

BATHURST JUNIOR RUGBY UNION CLUB INCORPORATED 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Annual General Meeting
Friday 30th October, 2020

OFFICE BEARERS AND OFFICIALS

President	Mike Curtin
Vice President	Mark Burns
Treasurer	Dustin Bartholomew
Secretary	Luke Hutchinson
Registrar	Sophie Anderson
Committee	Phil Lewis
	Megan Bargwanna
	Louise Francis
	Gareth O'Rourke
	Mark Brennan
Under 12s Coaches	Terry Phillips, Luke Hutchinson, Liam O'Hara, Gerard Lang, Michele Hutchinson
Under 10s Coaches	Phil Lewis, Dusty Bartholomew, Craig Grover, Michael Anderson, Gareth O'Rourke, Mark Burns
Under 8s Coaches	Mark Brennan, Peter Rohr, Richard Blackie, Henry Francis
Under 6s Coaches	Phil Carrol, Andrew Smith, Lee Knight

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with pleasure that I submit the annual report for Bathurst Junior Rugby Club for the 2020 season.

2020 has been an extra ordinary year. It has been a year in which COVID-19 has dominated proceedings and changed the way in which people interact for the foreseeable future. It was one which presented new and unique challenges, not just for Rugby Union but for sport, education, socialisation, workplaces and business. The fabric of our society and its interconnectedness has been tested and I am pleased to say that the Bathurst Junior Rugby Club has risen to the occasion.

Our 2020 preparation began with the CWJRU AGM that happened early December 2019. It was at this meeting that a massive shift in the way in which Rugby in the Central West would be run was voted upon and broadly accepted clubs. CWJRU voted to proceed with the progressive merging of the association with CWRU to eventually in 2021, form a single body representing Rugby in the Central West. CWRU under the leadership on Matt Tink (CEO), Jarrod Simpson NSWRU Development Officer and both Presidents, John Maynard(Snr) with and Ben Casey (Jnr) helping to form and shape the new direction.

One of the first steps in this new direction was to immediately shift our age groupings from U7, 9, 11, 13, 15 and 17s to even age groups. This meant that for the first time in the club's history we had an U6, 3 x8Us , 2 x U10 and U12 team in the competition. This move to even age groups in conjunction with the further adaptation and application of the Rugby Australia Walla Pathway has strengthened the Central Wests ability to align itself with other zones. The understanding of Walla Law continues to be lacking though, and this will be a focus of the association, developing this understanding in 2021.

With these in mind, BJRU set about preparing for its season, again, successfully implementing a Twilight 7s program in February/March to begin preparing players for the 2020 season. We were able to complete 4 Friday's of training and playing with many new families engaging in our club and then it happened....

I posted the following to both our web page and Facebook site on Monday 16th of March, after Rugby Australia released their statement. Registrations were closed immediately in our club and across the zone. All sport across Australia soon followed suit.

Monday 16 March, 2020

The following statement has been released this afternoon by Rugby Australia.

"Today, following a meeting of the National Development Panel, Rugby Australia along with the State and Territory Member Unions have unanimously agreed to postpone all Community Rugby until the first week of May, effective immediately. This recommendation covers Rugby matches, Rugby training and face-to-face Rugby education courses. Although this decision has not been made lightly, it has been made with the interests of the participants, families and the broader community as the priority."

As a result, effective immediately, all training, including Under 12s and Twilight Sevens is cancelled. We will update you when we have more info...

The month of May arrived, and the Pandemic was still very much active, children were not back to school and things were looking like we may not get a 2020 season off the ground. We usually start our Walla Gala Days in May and our U12 side should have played in April. I again wrote to our member parents in mid-May

declaring that there was no definitive restart date. CJRU cancelled the state championships and all representative Rugby for 2020 was abandoned.

“BJRC along with CWJRU and its member clubs are looking for ways to engage our players in term 3, moving forwards. Clearly when looking at the two documents providing our framework, you can expect any rugby that is played this year to look very different. Walla Gala Days will not happen in 2020. 100 people is not going to see such an event being able to be played. There may be U12 matches but each team will be restricted to one guardian only in attendance per player. There may be smaller intra club games able to be played at Walla level however, the committee, myself and the CWJRU committee will meet to make decisions about how and when this will be able to happen. The key here is to ensure we are abiding by the framework in place and ensuring that any activity remains legal and safe for all club members.”

