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The Buloke Times

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Friday, April 11, 2025

PRICE (inc. G.S.T.) \$2

For the Shire of Buloke, and the districts of Birchip, Charlton, Donald, St. Arnaud, Watchem and Wycheproof



• First Aid participants: back row left to right, Dawn Ferrier (instructor), Holly Saul, Mikayla Keller, Steve Cooper, Jenna Angel, Andrew Weir. Middle row, Montana Kelly, Meg Hogan, Suzanna Fawcett, Clifford Pearson, Brittany Wren, Georgia Brown, Alicia Gault, Zoe Ferrier (assistant). Front, Tanya Hogan, Keely Allan, Tessa Coles.

Wycheproof Hosts Sports Trainers' Course

A Level 1 Sports Trainers course and First Aid was conducted at the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve (Football Club Rooms) on Sunday, April 6, 2025.

Dawn Ferrier, TalkSmart Training from Echuca, was the experienced facilitator who once again worked in partnership with Rhonda Allan of the Mallee Sports Assembly (Wycheproof).

Dawn has been very busy lately facilitating several courses in the region and her very valued services give people the opportunity to be skilled up as a Level 1 Sports Trainer and gain their First Aid certificate.

While some trainer courses are industry recognised, this Level 1 Sports Trainer course is nationally

recognised. Sports taping of elbow, ankle, knee, fingers, thumb and Achilles were included in the session.

All of the theory was completed online prior to the "hands on" component, participants only come for the practical workshop.

Crucial Skills

The Level 1 Sports Trainer course teaches crucial skills for safety during sports activities. It is ideal for those involved in sports-related roles, including club volunteers and sports enthusiasts.

• Continued on page 2.



• Level 1 Sports Trainers participants, left to right: Clifford Pearson, Laura Poyner, Tessa Coles, Keely Allan, Lauren Thompson, Andrew Weir, Meg Tonkin, Kara Farrell, Tanya Hogan, Jeremy Dean, Shelley Nelson, Dawn Ferrier (instructor).

Commitment – with a Proviso

Should the Coalition form government at the next election, the Wycheproof Recreation Reserve will get a much-needed makeover thanks to \$750,000 committed by Member for Mallee Dr Anne Webster this week.

"Community sport is the heartbeat of Mallee communities and positive for physical and mental health, belonging and wellbeing," Shadow Assistant Minister for Regional Health Dr Webster said.

"I am so pleased to commit on behalf of The Nationals \$750,000, if we form government, to contribute to the Wycheproof Recreation Multi-Sport Redevelopment (Stage 1). The Buloke Shire Council

will contribute \$500,000 toward the project.

Multi-Purpose

"These upgrades will provide the multi-purpose sporting spaces supporting netball, football, hockey, lawn bowls and cricket, catering to a diverse range of community members across generations."

The project will remove unsafe infrastructure and install a modular amenities

block, multi-use indoor space to serve athletes and spectators, and construct a new multi-purpose sports court with modern surfacing, fixtures and competition-grade lighting.

Dr Webster joined Buloke Shire councillors and community representatives to look at what the funding would secure.

"Mallee has upwards of 80 small communities across its

83,412 square kilometres. It is wonderful to back communities like Wycheproof," Dr Webster said.

"I have to be clear, I can only make this funding a reality if the Coalition forms government after the upcoming election.

"The Albanese Labor government has reduced spending in Mallee by 95 per cent compared to my first term in office under a Coalition government. My hope is that projects like this one will see Mallee restored to its fair share of federal spending."

Dr Webster has criticised the Federal Government's failure to provide a single housing grant to Mallee under the Regional Housing Support program, referring that program to the Auditor-General.

Mallee Councils have consistently told Dr Webster that Federal and Victorian Labor's co-funding demands make it incredibly difficult to successfully apply for funding.

"The Coalition contribution towards this project will be welcome relief to shires like Buloke Shire Council, after Labor starved shires with



• Dr. Anne Webster.

prohibitive project criteria and co-funding expectations," Dr Webster said.

The Message from World Health Day

Monday (April 7), was World Health Day, when the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) continued to urge all political parties to prioritise maternity care in their election commitments, ensuring women in rural and remote communities can access safe, high-quality care close to home.

The World Health Organisation's 2025 theme, Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures,

highlights the staggering global toll of maternal and newborn deaths-nearly

300,000 women die each year due to pregnancy or childbirth complications, and more than

2 million newborns don't survive their first month.

While Australia's health-care system ranks among the best in the world, rural, remote and First Nations women face increasing barriers to maternity care as services are closed or downgraded, forcing them

to travel long distances and putting their and their babies' health at risk.

Recent data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows that nearly 80,000 women give birth outside major cities each year.

• Continued on page 2.



• Dr Rod Martin.

The Brutal Cost of Ignoring the Bush: Australia's Rural Collapse

[From Central Murray Environmental Floodplains Group Inc]

Farmers across the Murray-Darling Basin – the lifeblood of Australia's food and fibre production – are under increasing pressure. Government changes have reallocated 3,200 gegalitres of irrigation water to environmental flows, much of it unmetered and flowing out to sea, creating dire consequences for regional food production.

The Gannawarra Region alone is losing \$1.3 billion annually – and these impacts are expected to worsen.

The reduction in water availability for farm use is severely affecting food and fibre production, directly influencing the current cost of living for Australian households.

As more farmers are forced out of the industry due to ineffective policies, the situation at the supermarket is set to deteriorate compromising the Nation's reliable and safe food supply.

The Buloke Times

FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025

Flooding

Environmental water flooding is now real and with no on-ground mitigation work in sight, it will continue to disrupt rural communities' livelihoods.

Water that could be used to secure our future is instead wasted, and the effects on businesses and families are profound.

With no immediate action, rural communities continue to shoulder the burden of poor management decisions.

The disappearance of rural services is another blow to farmers. From the closure of bank branches to a lack of medical and dental services, rural Australians are increasingly being forced to travel longer distances on deteriorating roads just to access the basics. The loss of

vital infrastructure is leaving our agricultural sector more vulnerable to both economic and logistical pressures.

Policies

The policies that seem to punish rural Australians are piling up. The government's decision to end live sheep exports by 2028 will wipe out an industry worth \$84 million annually. The VNI West Project, which would see a 500 KV transmission line installed across pristine farmland, shows the prioritization of metropolitan interests over rural communities.

Adding insult to injury, primary producers, who are also the Service's volunteers, now face a staggering increase in the Fire Services Property Levy, with landholders seeing hikes of over 100% some accumulating into the tens of thousands of dollars. These are just the latest in a series of decisions that have left rural Australians feeling abandoned.

If politicians are serious about national security and our agricultural future, they need to start prioritizing the needs of rural and regional Australians. It's time to stop ignoring the crucial role farmers play in feeding our nation.

Wycheproof Host Sports Trainers' Course

• Continued from page 1.

The course covers injury prevention and management strategies, making it a valuable resource for anyone involved in sports.

This is an integrated program designed to provide you with a comprehensive understanding and skillset in sports injury prevention, management, and competition preparation.

Congratulations to the following people (11 from eight different clubs) who participated in the Level 1 Sports Trainers course: Andrew Weir (St Arnaud Football Club), Clifford Pearson (Cohuna Kangas FNC), Tanya Hogan (Birchip-Watchem FC), Tessa Coles (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Keely Allan (Calder United Lions Hockey Club), Lauren Thompson

(Calder United Lions Netball Club), Laura Poyner (Calder United Lions Football Club), Megan Tonkin (Donald Netball Club), Shelley Nelson (Charlton Football Netball Club), Kara Farrell (Macorna Netball Club), Jeremy Dean (Birchip-Watchem FC).

There were also extra people (10 from 3 clubs) who updated/completed their First Aid as follows:

Alicia Gault (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Brittany Wren (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Georgia Brown (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Holly Saul (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Mikayla Keller (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Montana Kelly (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Suzanna Fawcett (Calder United Lions Netball Club),

Meg Hogan (Calder United Lions Netball Club), Steve Cooper (Calder United Lions Football Club), Jenna Angel (Birchip-Watchem Netball Club).

The sports trainers play an important role in ensuring the safety of participants at sporting clubs.

These people will be now recognized as an industry

accredited sports trainer (depending on their pre-component training, current first aid, CPR status), providing skills on how to prevent and manage injuries on and off the sporting field. Industry accreditation from this course is the standard requirement to work as a sports trainer in many of the country's sporting codes.



• Mikayla Keller (left) strapping up Montana Kelly.



• Participant Jeremy Dean practising taping an ankle.



• Instructor Dawn Ferrier (centre) demonstrating taping.

Corack East Wind

Renewable Energy from ACEN

ACEN Australia

ACEN Australia is in the early stages of investigating a large-scale wind energy project in Buloke Shire in Western Victoria, called **Corack East Wind**. The development is proposed to be located on privately owned land between Donald, Birchip and Wycheproof.

Drop-in information Hub
Every Wednesday 1pm-6pm

Commencing 19 March, 2025

Meet the project team, find out more and provide feedback

Charlton Park Community Bank Complex
Boardroom

Charlton Park Community Bank Complex
Calder Hwy, Charlton

www.corackeastwind.com.au

info@corackeastwind.com.au

1800 498 550

Corack East Wind

The Message from World Health Day

• Continued from page 1.

No Clear Plan

ACRRM President Dr Rod Martin says we've seen growing political recognition of women's health, but there is still no clear plan to reverse the decline of rural maternity services.

"We've recently seen rural and remote maternity units close or downgrade across services in Tasmania, Far North Queensland, and New South Wales.

"Every closure makes it harder for women who are most at need to access safe, affordable care. "We cannot wait for a tragedy to spur action."

Key Priorities

As part of its election priorities, ACRRM has outlined three key priorities to strengthen rural, remote and First Nations maternity care:

• Stopping rural maternity service closures.

• Committing targeted funding to attract and retain Rural Generalists (RGs) with obstetrics and anaesthetics skills where they are most needed.

• Establishing an intergovernmental taskforce to ensure sustainable funding and continuity of services at risk of closure.

Dr Martin says evidence-based models that integrate RGs, midwives, and other

health professionals have already demonstrated their success in delivering high-quality maternity care in rural areas.

Crucial Role

"RGs play a crucial role in antenatal and postnatal care, planned deliveries, and emergency obstetrics, but they need long-term investment to continue providing these services," Dr Martin says.

"This election is a critical moment.

"We need all parties to commit to sustainable, high-quality maternity care for rural, and First Nations communities-because no mother or baby should face greater risks simply because of where they live."

Farmers Say “No” to REZ

Wimmera and Mallee farmers have mapped over 600,000 hectares of farmland where landholders have indicated they do not want to be in a Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).

The farmers that are in opposition have had their paddocks marked darkest. The map, which already covers vast amounts of paddocks, is still incomplete but it gives a clear message of community opposition.

Impacted farmers began the mapping to visually represent how unwilling the region was to be placed in a tier one priority area for REZ.

Powerful Tool

Marcia McIntyre, a farmer and volunteer behind the map, says that it is a “powerful tool to use with state and federal government,” and that the “map will continue to grow”.

Julie Weir, another farmer and volunteer, said that “this ‘No Renewable Energy Zone Map’ reflects the feelings of those most impacted. It is the voice of grassroots agriculture. The unmarked gaps on the map are either project

hosts, potential hosts or farmers who are in the process of sending in their details to us.”

