some years that the entire club ought to attempt to emulate.

In his first year as captain, Blair Richards was deservedly rewarded for his many outstanding years as a player, vice captain and club person. It is always particularly satisfying to see a person reap what they sow. In Blair's case, no one at the club would begrudge him the unbridled happiness of securing his first flag as a captain and enjoying another outstanding year contributing to our club.

Three of the four senior sides made finals and the Third Eleven were unlucky losers to Malvern in a grand final. Whilst many clubs may regard the overall senior achievements as satisfactory, I think it is fair to say that we do not. I believe we can do better and hopefully the proof will be in the pudding in the forthcoming season.

In the juniors, two sides made the grand final and Tristan Banks was deservedly rewarded for his unflinching efforts toward our junior program when his Under 15 side took out a flag.

The next objective of my first year as president was to attempt to ensure that the club has in place systems and structures in order to secure a strong financial base. It would be unacceptable for our great club to be anything other than vigilant and, if necessary, preoccupied with ensuring that our club can continue to thrive financially. To do so, significant energies have been allocated to increasing sponsorship revenue and revenue generally, resulting in probably our strongest ever financial year. These aspects are traversed in greater detail in the Treasurer's report.

Andrew Amarant ought be singled out for particular recognition given his herculean efforts in his first year as the head of sponsorship. It is not only sporting clubs but every organisation across the board that must come to terms with the challenges of either retaining sponsors or introducing new sponsors, and through Andrew's hard work we managed to introduce new sponsors and increase the contributions from existing sponsors this season.

Not only will the financial gains we are making now hold the club in great stead for years to come, given the sometimes stretched nature of our volunteers, these initiatives will enable us to outsource some of the responsibilities and obligations of our club.

From my perspective, this year yet again highlighted the burgeoning nature of our junior program. It would be remiss of me to fail to single out Bruno Borci for his contribution in the six or so years as president of our junior program.

Bruno, has been an outstanding clubman for over 30 years. He has held almost every significant role in the club. He has been a decorated player, club man, committee member and club person. His love and passion for the club is an example to us all. He has arguably taken on the most challenging role that has ever existed in the club, namely junior president when the junior program was in an embryonic stage.

The rewards for the club's efforts in this regard are blatantly obvious. Apart from the plethora

of talented junior players now populating our senior ranks on a weekly basis, we are attracting recognition and a form of branding for the club via our junior program. When other clubs are looking for an edge or to obtain a competitive advantage, it is imperative that we meet and hopefully raise the standards being set by other clubs with respect to our junior program.

I doubt that anyone would dispute that the junior program has been an outstanding success. To all of those that have contributed to the junior program, they ought to be unreservedly congratulated.

Whilst I am always reluctant to single people out, the final recognition ought be reserved for Wayne and Carol Seccombe. After many years as loyal and unflinching servants of our great club, they have decided to take a back seat at least insofar as any formal capacity is concerned. As Shaun observed many times during his Presidency, Wayne and Carol would be runaway winners in the HW Little award every year. Their contribution to the club cannot be measured. They will be sorely missed and the club owes them an incredible debt of gratitude for many years of unflinching and, at times, thankless contributions.

Otherwise, I would like to thank all that have contributed to our great club over the past year. A special thanks to those who have assisted me on the executive in my first year. Whether it be the support of a social function, popping down on a Saturday to play or talking up the club in a social context when you are not at the club, all of these contributions are appreciated and worthwhile.

I have no doubt that the club is well positioned to achieve not only onfield success, but that we will be successful on all levels due to the brand and culture that we have at Caulfield. Whilst we cannot rest on our laurels, I am optimistic about our future and that we are well positioned to meet the challenges not just of next season but the many seasons thereafter. Once again, I regard myself in a privileged position and I trust that I can help guide the club to a successful year in 2015/16.

Pat Lennon
PRESIDENT