



Caulfield Bears Junior Football Club



Annual Report 2024

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President's Report

Overview

A cornerstone of our success in 2024 has been the invaluable contributions of our dedicated volunteers. Their tireless efforts, particularly in supporting our children and the club's operations, have been instrumental in our achievements. We extend our sincere gratitude to the CBJFC committee - many of whom are new to the role this year-, sub-committees, coaching groups and all those who have volunteered their time to assist with specific tasks. Their behind-the-scenes work is essential to the smooth functioning of our club.

Beyond the committee and coaching roles, we are equally grateful to the game day volunteers who have supported our club in various capacities, team management, umpiring, medical support, running, photography, and more. The collaborative spirit fostered by these volunteers is a hallmark of our club, creating a safe and enjoyable environment for our children to play football. We encourage all families to participate in these volunteer roles, as they contribute significantly to the overall success and community spirit of our club.

Finally, we commend our players on an exceptional season. The achievements and improvements demonstrated by our teams are a testament to their hard work, dedication, and commitment to the sport. While winning premierships is a coveted goal, we believe that

fostering a strong team culture, camaraderie, and personal growth are equally important aspects of success. Our teams have excelled in all of these areas.



Highlights and statistics for the 2024 season:

- 286 player registrations were recorded across our 13 teams
- Of these, there were 41 Girls and 245 Boys
- We also welcomed 38 Players on Season Permit into the Bears
- Total playing numbers for Bears teams after Season Permits were 313
- 2 Girls teams including U11's (including loaned players from another club) and U18's.
- 11 Mixed/ Boys teams from U8's to U17.5's
- Co-Club Captains in Tashi Margerison and Max Bremner
- 8 teams made finals
- 5 teams made Grand Finals
- 3 League Premierships – U14 Mixed, U15 Div 5 Boys, U17.5 Boys
- U16 Div1 League Best & Fairest Winner - Luke Mahimarajan
- U16 Div3 League Best & Fairest 3rd Place - Sheldon Quirin and Samuel Davies
- U15 Div1 League Best & Fairest Winner - Angus Brown
- U15 Div5 League Best & Fairest 3rd Place - Isaac Feldman
- U14 Div4 League Best & Fairest Winner - Kenneth Brown
- U13 Div3 League Best & Fairest Winner - Owen Holm
- 2024 Interleague U14 Girls Coaches Award – Delilah Clohesy

- Several Bears players participated in the Saints NGA training programs and Interleague and Intraleague Representative games
- U15 Boys player Erik Hennequin selected in the “World Team” of players from across the country with a parent born overseas.
- U15 Boys player Angus Brown selected for the Victorian U15 Schools Team, and selected in the All-Australian U15 School Sports squad.
- Senior Bear of the Year Award – James Brown
- Junior Bear of the Year Award – Darcy Codarin
- Eighteen x Boys awarded 10 Year Player service awards and six x Girls were awarded 7 Year Player service awards
- Auskick was a great success again thanks to Luke Codarin.
- U7’s successful lightning carnival with 15+ kids involved and plenty of parent helpers. The 2025 U8’s are now well placed to hit the ground running.

The achievements highlighted above showcase the exceptional talent and dedication of our players and teams. Everyone should be immensely proud of these accomplishments. While individual player success is absolutely celebrated at CBJFC, we also put a high value on so many other amazing achievements and the all rounded benefits that AFL footy and being a part of an inclusive footy club bring to our kids.

In this regard, we would like to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of our 2024 Club Captains Max Bremner and Tash Margerison. Their leadership on the field was exemplary, and their commitment to the club for this year but also for the 7-10 years at the club prior extended beyond their own teams. We congratulate Tashi and Max on a fantastic 2024 season and their long-standing dedication to CBJFC.

Additionally, we would like to recognize the efforts of all our junior coach assistants who contributed to our Auskick and junior team’s trainings. We encourage as many players as possible to participate in mentoring and training sessions with younger players in the upcoming season. These interactions not only benefit the younger players but also provide a rewarding experience for the older players involved.

Registrations

Registrations increased at CBJFC compared to 2023. We had 286 player registrations overall and from these we had 11 girls players that were on a Season Permit out to other clubs including St Pauls McKinnon JFC and St Kilda City JFC. We thank the parent group of these players as well as the clubs that hosted these players.

We also welcomed 37 players to the CBJFC on a Season Permit with many of these coming from Brighton Beach JFC to enable two U16 Boys teams to be formed, some from St Kilda City JFC to join the U17.5 team and finally 9 girls from St Pauls McKinnon JFC to enable the set up a U11 Girls team. We continue to forge strong relationships in 2024 with other league clubs and enjoy the shared passion to get as many players on the field as possible. In particular, we are eager to get as many girls players on the field as possible and continue to appeal to parents, sisters, friends, relatives and classmates to come down and give girls footy a go.

This season, we had really good player numbers in U8’s and U9’s and so are delighted to

welcome a new generation of players to the club. We also set out to stand up two teams in the U13 age group and are delighted that we were able to welcome many new players to this team including some that had not played footy before. We thank all those that worked tirelessly to make this possible.