The dark paddocks indicate farmers who do not want to host turbines, solar panels, batteries or transmission lines.

Farmers were invited to participate in the map via phone or approached by volunteers at local drop-in meetings. The current map is the work of hundreds of volunteer hours; consulting with farmers and entering data.

National Survey

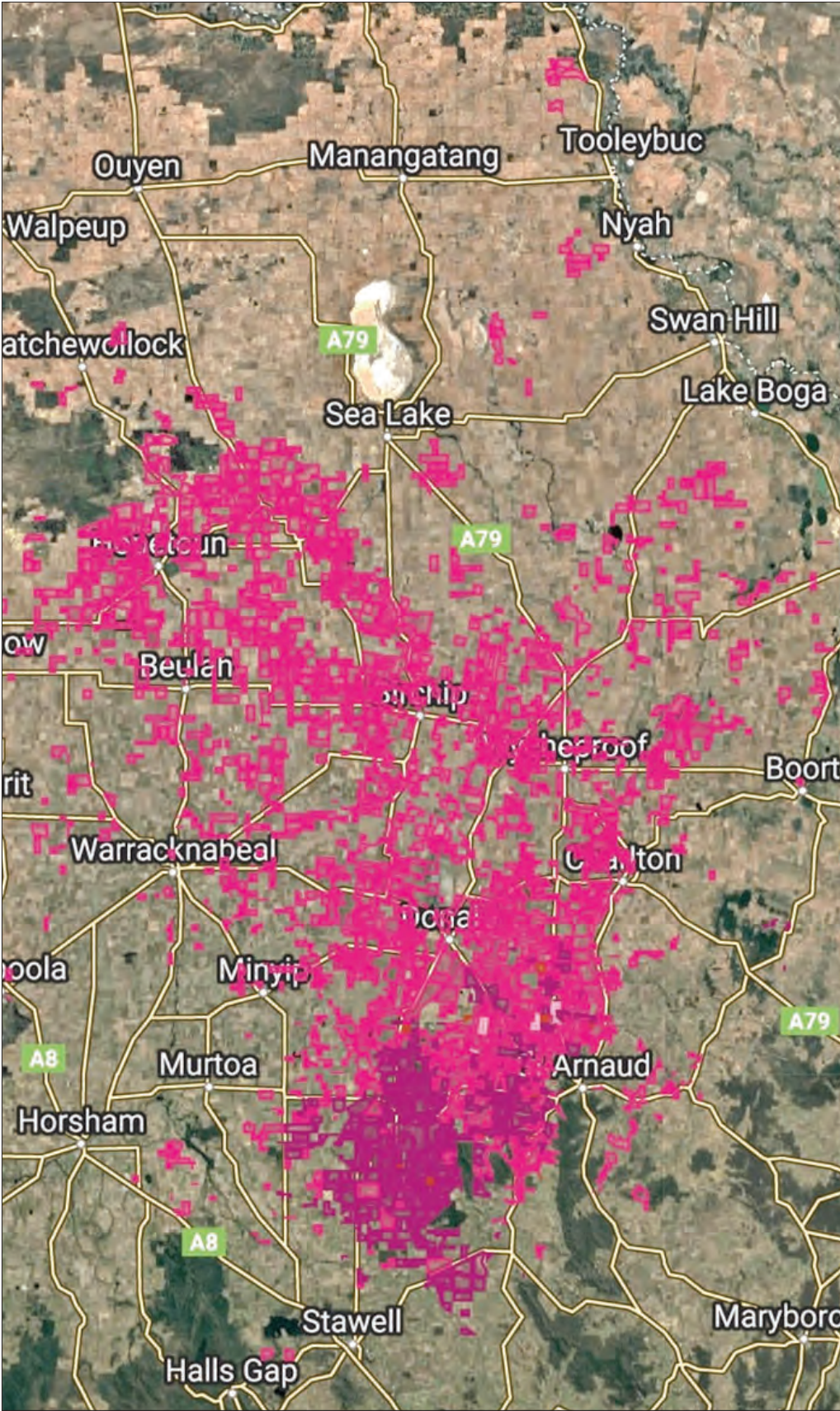
The findings of the map echo the national survey results published by Farms For Food earlier this year. The survey found that nine out of ten people opposed renewable energy projects on farmland. It also found that 81.9% of neighbours were opposed to renewable energy projects planned or built next to their property.

In Mallee

Due to the proposed VNI-West transmission line the electorate of Mallee has had an influx of new renewable energy projects completed or announced. In December of last year MP Dr Anne Webster cited that there were fifty constructed or planned renewable energy projects, however, more proposed projects have been named since.

Marcia McIntyre said that “protecting our precious food and fibre producing agricultural land and the irreplaceable, resilient and cohesive communities that farms nurture is paramount to the longevity of the agricultural sector and our legacy to our children.”

If you would like to add your paddock to the map you can contact norezinvic@gmail.com



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Letter to the Editor



Decarbonizing the Ecomony

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.— The discussion around decarbonizing the economy is gaining momentum, with the LNP exploring nuclear power stations and Labor focusing on offshore wind and green hydrogen. However, there is a noticeable gap in these discussions that needs to be addressed.

Transitioning towards a more sustainable future entails significant considerations. The CSIRO’s GenCost report shed light on the levelized cost of energy (LCOE) for various technologies, highlighting that solar PV and onshore wind offer cost-effective energy generation options.

Currently, solar and wind energy firming costs range from \$100-\$140 MWh, with projections indicating a decline to \$90-\$120 per MWh by 2030.

To support this transition, reforms are essential to plan for future renewable projects and establish transmission infrastructure to accommodate our growing population. It is crucial to ensure fair compensation for rural and regional communities hosting transmission developments.

Public ownership of poles and wires can facilitate government-led investments, paving the way for renewable energy zones.

Mr Corbell, CEO of the Clean Energy Investor Group, emphasizes the need for governments to enact laws that enable zero-carob electricity generation, energy storage, and transmission infrastructure development.

To achieve these goals, incentivizing battery storage across households and businesses nationwide can alleviate grid stress caused by

intermittent solar power.

Establishing federal programs for distributed and storage in schools, government housing, alongside re-nationalizing poles and wires through transparent processes, are crucial stages.

Additionally, prioritizing transmission upgrades, avoiding excessive grid investments, adequately compensating landowners who host transmission lines, and ensuring reliable dispatchable generation sources as coal plants phase out are vital strategies.

As a country, we must invest in long-duration storage technology, which is key to shaping Australia’s energy future.

Carly Noble,

Candidate for the Senate, representing Victoria as an Australian Democrat at the 2025 Federal election.

Regional Surgery Delays Risking Lives

The Nationals’ Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has slammed the Federal Government for its continued failure to address the regional health crisis, labelling current public surgery wait times as unacceptable and dangerous.

Ms Benham recently raised concerns with the Minister for Health, demanding an explanation for the increasing delays in both specialist consultations and surgery wait times in regional Victoria. Disappointingly, the Minister failed to directly answer when improvements can be expected.

“I have been contacted by several constituents who have been waiting months just to see a general surgeon,” Ms Benham said.

“These delays are putting lives at risk. Category 1 patients should never be left

waiting months for an initial specialist appointment.”

She reiterated the urgent need for more doctors in regional communities and called on the Federal Government to take meaningful steps to support and attract healthcare professionals to the regions.

“These wait times are simply unacceptable. Regional Victorians already face significant barriers to healthcare access, and the system is failing them,” she said.

Ms Benham highlighted a disturbing case of a seven-

month wait for an initial surgical consultation for a Category 1 patient, calling it “beyond belief”.

“The Labor Government must urgently implement real solutions to increase the number of specialist doctors in our regions and ensure timely access to critical health services,” she said.

“Without targeted action, regional patients will continue to suffer unnecessarily. We are crying out for hospital beds and for doctors and Labor is doing nothing to fix this.”

Scam Alert:

Know the Danger, Recognise the Warnings

Knowing how to identify a scam and what action to take to prevent being scammed is the motivation behind an information session being offered to Donald and district residents jointly by the Bendigo Bank, Community Bank Donald and District and the Donald Lions Club.

An open invitation is extended to community members to attend the free session, to be held at the Donald Community Centre, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 23.

Local branch manager, Kirby Richmond-Davis, said scammers use fake or hijacked profiles on social media, messaging platforms and apps to steal money and personal information, and will also try investment scams, romance scams and job and employment scams using social media, to deceive individuals or groups into surrendering money, personal information, or other valuables, often through manipulation or false pretenses.

“We want to see local residents better informed on how to identify potential scams so that they are better prepared to prevent themselves falling victim to what can be very convincing scammers.”

Scams are prevalent on many levels and through many every-day activities, with the perpetrators using very sophisticated techniques to gain the trust of people, particularly the elderly.

Bendigo Bank and the staff of the Community Bank, Donald and District, are keen to provide information to Donald and district residents that highlights scams that they have encountered and better inform local residents on how

to spot them, deal with them and, it is hoped, stop them in their tracks.

Scams can come in many forms, including the use of social media, and with this in mind, a number of case studies will be highlighted:

- Phone scam.
- Email scam.
- Online transactions.

Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and bank representatives, to enable them to be better equipped to spot a scam and to take action to protect themselves.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to book in time with the team in Donald to have a one-on-one chat.

"Times" Classifieds

Phone Donald 5497 1222, Birchip 5492 2735 Email admin@buloketimes.com

Deadlines:— **Tuesday's Issue:** Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Monday. Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Friday prior. **Friday's Issue:** Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Thursday. Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Wednesday prior.

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Friday, 18th April – Monday, 21st April

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Missionary and Bible College. David is now retired but is also an accomplished writer
and has authored Bible commentaries, ...

Youth Speaker: Josiah Watson

Lead Youth Pastor at Follow Baptist Church, Officer
and Design and Tech Support Worker.

Josiah is passionate about seeing youth
develop relationships with each other and with God.

Camps: Junior, Day Camp Years 3-6

Teens, Years 7-12

Young Adult, 18+

*Details and Register Online

www.wimmeraeasterconvention.org.au

Cross cultural Speakers

*Adult Accommodation & Meals available

*Enquiries: Hugh Keam Ph 0437016454

*Email: mhkeam@gmail.com

Bendigo Bank

You're invited to the Donald Bendigo Bank Scam Awareness Information Session.

Come along to learn about scams in our community. How to spot them. Stop them. Deal with them. As well as tackle any scam questions you might have.

Date: 23rd of April, 2025

Time: 9am - 10am

Venue: Donald Learning Group - 31 Woods Street, Donald

RSVP: 21st of April, 2025. Call Donald Bendigo Bank on 03 54 971 194 to reserve your seat.

Should you have a question, just call 03 54 971 194. We're more than happy to help.

Kind regards

Kirby Richmond-Davis and the Donald Team

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Avoiding Essential Vehicle Maintenance Can be Costly

RACV is urging motorists not to postpone essential vehicle repairs or maintenance in an attempt to save money, warning that delays can lead to significant safety risks and higher costs in the long run.

In 2024, the top reason for an RACV Emergency Roadside Assist call-out was battery-related issues, with 295,338 calls. This was followed by wheels and tyres (107,916) and electrical-related issues (50,993).

RACV General Manager Motoring Products Jeff Ames said that neglecting car maintenance or issues that arise can result in breakdowns and expensive repairs, potentially keeping your car off the road for extended periods.

"We know that cost of living issues are impacting families across Victoria in different, challenging ways, but RACV often sees first-hand that putting off seemingly small issues can be costly in more ways than one," Mr Ames said.

