



Caulfield Bears Junior Football Club



Annual Report 2025

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Caulfield Bears Junior Football Club



President's Report

Overview

Looking back at another year for our small but proud club, the Caulfield Bears JFC, what stands out most in 2025 is the strength of our community. Week in and week out, it's been the families, volunteers, and supporters who have created the environment where our kids can thrive both on and off the field.

This year we say thank you to a few long-standing committee members who are finishing up after many years of service. Their tireless commitment has helped shape the club and ensure our kids had the chance to enjoy their footy. To them, and to every

volunteer—whether it's being a committee member, helping out at training, coaching, umpiring, writing match reports, taking photos, or just cheering from the sidelines—your contribution makes all the difference.

It hasn't all been about football either. From great social events to many laughs and chats shared around the ovals, there's been plenty of fun and community spirit throughout the season. Even when some of our teams were put in tough divisions and had challenging results, the resilience and togetherness of players, families, and supporters stood out.

Of course, we also get to celebrate some outstanding on-field achievements. A huge congratulations to our U12 premierships team and to our merged U11 girls team who also took premierships honours. The kids have done the club proud, not just with their results but with the way they've carried themselves as ambassadors of our community. Parents too have shared in the joy, supporting their kids and celebrating their wins with pride.

2025 has been a season full of hard work, resilience, and achievement, and we are proud of our club and members.



Highlights and statistics for the 2025 season:

- A total of 238 players registered in 2025 (Of these, there were 35 Girls and 203 Boys)
- Within this overall total, 227 players played across 12 Caulfield Bears teams and 11 players were on Season Permit to other clubs
- We had 7 Mixed/Boys teams ranging from U8 to U15's and 1 Girls team in the U15/U16

- Club Captain - Angus Brown
- 2 teams made Grand Finals, with 2 league Premierships won – U11 Girls (merged) and U12 Mixed
- U16 Div 1 League Best & Fairest Runner Up – Eamonn Walker
- U14 Div 5 League Best & Fairest Winner – Bhavin Bandlamudi
- U15 Div 3 League Best & Fairest Winner – Kenneth Brown
- U14 Div 2 League Best & Fairest Winner – Owen Holm
- 2025 Interleague Coaches Award – Owen Holm
- Angus Brown selected for the U16 Victoria Metro squad, which won the 2025 Marsh National U16 Development championship
- Angus Brown, Eamonn Walker and Erik Hennequin were selected in the Sandringham Dragons U16 team.
- Senior Bear of the Year Award – David Ratner
- Junior Bear of the Year Award – Zaphira 'Zaza' Radion
- U7's successful lightning carnival with 10+ kids involved and plenty of parent helpers.

Registrations

Registrations decreased slightly at CBJFC compared to 2024. We had 238 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 again had a good number of registrations in the U8 and U9 age groups and so delighted to be welcoming the next generation of players into the club. We were also able to stand up 2 teams in the U14 age group as well 2 teams in U16. We were also delighted to be able to have an all Girls team in the U16 age group. We know that this playing group had many players that were completely new to the sport and we were delighted with the energy and passion this set of players brought to the field!

Auskick

Auskick was a huge success at Koornang Park in 2025 with 100+ kids participating. We again ran Auskick sessions on Friday nights (led by Luke Codarin) and Saturday mornings. 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.

Social Engagement

Our social media presence continued to thrive in 2025 through engaging posts, reels and stories that captured the energy, achievements, and spirit of our club.

A big thank you goes to our talented volunteer photographers, whose consistent efforts bring each moment to life and help tell the story of our teams each week. And special thanks to Bears parent Avi Gulwadi of Gulwadi Media, who in addition to capturing game day

photography this year, supported the club by producing video content at Family Nights, and interviews with our Club Captain and Interleague players.

With 1,451 followers on Instagram and 886 followers on Facebook, social media has become our most effective platform for celebrating our player and volunteers, sharing important updates, and recognising the vital support of our amazing sponsors.

Sponsorship

Junior sports thrive because of community support, and sponsorship plays a vital role in giving every child the opportunity to get involved and enjoy the game. Thanks to all our amazing sponsors — some who've been with us for many seasons and others who've recently joined — we're able to keep junior sport thriving and welcoming for everyone.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following sponsors for supporting the CBJFC in 2025:

- Gary Peer
- The Bank
- UDL Group
- TMS – Track Manage Support
- David Southwick MP
- Prosthétique Dental Designs
- Vets on Koornang
- La Cabra Carnegie
- Glen Eira Physio
- Gulwadi Media
- Bromley's Bread.

For businesses interested in becoming a CBJFC sponsor in 2026, we warmly invite you to join our Club family. If you're in the suburbs around Koornang Park, you've probably noticed the many Bears training tops worn proudly by our young players, prominently featuring sponsor logos. These "walking billboards" are just one way we showcase and celebrate our sponsors. We'd love to connect and discuss how your business can be involved in supporting the 2026 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 2025. 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:

- Matt Dry (Vice President)
- David Ratner (Treasurer)
- Belle Stevenson (Merchandising Manager)
- Nikki Hogan (Canteen Manager).

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 2026.

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 2026!

Go Bears!

