

DONALD

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The Buloke Times

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



• Brenda Heron, Anne Maree Kahukura, Kate O'Toole, Carly Hemley, Kirsten Geason, Kevin Sharp, Brad Sharp, Mark Darby, Tara Sharp, Nick Noonan, Lisa Barr, Cheyenne Parsons, Naomi Gwin.

Sharp's Bakery Triumphs – Again!

Sharp's Bakery in Birchip has once again claimed top honours at the prestigious Great Australian Vanilla Slice Triumph, held in Merbein on Saturday.

The family-run bakery is no stranger to success, having now won the title six times since their first win in 2000. They have also won the Vanilla Slice competition at

the Association of Australia's (BAA) Baking Show once.

When they haven't won the Great Australian Vanilla Slice Triumph they have

never been far away from the winner's list. In 2023 they were third and in 2024 runners-up, so they were delighted to be back at number 1 this year.

Most Reliable

The judges praised Sharps for their consistency, describing them as the most reliable performers in the competition, an accolade owner Kevin Sharp is particularly proud of.

"The slice you see in the competition is the same slice

you see in the bakery every day," Kevin said.

Brad highlighted the importance of both pastry and custard. "Our pastry is just beautiful and fresh and breaks in your mouth as you bite into it, so the custard does not squeeze out," he explained. "The custard has to be light

and fluffy, and the icing not sticky to touch, not too thick, but nice and sweet."

"Spot On"

Brad said: "We actually asked the judges if there was anything we could improve, and they reckoned it was spot

• Continued on page 2.



• Two new units at the Village

Look In at Goodwin Village Units

[From the Goodwin Village Administration]

Donald's Goodwin Village has just completed building two retirement living units.

We also have one of our existing units that is currently vacant. All 3 units are 2 bedroom, and have people who will be moving into them in early September 2025. We are giving people the opportunity to have a look at these units while they are vacant.

All three units will open to the public on Sunday, August 24, 2025, from 8.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m..

People are to arrive initially at new Unit 39 Richardson Heights, Goodwin Village, 20 Camp Street, before looking at Units 40 and 34.

All required information about all Goodwin Village units will be available during the sessions, including floor plans, and financial details.

St Michael's School Reunion Coming Up

St. Michael's School in Wycheproof operated from 1955 until 2003.

In the early years, Nuns travelled from Birchip to teach the students. The Sisters of Mercy were led by Mother Brendan with three others. One was Mother Brendan's sister, Miss Green.

Eventually a new Convent was built next to the School to house four Nuns, followed by a Presbytery to house the Parish Priest. The original St. Michael's Catholic Church was shifted from Mount Street to a site adjacent to where the current Church was built.

It is believed that all the land upon which all these buildings were built was donated by the family of the late Andy Kelly.

The school was very fortunate to have the Sisters of Mercy in the School Family until 1986. Lay Principals and teachers then filled the teaching positions until 2003, when declining numbers forced the School's closure.

Sad Day

It was a sad day for the St. Michael's families who worked extremely hard to provide the opportunity for their children to be given a Catholic Education.

About 3 months ago after yet another ex-student Bryan (Matt) Dillon was farewelled, many ex-students who attended his funeral decided that instead of talking about a reunion, it was time to actually organize one.

Committee

A small committee consisting of ex-students: Peter Cummins, Bernadette Storer (Dillon), Greg Taylor and Gerard Keane, was formed to get things moving.

It was decided that a date would be firstly set. Sunday, October 26 was chosen with venue being in Bendigo.

Recently, a number of venues were visited to check facilities' costs etc.

Venue

It has been decided that the best venue was the Kangaroo Flat Bowls Club (1 Station Street, Kangaroo Flat), which has a very spacious main room with all facilities and an excellent covered outdoor area.

Estimating attendance numbers has been found to be difficult, so it was decided that a modest charge be introduced to cover the cost of room charges and the provision of finger food.

This charge has been set at \$15.00 per person and this should give a reasonably accurate number of those wishing to attend.

For those who have dietary concerns (gluten, Celiac etc) there is only a limited amount of cake slices available.

Therefore, it has been decided that if you have dietary concerns, the cover charge is a very modest \$5.00. When registering, please advise us of your concerns. If you wish

you can bring your own food with you.

When paying the cover charge it is VERY important that you list your name/s when doing so.

A bank account has been opened for the purpose of collecting this cover charge. Details of this account can be found by checking Facebook: St. Michael's School Reunion 2025.