"Delaying essential car repairs may seem like a cost-saving measure, but motorists could expose themselves to issues that are both unsafe and expensive to fix."

Key Tasks

Key maintenance tasks that should not be deferred include:

Oil change: Poor or low engine oil can result in engine

damage, including stretched timing chains, which can result in major engine failure. Check your owner's handbook for the ideal way to check and replace your oil or engage your local service centre. Many modern cars have an oil change or oil pressure light that illuminates when there's a problem – so if you see the light, it's time to change the oil.

Coolant issues: Persistent coolant issues and leaks may be a sign of a serious mechanical issue and are best left to a mechanic to investigate immediately. Coolant should be brightly coloured (green, yellow, orange or pink, depending on the type). If it looks brown, rusty or murky, it's time for a change. An engine that frequently overheats is also a strong sign that your coolant is no longer effectively doing its job.

Suspension: If your tyres or ride comfort are deteriorating, there may be an issue with your suspension or shock absorbers. Address this promptly to avoid ongoing and costly problems.

Spark plugs and ignition coils: Spark plugs can impact

everything from your fuel efficiency to engine performance, making them an essential engine component. With a petrol car, you will also have ignition coils, which can break down over time. These usually present as a misfire, and/or the engine light will illuminate.

RACV encourages all motorists to adhere to their vehicle's servicing schedule and consult with qualified mechanics to address any issues promptly.

Investing in regular maintenance not only improves vehicle and road safety but also prevents more significant costs down the track.

For more information on essential car repairs and maintenance, visit RACV's guide on car repairs you shouldn't delay.



• In 2024, the top reason for an RACV Emergency Roadside Assist call-out was battery-related issues, with 295,338 calls. Image: RACV.

Support services

Adult

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 13 11 14
lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978
mensline.org.au

StandBy Support After Suicide
1300 727 247

Youth

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: 1800 650 890
headspace.org.au

ReachOut: ReachOut.com

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au

Other resources

Head to Health: mental health portal
headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal
lifeinmindaustralia.com.au

SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm)
online forums: saneforums.org

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Church Notices

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)

Donald, 10 a.m.
Wycheproof, 10 a.m.
Birchip, 10 a.m.

Friday, April 18
Good Friday

Birchip, 9.30 a.m.,
(The regular Sunday service
will be conducted as usual)

Contact Number: 5497 1033

ANGLICAN "Parish of Charlton-Donald"

Enquiries: Rev'd Judi Bird
0435 593 359

Friday, April 18
Good Friday

St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 20
Easter Day

St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.



www.granitecommunitychurch.com

At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.

Speaker: Johan Grobler
(Megavoice Africa)
Baptist Union of Victoria

Good Friday Service
Ross Barnes

at Granite Rocks Reserve
9.30 a.m. with morning tea
to follow.

No Easter Sunday Service

A Cosmic Rescue

In 1912 two impressive steam ships were built. One was the Titanic and the other was TSS Earnslaw.

Tragically the Titanic sank on its maiden voyage with the loss of 1500 lives.

The other, TSS Earnslaw, is still going strongly one hundred and thirteen years after its construction. It currently carries thousands of appreciative passengers each year as a pleasure steamer on Lake Wakatipu in New Zealand's South Island.

Named after Mt Earnslaw (2819 metres) the TSS Earnslaw is 51.2 metres long and weighs 330 tonnes. Two triple expansion jet condensing steam engines propel the ship at up to 13 knots (22 kilometres per hour).

Her working roles over the past decades have included transporting cargo, livestock carrier, passenger transporter and pleasure steamer in its latter days.

A quote from one passenger after a tourist trip on the Earnslaw: "This was a fantastic day. The ship was wonderful and really accessible for the kids. They loved looking at the engine, watching the stokers shovel coal and the pistons moving." Snow covered mountains and the stunning turquoise coloured water of Lake Wakatipu provide an amazing environment for this boat to transport many tourists each year – a trip which my wife and I and son, Paul, experienced one glorious day.

"The Titanic"

Now some more information about the Titanic. At the time the Titanic was launched it was the biggest moving object ever built by humankind. One described it as the "supreme epitomy of human pride and achievement".

However, it was just before midnight on 14th April, 1912, that the HMS Titanic, on her maiden voyage struck an iceberg in the icy waters of the Atlantic. Within two-and-a-half hours the then largest ship afloat, a ship claimed to be unsinkable, had plunged to the bottom of the ocean. All but 705 of the nearly 2,200 passengers and crew aboard perished.

These same 705 survivors who were able to get aboard life boats were overjoyed to see the ship Carpathia arrive a few hours after Titanic sank to rescue them after responding to the distress signals from the Titanic.

Easter

Easter 2025 is upon us. With Christmas we remember and celebrate "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4:14). The sending of the Saviour initiates God's cosmic rescue mission and Easter reminds us of the completion of the greatest rescue mission of all time.

Jesus Christ, God's only Son came to planet earth "not to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Tragically many people do not realise they need to be rescued from sin, the wrong things we do separate us from God, who is perfectly holy.

I am sure that the 705 surviving passengers of the Titanic expressed profuse thanks to the captain and crew of the Carpathia who saved them from the freezing waters of the Atlantic.

Even more so, Easter reminds us to express our gratitude to

Jesus Christ for His sacrificial death on the cross for our benefit. "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God" (1 Peter 3:18).

Christ "paid the debt He did not owe to satisfy the debt we could not pay". Jesus not only died on the cross for us, but He rose again. Over 500 people witnessed Jesus alive and well after His resurrection as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:3,4.

Millions today attest to the reality of the risen Jesus. One such believer is Dr Francis Collins, former Head of the Human Genome project and one of the world's most accomplished scientists. He said, "I encountered the person of Jesus Christ as this remarkable figure in history who clearly was different from any other figure in any other faith. Jesus claimed not only to know God but also to be God and to forgive sins, and He died on a cross in a way that took me a long time to understand. Eventually it made the most beautiful, perfect spiritual sense. I realised that this was not just a story to walk away from. I had to reach my own verdict based on the evidence."

Dr Collins moved from atheism to becoming a follower of Jesus.

Easter, a time to remember and give thanks for the amazing sacrifice Jesus made for us on the cross. Have a joy-filled Easter.

Bruce Stewart.



• In 1912 two magnificent steam ships were built. One was the Titanic and the other was TSS Earnslaw. Tragically the Titanic sank on its maiden voyage with the loss of 1500 lives. The other, TSS Earnslaw, one hundred and thirteen years after its construction, is still carrying passengers across Lake Wakatipu in New Zealand's South Island. Snow covered mountains and the amazing turquoise coloured water of Lake Wakatipu provide a spectacular environment for this boat to transport thousands of tourists each year – a trip which Jan and I and son, Paul, experienced one glorious day.



• A local farmer constructed this eye catching reminder of the centrality of the cross in the atoning work of Jesus. His blood was shed for us on that cross, He died and was buried and rose again.



The SEC is back.
To deliver renewable, affordable, reliable energy.
Helping reduce energy bills, drive down emissions and create jobs.
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Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal: Urgent Call for Support

The Salvation Army is calling on the community to sign up for this year’s Red Shield Appeal, raising local funds to support people who are struggling most in our region.

Across Australia the Salvos are aiming to raise \$38 million for Australia’s largest and longest-running door-knock appeal, the 61st annual Red Shield Appeal.

“The last few years have been incredibly tough for the hardest hit in our community, and for many that shows no sign of slowing down,” said The Salvation Army’s Major Warren Elliot.

“We see so many people grappling with increased stress and uncertainty as everyday living has become unaffordable, leading to housing stress, financial hardship and an inability to get by. At the Salvos we are privileged to support those in our area experiencing hardship, but we cannot do this without the ongoing and loyal support of the community.”

The funds raised in the Grampians for the Red Shield Appeal will stay in the local community and will be used

to meet the specific needs faced by the most disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Stocktake

Earlier this year, The Salvos released their Social Justice Stocktake; a survey which polled over 16,000 Australians and provided national, state and electoral reports highlighting the biggest issues faced by communities. Within Victoria it was found that 68.5% of people identified the issue of housing affordability and homelessness as the top concern for the community, with the second being mental health (60.6%).

“There is no better way to support your community than by donating to or volunteering in the Red Shield Appeal this year, and we need you to partner with us to be the hope our community so desperately needs. We can’t do our work in the community without

you,” said Major Warren Elliot.

Red Shield Weekend

The Red Shield Appeal culminates in the Red Shield Weekend (May 24 and 25), and there are a number of ways to get involved throughout the month of May – volunteering by collecting at local shopping centres and other locations, door knocking, online fundraising, organising a collection at your workplace, school or sporting event and making a donation.

Please reach out to your local Salvos to find out more about volunteering opportunities by visiting salvationarmy.org.au/red-shield-appeal

Across Australia last year, through The Salvation Army’s network of over 400 centres and 2,000 services in areas such as homelessness, family and domestic violence, youth, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, financial hardship and much more, the Salvos provided:

- Assistance to one person every 17 seconds.
- More than 1.76 million sessions of care to over 250,000 people in need.
- Over 1.1 million bed nights to those who needed accommodation.
- More than 1.5 million meals to those who accessed our homelessness services.

To donate or volunteer for The Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal or if you need support from the Salvos, visit salvationarmy.org.au or call 13 SALVOS. You can also donate at any Salvos Store.



• Support the Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal.

Another Billion-Dollar Disaster – Metro Tunnel Fails to Deliver

Jacinta Allan’s signature project – the \$14.5 billion Metro Tunnel – has now been exposed as yet another case of Labor blowing the budget, cutting back promised benefits, and lying to Victorians about the numbers.

Originally budgeted between \$9 billion and \$11 billion, the project has now surged to \$15 billion. But secret government documents reveal that the promised service uplift for commuters will never be delivered.

Shadow Minister for Public Transport, Matthew Guy, said this is not just a transport failure – it is a financial scandal.

“Labor told Victorians this tunnel would transform the network. Instead, it’s a \$15 billion black hole delivering no benefit to commuters in Melbourne’s north, west and south-east,” Mr Guy said.

“They’ve spent \$100 billion on infrastructure, plunged the state into record debt, and

now we learn they’ve been lying about the benefits of their flagship project.

“If Labor got the numbers this wrong on the Metro Tunnel, what confidence can Victorians have in their \$34.5 billion claim for the Suburban Rail Loop?”

Shadow Minister for Major Projects, Evan Mulholland, said this was part of a clear pattern of economic incompetence from the Allan Labor Government.

“Labor doesn’t deliver projects – they deliver debt,” Mr Mulholland said.

“They blew the budget, slashed the benefits, and now they’ve been caught out lying to Victorians.

“This isn’t just misman-

agement – it’s deception. They’ve lied about the cost, they’ve lied about the benefits, and Victorians are the ones paying the price.”

The project has also been rocked by revelations of a CFMEU ghost shift scandal, where union-connected workers fleeced millions from taxpayers in fraudulent claims – further proof Labor has lost control of both the budget and the build.

The Liberals and Nationals are calling for a full, independent audit of all Labor infrastructure projects, starting with the Metro Tunnel and Suburban Rail Loop, to get to the bottom of what Victorians have really paid — and what they’ve been promised.

What are SMS Scams?

[From the Bendigo Bank]

What are SMS scams? They are messages that might include a link to direct you to a fraudulent website or ask you for your personal information or from someone pretending to be a family member who needs money.