Kerry Widjaja



Football Operations Report

The 2025 season was another proud chapter in the Caulfield Bears story, marked by growth, resilience, and the unwavering spirit of our players, coaches, and volunteers.

From our youngest Under 8s experiencing their first taste of junior football, to our seasoned Under 16s and Girls teams showing grit and determination, every team contributed to a season filled with memorable moments and steady development. Across the board, we saw players improve their skills, deepen their understanding of the game, and most importantly, enjoy their football.

A particular highlight was the success of our Under 12 Mixed team, who capped off a season of hard work and team-first football with a thrilling Grand Final victory. Their journey from a challenging 2024 to premiership glory this year is a testament to what can be achieved with commitment, coaching, and community support.

Season Highlights

- Under 8 Mixed: A team built from Auskick graduates and first-time players, finishing the season with a strong showing at the Lightning Carnival.
- Under 8 Girls: A successful debut for the “Puppy Bears” merged team, including five Bears players in a season of serious fun, strong teamwork and huge growth from all players.
- Under 9 Mixed: Introduced “Bear Ball” training and welcomed Club Captain Angus Brown to mentor players. Finished the season undefeated at the footy carnival.
- Under 10 Mixed: Strong development in kicking, marking, and game awareness. A united team with consistent improvement across the board.
- Under 11 Girls: Premiership winners in Division 2.
- Under 12 Mixed: Premiership winners in Division 5, praised for fairness, sportsmanship, and team-first football.
- Under 14 Mixed (Div 2): Promoted from Div 4 after grading and competed strongly against larger clubs. Recognised for outstanding conduct and team spirit.
- Under 14 Mixed (Div 5): Despite early setbacks, the team rallied mid-season with a renewed focus on tackling and effort, showing great character and improvement.
- Under 15 Mixed: Reached finals in Division 3 after a dominant late-season win over East Brighton. Fought hard in finals and showed great leadership and depth.
- Under 16 Boys (Div 3): Played a memorable home game under lights — a first for many players — and showed resilience through a tough season, finishing with three wins and a strong team bond.
- Under 16 Girls: Built from just four experienced players to a squad of 23. Competed strongly despite injuries and showed enormous growth and commitment.
- Under 16 Boys (Div 1): Played in the SMJFL season opener under lights. Despite injuries, they defeated top teams and had multiple players selected for representative squads.

Behind every team is a village — and I want to extend my deepest thanks to our coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, trainers, runners, umpires, and volunteers who make game day and training possible. Your time, energy, and care are the backbone of this club. Whether you were setting up drills, managing rotations, running water, or simply cheering from the sidelines — thank you.

Special thanks also to our parent community, who continue to support not just their own

children, but the club as a whole. Your involvement creates the inclusive, supportive environment that makes the Bears such a special place to play footy.

As we look ahead to 2026, we do so with confidence. Our player numbers are strong, our culture is thriving, and our commitment to development remains front and centre. We'll continue to invest in coaching, equipment, and pathways to ensure every Bear — regardless of age, experience, or background — has the opportunity to grow and succeed.

Thank you again to everyone who contributed to the 2025 season. It's been a privilege to serve as Football Operations Manager, and I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together next year.

Go Bears!

Andrew Harrap
Football Operations Manager

Team Reports

Under 8 Mixed

This year was such an exciting one for our U8 mixed team with so many of our players, and parents! experiencing organised junior sport for the first time.

We started our pre-season training a month out from the season with 5 players in the pouring rain at Duncan Mackinnon reserve. As a coach and parent it was so rewarding seeing how much the team grew together from that initial session into the fantastic showing they had at the final lightning carnival of the year for the first 'win' of the season, of course though we don't keep scores in U8's.

This year we had a mix of players that graduated from our u7 Auskick carnival as well as those that were trying out footy for the first time. And we had a real steady stream of players join the team throughout the year once they heard of the great fun that their friends were having at training Friday night and the matches on Sunday morning. Given this mix we focused a lot early on with skill fundamentals as well as preparing the team to be comfortable for the additional contact that comes with progressing from Auskick u8 play. As the year progressed so did the focus on gameplay and match awareness. It was so pleasing to watch and hear the players grasp these concepts and encourage each other to protect the goal line, not kick across the danger zone and outnumber at contests.

Thank you to all the players for this past year, including those helping us out from other teams, and to the parents who all put their hands up each week to join a drill at training or help out with a task on game.

And finally a huge thank you for our team officials for the year, without who we wouldn't have a team this year. Our Team Manager Lauren who always ensured there was an organised team and helpers each week, Assistant Coach and Runner Chris, Assistant Coach and Goal Umpire Tony, our trainer Joe and field umpire Graeme.

Keep the practice and ball skills up over the summer, remember to recruit some mates over the offseason and look forward to a great year of u9's in 2026.

Alastair Renshaw

Under 8/9 Girls

The 2025 season was a fantastic ride for the merged Caulfield / St Pauls McKinnon U8/9 "Puppy Bears". Five Bears players joined the contingent from St Pauls and from the first training session, it was clear that our Bears girls were in for a year of fun, fierce footy and huge growth in their debut season.

From their first outing at the Lightning Carnival, the girls showed great spirit, sportsmanship, and a fearless approach to the game — they were a force to be reckoned with!