Fortunately, in my role as CWJRU Walla Chair, I was privy to some of the machinations operating at higher levels and the AIS rebooting sport documents gave some indication of how things may return to normal. Governments and health departments in NSW handled the situation well and eventually we were able to return our U12 players to training on July 1. This was unimpeded but they had to turn up ready to train with no spectators, train and leave immediately. By July 25th our U12s were able to start their condensed season with a victory over the Orange Emus. It was around mid-July that the lifting of outdoor gatherings to 500 in number gave Walla Gala Days a glimmer of hope.

Walla Gala Days as we knew them, had to be restructured and sorted out. Fortunately, with registrations lower than normal among all clubs due to the hasty closure back in March, as a presidential group, we decided that the best option was to split the zone into two. An Eastern and Western Zone. Up to 6 clubs would be in attendance across two Gala Days in the Zone on any given Sunday for a shortened 8-week season. To keep numbers down, only one parent was permitted at the Gala Day, with no siblings allowed. This meant that numbers hovered close to, but not over the 500-person mark.

The real positive of the “Split Zone Gala Day” format was that parents had much shorter travel with no long-distance gala days as has been seen in the past. The furthest Bathurst parents travelled this year was to Cowra. To ensure parents and players spent the minimum amount of time in any location Gala days were also tweaked by changing from 3 games of 26 minutes each, to two games of 36 minutes. This meant less waiting around by parents and longer games for greater continuity. I am pleased to say that these ideas came out of the Bathurst Committee and was first tested at our home Gala Day, which occurred on Sunday the 2nd of August. The Result was that the new format was a resounding success and within a fortnight it was being used at both Eastern and Western Gala Days on a Sunday in the Central West with close to unanimous parent support.

Bathurst Junior Rugby participated in 6 of the 8 rounds intended with Millthorpe’s first gala day abandoned due to heavy snow and Molong’s due to heavy rain. It was a season to remember, not so much for the results, but for the resilience showed by our committee, coaches, players and parents to make it work. Sacrifices of not seeing children play were made by parents to ensure that the players were able to continue to play Rugby. For that, I thank all our parents and grandparents for their cooperation and am grateful that the season although altered was able to proceed.

We hosted a presentation of sorts on the Final Sunday of the October School Holidays in an outdoor setting. Daylight Savings due to the much later finish of the season enabled us to have the day outdoors, a necessary concession of the COVID restrictions. Due to the short season we made the decision to present the players with their jerseys with the support from sponsors. I am happy to report that Paddy Phillips was awarded the President’s Shield. Paddy would have played in the Central West U12 side this year had the

rep season proceeded despite only being an U11 this year. He was elected captain of our U12 side and has led his U12 team by example. I congratulate him on winning this award, the highest that our club can bestow.



To our coaching staff, I would like to thank you for your love of the game and the fostering of that with our players. Your selflessness, patience and care of both the players and the club in general is highly appreciated and admired. It was indeed a difficult year but your input is truly respected under the conditions.

Committee members had more than a few hurdles to jump this year and did so with cool heads. The group helped to steer the club through a storm which will be remembered forever by this generation. I thank them for their time, counsel and tireless work in ensuring that the season progressed with the minimum of fuss.

There are literally hundreds of hours involved in running a club like Bathurst Junior Rugby Club. These have generally been soaked up by the committee members who have done an outstanding job in organising, implementing, structuring and running everything from training to the wonderful gala days that we have seen this year. These people give up their time week after week, to ensure that our season runs successfully. From the very first meeting in early November through to the final committee meeting, they have given their unwavering support to ensure that this club that we all enjoy so much prospers, even in a COVID affected year. I would like to thank them for their time and their energies in the last twelve months.

I also would personally like to thank all our sponsors for the 2020 season. Without their support and continued involvement in our club, we would not be able to give the opportunities to our players that have been afforded them. We greatly appreciate their continued support and look forward to our continuing relationship in future seasons.



Bathurst Rugby Union Club, Greg Reid, and the senior committee deserve a vote of thanks for their continued support of the junior club. The use of an Ashwood Park and the club facilities, owned by them, is a wonderful bonus for us and we could not do it without their continued support. I would also like to thank Bathurst Regional Council for their continued maintenance of the grounds. Our relationship with the senior club has grown markedly over the last 3 seasons to the point that senior executive committee members of both clubs have developed a memorandum of understanding that hopefully will be passed at an SGM immediately before this report is presented.

