Presidents Message

As season 2015 is now completed, on behalf of the Gippsland Coaches Association, I would like to congratulate all leagues and clubs on their seasons.

We would like to especially congratulate all Premiership winning teams and their clubs as well as the outstanding players who have won league best and fairest awards across the 12 leagues that make up football in Gippsland.

In 2015 we conducted 2 Level 1 coaches courses. They were in Korumburra and Sale and were well attended.

The GCA also conducted 2 very successful Coaching Seminars in Traralgon and Warragul. We were fortunate to be able to have former Melbourne captain and North Melbourne premiership player Stan Alves act as key note speaker at both of these events. He spoke on the role of the coach and the responsibility each coach has in “Coaching to develop players” and not the scoreboard. We had Stan’s session recorded and if you would like to watch his session, you will find the link on the AFL Gippsland website.

Gippsland Power coach, Leigh Brown presented at the Traralgon seminar and Inverloch Kongwak senior coach presented at Warragul. Their topic for the night was the creation and management of a club coaching coordinator. The sessions were a huge success and were well received by all coaches in attendance.

These programs are crucial to the continued development of coaches across the region and we are looking to maintain or even increase the amount of opportunities for coaches to increase their knowledge and assist them in their development for the betterment of football in Gippsland.

We have many coaching resources available to assist coaches in planning their training sessions and drill and skill manuals. We also have coaches diaries and coaches magnetic boards which are a huge benefit to coaches.

Rob Reid  
FDM AFL Gippsland
Alves inspires in Gippsland

Australian football icon Stan Alves imparted some of his wisdom at a junior coaching seminar in Traralgon on Wednesday night. Alves, who played and coached more than 400 AFL/VFL games, shared his football experiences and coaching philosophies with more than 60 local coaches and administrators.

Drawing heavily on his time as under-14 coach at Mordialloc-Braeside Junior Football Club, Alves stressed the important role junior coaches played in shaping young players as footballers and people.

“Junior coaches are the reason the game succeeds at the top level; they are the ones that sell the dreams,” Alves said.

“You make it happen because what you do is you excite, you entice and you help sell the dream for young people to be involved in this great game. “In every player there is a spark of greatness. It’s up to us as coaches, to work out how to ignite it.”

Among the key messages was the importance of engaging parents, empowering players, not coaching for the scoreboard and putting a club succession plan in place. Alves also argued “wisdom doesn’t always come from the top down” and encouraged coaches to learn from their players. “It’s important we look (at coaching) from a player’s perspective, because we’ve got to find out what’s important to them,” he said.

“If we don’t go in with this attitude we can make terrible mistakes. People do not do their best by being told.”

The one hour talk and question-and-answer session also included practical advice on how to manage players, parents and club officials and was followed by a talk from Gippsland Power coach Leigh Brown on the club coaching coordinator role.

It followed a similar session at Warragul on 1 July, which also attracted about 60 coaches and featured Alves and Inverloch-Kongwak senior coach Ben Soumilas as guest speakers.

You can watch Stan’s presentation by following the link - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9wWqAQq_VE

Development Wrap

AFL Gippsland’s football development managers have been continuing their positive work in the club sphere.

In the wake of Nyora Football Netball Club losing its senior coach, Chelsea Caple and Leigh Brown hosted a training session and dinner to provide some assistance and engage the local community.
Rob Reid has assisted GippSport, Drouin Football Netball Club and Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation in establishing an Indigenous Auskick Centre in Drouin, with the local Indigenous community now being directly engaged to participate in football.

Rob and Chelsea have run meetings around AFL Victoria’s Community Club Sustainability Program. Region General Manager Travis Switzer provided a presentation on the proposed player points system and salary cap to ensure club's were informed of the incoming changes.

As part of his role as president of the Gippsland branch of the Australian Football Coaches Association, Rob also arranged for AFL/VFL icon Stan Alves to speak at junior coaching seminars in Traralgon and Warragul, with more than 100 attendees over the two sessions.

In addition to club development activities, AFL Gippsland has employed eight game development officers to roll out the AFL's Sporting Schools Programme at schools across the region.

This exciting development ensures more Gippsland children will have the opportunity to experience football at school, with Thorpdale Primary, Elizabeth St Primary in Moe (two), Poowong Primary and Tobruk St Primary in Morwell among the schools already running with the SSP.

Rob also ran six-week course at Trafalgar Secondary College and Warragul’s Marist Sion College consisting of coaching, umpiring and AFL 9s units with theory and practical sessions, while Chelsea and Rob hosted a three-day AFL 9s clinic and a staff training session at St Michael's Primary School in Traralgon.

Recent census data shows AFL Gippsland’s football development managers have run more than 215 school clinics in the past 12 months – and increase of 34% in participation numbers on 2014. This is a huge effort to increase the presence of football in Gippsland schools.

**Leagues review on track**

The AFL Gippsland Football Leagues Review remains firmly on track, with the review committee concluding its first round of stakeholder consultation.

Since launching the review in April, the committee has held individual meetings with every affected senior league and club in the Gippsland football and netball community.

Leagues and clubs have also been given the opportunity to complete a written survey. The committee will now review the consultations and primary source data on player registrations and population demographics, before finalising its draft recommendations for presentation to the AFL Gippsland Region Commission in late August.

The Commission will consider the draft recommendations and provide feedback on the next stage, as per the Leagues Review Project Plan.

AFL Gippsland region general manager and review committee chair Travis Switzer was pleased with the progress of the review and the response of the football and netball community.
“The review committee has put in a power of work getting around to every league and club and gathering as much data as possible in a short space of time,” Switzer said.