How to spot a scam: There is a sense of urgency or threat to the message – “your bank account is overdue! Pay now”, “Your account has been suspended” and includes a link to make the payment which directs you to a fraudulent website.

You receive a message from a number you do not recognise claiming to be a family member and in need of money.

How to Protect Yourself

Don’t be pressured into taking action.

Don’t click on any hyperlinks or open attachments in on SMS.

Contact the family member on a number you have sourced directly.

We will never send you a message asking for your banking, personal information.

We will never send you a message asking you to click on a link to activate your account or gain access to special offers.

If you are unsure of a message you receive from Bendigo Bank, contact us directly or visit us in a branch.

Don’t click on any hyperlinks or open attachments in an SMS.

Mum SMS Message Scam

An indicator of this SMS scam is when you receive an SMS message sent from “Mum” or “Dad” asking for money to be transferred urgently.

The SMS scam messages may vary, however, if you unexpectedly receive a message

to send money to a family member, always call them on their trusted number (one you have previously spoken to them on) to confirm the message.

Fake Bendigo Bank SMS Messages

Bendigo Bank will never ask you to click on a link in an SMS text message to login to e-banking. Do not click on the link.

We are aware of a SMS phishing campaign targeting Bendigo Bank customers. The messages claim to be from Bendigo Bank and include a website link. The link leads to a fake Bendigo Bank website asking you to login to e-banking.

Sometimes an SMS alert is also sent prior to a “cold call scam” that seemingly look like they are from Bendigo Bank.

This is achieved using another method known as “alpha togs” to make messages appear in a thread of legitimate messages sent from us. Unfortunately, there is currently no feasible way to intervene or prevent this from occurring.

Let us know ASAP if you think you have been the victim of a scam

Things to Remember

Never provide your 6-digit e-banking security code to anyone in person, over the phone or online even if they claim to work for your bank and have personal information about you.

Never provide a caller with remote access to your computer.

We will never ask you for your e-banking PIN, e-banking password or 6-digit e-banking security code.

We will never ask you to login to e-banking via a link sent in an SMS or sent in on email.

We may call from time to time and ask to verify your identity by asking for your verbal password. However, we will never ask you for any PIN, password or security code relating to your e-banking. If you feel uncomfortable, you can always verify our branch contact details on our website and call us back.

If You Need Help or More Information

If you have clicked on any suspicious links and entered your e-banking details: Call 1300 236 344 (in Australia) or +61 3 5445 0666 (from overseas standard international call charges apply), Monday to Friday – 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. AEST/AEDT (excludes Christmas Day), weekends (Saturday and Sunday) and some public holidays – 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. AEST/AEDT.

SMS

If you have received a suspicious SMS message claiming to be from us, you can forward it to 0429 557 997 for investigation. Please note you will not receive a personal response from 0429 557 997.

Email

If you have received any suspicious emails, you can forward them to us via email. Please note you will not receive a personal email response from us.

Slip Up Over \$2.4 Million Fraud

[From Australian Tax Office]

A Victorian man has been jailed for fraudulently obtaining over \$2.4 million dollars in GST refunds, contrary to section 134.2 of the Criminal Code (Cth).

ATO Deputy Commissioner and Serious Financial Crime Taskforce Chief John Ford welcomed the result.

“It is astounding that people think they can get away with this type of behaviour,” Mr Ford said.

“We take all levels and amounts of fraud seriously and ensure that those who seek to gain an unfair advantage face the full force of the law.”

The man was sentenced in the County Court of Victoria to 4 years and 7 months imprisonment, with a non-parole period of 2 years and 7 months, for fraudulently obtaining \$2.4 million in GST refunds and attempting to receive a further \$300,000. He was ordered to make reparation of \$2.4 million.

Between March 1, 2021, and February 2, 2022, Mr Andree-Jansz lodged a total of 31 business activity statements (BAS), claiming his business had made nearly \$30

million worth of purchases.

An ATO audit found no transactions or bank activity consistent with the running of a plumbing business. Instead, it was found Mr Andree-Jansz spent the money on various lifestyle items, luxurious accommodation and a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

“This type of behaviour is essentially stealing money from the community that could be used to fund essential services that benefit everyone,” Mr Ford said.

This matter was prosecuted by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth)(CDPP) following a referral from the ATO.

As part of Operation Protego, the ATO has taken action against more than 57,000 alleged offenders.

The ATO continues to undertake firm action including debt recovery, as well as criminal investigations for serious offenders.

As of 28 February 2025:

• 104 people have been arrested.

• 98 people have been convicted with a range of sentencing outcomes, including jail terms of up to 7 years and 6 months and with orders made to restrain real property.

• the ATO has finalised 61 investigations and referred 51 briefs of evidence to the CDPP.

You can anonymously report suspected tax evasion or crime to us by making a tip-off online or call 1800 060 062. For more information about Operation Protego results, visit www.ato.gov.au/Protego.



AMBULANCE PHONE NO.
000



• Captain Matt Clarke is ready to launch the season by hitting the traditional “First Drive”. Eagerly watching in the background are, left to right, Geoff Harvey, Richard Gallagher, Anthony Hogan, Kelvin Clark, Sam Beavis, Leonie Harvey and Luke Kelly.



(By “Course Language”)

The Donald Golf Club’s 2025 season officially got under way last Sunday with a 2-person Ambrose.

Captain Matt Clarke launched the season by hitting the traditional “first drive”. Thankfully this year we saw where it went and he didn’t take three attempts – unlike last year.

There were 11 eager participants who tackled the very dry and some might say un-inviting golf course.

Despite this, the course played pretty truly, with some good scores and some golf that did improve as the players warmed to the task of hitting golf balls again after a 6-month break.

It was good to see all the work our members have undertaken over the off season to improve the course. Something that will hold the course in good stead for years to come.

The winners last weekend were Matt Clarke, Richard Gallagher and Geoff Harvey.

The “Nearest The Pins” were: The Donald Auto Elec 3rd, Anthony Hogan; Weirs IGA 7th, Luke Kelly; Nufarm 14th, Kelvin Clark; Bendigo Bank 16th; Luke Kelly.

Great to have Anthony Hogan back on the golf course. He’s lost none of his touch as his approach shot on the first showed. He hit his ball 4 metres past the hole and made it spin back towards the hole leaving him with a four-foot putt. Very tough to do on a sandscrape unless you hit the scraper. Isn’t that right, Hoges?

One of the disappointing things that happened over the off season was that our workshop and equipment shed was broken into with over \$5,000 worth of equipment taken. This a huge financial and emotional burden that has been forced upon us and with little to no chance of the

Police recovering our equipment, our members will again work hard to replace the items over time. With security cameras now installed, I hope the culprits smile if they try again so the Police can catch their best angle.

Coming Up

This weekend is a Stableford event on Saturday and

Sunday sponsored by Harbergers.

Dad Jokes

My boss told me to have a “Good Day”, so I went home.

What has more letters than the alphabet? The Post Office.

Maths is very hard to understand – fifteen plus fif-

teen is thirty, but sixteen plus sixteen is thirty TOO!

Yesterday I was sitting, drinking coffee in my slippers. I thought, “I really need to clean some mugs.”

Did you hear about the shop assistant who fought off a robber with a labelling gun? Police are looking for a man with a price on his head.

Presentations

Presentations followed with the following players

Birchip Golf Season is Under Way

The Birchip course is looking amazing, just waiting for a little rain to change the colour of the grass. There has been a power of work to get it up and going. Thank you to everyone for all your efforts.



• Jack Knights tees off.

Panthers Celebrate Premiership

Watchem Panthers “B” grade Wimmera Mallee Cricket premiers held their end of season break-up and presentation day on Sunday, March 30 at 2 p.m. in the club rooms at the Recreation Reserve.

The day was well supported by players, partners, family and supporters with a fine spread of afternoon tea available.

Club president Jeremy Dean welcomed everyone along, including life members and recorded the apology of one of those, Barry Johnson, and acknowledged that he was very happy indeed to be standing there as the leader of a club which has just won a premiership, after working toward it for ten years, with good mates, supporters and the winning team. He spoke about the journey to this point and that a couple of players, Sam Milne and Seamus Lowry, had been with the club through its whole journey. These two both reached their respective 100 game milestones this season.

Jeremy talked about the memory of being skittled for 14 runs against St Mary’s, the times when the team was still chasing players the night before or the morning of the game, picking bindii’s out of knees, and other individual happenings that have been part of getting to this premiership. He agreed that the Bus trip home from Marnoo would never be forgotten, nor would the hard work by many club people who have helped along the way.

being recognised. Leading run scorer was Ty Colbert 507 runs (avr 50,7). Leading wicket taker was Austin Dean (apology on the day) with 28 (ave 9.03). The Charlie Petrie memorial trophy for the best junior went to Jam Borden, Best in Finals (sponsored by the Woods Family) was also Austin Dean. Most Determined went to Riley Hogan who also picked up the prestigious Best Club Person award for his willingness to get in and help in so many ways.

Other significant presentations went to Jam Borden with his hat trick against Charlton, Austin Dean for his double hat trick against Donald Jeffcott in the early round, 50 runs scored were noted for Ty Colbert (62) and (71), Danial Tatarskj (51), Captain Connor Boyle also with 2 x 50s and the unfortunate Daniel Slater who on 98 found the edge and saw the finger go up from Ump, his dad, Andrew. 100 runs were recorded by Ty Colbert with 127.

Five wicket hauls were noted for Ty Colbert 5/14 (6) and Austin Dean 6/40 (8) and 6/15 (8).

Church Notices

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES

“East Wimmera Parish”

Birchip	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream in)</i>	
Boort	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream in)</i>	
Banyena	No Mass
Charlton	8.30 a.m.
Donald (Sat.)	7.00 p.m.
St. Arnaud	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream out to churches without Mass)</i>	
Wycheproof	10.30 a.m.
<i>(Livestream in)</i>	

Easter Service

Thursday, April 17

Holy Thursday

Live-streamed out from St. Mary’s Birchip. 7.00 p.m.

Friday, April 18

Good Friday

Charlton LLA	10.00 a.m.
Donald	3.00 p.m.
<i>(with Fr Gerry)</i>	
St. Arnaud LLA	3.00 p.m.
Birchip LLA	3.00 p.m.
Wycheproof LLA	3.00 p.m.
Boort LLA	3.00 p.m.

Saturday (night), April 19

Easter Vigil

Wycheproof	5.00 p.m.
Charlton	7.00 p.m.
St. Arnaud	9.00 p.m.

Sunday, April 20

Easter Sunday

Birchip	8.30 a.m.
Banyena.	12 noon.
Boort	5.00 p.m.

Live-streamed out from St. Mary’s Donald 10.30 a.m.
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-7KMG-nnvs-fjpGqN39qKnw>

Fr. Gerry Prunty

0419 247 779

Parish Co-ordinator

– Noeline Hogan: 0476 617 976

Big Win for Bulls' Reserves

Birchip-Watchem reserves started their season in impeccable fashion last Saturday with a 118-point win over Charlton at Charlton Park.

It was a dominant victory for the visitors who relentlessly peppered the scoreboard throughout the match. The Bulls' defenders also deserved to take a bow as they restricted Charlton to just five behinds for the match.

There was plenty of youth amongst the Birchip-Watchem team, including Connor Lee who took on a key midfield post. Lee wasted no time putting his name in lights for the vote givers and the senior selectors respectively, blitzing his Charlton opponents and collecting well north of 30 possessions for the match. Lee also finished the day with four goals to his name, a stats sheet that any player would gladly accept.

