

SYDNEY RANGERS FOOTBALL CLUB

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2016-17



AGM – Tuesday 18th April 2017

I welcome everyone to the 2017 Annual General Meeting of Sydney Rangers Football Club and thank you for your continued interest in the future of this proud club.

Introduction

I am pleased to report on behalf of the committee that during the last 12 months we've seen the expansion of our club with a fifth winter comp team in 2017, the formation of the SRFC sub-committee and appointed positions to help drive our club forward, the formation of the first Pride Football Australia committee, a massively successful 2017 Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras in SRFC's 20th Anniversary Year, and extensive national and international media coverage with the club taking a strong leadership position on the issue of homophobia in football. This position has been enriched by a healthy financial position as the club has continued partnering with The Beresford & ACON to realise our mutually beneficial goals and we have continued our commitment from members to fundraising within the wider LGBTI community.

Vision, Mission, Values & Goals

The committee has a clear vision for the club going forward which is updated every year in [Vision, Mission, Values & Goals](#) and many of these goals are well on the way to being successfully achieved.

Membership

The club has grown from 69 members in 2013/14 to 80 members in 2014/15 to 99 full, social and supporter members in 2015/16 year. This year we have 81 winter comp players registered of which 70 are currently full members which is in line with our growth expectations.

Leadership Driving Our Club Forward

I would like to thank the current committee for the commitment they have shown to their [SRFC Committee Roles](#) and the support they have given me as President. The elected members for 2016/2017 were current committee members; Vice President Mark Robinson; Secretary Michael Healey; Treasurer Ian Rathmell and Sponsorship & Fundraising Officer Carl Austin.

The committee appointed five sub-committee roles in late 2016 to ensure the efficient and effective running of the club. We're very proud to announce the following [SRFC Sub-Committee Structure](#) with positions accepted for; Kevin Kaila (Events Officer), Ben Bagshaw (Football Officer), Duncan Jones (PR & Comms Officer), Jackson Bova (Player Liaison Officer) and Gavin Mears (Social Officer). We wish these boys well in their roles for the coming year and thank them for their involvement.

Special thanks to Public Officer Mitch Coidan for his valued contribution and expert legal counsel; Football Officer Ben Bagshaw for his strategic and well-coordinated implementation of the [SRFC Registration & Grading Policy](#) and organising the trial match program; Fitness & Conditioning Coach Sean McKenna for his preseason training sessions; and, Club Coach Ben Bagshaw for leading SRFC in the annual JF Cup in 2016. We thank the tireless and often thankless work of our current and former winter comp coach and managers over the past year, in no particular order; Ben Bagshaw, Rob Lumb, Gavin Mears, Aaron Hall, Duncan Jones, Ian Rathmell, Michael Healey, Matt Beal, Cristian Rodriguez, Diarmuid O'Connor & Mark Eagleson.

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Winter Comp: Review 2016 & Preview 2017

2016 will long be remembered as our most successful competitive season so far with two of our four Winter Comp teams winning our first Premierships. Coached by Ben Bagshaw, our Rangers A team will be forever known as “The Invincibles”, as these boys went the whole season undefeated in CDSFA All Age Div 4 and won their grand final impressively, 3-0. Our 35’s team coached by Rob Lumb also won CDSFA Over 35’s Div 5 grand final a week later in style, 2-1, after securing third place in the league. The defining moment of winter comp 2016 was the incredible Rangers sideline support.

Before the start of this winter comp season, the [SRFC Codes of Conduct](#) was sent to all members to establish a minimum standard of performance, behaviour and professionalism for our club. We look forward to continued success in 2017 from our five winter comp teams, all playing for our umbrella club, Balmain DFC as we have set the challenge in 2017 of making the semi-finals in each of our three All Age teams. The committee is dedicated to achieving competitive success on the football field and continues to promote a training-focused culture. The results of the [2017 Winter Comp Survey Results](#) have given a clear focus for the team structure, selection and training considerations.

All players from our premier team Rangers A have committed to a minimum of 60% training participation with no exemptions and our Rangers B & Rangers C teams have agreed 50% with exemptions allowed. The committee hasn’t been able to invest in an external club trainer for winter comp 2017 but will look to boost attendance at training on Wednesday Night at Birchgrove with a structured needs based training approach using the skills that exist within the club.

We’re extremely pleased to have formed SRFC’s fifth winter comp team this season which is also our second Over 35’s team. Our 35’s will be run as two separate teams but one squad and we’ve chosen the names ‘Golden Oldies’ for our Div 3 team and ‘Silver Foxes’ for our Div 4 team. We acknowledge the hard work of Diarmuid O’Connor, Rob Lumb & Gavin Mears to make this team a reality.

Sponsorship & Fundraising

Securing another high profile corporate sponsor such as St George Bank will be pivotal to the committee’s plans to promote our club within our community and to a wider audience as it now looks increasingly likely that St George Bank won’t be renewing as platinum sponsor of our club. We thank the continued support of our venue sponsor, The Beresford Hotel and we thank former committee member Paul Flynn for his instrumental work in managing our relationship with this iconic Surry Hills entertainment venue. Lastly, our sponsorship with ACON has helped us to build stronger ties within our community and we are proud to help promote the excellent work they carry out on a daily basis promoting positive messages of tolerance, diversity, equality, health and wellness within our communities.