“We must say a big ‘thank-you’ to all our leagues and clubs for appreciating the importance of this review and making the most of the opportunity to have their say on the future direction of football and netball in Gippsland.”

The Commission is due to provide feedback on the review committee’s draft recommendations by the end of September.

Clubs and leagues will then have the opportunity to provide written submissions as part of a further period of consultation between October and November, before the review committee’s final recommendations are made by March, 2016.

**Coach Interview Questions**

As the curtain draws on another season committees will start turning their attention towards next season. Many clubs will find themselves searching for coaches for a number of their teams.

Irrespective of whether the person is known to the club or not, there are some essential procedures that should be undertaken before the appointment is made. Writing clear position descriptions, advertising for the appropriate person, meeting with the potential coach, screening potential coaches and conducting reference checks are significant features of the appointment process.

Developing a policy for the selection of appropriately qualified coaches in alignment with the purpose statement and the club coaching trademark is of paramount importance.

For the appointment of coaches, the interview is an important time to not only find out more about the applicant but provide them with some background knowledge on your club and its purpose and its coaching trademark.

Before interviews start, it is important for your club to create role descriptions and form an understanding of the type of coaches you are looking to attract. The interview should be used as a chance to assess the candidates’ personal coaching philosophies, knowledge and understanding of the game, people management and organisational skills, and their ability to inspire and motivate players.

Some specific coach interview questions for potential coaches for different age and development groups follow.

**Coach Interview Questions**

**U/8-U/12 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**Experience**

What is your previous coaching experience, in particular, with this age group?

**Philosophy**

1. What do you see as the most important reason children want to play football?
2. What elements of the game do you believe you can develop in the players at this age group?
3. How important is winning to you? Why?
4. What are your thoughts on modified rules for children this age?
5. What are your thoughts on a selection policy for finals matches?

**Role Modeling**

1. A player in your team has abused a teammate. As a coach, what would you do? OR
2. A player in your team has abused an umpire and then his parents continue to vocalise their discontent at the umpire(s). As a coach, what would you do?
3. How should you present yourself and act at training/game-day?
4. What do you see as your responsibilities as a coach of 9/10/11-year-olds?

**Player Management**

1. Do you have a solution on how you can make every player’s involvement at training enjoyable and beneficial?
2. How would you manage players playing time and playing experience throughout the year?
3. What resources could you use to assist you in your role?
4. What policy would you implement to allow all players to have equal opportunity to display their skills?

**Skill Knowledge and Development**

1. Explain to the panel how you would introduce or teach kicking to players in your team?
2. You have 10 footballs and 10 cones in your coaching kit. You are in charge of 30 players. How would you conduct training to maximise all equipment and player involvement?
3. What needs do you see the club being able to fulfil to assist you in your coaching?
4. Are there any other questions or queries you (the coach) have of the panel?

**U/13-U/15 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**Experience**

What is your previous coaching experience, in particular, with this age group?

**Philosophy**

1. What do you see as the most important reason teenagers want to play football at this football club?
2. What elements of the game do you believe you can develop in the players at this age group?
3. Do you believe in “tagging”? Why?
4. What are your thoughts on the importance of tactics and introducing them to this age group?

**Role Modeling**

1. A player in your team has abused a teammate/umpire. As a coach, what would you do?
2. How should you present yourself and act at training/game-day?
3. Do you have any ideas on how to reduce or eliminate “ugly parent” behaviour?
4. Do you have a role in this?

**Player Management**

1. What are your thoughts on rotating players in different positions and ground/game-time with this age group?
2. How would you communicate and implement your game-plan to your players so that all could understand it?
3. What resources could you use to assist you in your role?
4. What is your opinion on player “burn-out” – both physical and psychological?

**Skill Knowledge and Development**

1. Explain to the panel how you would improve the “tackling” ability of the “less physical” players in your team?
2. You have 10 footballs and 10 cones in your coaching kit. You are in charge of 30 players. How would you conduct training to maximise all equipment and player involvement?
3. What needs do you see the club being able to fulfil to assist you in your coaching?
4. Are there any other questions or queries you (the coach) have of the panel?

**U/16-U/18 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**Experience**

Why do you want to coach this team and how is your coaching experience relevant to coaching the team?

**Philosophy**

1. What style of play would you aim for in coaching this team?
2. Which activities would you use to assist players with game-paced skills and decision-making?
3. What do you perceive to be the success indicators of a youth coach?
4. Briefly describe some of the match strategies you will use to maximise the performance of the team and the development of the players?
5. What is your overall role as the coach of the youth team?
6. What are your thoughts on coaches using “run withs”, “taggers”, extra players in the backline, “flooding” the opposition forward line?

**Player Management**

1. What processes will you put in place to keep players and parents “in the picture”?
2. How would you utilise the support staff?
3. Do you believe youth players have characteristics and circumstances that require special communication and attention at this age group?
4. Explain how have you kept up to date with current coaching methodologies and tactics?
5. How would you combat a 3-4-5 zone on your team’s kick-outs?
6. If one of your players is consistently “hooking the ball” when kicking, what do you believe needs to be done to reduce this?
Role Modeling

1. A player in your team has abused a teammate/umpire. As a coach, what would you do?
2. How should you present yourself and act at training/game-day?
3. What needs do you see the club being able to fulfil to assist you in your coaching?
4. Are there any other questions or queries the coach has?

Before you know it, pre-season training will be back underway and we’ll be counting down the days to another exciting year of footy.

Refer to *Club Coaching Coordinator Handbook* for more information.