

RGM ROUNDUP

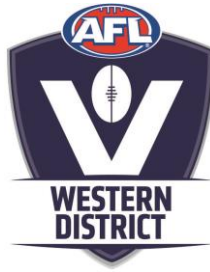
Welcome back to another edition of the AFL Western District Warbler. We had some great feedback from our first edition and will again aim to provide you with as much information as we can put together each month.

I would like to start by saying what a huge relief it was to all involved in country football this week when the Victorian Government committed \$2M to extend the Country Football Netball Program (CFNP) for 12 months, with a view to consider a further three years at next year's budget. The CFNP has proved to be an unmitigated success for community football and netball clubs and is lauded by leagues, local government and other key stakeholders. The Victorian Government's support of this funding program is a significant result for community football and netball clubs and we look forward to working with clubs and local government throughout the application process for new and exciting upgrades in our region.

The first meeting of the working party looking at the possibility of Portland Junior Football Association and Hamilton Junior Football League met last week with some very positive discussion taking place. It was agreed that in order to do what was best for junior football in our region, the working part members will now discuss solutions to identified operational issues and report back to our next meeting later in May. No matter the result, it was fantastic to be involved with a group of people who are prepared to look at the bigger picture in ensuring a future for our young footballers throughout the region.

We also undertook a very productive workshop with the Warrnambool District and Western District Umpires Associations during late April. Issues identified were consistent between the two associations and it was agreed that a regional approach to alleviating some of the concerns was the best way to go. With the information received on the night, we are now working on some plans that we hope will help both associations increase membership and improve the standard of umpiring, on and off the field, throughout our region.

Three of our four leagues (Hampden, Warrnambool and District and Mininera) are now well underway in preparations for AFL Victoria Country Championships on 23 June. It is a great honour for these representatives to take part in the Championships and build bonds that would otherwise not be possible. It is also a great way for leagues to benchmark themselves against opposing leagues and set goals for improvement. We wish all teams, players and officials taking part the very best of luck on the Country Championships weekend. On 24 June our young footballers have the chance to participate in representative football with the AFL Western District Subway Junior Carnival. This year's event, proudly supported by Elders Insurance, will be held in Casterton and will host almost 500 of the region's most promising young players. We thank the Casterton/Coleraine Junior Football Association for their efforts in organising this year's carnival and again wish the very best of luck to those participating.



Later this month, representatives from AFL Victoria will provide information sessions for league and club representatives from our region in regards to the recommendations of a working party looking at the sustainable community football program. Many of you will have heard of possible salary cap and player point initiatives for the 2016 season and these sessions will outline draft recommendations that are hoped will arrest the issue unsustainable player payments are having on our game. Details of these sessions in Warrnambool and Hamilton have now been forwarded via email but please be sure to RSVP with your attendance prior to COB 18 May.

It is fantastic to again be involved in the Whitten Project being held for the second time throughout the Glenelg Shire. The Whitten Project is a brilliant leadership program for the youth of our region and more information can be found later in this newsletter.

Our Commissioners and Football Development Staff are only too happy to help you if you have an issue you think we can assist you with. Please make yourself known to myself or the Commissioners when you see you us around the district or feel free to call me on 0429 955 669 if you would like to discuss anything at all.

Good luck for the next month of club and representative football.

LACHY PATTERSON

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lachy Patterson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

AFL Western District - Region General Manager