

GLADIATORS



2023 YEARBOOK



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The 2023 year at Gladiators was a year of growth, where we had 525 players making up 24 teams, 6 more than in 2022. We welcomed 70 new players in the U8 division and a record number of girls, with over 100 female players.

We had 7 teams make the finals (6 in 2022):

1. U11 Winnett Division 1
2. U12 Girls Division 1
3. U12 Gnatts Division 2
4. U14 Girls Division 2
5. U15 Newton Division 2
6. U15 Hangers Division 5
7. U16 Girls Division 1B

The U11 Winnett and U12 Girls teams made the grand final (U11 W victorious and U12 girls a very competitive runner up), U12 Gnatts and U14 girls lost in the preliminary final and the remaining teams went down in week 1 of the finals.

Our U10 girls won the lightning premiership in 2023, continuing our success of recent years at U10 level.

There were some individual accolades as well. Sacha Demetriou and Flynn Adler were in the U14 Yarra Magpies program and Bart Leeton in the U15s. Bart also made it into Team Vic 15 and under for the School Sports Australia national championships.

We also had strong performances by our players in YJFL B&F voting with one league B&F winner (Oscar Palmer U/15 Div 5) and several top 3 finishers.

Our Auskick program also continued strongly at Righetti and at Auburn South. The YJFL ran the U7 competition again in 2023 where we fielded several teams. We hope this bodes well for the U8s in 2024. An are of focus for us in 2024 is to be more closely involved with Auskick. AFL Vic are also considering a new program in 2024 aimed at 8-12 year old which we are considering.

From a social perspective, we saw continued success with our Friday night drinks including raffles, prizes and a great turnout. The younger players and their parents particularly enjoyed these nights which will continue in 2024. We also had a very successful mid-year function which raised nearly \$20,000 that will go towards funding a new scoreboard at Righetti.

A year at Gladiators can't go by without a call out Jan Gnatt who as always went above and beyond again this year. We are all very grateful for your tireless efforts, commitment and passion for our great club.

Dave Barnaby
Glen Iris Gladiators President

BEST AND FAIREST

U/10 Cooper Edward Chamberlain

U/10 Winnett Jesse Jamieson

U/11 Cooper Jayden Millie

U/11 Winnett Callum Lehmann

U/12 Gnatt Ed Barnaby Lawson Foley

U/12 Hanger Joe Ramasamy

U/13 Gnatt Marcus Oh

U/13 Winnett Oliver Barnao

U/14 Gnatt Sacha Demetriou

U/15 Newton Oliver Condon

U/15 Hanger Nick Pritchard Oliver Abela

U/16 Gnatt Dan Welford Harrison Hewitt

U/10 Girls Mila Carroll

U/12 Girls Evie Brooke Lucy Devine

U/14 Girls Sofia Barnaby

U/16 Girls Emma Johnston

SPECIAL AWARDS

YJFL Best and Fairest U/15 Div 5 Winner

Oscar Palmer

GLADIATORS CLUB AWARDS

Ian Hanly Memorial Trophy

Henry Cooch

U/10 Winnett

Justin "JOC" O'Connor Commemorative Award

Lachie Downing

U/10 Cooper

Eleanor Brown Encouragement Award

Isabella Wain

U/10 Girls



100 GAMES IN 2023

Gus Sheehan

Teddy Symons

Alex Messina

Harrison Hewitt

Monty McCann

Nick Pritchard

Jack Kelly (including Surrey Park games)

Ford Thompson (including Richmond games)

U8 BRYAN

In their maiden season, the Under 8 Team Bryan Glen Iris Gladiator Footy Team embarked on a journey that was nothing short of extraordinary. These young boys showed up giving their all weekly, showcasing an unwavering commitment to the team that left no doubt about their love for the game.

For the boys, this season marked the transition from three years of interrupted Auskick to full-fledged competition. Coach Monty played a pivotal role in their development, attending every training session and match with unwavering enthusiasm. His ability to keep the boys engaged, teaching them to play in 'their zones' and instilling a deep love for the game was truly outstanding.



What made Coach Monty even more remarkable was his unique approach to recognizing each of the boys' efforts. He didn't just celebrate the players with the most goals or possessions; he applauded the ones with the dirtiest knees or those who came tantalizingly close to touching the ball. His inclusive coaching style made each child feel valued and appreciated, creating an environment where each one could perform. We were all fortunate to have such an influential and fun coach for our boys in their first season of footy. Thanks to him, there's no doubt that these young players will eagerly re-sign for the Gold & Blue next season.

From the very first game, cousins Ben and Louis wowed the parents on the sidelines by demonstrating how to get the ball out of the center and deliver it to the towering figure of Sammy G. Sammy kept the opposition guessing by gracefully swinging onto his left boot and launching goals from all corners of the park, leaving the defenders scratching their heads in disbelief.



The StKeys crew of Max, Anton, Henry, Oliver, Freddy and Bailey, brought their defensive prowess from the basketball court to the footy field, forming an unbreakable back line. Their collective strength turned them into a formidable force that opponents struggled to breach.

The sneaky fast wingman trio - Noah, Huddy and Alec - showed their speed and cunning as they weaved around the boundary line. It was no surprise that Coach Monty lost countless packs of footy cards throughout the year in their running races. These boys not only had a need for speed, but also a knack for keeping spectators on the edge of their seats.

Lachie's towering marks, Tommy's lightning quick snaps and Hudson's fierce tackling were the pillars of Team Bryans dominance. Their individual brilliance, combined with the teamwork and camaraderie of the entire squad, would have easily secured the premiership this season - if they had only played for one.

A heartfelt thanks goes out to the parents who played an energetic role throughout the year. Your support and volunteer efforts were instrumental in making these weekly events possible. Without you, this season would have been much like my Tigers - disappointing.

To the entire Glen Iris Gladiator family, you transformed training sessions, functions and BBQ's into enjoyable gatherings that felt like home. Your sense of community and camaraderie added an extra layer of joy to the season.

Lastly, a shout out to Jan, the master organizer who kept everything running seamlessly. Your dedication behind the scenes did not go unnoticed and we extend our sincere thanks.

As the first season comes to a close, the Gold and Blue jerseys worn by these budding footy stars will forever hold the memories of this remarkable journey. With Coach Monty's guidance and the unwavering support of the parents and the Glen Iris Gladiator Family, the future looks incredibly bright for these boys.

U8 COOPER

This was the first season of football for the Cooper team and it was my pleasure to be their coach. They are all remarkable boys and, over the course of the year, they showed tremendous growth. Not just in developing their football skills, but also their commitment to each other and the team. The journey this season was about more than just wins and losses. It was about fostering a love for the game, learning the fundamentals, and building great friendships on and off the field.

Throughout the season we rotated the boys through all the positions on the ground, including the bench. This allowed them to have a well-rounded experience of all parts of the game and the different skills required. For example; William G, William H, Hugo and Mason loved going hard for the footy and kicking long into the forward line. Harry, Henry, Zac, Alfie and Tommy G played as forwards that could kick goals from everywhere. Fraser, Oliver and Alexander L were often seen streaming out of the backline with the ball under their arm, while Lawson and Alexander S were the last line of defense on numerous occasions.





A highlight of the season was the Round Robin in Thornbury in May, where the boys thrived and won the majority of their matches. Despite the cold and miserable day, they brought energy and enthusiasm which meant it was a fun experience for everyone.

We also had a couple of great social functions throughout the year. The first was at the Malvern Vale hotel at the start of the season, which brought the kids and parents together in a fun and friendly environment. The second was an end of season barbeque, where it was clear to see the great connections that the boys had formed throughout the year.

