



The Annual Report of the Epping Eastwood
Football Club Inc. for Season 2016

Presented to the Annual General Meeting
Held Tuesday 25th October 2016

Tonight I am pleased to submit the 64th Annual Report of the Epping Eastwood Football Club for your consideration and acceptance.

This season saw the retirement of our long-time President, Mr Ian Kendal. Ian's contribution to the Club over the past several decades has been phenomenal and once again I would like to express our great appreciation for all that he has done to mould the Club into the successful operation it is today. Of course, Ian continues to contribute, and his advice and guidance over the past year has been invaluable.

Ian's absence from "full-time" contribution has been a challenge which the Management Committee has had to rise to. A redistribution of workload saw a range of tasks falling to others for the first time. I would like to acknowledge all the hard work put in by our Committee members (and others) in keeping things running smoothly in this transition year.

Comparison of Team Numbers for 2016 / 2015 / 2014

<i>Teams</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2014</i>
Minis (U6-U9)	10	9	11
Juniors (U10-U17)	12	13	14
Seniors (U18+, AA, O35, O45)	14	15	15
Premier League (1st, Res)	2	2	2
Total Teams	38	39	42
Total Players	536	555	559

Our player numbers have been reasonably stable over the past few years, although the loss of one all-age team this season saw a corresponding small reduction in player numbers.

Our largest junior age group was in U16s where we fielded four teams, one in each available division. We continued with a strong senior cohort and had the third highest number of senior teams of any club in GHFA.

Minis numbers remain a little disappointing. We face strong competition for recruitment in the younger age groups from our many neighbouring clubs. The challenge for the Management Committee going forward will be to find ways of improve numbers of our youngest players.

Across the board we had a reasonably good success rate for our teams in terms of the competition. Four teams finished Premiers, so congratulations to our U15/3, U18/2, O35/2 and O45/1 teams for their terrific performances.

Six teams progressed to their respective Grand Finals. These were U15/3, U18/2, AA/4, AA/13, O35/2 and O45/1. Three of these were successful in winning the Championship, AA/13, O35/2 and O45/1. I should also mention that the O35/2 team went through the season undefeated, a huge achievement for a team stepping up to this division for the first time.

The O45/1 team progressed into the Champion of Champions competition, playing against the best O45 teams in NSW. Creditable performances playing quality football against strong opposition saw them into the Grand Final. Unfortunately they were unable to clean up in the last game, going down 1-2 to a team containing ex-professionals, but still an excellent result and one to make us proud.

Premier League were defending their 2015 Premiership in first grade. A number of injuries to key players saw them eventually finish in 6th, although they were in or close to the top 4 for much of the season.

It is always gratifying to see the progression of our players through the junior ranks and into Premier League. This year we had seven new players in the squad who played the 2015 season in U18 and U17 teams at the Club. A couple of those even saw regular time in First Grade. An influx of young players into Reserve Grade combined with the more experienced players being pushed up into First Grade to cover for injuries made it a challenging year, and our Reserve Grade team finished in 8th place. However we are confident that the experience has done them well and that results will improve as these young players mature.

The weather is always an interesting, if uncontrollable factor. This year we were lucky enough to go through the first half of the season without disruption. However rain in the latter stages led to a few rescheduled rounds and the sudden end of season for most teams with the last week of the round robin being cancelled.

Several of our teams had the interesting experience of playing on the new synthetic field at Pennant Hills Park. This excellent playing surface is useable in all weathers and was certainly a dramatic improvement over the conditions we are used to, especially towards the end of the season when many grounds are reduced to being mostly dirt. Expect to see more of this type of field in future. Christie Park is about to undergo an upgrade which will see two synthetic fields in place for the 2018 season. ELS Hall is currently underway and should be ready for the start of 2017. The YMCA ground at West Epping has also started work and their new synthetic field is expected to be completed in June. At over a million dollars each, these fields do not come cheap, but the increase in usage

and their all-weather nature makes them a great investment. Will we ever have this at Boronia Park? Perhaps it's not so many years away.

On the subject of grounds, we had a bit of a mixed year. Epping Oval held up very well and the usual nightmare on the cricket square didn't seem to eventuate. Boronia Park turned into a beach after council applied 75 tonnes of sand to level the surface and protect the grass. It was not really an ideal situation but we did manage to play on it every week except those when the entire round was called off due to rain. We are in discussions with Parramatta Council at present for improving the surface for next season.