Auskick

Auskick was a huge success at Koornang Park in 2024 with 100+ kids participating including 30 girls!! We again ran Auskick sessions on Friday nights (led by Luke Codarin) and Saturday mornings (led by me, following Luke's program!). Thanks very much to Luke for your dedicated efforts in coordinating the sessions and teaching our future footy stars the skills of AFL. Also to all the parents and our junior player coaches out on the field coaching and assisting as well as those behind the scenes in the canteen and at the BBQ.

A big highlight of the Auskick season this year was the U7's Lightning Carnival run by the SMJFL. This was a great success as our kids and parents get ready for the U8 season ahead of them. It was great to see 15+ kids in Bears gear snapping goals, giving great Bear Hug tackles and showing off their Auskick skills in game conditions. They are well and truly ready for 2025!

Social Engagement

In 2024 we had 4 Bear Cave family functions, a Mother's Day lunch, a Father's Day drinks night and a Volunteers/Sponsors function. Thanks to all parents for making these events run smoothly, especially to our Social Committee for all the planning that went into these events, making this a great community club for families to get together socially.

Our social media presence thrived this year thanks to Chelsea Hall's exceptional work in her first year as Social Media Manager. Her engaging posts, reels, and stories on Instagram and Facebook captured the excitement and achievements of our club. We also extend our gratitude to our dedicated team of photographers. With over 1,300 followers on Instagram and over 880 on Facebook, social media has become our most effective platform for communicating, celebrating, and sharing the remarkable accomplishments of our young athletes. It's also a valuable tool for acknowledging the support of our amazing sponsors.

Sponsorship

Without sponsorship, fees for junior sports would mean a huge drop in kids playing junior sports. For this reason, we are so very appreciative of our loyal group of sponsors, some who have been with us for many seasons and some who have recently just joined. You are all important to us and we hope we give back to you too for our mutual benefit.

I would like to mention and thank the following loyal sponsors for financially supporting the CBJFC in 2024:

- Gary Peer
- The Bank
- @ The Catch
- TMS – Track Manage Support

- Pearl
- 1300 Bidder
- Glen Eira Physiotherapy
- Prosthetique Dental
- Hot Bird
- Pizza Religion
- UDL Group
- Bakers Delight Carnegie.

For any businesses that wish to become a CBJFC sponsor in 2025, we look forward to welcoming you to our Club. If you live in the suburbs surrounding Koornang Park then you cannot possibly miss the amount of Bears training tops with sponsor logos being worn by the kids over the weekends. The walking billboards are just one part of sponsorship which the club can offer. Please reach out if you wish to discuss being involved in sponsoring over the 2025 season.

Conclusion

CBJFC is run by a large number of volunteers who help with a variety of tasks to ensure the kids can play fun, safe and competitive football every year. I would like to thank everyone on the Committee and Sub-Committee as well as the numerous volunteers for all your help in 2024. We are farewelling a few huge contributors to our club from their official committee or coaching positions and we would like to acknowledge these amazing people:

- Derek Waters (Football Operations and Coaching Coordinator)
- Chandra Bandlamudi (General Committee)
- Dan Marin (Coach U18 girls).

So whilst these amazing volunteers are moving on, new parents have put their hands up and we look forward to hearing from anyone else who has some capacity (small or large) to help out behind the scenes on the ground in 2025.

Junior football offers a fantastic opportunity for children to develop their skills, forge lasting friendships, and achieve both personal and team success. At CBJFC, we prioritise skill development, camaraderie, sportsmanship, and fun, and we believe that this combination will lead to success on the field. We look forward to seeing you all again in 2024!

Go Bears!

Kerry Widjaja



Football Operations Report

The 2024 season started very positively for the Bears. An early move to merge our U16 Boys team with Brighton Kangaroos set up both teams for success. We started to see junior girls numbers recover and fielded an Under 10 and Under 11 girls team alongside St Pauls McKinnon. Player numbers continue to strengthen, and Luke Codarin's Auskick "footy factory" produced another ready-to-go Under 8s team, featuring no fewer than eight coaches!

Our Premierships and Awards are called out earlier in the report, but I'd like to celebrate a few special achievements that don't appear in those lists:

- Through some really hard work by Troy, Chandra, Scott and Andrew, we were able to field two Under 13 mixed teams - just! Despite Scott's Under 13 Div 6 team featuring some underaged players, and many kids who had never even played football before, the team managed to feature in a finals series. It's a remarkable effort, and hopefully sets that age group up for further success in seasons to come.
- It is not often that the Bears field a team in Division 1, and even less common when that is not a merged team. This year the Under 15 Div 1 team not only featured in Div 1, they made the finals for the second year running, this time fighting their way through to a Div 1 grand final. We've scoured the record books (and we're happy to be corrected), but we think this is the first time a Bears standalone team has played in a Div 1 grand final. Along the way they became the first team to beat a Vampires outfit that had not lost a game since 2022. Although they couldn't quite get the win on Grand Final day, the bar has been set very high for 2025.

- Josh Acklom managed to take his U14 team to back-to-back Premierships, a remarkable achievement.
- 73% of our eligible teams made finals, 45% made a Grand Final, and 27% took home the Premiership cup.