Of course, the organizing of the season, training and match days is a team effort too. We are so grateful to assistant coach Rich Harley, who turned up to every training and match day full of encouragement for the kids to do their best, team manager Jane McGill, who was the glue that kept us together thanks to her amazing organization skills, and first aid officer Calum Henderson, who dedicated numerous hours to completing the training and was always there for the kids on match day if they got injured. And of course a huge thank you to all the other parents and family members who volunteered throughout the year to ensure the team was well supported and had lots of fun.

As we move forward, my hope is that our players continue to have fun and continue their passion for footy with the same dedication that they've shown this year.

In closing, I want to once again thank each and every one of you for being part of our Under 8s Cooper team this season. It has been great fun coaching your boys and I hope to see you again next year.



U8 GNATTS

April 2023 saw a group of young boys come together, many of whom didn't know each other, for their first season of footy. Our first game in the school holidays saw a depleted side but the following week the boys came together, beginning to get to know each other and developing their skills. From an initial quiet first training, Friday nights became an energized affair! As the adults were winding down for the week it seemed the boys were just firing up and harnessing their energy was clearly the key to a successful training session! Some basic drills followed by a modified game seemed to support their skill development and maintain their attention.

It was great to see their enthusiasm for the game and their friendship grow with each game. In particular it was great to see each member of the team bring their unique self to the group and in doing so supporting the growth of their teammates. By mid season the boys confidence and skills had grown and so to had their success as a team and as individual players. Equally their Charter Strengths became evident bringing leadership, judgement, bravery and persistence to name but a few to the team. Training was also clearly paying off as they started to look to handball when in trouble and run in numbers to support each other.

Half time snakes proved more popular than oranges but given our second half was usually better than the first they clearly hit the spot. Equally our mascot the squeaky chicken seemed to have a positive impact on the team.

It was a privilege to have the opportunity to coach this group of young boys who taught me far more than I taught them. I want to thank Ed Marks as coach, Andrew Hinshelwood as team manager and Michael Oldroyd, supporting the team in various roles. I also want to thank all the parent volunteers supporting the team throughout the season.

U8 OLDFIELD

What a privilege it was for all the parents to watch this wonderful group of boys approach their footy this season. With a strong desire to learn, run hard, work together and have fun, they thoroughly enjoyed every week together.

The boys rotated through the each of zones throughout the season and all improved their skills out of sight. Each week we saw Freddie, Hunter and Ed leading the charge by running hard through the midfield, winning the centre breaks and pumping the ball forward, with Beau and Jack taking big marks to excite the crowd. Alex, Spencer and Quinn were snapping goals from the pockets. Max was our Luke Hodge general across half back, whilst Teddy, Ovi and Archie showed us how to tackle hard and win the ball. Ollie, Max and James also gave us great run throughout the season.



The boys had a wonderful first season together full of fun and countless highlights. These included two action packed night games under lights at Ferrie Oval against fellow gladiators teams. These games allowed the boys to showcase their “run and carry” football and saw some wonderful big marks and freakish goals in front of a fantastic crowd of parents, siblings and friends.

Quinn’s running goals were a feature of their “under lights” performances and Beau took multiple one grab hangers in a bid for mark of the year. Spencer’s “don’t agree” impersonation of Dusty Martin early in the season was awarded goal of the year, whilst Alex’s 7 goal haul in two quarters against Ashburton Redbacks in the pouring rain was a great example of skilful finishing.



Freddie's season was reminiscent of Clayton Oliver's 2021, dominating the centre clearances every week and giving 100% effort at every contest. Hunter and Ed both put in bids for the best running goals of the year with multiple bounces before their long bombs, whilst Jack's tap work in the centre square reminded us all of Max Gawn. Max's dominance across half back drew comparisons with Luke Hodge's grand final performances from the coaching staff, whilst Teddy's ferocious tackling late in the season showed how much the boys had developed.

It was also fantastic to have Fred Oldfield, the former club president, visit one of the games this season to watch the boys in action. The boys had a wonderful season together and are already looking forward to being reunited in their u9s season next year.

U8 WINNETTS

To say that this has been an exciting, action-packed season would be an understatement. We saw a group of boys from various schools' band together forming a new team, and new friendships. As a club, this is something that GIJFC is well known for, and are incredibly proud of. It would be fair to say that each team member started with varied skills and enthusiasm, but they ended the season with so much more.

As each player rotated within the oval boundaries, they had an opportunity to experience every position. Some weeks this meant they really ran the ball, and other weeks things were a little quieter at one end. As parents it is great to see them take these shifts in their stride and make the most of each opportunity on the field. It would fair to say one of the ultimate highlights for the team was playing 2 of our games under lights. There were tears, there were tumbles, and sometimes tempers, but win or lose, the boys gave it everything.





A MASSIVE thank you to all the parents who also helped keep our clubhouse running throughout training and game days. These sporting events cannot run without your unwavering support and willingness to get involved.

A HUGE shoutout to our incredible coaching team. Under the guidance of our dedicated coaches, Stuart McLaren and 2nd in charge Michael Richards, these boys continued to learn skills that were seen played out on the field week after week..... and no doubt at school!

What an incredible introduction to this great game for our boys, and we hope to see them sign up for 2024!



U9 BOWMAN

After the fantastic U8's Bowman season the team got back to work with the pre-season training to hone their skills and shake off the cobwebs. The U9s Bowman Gladiators was a slightly new looking team after the trade period and draft selections. Unfortunately, we lost some key players in the trade period who dominated in the U8s season last year, to the U9s Cooper team. But what we lost in the trade period we gained in the draft with the likes of Barrington, Ryan, Burnett, Colbert and Melbourne. We also gained O'Brien who trained with the U8s team towards the end of last year. The new boys assimilated into the Gladiators culture and went to work preparing for the season ahead.



U9s Bowman Gladiators came out of the gates for the first match and continued for the whole season, showing the tenacity and grit they demonstrated in the U8s last year. Biggins, Melbourne, and Ayliffe were fearless in the fight for the ball and once they had the ball the opposition struggled to keep up with their speed. When the opposition got the ball, they would struggle to get past the tackling of Roosenburg, Bobeff, Barrington, Vo and Talmor who on occasions were tackling boys twice their size! While we lost Bobeff to an injury during the middle of the season the boys were still able to apply the same pressure to the opposition's game.

This year the U9 Bowmans played with confidence, maturity and skill that amazed the parents. Marking had improved significantly with the boys showing a lot more confidence in overhead marking and contesting a mark. Pausewang, Vun, Walta and Hernandez were great examples of this.



The skill level improvement on last year through their handballing was self-evident in the number of times they were handballing within a game. Burnett, Vun, Ayliffe and Melbourne all used handballs throughout the season to move the ball forward and find a teammate in space.

Of course, the confidence, skill and passion in the U9s is displayed nowhere else more than through the goal kicking where we saw the talent of the U9s Bowman team shine. We saw goals kicked on a tight angle from the boundary, goals kicked from the centre of the field, an over-the-head goal and most importantly unselfish goals. While nearly every boy during the season got a goal, Tossoun would always be effective whenever he played in the forward line.

While these are just some examples of the talent that is within the U9s Bowman Gladiator team, their great enjoyment was at the end of the game where no matter the weather or if the other team had seemingly kicked more goals, the U9s Bowman team would gather in a circle shoulder to shoulder singing our Gladiators club song aloud with huge smiles, knowing they had all played their best.

I'm sure after this year their confidence and passion for the game has grown and next year the boys will return to amaze the club and show us they have even more to offer.



U9 COOPER

What a year - started with a squad of 18, six returning U8 gladiators and 12 new boys were welcomed to the club.

We scored 2 points in the first 3 rounds, but the boys were having fun and improving. The coaches established additional weekly training sessions & kids dinner/parents social which was a huge success.

We started to score a few goals per game, each were celebrated as grand final wins!! The boys' skills were coming along nicely.