The bar at the Kangaroo Flat Bowls Club is well set up to provide a wide range of drinks at very reasonable prices.

Photos

Brian Keane is happy to download photos, which will be displayed on the day at the Bowls Club.

Please forward any photos to: Bfp.keane@gmail.com

Ex-students, partners, parents of students and ex-staff are very welcome to attend this event.

Any inquiries can be directed to: Greg Taylor (greg.taylor5@bigpond.com) 0477 043 937; Bernadette Storer (storerb2@hotmail.com) 0407 051 722; Peter Cummins (pscummins@bigpond.com) 0488 986 915; Gerard Keane (gerard.keane69@gmail.com) 0498 088 565.

We sincerely look forward to seeing as many as possible at this get together to relive some wonderful memories.



• Confirmation Day, October 18, 1959: Greg Kennedy, Leo Keane, Shane Hogan, Greg Taylor, Trevor Smith, John McLean, Brendan Keane, John Brennan, Peter Hogan.



• St Michael's school, Wycheproof (c. 1955).

Letter to the Editor



News from the Ukraine

(The Editor, "The Times")

Dear Editor.- I would like to share an email received today from an Ukrainian refugee living and working in Germany.

Every three months or so we send donations into Ukraine from Horizons Local and Beyond/Look First Op Shop.

Three years ago, when Russia invaded Ukraine, we opened a Ukraine Appeal. This has been generously supported over the time. The donations are dropping off lately as the war is not on the front page, while the War in Gaza has taken its place - equally shocking.

In Ukraine, the donations are spent on families who have lost everything: their home, their jobs, on medical needs, basic food items; amputees and their social needs; special craft afternoons for the widows and mothers who have lost their sons, children traumatised by the death of their father; soldiers' basic needs in the trenches; heaters, stoves, hand and feet warmers; contributions towards first medical responders' vehicle, to name a few.

So it is very hard to hear reports of President Trump's statements, "Ukraine started this War," "President Zelensky, you should be grateful", "I will stop this War in 24 hours", "You, Ukrainians should roll over and let Russia

have your country because they are bigger than you."

The Ukraine borders were set in place with the Minsk Agreement, signed on December 30, 1991, establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Key provisions included Russia taking responsibility for all former Soviet nuclear weapons, with Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. Ian and I have seen the paddocks where the missiles had been removed.

So what is the effect on the people themselves? We have a glimpse of this in the following email:

17th August, '25.

Dear Alison, I wish you and Ian a wonderful and pleasant journey - and no more sudden troubles with your caravan (Alison hit a pothole on the highway and broke a spring).

This year, my psyche has probably started to adapt a little to reality. For 3.5 years of war, my inner world has not known peace: constant anxiety for my family, friends, especially the soldiers, for children left without parents, for children who were raped by Russian soldiers, and the constant feeling of guilt that I am here, safe. But I am infinitely grateful to my God, who walks with me on this difficult path and is leading me toward peace. This summer, I finally felt the desire to rest. I longed to go to the sea with

my family. We had already begun to plan a small trip. But unfortunately, circumstances turned out differently. And funds are always needed for the military. So the trip was postponed.

I am grateful to God that my family is with me: my husband Vitalii and my sons. And I am grateful that you are in my life. I will never tire of thanking God for you, that you are close in these difficult days and years. Thank you for your tireless service and for the newsletters you send out. (Alison-thank you Horizons' team for making this possible)

I experienced yet another disappointment after the meeting of Trump and Putin in Alaska. Deep down, I understood that Putin would not give in. But the very fact that before the murderer and terrorist Putin, they laid out the red carpet, welcomed him as an honoured guest, and shook his hand - it feels disgusting and painful.

I pray, pray, pray.
With love,
Iryna Padstupa.

Readers, we ask you to pray and even write to the USA Ambassador. The main U.S. Embassy in Australia is located in Canberra, at Moonah Place, Yarralumla, ACT 2600.

If you would like to read more emails from Ukraine, please contact us on ianmcewn9@gmail.com

Alison McEwen.

Sharp's Bakery Triumphs – Again!

• Continued from page 1.

on so we will probably try and replicate that again next year."

In the Beginning

Sharp's Bakery began in 1977 when Kevin and Gail Sharp opened their doors with just one shop assistant. Today, the bakery employs around 25 staff, including many local students.

Kevin and Gail's oldest son Brad, who has been in the business for over thirty years, and his wife Tara, now manage the business, but Kevin continues to work full time. Gail has recently stepped into retirement, although she remains a guiding influence and can often be seen in the black apron.