A huge thanks to Simon, Sam, Dave, Dan C, Scott, Troy, Josh, James, Aaron, Stu, Jordan, Al and Dan M for putting their hands up to coach this year. It's a really huge time and energy commitment, but it's also such a vital role for our kids. I can honestly say that this group of coaches has been the easiest to manage in my time in the Footy Ops role.

Thanks also to all of our assistant coaches - often unsung - for working tirelessly behind the scenes. The Club invests in the future of our kids through Coaching Development Programs and in maintaining a level of training equipment (one ball per child) as we know how important these are in ensuring our Bears want to come back next year. To the Team Managers, Trainers, Water Carriers, Runners, Goal Umpires, Boundary Umpires, Field Umpires, Timekeepers and Umpire Escorts, a big thank you from the Club.

Go Bears!

Derek Waters

Team Reports

Under 8 Mixed

Under 9 Mixed

Seven months is a long time between sirens and weren't the newly minted Under 9s ready to roar when Round 1 finally kicked off!! Graduating from being the youngest cubs of the club, to the wiser, more experienced Under 9's, this was a list with a lot of new faces but also talent to work with.

From the first bounce, the tempo was so much higher. Felt like we were playing against giants and the going was tough. We came out bruised and battered, but we fronted up again to training, stuck to the basics and we grew an inch every week.

As the year progressed, so did our teamwork. Handballs, measured foot passes, and kids playing in more positions evolved us into the form team of the comp.

As a team, there was so much trying, tackling and chasing it down. Old teammates looked for each other, kicked long and scored some truly epic goals. Our wonderful band of enthusiastic first timers fitted in seamlessly, impressing with their speed and agility. Players, parents, grandparents and siblings took up their familiar spots on the sidelines, and as the year rolled on, tears were replaced by cheers.

Over the course of the season, our players were strong out of the pack, bursting through with the ball and sometimes, paying the price for such bravery with some very eager tackles. We no longer feared the giants, going straight past them for the footy.

As a coach it was most pleasing to see that the kids each have an individual style of play. Some in and under, some play a bit outside, some love to bounce and run...some love to tackle. Whatever they do, we the adults loved to be a part of it.

Bears, you played the season of their lives, and we are so fiercely proud. Eric's stirring rendition of the club song at the end of our many victories always left us on a high.

Sam Dunbar

Under 10 Girls

Awards

Best and Fairest

Maddie Widjaja

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Emily Robertson (St Pauls)

Third Best and Fairest

Evie Ellis

The U10 Puppy Bears (merged team with St Pauls McKinnon) started the season not in the usual way - with only 6 players ready to take the field come round 1. However, the beauty of being a modified rules age group meant we still took to the ground with a few opposition team top-ups and during the game a few younger aged u11 girls joined in too - and this is when we kicked away for an amazing first game. So whilst numbers in the group started small, from there we grew! U7, U8 and U9 girls jumped into the team getting some amazing experience for their future footy years, and then our Puppy Bears started to dominate on the (unofficial) scoreboard. The girls exceeded expectations and by the end of the season the team was recognised as being the top of their division and were put into Div1 for the lightning carnival. They truly deserve huge credit for their season and we look forward to seeing even more girls join the team in season 2025.

Under 11 Mixed

David Ratner

The U11s season began with great excitement and enthusiasm as the boys were ready to step up from modified rules into zone-free, full contact footy. With most players having returned from the previous year, we also welcomed five new team members, resulting in numbers being capped for the first time.

Training commenced in February at ECR, with the sessions extended from an hour to ninety minutes. New drills were introduced as well as some set plays, all designed to build on the framework of seasons past. It was fantastic to see the group embrace the new structures, continuing to support each other and responding well to instructions. Training sessions would almost become the highlight of the week – and on many occasions there was disappointment when the sessions ended, and they had to go home.

The grading games saw the team win just one out of four games, and recommendations had to be submitted as to whether to stay in the higher grade or drop down. Ultimately the decision rested with myself, and I was of the view that I'd rather we spent the year being challenged by better teams than winning comfortably in a lower grade.

For the next eleven weeks, the boys gave it their all and improved every week. While some players settled into set positions and just got better and better, others found themselves with different challenges every week and took on the opportunities presented to continue to develop. As you would expect, there were many players that had break-out games throughout the year and it was great to see their individual confidence levels rise, even as team success became more and more elusive. Most of our new players had never played football before and it was wonderful to see their teammates continue to support them as their development was fast tracked throughout the year.

It is often said you can learn more from a loss than a win. With this adage in mind, it would be fair to say we certainly maximised our opportunities to learn. For the first time for these boys, official scores were kept, and despite a never say die attitude and clear signs of improvement throughout the year, we were unable to win another game. While it would be reasonable to expect that a year without a win would leave kids and parents alike feeling like they may have failed – that wasn't the case here.

We quite literally proved that winning isn't everything – maintaining our enthusiasm, training standards, and commitment to getting better no matter what the match day results were. So much so that after our best performance of the year in the final game, despite losing (primarily due to a single player on the opposition kicking seven straight goals!) the team leaders asked if we could sing the team song after the game. They gathered the boys together, had all the new players huddled in the centre, and belted out the song as if we'd just won a premiership. It almost brought a few parents to tears – seeing how resilient the boys had become, and the love they still had for the game and each other. That's why we play.

