

Swoop!

The newsletter of the Gumeracha Football Club



Magpies preparing for Spring Offensive

Edition 1 - 2023

20 July 2023

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Winter has been cold and wet (as it should be!) but it's been a tremendous first half for season 2023. After a demanding but hugely beneficial pre-season program under new coaches Mark Weaver (A Grade) and Darren Mahlo (B Grade) the boys were looking good for Round 1. It was just a matter of finding enough players to fill two teams! Who would have thought that would be a problem after our success in 2022?

After lots of meetings, phone calls, deep and meaningful conversations and some coercion(!) we were ready.

2023 has been full of excitement and tragedy. The devastating injury to Danny Leith in our trial match against Barossa Districts caused us all great concern. Fortunately,

Danny is back at work and, supported by his partner, Tash, is doing well. Round 1 against Birdwood under lights brought a tragedy the likes of which none of us has seen on a football field. However, one thing is undeniable – that the Magpie spirit is alive and thriving. We have been resolute despite very difficult circumstances.

We are now in the back half of the season and looking forward to defending our crown this Spring as the best team in Country Division.

In a rather disjointed season disrupted by Easter, the AFL Gather Round and two byes, we have seen a consistently professional effort by our A Grade boys and the Bs, most of whom have not played together, have given our supporters plenty to smile about.

Left: Ethan Lynch taking on his Meadows opposition during a big win at Hybrid-Ag Oval in Round 11.

Below: Mac Scully lays a strong tackle on his opponent at Macclesfield in Round 8. Tackling has been a major feature of our 2023 success.



They are playing with plenty of spirit and each week are building their skills.

As Spring approaches, do what magpies do best – win!

"The meek may inherit the earth but they will never win games of football."

Mick Malthouse

Legendary Australian Football League coach

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S&J Interior Lining

From the President

Has the Gumeracha Football Club ever experienced such a dramatic start to a season? We farewelled our premiership coach, Brett Randell and some key players including Dillon Harding (Sedan-Cambrai) and Jack Hanna (Griffith).

After a really positive pre-season under new coaches Mark Weaver and Darren Mahlo spirits and expectations were high. Two dramatic incidents early in the season - one involving a serious injury to our centre-half back Danny Leith and the other being the tragedy involving Birdwood player Antonio Loiacono in the Round 1 night game - have called on everybody associated with the club to pull together in the strongest possible fashion.

To the credit of all concerned - players, coaches, volunteer staff, committee members and supporters - our club has shown enormous resilience. Naturally, our players and volunteer staff

have been our focus and I am extremely proud of how we have worked through such difficult circumstances.

We have worked very closely with the Birdwood Football Club, the Hills Football League and the SANFL to ensure our club is getting the support it needs while assisting the Roosters to deal with their grief.

We have agreed with Birdwood and the Loiacono family to erect a plaque at the Western end of the ground under the big gum tree to recognise the tragedy.

Despite these incidents our teams have started the season really well with the As undefeated and showing great skill, courage and tenacity. I welcome all of the new players to our club such as Ben Biagi from Tanunda (son of 1980s premiership player Ralph) and Kyle Paech from Onkaparinga Valley as well as a number who have

returned many of whom played in colts teams previously. Let's not forget some who retired prematurely and some who left and quickly came back!

An area which has had significant media focus is concussion. We are at the forefront of concussion management in our chosen sport. Our work with NeuroFlex and the SANFL is leading the way not just for us but all amateur sporting clubs. We will continue to look after the health and wellbeing of our players as our first priority.

I hope to see you at our remaining matches as we push for another successful season.

I remind everybody that we are part of the Gumeracha community and we represent the community. Be proud of that! Play and barrack enthusiastically but with good grace and sportsmanship.



Coach's Corner

It was with sadness that we accepted Brett Randell's resignation after last season's hard fought grand final. It was fitting that Brett enjoyed premiership success and we were pleased to present him with a token of our gratitude at the Guernsey Presentation Night on 20 April.

However, we needed a new coach and, after conducting a

rigorous search, the club appointed Mark Weaver as A Grade coach. We were also very pleased that Darren Mahlo agreed to join us from Lobethal as our new B Grade coach taking over from Michael Parker who is still at the club as you may have noticed! Thanks to 'Parks' for all of his hard work in difficult circumstances.

Mark comes to us with lots of

senior coaching experience at Golden Grove, Tea Tree Gully and Virginia.

He has quickly impressed with his calm demeanour and communication skills. Mark has set his expectations for the season and is very confident about what lays ahead. What's with the shorts in winter though!

All the best to Mark and Darren!



Far Left: Mark Weaver explains what he wants. Below: Coach and senior players Ben and Sam Hanna discuss tactics.