Early wins against teams like Port Colts and St Kilda City built confidence, while tight contests against strong sides like Cheltenham and East Malvern gave the girls a chance to dig deep and learn. Win or lose, they always played with heart — tackling hard, chasing

down every ball, and celebrating each other's efforts.

Season highlights included first goals, remarkable comeback victories, dance parties in the change rooms (Pink Pony Club became the team's unofficial anthem!) and a Mother's Day match to remember complete with chocolate and flowers. Not to mention hair ribbons for every occasion — including the St Paul's Pink Sports Round, and colours to match both Bears and Doggies uniforms. Even in narrow losses, the team left everything on the field, with big smiles and heart never in short supply.

The final Lightning Carnival brought one win, one loss, and most memorably a well-earned Slurpee reward — a fitting end to a season where every girl improved, supported each other, and fell more in love with the game.

A big thank you to the coach Matt Powell, assistant coach Tim O'Halloran, and all the amazing Bear and Doggy families who made it all happen. The Puppy Bears were a joy to watch this year — and 2026 can't come soon enough!

Chelsea Hall

Under 9 Mixed

Season 2025 was a year of growth, development, and success for our Under 9's team. The season highlighted how far the players have progressed in skill, confidence, resilience, and trust in each other. From where we started in Under 8's in 2024 to where we finished this year has been remarkable. This improvement was not luck—it came from the players applying what they have been taught and consistently putting it into practice on Sunday mornings.

Despite challenging results in 2024, all players chose to return in 2025 (with 3 staying in Under 8's and 1 transferring to Ajax), giving the coaching team confidence that our players were enjoying themselves and engaged with our program.

Training & Development

We focused on building from our strengths and addressing weaknesses identified in 2024:

- Introduced "Bear Ball", a training grid used as the foundation of every session. The players quickly understood the purpose and it became central to their development.
- Significant improvement in kick-outs from goal, with players making smarter decisions without constant instruction.
- Introduced an earlier kick-to-kick session before training, giving players 15–20 minutes to work on kicking, marking, and team connection.

A special highlight was having Club Captain Angus Brown attend multiple trainings. His involvement added immense value:

- Worked with small groups to develop all-round skills.
- Contributed training drills and mentoring.
- Encouraged the players not just in football but in their off-field interests as well.

We hope his involvement continues into 2026.

Game Day & Performance

This season we asked the kids to continue with last season's focus of fun being the most important thing, but at the same time - turn up to training and games with a want to do well, and also to get our competitive juices flowing.

The season began with a tough first-round reality check, but the team responded strongly and sang the club song more often than not as the year progressed.

A permanent runner and a dedicated sub manager were introduced. This consistency meant:

- Clear, familiar communication of messages.
- Equal rotations for all players at the 3-minute mark, regardless of the game situation.
- Reinforcement of trust in every player's ability to contribute.

A key turning point came in our third match against Ajax. We challenged players and parents to drop talk of "unfair matchups" and instead focus on controlling what we could. The result was an inspiring victory, leaving parents emotional with pride.

The season ended with the footy carnival. After winning the first game, the players were challenged to win all three matches before singing the club song. They rose to the occasion, winning all three and finishing the season on a high.

Acknowledgements

This season's success would not have been possible without the dedication of:

- The coaches and manager, who consistently prepared and guided the team.
- The volunteers and parents, who helped week after week across roles big and small.
- Most importantly, the players, who showed resilience, teamwork, and a passion for the game.

Conclusion

The 2025 Under 9's embodied the spirit of the Caulfield Bears—resilient, supportive, and committed to improvement. The players demonstrated enormous growth in just one year, both on and off the field. They are a fun, enthusiastic group who enjoy playing together and have earned every bit of the success they achieved this season. We look forward to building on this foundation in 2026.

Simon Rayner

U10 Mixed

This season has been a fantastic journey of growth and development for our Under 10s team. Our focus from the outset was on building core football skills—particularly kicking, marking, and learning the fundamentals of the game such as carrying the ball and playing kick-behind-the-play. Reflecting on the year, it's clear that every player made significant strides in these areas.

Player Development

Throughout the season, our players demonstrated remarkable improvement, both individually and as a team. Many of our newer players adapted quickly, showing rapid progress in their understanding of the game and their skills on the field. Across the group, we saw:

- **Skill Development:** Players worked hard to improve their kicking and marking, with noticeable gains in accuracy, confidence, and technique by season's end.
- **Game Awareness:** There was a strong focus on learning the basics of positioning, reading the play, and supporting teammates. Players became more comfortable with concepts like playing kick-behind-the-play and moving into space.
- **Consistency:** As the season progressed, many players became more reliable in their roles, contributing consistently each week and showing greater resilience and determination.
- **Teamwork and Spirit:** The group's willingness to support each other, listen to feedback, and embrace new challenges was outstanding. This positive attitude was reflected in their performances and the improvement seen across the board.

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you to all our volunteers, whose dedication ensures the smooth running of our club. Special mention goes to our umpires, who take on one of the toughest roles, and our trainers, who carry immense responsibility each week.

To our team managers, Andrew and Jen—thank you for your outstanding support and organisation throughout the season. Your efforts have made a real difference to the experience of our players and their families.