Alexander Hay made his debut appearance for the Bulls, playing as a tall, solid and imposing key forward. Hay had a strong outing, leading to the right spots, making smart decisions with ball in hand and kicking three goals. Connor Boyle, who has had a golden run on the sporting field in recent months after captaining the Watchem Panthers "B" Grade cricket team to premiership glory, seamlessly transferred his prowess to the oval ball and kicked

three goals of his own playing off a half forward flank.

Another Bulls forward who had an influential match was Tom Gibson. Hailing from the Yorke Peninsula in South Australia, the same stomping ground as the Bulls seniors full-forward Ben Edwards, Gibson is spending his workdays plying his farming trade at the Hinkley farm. On-field, Gibson provided further evidence that the YP breeds some handy footballers. His kicking skills have always been excellent and were put to good use in front of goal where he kicked three majors.

The silky skills of Bodie Colbert and Riley Hogan were a fine complement to Connor Lee's high possession game in the midfield, while Connor's first cousin Jack Lee was at his usual bullocking best at the stoppages.

In order to keep a team goalless, the defence must be focused, determined and well-structured throughout the match. Birchip-Watchem stalwart Matt Rickard led the way in this regard. Rickard took several intercept marks across the middle of the ground and set up many of the Bulls' forward thrusts. Patrick Lakin, who joins brother Ben at the

Bulls this season, was serviceable at full-back.

For Charlton, Benjamin Roberts and Cooper Boyle were among the best performers. Both ran out the game with plenty of gusto and executed numerous tackles, ensuring the Bulls weren't cruising to the finish line. Mason Heenan and Travis Salmon also performed admirably, executing their fair share of spoils in the backline.

The match belonged to Birchip-Watchem, however, registering 33 scoring shots to Charlton's five. Nine goalkickers in total and four multiple goalkickers for the Bulls showed they had multiple avenues to goal which would please the coaches.

Final score: Birchip-Watchem 18.15 (123) defeated Charlton 0.5 (5).

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Tom Gibson (O'Connors), Connor Lee (YBS Ag), Jack Lee (Agrifac), Riley Hogan (Donnellon's Bulk Haulage), Bodie Colbert (Nutrien Ag & Ryan Commodities).

For Charlton: Benjamin Roberts, Cooper Boyle, Mason Heenan, Travis Salmon, John Leathan, Lachlan Holmes-Brown.



• Callum Goode chasing Charlton player, behind Callum is Tom Gibson.



• Bulls' player with ball is Archie Lewis, with Jack Lee (right).

Field and Game – Easter Shoot

There were 52 shooters at Donald F&G's S75 ASF OTG (LVJ Handicap) April Target Shoot. Great targets and a "cruisey" day.

Sponsor for the day was Kooka's Country Cookies. Donald Field and Game's next shoot will be Sunday, May 4.

Jono Turnbull and Jason Parker were in a shoot off for first in "A" grade.

High Gun: Jim Sawyer (Ararat-Stawell), 64.

AA: 1st Peter Mitchell (Donald), 62; 2nd Robert Papst (Minyip), 61; 3rd Mick Seehausen (Grampians), 59.

A: 1st Jason Parker

(Grampians), 58; 2nd Jono Turnbull (Mt Wycheproof), 58; 3rd Trent Grant (Donald), 58.

B: 1st David Manifold (Donald), 49; 2nd Boof Lorenzen (Clunes), 48; 3rd Andrew Falla (Donald), 46.

C: 1st Jason Giddings (Donald), 38; 2nd Michael Whelan (Donald), 34; 3rd Greg Cooper (Grampians), 31.

Ladies, Vets and Juniors include handicap.

Ladies: 1st Carey Brennan (Donald), 67; 2nd Tanya

Clark (Minyip), 63; 3rd Kerry Donald (Canberra), 50.

Veterans: 1st David Lanyon (Donald), 63; 2nd Basil Wagg (Natimuk), 55; 3rd Ken Schurmann (Minyip), 51.

Juniors: 1st Brendan Winter (Donald), 70.

Targets Only: 1st Matt Sawyer, 2nd Beau.

Please note FGA memberships were due 31st March, please check your membership. See you in May.



• Beau in stand, Jason scoring, Trent on the button, Wayne Piera and Andrew Donnellon watching on.



• Tanya Clark in the stand with James Byrne and Kerry Donald watching on.



• Highgun winner Jim Sawyer.

Bulls' Hockey Looks to Future

The Bulls Hockey Club has made the decision to focus on its large junior numbers this season, in an effort to attract more volunteers to the club and provide pathways for these juniors to play senior hockey in the future.

It was great to see so many young people and their parents enjoying training on Wednesday, which was followed by a barbecue on a beautiful autumn night. The enthusiasm of the players and families' augurs well for the future.

In contrast, it was a cold morning for the first round of hockey for 2025, but by the time the teams took the field in Charlton, the sun was shining.

Minkey

The minkeys started the day with lots of enthusiastic players playing their first game of minkey, and many others coming back to enjoy another season. The first half was a nil-all draw as players got to know their way around, but in the second half both teams scored goals, with Thomas Noonan enjoying his chance to score multiple times. Team mates Remi Bowen and Eamen Wood helped out when the ball came their way and Charlton's goalie made some great saves with enthusiastic support from Jonathon Morkos.

Award winners for Birchip-Watchem were Remi Bowen (BWHC Canteen) and Eamen Wood (T & B Morris). For Charlton, Molly Riley (IGA) and Jonathon Morkos (Connect Coffey).

Under-12

Birchip-Watchem is lucky

to have plenty of numbers in the squad this year, with a few making their debut from minkey last year. This meant coach Tim McClelland could rotate players and have fresh legs which kept up their energy and momentum.

Both teams had some smooth passages of play and worked together well, given it was the first game. There was a lot of encouragement from both teams.

Zayvier Sagers made his goal-keeping debut for Birchip-Watchem and he did a great job stopping a few shots after Toby Bourke from Charlton had been able to sneak one through early in the game. Birchip-Watchem had lots of forward momentum with Denley Tyler and Oscar Sharp moving the ball forward, but Charlton defenders were strong in defence, stopping several short corners. Toby Bourke cleared the ball deep for Charlton on several occasions, giving them time to regroup but they didn't have any further opportunities to score and they remained ahead 1.0 when the final whistle sounded.

Thank you to all the sponsors. Birchip-Watchem award winners were River Ryan (TMC enviro) and Jett Hinds (BWHC). Awards for Charlton: Sophie Roberts (Foley's Hill), Toby Bourke (Auxiliary



• Rosie Fitzpatrick shooting for goal, Goalie Garth Kilroy and Sadidas Gardiner-Paiea trying to defend, with Darcy Olive and Des Coffey on the line, and Michael Darby running back.

Kiosk), Finn Schofield (Connect Coffey) and Archie Smyth and Tom McGurk (IGA).

Underage

In the first game back the Birchip-Watchem Bulls had a tough assignment against the experienced Charlton team. In the opening minutes Garth Killroy faced a stroke against Murphy Fitzpatrick, who snuck the first goal of the

game in to get Charlton on the board and they followed up with a goal scoring blitz from the Fitzpatricks, with Murphy scoring 6 and Rosie and Amali scoring 2. Lila Schofield chimed in with 1 as did Jordan Chamberlain.

In the second half Frankie McClelland assisted Archie Tyler down the field to score a goal for the Bulls. Harry Mitchell, Elise Cox, Alana

Caldwell and Ben Horton all played very well for their first game with the Bulls and will get better as they learn more skills from their new coaches. Charlton 12 defeated Birchip-Watchem 1.

Although the Bulls team was feeling a bit defeated, they all kept their heads high and will improve as the season progresses and Charlton will no doubt be one of the

teams to beat in 2025. Birchip-Watchem awards went to Max Field (O'Connors) and Frankie McClelland (Fiona Best). And Charlton, Murphy Fitzpatrick (Fitzpatrick transport), Jordan Chamberlain (Auxiliary kiosk), Sheena Fitzpatrick (Charlton bakery), Rosie Fitzpatrick (Connect Coffee) and Darcy Olive (North West Ag player of the round).



• Murphy Fitzpatrick taking stroke against Garth Kilroy. At left is umpire Leanne Gretgrix.

Calder Hockey in Early Form

The Donald women's hockey team took to the field against the newly formed Calder United. Donald put everything it had learnt in training into practice and had some amazing plays during the match.

Louise was a fierce competitor in the middle of the field, constantly moving the ball in and out of players and making options to pass or receive the ball, and nearly got the ball down the Calder end for a goal. Sophie had a great run down the field keeping the ball firmly on her stick while defending Calder players, while Carly also was adept at keeping the ball on her stick and making great saves from shots at goal by Calder.

Keely Allen was awarded a stroke against Donald goalie Charlotte which Charlotte initially defended well before dropping the ball between her legs and awarding the goal. Great field work and defending by Erika and newcomers to the Donald team, Fiona and Lily.

Calder had some great goal scoring done by Sarah P., Mary-Anne, Alicia, Sarah B. and Keely. A great first match for the girls despite losing they all worked together and fought hard, just got a little tired in the last quarter.

Donald lost to Calder 0-10.

Calder goals: Keely Allan (3), Sarah Botheras (4), Alicia Gault (1), Sarah Plowright (1) and Mary-Anne Pollard (1).

Donald awards: Best on, Charlotte Bicket; Dellavedova, Louise Barber.

Calder awards: Meal voucher (Terminus Hotel), Phoebe P.; Meal voucher (Bridgewater Hotel), Kathy D.; IGA Powerade, Keely A.; \$20 voucher (Balinese Massage Bendigo), Sarah B..

Men's

What an absolutely perfect day for much anticipated return to the hockey season with the first round clash between the rival teams.

Both teams took to the field with energy and enthusiasm, the game moved at such a pace that it actually became detrimental to game play, with many missed opportunities on both teams. Calder most definitely proved a team to be taken seriously, dominating the field from the onset, and clearly working more cohesively as a team than perhaps the Donald side.

Donald's goalie was definitely put through his paces and despite the final scores, one could not say that an amazing job was not done on his part, even successfully defending a stroke.

Frustrations became clear

throughout the game leading to 4 yellow cards and a red being called by umpires before the game's end. Despite this, however, the game was amazing to watch and surely both teams will take away insight before they meet again later this season.

Final score: Donald 1 def. by Calder 5.

Donald goal: Glenn Pearse.

Calder goals: Marcus Williamson 3, Corey Harrison 1, Matt Hall 1.

Donald awards: Best, Sam Hirst-Pearse; Dellavedova, Henry Bourchier.

Calder awards: Jacob Moresi, Marcus Williamson, Xavier McKersie, James Ison.

Underage

What a game to watch, someone would find it hard to believe this was the first game of this season with so many new-to-hockey players involved on both sides.

These kids showed an amazing amount of skill, co-ordination and team communication. It was great to see the more experienced players on the team encouraging and teaching the newest members the way around the field. This

game was probably one of the best to watch of the day with both defence and offence matching well.

This game could have gone either way and it will be interesting to watch as the season progresses, how far these two teams advance in both ability and team unison.

Final score: Donald 4 d. Calder 2.

Donald goals: Oakley Brennan 3, Larou Clapham 1.

Calder goals: Ryder Harrison 2.