Huge thanks again to our U11 parents. We have a fantastic group that are always ready to help and step up as required. I'm super grateful for their ongoing support even as the losses stacked up. Special thanks to Luke and Darcy for helping with the coaching roles, and for others like Freddy that helped at training whenever required. Joy once again did an amazing job as TM – and I'm sure she too is grateful for the way parents supported the team throughout the year.

Looking forward to seeing everyone back for a huge 2025! Go Bears!

Awards

Best and Fairest

Lenny Blustein

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Harrison Widjaja

Best Team Player

Michael Thuema

Most Consistent

Dion Dimopoulos

Most Determined

Isacc Bates

Most Improved

Jack Miller

Under 11 Girls

Dan Clohesy

Awards

Best and Fairest

Jemima Fryar

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Mackenzie Jackson

Third Best and Fairest

Samantha Magdulski

Most Determined

Matilda Commerford

Most Courageous

Isabel Logan

Coaches Award

Ruby Colquitt

Under 13 Div 6 Mixed

The 2024 season saw the emergence of a second division for the under 13's Caulfield Bears Junior Football club. With the player numbers not quite there, the challenge was definitely ahead of us. Despite this challenge the focus was a basic one: opportunity. In the past this opportunity would not have been available to the newcomers to our club due to there being too many numbers for just one side.

With some incredible behind the scenes rotation of players from both divisions and some essential help from the under 11's, we made it work. Managing rotations and player numbers was a huge job that fell squarely on the existing coaches, assistant coaches and team managers. Put simply, without the hard work of Div 3 coaches Troy and Andrew, season 2024 probably wouldn't have happened. A huge thank you goes out to Chendra our team manager for his work throughout the year.

With the emergence of our new div 6 side came 12 new players and families to the Bears Football Club. And so we began the season. Many of the new additions to the side were players who had never played football before. We made it our goal to make sure all players got a chance at multiple positions around the field. This stayed true to our goal of providing opportunity to players and also gave the coaches the chance to work out best player positions.

Our year started well, with plenty of enthusiasm and some highly competitive games. Playing against some other sides who had the clear advantage of player experience, we had our work cut out from the start of the season. Our message became one of not being concerned with the scoreboard but rather concentrating on our effort and perseverance. This attitude got us to the halfway point of the season all the while building player confidence. There were some encouraging close losses and a very clear improvement. Despite still searching for that elusive first win, the team was starting to come together as a unit and spirits were high.

With each new game came the opportunity and the much needed game experience for our new to the game football players. As coaches we could see their improvement with each week's training and game play and knew it was only a matter of time before we turned the corner and crafted our first win. Round 8 brought this first win against East Malvern. This was a very special day for the side and was a real reward for our hard work and perseverance. The win gave the coaches a chance to build on the confidence that a first win gives, and helped us push the message of teamwork.

This first win resulted in a boost to team confidence and the growth of our team structure. With some more close losses and highly competitive efforts, we continued to improve as a team and feel confident that we could compete with the best in our division. The improvement of all players, new and old, was encouraging but ultimately it was our coming together as a team that was our key achievement.

Round 11 saw us face off with St Peters at Centenary Park, a side that had beaten us soundly by 38 points a mere 5 rounds previously. However by round 11, this Bears side had extra game experience and a growing confidence and belief in the team and what they could do. We witnessed our side take another big step forward as we powered to a 27-point victory. Again, a big reward for hard work from our player group.

Pushing the message of our underdog status, we faced off against Mordi – Brae in round 12. This was another side that had rolled over us by 22 points in round 7 with relative ease. With a turning of the tables, we powered to a 20 point win for our third victory of the year. We were now officially on a roll.

In round 13 we came up against East Malvern at their home ground, and what a game we witnessed. We found ourselves in the dying seconds of the game with the ball in the opposition's forward line. The game could have gone either way, but our team was able to fight, showing real determination and grit in a true thriller. We scored our third straight win by a nail biting 2 points. This down-to-the wire win guaranteed us a place in the finals.

With limited success in our last two home and away games, our focus turned to the finals. Facing off with the far more experienced Prahran, we went in knowing we had to give it our all. At the first break and only 4 points down, our team started well showing no signs of nerves. As the game progressed, the more experienced side prevailed, but your young Bears never gave up fighting all the way. Although this was not the result we hoped for, it is vital to keep in mind what we were able to achieve throughout the season. The team has improved and evolved so much from the start of the year and this is a success in itself.

To get a side with such limited experience into the finals was amazing and is testament to the people and families behind the scenes. A big thanks must go out to all the players who played two games on a Sunday and to the parents who made this possible with the mad dash between games and interruptions to Sunday plans. To my Assistant Coach Andrew, who had to perform his duties to both sides each game day a huge thank you. Your efforts are much appreciated. A huge thank you to Troy the div 3 coach for his help through the

year and his juggling of players through both divisions.

The season would also not have been possible without the help of David R and the under 11's, and their help with numbers. A big thank you goes out to our runner Buzz for his work during the year and his words of encouragement throughout.

Thanks to all behind the scenes, from timekeepers to our trainers and boundary umpires, without you guys football simply doesn't happen on the Sunday.