The bakery remains a true family affair, with Brad, Kevin, and Carly working behind the scenes, supported by long time staff members such as Nick Noonan, who has

been part of the Sharp's team for 23 years, and Mark Darby, now a key right hand helper. Carly brings flair to the decorating, while Tara manages front of house operations and the bookkeeping.

Commitment

Beyond baking, Sharp's Bakery is renowned for its commitment to the Birchip community. They are strong supporters of community groups and events and local sport and they provide valuable employment opportunities for people of all ages.

Many local students begin their working life at Sharp's Bakery, and others undertake their gap year at the bakery, saving up enough money to travel or pursue their university dream. Many of these students work at the bakery throughout their university years, returning in their semester breaks to lend a hand over the busy holiday periods.

Rewarding

Kevin said watching local young people develop confidence through their work at the bakery has been one of the most rewarding aspects. "We love being part of their journey and sharing our achievements with all of our staff," he said.

Many mums with young children have returned to work through Sharps Bakery with many of their children growing up alongside the Sharp children in the back room of the bakery.

Vanilla Slice Demand

The vanilla slice is Sharp's most popular sweet selling item, with around 700 sold each week, adding up to more than 35,000 a year. Following Saturday's win, demand soared, with 250 sold before lunch on Monday alone.

With caravans passing through on their way to Broken Hill's Mundi Mundi Music Festival, there will be plenty of detours being made through Birchip this week for people to get their hands on Australia's Best Vanilla Slice.

As Sharp's celebrates another national victory, the win cements their reputation as custodians of Australia's best loved vanilla slice, a sweet success story built on family, tradition, and a commitment to quality.

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Quiz Night Supports Wycheproof Campus

Friends of EWHS – Wycheproof Campus were appreciative of the great crowd which attended the Quiz night on August 15, 2025

The event was a fund raiser for the purchase of a portable Doppler machine. A Doppler ultrasound is a non-invasive test that can be used to measure the blood flow through your blood vessels. This equipment will be used in both the Hospital and by the District Nursing Service in the community to assist with wound management and other relevant health issues. This machine will provide real time information for the Hospital and medical and health experts to assist in ongoing diagnosis and care of members of our community.

The Quiz Night had competitors eagerly answering questions presented by our quiz master extraordinaire, Paul Connelly, who kept the competition moving along and vetted the questions provided by the quiz question co-ordinators and checkers. Only a few questions were intensely researched due to questioning the answers initially provided!

Who Knew?

Who knew the national animal of Scotland is the Unicorn? Or that the Turtle breathes through its Butt, these are just a few of the amazing facts we learnt on the night. Some of these type of facts were common knowledge to the youngest (8yrs) team player on the night.

The night came down to a draw and a playoff was held, a nail biting time of anticipation, resulting in a win by one question – to Suzy Morrison’s team, a great effort with WCRC team in second place, well played. It is to be noted that the scores were all fairly close by all teams. A breathtaking, heart palpitating time, to the finish of the quiz.

Throughout the evening refreshments were of food and cuppas, or by going to the bar that was generously manned by the Golf Club, and once again, the club waived the hire fees for our event to assist our hospital campus.

Spinning Wheel

Throughout the evening, many prizes went off with the spinning wheel running hot between each section of the quiz. We have to thank everyone who donated towards the spinning wheel prizes and to the wonderful President Deb, who continues to co-ordinate the spinning wheel prizes.

The raffle was the final event of the evening, with congratulations to all the winners in order: Mr Tony Bartram, Mr Adrian Jorgensen, Mr Sandy Denney and Mrs Carol Jones.

Another amazing effort by the Hospital Ladies, who continue to work hard raising funds for the hospital, as well as providing entertainment and a service to the community, as they have continuously done since prior to 1936 when records are available from.

Thank you to everyone for the wonderful evening out, and supporting the local hospital campus.



• Dr Ann Webster standing in support of the farmers, all of whom had a very clear message.

Farmers Say “No!”

“Hundreds of farmers at Marnoo today are telling the Victorian Labor Government they do not want VNI West, they do not want WRL and they don’t want their farmland made into renewable infrastructure”, said Dr Anne Webster MP, Member for Mallee and Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government, Territories and Regional Communications.

“We do not need Mallee turned into an industrial wasteland. It is no good for our food security, and Senator McKenzie and I, The Nationals, stand with the farmers of this region.

“I give so much credit to Mallee farmers for having the courage to stand. It’s been really, really tough and been going on for some time now. I encourage them to keep at it.