In principal, it allows for the first time, a merger between the senior and junior rugby clubs in Bathurst. Bathurst Rugby Club will be responsible for the running of Rugby in our town from U6 through to 1st XV Grade. The combined resources of the two clubs will ensure a bright future for rugby and if approved will be a legacy of the two committees who both unanimously voted to support it. It means one club working to the common goal of developing and presenting rugby for the people of the community.

After serving on committee for the last five years, 2 as secretary and 3 as president, I thank the club for putting its faith in my leadership. It is time for new directions and a fresh perspective on the junior rugby

structures. Serving on any committee is a wonderful experience and one which I am grateful to have had. It presents a wonderful opportunity to show our children that a community is about contribution and care. It challenged me at times and given me much satisfaction. It is now time that this chapter ends and a new one begins.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Alison, and my three sons, Eddie, Will and Xavier for their continued support over the last three seasons. Being president of a club like Bathurst Junior Rugby Club, is no small task. It has involved time away from family, travelling to meetings, dealing with issues related to training and games and being a delegate to numerous meetings of CWJRU. Without their love and support, the completion of this task would not be possible. I look forward to spending a little bit more time with them as we leave season 2020 behind us. I look forward to watching the junior committee continue to develop our game in Bathurst continue to steer the club on its journey. With new leadership, new ideas and new beginnings, the future looks exciting. I will remain as a parent, volunteer and perhaps a coach and I look forwards to the exciting opportunities that 2021 brings.

Yours in Rugby,

Mike Curtin

President, Bathurst Junior Rugby Club.



UNDER 6S REPORT

U6's Season Report

The mighty U6's Bulldogs!!

Right from the beginning, at our first training session, it was obvious that we were in for a great season with an enormous amount of enthusiasm shown from all the keen U6 players.

Phil and Struth had a great time coaching the boys and girls and their participation was amazing throughout the season. Covid wasn't going to stop this team! The very first game in Bathurst showed we have a team full of future superstars and the following week didn't curb any enthusiasm with the saturating rains of Cowra.

Each week, the team developed and built confidence and developed their key skills. They all showed they were really enjoying and understanding Rugby. As a team, we focused on running forward, passing backwards and two hand touch in defence. By the end of the season, the U6's demonstrated additional skills such as structured training drills, kicking and passing accuracy. The eagerness to learn tackling was the highlight of the final training session.

Well done to all players - Amelia, Ben, Danica, George, Hugo, Kayden, Oisin, Oliver, Theo, Will and Xavier for all your efforts and we look forward to seeing your rugby careers develop. Last and certainly not least, thanks to all committee members and parents that stuck through Covid, the rain and the winter weather to make this season a success.

Well done to all the mighty U6s.

Thank you and cheers,

Lee, Phil & Struth



UNDER 8'S REPORT

Under 9 Blue Season Report

2020

Wow, what a season – 2020 has been an unusual year, and this year's rugby season was no exception! Whilst Walla's does not have the same competition element of the older age groups, we aimed to ensure rugby fundamentals were developed, as well as having an emphasis on fun.



Firstly, the committee. They put in countless hours, while working with Central West Junior Rugby and the other clubs in the region to provide a fantastic season, when it could have easily been written off. Our experience continues to show that the pre-season rugby 7s format provides an edge over our competition right from round one, despite the delayed start to this year's regular season.

The generosity of our sponsors allows us a great facility, great equipment and other resources to put our players on the field each week. Thank you.

With a large playing group, outside assistance was provided and well appreciated. Thank you to Candice Brennan, our U8 team manager. Candice organised our player group weekly as well as provided team updates. Dean Sage, James Gilbert, Leigh Hands, Phil Humphries, Pat Bird, (and apologies to any one not mentioned by name) helped out on and off the field with a number of activities, training drills, offering advice and running subs on game day. When considering training, game time and travel, all parents displayed great commitment to their child's sport. Additional thanks to those who offered and washed jerseys.