In the 2nd half of the season, any final scoreline where we were with 2 goals, we'd claim as a win and belt out the club song, the boys and parents loved it.

Final game of the season we snagged our first win, against a team than handed us a 70 - nil drubbing previously in one of our first games of the year.

The coaches Rydo, Nick & Julian had a blast, what a beautiful bunch of boys.



Oli - he's tall.... Useful when hands not in pockets. He was our dependable ruckman.

Jono - best long goal of the year. I reckon he was at the edge of the mid zone when he marked .. Rydo set him up, the ball was a low rocket, just cleared the pack, and bounced through for a goal!!

Sam - enthusiasm / love this kid, we missed him in 2nd half of season.

Jackson - set shot specialist / kick preparation was methodical ... you could boil an egg in the time it took.

now the number #1 Cooper FF Bracken - In and under, tacking intensity - last game of the season was his best.

Philip - can break a tackle, loves a bounce and a run, then absolutely SENDS it when it hits his boot.

Ezra - greatest improvement, 2H of season was a solid contributor each week

Junks - gave 100% every game, just dependable. Coaches say - definitely our a top 3 draft pick Junk-inator!!!

Noah - king tackler, taskmaster - sent him to shut down some of the huge 13YO we played and he showed no fear - was seen being carried around by the player he bear tackled

Cooper - most improved / quiet achiever, just got the job done without any fuss!

James M - always gave 100% / great contribution from round 1. Great listener as long as he's not cuddling Oli.

Hugo Blackmore - Mr consistent / tackle machine, another safe pair of hands, and top 3 draft pick

Rohan - glimpses of brilliance throughout the season / speed & kicking was phenomenal at times. Greatest untapped potential

Jack - biggest improvement for the year, great grabs, great marks, great tackles - great all round nice guy

Felix S - Mr consistent, Mr Dependable - when he got possession he just ran through people - then gets ball to boot and ROOSTS em !!

Felix R - speedy, snappy, SPECIAL things happened when Rydo got the ball!!

Austin / most improved on toughness / Schwal got into his ear continuously and built a tough guy. "Don't get sad get up, remember faces and even".

WEBBY - our left foot specialist, kicking long bombs out of FB, the midfield and forward line.

GO TEAM COOPER !!

U9 WINNETT

Another fun filled season for the U9 Winnet's in 2023, finishing the year with a clean sheet of zero wins and zero losses. There were plenty of highlights, a few lowlights and heaps of improvement from the team as a whole. I'm proud to say every boy showed progress in their skill and endeavour as we work toward scoring and the full ground next season. There was some tough games which gave the boys some insight as to what to expect next year but most importantly plenty of smiles and spirit every match:

A shout out to the parents and grandparents for showing up each week in the rain and cold and helping out where they could.

Thank you to Richard and Will for their excellent organisation all year as well.



A few words about each boy...

Teddy O - the silent assassin who shows up with a smile and gives his best each week.. was a crafty small forward and clever back pocket

Jackob M showed some great endeavour this year and was very much improved with kid skills and attack on the ball

Hugo S - a huge improver this season and found his niche and a sharp shooter up forward. Worked hard on his leading and made some fantastic progress

George D - another massive improver this year. Has some great moments and his confidence grew each week

George G - speedy forward pocket / back pocket who showed some glimpses of brilliance throughout the year. Expecting a big season next year

Noah R - another great season continuing on from last year. Great attack on the ball and his pace through the middle was crucial all season. Floated forward to snag a few goals as well

Monty F - fleet footed small forward who pinch hit in the middle. Showed massive improvement as the season went on. Another player to watch in 2024

Tex S - another dominant season - had some big impact out of the middle and up forward with his athletic prowess. Will continue to improve next season

Henry D - the tagger who kept us all smiling throughout the year but also had some great moments on field

Huddy R - another big improver late in the year as he found his position as a lock down defender. Expecting him to rise to another level in 2024

Felix V - Had another great year as a key forward and ruck with his strong marking and kicking.. showed he had another string to his bow with some hard tackling and attack on the ball as well

Jack S - the "Great Wall" who was formidable force down back and in the middle all season. Another great season by the contested beast

Sam G - another big improver this season. Was a constant threat up forward all year and was always front at centre at training and executing in game.

James S - gritty defender who excelled down back this year. Also went forward and kicked a few goals when required. Showed consistent improvement throughout the year with his skills and attack on the ball

Gussie R - another speedster who found plenty of the ball all year. Found his position late in the year as a dashing half back flanker providing plenty of run of of defence. Another great year of improvement

Will F - Found his position down back as a lock down defender. Showed plenty of courage at the contest and was rarely beaten in defence. Flourished late in the season as a small forward. Another year of big development.

Herbie J - Speedy and skilled forward / back pocket who came along in leaps and bounds throughout the year.. wasn't afraid to put his body on the line when needed each week

U10 COOPER

The Under 10 Cooper's had an amazing season in 2023. The team was a pretty much even spread of old boys from the under 9's and a half a dozen new players eager to start their junior football career as a Gladiator.

It definitely took a few weeks for the boys to gel together as a team but with a lot of hard work at training it wasn't long before they started to hit their straps and became a formidable force against their opponents each week. Often undermanned the boys showed a tremendous amount of courage and determination week in week out and their improvement as a team was incredible to watch as the season progressed.

By the end of the season the boys had turned into a well-oiled machine and it came as no surprise that they had managed to chalk up a few wins.





However, what was even more pleasing to see was the bond that had developed between every member of the team. The team had come a long way since the start the of the season and their love for football as well as each other was just phenomenal to witness.

In such a small amount of time they had grown into young men, showing huge amounts of respect for their opposition and the umpires, whilst still playing a hard but fair brand of football. Every member of the team should be incredibly proud of their achievement throughout the season.

The 2023 Awards were
Best and Fairest - Edward Chamberlain
2nd Best and Fairest - Luke Johnston
3rd Best and Fairest - Jackson Scott
Most Improved - Oliver Pristel
Coaches Award - Charlie Hanger



U10 GIRLS

From the moment pre-season training started in March (was it March? I cannot remember) we had great representation from players that were looking to play U10 footy for the Gladiators in 2023. It was a great mix of girls, some of which who had played the year before and some, who were looking to play competitive footy for the first time. The top age girls were great role models for our new crop of Gladiators, and this will hold them all in good stead as they look to progress in their football journeys next year.

The fantastic numbers we had in pre-season grew as the season drew nearer and we ended up with a squad of about 26 enthusiastic footballers, who we were able to turn into a very engaged and highly competitive team.



Pre-season came and went extremely quickly, and it was not long before we turned our attention to putting a team on the park for Round 1. In the end we had the full squad pull on their Gladiator jumpers for the first game and although we did not end up winning, we saw plenty of signs that the team was going to be in for a great season ahead.

Training was always well represented, and the squad really developed their skills in a short period of time that meant we won more games than we lost in what ended up being a very successful year that culminated in winning the Lightning Premiership, which the whole team can be extremely satisfied with. We saw a flawless display of football in each of the games we played, and it was a very proud moment for the coaching group when the siren went in the final game. The celebrations post this was fantastic to see.



The support and encouragement that the coaches and the team received from parents and supporters throughout the year was wonderful and we are very thankful for this. There was a tremendous amount of work that went on behind the scenes and I would like to particularly thank team manager, Sothy Kittikhoun and Assistant Coach, Nick Harrison for all their hard work at training and on game days. The season certainly would not have run as smoothly as it did without their tremendous assistance.

Special mention to the below award winners, who all had outstanding seasons.