“VNI West, WRL and the REZ are being driven by an ideology from Energy Minister, Chris Bowen, and Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, which forces the states to fall into line with federal renewable energy targets. These projects are being supported from federal coffers.”

Senator Bridget McKenzie, Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, Leader of The Nationals in the Senate:

“We have heard from hundreds of impacted farmers and their families about this renewable energy zone, the industrialisation of the most productive food and fibre communities in our state. “The Labor government is fixated on trashing the private property rights of these farmers, which is so appalling, they have been loud and proud, and they need to stay strong against a government that doesn’t respect them.

“Community after community has to stand up and say no to these projects being built because it has significant environmental, social and economic impact.

“Back in the day, we used to hear about triple bottom line – something had to be good for the environment, good for the economy and good for society.

“These projects are impacting the mental health and social cohesion of these communities, trashing the environment, some very significant environmental sites are going to be impacted by the rollout of these projects.”

For Reliable and Higher Quality Water: Clean Water Project

GWMWater has taken another step towards delivering improved water quality to more rural customers.

Following a successful pilot at Ouyen in 2024, GWMWater is now rolling out its \$13.56 million Clean

Water for North-West Rural Communities Project at Nyah and Piangil in the north of the state, and at the Waranga Channel in central Victoria. The project will deliver new treatment plants and pump stations to enhance the quality and reliability of rural water that is sourced from the Murray River and the Waranga Channel.

1.8 Gigalitres

Once operational, the facilities will treat 1.8 gigalitres of water annually, supporting more than 750 farming enterprises as well as urban customers south and west of Swan Hill. Tenders are currently being received for construction at Nyah, while upgrades at the Waranga Channel and Piangil are scheduled to be completed over the next two years.

GWMWater Managing Director, Mark Williams, said rural customers in the area serviced by the Piangil and Nyah Murray River offtakes can look forward to the same improved water quality as experienced in rural areas around Ouyen that were part of the project’s first stage. Likewise, in Central Victoria, the plant to be constructed on the Waranga channel off take will supply clean water into the South West Loddon Pipeline area, an extension of the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline that is bounded by Inglewood and Bridgewater at the northern end and Laanecoorie in the south. Since completing the South West Loddon Project, these customers have been receiving water that has been sourced from Lake Bellfield.

New Infrastructure

“GWMWater will build new infrastructure at the three raw-water extraction sites, including treatment facilities, pump systems, chemical dosing systems, and solar and battery storage systems to sustainably power the sites,” he said.

“A key feature of the treatment process is the dissolved air flotation plant, which removes all the particulate from the water – significantly enhancing its quality.”

Mr Williams said that the rural communities would not only receive water that has greater clarity but would also reduce supply interruptions from blue-green algae and black water events. These events are becoming more prevalent on the Murray River and the Goulburn River via the Waranga Western Channel.

“The new infrastructure aims to reduce these risks, ensuring a more consistent water quality for our rural customers,” Mr Williams said.

“The improved water quality will also improve the operational performance of the network with existing Murray River supplies frequently clogging meters. Improving system reliability is a win for towns and communities – and a win for farmers.”

The project is jointly funded by the Australian Government (\$5 million) and GWMWater (\$8.56 million). Australian Government funding is provided through the National Water Grid Fund.



• Dr. Webster speaking to the farmers, Noel Slee (right) and Mathew Weidemann.



Current Affairs

(The Editor, “The Times”) Dear Editor.– I am often perplexed and dismayed by the lack of current affairs knowledge in my circle of friends and associates. Most of those who keep informed commonly do so through social media. Meanwhile I am a devoted daily reader of “The Age” and occasional reader of an esteemed regional paper celebrating an important anniversary this year. My wife and I often attend Melbourne gigs to enjoy the music of a band featuring prominent Donald musical identities. The butcher never picks up an axe but he’s pretty handy with the drumsticks! Apparently the lead singer has been banned – somewhere. Congratulations to you all on your sesquicentenary. Long may you continue to print and may the Royal Blues LIFT!

Best regards,
Darren McClelland
Moonee Ponds



"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.



DEATH

BAIRD.— Chris

On behalf of the Watchem fire brigade we would like to send our deepest condolences to the Baird family on the sudden passing of Chris Baird "Toph".

Toph was a member of the brigade for many years. A loyal community man and an even better bloke.

*You will be deeply missed.
Rest easy Toph.*

DEATH

BAIRD.— "Toph"

Another fallen brother, Gone too early but never forgotten.