Fundraising continues to be one of our keystone social activities to generate revenue and for our members to engage and interact with our community and we have seen continued success on this front with our affiliation with the ‘I Remember House’ parties and the Harbour City Bears events.

Continued Development of Pride Football Australia (PFA)

The club is proud to be formation members of the PFA tournament and we were delighted to host the JF Cup in Sydney last October. The PFA working group of Mark Robinson, Mitch Coidan, Kevin Kaila and Alicia Rich did a fantastic job and our team, coached by Ben Bagshaw, performed

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admirably with representation from all four winter comp teams and only narrowly went down to Melbourne Rovers on penalties. The 'weighted' lottery selection system has served us well to this point but as always things can be refined further, especially now we have 5 winter comp teams.

I am pleased to report that positions to the inaugural Pride Football Australia committee have been elected with SRFC holding 2 of the 6 positions as set out in the PFA Constitution. I can confirm that Mitch Coidan is Vice President and Mark Robinson is General Committee Member. This organisation was set up to provide the national impetus to achieve the following objectives: promote participation in football within the LGBTI community; be a leading advocate on promoting the inclusion and acceptance of LGBTI identifying people in sport; foster and provide assistance to newly emerging LGBTI football clubs around the country; and finally, organise and promote the PFA tournament including fundraising and sponsorship activities.

Communication & Social Media

With continued growth of the club's online presence to 1,176 likes on the SRFC Facebook page, 558 friends on Facebook personal page and 904 followers on Twitter, it's no wonder SRFC are boosting our profile and brand within the community. We also now have a strong and growing Instagram following managed by Comms Officer Duncan Jones which highlights the club's player profiles, match day feeds & photos from the past 20 years using the hashtag #SRFC20.

Leadership on Issue of Homophobia in Sport & Extensive Media Coverage

SRFC played a key leadership role when a homophobic banner was used by fans in a Sydney A-League derby match in February 2017 and we helped to drive the story with a Press Release calling for a 1 year ban for 14 homophobic fans. The subsequent ban of these fans by their club for 18 months (pending completing an inclusion program at UWS) and club fine by FFA is a sign that homophobia is being taken very seriously in this country.

The media coverage was extensive with SRFC commentary in Four Four Two Magazine, ESPN International, Nine Wide World of Sports, SMH, SBS World Game, the gay press and regional newspapers. SBS News invited me twice to appear on their national nightly news and some of the positive developments for our club was making contact with Sydney FC who have committed to an annual pre-Mardi Gras match. Two important photo stories with Emily Shrubbs, President of Flying Bats and Graham Arnold Sydney FC Coach & players appeared in the SMH and The Daily Telegraph. Western Sydney Wanderers have also committed to working with us during the Rainbow Round of Sport.

We thank Rob Nice for organising SRFC to appear on the Jackie & Kyle Show at KIIS FM during mardi gras week, the number one breakfast show in the country with massive viewership and reach.

Sophisticated and Award Winning Events

I would like to mention the fantastic effort, organisation and work put into the 2016 End of Season Awards night at The Beresford Hotel organised/hosted by Mikey Lovegrove, Carl Austin, Shaun Diaz and Michael Healey. The boys kept everyone entertained and the event was once more a real highlight of our social calendar.

A phenomenal amount of work goes into SRFC's events program and none more so than at our 2017

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Mardi Gras events celebrating our 20 Year Anniversary. Fair Day was organised by Michael Healey with great community presence and a surprise silver medal in the annual tug-of-war competition. Mark Robinson organised our best Mardi Gras Football Tournament yet at new home, Lambert Park with a *BACK TO THE FUTURE* fancy dress theme. The anniversary celebrations continued in our 2017 “Future Gayzing” parade float which was nominated for two Mardi Gras Parade Awards (Best Choreography and Best Float Design). Our working group of Adam Rose, Kevin Kaila, Ian Rathmell, Luke Harrington & Tiger Hu put in six months of incredible work and deservedly SRFC won a Special Commendation Award by Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras putting us on the map and in the top 5 floats out of 180 participants.

We have our ‘Season Launch’ at The Beresford on Saturday 22 April to help build stronger ties between our players, teams and club as we communicate the great members benefits on offer and also the work Rangers are doing in the community.

Competing Internationally

SRFC has a rich history of competing internationally and we’re sending a team to the Miami World Outgames, 26 May to 4 June. We wish our team and coaches Akio Matsui and Koji Niikura all the very best and know they will do us proud. We also look forward to sending a team to Paris Gay Games in 2018 which we will communicate very soon.

Looking Ahead & Conclusions

Looking ahead in 2017, we have quite a year coming up as our club’s 20th anniversary celebration culminates in the 20 Year Anniversary Ball. We request all members to get involved and share the fun to make this event as fabulous as possible.

We are very pleased to report that Carl Austin’s application for a grant under the Local Sport Grant Program was successful and the club has received \$5,000 to commence the inaugural Western Sydney Pride Tournament on Saturday 28 October to coincide with Parramatta Pride on Sunday 29 October.

There is much to be proud of over the last 12 months and the committee plans to continue driving SRFC forwards. There is always room for improvement and we ask our members to communicate your ideas and thoughts constructively and without hesitation. I encourage all members to get involved in the workings of the club for 2017/2018 and interested members should get involved on the working groups as preparation for possibly joining the committee. Together we can continue to create a supportive and inclusive club where being a Ranger means so much more than just playing football.