Looking Ahead

This season has laid a strong foundation for future success as we move beyond modified rules. The improvement in skills, teamwork, and game understanding has been clear to see, and we look forward to building on this progress next year. Congratulations to all players, families, and volunteers on a fantastic season!

Jonathon O'Kane

Under 11 Girls

The U11 Doggie Bears had a season of huge growth and ultimate team success! We started in Division 1 and faced some tough competition, especially with a few players completely new to the game. Being regraded to Division 2 early in the season gave the girls the chance to build confidence and develop together.

Throughout the year, there were standout performances across the team. Early on, two sides proved a challenge, but the girls stayed focused and kept improving. By the back half of the season, everything started to click — they were playing as a cohesive team, working hard for each other, and showing real maturity in their game.

Coach Sam had the group well-drilled in their roles and positioning, and the improvement in their basic footy skills was clear to see. Heading into finals, the girls knew exactly what was

required. They played a brilliant preliminary final, earning a well-deserved spot in the grand final.

Grand final day had all the excitement — the banner, the nerves, and plenty of wind! With the goals flowing at one end, the Bears went into three-quarter time with a three-goal lead. The final term was tense, but they dug deep to hold on for a thrilling two-point victory. The girls proudly lifted the cup after an incredible team effort.

Plenty of celebrating followed, and the Doggie Bears have set the bar high — ready to go for back-to-back success next year!

Kerry Widjaja

Awards

Best and Fairest – Maddie Widjaja

Runner-up Best and Fairest – Frankie Foots

2nd Runner-up Best and Fairest – Emily Robertson

Most Consistent – Evie Ellis

Most Improved – Rose Van Dyk

Best Finals Player – Jemima Fryar

Under 12 Mixed

The U12s season began with all the enthusiasm and excitement we have come to expect from this team. Despite a challenging season last year, most of the squad returned determined to take on the new season with gusto. While we lost a couple of key players who had been playing up in previous years and had elected to do another season of U11s, we also welcomed seven new players to the club, half of which had never played before. As has always been the case the boys embraced their new teammates and their families instantly became part of our Bears community.

Preseason commenced in February and for the first time since Covid, we would have the opportunity to train at Koornang Park during the regular season. As if the homecoming was not enough, training under the glow of the brand-new lights lifted the energy levels even higher. Coach Luke and Darcy returned to assist, and we also received a massive boost with Coach Scott available every week enabling the large squad to settle into a regular routine. Consistently high numbers on the track enabled the boys to improve as a collective and the on-field results would soon reflect the hard work and commitment put in by all.

A strong start in the qualifying games (three wins and one loss) lifted the confidence of the boys and it was clear that they had improved throughout the previous year despite the results. While we could have moved up to Division 4 where we had been competitive but winless last year, we opted to remain in Division 5 to enable the players a chance to learn how to win and to give the inexperienced players an opportunity to develop.

It would soon become apparent that the division was one of two halves with the top three sides extremely competitive and the others struggling to keep up. With most players available each week we would regularly play with five or six on the bench. In line with our team values every player would get equal time on the field throughout the regular season,

and it is a credit to our leadership group and experienced players that they continued to accept the rotations no matter what the score in the game.

Sitting on top of the ladder after the first seven games due to a high percentage, we would come up against the other undefeated side, Waverley Hawks. With a poorly timed party at Luna Park reducing our numbers to nineteen, we soon realised that the season was not going to be as easy as a few had come to believe. A narrow two-point loss against a very good team was the reality check we needed and provided the impetus for the team to refocus on improving every week.

The season trend of easy wins against the lower teams continued while a second loss to Waverley, this time at home, and another loss to the third placed Hampton Rovers meant the upcoming final series would be an open affair. There would be no hubris – just a fierce determination to play at our best when it mattered most. The consistent numbers at training never dropped off – enabling our preparation to be as good as it could be. In the lead up to the finals it was made clear to players and families alike that we would predominantly play our best 18-20 in the finals. The way this was accepted by both players and their families was a credit to all. The team first, selfless mentality would prove to be invaluable over the next few weeks.

After finishing second on the ladder, we were lucky enough to host the first semi-final at KP. The coaches knew we were primed and so the message on the day was simple - play as we had all year. Play team first unselfish football, be the best and fairest tackling side, and more than anything else – have fun. In perfect conditions and with a great crowd in attendance, the boys played a flawless game of football, reversing a four-goal loss to Hampton a few weeks earlier to run out comfortable winners 45 points to 1 and book our spot in the Grand Final against the dominant Waverley Hawks.

The Grand Final was always going to be an epic affair between the best two teams of the year and it did not disappoint. In a game where the wind blew strongly to one end all day, the lead changed every quarter as both teams gave everything they had. When the final siren sounded, it would be the Bears on top, coming from two points behind at three quarter time to win by six points in an absolute nailbiter. Amazing scenes after the game as a team that had proved winning is not everything the year before, would have the best day of their football lives, basking in premiership glory. The joy on their faces was priceless as were the beaming smiles of their families and friends.