Till we meet again,
Ride on, ride free.

— The "Bats"



Take care on the roads — no one is safe from careless drivers.



DEATH

JONES (Golding).— Doris

01/01/1925 - 15/08/2025

Doris passed away peacefully at the Johnson-Goodwin Homes on Friday, August 15, 2025.

Much loved and loving wife of the late Graeme, loving mother of Shirley and mother-in-law of John. Adoring grandmother of Bryce.

A loving Aunt of Judi, Barry, Peter and their families and a respected friend of many.

DEATH

JONES.— Doris

Members of the Donald Bridge Club were sad to learn of the death of Foundation Member Doris Jones. Doris was an active and cheerful member of the Club for over thirty years.

Our sympathy goes to her family.



DEATH

PAYNTER.— Mary JONES.— Doris

The members of the Donald Golf Bowls Club regret and mourn the passing of two of our esteemed ex-club members in Mary Paynter and Doris Jones.

We extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to their families on their personal losses at this sad time.



DEATH

SEGGAR.— Bernie

Donald High School students, parents, staff, school council and wider school community are saddened by the passing of one of our school's colleagues and friends, Bernie Seggar.

Bernie was a staff member at Donald High School for over 15 years, mainly working as a Trade Teacher, before retiring at the end of last year.

Our most sincere condolences are sent to Bernie's family and friends at this most difficult time.

An advert. in "The Buloke Times" can cost as little as \$10, and up to 5,000 readers will see it.

FUNERAL
JONES (Golding).— Doris

You are warmly invited to attend a Graveside Service to celebrate Doris's 100 years, and lay her to rest with her beloved Jonesy at the Donald Lawn Cemetery on Monday, August 25, 2025 at 11.30 a.m.

To leave condolences and tributes please go to our website at:
www.sunraysiafunerals.com



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IN MEMORIAM

Leonie Monica Connolly
26/08/1980

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—Fiona and family



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—Leo & Sue

Law Notice

Lillian Jean Bibby late of Goodwin Village, 22 Camp Street, Donald, VIC 3480, Home Duties, deceased.

CREDITORS, next of kin, and others having claims in respect of the will of the above named deceased, who died on 11 August 2024 are required by the executors, Stephen Macs Bibby and Joanne Elizabeth Bibby, c/- the under-mentioned solicitor, to send particulars of their claims to them by 21 October 2025, after which date the executors may convey or distribute the assets, having regard only to the claims of which they then have notice.

MCL Legal
78 Napier Street,
St Arnaud VIC 3478

Notice of
DONALD LAWN TENNIS CLUB INC. Annual General Meeting

WED., AUGUST 27
BULLOCK'S HEAD TAVERN
7.30 p.m.

2024-25 financial members, life members and committee members all welcome.
—S. Potter, president.

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THURS., AUGUST 28

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ALL WELCOME

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9.10 a.m. - 12 noon (approx.)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29

• Multi-purpose Room
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AGM

Wed., September 10
7p.m. at Clubrooms

—Brad Bath, Pres.

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Samuel "Clowning Around" in preparation for The Wizard of OZ production.

The Textiles students were planning to help with the production wardrobe and were just getting into "character".

Aria Brennan
DONALD HIGH SCHOOL



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Sunday, August 24

Morning session 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
~ Complimentary tea/coffee ~

Commencing at new Unit 39, Richardson Heights,
20 Camp Street, Donald 3480, before looking at
Units 40 & 34, Richardson Heights.

*Information relating to Goodwin Village units, in-
cluding floor plans, and financial details available
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For more information further information contact Mandy Coulson, Manager Sustainable Agriculture on (03) 5448 7124.

For a copy of the position description or to apply, visit the Careers section of our website at www.nccma.vic.gov.au or email HRManager@nccma.vic.gov.au. Applications will be accepted **until 4:00pm Monday 1 September** and should address the key selection criteria.

We embrace diversity and inclusion; we welcome you to apply if you are a person with disability, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, Culturally and linguistically diverse, or LGBTQIA+. We welcome applications from people with disability and aim to provide an inclusive and accessible workplace.

If you need any help with the application process or would like to discuss your reasonable adjustments during interviews, please contact: Trepina Marek, HR Manager on 03 5448 7124.

