



2019 AGM Presidents Report 04.09.19

2018-19 has been a turbulent year for Batemans Bay Basketball Association (BBBA). Since the 2018 AGM, 5 of the 7 elected directors provided notice of resignation. This movement in part led to my involvement on the committee, and resulting “ascension” to the role of President.

In February I was invited to be part of the committee, filling one of multiple vacant director positions. I reluctantly accepted. A month later, that commitment had progressed to becoming the Association’s Vice Presidents role.

At the time I thought the Vice President’s role would be a good fit. In my experience the Vice President’s role allows for good line of sight across the Association, without having to shoulder the enormous responsibilities that other committee positions hold. It was a cunning plan. Unfortunately that plan was thwarted a month later when the president handed in their resignation.

I share that by way of introduction to highlight two things. Firstly, to highlight the rocky path we’ve had to navigate this year, and secondly to highlight that my involvement with the committee only dates back to Feb, and as such my report will focus primarily on events from that time forth.

Member survey

In March this year, BBBA conducted a member survey. The survey received 68 individual responses. Considering the size of our membership, this was a substantial response. In itself, this response pointed to the fact that members were crying out for an opportunity to be heard. The survey included 15 questions, with opportunities to score the Association in a range of important markers, whilst also leaving comments to provide further context.

A full summary of the survey can be found on our website. The following 7 overarching themes were identified.

- More transparency is needed in all areas, but specifically in relation to rep fees.
- Communication needs to be improved, with more attention given to emails and website instead of relying solely on social media.
- The association needs to be more welcoming, and the committee need to be more approachable.
- Representative basketball is important, however it shouldn’t overshadow the club competition which is the association’s core purpose.
- More assistance is required to deliver a quality basketball program. The same volunteers are too regularly called upon which results in burn out.
- Referee development and support needs to be a key focus.
- Increasing junior participation needs to be a major focus.

Upon receiving this feedback a number of decisions have been made to help address concerns. There has been increased attention given to our website, an increase in the number of emails sent, a restructuring of club game times with the club competition receiving preference for priority timeslots ahead of representative training, the appointment of Paul Martin to the role of referee coordinator, and the re-establishment of an U12 competition. The survey also became the catalyst for the start of a strategic planning process, and the eventual formation of a draft 5 year strategic plan, which will be presented later tonight.



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It's fair to say that some of the feedback from the survey was damning. In most cases it confirmed what we already suspected. Whilst the feedback was confronting to receive, it was invaluable. Importantly the collective responses should now form a benchmark, albeit a low one, that the Association can measure itself against by ensuring the survey is part of an annual process.

Financial position

In March this year as we looked through a long list of debts, many of which the committee were not fully unaware of. We also looked at our current bank balances, which had reportedly taken a substantially hit over the previous 24 month period. It became alarmingly clear to me that the Association was not in a healthy financial position. To be frank, if all our debts had been called at that particular time the Association would have been insolvent. This is not a good position to be in at the best of times, but coming into finals with medallions and trophies still to be ordered it was a particular difficult time to navigate.

Credit must go to Simon Wheatley who came on board to fill the vacant Treasurer role in the interim. Simon helped unpack the clubs existing financial position, identifying some additional funds that were owed to the club, and negotiated payment terms with some of our larger creditors. I've been asked by past committee members, what happened to the Associations sinking fund which in February 2017 sat at \$45,000, and by August 2018 had dwindled to \$11,000 (abeit there was a further \$11,000 in the trading account which was not the case in February 2017).

A part of this answer lies in stock on hand. \$26,500 was invested in individual player representative kits. Of this investment \$17,000 was recouped through sponsorship and kit sales. We still have approximately 50 kits available. A further \$4000 was invested in Spalding basketballs. A large number of these balls remain in stock. By in large however, I would argue that the biggest factor draining the Associations reserves, was not properly budgeting for the actual cost of club and representative basketball.

I'm led to believe that previous committees had been able to offset the cost of participating in basketball through diligent fundraising and sponsorship drives. Unfortunately the same low fee structure had been sustained, despite rising expenses and a diminished focus on association orientated fundraising.

Club basketball fees were addressed at the beginning of the Winter 2019 competition. A slight increase of fees was introduced, as was a move for all club fees (BNSW registration & BBBA court fees) to be captured online through SportsTG. This significantly reduces the amount of cash handling required. It also makes it easier for the Association to track membership status, with all payments being stored in one place and available at the push of a button. Whilst this has been an important step, it is acknowledged that more work needs to be done to change the culture within the Association towards punctual fee payment, whilst also tightening up the internal processes to ensure fees have been paid.

