



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016 - LANCE BLACKLEY

What a great year it's been for the Cheltenham Baseball Club with success across all levels of competition. I have included reports from the Summer and Winter Competitions to provide a consolidated view of the Club's operations overall. It is impossible not to be impressed by what our members are achieving as a voluntary community based organisation. Highlights include:

WOMENS TEAM ENTERED

A Women's team was entered for the first time in 20 years and after getting smashed in the season opening games showed their durability and progress by winning 3 games for the season and not being the easy beats by any means. Our season closing games saw us losing by 2 runs to the eventual runners up so bigger and better things next season.

COMMUNITY GROUP NOMINATION

Cheltenham Baseball Club's nomination for Community Group of the year was accepted by the Kingston City Council. A recognition of the great work that we do as a Community Organisation.





LIFE MEMBER PETER LESLIE



Peter Leslie was elected as a Life Member during the year. Peter has been heavily involved since he joined the committee in 2001 making significant contributions in a wide range of areas as Junior coach, coordinator, umpire with a special interest at the Tee ball end of the Club. He has contributed his time, trade skills to assist with ground set up and maintenance and direct sponsorship.

GRANTS

The Club was successful in two grant applications with the support of the Kingston City Council.

1. **Little League Field Backnet, Dugouts and Scorers box** - \$15,000 grant from the Federal Government on the basis that similar funding is provided by the Club
2. **Main Field Lighting** to the standard needed to play Little League and Social Baseball games. State Government to provide up to a \$100,000 in the grant towards the infrastructure and the Club to contribute \$29,000 with KCC to manage the project and fund the balance of funds required.

This of course will add further challenges for the Club as we only have a proportion of the Club's contribution of funding in the bank. However, we will need to do some serious fundraising to pay off a debt that we will incur in the construction of these facilities. A percentage of these costs are "In Kind" contribution which means we will be calling on volunteers to assist with some of the works through some working bees however our main challenge will be a large fundraiser that we will announce after the new committee is appointed.

This infrastructure will greatly increase training capability and broaden our options to increase participation as well as strengthening our finances with more people around the Club.





SUMMER 2015/16

A year full of challenges culminating in our first nine making the playoff's for the Division 1 Championship. Although losing, we can sit back and reflect what an achievement it was to even get there with what had to be the youngest and most inexperienced team in the competition. Just one player (Coach Adam) Blackley had ever played Div 1 finals previously.

But, it's not all about the first nine. Our second nine made the finals but unfortunately were not up to the task. Our third nine just missed out on finals on a technicality and our fourth nine were very young but gained valuable experience this season. The young side was ably assisted with a few old heads in Ron and Russ and the young players will be a lot better for it next season.

Our fifth nine led by Damon Pettit had a great season making the finals and again were a little under done in making further headway in their campaign.

The Masters looked like not making the finals however they flicked the switch in the second half making the playoffs and putting up a very good performance in their game against the unbeatable Springvale Tomatoes who are all at least 10 years our junior. Not sure why they even bother playing in this comp.

The Under 16 & 18 State teams played very well this season but not quite good enough to make the playoffs whilst the under 16 Metro side were there but just didn't manage to advance in their finals campaigns.

Under 12's and Under 14's however were a different story and Cheltenham cleaned up everything on the table including the runners up flags as it was Chelt vs Chelt all the way.

And Teeballers just keep having fun along the way and gain experience as they grow up and into the baseball.

All said and done, Cheltenham Baseball Club were just 6 points off taking out Baseball Victoria's Club Championship. That's just 2 games of baseball somewhere throughout the season that could have seen us winners.

How did this happen? Apart from all of our fantastic and dedicated coaching staff we made a fundamental change this season by appointing one of Cheltenham's own - Adam Blackley, as the first nine coach. We stripped away the expectation of being responsible for the whole Club, a job that just can't be done by a single person. Adam was ably assisted by Matt Gourlay, Laurie Hall, and Russell Ferguson on game days and Andrew Gribbin also assisted as a training drill coach which saw the level of training increase significantly.

We again brought in our International player in Bryan Kloppe. Although the Club funds Bryan for his trip out here, we only fund a minor component of his actual costs whilst he is here. The value we receive back from Bryan is sensational. Bryan is a very capable pitcher at





this level and he also provides some great coaching through the junior ranks. Bryan wants to come back again next season so we will need to find a way to get him here again.

In addition, we appointed Ron Carothers as Head of Junior Development. Ron is a coach who has a very high level of technical knowledge; so rather than have Ron's skills directed towards just 9 or 10 players, this new role gave every junior level of baseball access to Ron throughout the season. A great move that will see a lot of young talent improve their skills and become better baseballers.

Cheltenham Baseball Club continues to have a large number of our junior players representing State and National Teams with Jack Dunn and Max Barrett in u18 squads, John-Paul Callil, Declan Croker, Ben Fierenzi and Cruize Leech in the u16 squads, Max Barrett, George Callil, Jack Enciondo and Mitch Holding in the u19 National squad and Travis Blackley in the Brisbane Bandits and National Men's squad in the ABL and World's Baseball Classic Qualifiers.

In addition to this, we say farewell to at least 5 of our young players as they take up University Scholarships in USA Colleges. As others gain entry, we expect at least 3 or 4 more to make the journey into the College system.