Donald awards: Best on, Oakley Brennan; Coaches' choice, Sophie Burke; Encouragement, Kaile Krause.

Calder awards: Ollie White and Tyler Harrison.

Under-12

Although Donald played well against Calder United, the team seemed to bunch towards each other, and towards the end, they seemed to lose motivation to put effort in.

Wyche and Nulli's combination produced a fairly strong team with many players who knew what they were doing. Two players in particular were stand outs, using the team well and were efficient with their attacks as

well as their defence.

For Donald, Darcy Burke and Annabelle Robinson played so well, Darcy especially. They had some pretty clean tackles of the ball and most passes went to the

player they were directing it to.

Final score: Donald 0 lost to Calder United 4.

Donald awards: Larou Clapham and Latoya Rayner.

Calder United awards: Finn M. and Bella P.

MICHAELS OF DONALD

Belvedere By George Crenshaw
www.belvedere-cartoons.com

"I don't think Belvedere likes sleeping in the basement."



• 200-gamer Khiana Brooks takes the ball, Bulls' Mackenzie Ryan (WA), Charlton's Claire Smith (WD), Bulls' Sophie Parfrey (C), Charlton's Isabel Soulsby (GD), Meghan Bruns (GK) and Bulls' Zali Angel (GS).



• "A" Grade: Charlton's Best on Court, Remi Jeffery (C).

Flying Start for Bulls' Netballers

Birchip-Watchem had a resounding start to the 2025 season against the Navies, with a very different line up of senior players this year, with several ins and outs from 2024 adding some excitement to the season ahead.

The Under-14 "A" played the first game of the 2025 season and there was some good netball on display, but it was the Bulls who had the height and age advantage. During the first quarter, Birchip-Watchem had many intercepts and goals, despite Marley McGurk and Sophie Roberts working hard in defence.

The score at half-time saw the Bulls being up 23-0. In the second quarter, goal shooter Anna Fitzpatrick scored the first goal for Charlton, but the Bulls pulled back in the third quarter with Anieka Boyle and Gemma Tynan shooting enough goals to enforce the mercy rule.

Thanks to amazing communication in the midcourt between Mia Sharp, Sienna Richmond and Grace McAullife, the Bulls were able to keep putting in the hard work to finish the game 31-1.

Award winners for Birchip-Watchem: Mia Sharp and Gemma Tynan. For Charlton Rosie Fitzpatrick (Tee Jet), Lily Lane (FHN auxiliary), Sophie Roberts (Have a crack, NWAG & Charlton Caravan Park).

Under-17s

Beau Haslam was in red-hot form for the Bulls in the first quarter, displaying exceptional shooting accuracy for the first round of 2025. She scored 14 of Birchip-Watchem's 17 goals, despite tight defensive pressure from Anika Holmes-Brown, who was tasked with guarding Zali Angel.

Birchip-Watchem strengthened its lead in the second quarter, with Asha Lee playing a pivotal role in connecting the play. Stella Nicolson consistently set up attacking opportunities for Charlton's shooters, but the Birchip-Watchem defence stood firm with Lana Angel's rebound work and Elise Cox's impeccable interceptions crucial in denying Charlton's advances.

Midway through the second quarter, Lacey Smith was subbed on as Centre for Charlton and made an immediate impact with her strong drives and precise passes, en-

ergizing her side. At half-time, the score stood at Birchip-Watchem 38, Charlton 16.

The second half was a more evenly contested affair, with Birchip-Watchem managing to extend its lead by just five goals. The Bulls' versatility was on full display, with several players contributing in different positions across the court. Final Score: Birchip-Watchem 65 defeated Charlton 38.

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Lana Angel and Asha Lee. Best for Charlton: Stella Nicolson (FHN Auxiliary), Lucy Gretgrix (Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee).

"C" Grade

The Bulls stepped on to the court firing for the first game of the year with Megane Greenaway's strong holds in the ring helping Birchip-Watchem take a 16-7 lead at quarter time.

Birchip-Watchem continued its momentum into the second quarter with young guns Immy Boyle and Hannah Wilson applying some impressive defence up the Bulls attacking end helping to extend the lead to 26-13 at half-time.

The accuracy of Charlton's shooters made it important for the Bulls to step up the pressure outside the goal ring. Steph Coffey floating in the centre third was able to pick up numerous loose balls and intercepts. At three-quarter time Birchip-Watchem was ahead 33 to 18.

Some fresh legs and positional changes helped to provide some more drive in the last quarter for the Bulls, helping them to come away with a 44-24 win. Award winners for Birchip-Watchem: Immy Boyle and Hannah Wilson. For Charlton: Annie Olive (Jack Thompson Construction), Brooke Prior (S&D Consulting) and Ebony McCarthy (Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee).

"B" Grade

The Bulls "B" grade continued the charge, starting very strongly against Charlton with great attacking play. Charlton kept up the intensity

to the Bulls and had a cracking second quarter. The Bulls withstood the barrage and were able to pull away to win 64-23.

Bulls new recruit Toni Jones was awarded best on the court with a great game in goal attack and Tylah Haslam was awarded second best with a very consistent game through the mid court. For Charlton the Teys Charlton feedlot award winners were Kate Stutchbery and Emily Olive and the Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee went to Jac Leslie.

"A" Grade

Birchip-Watchem had a new look "A" grade team which was keen to challenge last year's premiership defenders. A constant in the Bulls line up was Khiana Brooks, who was clapped on to the court in her 200th game for the club.

The Bulls were pleased to start the season off nice and strong, with a comfortable 63-27 win. The girls brought plenty of positivity and energy into the game, starting the first quarter off with 14 goals. Romi Miller and Sassia Coffey kept the defensive pressure up in the goal ring throughout the whole game, keeping Charlton to just three goals in the first quarter.

Zali Angel and Khiana Brooks worked super hard in the ring together in the second quarter, scoring 21 goals between them. Isabel Soulsby and Meghan Bruns kept the pressure on all day, but with the relentless feeds coming in from new recruits Issy Atkins, Sophie Parfrey and Mackenzie Ryan who were bringing the ball nicely down the middle for the entire game, working perfectly both attacking and defending, they had their work cut out.

When Jenna Angel came on into goals, she combined well with sister Zali Angel scoring 16 goals in the fourth quarter. The Bulls played together well in their first game, and it should be an interesting season for this team going forward!

Birchip-Watchem award winners: Zali Angel and Sassia Coffey. For Charlton the Walsh Motors awards went to Remi Jeffery and Megan Bruns, and Claudia Lee won the Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee. Charlton's Connect Coffee and Stacy's Dental volunteer of the day was awarded to Kate Stutchberry.



• "B" Grade: Emily Olive (WD) passing to Abby Mulquiny, with Holly Thompson (GD).



• "C" Grade: Tahlia Holmes-Brown defending with Zoe Carney.



• Under-17s: Stella Nicolson (WA) looks for Maggie Riley (GA) with Sarah Blair (GS).

"Times" Crossword

CRYPTIC PUZZLE NO. 8172 - SOLUTIONS

Across - 6, Raise the bid. 7, Tax-I. 8, Peris-he-d. 9, A-scent. 10, S-tres-S. 12, B-asset. 15, Re-tort. 17, Get round. 19, On-us. 20, Social scale.

Down - 1, T-I-din-ess. 2, De-spot. 3, Shores. 4, I-B-is. 5, Adders. 6, R-O-ams. 11, Rat-ional. 13, Avers-E. 14, Truman (true man). 15, Rad-I's-h. 16, Ro-us-e. 18, Rock.

Dead Heat at Donald Races

(By Peter Hibberd)

After a dead heat in the second race of a 7-race program at the Donald Racing Centre last Monday, the exciting finishes continued on with small margins in most of the races.

With no on-course TAB now it will be small crowds at these types of meetings. Another thing of the past is race books.

The club is to be commended on the presentation of its recent changes and the track. Starting on a good 4 with some excellent times the track was upgraded after race 4.

Leading jockey on the day was Jake Noonan, with two winners. Looking at Jake's career he started riding in 2009. Since then he has only had 70 race rides at Donald for 7 wins and 25 placings. He is based in Mornington so does most of his race riding in that part of the state and the metro. area.

A big supporter of the local club is Warrambool trainer Symon Wilde, who also had a winning double.

The next meeting is on Saturday, May 3, (election day). The featured event on the day is the Weir's IGA Donald 2y.o. Classic.

Results

Race one: Trainer Symon Wilde produced what could be a very promising 3-year-old gelding by the name of "From A Distance". Having

won three jump outs prior to his race debut he showed he had ability. Sat behind the leaders in the run, came out entering the straight to record a very comfortable win. The race time was well inside standard time for this type of race.

Race two: After using the magnifying glass the judge could not separate "Kid Dynamite" and "Iron Fury". Both of these horses had good runs in the race and came away for a fight to the finish. It was the same in the betting markets, as they were both heavily supported.

Race three: The judge also had to work hard for a decision in this race with a nose margin. In another stirring battle "Littlebitcheeky" defeated "My Uncle Did It". The winner was trained by Andrew Bobbin from Stawell, who has a very good training complex, and is producing many winners.

Race four: It was proved again when trainers come from afar to race at Donald they often win. Such was the case of "West Cliff" trained by Jamie Opperman from Mt. Gambier. Ridden by his son, Jacob, sat outside the leader and proved

too strong in a 5-horse fight to the finish. The other amazing fact of the win was the price of \$12.00, considering its recent winning form.

Race five: Symon Wilde had his second winner with "Darts Daly". Ridden by Jake Noonan who sat back in the field, but with a strong early pace proved too strong in the run to the line. The unlucky run of the race was "Black Storm", a former horse from Singapore and with his trainer, Tim Fitzsimmons, have relocated to Bendigo. The racing industry has closed in Singapore, so we might see more of those horses.

Race six: Jake Noonan completed his riding double with an all the way win on "Zetaly". This horse was very well supported late in betting.

Race seven: Coming back in distance did not stop "Simply Sparklez" for trainer Austy Coffey. Another race with a very hot pace early, jockey Harry Coffey sat well back in the run, but finished very strongly. Again the race time was well inside standard time for races over this distance.



• A dead heat in the Russ Studio Jewellers Maiden Plate. On the outside "Kid Dynamite" ridden by Mitch Aitken shares the win with "Iron Fury" ridden by Dean Yendall. In third place was "Fat Bottom Girl" ridden by Melissa Julius.



• Another very keen finish on the inside "West Cliff" ridden by Jacob Opperman in the middle, "Mrs Secombe" ridden by Will Price. In third placing was "Giddy Up Warrior" ridden by Harry Coffey. The total margin between the first five horses was three quarters of a length.



• It was a very happy Coffey family (Swan Hill) after the win of "Simply Sparklez". Part owned by Maree Coffey, trained by her husband Austy, and ridden by her son Harry. In another close finish defeated on the inside, "Raging Monkey" ridden by Nathan Punch and outside, "Hedonist" ridden by Jarrod Fry.



• Race 7 winner "Simply Sparklez" with Austy Coffey and strapper Chloe Date. (Photo by Matt Rigby.)



• On the inside "Littlebitcheeky" ridden by Jarrod Fry narrowly defeated "My Uncle Did It" ridden by Dean Yendall. In third place was "Elphaba" Ridden by Jacob Opperman. The winning margin was a nose.

Down the Middle?

Ten Donald players took to the field for the Stableford event on Wednesday, with the winners being the two Kerrys.