Best & Fairest - Mila Carroll

Runner Up - Best & Fairest - Abby Johnston

3rd Best & Fairest - Daisy Griffiths

3rd Best & Fairest - Elle Dunne

Coach's Award - Madeleine Gibson

Gladiator Award - Sofia Quinn

Rising Star - Imogen Cook

Most Improved – Khalissa Kittikhoun



U10 WINNETTS



U11 COOPER

An excellent season all round with boys finishing 5th in Division 1 and importantly being ultracompetitive against the very best teams including both the grand finalists. Qualifying for Division 1 after strong grading games was a big step and meant that everyone had to contribute not only to be competitive but also help the team etch out the 3 Division 1 wins. Highlights for the season included our first win against Banyule away, close games against the eventual premiers and the whole team contributing to hold on for a nail-biting 5 point win against Camberwell. A consistent comment from opposition coaches was that our boys were some of toughest around the ball and excellent in contested situations. The season saw a number of the boys show great improvement both at games and at training and the camaraderie between the boys win, lose or draw was fantastic and is what footy is all about. The team was well supported by a broad coaching / management team and a great group of parents.



Aadi – Runs hard, attacks the ball, tackles bigger players and gives it his all. Brought his best against Winnett and helped us nearly get over the line

Anderson – Reads the play well from the backline with some excellent intercept marks and long kicks to our advantage

Angus – Probably one of our hardest trainers and an absolute pleasure to coach. Kicks out well, follows instruction and commits himself to the game

Archie - A real team player. He was successful in his role to create forward pressure and stop his opponent from getting the ball

Ben - One of the key forwards within the team. If he wasn't marking the ball he was bringing the ball to ground for his teammates to score

Casper - One of the most improved who played the wing as well as it could be played, consistently working well with backline to transition the ball forward, and adding contested ball wins to his game

Colby – The listener and learner. Player always eager to get a tip at training and follow through in a match. Might not be our biggest player, but always giving 100% and follows the team rules

Edward - Has a great ability to read the play and the rare gift to so cleanly pick the ball up off the ground and use it so unselfishly. Winner of the Most Improved Award

Freddie - Hard, head over the ball player. A fierce competitor who never backs down. Highlight was against Ashy when we needed someone to stand up and make a difference.

Gabe - One of the real success stories this year. Some of the tap work to his midfield crew was a sight to behold, and his work rate on the ground was exceptional. Winner of the Rising Star Award

Hayden - Started the season in superb form and showed his value to the team at centre bounces and also across half back. Reads the ball incredibly well and gets in and under to win clean possession

Harry Rodski – Brought his best when in the midfield mixing it with the toughest in contested ball and laying big tackles. His performances against Winnett clear standouts

Harry Savige - After starting the season up forward, went into the middle with enormous impact and then played at CHB as our own Jeremy McGovern reading the play to great effect. 3rd in B&F

Hunter - Runs hard, covers a lot of ground and plays as an integral part of our half back line. Always one you know will give his all to even or win the battle. Many times out numbered

Jayden - Jayden's contested ball work and his tackle pressure around the ball makes everyone else around him walk taller. An elite runner and added goal kicking to his game. B&F winner

Lachie - Got the speed to get the contest and always love a tackle and a dog on the sidelines. One of the most positive kids there is and also an absolute pleasure to coach

Lucas - Our rock in the backline. Attack on the ball, strength and support for his team mates and never gives up.

Nicholas - Stood tall throughout the whole season at CHF. He was an amazing pack mark, ran like the wind and was a crafty ball user when not kicking goals. Winner of the Most Consistent Award

Ollie Simpson - One player that who would always create a contest. Played his best footy in the forward line applying great pressure and unselfish with the ball.

Ollie Stenson – Consistent throughout and at his fiercely competitive best in the second half of the season when thrown in middle with hard ball gets, strong tackles and skilful ball use

Olsen – Key pillar of the defence. He punches, he spoils and became ever reliable on kickouts.

Oscar – A very dangerous forward and showed his value with long goals and presenting well on leads across half forward.

Sam - The defender who gets the biggest, fastest, tallest, best forward every week and licks his lips. No challenge, no request is a challenge.

Seb – at his best across half forward this year, he presented aggressively to lead and take marks, and then pinpoint passes

Teddy – Incredibly damaging with clean skills, astute ball use, run and carry and regular goal kicking through hard running and elite positioning. 2nd in B&F

Toby – One of our leading goal kickers. If he wasn't taking the mark his second and third efforts were outstanding. Also well known for his extreme tackle pressure and snaps for goals.

Will - Gave it his all in his first year of footy. He put his body on the line for the team and on numerous occasions his efforts resulted in his teammates scoring goals.

U11 WINNETTS

The boys built on their successful 2022 season with back-to-back premierships in 2023, this year in division 1.

A home and away season of 12 / 1 win loss ratio the only blemish being against our archrivals Kew in the first occasion during the season.

Finishing on top of the ladder, we played Kew in the first final at Righetti, controlling the game with a clinical display of football, winning comfortably with the game result confirmed with 5 minutes to play. The win putting the team straight into the grand final with a week off. Kew won the semi final against Ashburton confirming we would play them again in the Grand Final.



The Grand Final was a typical finals footy day, bright sunshine and a cool breeze favoring one end. Losing the toss we kicked with the wind in the first quarter holding a narrow margin at the end of the first quarter.

Our second quarter set up the game holding Kew to only 2 goals playing into the wind and our leading margin into the long break. Our whole team performance in the third quarter set up the game with a commanding lead heading into the last against the wind. Coming away victors by 34 points. The final score 8 8 56 to 3 3 21 to claim back-to-back flags.



Throughout the season the coaching group were impressed with the whole team's skill improvement and their game sense. More importantly their confidence in themselves playing the game and their growing belief in their teammates.

A testament to this was in the best and fairest awards, a standout season performance by Callum Leahman taking the award and Lachie O'Brien runner up, however we were more impressed with 20 boys polling votes throughout the season, highlighting the team approach and philosophy. Other special awards went to Archie – Rising Star, Harrison Beech – Most improved, Leo Zhang – coaches award.

We had some "firsts" this year with Archie, Max B and James K kicking their first goal. Xavier being awarded his first free kick and almost slotting his first goal and one of the best "selling candy" moments by Ollie G to name a few.

On behalf of the coaching group, we would like to congratulate all the boys for their dedication to their football, their constant improvement to their skills and growing confidence and we look forward to seeing every boy back next year!



U12 GIRLS

ngst the girls to qualify for first division and have a crack at the big time. Similar to last year we had a real mix of age and social groups with girls from three different school years, and seven different schools. A brilliant idea from Ronnie Calvert saw us do a clinic at Malvern Central which attracted a fantastic group of girls into the footy club. What was even more exciting was the fact we had 27 girls registered by season start.

Pre-season training was a chance to focus different levels of attention on the developing and developed players. The girls coming up from 'zoned' playing conditions, or never having played before were developing and we wanted to ensure they knew key skills, positions, and rules. The girls who had a few seasons under their belt we started to focus on match play and supporting roles.

We then moved into the grading games where we were able to really put some of these skills into play, and even though we narrowly beat Kew (who we would later meet in the preliminary final) it was clear that we had a strong playing group and rightfully qualified for Division 1 – our shot at the big time.



As the regular season moved on we put in place our key team rules of Respect, Positivity and Fun, with an underlying theme of being a Champion Team...not a Team of Champions. The season went unblemished until we came up against the formidable Camberwell Sharks who were clearly the dominant team with victories of well over 100 points against other opposition. When we finally had our chance we unfortunately could only field a team of 14 due to holidays and were comprehensively beaten by 10 goals. The spectre of Camberwell would hover over the girls until finals.

We finished the season in second position with key highlights hosting the girls from Papunya against Beverley Hills, and a game against Heidelberg where we played a complete game which saw us play a really unselfish brand of football – Champion Team Football! We also grew as coaches this game which was to let the girls play and less mid-game sideline instruction which reduced confusion.