I am so proud of this team. They did everything asked of them from the first training session to the last. They supported each other both on and off the field and played a brand of football the club should be proud of. While winning the flag was a great reward, for myself and the coaching staff, it was the way they played that mattered most. A constant all year was opposition coaches admiring not only our skills and teamwork, but also our fairness and sportsmanship whether we had won or lost. We trained hard and played harder, with every single boy improving as the season rolled on. I am incredibly grateful to Luke, Darcy, and Scott, as well as others that put their hands up to assist at training whenever they could. Our team manager Joy led the parent group seamlessly, allowing myself and the coaches to focus solely on the boys. A huge thanks to all.

Season 2025 is one none of us will ever forget. Bring on next year! Go Bears!

David Ratner

Awards

Best and Fairest – Harrison Widjaja

Runner-up Best and Fairest – Isaac Bates

2nd Runner-up Best and Fairest – Sam Sternbergs

Most Determined – Ben Ratner

Most Improved – Isaac Cremin

Coaches Award – Dylan Brewster

Under 14 Mixed Div 2

Starting off the season in Div4 the team was catapulted into Div2 after grading.

This presented a steep challenge.

We were pitted against five big clubs, all of whom are able to draw on wider catchment areas for talent.

What the Bears lacked in size they made up for with resilience, team spirit and a desire to compete and improve.

For all but one game, the team demonstrated they could match it with each of the teams they played. The challenge was doing that for the full 60 minutes.

Through the course of the season the teams' ball movement, ability to hit targets and overall game play improved markedly.

In the first quarter of Round 15 they dominated one of the top teams and looked like a premiership contender. While they ran out of steam as the game progressed, it was a great way to finish the season seeing the team in full flight and the potential they hold.

Importantly the group was supportive of their team mates on and off the field. They welcomed new players into the team and respected the umpires. The teams "outstanding conduct, effort and behaviour as a Team" was even recognised in writing by one of the opposition parents.

The group was positive, fun, resilient, put in effort at training and on game day and had a desire to compete and improve. As Coaches and a parent group we couldn't be prouder.

Troy Fryar

Awards

Best and Fairest – Owen Holm

Runner-up Best and Fairest – Oscar Bremner

Third Best and Fairest – Elliot Mulholland

Best Team Player – Banjo Goudie

Most Improved – Alex Chivers & Eli Watts

Under 14 Mixed Div 5

The Under 14 Div 5 side started the year with great enthusiasm and a solid pre-season starting early in the year. With two sides in the under 14 age group, we went through a comprehensive grading process for the first time, allowing each side to have a set list to work with for the year. It was hoped that with this set side in each division, rather than last year's rotation of players through two teams, we could create a more connected two side system with a greater sense of "team" for the kids.

After our finals appearance last year, everyone was looking to take the next step and improve our game play. Reaching the finals last year with many kids that had never played football before was a great effort, but we knew we would still have to improve to take the next step. An early preseason gave us the opportunity to train and practice a new game style. Our training and practice revolved around a high possession style of game, with an emphasis on short kicking and high handball rate. We focused on lots of run and carry due to our lack of height and marking targets.

After limited success in the grading games, we found ourselves in division 5 with 7 other clubs. We knew most of the other sides in the division and had played them the previous year, we also knew that we could challenge most of them on a good day.

For the next 7 weeks, our boys competed valiantly, implementing our new style of play, but with limited success. At the halfway point of the year, we found ourselves with just the one win but knew we could turn it around for the run home. After some heavy losses and one particularly large loss to Ajax, we had our usual team meeting and match review before training on Wednesday night. We knew a finals appearance would be hard but decided to make some new team rules and goals for our last half of the season. Our new rules were:

1. Not worry about the score board and stick to our game plan.
2. No broken tackles, and an emphasis on tackling each week at training.
3. Making sure whoever we played, we would fight for every possession for the whole game.

With this new vision of how we wanted to be seen by other teams, we set out to turn things around for the last part of the season. Our new emphasis on tackling and aggression at the ball was noticeable for the last 8 games of the year. We greatly decreased our losing margin in each game as opposed to the previous front half of the year. The new spirit was noticeable in the playing group as well, with a measurable jump in our team enjoyment even after some close losses. The overall team spirit was high, with a new vigour to not let each other down in the hard moments.

With some fantastic team spirit we made some real improvements in coming together as a team and learning a new style of football. The overall attitude of our playing group was exceptional, even after our limited success for the year. Our players had the opportunity to play in new positions and learn new skills. After each close loss we made sure we had positive match reviews, making sure to discuss our good points from each game as well as things we would work on at training and match day. A real character-building moment was displayed by these young men, taking a stand at the halfway point of the year and saying to each other that we can be better than this. It would have been easy to continue as we had the same the first 7 games, but the boys really stood up and showed maturity and turned things around for the later part of the year.

Overall, a great year of football was crafted after a tough start. I was personally impressed with the team spirit and overall improvement for the year. At the end of the day, I think our enjoyment for the game came from what we learned from some tight losses and how to handle the hard times.

A huge thanks must go out to David Ratner and the under 12's who helped out with numbers on most Sundays; without this help some games may have been forfeited, so thank you guys. Thanks to the div 2 coaches, Troy and Andrew, for their support and help with training for the year. To our assistant coach "Buzz" and our runner Adrian, thanks gentlemen for your hard work and invaluable match day insights. To our team manager Cathy Foden, great job for the year, your help behind the scenes, keeping on top of numbers before the game, and match day efforts went above and beyond. To all the parents, thank you for your support during the year, I could not have asked for a

better group, always ready to step up and help with all the jobs that are required to keep a side on the field.