Guernsey Presentation Night

In what is quickly becoming a tradition at the club, guernseys were presented to all players at the clubrooms on Thursday, 20 April. We were pleased to welcome 1970 premiership player, Michael Kunst, to present the guernseys and to offer some advice to the players.

We also took the opportunity to present a framed premiership guernsey and medallion to 2022 premiership coach Brett Randell to thank him for his considerable hard work.

For the new players to the club, receiving the guernseys amongst their new team mates was a great thrill. At least that was until father Ralph Biagi stepped up to present guernsey No. 15 to his son, Ben who has moved to Gum this season.



Top: Dylan Grech receives his guernsey from Michael Kunst. Top Right: Biagis x 2! Proud Dad. Embarrassed son. Right: Brett Randell receives his premiership memento from Club President, Tony Hannaford. Below: Surprise, surprise – Matt Redden gets No. 6!



Concussion Management



For the second season in a row, Gumeracha Football Club undertook baseline concussion testing for all available players during the pre-season. Baseline testing will allow for scientific analysis of a player should they suffer a head injury during the season.

Baselining comprises a series of tests using virtual reality goggles. This method is far superior to the tradi-

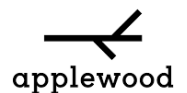
tional SCAT questions asked of a which rely on subjective views.

While the AFL continues to dawdle on implementing scientific testing, we are working towards the best possible approach for our players.

Discussion within the HFL is being undertaken with a view to establishing better procedures.

Left: NeuroFlex baseline concussion testing at Gumeracha.

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Anzac Round



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Our traditional Anzac match against Kersbrook was held at Kersbrook on 29 April as part of Round 2. This year was sadly influenced by the tragedy of Antonio Loiacono and all players were given the opportunity to delay the match until later in the season.

However, all players opted to 'get back to normal'. Collectively they stepped up and fought hard.

Kersbrook President Matt Coad conducted an amended Anzac remembrance ceremony which also reflected on the previous week's incident.

It was an exceptional performance by Charlie Graeber so soon after the Loiacono incident and, after getting the first clearance of the match, he continued valiantly and was awarded the Anzac Medal. The medal is donated jointly by Tim Hanna and the Gumeracha RSL and is awarded to the player who best displays the Anzac attributes of courage, initiative and teamwork.

We had a comfortable victory and saw some good signs from the Bs who took the fight right up to the very experienced Brookers B team.

Top: All players from both clubs gathered at Kersbrook for the annual ANZAC ceremony.

Middle Right: Tim Hanna, father Scott Graeber, ANZAC Medal winner Charlie Graeber and RSL Gumeracha President, Alan Huggins.

Right: Darren Mahlo surveying the B Grade match at Kersbrook during the ANZAC round.



In memory of Antonio Loiacono



*The Gumeracha Football Club
extends its sincere condolences to the family of Antonio Loiacono
and all players, officials and supporters of the
Birdwood Football Club*



Life Members and Sponsors Day

Craig and Christine Jones put together a sumptuous lunch for about 40 life members and sponsors as part of Round 4.

We were pleased to welcome a major new sponsor in GH Haulage Car Carrying

Eileen O'Dea, wife of premiership player Jim, generously donated \$200 to the club which will be used to continue work on our historical collection.



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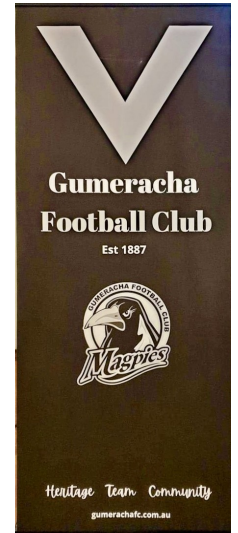
Top: John O'Dea, Alex Tucker and Mark Gevers enjoying the club's hospitality. Centre: Merv Miles and Eileen O'Dea looking back over successes in the 1950s golden era. Left: Pat Strangio from Produce Carton Supplies giving some tips to Mark Weaver at quarter time!

Maczkowiack Cup 2023



Top: Co-captains Jack Parker and Ben Hanna accept the Maczkowiack Cup from former captain-coach Milty Maczkowiack's daughter Dee Neindorf. 'Photo hog' John O'Dea looks on. Left: The scoreboard!

Who would have thought we would have held Kersbrook goalless? Well that's exactly what we did in the A Grade demolition of the Brookers in Round 9. In wintery conditions, the glowing scoreboard tells the story – 9.12 (72) to 0..4 (4)!