Then came finals where we came up against Sharks in the qualifying final for a spot in the big dance. The key themes from the girls was aggressive but fair football and intimidate with physicality. Sharks were rattled and our girls confidence grew – and if it wasn't for some unbelievable defence from Camberwell we would have got a few on the board. We lost the game but didn't lose any respect from the opposition coaches, but more importantly the spectre of Camberwell had evaporated and the girls believed.

We went on to the preliminary final and easily accounted for Kew – with a full team to choose from it was a coaches delight (and nightmare with so many on the bench!!!). This brought us to another date with Camberwell in the big dance. The final training session of the year saw lots of smiles and laughs but most importantly a desire to take on the best.

The big day came and I can clearly say I've never been prouder of a bunch of football players in my life. We conceded a goal within 30 seconds and could have played to the script of being second best, but the girls rallied and held the ball in our forward line for the quarter – kicking 1.4.10 we were unlucky not to be further ahead. Camberwell supporters were heard spluttering at the Gladiator upstarts not rolling over. The second and third quarters were absolute ding-dong classic finals footy with our defenders repelling wave after wave, however Camberwell's gun players getting on top.

One of our top players went off at the end of the second with a shoulder injury which was the second opportunity to throw it in but alas the girls rallied again. With a goal kicked in the last 2 minutes of the third quarter we drew within 2 goals – of the team that had only had 2 goals kicked on them all year. The girls believed and went into the last quarter knowing that they were the Champion Team. They fought bravely, with one player dislocating her knee she went that hard, but alas we fell short. The record will show we went down by three goals but we won so much respect from the opposition and other teams that turned up to watch the showdown.

It was an amazing year and Matt, Mardi and myself could not thank the parents and players for their commitment and support throughout the year. The environment was amazing which focussed on striving to achieve success as a team without wavering from our rules. I truly hope to see all girls back and continuing to develop their talent and love for the game. The fact that in the league B&F we secured four of the top 10 positions shows what a great team we had – and even better that our votes were spread over all positions, defenders, mids and forward. Bring on 2024!!!

U12 GNATTS

We were thrilled to get back together as the U12 Gnat's team for 2023 with 17 of last year's "Premiership" players under the passionate new Coaching duo of Quinn McKay and Lucas Wheatley. It was a full season which culminated in us making the Preliminary Final against Surrey Park and finishing 3rd on the ladder for the 2023 season in Div 2.

Thank you to our U11 friends who "played up" and the U12 Hangers who assisted us when we needed their help, even playing with us instead of their own team in Round 9 to avoid our forfeit – it was all truly appreciated.

It was fantastic to welcome back friendly faces from last season to come together again as cohesive and connected group of mates. The boys were taller, faster and stronger with great skill development and teamwork creating exciting and engaging matches for all to enjoy - their attitude to try their hardest and have some fun along the way shone through.





Glen Iris Gladiators U12 Gnatts 2023

Round 1 included a special memorial and moment of silence for ANZAC Day, Round 4 Mothers' Day match was a family day and in Round 5 Ed was recognised by the Fitzroy club as part of the "Sir Doug Nicholls" Indigenous round. Again a highlight of the season was our "Sock it to MND" in Round 9 with the generous support of the Bachelor family where the boys wore matching socks to acknowledge Motor Neurone Disease research.

In Round 11 we wore matching armbands to promote the TAC initiative around Road Safety in soggy conditions. The Club Disco was a social highlight for the boys this year as was the pizza night to hear about the U13 NT Papunya trip.

We enjoyed celebrating the 50th milestone games for Ed, Nico and Lawson and the thrill of running through the impressive banners was a buzz for all. Ed, Lawson and Nico were nominated by YJFL umpires to attend the leagues "Best and Fairest" event - huge congratulations!

Our coaching team of Quinn and Lucas brought out the best in our boys – a huge thank you to the coaching team from all of our boys and parents. Also our sincere thanks to our runner Rayden, trainer Adam, boundary umpire Don all the families who assisted with a range of roles to support the team in 2023.

U12 HANGERS

As I reflect on the 2023 season as the coach of the U12 Hangers, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the remarkable journey we have undertaken together. This season has been defined by substantial growth, unwavering determination, and a resolute sense of teamwork. It is with great pleasure that I provide you with an overview of our team's incredible voyage.

Much like the preceding year, this season brought together a diverse mix of familiar faces, returning players, and promising newcomers. Our squad, composed of dedicated individuals, embarked on this season with a common goal: to push their boundaries and leave everything on the field. In a division characterised by intense competition, our boys remained steadfast week after week, navigating through memorable victories and challenging losses, all the while maintaining their unwavering commitment.



This season served as a showcase for the remarkable teamwork, growth, and dedication exhibited by all our players. Their attitude and dedication to learning were nothing short of exceptional, resulting in some truly impressive wins. They faced each challenge with unyielding determination, demonstrated their adaptability as a team, and willingly embraced new responsibilities.

I would also like to offer a massive thank you to all the parents who played pivotal roles in ensuring the success of our training sessions and games throughout the season. Your collective efforts and unwavering support were instrumental in the achievements of our team.



I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our exceptional support team, including our outstanding Team Manager, Elisa Failla, whose tireless efforts, and organisational prowess ensured seamless operations throughout the year. A special note of appreciation goes to Assistant Coach Ben Sellenger for his invaluable support and inspirational pre-game speeches that fired up our team when it mattered most. A massive thank you to Julian Ramasamy, who undertook the challenging role of age group coordinator, working hard to ensure we could always get a team on the field. Our trainers, Sarah Ramasamy and Bec Estlin, deserve our recognition for their unwavering commitment to our players' well-being. Additionally, Rob Collier, our runner, provided invaluable insights and motivation on game days.

In conclusion, the 2023 season has left an indelible mark on the Hangers. The growth and development of our players have been nothing short of remarkable, and I have full confidence that they will continue to excel in the years ahead. The teamwork, passion, and commitment displayed by the boys, coupled with the unwavering support from our dedicated parents and volunteers.



U13 GNATTS

Our aim for season 2023 was to field two full teams in the Under 14's and create a fun supportive environment.

The Gold team should be really proud of their efforts and attitude across the whole season. We could see improvement in all of our young lads. They consistently took on every challenge with a positive attitude and showed great sportsmanship week after week especially when the scoreboard was challenging for us at times.

The boys really lived the values we shared. They showed great respect for the umpires, the opposition and each other. They competed hard, had some great wins, learnt a lot from some tough defeats but more than anything should be proud of the way they conducted themselves all season.

The boys were incredibly fortunate to have Josh Bienert coach them. Josh is a former Gladiators superstar who generously gives up his time while juggling work and study. Josh is an outstanding young role model for the boys. My hope is that some of this group go on to coach at the Gladiators when their junior playing days are finished following in Josh's footsteps.





Huge thanks to Daniel Oh for his contribution as team manager. Andy Seymour and Tim Holt who shared the role as runner and helped at training throughout the year. Finally, thanks to our trainer, Richard Dallalana, and all other parent volunteers who have happily contributed throughout the year.

A highlight of the year without question was the return of the Gladiator's/ Papanya collaboration. A number of our team were fortunate enough to travel to a remote Indigenous community a few hours out from Alice Springs. It genuinely makes you smile to see the beautiful connection and friendships made when the Papunya community returned to visit us a short time later. Massive respect to Paul Cooper and his outstanding contribution in making this possible

Josh and I are very thankful to have been supported so well by the parent group and extended families. We think junior football should be a fun and positive experience for everyone regardless of the result. Our families were brilliant in helping us to achieve that for the boys.