Looking forward to seeing everyone back for a big 2026

Scott Cowell

Awards:

Best and fairest - Archer Williams

Runner up Best and Fairest - Bhavin Bandlamudi

Third Best and Fairest - William Livingstone

Fourth Best and Fairest - Jagger Colwell

Most improved - Vincent Garvey

Most consistent - Daniel Theuma

Under 15 Mixed

The U15 Bears started preseason training full of enthusiasm after winning back-to-back premierships the previous two seasons. Over the previous three seasons we'd made our way from Division 6, to 5 and then to 4. The plan was to try and continue this movement and cement a spot in Division 3 in 2025.

New additions of Ollie C and Hamish to the team kept our numbers around 24 for the season, which was a blessing as a few injuries hit the squad throughout the year.

Round 1 saw a Grand Final rematch from last year, where we snuck home against Bentleigh. The work the boys put in during the preseason paid off with a huge 66-point win with Levi kicking the first goal of the season. Rounds 2 and 3 saw some tough competition and we quickly learnt Div 3 was going to be a lot tougher than Div 4!

In the final grading game, we played Ormond and despite dominating the match, we weren't accurate with our goal kicking and went down 6.6.42 to 3.15.33. This however gave us the belief we could match it with other teams in Div 3 and be competitive.

We were ecstatic to learn we had locked in a position in Div 3 for the season and were looking forward to being competitive and had a goal of trying to reach the finals. Wins

against East Sandy and Beaumaris to start the season off put us on top of the ladder and on our way.

We battled our way through the season with wins and losses and were holding on to 4th position at the end of the season as we faced 5th placed East Brighton in round 14. This would be our most important game of the season as finals were on the line. We lost to them by 16 points last time we played so we had to be on. Enter captain Ken. He had the boys fired up before the bounce and the Bears came out breathing fire. A 10 goal first quarter stunning East Brighton and revenge was sweet as we won by 119 points with 9 goal scorers, including 7 from Ken.

Finals were locked in and the boys were set to give it one almighty crack, although we'd have to do it without our best defender and full-back Matthew, who'd broken his finger and was ruled out for the remainder of the season.

Archie took up the role at full-back and had his fellow backs of Baden, Lei, Arjun, Hamish, Seb, Conor, Teva ready for the challenge. Liem was back in the ruck after missing many weeks with an injury. And we were set. Oscar kicked the first goal of the final and things were looking good. Johnny, James and Charlie were great focal points up forward and Johnny, Levi, Ben, Cooper C and Cooper T did their best to put on some scoreboard pressure.

Ken and Darcy were incredible in the midfield, along with Ollie C and our wings of Nick P and Nick Y worked hard all day.

Despite our best efforts, we couldn't quite sneak over the line. But to the boys' credit, they fought hard until the final siren and held their heads high as they left the field, knowing they'd achieved our goal of making finals and giving it their all.

A huge thanks to our Assistant Coach Greg, TM Adam, Trainer Matt, runner Chris, photographer Avi, Jamie and Scott for always assisting and all the parents for their support.

Josh Acklom

AWARDS:

Best and Fairest - Darcy Stewart

Runner-Up - Charlie Burrage

Second Runner-Up - Kenneth Brown

Best Defender - Matthew Fardell

Best Clubman - Sebastian Sparrow-Cooper

Coaches Award - James Morgan

Under 16 Div 3 Boys

Coming into the 2025 season there was a feeling of confidence as this group of boys had back to back on their mind.

4 games of grading saw us winning 2 out of the 4. Small loss to the Div 4 premiers of the previous year in Cheltenham, wins against Hampton & Ashwood. But then we saw the difference in the higher divisions with a massive loss to Ormond.

The feeling in the group was we would be graded in Division 4 which was 1 division up from where we played the previous year & the wins in grading saw match up well against those teams. But then grading came out. WOW, division 3 are they joking.

After a series of back & forth with the league unfortunately we were told that's where they saw us & that's it. This caused a lot of frustration & disappointment to the boys, but we play on.

During the weeks after grading the group of boys showed a lot of spirit & fight but the teams we come up against were just that next level better than us

The boys didn't win a game until we played an undermanned St Kilda City in round 10. Then another couple of wins against Ajax (which the win was taken off us by the league) Which was another blow for the boys & our last win of the year was against Malvern.

The highlight of the year for this team was to play a home game under lights which none of the boys have had the opportunity in the past.

We qualified for the reserves finals in Division 3, but after a massive 100 plus loss in the final game the boys decided as a team that they had enough for the year & forfeited the final series as there was just no point.

For my players, after a disappointing year I wish you all the best in your future endeavours playing football next year or the following years playing senior football. You all share a special bond by being premiership teammates.

Lastly, Tony & I would like to thank our Team Managers in Samantha & Nikki, Runner in Matt, Trainers in Lou, Toni & Dave. All the parent volunteers that filled the roles every week with no complaints & special thanks to Omar for the half time oranges & watermelons.