In closing I feel we achieved what we set out to do at the start of the year and that was to give players an opportunity. The new players were able to experience being part of a team and a community, something that would not have happened if we hadn't put the work in and started up the second side. To all those involved, well done. Let's build on this momentum in 2025.

Scott Colwell

Awards

Best and Fairest

Kristoffer Pipingas

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Lion Wissmann

Third Best and Fairest

Riley Newport

Fourth Best and Fairest

Rory Johnston

Best Team Player

Sid Burrage

Most Improved

Jayden Ong

Under 13 Div 3 Mixed

Off the back of successful 2022 and 2023 seasons making two grand finals and winning one, the players were keen to get the season under way with a strong pre-season.

A couple of fresh recruits over the off season meant the team was bursting at the seams and we were looking at needing to create two U13 teams to make sure everyone would get a game each week and plenty of game time.

By early April we had built our registrations up to 34 players and as the weeks progressed the numbers continued to build from there. I'm pleased to say that we ended up with a total of 39 players registered which is an awesome result. We had 14 players join the Club that weren't with us in 2023!

Standing up two teams (Div3 and Div6) and juggling players to ensure we could get numbers on the ground each week was at times challenging for those doing admin and for parents alike but paid big dividends in terms of player development.

Being able to play across two teams opened up opportunities to play in different and new positions, it provided an opportunity for some players to step up and show leadership, and it helped some players build and/or regain confidence.

It also gave some of our newer players the exposure and experience of training and playing with some old hands. The overall effect was to lift the collective capability of the playing group.

In terms of on-field performance, from a Div3 perspective while we didn't have success reflected on the scoreboard or make finals, the team can be really proud of their efforts.

We were able to match it with the other six teams in our Division. It was often just one quarter or even a 5-minute period where some of the teams were able to kick ahead and get on top of us. When we were switched on for the full 60 minutes we could mix it with the best.

I'm really proud of how the Team conducted themselves through the season. They respected the umpires. They were enthusiastic at training. Wanting to learn and improve. Discussing and putting forward ideas. Were supportive of their team mates on and off the field. They welcomed new players into the team or at training. This is a real credit to the group as individuals and as a Team.

We are very fortunate to have a really supportive and engaged parent group who are willing to help out at training, on game day, at the Club and on the Committee. A specific thank you to Andrew H (Assistant Coach), Chandra (Team Manager), Phil T and Scott C (Runners), Andrew W, Jen W and Michael G (Trainers), Emily (unofficial team photographer), James B (banners and trophies across all teams), Karen M (Incident Officer).

2024 is a season the Team can be really proud of, and we can't wait to see what 2025 holds.

Troy Fryar

Awards

Best and Fairest

Owen Holm

Runner-Up Best and Fairest

Yiani Tsakirakis

Third Best and Fairest

Oscar Bremner

Best Running Defender

Hamish Fleming

Most Versatile Player

Cooper Wisdom

Most Impactful Defender

Archie Palmer

Under 14 Mixed

The players returned early in 2024 full of enthusiasm and confidence after tasting their first premiership in 2023. Turnouts were strong and effort unwavering as the squad was put through their paces in a gruelling and sustained preseason.

Numbers were stronger than ever with new recruits Charlie and Conor joining from last year's U14 team, Arjun and James transferring from opposing clubs and new players Nick Y, Lei and Cooper T wanting their first taste at AFL. With so much interest in joining the U14 Bears numbers were capped! What a difference from 2022 when we struggled to get a team together.

The Bears opened their grading season with a grand final rematch against Prahran, where they continued their dominance over their rival. After 3 more games against Beaumaris, Mordi-Brae and East Malvern, the Bears settled in Div 4, a jump from Div 5 from 2023.

The season proper kicked off with a thumping win against AJAX and the Bears sat top of the table. This would be where they stayed for the entire fixture as they sailed through an undefeated home and away season.

While Matt Cooper did an amazing job as trainer, keeping the boys fit all season long, there wasn't anything he could do to prevent injuries off the field. Matthew, Darcy, Levi and James all suffered significant injuries away from the Bears, however with a big squad and players determined to lift in their absence, the team grew stronger, more united and committed to one another in their drive for another finals campaign.

New challenges were thrown on the Bears during the season, including a focus on each player kicking their first ever AFL goal. The team bought in and worked hard to deliver Oscar B, Teva, Ollie Y, Lei and Nick goals and when Johnny sailed one through in the dying stages against the Vampires, the 'goal' was achieved and celebrations erupted.

As the finals started there would only be one challenger, Bentleigh, that stood in the Bears' way of back-to-back premierships. Meeting in the first week of the finals and with a grand final berth up for grabs, Bentleigh jumped the Bears and had a 3-goal lead at quarter time. As they've done many times before, the Bears dug deep and clawed their way back and hit the front in the last quarter before running away with a 17-point victory.

The grand final against Bentleigh, lived up to all expectations. Charlie was superb up forward, Matt and Archie held the backline together, and the mids didn't stop working all day. An absolute arm wrestle of a final that had Bentleigh within a kick with 5 minutes to go had everyone on the edge of their seats. Assistant coach Greg's suggestion of moving Johnny forward paid dividends as his strong tackle, gather and snap gave the Bears some breathing space. When Liem nailed a long bomb with a minute remaining, the sweet taste of back-to-back premierships had arrived.