Our strength in numbers allowed us to field three U8 teams week on week, giving all players regular, consistent game time. Blood, sweat, tears and cheers were seen throughout the season, in unpredictable climates of frost, fog, wind and rain. Not every player will receive an award, but we would be hard pressed to find a player who did not improve their skills, show team commitment or display great sportsmanship this year. We hope your child continues at Bathurst Junior Rugby Club and look forward to seeing you next year.

Richard Blackie

Mark Brennan

Henry Francis

Peter Rohr

UNDER 10'S REPORT

U10 Blue.

With 31 juniors registered for this year the under 10's were split into two even teams of varying abilities. A large success for the club indeed. A late start to the season due to the COVID -19 pandemic led to training sessions being held on Wednesday and of Friday evenings. This turned out to be a real success for players and coached alike. Skill progression and development certainly improved the team's ability to compete on the field. Most notably was the kids' successful fixture against their long-term rivals Milthorpe, never beaten. Strong performances up front from powerhouse forwards Oliver Gruen, Harry Grover, Henry Schumacher and Archie Lewis set the tone for the fixture. Jock Robinson combined well in the backs with Nate Brennan and Sam McGregor to score some excellent try's out wide. Match highlights certainly came from set piece plays at the lineout who saw Henry Schumacher run 40 meters to score a beautiful try in the corner. Winners for the first time against Millthorpe the lads were certainly chuffed with their performance.

Other season memories certainly came from our wet gala day at Cowra. Cold and wet the lads excelled in the conditions. Our first fixture against Orange City was a whitewash with Bulldogs running all over their counterparts. Of note was Rory Hutchinson who ran 60 meters to score a beautiful solo try from the base of the ruck. Rory loved the dummy pass and individual attack from halfback. Not to be outdone was Archie Bartholemew who scored a similar try just five minutes later in the corner. Riding high on their success the lads continued to impress and play some strong rugby against Cowra. Sam Rohr, Harvey Francis and Nate Brennan all had strong games. Aggressive tackling from Digby Adams, Archie Lewis and Henry Webb kept the opposition pinned in their own half for most of the match. Again, Jock Robinson scored some spectacular tries from one on one ball steals. As a spectator and coach, it was a pleasure to watch.



Our performance at the Orange Emus gal day was certainly one of best. Our first match against Orange Emus Black saw the lads step up and tackle like men possessed. Great combination work from restarts

saw Nate Brennan kick to the sideline for a flying Jock Robinson to score a beautiful try in the corner relatively untouched. Newcomer to rugby this year Joseph Carroll had also had a strong game defending well out wide and making numerous try saving tackles. Harvey Francis came out of his skin and stood at first receiver hitting the ball up making the advantage line all the time. Henry Schumacher and Archie Lewis had outstanding games up. Brutal cleanouts from Archie at the breakdown certainly made the opposition think twice about shielding front their ball at the tackle contest. This was certainly our best performance of the season. Our second match against Wellington Redbacks continued in the same manner as our first match. Overall, it was a strong showing from the Bulldog lads.

A relatively short and compact season the lads across the age group performed admirably well. Catch pass, tackling and ruck skills certainly improved. I would like to thank all the coaches who helped throughout the season. Of note are Dusty Bartholemew, Craig Grover, Michael Anderson, Mark Burns and Gareth O'Rurke. Without their support at training, we would not be able to perform and compete at the high standard of which we currently are. I look forward to another strong season next year as we progress to full field rugby in the Under 12's.

Mr Philip Lewis

Coach

U10 Gold

Even with the challenges of Covid, and unprecedented drought breaking rain , Under 10 Gold displayed some great running rugby in 2020. For the first time we split some training sessions into backs and forwards with an attempt to introduce structure into scrums and lineouts. Whilst this was hard in a condensed season the whole under 10 squad displayed some promising signs going forward into 2021.

The Under 10 Gold forward pack was the younger of the 2 teams with 5 players being under 9's. This didn't faze them and they matched it with all opposition throughout the year. Our forwards consisted of a front row of Charlie O'Rourke and Riley McNiven as props and Tadhg Patterson as Hooker in his first year of Walla Rugby. Our second row was a fearsome rotation of Cooper Gilbert, Harry Dubowski and Nash McWilliam-Gibson and lastly our always solid Lock was Hugh Anderson.