Our big hope is that we get everyone playing again next season. We are excited to see all the boys develop, improve, compete hard and have fun.

Looking forward to season 2024

Luke Darcy

U13 WINNETTS

The 2023 season offered the boys a number of footballing challenges but was ultimately instrumental in their development as players and young men. A promising start in the grading games left the team with three wins from their first four outings in matches characterised by gritty performances, winning contests and outnumbering at the stoppage to overpower teams when attacking inside 50. These early victories placed the group in a difficult grade which tested their resilience as players and desire to improve.

Training centred on developing both footballing skills and structural elements in an effort to enhance players fundamental abilities and generate a more controlled game style which encouraged taking the game on and defending with discipline.



The team fought hard in the early stages of the season being unlucky not to see positive results including a narrow 11-point defeat against Ashburton (eventual runners up) and being overrun late to fall to Hawthorn and St Marys. These matches saw greater cooperation between the team as they got to know each other better, displayed by the pack like approach when tackling at the stoppage and a greater chemistry in link up play around the ground.

Mid-season confronted the boys with tough opposition in which strong defeats were seen against Surrey Park, Templestowe and Beverly Hills, in which the team was outsized and outclassed. Despite the results, effort on field remained as the team had to troubleshoot methods in which to compete where possible against these top teams and develop plans to combat their proficiency. This stage of the season saw a number of courageous defensive performances from the likes of Monty, Harry and Lachlan who fought hard under extreme pressure from the opposition.



The mid season setbacks brought the team closer together and caused a restructuring in training with aims of defending more holistically around the ground and encouraging two way efforts from those playing higher up the pitch. The new approach brought a much improved effort in the return fixture against rivals Hawthorn but was unfortunately not enough to get over the line.

As the season drew to a close and finals chances dwindled the boys had to draw on different motivation to thrive in the back end of the year. Players were offered new challenges including playing in different positions, trialling tagging roles on some of the opposition's best players and encouraged to play a free flowing attacking style. This was a valuable period in the boy's development who had to draw on themselves to work harder against the top teams preparing for finals. The new roles brought some new life to the team but couldn't translate on the scoreboard. Despite the lack of returns for the group's work, effort remained in the backend of the season which was encouraging to see.

Some of the standout performances throughout the year belonged to Oliver who took away the best and fairest thanks to his consistent performance in the ruck and his ability to almost single handedly shift momentum through his follow up work around the ground. Zac who was runner up in this award, too performed highly as a player, he got better almost every week and performed as a leader when playing in defence and brought constant tackling pressure and ball winning ability when playing in the midfield. Lyon too was a crucial component in the team with his goal scoring ability lifting the potency of the attack and his natural clearance strength assisting when playing on ball.

Highlights of the season included the single goal victory against Templestowe in round two of grading in which a late goal gave us the edge after a well-orchestrated team performance, as well as popular team member Bevan's stunning goal against Hawthorn which caused celebrations of unheralded proportions. I also can't forget the goal kicking competitions down at training in which windy conditions at Righetti left winners hard to come by.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my first season as coach and hope the boys did too, despite challenging results at times I think the group developed nicely throughout the year and learned some valuable footballing lessons. The resilience they showed really impressed me and as a team we always had fun coming down to training (perhaps too much at times) and on match days even if it was freezing cold and raining.

U14 GIRLS

The U/14 Girls AFL season was a remarkable journey filled with determination, growth, and outstanding achievements. Both of us coaches, Steph and Maddy are immensely proud of the team that started with a group of promising individuals into a tightly-knit unit.

We began the season with a solid foundation, comprised of several girls from the premiership-winning U/12 team of the previous year. These experienced players brought their championship spirit and skills to the field, setting the tone for our season. Alongside them, we welcomed a few exceptional new additions who added fresh perspectives and immense talent to the side.



Our journey commenced with a series of grading games that presented a challenging hurdle. We faced opponents who were often older and more experienced. We were predominantly composed of under-age girls, which made our early-season struggles understandable. However, as we spent more time on the field together, the chemistry between our players grew stronger.

Two key inclusions, Harriet Hutchins and Amelie Chmielewski, played pivotal roles in our success. Their versatility to play in the ruck and back-line positions offered us flexibility and strength in critical areas of the game.

Another first-time player Eloise Spinks earned the well-deserved title of Runner-Up MVP, showcasing her exceptional skills and dedication. Her speed and ability to run through backs down the wing was a joy to watch. Isobel Hume had a breakout season, also earning the Runner-Up MVP, and her remarkable performances were an inspiration to her teammates. Together, Ellie and Issie formed the backbone of our midfield, consistently delivering stellar performances that drove us forward.

In the heart of the ruck, Liliana Perovic demonstrated her excellence. Her taps were executed with precision and read expertly by Sofia Barnaby, who had a remarkable season of her own. Sofia's stellar performances culminated in her being awarded the MVP, a testament to her dedication and leadership on the field.

Ava Coulton, a talented newcomer, was a standout player. Her remarkable progress throughout the season earned her the title of Rising Star. She constantly improved, becoming an integral part of our team. Her commitment to learning and growing as a player was truly commendable.



Tabby Simkiss, with her toughness and exceptional footy IQ, provided a strong presence on the field. Her skills were crucial in tight situations, and her determination set a high standard for our team. Meg Lindeman, a true goal sneak, added an element of speed and agility to our line-up. Her ability to navigate the field and use her speed to our advantage was a valuable asset throughout the season. Cate McClusky was another player who improved every week, becoming extremely reliable up forward and demonstrating exceptional tackling pressure.

Gen O'Callaghan, an experienced player from previous years, brought her wisdom and skills to every position on the ground, scoring some incredible goals throughout the season. Molly Griffiths was outstanding in defence, proving to be a tackling machine, while Zara Daffy stood out as the most reliable defender, always ready to run off half-back and also be able to stop the opposition's goals.

Maddy Lavery, equally reliable in the back line, used her skills and experience to prevent countless goals. Sienna Carroll, with her skills and height, became a force in the forward line, taking some impressive marks. Emerson Atkinson's versatility allowed her to excel in various positions, with her remarkable running and tackling abilities. Poppy Coates and Molly Johnston, our dynamic wingers, were a joy to watch every week. They consistently outperformed and outsmarted their opponents, displaying immense talent and showing continuous improvement. Molly's efforts earned her one of the two Team Player awards. Billie Colquhoun, the other Team Player award winner was extremely deserving. She spent most of the season in full-back, showcasing unbelievable kicking skills and bodywork. Her reading of the play saved numerous goals throughout the year.

Overall, an amazing season that Steph and I are incredibly proud of. Not only for the girls' on field performance and improvement, but their attitude and team spirit. Opposition coaches often spoke with us post game to commend our girls on their sportsmanship and character, which as coaches is something we tried to instil in the girls throughout the season.

It was a privilege to witness the growth and unity of this group. To end this season in fourth place and win the semi-final against a team we previously lost to by over 50 points was remarkable. The belief from the girls was awesome and we were so proud of them on and off the field. The season wouldn't have been possible without our team manager, Sharon O'Callaghan who went above and beyond for the team. Thanks to countless volunteers who helped the match-days run smoothly. There are so many positives to take from 2023 and we look forward to continuing to improve next season.

U14 GNATTS

Jack Satterley: Jack is always hugely consistent and always presents a dangerous presence for opposition backlines. Unbelievably courageous and clever and if he sniffs a goal watch out!!

Angus Beechey: Angus is a great athlete who has improved dramatically over the past 12 months. Incredibly reliable down back with a great competitive spirit which always seems to win or halve a contest.

Tom Barnett: Tom gained with confidence as the year went on. In particular Tom's last 4 weeks were great. Tom is very clever and sees space where others don't.