A special mention must be made of Ken Brown who stood in as captain in Darcy's absence. Ken had an incredible season, leading the division in goal kicking, winning Best On Ground in the grand final and also taking out the League's Div 4 Best and Fairest award!

As the team thinks back about the struggles of the past, not winning a game for three years and seasons cut short to COVID, it's been a long and hard journey with the ultimate prize achieved not once, but twice. Back-to-back premiers! This couldn't have been achieved without the efforts of our volunteers, particularly Greg as Assistant Coach, Adam D as Team Manager, Matt our trainer, Chris and Scott as runners and Adam B as Boundary Umpire. Many thanks to everyone who helped behind the scenes and supported the team on their journey.

Josh Acklom

Awards

Best and Fairest

Ken Brown

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Charlie Burrage

Third Best and Fairest

Darcy Stewart

Defender of the Year

Archie Newton

Most Improved Player

Oscar Baldock

Coaches Award

Cooper Thomas

Under 15 Div 5 Boys

After making finals for the first time with this group of boys who have come together over a couple of years the boys wanted more finals to action and hit preseason training with vigour in January.

During the grading process we encountered some big losses within the first few games, round 1 loss to Ajax & a big loss to Ashburton Redbacks during an early season practice match. The boys were still trying to gel as a team with a few players that were playing in the Div 1 team in 2023 deciding to join the lads in the Div 5 team. After the grading we were 2 wins and a loss with the lads staying in Div 5.

Before the mid-year break to lads were travelling just OK with some big wins against Hampton and Murrumbeena but losses to Ajax & South Melbourne, so the break came at the right time.

The turning point of our season came after a 4 week break during the holidays & another dreaded bye. It was a disappointing loss to Murrumbeena in the rain on an early Sunday morning where the lads needed to lift if they were going to make a run for the grand final & win a premiership.

The Bears awoke from their mid-season hibernation with a 12 goal win against the ladder leaders Ajax which saw the boys played tough, contested, fast running football in a total opposite to the previous week. This saw a 4 game winning streak leading into the finals where the lads finished 2nd on the ladder at the end of the Home & Away season.

The Qualifying final was against Ajax on their home ground where we hadn't won for years. After a great start in the 1st quarter, Ajax come back hard in the 2nd quarter and they had a slight lead at the main break. I urged the lads to play like they have been playing & believe in themselves. The Bears came out firing taking control of the game and winning themselves into a grand final and a week off.

The grand final was against you guessed it Ajax. This was a tough contested, low scoring grand final where the scores were level at half time. In the 3rd quarter the Bears took control again to take a lead into 3/4 time. The last quarter was a real nail bitter with Ajax have most of the ball & kicking the last 2 goals of the game. The backline stood up again & again after repeat entries but the Bears hung on by 4 points to see the lads archive the ultimate team success.

The Premiership was ours!!!



Off field I would like to thank Tony as assistant coach, Sammi and Nikki as team managers, Will as the runner, Lou, Toni and Dave has trainers. The parent volunteers every week in doing the roles such as water carrier, match reporter, umpire escort, goal umpire & time keeping.

Lastly, congratulations to Zac who finished 3rd in the League B&F.

LETS GO BACK TO BACK LADS!!!

Aaron Chrystie



Awards

Best and Fairest (joint winners)

Will Taylor

Henry Gledhill

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Sebastian Chrystie

Third Best and Fairest

Asher Lowe

Best Finals Player

Issam Martinez

Most Improved

Remy Golotta

Under 15 Div 1 Boys

The Under 15 Div 1 Bears had an extremely successful season in 2024. Coming off a finals appearance in 2023 and Div 2 flag in 2022 the team was raring to go in 2024. We welcomed 5 new players to the squad including Tanish Singh, Sam Howley, Ashwyn Boag, Max Mouhtouris and Charlie Hicks.

In grading the team was put in its place with a 1-3 win loss record. The team battled through the first half of the season but the turning point came defeating East Brighton Vampires in round 9 breaking their 26 game winning streak. This created belief that we could match it with the best.

The boys fought hard in every match giving their all to finish with a 9-9 record.

Off the field the team enjoyed a pizza night, pie night and a mid season overnight camp to Torquay.

The team scraped into the finals on percentage winning the round 15 match against Beaumaris and another result going our way. We defeated St Kilda City in the Elimination final (who had beaten us twice in regular season), and again defeated Hampton in the Preliminary Final (who had beaten us twice in regular season) with outstanding high-pressure football. Unfortunately, the grand final against rivals East Brighton didn't go our way to finish the season runners up. We had our opportunities with more scoring shots but failed to capitalise leading to a 29 point defeat. A magnificent effort and I am so proud of the boys in the team.

A huge thank you to Team Manager Chris Godfrey, Runner Derek Waters and Assistant Coach Gil Hennequin. Also, thanks to all the parents who fulfilled match day duties.