Our backline put on many tries in 2020 with most starting at the breakdown with our fiery little scrum half Olivia Meyers. Our 3 primary ball players who continue to improve their teamwork and combinations were Edward (Ned) Anderson, Connor Burns and Will Curtin. These players were complimented in the backline by utilities Jack Bird, Harrison Leet and Khaelan Lamond. These 3 players ability to fit in anywhere, run the ball and make tackles improved dramatically throughout the season and proved to be fantastic asset to the team.

As Coaches of Under 10 Gold in 2020 we would like to thank The Club, Committee, Sponsors and Parents for their commitment to fitting in a Rugby season this year. We would also like to thank the other members

of the under 10 coaching squad Phil Lewis, Dusty Bartholomew and Craig Grover for another great season of Walla rugby. We look forward to see everyone in 2021.

Thankyou,

Michael Anderson and Gareth O'Rourke



UNDER 12'S REPORT

2020 U12's Report

2020 was a great year for the powerful U12 Bulldogs. The first year for all at the competitive level. Mix this with a pandemic, new age structure & shortened season, it made for an unforgettable year.

Due to large numbers of players (26 registered) we were able to field a full side for all 9 matches we played, a real challenge for the coaches managing 11 reserves at times, this is something we need to learn from for future years. Our squad consisted of an even mix of 11 & 12 year olds with a huge range of rugby experience and skills.

The whole squad was new to 15 a side competitive rugby having all come from Wallas the previous year, due to the change of age groups in 2020, which we believe is a great move by CWJRU.



The commitment of all the players was brilliant, when injured players came to games to support the team, continued training when they weren't available to play, played injured at times and played in positions they were not comfortable with for the betterment of the group. Qualities that did not go unnoticed during the season.

Under the expert tutelage of coaches Terry Phillips, Gerard Lang, Luke Hutchinson and Liam O'Hara the squad progressed and developed on a weekly basis and by the end of the season they were showing some great skills in all facets of the game, particularly in set piece, passing and defense. The idea of teamwork

really began to take hold in the latter stages of the season. The sportsmanship they showed throughout the season is to be commended and it was second to none across the competition.

At training the team was exposed to various drills to work on skills and to develop team work. One drill the team excelled in was that of tackling, rucking & mauling, both on the bags and each other. This will assist them in their development through their future progression in rugby. We always instilled defense and controlled aggression wins rugby matches!

2020 saw a high level of involvement from the parents at training and on game day, which was greatly appreciated by the coaches and the players. The players loved showing off their skills to their parents and I think some of the parents really enjoyed reliving some of the old glory days! Big thanks to all those parents that helped us along the way and their understanding given the ever changing situations caused by COVID.

Success does not come without a lot of support: a big thankyou to all the sponsors in 2020 for their generosity in helping to keep the club and kids on the field, to the parents for their dedication to the players and club through training and travelling to the matches, to our President Mike Curtin and the whole committee for all their efforts during the season and last but not least: the coaches (well done gents!) and our totally awesome manager Michele, for giving their time and knowledge to the squad to ensure a great time was had by all and that we followed the CWJRU/COVID rules (thanks Michele).



The biggest thanks go to the players – their attitude, commitment and effort during the season was outstanding. They are all a credit to Bathurst Junior Rugby Club and their parents.

The Bulldogs squad proved a real handful to all opposition teams throughout the season. Since coming together in February/March they became a real force in the competition and this was noted by our opposition on more than one occasion. The level of dedication and willingness to learn and support their team mates was a pleasure to watch.

We hope to see you all back playing next year (at dogs or at high school) and look forward to sharing in a successful 2021 season.

Yours in Rugby,

Terry Phillips, Gerard Lang, Luke Hutchinson, Liam O'Hara & Michele Hutchinson.

SPONSORS

Thanks to all our sponsors - amongst many things your support provides to the club, it means we have training jerseys, shorts & socks for players to keep & playing jerseys for every team!

[BAR Constructions](#)

[Steeline Roofing Centre](#)

[Ray White Emms Mooney](#)

[Bathurst RSL Club](#)

[Pacific Biologics](#)

- Bellacon Fly Control

[Bowman Dental](#)

[Kelly + Partners Blue Mountains Central Tablelands](#)

[TFH Hire Services, Bathurst](#)

[Intersport Bathurst](#)

As a club, we are ever grateful for the support our sponsors show us and we ask that all parents, players and supporters patronize our sponsors whenever possible.