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The Buloke Times
Est. 1875

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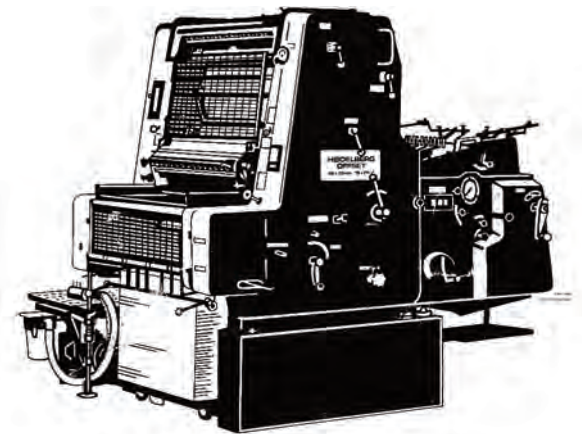
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TV Series Has Birchip Abuzz

Birchip has been buzzing with excitement this week as local favourite Jarrod “Norm” Hogan and Jess Eva have been filmed leading a renovation project for Channel 9 television series “Budget Battlers”.

The show focuses on renovating homes on a tight budget for deserving Australians and in this episode Jess and Norm have set out to give back to one of Birchip’s most selfless community members, Maurice “Blackie” Hogan.

Community Spirit on Display

From dawn to dusk, locals have rolled up their sleeves to help with the renovation project, transforming Blackie’s house on one of the tightest budgets imaginable.

Norm himself has been on the tools, assisted by the show’s tradesman and a dedicated crew of local builders with Jack and Robbie Lee, Cormac Wilson, Mick Hogan and Sam Noonan among them.

Former concreter Peter Noonan has come out of retirement to co-ordinate and execute the concreting. War-rack Concrete donated truck-loads of concrete, and a team of helpers including Jayden and Alex Noonan, Heath and Jade “Todge” Hogan and George Addis were lining up with wheelbarrows to get the new verandah in place on Wednesday morning.

The electrical work was overseen by Brad Ryan and Ben Hogan, with plumbing

work completed by nephew Rhylie Hogan.

Local hospitality outlets have kept the influx of visitors fed and watered, while Birchip Hardware was a constant stop for materials along with Dahlsens from Swan Hill.

A Tribute to “Blackie”

At the heart of the project is Maurice “Blackie” Hogan, a quiet achiever who has dedicated many hours to the local football club. Known for doing the jobs that often go unnoticed, Blackie cleans the clubrooms, lines the oval, restores and operates the old scoreboard, and collects raffle prizes for home games.

Beyond football, he has been involved in the Birchip Trotting Club and an advocate for Team Teal which supports women with ovarian and gynaecological cancers. Blackie has established a can collection outlet at the back of the Birchip Hotel which has benefited both Team Teal and the Birchip Campus of East Wimmera Health Service, raising around \$500 a month.

Blackie, who returned to Birchip after a teaching career in Darwin, has become an indispensable part of the town’s fabric and Norm said, “His name just kept coming up when we asked community

members to recommend a worthy recipient.”

The Budget Battlers team said it has been great seeing the town recognise his contributions by rallying the troops to help renovate his home. Glen Hare, the show’s painter was moved by the township’s spirit. “I have never seen a town like it,” he said. “When you need something, it just turns up.”

A Happy Homecoming

For Norm and Jess, it has been nothing short of emotional. “Everyone and anyone have been getting on board, it’s been unbelievable,” Norm said.

The week has been a celebration of Birchip’s trademark community spirit, where neighbours become family and a whole town bands together to get a job done to say thank you to a tireless community worker.

Blackie said, “I am truly humbled and honoured to be chosen. I see myself as just a representative of the countless volunteers in our town which thrives on the spirit of volunteering.”

Jess said, “it’s been a really happy story, and we have had so much fun introducing the crew to the local town and the people we love.”



• James Cook Filming Jarrod (Norm) Hogan on the tools.

Victorian 2025 Transmission Plan: Regions Need More Support

[From the Renewable Energy Alliance (RE-Alliance)]

Rural and regional communities across Victoria now have a plan for the build out of the renewable energy infrastructure needed to replace the state’s ageing coal-fired power stations over the next 15 years.

VicGrid has released the Victorian Transmission Plan, responding to feedback from agriculture, environment, community, and industry groups and ongoing engagement with First Nations communities.

It outlines details for six renewable energy zones where wind and solar projects and batteries for storage should be built, and the new powerlines required to connect it all.

The Renewable Energy Alliance (RE-Alliance), an independent not-for-profit working for more than a decade with regional communities at the centre of the shift to renewables, says the plan is an important step forward for certainty and clarity.