Thank You - Coach Aaron.

Awards

Best and Fairest - Kingsley

Runner-up Best and Fairest - Harley

Third Best and Fairest - Josh S

Most Improved - Jackson

Bear of the Year - Archie

Team Mate of the Year - Hamish.

Under 16 Div 1 Boys

After a successful 2024 with this team finishing runners up in the grand final the team looked forward to more success in 2025.

We were selected to play in the season opener under lights at RSEA Park on Thursday 24th April to kick off the 2025 season for the SMJFL. Unfortunately the result stayed the same with a narrow loss to the Vampires. We did get payback defeating this team twice later in the season.

During grading things looked great with 3 wins in our next 3 games and we were flying showing we can once again compete at this high level. This left a highly skilled 6 team competition where anyone could beat anyone on their day.

The team was hit hard by injury throughout the season keeping the trainers very busy. This led to having only 18-19 players many times from our squad of 26 players. Thanks to under 15's Ken, Nick and Charlie for helping us field a team many times.

A highlight of the season was a 2nd last round victory over grand finalist East Malvern to show we could still beat anyone on our day.

We finished the season in 5th missing out on the finals with both of last year's grand finalists missing finals.

Congratulations to Easmon Walker, Erik Hennequin and Angus Brown (Capt) who were selected for the under 16 Sandringham Dragon Squad. Angus was also selected in the Vic Metro under 16 team.

A big thank you to our volunteers Team Manager Chris, Assistant Coach/Runner Gil, Assistant Coach Hank, Trainers Ness, Pete and Chris, Drink boys Adam, photographer Reg and filming each match DB for all your assistance during the season.

Thank you to all players and parents for the season.

James Bridges

Awards

Best and Fairest - Eamonn Walker

Runner-up Best and Fairest - Same Howley and Alex Bridges

Most Consistent - Max Mouhtouris

Most Improved - Tanish Singh

Most Determined - Josh Godfrey

Under 16 Girls

Our season began in late March with just four weeks of training before our first game – with only four girls having ever played footy before we knew it would be a development year, with less focus on the scoreboard and more on the improvement of skills and understanding of the game.

Numbers were an issue throughout, but did get better as the year went on. Our 14th registration, the minimum number required to take the field, was put through as we were running out for Round 1, but through some great recruiting from the Girls we finished the year with 23 on the list.

Grading was a tough time, with our first two matches against East Brighton and Mordialloc Braeside combining for a 350 point margin – after discussions with the league, we were moved down an age group, which resulted in far more even games after the first four weeks. After those first two rounds, we didn't concede another triple-figure margin until the last week of the season, a game that saw us finish with 13 on the field thanks to a range of injuries, which were a consistent issue all year. We lost Lara in the first quarter of Round 1 to a concussion, but thankfully she managed to stay around the group as an assistant coach for the rest of the year. Marleen only managed three games due to a persistent finger injury, Bella missed the end of the year with a bad ankle problem, and we had many other one or two week injuries to go with them.

Despite all that, we managed to get a team on the park almost every week, competing with incredible effort and desire which was not reflected in the final results. As the season progressed the final scores did improve – a highlight being our contest with the undefeated Cheltenham at their home ground, in which we won two quarters and stayed right in the game until the last term.

We had opportunities for a couple of wins, in very competitive contests against Ajax and Port Colts, but unfortunately bad injury luck and a lack of rotations prevailed in both games, and we were simply overrun by a better team.

Credit has to go to the girls, who kept backing up week after week, and all seem keen to return next year – recruiting had already started with a couple of weeks left in the season. A huge thanks has to go to all our parents and other volunteers, in particular Lara (Assistant Coach), Cheryl (Trainer) and most importantly Michael, for being our Team Manager while also helping me with all the off-field duties of being a coach.

I'm incredibly proud of how far the team came throughout the year and can't wait to get stuck into a longer preseason for 2026.

Gordon Beet

Awards:

Best and Fairest - Ellie Heron

Runner-up Best and Fairest - Izzy Huntley

Third Best and Fairest - Tanisha Gunawardena

Most Consistent - Tamsen Bowman

Most Courageous - Mia Euvrard

Coaches Award - Natasa Petrovic

Treasurer's Report

The Caulfield Bears JFC have recorded a profit in 2025 of \$5,567. A lower number of teams as well as discounts in certain age groups resulted in lower revenues across Registrations and Canteen and Bar, though these have been partly offset by lower operating expenses across relevant categories. While sponsorship was also down from FY24, it was still very high relative to seasons past. Overall operating expenses were in line with past seasons, with medical expenses higher due to the increased usage of ECR and the ongoing commitment to maintaining trainer qualifications. Several balance sheet adjustments also impacted the net profit. \$3.8k in inventory (white shorts) was written off as these are no longer used, resulting in a higher merchandise expense relative to sales. Inventory now also includes new jumpers purchased in FY25, where they had previously been fully expensed.

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

FY25 Profit & Loss with three-year comparisons below.