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" It's got to be a do-or-die effort. It's got to be a determined effort. You've got to show me all the guts and determination you've got in your body. You've got to inspire me with this last quarter finish. You've been in front all day and you've got to stay there."

**Ted Whitten
VFL Legend**

Reunion Day

A most enjoyable Reunion Day was held on 24 June in conjunction with Round 9. Pst players came from as far away as Streaky Bay and Wentworth to reminisce and catch up with old team mates and friends, some of whom have not been around the club for many years.

This year's them was the '3s' being the 1933 A Grade premiership and the three in a row Colts premierships of 1971–73.

While we didn't have any players from 1933 we did have some descendants including Dennis Bleeze and Mark and Tim Hanna,.

Colts coaches Barry Farley and Ken Quast (also both members of the 1970 A Grade premiership team) glowed in their success. Ken kindly presented his 1970 premiership medal to the club. Tim Hanna gave a run down on the 1933 team in which three players had success in the SANFL – Bill Guthrie, Ken Cornish (both South Adelaide) and Dudley Bell (Glenelg and Norwood). Additionally, eleven players served in uniform during World War II.



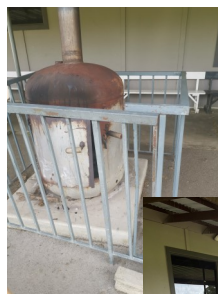
Top: Ken Quast describes the worst trainer he coached – Ian 'Scruff' Hanna with Tim Hanna and Nigel Jamieson (Past Players), Middle Left: GFC's first formal coach—Rex Bleeze in Army uniform. Bottom Left: Rod Hanna, Len Rich and Don Miles. Right: 1933 A Grade and 1973 Colts premierships teams.

What's new at Gum Oval?

Todd Faucett was approached by Carpy and Parks to modify the old fire surround which, while functional, lacked a bit of pizzazz!

Todd redesigned the surround so that people could gather around the fire with a beer or wine and food in an outdoor 'bar like' setting. Topped off with the traditional Magpie logo, the new surround has been a crowd favourite.

Many thanks Todd!



New nets – nice and straight!



Now we just need some straight goal posts!



Old and new surrounds



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At the footy!

Love those magpie sunglasses!



Come on Digger. If you had done a proper pre-season you would be able to keep up with me!



Sun smart pre-season!



That's mud in the eye ump!

Do I really make you that nervous?



Barry Farley
Star Full Forward!



Spray or amputation?



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What's this? Carpy's definition of misery.



A Grade



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As you train, so shall you play!

B Grade



Under 8s!

Club birth-day - 24 May

We are 136years old!

On this day in 1887, Gumeracha drew with Kensington at Gumeracha, 1.6 (12) to 1.2 (8).





We have struggled on a few occasions this season to fill our Bs team. So, we are very lucky to have a ready reserve of young players who can step up at a minute's notice. Off you go lads!

Merchandise

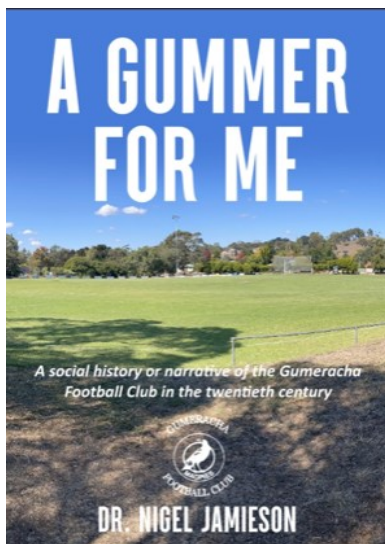


I was so impressed with the Gum merch that I asked my tennis gear supplier to make me up some of the same stuff. Get yours at the bar!

Alex de Minaur at Wimbeldon

New hoodies, polo shirts, jackets, rugby tops and caps!

Past Player News



It's almost finished! The long awaited and much anticipated 'social history' of the mighty Gumeracha Football Club 'A Gummer for me' will 'soon' be available..

To order your copy please contact Nigel Jamieson at gfcppa@gmail.com

It might make a great Christmas gift for your loved one!



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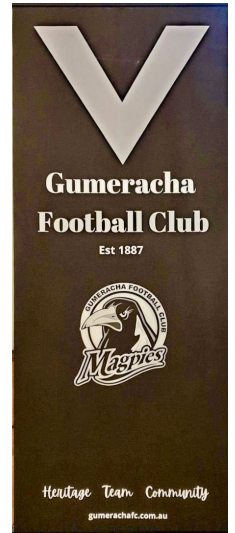
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Gate keepers wanted!

Please help out by doing a stint on the gate every now and then. A club without volunteers is not a strong club. Have a chat to Parks if you can help.



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