“Victorian communities have been calling for a clear plan and now we have it,” said RE-Alliance National Director, Andrew Bray. “It gives clarity for where we’re going to build the renewable energy we need to replace coal, and how we’re going to connect it into the electricity grid.”

Increased Urgency

Mr Bray said as Victoria prepares to close the Yallourn coal-fired power station, the plan’s increased urgency around the delivery of key transmission infrastructure projects like Western Renewables Link by 2028 and VNI West by the early 2030s is welcome, as is certainty on the amount of land required for wind, solar and battery projects in renewable energy zones.

“Communities now have a clear picture on the 1% of land required to host physical infrastructure like solar farms, wind turbines and roads, and where and when the power lines need to be built.

Hard Work

“Now the hard work comes to build public trust for

the change ahead and to back in regional capacity to deliver that change,” Mr Bray said.

“We look forward to seeing the further consultation that has been promised on how communities can benefit, which is an important piece of the puzzle to get right. Local councils and community groups need capacity and support to lead this change and we think policy solutions like Local Energy Hubs can be a part of the solution.”

RE-Alliance has called strongly in its submission to the draft Victorian Transmission Plan for the Victorian Government to establish Local Energy Hubs in key regions.

“With so many government agencies and private companies involved in the shift to clean energy, communities are telling us they need a source of trusted information that can answer their questions. Local Energy Hubs could provide this,” says Mr Bray.

“These hubs would be physical centres with a strong outreach program, staffed by independent local experts to help build trust and provide accurate information about what’s happening,” he said.

More information on the Local Energy Hubs model can be found at: localenergy-hubs.org.au.



• Jess Eva with Peter Noonan.



• Grace Crescent, closed off with the cast and crew utilising the Anglican Church, Shire shed and Seniors Citizens buildings.

“Times” Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8190

		1		2		3		4		5	
6											
7					8						
9							10		11		
12	13				14		15			16	
17			18						19		
	20										

ACROSS

6. Ship (11)

7. Mineral (4)

8. Robust (8)

9. Walk (6)

10. Cash in (6)

12. Cloth (6)

15. Clamour (6)

17. U.S. state (8)

19. Commonsense (4)

20. Absolute (11)

DOWN

1. Vegetable (8)

2. Tool (6)

3. Animal (6)

4. Potentate (4)

5. Suffer (6)

6. Intended (5)

11. Explode (8)

13. Hatred (6)

14. Elaborate (6)

15. Fruit (6)

16. Circular (5)

18. Match (4)

• Solution next issue.

PAGE 6 — “The Buloke Times”, Friday, August 22, 2025.



Breath testing millions of drivers this year.

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Donald Competes at Interschool Athletics

The Interschool Athletics was held on Friday, August, 15. Thirty students from Donald High School participated in the event and they are all to be congratulated for their efforts.

There were several outstanding individual results on the day, and we had one Age Group Champion. Layla Griffiths won the 14-year-old championship with the following results: 400m first, 1500m first, 800m second, 100m second, high jump second.

Winners of events on the day, and therefore, students who have qualified for the Zone Athletics in Bendigo were: Layla Griffiths, 14-year-old 400m and 1500m; Ethan Clapham, 17-year-old shot put; Charlie Burke, 16-year-old shot put, discus, 100m and javelin; Jam Borden, 17-year-old triple jump; Hugo Funcke, 15-year-old High Jump.

Evie Donnellon (javelin, long jump, triple jump, 100m, 200m), Samuel Mortlock (long and triple jump) and Charlie Burke (high jump and 200m) also had an excellent day with a number of seconds in their respective events.

Donald's only relay winners on the day were the 15-year-old girls: River Sterling, Layla Griffiths, Evie Donnellon and Halle Rice.

It was great to see Donald students competing hard and supporting their peers. The students are to be commended for their participation and positive attitude.

A big thank you to Mr. Tatchell and Ms. Cavanagh, who helped out on the day.



The Loddon Mallee Region Interschool Athletics will be held on Thursday, October 9, which is in the first week of Term 4. Students who have qualified will be given further details as the date gets closer.



• Above: Shaine Mansibang – sprint.



• Samuel Mortlock – long jump.



• Halle Rice – long jump.



• Darnell Clapham trying out the Virtual Reality scenarios.

Donald Students at Horsham Expo

On August 7, seven Donald High School indigenous students travelled to Horsham to attend the Pathways Expo, run by Horsham's Goolum Goolum organisation.

There was a very wide range of activities to participate in, including first aid, emergency services, Powercorp, Bunnings and representatives from several tertiary institutions were in attendance.