	2025	2024	2023
Trading Income			
Canteen and Bar	37,216	46,140	36,040
Registrations	46,094	64,820	52,886
Sponsorship, Grants and Fundraising	22,745	29,829	19,009
Merchandise	8,644	16,853	14,250
Total Trading Income	114,744	157,642	122,185
Cost of Sales			
Cost of Goods Sold	9,372	12,660	7,659
Total Cost of Sales	9,372	12,660	7,659
Gross Profit	105,372	144,982	114,526

Operating Expenses			
Advertising	125	115	440
Auskick/Recruitment	0	0	42
Bank Fees	58	67	236
Canteen Expenses	18,420	20,123	20,975
Canteen & Ground Staff	9,351	12,678	10,569
Cleaning	2,198	1,538	120
Coaches, Team Managers	4,559	10,197	4,802
Consulting & Accounting	812	755	147
Depreciation	0	0	4,741
Donations	454	550	0
Entertainment	400	0	1,705
Footballs	1,436	6,064	5,605
General Expenses	2,289	2,873	0
Ground Hire	5,909	5,819	7,534
Insurance	0	0	1,687
Light, Power, Heating	3,066	2,434	2,606
Medical Expenses	13,659	9,688	10,975
Merchandise Purchases	12,565	20,434	16,981
Newsletter	2,040	1,920	2,040
Office Expenses	0	0	211
Printing & Stationery	0	382	0

Repairs and Maintenance	1,941	1,386	1,261
SMJFL - Fines	300	100	310
SMJFL - Subscriptions	600	1,846	902
SMJFL Umpires	14,775	20,303	18,781
Telephone & Internet	315	300	240
Trophies and Awards	3,668	5,035	5,480
Website	528	528	528
Total Operating Expenses	99,805	125,135	118,918

Net Profit	5,567	19,847	(4,392)
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Canteen

Canteen revenues were lower in 2025, with no canteen operating at East Caulfield Reserve and less teams playing each week at Koornang Park. On occasions the ground managers were also able to run a BBQ which was well received, as were BBQ's at Auskick. Nikki Hogan and Matt Dry both stepped up again to manage the canteen and together with our canteen staff did a fantastic job in enabling the canteen to run seamlessly. Both Nikki and Matt are stepping down after many years of service, so a huge thank you to both for their massive contributions over the years.

Registrations

Registration income in 2025 was significantly lower due to the lower number of teams and due to the committee reducing fees across several age groups to ensure we could attract sufficient playing numbers. Once again we had teams across all modified rules age groups, continuing the recovery from COVID. Auskick registrations remained strong with Friday nights again the most popular option.

Sponsorship/Grants

Support from our sponsors was high, with most sponsors returning and new community level sponsors coming on board. Well done to Nicole and Chelsea for achieving this result. While coming off an historic high last year, the actual number of sponsors increased from FY24.

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 \$20,144, with the new jumpers purchased in FY25 now on the balance sheet to allow improved tracking. Training tops that are provided to players have been allocated to the Cost of Goods Sold, as were the design costs for the FY25 tops.

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 many parents and managed successfully by Joe Cremin.

SMJFL Fees

SMJFL fees consist predominantly of umpiring fees. The decrease this year primarily relates to the lower number of higher aged teams and a lower number of teams that played in finals.

Capital Investment

The club did not make any capital purchases this season.

Thank you

Finally, after five years on the committee I am stepping down as Treasurer to focus on coaching. I would like to thank the club and committee for the opportunity to contribute to making this club such a wonderful place to be. I leave knowing the club finances continue to be strong, and that the financial systems that we have put in place over the last few years will enable this critical function to be more secure and transparent than it has ever been.

David Ratner



50/100 Award Winners

During the 2025 season we celebrated the following key game milestones.

100 Games	50 Games
Angus Brown Archer Hankin Archer Newton Archie Johnstone Asher Lowe Charlie Dimogotsi Charlie Hicks Cooper Warburton Delilah Clohesy Eamonn Walker Harley Benton	Alfie Liem Charlie Dwyer Charlie Pearson Cooper Colwell Daniel Theuma Darcy Messer Dion Dimopoulos Dylan Szmerling Isaac Bates Jagger Colwell James Morgan

Hunter Hayes Isaac Feldman Jackson Dry Joshua Godfrey Joshua Stacey Kenneth Brown Luca Cipriani Maximus Atherinos Maximus Mouhtouris Nathan Rekas Noah Collard Quinn McDonald Sebastian Chrystie Tadhg Hogan	Samuel Sternbergs Sid Burrage Takoda Arjana
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2025 Committee

- President - Kerry Widjaja
- Vice President - Matt Dry
- Secretary - Rebecca Hunt
- Treasurer - David Ratner
- Head of Football Operations - Andrew Harrap
- Coaching Coordinator - Tod Mathiesson, Susan Price
- Team Manager Coordinator - Kelly Wheeler
- Registrar - James Brown
- Sponsorship Coordinator - Nicole Sternberg, Chelsea Hall
- Communications & Social Media Coordinator - Chelsea Hall
- Merchandise Coordinator - Belle Erickson
- Canteen Manager - Nikki Hogan
- Trainer & Medical Coordinator - Joe Cremin
- Child Safety Officer - Sanaa Radion
- Auskick Administration - Luke Codarin
- Incident Officer - Kerry Widjaja
- Social Committee - Natasha Robinson, Simon Rayner