Whilst this hurts the Club in losing great players in the short term, we wish every player every success and look forward to the day when they return to Australia and back to the Club. The Cheltenham Baseball Club will be a lot better when these players return as mature highly skilled players and future coaches of the Club. Our Club now provides pathways for our players and it all starts by the skills they gain on their journey through our junior system. This is a system that we are very proud of now and is only getting better.

WINTER 2015

Pat O'Neill in his third year as President Winter Section reports:

The season started off with a weird feeling around the Club, with our always dominate A grade team losing the first 5 games and sitting stone cold last holding up the ladder of some quality teams. But Clarko and his team's effort will go down in folklore now after taking out the 2015 A grade flag. Also at the bottom end of our club we took out the U13 Premiership with a win over Boneo.

A special thanks has to go out to our junior and senior coaches these position are all volunteer and the dedication that you put into your teams showed all season long.

Also a thank you to all our scorers throughout the club it is a thankless job but the game can't be played if you aren't sitting there keeping track.

This year we had a few different social nights and once again they weren't supported as well as we would have liked. But in saying that everyone who came to the nights totally enjoyed themselves. Just need more numbers. Please support your club.





I would like to thank all my committee members you all help out and donated your time so that this great club can keep running in years to come.

David Clarkson Club Coach Winter Reports

It never gets any easier coaching at Cheltenham. We are always the hunted, but I do like being in this situation.

I always look forward to those cold, Winter Thursday night training sessions, as there is always willing participants wanting to learn about this great game of baseball.

The club this year introduced junior players training with our senior players once a month. Senior players trained alongside the next generation Cheltenham players on these nights, plus also gave instruction on how to play their specific position. I think this was a great success and I look forward to keeping this going again next year.

Our A1's had an overall tough season but managed to take out another premiership, even after starting the season 0 and 5. This team showed a lot of character for the way we covered players who were unavailable and also for the way they fought out every game to the end.

One of the most pleasing aspects this season for me was the A2's. This team, made up of young, and I mean young players, went on to record some fantastic wins eventually getting pipped in the preliminary final 2-1. Along the way they chalked up some great wins, especially the win against eventual premiers Frankston. John Carlile did an outstanding job moulding them into a very competitive side by seasons end. Congratulations and a big thank you goes to John for taking on this role. To see these players develop from the first game to the last was one of the biggest pluses for the club this winter.

Our B1's struggled all year for numbers and I believe that the DBA has to look at this area next season as we cannot expect to compete when our third best team has to play against some clubs best team. I must also thank Ron Carothers for looking after this side during the season.

The B2's played off in the grand final but unfortunately, no cigar. Having watched these guys play both the semi and preliminary final, they very much enjoy their two hours of baseball having lots of fun. To Pat O'Neill and David Stenhouse, I thank you for looking after this team as well as trying to make the B1's more competitive by rotating players through that team during the course of the season.

Our C2's played finals reaching the preliminary final but were unfortunate not to make it to the big dance. I didn't get to see these guys and gal play at all this season, but from all reports, they had fun. To Mark Campbell, thank you for your commitment in running this team this season.





To Antony Harrowell, who opened the bar on training nights, as well as Nicole Crocker and Katrina Johnson for their delicious meals after training, I can't thank you enough for your time that you put into the club.

Lastly I would like to thank Pat O'Neill and his board for allowing to coach this great club with no interference at all.

It has been a great year and hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did.

Trevor Clemens – 20 Years of Service as Winter Secretary

A special mention has to go out to TC most people wouldn't have known but it was his 20th year as secretary which isn't an easy job. So thank you so much for your time and effort over that time. We are hoping for many more years of service



UNIFORMS

Winter took a face lift and after 15 years with a new look Bull to move our logo into the 21st century. With new warm-up shirts, hoodies, key rings, stickers, stubby holders and flags the logo looks great and represents our club proudly.

CANTEEN

Over Winter Katrina O'Neill continued her amazing job. A huge thank you for running and stocking the canteen that takes up hours each week. I would also like to thank all the helpers this year as it has made her job just that little bit easier each week.

In Summer Canteen continued to be run brilliantly by Kathy Daniels but revenue was adversely impacted by the restructuring of the Little League competitions that saw a shift in the number of games played at the Club, A new irrigation system was installed during the





season and this and washouts impacted the number of home games we had, thus canteen and bar income were adversely affected.

SPONSORS

Our sponsors have again provided some fantastic financial support for us. Platinum Post Tensioning has again made a major contribution and backed up by Bentleigh RSL, Bridgestone Tyres, Bendigo Bank, Hodges Real Estate and Urban Gardens.

We also have a silent sponsor in Russell Ferguson who has allowed Bryan Kloppe to stay with him in his apartment. This is a significant contribution by Russell and we seriously thank Russell for this.

If you use any of our sponsors don't forget to mention the Club as this assists us in resigning the sponsor for next season as well as directly providing additional funding from both Bendigo Bank and Hodges.

As Club president, I would like to thank all members of the Summer Committee who have again all contributed to a most successful year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Lance Blackley'.

Lance Blackley

Club President

The 'Rustlers' logo in a blue, stylized script font with a horizontal line underneath.