

**Old Carey Grammarians FC**  
**2013 AGM**  
**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013**  
**Bulleen Club Rooms**  
**Presidents Report**

Sadly after 3 wonderful seasons in Premier A grade our time came to an abrupt end as we were relegated at the end of the 2013 season, back to Premier B grade and time to rebuild confidence and self-belief.

2013 promised so much but in the end delivered a massive reality check for the club: you need depth and a strong recruiting program to survive at the top level. There is no doubt all clubs are striving to get better each year and that becomes most apparent at the top level where the best clubs in the competition have that ability to attract quality players and maintain their depth. The VAFA competition rewards clubs that can generate depth, unlike other competitions that "cap" the number of teams a club can field (for example in the EFL clubs can only have seniors, 2nds and Unders). Looking at teams in Premier A grade, the likes of Xavs, De La, Collegians, Blues, Blacks and Scotch all of these clubs have between 6 and 8 teams, whereas we field 4.

There was a lot to get excited about at the beginning of the 2013 season; the club had conducted an overhaul of its coaching department following the retirement of Trevor Rowe. After an extensive search we appointed former EFL coach, Steve Cochrane to the position of senior coach. Joining Steve were a further 5 assistants, all with a great deal of football knowledge and experience. Whilst we said goodbye to a number of quality senior players after the 2012 season we were buoyed by the recruitment of onballers, Ryan Carafa and Joel Rice, and forwards Michael Rainey and brothers Tom and Andrew Harley. Several other new players signed up and we had our customary influx of school leavers ready to play Under 19 football.

The highlight of the pre-season was the Portsea camp where 60 plus trained until they dropped followed by a "recovery" session at the Pub. Back at Bulleen in late March we had a great hit out against EFL powerhouse Vermont, ahead of our season opener at home to Collegians.

Fast forward to season's end and a grim picture emerged, the seniors only registered the one win, whilst the 2nds and 3rds struggled under the weight of another season of injuries and absentee's. The good story was our Under 19's fantastically led by new Coach Michael Tarrant. Despite the 5 wins Michael galvanised this group and has set the foundations for further improvement in 2014. We already have a good deal of interest from the 2013 year 12's plus some quality returning. Michael was very well supported by Rob O'Hern as TM, but sad to say no one else. We cannot allow the Under 19 program to be neglected and must in 2014 make it a major focus, Michael has agreed to coach the group again on the understanding that the committee will find the support structures, we must oblige. As I have already stated our depth was an issue so we can ill afford to neglect the Unders.

Major injuries to our top end players for extended periods of time resulted in many changes to the teams on a weekly basis. Matters were not helped by several players opting to travel at various stages in the season without giving sufficient advanced warning. By seasons end it was apparent that the club would be on the lookout for new coaches as both parties agreed to part ways. To the credit of the coaches they all stuck with their beliefs and worked hard to the final siren; we would have dearly loved to have experienced some more wins because no one could fault their work ethic.

Special mention must again go to Ian England and the 3rds crew who had to take on the likes of Xavs and Blues 3 times throughout the season because of it being an 8 team comp (no

Beumaris and no St Bedes Mentone). There is something very wrong with the 3rds comp and the number of forfeits has to point the finger to the fact that it's not working. Under the VAFA's mandatory rules, clubs in Premier are not allowed to field a Club 18 team without fielding a 3rds team. Ocka did another stellar job in managing his squad and was very proud of their commitment and passion.

The two senior teams were again well organised by our mighty Team Managers, David Cordner and Alan Fotheringham, these two did magnificent jobs keeping spirits up when the season was grim. Both fitting Lew Mackrall award winners. The club continued its commitment to provide the playing group with all of its needs (despite the increasing cost of running a driven program). We retained the services of Peak Physio in the form of a dedicated physio to be at training one night a week and attend all senior games on the weekend. Furthermore, we enlisted the services of new trainers thereby allowing Matt to focus on managing his team to ensure we would have sufficient coverage at all times. Other items of expenditure included footballs, training bibs, rub down tables and plenty of consumables.

Sponsorship was again underpinned by the very generous support from Bank of Bendigo, Jellis Craig, Geebung Hotel and Lion Nathan (Boags Draft), not to mention the invaluable "donations" from our fantastic Panther Club members. I know I speak on behalf of the players, coaching staff and committee in stating how appreciative we are of the generous support for everyone.

The club's football budget is expected to further grow with continued emphasis on player welfare, fitness and injury management. It costs us in the vicinity of \$200,000 to run the club so sponsorship is a very important and a challenging part of our program. On that matter I am very pleased to announce we have secured the Yamzar Group as the club's new major sponsor for the next 3 seasons. Owner of Yamzar and club stalwart, John Hands established the business in 2011 to meet the needs of Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes, Clubs and Aged Care Facilities.

The most notable achievements in 2013 were the selection of players in the various VAFA representative teams including Cam Howat, Lachie McQueen Miscamble and Ben Smithwick all playing in the successful VAFA senior team in its victory over the AFL country. James Gaff was rewarded for his excellent year and played in the U19 VAFA team; James played some wonderful games in the seniors and showed he has plenty to offer. It was also great to see Andrew Sloan acquit himself in our senior team as full back despite still under 19. We hope to see these two boys' leaders of our club in a few years.

Off field we maintained our commitment to provide home lunches to our loyal supporters and sponsors. Our Enewsletter, the Schiller Report, was produced weekly ensuring we continue to communicate with our growing database, now 1000. The club's new web site is nearly ready to roll out and will ably support the regular tweets from our club twitter login, we now have 170 followers! The players partied hard and enjoyed several functions including a mid-season cocktail party at the Albert Park Hotel.

The club is indebted to the tireless work undertaken by the entire committee, in particular Craig Wallace as Treasurer and the support provided by Sam Hassett as Secretary. Special mention must go to Cookie for his customary home lunches and the support he extended to Michael Tarrant. The same can be said about David Arthur, Rowan Reid, Rob Smithwick and Mike Ramsay for their behind the bar support on Thursday nights and home games. Thanks to Al Parton in his role as Director of Football, Nick Thompson as Football Operations and Richard Oppy. The contributions made by player's representatives Liam Cooney and James Rimington was invaluable. New committee members Ben Dunshea, Chris Battle and Wes Mudge are now running the sponsorship program and we have already seen the benefit with some new signings. We also had Kristen Hancock join us in 2013 to run the social program, Kristen is a great addition and is already planning for more in 2014.

I would also like to acknowledge the outstanding commitment of the club's trainers under the leadership of Matt Pallozzi, this team did another wonderful job and go about their business with little fuss, the same can be said of John Pompei, our physio.

Carey Grammar School in conjunction with the OCGA, have again been great supporters of the club, both in providing facilities as well as administrative support and understanding. Jim and Erin at Bulleen are always obliging and have made our job all the easier at times.

So in closing I would like to thank you all for the support you have given me. Looking to 2014, there is no off season, we are already in training and have in place plans to ensure we rebound. We must look beyond surviving, everyone else will be making every effort to improve so too must we.

Season 2014 is not far away and we will have a massive challenge, so stay involved please.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. Newton".

*Paul Newton*  
*President, OCGFC*