In response to representative fees it is recommended that the incoming committee works to establish a representative sub-committee as a matter of urgency. One of the tasks the sub-committee needs to undertake is the establishment of a clear and transparent budget for rep teams. Our SJL per player budget this year was \$637, based on an expectation of 8 players per team. Our representative fees were set at \$600 per player, which already puts us at a deficit. This was further impacted with a number of teams fielding less than the required 8 players. The association also



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received fines from BNSW for the late withdrawal of rep teams, which were not accounted for in the budgeted fees. I'm lead to believe that in previous years, representative players were charged between \$200-\$400. Whilst I don't have line of sight on the expenditure during those years, I strongly suspect that the representative income fell a long way short of covering all expenses. This clearly needs to be addressed moving forward. Representative basketball needs to be a user pays system.

Currently the Association holds \$10,129 in our trading account, and \$11,443 in the reserve account (which remains untouched for the past 12 months). We have a few minor bills (rep coach payments, SJL nomination fees) but also have some outstanding fees still to come in which should counter balance this. Our major expense in the immediate future will be purchase of medallions/trophies for grand finals.

Club competition

One of our biggest wins over the past 6 months has been the successful reintroduction of an U12 club competition. This competition had fallen over 6 months prior. There has been a lot of hard work to reinstate this competition. Whilst a number of players in this competition will graduate to the U14's when our new competitions launch in October, we have existing Aussie Hoops programs that will help fill the gap. Losing an U12 competition is a stark wake-up call for an Association. It is vitally important that the Association continues to focus on refilling the U12 funnel each season.

Whilst our recent competitions saw the reintroduction of an U12 competition, it also saw the departure of the U16 boys and Youth Women competitions. Remaining players in these competitions were subsequently catered for in other competitions (U19 Men & Open Women). Whilst this was the most appropriate solution, it's far from being an ideal outcome. Unfortunately when competitions fall over in these older age groups, it is near impossible to recover them. This again points to the importance of having flourishing U12 competitions, including a standalone U12 girl's competition (as opposed to a mixed U12's).

Both Men and Women's senior competitions appear to be in good shape, highlighted by a reduction in forfeits in Winter 2019. Credit should go to the teams involved who have done a good of evenly distributing talented players across the competition, resulting in competitive games each week.

Representative competition

As was indicated earlier, our representative programs have faced some challenges this year, ranging from unexpected coach turnover, to limited subs available, to teams needing to be withdrawn from competitions due to lack of available players. Putting all that aside, the representative program has been a resounding success. All credit goes to the coaches, managers, parents, and most of all players who have toiled in difficult circumstances. All feedback that I've received about the way our teams have applied themselves has been incredibly positive.

Special note goes to the U18 girls who were victorious in the Division 1 SJL competition, and the U14 boys who went undefeated in the Division 2 SJL competition. The U16 girls finished runner up in Division 1 SJL. Both the U18 girls, and U16 boys (through a wildcard entry) represented Batemans Bay at the State Cup.

U12 boys, U18 boys, and Open Men's teams will all compete in the Barrengarry finals later this month.



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BNSW Representation

BBBA were well represented in BNSW programs in the past 12 months. Riley O'Shannessy was selected to the U20 NSW state team, helping them win a bronze medal in Canberra earlier this year.

Oliver Dyason was selected to the NSW primary school state team. He followed this up with selection to the BNSW U14 Talented Athletes Program, where he joined fellow Breakers U14 player James McMillan.

James McMillan, Shanaya Williams-Schillings, and Kayla Beattie were selected to represent NSW at the Australian Country Cup, whilst Tabitha Beauchamp, Alexa Warwick, Lavhy Franchi, and James Hurley participated in the Country Development Tournament. Josh Bladden was selected to participate in the BNSW U12 John Davidson Jambouree. We also had multiple senior Batemans Bay players play with Shoalhaven in the BNSW Warratah compition.

Darcy Harding continues to be a shining light of what is possible in this sport when an individual applies themselves. Darcy continues to represent Australia internationally on the 3x3 stage, whilst also representing Team Australia in China, and NBL1 in Thailand.

Final acknowledgements

In closing I'd like to acknowledge a couple of outgoing Committee members. Whilst they didn't see their full terms out, the workload that Jason Funnel and Marnie Crabb shouldered as President and Secretary prior to my involvement needs to be acknowledged. Few people would be aware of just how many hours these two individuals gave the Association. Running a basketball association can be a thankless task at times, so I take a moment to genuinely thank them for their efforts across the past 12 month and before.

I'd also like to acknowledge the contribution made by Ria McMillan and Jo Hudson who have almost single handedly ensured the Association stays afloat as we've transitioned through some trying circumstances. BBBA took a number of hits over the past 12 months. These two ladies have helped ensure that those hits were not knock-out blows.

In closing, I welcome the incoming committee of which I intent to continue to be a part of. Whilst we have plenty of work ahead of us, we also have some great opportunities on the horizon. I'm excited about where the Association is heading, and the people who are putting their hand up to help us get there.

Sincerely,

Matt Neason
BBBA President