On the bright side, Boronia Park received an overall upgrade with Council investing heavily in the surrounds. This saw new pathways and lighting throughout the park, an upgraded playground and new amenities block in the lower area. Of direct benefit to us was the extended seating in the spectator area. Plans are in place for new fencing at the Northern end of the ground as well as extending the high fencing to the East, expected to be built over summer.

GHFA also experienced some management changes with the appointment of a new General Manager, Mr Mark Lockie. Mark took over from Kay Iredale who retired in 2015. There were also some new faces on the Board and a new Chairperson, Mrs Helen Armson (previously President of North Epping Rangers). There were a number of new initiatives as a result and we expect more new ideas to emerge in 2017. The draw had a few hiccoughs as the new management came to grips with things, but we appreciated the willingness to move things around for the benefit of the teams involved.

Our canteen provides a vital source of income to the Club as well as being a benefit to our many players and spectators. Once again we provided temporary facilities and a BBQ at Epping Oval for the morning minis crowd. I must acknowledge the efforts of Jarryd Mitchell in keeping this going, as well as all the volunteers who helped out through the season. The canteen at Boronia Park has been a bit quiet in the mornings but did a brisk trade during Premier League home games. Ian Smith's efforts continue to make it one of the best canteens in our Association.

The continuing shift to Social Media for all forms of news and communication has arguably left us a little behind the times. This will be addressed in 2017 with the proposed expansion of our internet presence into Facebook, Twitter, etc. Our players (and their parents) increasingly shun email, web pages and telephone calls for communication (what's a letter?!), relying on Facebook

groups, instant messaging and portable devices. Catching up with this will be vital to our ongoing engagement with all our members.

The Treasurer will present the Financial Report and you will see that we have again had a small financial surplus in 2016. Our sponsorship from the Epping Club has increased but we have not been able to find other sponsors yet. More effort will be put into developing attractive sponsorship packages for 2017 and we hope this will attract other sponsors. Careful financial management has been a hallmark of the Club for many years now. The resultant healthy bank balance will allow us to look into more significant improvements in the future, or provide a buffer against any unforeseen expenditure. We expect to run at a small deficit in 2017 as the replacement of a number of sets of team jerseys is overdue and we are trying to get a more consistent appearance across the Club.

Our Annual Dinner was once again held at The Epping Club and this year was held in honour of Ian Kendal. We hosted many guests from GHFA and other Clubs who wanted to show their appreciation for Ian's contributions, not only to our Club but also the Association as a whole. It was certainly an enjoyable evening and a chance to catch up on some Club history as well.

The Club Picnic was unfortunately affected by rain, with the showers starting just as the picnic kicked off. In spite of the weather, the event was well-attended and plenty of fairy-floss and sausages were consumed. Presentations took place in the home dressing room which gave the young players a glimpse into our Premier League's den. A big thank you to all our volunteers on the day who helped out with BBQ, fairy-floss machine, etc.

I would like to say a big thank you to our coaches and managers who make this Club possible. We all love our football but our Coaches and Managers take the extra step and put in the effort to make sure that our players are learning more and getting organised to go out and play. Hopefully we find more like you!

To our players we thank you for your achievements as well as your good behaviour on (and off) the field. We had no serious problems that required disciplinary action which is gratifying. It would be good to be able to reduce the number of minor infractions too. We're not the worst but we're not quite the best yet either in this respect. The number of yellow cards is a bit higher than we would like and in particular we want to eliminate dissent against referees. We don't always like the match officials but they are an essential part of our game and should be highly valued.

I would like to thank our hard-working Management Committee for all their efforts in 2016. This terrific bunch of people put in their time week after week to make sure our players make it out on the field.

In particular I should mention Mr Seb DiBella who stepped into the Registrar position this season. Particularly in pre-season this is a highly demanding role requiring many hours (hundreds of hours!) of work. Please consider Seb when you register next year and don't make him chase you for photos, payment, etc.

I would also like to single out Mr Ian Smith and Mr Scott McGoogan, both of whom go above-and-beyond to make sure everything gets done. Their work this season has made this potentially difficult year into a smooth (I won't say effortless) transition.

And as my predecessor was so fond of saying, GO YOU TIGERS GO!

Chris Salmon
President