Kerry Wood won with 34 points and Kerry Raven was runner-up with 30 points. Nearest the pins were shared around this week with Kerry Wood taking out Donald Auto Electrical's 3rd, Margot Paynter on Weir's 7th, Jo Beavis on Nu Farm's 14th and Luke Kelly on the Donald Community Bank's 16th. Sponsor for the event was Jasper & Co.

Next Week: Monday April 14th – Assemble at 9.45 for a 10 a.m. hit off.

Wednesday, April 16, stroke and putting sponsored by Donald Riverside Motel.

Sunday, April 13, and Monday, April 14, at 10 a.m. Kerry will be giving lessons to anyone who is interested. Old, new and ex-golfers welcome. If you don't have any clubs, we can provide them for you.

Monday, May 5 – First round of pennant, so give

your name to Kerry if you can play.

Highlights and Lowlights

Tickets for the Easter hamper, donated by Weir's IGA, will be drawn on Thursday April 17th.

Jo Beavis' wayward shot on the second last hole nearly removed Margot Paynter's nose.

And Beris Jones almost took herself out when her drive ricocheted off the tree in front of her.

Sorry to hear about your swish Luke Kelly, but you weren't the only one. Apparently four other golfers did the same, so the pig had a good feed this week.

Player Profile Enid Brasier

How long have you been playing golf? About 25 years. What do you enjoy about

golf? The walking and the talking, and every now and then a good hit that keeps you hopeful.

What is the best part of your game? That varies from week to week and even from hole to hole.

What advice would you give to anyone thinking of taking up golf? Do it! You won't regret it. Take lessons and practise as much as you can.

What is your best score? In August, 2008 – 95.

What is your best shot ever? A hole in one at the Charlton Tournament playing with Jan Corrie.

Who is your favourite golfer? Mollie Sheridan, who was very encouraging when I started playing.

Position held in the club? Match Committee.

Bulls Battle Navies’ Juniors

In an electrifying showdown between the Birchip-Watchem and Charlton Under-14s, the Navies emerged victorious in a display of skill, teamwork, and determination.

Birchip-Watchem was spearheaded by second year coaches Ben Hogan and Sam Simmons, and with seasoned players like Willow Ryan and Toby Kemp leading the charge, the Bulls showcased their prowess in the opening quarter.

The first quarter saw Denley Tyler execute masterful centre clearance work, swiftly propelling the ball into the visitors’ forward line. Despite five close calls resulting in points, Liam Spezza managed to put the Bulls on the scoreboard with a sensational goal. The Bulls’ defence, led by River Ryan, Jed Coffey and Des Coffey, remained steadfast, thwarting Charlton’s advances and keeping them scoreless. At quarter-time the Bulls led 1.5 to 0.0.

Charlton refused to back down and emerged with renewed vigour in the second quarter. Tamsyn McGurk led the way for the Navies in the ruck and also booted her team’s first goal. Isaac Roberts followed suit shortly after with a well-executed snap and Charlton had the lead. This time it was the Bulls who were kept scoreless for a quarter and the half time score was Charlton leading 2.2 to 1.5.

The third quarter was more of the same from the home team, with Liam Monaghan and Darcy Olive helping the Navies to dominate possession. Their radar was slightly off at times, kicking a couple of points, but another goal to Isaac Roberts provided a crucial buffer on the scoreboard. Birchip-Watchem added a single behind for the term and Charlton led 3.4 to 1.6 at the final change.

In the final quarter all players showed impressive endurance to keep fighting until the final siren. Charlton had the perfect start with Charlie Zagame kicking a goal to extend the Navies’ lead to 16 points. The Bulls responded quickly with a promising forward thrust but Archie Tyler’s kick for goal hit the post.

The result was all but sealed moments later when Zagame kicked his second goal of the term and Charlton’s lead ballooned to 21 points. The Bulls didn’t give in and Willow Ryan made an impact on contest after contest. He was fittingly rewarded with a goal just before siren, but the Navies took the

win with a final score of 5.4. to 2.9.

Excellent performances from Denley Tyler (Noonan’s Tyres Glass and \$5 Jake and Billy Noonan), Willow Ryan (TMC Enviro Towel), Liam Spezza (Bulls’ canteen voucher), and Jed Coffey (Birchip IGA) earned them recognition as Birchip-Watchem’s award winners. Charlton’s awards went to Isaac Roberts (Michell Wool), Liam Monaghan (in memory of Bill Russell), Darcy Olive (Jack Thompson Constructions), Xav Good (Nutrien Ag Solutions), Tamsyn McGurk (Heenan’s newsagency) and Sam Cossar (Auxiliary award), Charlie Zagame (Connect Coffee), Cooper McGrath (Holmes-Brown Have a Crack).

Under-17s

The Under-17 game opened with both teams vying for control, each attempting to implement the game strategies emphasized by their coaches during the pre-season.

The Bulls list was bolstered by Cam Jones who joins the squad permanently from Donald, and Toby Kemp who has made the transition from Nullawil and a few holiday makers including Sam Barber and Mac Lewis, and with the inclusion of some under-14s, both teams were able to play with 16 a side.

Charlton showcased its dominance from the get go, punching the first ball out of the centre and clearing it to its attacking end. A behind resulted when the ball hit the post, but Charlton followed up with two successive goals in the first three minutes. The Bulls moved the ball towards their goals, and were advanced with a free kick, to score their first for the season, albeit a minor. At quarter time the home team was ahead 2.4 (16) to 0.1 (1).

The second term was a dour one, with the ball being moved from end to end, and side to side, with only 1 major score resulting. Charlton added 1 goal 3 and the Bulls also amassed behinds, to see them trailing 3.7 (25) to 3 at the long break.

Goals were more plentiful in the third stanza with Charlton scoring directly from the ruck contest. However, in the second half, the Bulls began to find their rhythm and at the eight minute mark, the Bulls got the play deep in their

forward line and Willow Ryan and Noah Dean scored much needed goals.

Charlton had straightened up too though in the third, which was detrimental to the Bulls as they piled on four goals with Seb Zagame and Oscar Bourke being the most prolific. At three quarter time the Navies led 7.8 (50) to 2.3 (15).

As they had done in the preceding three quarters, Charlton won the ruck contest and moved the ball quickly to its forward line and kept the ball in the scoring zone long enough to add its final major. The Bulls added a final goal through Willow Ryan who made a significant contribution in the forward line all day.

The final score stood at Bulls 3.6.(24) defeated by Charlton 8.10.(58).

Best Players for Birchip Watchem: Ollie Cook (Noon-



• The Bulls’ Ollie Cook spoiling the marking attempt by his Charlton opponent.

nan Tyres and Connely and Brad Ryan), Willow Ryan (YBS Ag), Mac Lewis (Birchip Cafe), Bayley Kemp (Bulls’ Canteen).

Charlton awards; Leigh Van Boven (Charlton Hardware), Isaac Bourke (Jye Roberts), Seb Zagame (Julbre Park), Sam Olive (Michell

Wool), Ethan Soulsby (North West Ag), Jordan Chamberlain (Auxiliary award), Owen Burr (Holmes-Brown Have a Crack).

Calder Netballers Shine at Donald

(By Belicia Francis)

The Donald Netball Club was thrilled to host the Calder United Lions over the weekend for its first home game of the season – also marking Calder’s debut match since its recent amalgamation.

The Donald club thanks the Lions for making the trip and commends them on their positive start as a newly unified club. With beautiful weather and a fantastic crowd, it was a great way to open the 2025 netball season.

Juniors

The junior teams kicked off the day with a series of spirited performances across all three age groups. From the first whistle, it was clear the Donald girls have been working hard at training, with strong fundamentals and a growing understanding of court play on full display.

New combinations were seen across the board, and it’s exciting to think about how these young athletes will develop as they progress into the senior ranks.

Under-14 “B”

Final Score: Donald 8 drew with Calder United 8.

The Under-14 “B” team fought hard to finish with a draw; a solid effort from both sides.

Donald awards: The Clothes Bin, Mackenzie Wild; Love Shack Giftware, Ellie Burke.

Calder United awards: Millie Poyner (Wycheproof Op Shop), Ari Richmond (Access Grain), Greta McClelland (WMA).

Under-14 “A”

While no official scores were recorded due to the mercy rule, the girls gave it their all from start to finish.

Donald awards: Gilchrist & Co., Evie Donnellon; Harvest Café, Layla Griffiths.

Calder United awards: Ashleigh Poyner (WMA), Jewels Barton-Seddon (Wycheproof Op Shop), Cheveron Bartlett (Access Grain).

Under-17 “A”

Final scores: Donald 15, Calder United 102.

The Under-17 “A” team came up against a strong Calder side. Despite the result, the girls showed determination, grit, and resilience; values we’re proud to see in our juniors.

Donald awards: Donald’s Family Butcher, Laila Reilly; Spud’s Café, Alyssa Hepworth.

Calder United awards: Lana Fawcett (Wycheproof IGA) and Lily Humphreys. (WMA).

Seniors

With three senior teams on the court, it was fantastic to see fresh faces and new combinations forming across each grade. Donald welcomed several new players into the Royal Blues family, and they have already brought great energy and potential to the squads. Calder United brought fierce competition across all grades, challenging our teams to lift, adapt and dig deep. Across every quarter, our senior players showed determination, resilience, and a strong desire to connect as a team.

“C” Grade

Final scores: Donald 19, Calder United 77.

The “C” grade team came up against a strong and structured Calder side. While the score wasn’t in our favour, the team continued to support each other, fight for every possession, and apply pressure from start to finish.

Donald awards: Gilchrist & Co., Olivia Wollermann; Bev’s Baubles, Molly Harrison.

Calder United awards: Suzanna Fawcett, Hayley Matheson and Stephanie Cooper.

“B” Grade

Final scores: Donald 31, Calder United 57.

Our “B” grade team showed moments of great ball movement and teamwork throughout the match. With

new combinations across the court, the girls are beginning to build cohesion and trust.

Donald awards: Weir’s IGA, Zoe Grigsby; Donald Hotel, Jess Nunn.

Calder United awards: Grace Scott, Gabrille Ives and Jessie Fawcett.

“A” Grade

Final scores: Donald 43, Calder United 46.

A nail-biter of a match, the “A” grade clash was a true showcase of high-level netball. The girls played with grit and unity, challenging Calder all the way to the final whistle. Despite a narrow loss, the team took great strides in building strong court chemistry, and their never-say-die attitude kept the pressure on right to the end.

Donald awards: Jasper & Co., Milla Adams; Mensland, Anna Sudholz.

Calder United awards: Ella Sheahan, Meg Hogan and Libby Thompson.

Thank You

A big “thank you” to our coaches, scorers, timekeepers, parents, families, and everyone working behind the scenes. We also thank our amazing sponsors and award donors for your continued support.

Finally, thank you to our players for giving it their all and proudly representing the Royal Blues. We look forward to an exciting season ahead!



• Mac Lewis tucks the ball under his arm and attempts to outrun his Charlton opponents. Other Bulls pictured include Sam Barber, Jack McAuliffe and Koby Hamilton.



• Looking towards changerooms. Photo - Jason Smith (St Arnaud Football Club).

Saints Struggle Against Magpies

While the evening’s results weren’t as the Saints would like, it was another very successful evening for the Club, as they hosted the Boort Magpies under lights, to kick off Season 2025.

The weather was on point, the crowd was up and about, and Lord Nelson Park lit up the sky for the district to see.