Individual Honours included:

- Captain Angus Brown – League Best and Fairest, Team Vic Representative, All Australian, Interleague
- Eamonn Walker – Leading Goal Kicker, Interleague
- Erik Hennequin – Interleague, Multicultural Team
- Charlie Hicks – Next Gen team
- Tanish Singh - Multicultural Team
- 100 Game players – Adam Arbaitman, Erik Hennequin, Tanish Singh, Alex Bridges, Cade Kelly, Sam Howley.

James Bridges

Awards

Best and Fairest

Angus Brown

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Eamonn Walker

Third Best and Fairest

Alex Bridges

Most Consistent

Charlie Dimogotsi

Most Improved

Archer Hankin

Player of the Finals

Sam Howley

Most Courageous

Quinn McDonald

Under 16 Div 3 Boys

Awards**Best and Fairest**

Sheldon Quirin

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Chris Wilson

Third Best and Fairest

Lincoln Higginbotham

Fourth Best and Fairest

Alfie Blyth

Best Team Player

Martin Kennedy

Coaches Award

Jay McDonald

Under 16 Div 1 Boys

Awards

Best and Fairest

Luke Mahimarajan

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Albert MacGowan

Third Best and Fairest

Lucas Kennedy

Most Consistent

Max McMahon

Leadership Award

Max Wigney

Best Team Player

Cade White

Under 17.5 Boys

Preseason started back in November 2023 with about 8 – 10 lads.

From a review of last season in consideration of injuries and APS players we thought a list of 32 would be a healthy number to support one team in the Under 17.5.

By the start of February with only 2 registrations things were looking grim.

With the help of the committee, we were able to offer a 'half season' registration which allowed the APS lads to sign up and the rest is history. Within 4 weeks we had to cap the registration numbers at 32 and we were ready to attack the season.

Grading for once went our way and we remained in DIV 2. Injuries were far fewer than in previous years so rotations and player management was a big task which we managed to achieve in the end. The lads grew each week culminating in 11 wins in a row including premiership success in September.

Apart from the premiership, a highlight was beating the Port / South team 4 times during the season who were a team that came down from Division 1.

Great work by our captains this year – Max Bremner (Club Captain as well) and Brody Rossney – the team was extremely well led.

Our triumphant season concluded with our presentation evening where as well as our awards winners, the 10-year players were acknowledged which is a great achievement for the following lads:

- Jed Williams
- Jacob Sekker
- Billy Lamb
- Max Bremner
- Patrick Rowlands
- Thomas Walsh
- Noah Will
- Phoenix McCabe
- Jack Malick
- Ned O'Neil
- Will Scott
- Dan Fergus
- Lucas Cromer
- Alexander McElhone
- Zander Ross
- Archie Murrihy
- Ben Bayley
- Charlie Mckay
- Will McCormack
- Brody Rossney
- Kristian Taalikka

Al Rowlands

Awards

Best and Fairest

Max Bremner

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Archie Murrihy

Third Best and Fairest

Brody Rossney

Best Finals Player

Archie Murrihy

Coaches Award

Jake Sekker

Most Courageous Player

Christian Howard

Most Improved

Patrick Rowlands

Under 18 Girls

Awards

Best and Fairest

Grace McIntyre

Runner-up Best and Fairest

Sienna Cipriani

Third Best and Fairest

Claudia Wotherspoon

Fourth Best and Fairest

Kayla Vais

Leading Goal Kicker

Georgia Miller

Coaches Award

Bailey Lucy

Treasurer's Report

The Caulfield Bears JFC have recorded a strong profit in 2024 of \$15,451, primarily due to increased revenues in every category. The only material increase in expenses was in coaching. With several teams unable to find parents to volunteer for the roles, the Executive decided that an investment in paying several coaches was needed as a last resort. This is not expected to be required next season.

The financial position of the club remains very strong with high cash reserves.

FY24 Profit & Loss with three-year comparisons below.

| | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Trading Income | | | |
| Canteen and Bar | 46,140 | 36,040 | 43,083 |
| Registrations | 64,820 | 52,886 | 54,068 |
| Sponsorship, Grants and Fundraising | 29,829 | 19,009 | 25,675 |
| Merchandise | 16,853 | 14,250 | 7,332 |
| Total Trading Income | 157,642 | 122,185 | 130,159 |

Cost of Sales

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Cost of Goods Sold | 12,660 | 7,659 | 16,817 |
| Total Cost of Sales | 12,820 | 7,659 | 16,817 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Gross Profit | 144,822 | 114,526 | 113,342 |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|