James Coughlan: The highlight for James this year was his incredible work rate. Always running back to help out and support the defence. James has beautiful skills and as a coach you have a level of comfort when James has the ball in his hands.

Austin Lambart: Similar to James, Austin's work rate is enormous. Again, first back to defend and then create the outlet going forward. Austin is very courageous and fights really hard for every contest.

Benny Nichol: Ben is the ultimate accumulator racking up possessions every time he plays. Ben works from contest to contest incredibly well. Ben sees the game better than most and can predict where the ball is going before it happens.



Sacha Demetriou: Sacha enjoyed an amazing year. The improvement in his athletic development has been a pleasure to witness. The work he did before the season was enormous and benefitted from that throughout the season. Sacha was consistently a major ball winner in every game we played.

Ethan Herbert: What an athlete! Ethan's running power is incredible to watch. I often say to myself and others, "Good luck catching him!" when he gets goal side. Ethan developed into an effective midfielder, and I can't wait to see how much Ethan improves over the next few years.

Max Johnston: Max has improved dramatically, and the last 4 games was evidence of this. Max did everything right for the team, he always looked to give the ball to someone in a better position.

Fergus O'Connor: You can't help but smile when talking to Fergus. His infectious nature is incredibly welcomed. Fergus always was upbeat even when we were having a tough time. A wonderful attitude to have and a pleasure to be around. Fergus' football improved as the year went on and had a breakout game at Victoria Park.

Sam Hewitt: Talk about improving! Sam had a wonderful year as a key back, he was really competitive and did a great job on locking down on opponents. A few injuries halted some progress but had an impressive year.

Ned Whittaker: Ned is a highly underrated player with a beautiful kick. When Ned's confidence is high, he becomes a very strong player. I hope Ned continues to play and enjoys his time playing football.

George Barnaby: Incredible player who reads the ball far quicker than most. Although he plays undersized every week as a key back, I have never seen him get beaten in a game. Obviously, all our hearts were in our mouths as George suffered an injury earlier in the year. It was so wonderful to see him back and having the confidence to play with freedom and flair.

Rupert McCann: Rupert is very much the team man. I think sometimes he feels nervous to be on the field in case he makes a mistake or lets his mates down. Please be assured you are a very capable player who improved as the year went on. Kick most left footers a lovely kick who can cut opposition to pieces.

Zac Cumberlidge: Zac is a very talented hard-working player who gets in wonderful positions to receive and defend the ball. He plays very much for the tea and can be highly influential in creating the result of the game. The game against Heidelberg was a massive standout which saw Zac dominate.

Evyeni Velakoulis: Evy started the year really well especially in the practice matches where he often provided a target forward and kicking a few goals. Unfortunately, we didn't see Evy much throughout the year due to other commitments.

Tynan Ediriweera: Tynan is another that has improved dramatically. Tynan always created a contest and never gave up. It was comforting when we were struggling in a particular part of the ground. Tynan could plug that hole for us.

Flynn Adler: This bloke is legitimately mad. Flynn is incredibly brave and cracks in to set the tone for our team. As the year went on it was great to see Flynn return to his best form and started to cover the ground better. Always great to watch you play!

Tom Burrell: Had a frustrating year with injury but when he did play Tom dominated games of football. It really is amazing to watch the partnership of Tom and George control a backline like they do. If they were at the same school, they would win an APS premiership. As a coach there is no greater comfort to have Tom behind the ball. You know when the ball enters the backline the ball will be intercepted or smashed out of the area.

Tom Brownell: What a frustrating year for Tom due to injury. So wonderful to see him play the final game. It was a case of what could have been. The highlight for me was his commitment to his team and the club off the field. Moving the magnets and supporting us as a coaching group was invaluable.

Alby Elsom: Another amazing athlete. Every time Alby gets the ball I think to myself this will be interesting...but he always creates something and opens up the game. It really is great to watch! Keep taking them on...

Lachie O'Halloran: I only wish how influential Lachie can be. We only have to reference the last game. I haven't seen such a dominate last quarter where the games up for grabs and Lachie took it away from Ivanhoe.

Paddy Benson: Paddy is unstoppable when his confidence is high. Believe in yourself and the results will follow. Paddy enjoyed some memorable moments no greater than against the Redbacks when he kicked 2 goals back to back which were incredible. Paddy finished as our leading goal kicker and had a very consistent year.

U15 HANGERS

The U/15s Hangers 2023 season started on the back foot with both Coach and the team meeting once before the first game of the season, even with this challenge the Hangers in their very first game pushed Fitzroy the whole match. The Hangers led up until 3/4 time but were eventually beaten with fresh legs as the Hangers had no bench and Fitzroy had 6 to interchange so it was a great effort by the team.

The Hangers then came up against Hawthorn Citizens and were convincingly beaten by 90 points by a team who ended up moving up a division.

After losing the first two matches and then having to play last year's Premiers who also moved up a division it was looking like it was going to be a challenging start for the season, but the Hangers came out fighting and had a great comeback win by 5pts over Park Orchards who beat them in the Grand Final the year before.



The Hangers then went on to record a couple of big wins against Preston and Ashburton, winning both games by over 45 points which gave the team much confidence and brought the team back into contention for the season. The rest of the season was up and down, with a couple of wins then a couple of losses, however the Hangers never lost to anyone outside of the top 4.

Every time the Hangers played the top teams, they fought the game out until the very end showing they had the ability to match it with the best but could never quite get over the line. I believe that the Hangers did a great job, each week they played with not one single player on the bench, they showed great determination and courage throughout the whole season.

The home & away season finished with the Hangers finishing 4th on the ladder after sitting 3rd place for the whole season up until the very last round. The Hangers came up against eventual Grand Final winners Boroondara Hawks in their only finals match and were convincingly beaten in the first half. Down by 40 points at half time all seemed lost, but once again the Hangers showed great determination and heart and that they were not going to have their worst showing in the final. After the break in the 3rd quarter kicked 6 goals straight to 2 points getting within a couple of goals to start the last quarter. Unfortunately, the team could not continue their form during the last quarter and were beaten by the eventual Premiers.

For a team that met their Coach a week before their first match the Hangers showed grit, determination and a never say die attitude the whole season, playing most games with no players on the bench. The team was led from halfway through the season by Oliver Abela who was appointed Captain and led by example every match giving 110% at every contest and who finished equal first in the B&F.

- Nick Pritchard who finished equal 1st in the B&F also had a great season and was the engine room of the Hangers, winning contest after contest in the midfield and was an absolute tackling machine all season, also reaching 100 games for the GIJFC.
- Jack Meinhert started the season at CHB but then found his home at CHF kicking a bag of goals most matches, Jack ended up finishing 2nd in the B&F for the Hangers also kicking 5 out of the 7 goals that were scored in the Hangers finals match.
- Will Keller had a great season finishing 3rd in the B&F and showed his versatility when he was put at CHB, Ruck, Full Forward wherever we needed him, he was happy to play and always gave 100% effort no matter what position he was played in.
- Oscar Palmer was a late addition to the Hangers but showed everyone his skill winning 90% of Ruck contests every game and eventually winning the YJFL U/15s B&F which is an absolutely amazing achievement as well as the Hangers Most Valuable Player Award.
- A special mention goes to Sam Doak who played his 50th game this season and had a blinder that game kicking 3 goals in the first quarter and 4 goals for the whole game, Sam also won the 'Best Team Player' award.
- Nate McKay also played his 50th game this season and found his confidence taking the kick outs for the team and taking the oppositions Full Forward every week.
- Darby Alexander-McCurry also played his 50th game this season, Darby was a great team player all season and was always there to back up his team mates no matter what the situation.

Special mention goes to the four boys who came from the year level below to help give the Hangers a full team, it is extremely courageous of Darby Alexander-McCurry, Alexander York, Fletcher Rehfisch and Julian Perri to have joined our team and played an age level above all season, so thankyou to all those boys.