The Magpies came out with a fury; they moved the ball fast, and had a clear plan of attack. Jhye Baddeley-Kelly was everywhere, while Tom Potter and Kayne Rutley were also among the better players in a strong Magpies outfit.

For the Saints, it was Torin Petrie who stood tall, with Max Hungerford providing a target down forward. Jay Kirwood looked lively at times, with the returning Brad Organ, Owen Lowe, and Bailey Nicholas rounding out the top 6. Final scores: Boort 17.16, St. Arnaud 7.7.

It was a similar story in the reserves, with a perennially strong Boort outfit taking charge early. Alex Cockerell was prolific in front of the sticks, kicking 4 of his side’s 13 goals. Jacob Mulquiny was named best, with Harry Weaver also contributing strongly.

For the Saints, Luke Jackson had a very impressive

debut game, with Gus Meagher and Colin Campbell also among those named in the best.

Congratulations also to Beau Knight, who played his 100th reserves game.

This week the Saints head over the Avoca River, to take on the Redbacks at Donaldson Park. It’s two sides which have undoubtedly improved across the summer, looking to kick their 2025 campaign into gear.

This week, the awards will be in the rooms after the game, however we encourage all Saints to get back to the Farmers Arms ahead of their Royal Children’s Hospital Good Friday Appeal auction.

It’s a cause that goes well beyond the club, and something that has impacted many lives within our community.

Social Calendar

The Saints social calendar will be posted on their socials this week.

Memberships

Memberships are available for purchase. If you would like to support the Saints with a membership, please contact John Beggs, on 0417 448 929, or catch up with a member of the committee at trainings or game days.

• Right: Flanked by Boort’s Lachie Hall (left) and Ryan McGhie, the Saints’ Bailey Nicholas boots the ball forward. St. Arnaud’s Kurt Torney is at left.



Top Trio Takes Control

• Continued from page 16.

the pres. was able to execute a quick wardrobe switch prior to the first bounce.

No Respite

Donald travels up the Sunraysia Highway to take on keen rival Birchip-Watchem, is shaping as a massive mismatch, given the parlous lack of depth in terms of experience currently being confronted by the Royal Blues.

Although comprehensively beaten in every aspect of the game, the willingness of the team’s many young players to contest every issue gave heart to their loyal supporters

Coach Daniel Pearce will be forced to make several changes to the line-up comprehensively defeated by Calder United last Saturday, with limited options available in the reserves team.

The Bulls, on the other hand, started the season in a blaze of glory, led by spearhead Ben Edwards, who should again thrive on the opportunities generated by man mountain, Hamish Hosking, and which are thrived on by the likes of Nick and Marshall Rippon, Daniel Bell and Meyrick Buchanan.

The Royal Blues will be honest in their contest, led by coach Daniel Pearce, Eddie Landwehr, Charlie Campbell and George Walker, but a lack of experience and physical strength to counter those same attributes that the Bulls possess in spades, will ensure that Birchip-Watchem continues on its merry way.

Magpies Can Build

A confidence boosting win over St. Arnaud last Saturday evening was just the start to the season coach Dale Cameron and his Boort charges were looking for. And tomorrow, at home to Charlton, is another opportunity to gel together as a cohesive unit, in readiness for much

tougher assignments further along in the draw.

Productive recruiting has already produced promising results, with rover Carlos Egan and Kayne Rutley adding to the firepower provided by the dynamic Jhye Baddeley-Kelly, Tom Potter, Keiren Wilson and James Keeble.

Charlton has had a week to recover from the full-frontal assault it experienced at the hands of a rampant Birchip-Watchem, but also found out plenty about its recruits and the improvement from within its established ranks.

Ben Xiriha and Luke Dunne will give coach Mitch Collins much needed support, as will reliable locals, Pat Soulsby Ben Lanyon and Sean O’Connor, whose 150th outing in Navy Blue just about qualifies him for local status.

To have any chance against the Magpies, the Navy Blues must find a way to apply consistent scoreboard pressure, rewarding the tireless efforts of those further afield.

At home, Boort will be very hard to beat.

Redbacks to Bite Back

There had been a fair bit of hype pre-season about the depth of talent recruited by Wedderburn, but the Redbacks stumbled at the first hurdle, suffering a comprehensive defeat at the hands of Sea Lake-Nandaly.

The impact of the loss of big forward Tom Campbell was underlined by an inability to convert effort into goals against the Tigers, an area in which coach Tom Metherell will be looking for a significant improvement against St. Arnaud tomorrow.

The Saints will also be looking for a significant improvement in their four-quarter performance, which fell well short against Boort.

A week is a long time in football, particularly when it includes the first real hitout for premiership points, and both coaches, Metherell and St. Arnaud’s Scott Driscoll, will be hoping to turn their fortunes around.

Wedderburn looks to have found a number of very capable contributors, including Mitch Jensen, Zach Pallpratt, Ben Bacon and Jye Mortlock, but will need a quick return to form from its key locals, only ageless warrior, Danny Benaim, performing at his usual high level of consistency.

St. Arnaud relished the return of hard nut, Brad Organ, but will also need a lift from all players, including impressive recruits, Max Hungerford, Jay Kirwood and Sean Holroyd, if it is to break the ice for a much-needed early season victory.

At home, the Redbacks are always a tough assignment for any opposition, and should register their first win.



• The ruck contest is between St. Arnaud’s Zac Phillips and Boort’s James Byrne.



Top Trio Takes Control

(By Shane O'Shea)

It's only the very early days of North-Central football's 2025 season, but already it is clearly obvious that, barring drastic and unforeseen upheavals, and with due respect to the other five teams, defending champion, Sea Lake-Nandaly, last season's grand finalist Birchip-Watchem, and new kid on the block, Calder United, will occupy the top three positions on the competition's ladder.

The Tigers, Bulls and Lions all recorded emphatic victories in round 1, as well as showing plenty of room for potential considerable improvement as the season unfolds.

And while it is far too early to evaluate the potential improvement of the other teams, in particular Boort (which also enjoyed a successful first round, at the expense of St. Arnaud), and Wedderburn (which was right in the contest against Sea Lake-Nandaly for much of the first half), there appears to be a huge gulf between the top three and the rest of the field.

Charlton, St. Arnaud and Donald already face an uphill battle to be competitive against the best in the competition.

Tyrrell Thriller

In a sporting rivalry that dates back generations, tomorrow's clash at Nullawil between host Calder United and the visiting Sea Lake-Nandaly, promises to open a new chapter building on a proud history of intense competition.

As a mark of respect to history and those who created it, particularly for the Nullawil community, Tom Townrow, now well into his nineties, will be honoured. He is the only surviving member of Nullawil's 1945 premiership team which defeated Woomelang at Berriwillock in the grand final of the Tyrrell Patriotic League, the forerun-

ner of the Tyrrell Football League, formed in 1946.

It is worth recording that foundation members of the Tyrrell league included Wyche-proof, Narraport, Birchip, Nullawil, Culgoa, Berriwillock, Sea Lake and Curyo.

No wonder both the Lions and Tigers, and their large supporter bases, have expressed a strong desire to claim victory in this battle of the ages.

One of Tom's sons will toss the coin at the beginning of the senior football match also.

And an afternoon tea will be held in the Complex at half time of the senior game, where anyone and everyone is invited to attend if they wish.

Gerald "Whip" Hogan will provide a short overview of Tom's career and those present will be encouraged to reminisce about Tom's football playing days.

In his time as a footballer, eighty years ago, Tom Townrow did battle with the above-mentioned clubs, as well as Nandaly, adding further weight to tomorrow's contest being a true Mallee affair, and one likely to see the Nullawil ground and its surrounds bursting at the seams with spectators watching the three codes of football, netball and hockey.

Calder United secured its maiden victory "on the bit" against a very undermanned Donald, but will face a more searching challenge against

Sea Lake-Nandaly.

The Lions should have recorded a much bigger goal tally than the 23 registered by eight individual goal kickers, from 48 shots.

Forwards including Jack Exell and Mitch Farmer will receive far more intense attention from the Tigers' defence, led by Cooper Roberts, Jack Poulton and Brodie Adcock, so every scoring opportunity must be made to count.

At the opposite end of the Lions' Lair Oval, Calder United's defence, which includes Joe Walsh, Spencer Allan and Boe Bish, which barely let the breeze through against Donald, will enjoy a more challenging day against the likes of Lachy McClelland, Jarvis Keogh and Adam Pattison.

Without doubt, however, the feature of the afternoon will be the midfield clashes between two very strong and hugely talented midfielders.

From opposing ruckman, Lion Dean Putt up against Tiger Ryan O'Sullivan, to those at ground level, Matt Wade, Stephen Kennedy, Kobe Lloyd, Zac Caccaviello and Zane Keighran for Calder United going head-to-head with Wade Donnan, Oscar Brownless, Bryce Delmenico, Tyson McKenzie and Thomas Cox for Sea Lake-Nandaly, the contests will be fierce and unrelenting.

It will be standing room only for those crammed into the undercover sheltered area



• Leadership challenge: Donald playing coach, Daniel Pearce (left) and Calder United playing president, Ricky Allan, go head-to-head in a contest for the Sherrin.

between the Nullawil Sporting Complex and the boundary line, so get there early to stake your claim.

It may take coach Darryl Wilson a game or three to get his 21 charges all singing from the same hymn sheet, but if last Saturday's display is any indication, when they collectively hit the right note, the Lions will produce scintillating, fast flowing and high scoring football.

And tomorrow, they will

need to perform consistently over four quarters, against a team well drilled on how to absorb pressure from the best, and then rebound with strong, purposeful football, a quality that has enabled the Tigers to win successive North-Central premierships.

A sense of occasion suggests the Lions might be able to ride the wave of emotion generated by their recent creation, but a wiser head, reflecting on the achievements

of the Tigers in recent years, points to a Sea Lake-Nandaly victory, by 5 points, right on siren time.

• United president Ricky Allan and his brother Spencer might need assistance when dressing in the club's new uniform. It was noted last Saturday that both had their shorts on back to front (the Lion logo goes on the front) when they took the field prior to the main game, although

• Continued on page 15.

GOLDACRES NORTH CENTRAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

ROUND 2

SATURDAY APRIL 12TH, 2025

CALDER UNITED LIONS	VS	SEA LAKE NANDALY TIGERS
NULLAWIL FOOTBALL OVAL		
BIRCHIP-WATCHEM BULLS	VS	DONALD ROYAL BLUES
GEORGE CARTWRIGHT OVAL		
BOORT MAGPIES	VS	CHARLTON NAVIES
BOORT PARK		
WEDDERBURN REDBACKS	VS	ST ARNAUD SAINTS
DONALDSON PARK		

NCFL
North Central Football League

Kubota AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Quambatook

TRACTOR PULL

EASTER SATURDAY
April 19, 2025

Tickets available through Ticketebo

Full catering • Bar Facilities

VINTAGE: 1pm - 3pm MODIFIED: 3.30pm - 10pm
TRUCK & CAR DISPLAY
NO GLASS • NO PETS • NO BYO ALCOHOL • NO EFTPOS

Map showing locations: Mildura (3 hours), Swan Hill (2.5 hours), Kerang (2.5 hours), Echuca (1.5 hours), Durham Ox (45 minutes), Bendigo (1.5 hours), Ballarat (2.5 hours), St. Arnaud (1.5 hours), Stawell (2.5 hours), Horsham (2.5 hours), Sea Lake (1.25 hours).

Quambatook

Facebook icon and QR code