Operating Expenses

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Advertising | 115 | 440 | 43 |
| Auskick/Recruitment | 0 | 42 | 850 |
| Bank Fees | 67 | 236 | 378 |
| Canteen Expenses | 20,123 | 20,975 | 29,725 |
| Canteen & Ground Staff | 12,678 | 10,569 | 9,668 |
| Cleaning | 1,538 | 120 | 1,155 |
| Coaches, Team Managers | 10,197 | 4,802 | 5,000 |
| Consulting & Accounting | 755 | 147 | 164 |
| Depreciation | 0 | 4,741 | 4,038 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Donations | 550 | 0 | 1,764 |
| Entertainment | 0 | 1,705 | 884 |
| Footballs | 6,064 | 5,605 | 3,973 |
| General Expenses | 2,873 | 0 | 1,638 |
| Ground Hire | 5,819 | 7,534 | 8,489 |
| Insurance | 0 | 1,687 | 1,687 |
| Light, Power, Heating | 2,434 | 2,606 | 874 |
| Medical Expenses | 9,688 | 10,975 | 6,974 |
| Merchandise Purchases | 23,491 | 16,981 | (326) |
| Newsletter | 1,920 | 2,040 | 1,875 |
| Office Expenses | 0 | 211 | 0 |
| Printing & Stationery | 382 | 0 | 205 |
| Repairs and Maintenance | 1,386 | 1,261 | 1,497 |
| SMJFL - Fines | 100 | 310 | 270 |
| SMJFL - Subscriptions | 1,846 | 902 | 8,135 |
| SMJFL Umpires | 20,303 | 18,781 | 14,147 |
| Telephone & Internet | 300 | 240 | 144 |
| Trophies and Awards | 6,215 | 5,480 | 8,125 |
| Website | 528 | 528 | 517 |
| Total Operating Expenses | 129,371 | 118,918 | 111,893 |
| Net Profit | 15,451 | (4,392) | 1,449 |

Canteen

Canteen revenues were up in 2024, with additional modified teams enabling the canteen to be open at two venues on most weekends. Nikki Hogan and Matt Dry both stepped up to manage the canteens and together with our canteen staff did a fantastic job in enabling them to run seamlessly. On occasions the ground managers were also able to run a BBQ which was well received. Another reason for the increase was the number of BBQ's held following Auskick sessions - all run by volunteer parents. Finally, the continued increase in usage of sponsor vouchers rather than club funded 'Bear of the Week' awards also meant that the net profit for the canteen was increased.

Registrations

Registration income in 2024 was significantly higher due to the additional number of teams and a small increase in registration fees across all teams. For the first time since COVID we had teams in all modified rules age groups, and also added an additional U13s team. Auskick registrations remained strong, with Friday nights again a very popular option.

Sponsorship/Grants

Support from our sponsors was the highest it's been in years, with growth in all levels of Sponsorship. Past and new sponsors provided value through cash, restaurant vouchers and team dinners that were well received. The committee worked hard to lock in several major sponsors long term having identified last year that this an opportunity for growth needed to offset the rising costs of running the club. Club sponsors were also recognised with certificates of appreciation as we aim to build on our existing relationships.

Merchandise

A complete stocktake of all saleable items was completed and inventory recorded at cost. Current stock on hand is \$19.5k. The cost of jumpers and training tops that are provided to players have been allocated to the Cost of Goods Sold.

Medical Expense

Medical expenses are in line with previous seasons. There was an ongoing utilisation of Colmed medical staff with the two grounds being used. In addition to this, the club continued to invest in trainers by offering to cover the costs of volunteers gaining or upgrading their medical qualifications to assist in ensuring that there would be sufficient trainers available across all teams. This offer was once again taken up by over twenty parents and managed successfully by Joe Cremin.

SMJFL Fees

SMJFL fees consist predominantly of umpiring fees. The increase this year primarily relates to the increased number of teams that played finals, with four teams progressing all the way to grand finals.

Capital Investment

The club did not make any capital purchases this season.



50/100 Award Winners

During the 2024 season we celebrated the following key game milestones.

| 100 Games | 50 Games |
|--|--|
| Adam Arbaitman Alex Bridges Billy Lamb Cade Kelly Cam Green Charlie Burrage Charlie McKay Chris Wilson Christian Howard Claudia Wotherspoon Cooper Acklom Daniel Affinita Erik Hennequin Harry Fryar Jack Conrad Jackson Jeanes | Alex Chivers Andrew Meldrum Aussie Goudie Bailey Lucy Benjamin Ratner Bhavin Bandlamudi Charlotte Fanning Chloe Apps Cooper Wisdom Dylan Brewster Eli Watts Elliot Mulholland Pyle Hamish Fleming Harrison Widjaja Hayden Yong Henry Gledhill |

| | |
|---|--|
| Lily Skinner Lucas Kennedy Olley Corrie Sam Howley Tanish Singh Tashi Margerison | Isaac Cremin Jacob Yeung Jemima Fryar Johnny Papaioannou Josh Bogaoan Kris Pipingas Lenny Blustein Leo Brown Levi Acklom Lion Wissmann Lucas Foden Matilda Commerford Matilda McIntyre Moudy Elsaleh Nick Pipingas Ollie Paterson Oscar Dickens Owen Holm Rory Johnstone Shani Williams Teva Roberts Tully Smith Victor Brown Will Robinson |
|---|--|

2024 Committee

- President - Kerry Widjaja
- Vice President - Matt Dry
- Secretary - Rebecca Hunt
- Treasurer - David Ratner
- Head of Football Operations - Derek Waters
- Team Manager Coordinator - Kelly Wheeler
- Registrar - James Brown
- Sponsorship Coordinator - Nic Atherinos
- Communications & Social Media Coordinator - Chelsea Hall
- Merchandise Coordinator - Belle Erickson
- Canteen Coordinator - Nikki Hogan
- Trainer & Medical Coordinator - Joe Cremin
- Child Safety Officer - Karen Massier
- Auskick Administration - Luke Codarin
- Incident Officer - Karen Massier
- General Committee - Chandra Bandlamudi