A special mention to Fletcher who played at half back and after finding his feet and getting some confidence showed that he could match it with the best of them.

Congratulations to James Hay for winning Most Determined, James Keenan on Most Consistent, Lucas Jones Best Small Forward, Nate McKay Best Backman, Mitch Robb 'Most Improved' & Darby Alexander-McCurry 'Coaches Award'.

In all the Hangers had a difficult season playing under a new Coach and with no bench most games but did an amazing job in making the finals and never giving up in any of the games they played. Hopefully next year the Glen Iris Gladiators U/15s Hangers can go that little bit further and bring a Flag back to the Club.

U15 NEWTONS

The Under 15 Newtons team entered the 2023 season with the same coaching staff as the previous year, but this time embarking on their journey much earlier than in past seasons. Training as a group with the Hangers in early February, they aimed to tackle what remained of the summer head-on. The season proved to be a challenging and exciting one for the team, filled with ups and downs.

The coaches found themselves faced with the hard task of grading players, a task made particularly difficult by the continuous development and improvement of their players during the pre-season training. After two practice matches and much time spent training, the coaches gained confidence in identifying the best team on paper.



Once the squads were selected, it was time for the team's first meaningful game against Kew, a team we had beaten the previous season. However, on this occasion, Kew proved too strong for the us, and despite our best efforts, we lost by 35 points. This was a challenging start, especially since we had only 14 players available for the match.

Our search for a win continued in the following round against Camberwell, but, again, we fell short, losing by just 8 points. Despite the loss, we as coaches were proud of the team's performance, and we believed that a big win was not far off.

The subsequent two weeks saw the Newtons take on Parade Saints, resulting in an impressive 89-point victory. The defence was outstanding, not allowing any points from the opposition. Harry Spraggett delivered a stellar performance, applying pressure and scoring 5 goals, earning him the best on-ground recognition. The following week, we faced Ivanhoe, a team with similar results. The game was challenging due to the wind, but the Newtons managed to secure the victory thanks to a moment of brilliance from Harry Giffard, who kicked the winning goal in the dying stages.

The rest of the home and away season played out with a pattern of wins against lower-ranked teams and struggles against higher-ranked teams. Ultimately, we finished fourth on the ladder losing to the eventual premiers, Surrey Park, in an elimination final.

Throughout the season, there were several notable milestones and achievements:

- Nimalan Suresh was peer-voted captain, leading the team humbly throughout the year.
- Vice-captains Sam Mellor and Bart Leeton made significant contributions.
- Ford Thompson celebrated his 100th junior game with an outstanding performance.
- Oliver Condon's consistent season earned him the best and fairest award.
- Henry Leake had a strong first season, finishing as a runner-up in the best and fairest.
- Bradley Johnstone was a defensive stalwart and ranked third in the best and fairest.
- Harry Spraggett excelled as the most consistent player and was the leading goal kicker.
- Josh Tallis won the coaches' award for displaying moments of brilliance throughout the season.

Despite not securing a finals victory, we consider our season to as successful. We team faced challenges such as player shortages, injuries, and tough losses but emerged stronger as a result. What stood out the most was the growth and development of the players over the season. Many players showcased their potential, both to themselves and to spectators, each Sunday on the field. As coaches, this progress was precisely what we had hoped for.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the parents who supported us during match days and our dedicated team managers, Kathy Tingate and Simon Twitt, for their unwavering commitment and organisation throughout the year.

Looking ahead, we remain optimistic about next season. Despite the challenges we faced in the 2023 season, we are determined to build on our experiences and continue our journey of improvement. While we may not have secured a premiership, our season was filled with growth, development, and a strong sense of unity within the squad. As we set our sights on the next season, we are ready to move onwards and upwards.

U16 GIRLS

Season 2023 was filled with all the usual ups and downs of game day action for the U16 Girls, and we were very fortunate to be lead from the top by Henry and Scott, our coach and assistant coach respectively. Their tireless energy and effort on the training track and match day held the team in good stead for a successful season

We had 24 girls on our list this year and our playing numbers exceeded 15 every week through holiday periods and with injuries and illness. On average each girl played 9.7 games out of a total of 12 possible matches. Outstanding and a feat I have not seen in over 10 years of girl's football at the Gladiators. I put this down to the passion and strength of our squad and quality of leadership that reflected in the experience and enjoyment shared by all. We scored 45 goals for the season from 17 different sharp shooters. A big thank you to Henry for his efforts over the last three years coaching the Glad girls and best of luck in the big apple next year.

As team manager you are dependent upon the quality of the parent group to deliver a seamless match day experience. A big shout out of thanks to all the parents in the team for their willingness to help and reliability to turn up all year. One of the best groups I have been involved and that made my job very easy.





Special thanks to our runner CJ (aka Forrest), medics Darryn and Tania, our regular runner Richard, and “go to” assistant Louise. Who could forget our man behind the flags Ralphy and the hard men in the Umpires Escort kit, Bettsy and Gus. The big votes go to all the canteen and Orange/Snakes support crew.

Finally, a big thank you to Ron Calvert, the Head of Girls Football at the Glads for his unwavering support of the all the girls and teams. The countless meetings and emails to which he responds are a job on their own, let alone running a funds management empire on the side!

Go Glads and bring on Youth footy in 2024
Goughy



U16 GNATTS

The lads had a lasting mantra: mateship, teamwork and fun. They did not play finals but beat a number of teams who did through their work ethic. They gave their all in each game and you cannot ask more.

The mantra means that the Gladiators are a destination club, with 40 players registered for the u16's. Many new and returning players. Many reached 50 or 100 games this season.

Injuries, higher school and regional commitments meant we had an unsettled but always committed line up each game. Its a credit to the coaches, Angus Symons, Tim Bayles and Julian Daffy, plus all parents and volunteers that they produced great inspiring footy each match without always having our best 22 on the park.



Down back was hard for many matches, but Flynn O'Halloran, Digger Shevlin, James Dunlop and Ed McCorkell were rocks. Rupert Sternson was an iron-man who took heart damage for the team in the tie versus Richmond. Griff Artz was fierce every game.

Ben Doupe, Jai Ord-dcruz were new faces that added hard bodies to a midfield with Gus Sheehan, Angus Moloney and Jack Kelly. Swing-men Alex Messina and Will Longley were very valuable, with Hammer Langford and Will Bond mopping all up and drawing blood with Ollie Moore, Aiden Stewart and Sam Bayles. Ted Symons was Mr consistent. Will Darcy contributed smarts and courage, as did Jack Mollison from Bali!!



Ryder Daffy was explosive in so many ways up forward and won representative honours and Sam Allen kicked 5 in one game. Loch Mann and Jacko Armstrong ran their butts off in pursuit of cake. Max Findlay and Wilson Crawford had some great games.

To our award winners – at least 18 players voted, indicating the spread of effort.

Andy Oliphant won the coaches award, he consistently put in hard yards and was a spiritual leader of the lads along with skipper Monty McCann. Benji Randabel was unlucky with injury but a great team man.

Luka Nomikoudis was the best clubman: loves a contest, infectiously determined to train as he plays and he led the backline.

George Cox was huge down back and won the golden fist award, giving as good as he got against bigger opponents.

Will Bond was 3rd in the BnF, the contested beast who would never give in.

Equal 2nd were Rio Barry (great skills and always spot on with disposal) and Mackie Martin (ran around and through his midfield opponents every game).

Equal first. I don't think any players have put in harder for the Gladiators than Dan Welford and Harrison Hewitt. Dan rucked imperiously and tirelessly each game and made the team walk tall. Harrison was a contested bull who drove every ball forward and inspired all around him.