The students enjoyed themselves and look forward to next year.



• River Stirling and Karleisha Anderson with their array of showbags.



• Jaya Stirling and Jasmine Anderson learning about first aid and life saving.



• Zachariah Clapham and Ethan Clapham creating some carry boxes.

Camps Broaden Students' Horizons

Birchip P-12 College students recently returned from their annual camps, with Years 9, 10 and 11 each heading off on unique adventures designed to extend learning beyond the classroom.

Year 11s immersed themselves in culture and history during a week in Melbourne. Highlights included Luna Park, the Old Melbourne Gaol, Queen Victoria Market, the Holocaust Museum, and a spectacular performance of “Annie” at the Princess Theatre. Students also tested their independence during a “Race Around Melbourne” and teamwork in an Escape Room challenge.

Year 10 – Geelong
Year 10s combined outdoor challenges with cultural experiences in Geelong. From bushwalking at the You Yangs to surfing at Torquay, exploring the National Wool

Museum, and a ghost tour of the historic Geelong Jail, the camp offered plenty of variety. A behind-the-scenes tour of GMHBA Stadium and fitness activities at Deakin University added to the action-packed week.

Year 9 – Rubicon
The Year 9s ventured to Rubicon, where the focus was on the great outdoors. Students embraced bushwalking, explored the snow, and had plenty of fun learning to ski and toboggan. The camp gave them the chance to challenge themselves in a completely different environment while enjoying the beauty of the bush.



Learning Beyond the Classroom
Across all three camps, students built independence, teamwork, and resilience while creating lifelong memories. Whether tackling waves, exploring the city, or playing in the snow, Birchip P-12 students experienced the kind of cultural, physical, and personal growth that comes from learning beyond the classroom.



• Year 11 students left to right: Kyan Wallace, Annabelle Bennett, Aljeena Joseph, Eliza Gould posing outside of the Melbourne Museum.



• Visiting the wool museum in Geelong are year 10 students Gracie Ferrier (left) and Zara Lowry.



• Year 11 students gathered around the Melbourne War Memorial.

One Hundred Years Ago

From the “Birchip Advertiser”, August 21, 1925.
Birchip Agricultural Show

In less than four weeks the thirty-third annual show of the Birchip and District Agricultural and Pastoral Society will be held. For many years shows were held on the third Wednesday in September, but for certain reasons four weeks ago the date was changed to the second week in October. To avoid clashing with other similar fixtures, the majority of which are held during that month, the old date is being reverted to this year, and as a result there will be no counter attractions to induce district residents to miss seeing our show, which should be a most successful one.

Prize list
Show schedules have been circulated throughout the district and copies may be inspected at the public library and business places locally, and also in neighbouring towns. Two events of general interest are musical chairs and bending race. Crop and fallow competitions are being held this year. To avoid any delay in regard to the staging of ring

events a time steward has been appointed, and patrons can rest assured that every effort will be made to study interests in this respect.

Membership
A special endeavour is being made to increase the membership of the Society this year. In Wycheproof and Charlton almost every district farmer is a member of their respective society, but unfortunately this is not so here. Now that the society has inaugurated crop and fallow competitions farmers should rally round and accord it every support.

Residents should generally take an interest in the affairs of the society and see that their show is one of which they can be proud.

A New Daily
A new morning daily paper is to be launched in Melbourne. The first addition of the paper, which has been named “The Morning Post” will be circulated about the first week in November.



ANGLICAN “Parish of Charlton-Donald”
Enquiries: Rev’d Judi Bird
0435 593 395
Friday, September 5
St. Paul’s, Birchip, 5 p.m.
Sunday, September 7
St. Martin’s, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George’s, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W’burn, 3 p.m.

GRANITE Community Church
www.granitecommunitychurch.com
At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.
Speaker: Kyle Pearse
Baptist Union of Victoria

Church Notices

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)
Donald, 10 a.m.
Next Birchip and Wycheproof Services,
10 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 7
Contact Number: 5497 1033

DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES “East Wimmera Parish”
Birchip 10.30 a.m. (Livestream in)
Boort 10.30 a.m. (Livestream in)
Banyena No Mass
Charlton 10.30 a.m. (Livestream out to churches without Mass)
Donald 10.30 a.m. (Livestream in)
St. Arnaud 8.30 a.m.
W’proof (Sat.) 7.00 p.m.

Fr. Gerry Prunty
0419 247 779
Parish Co-ordinator
– Noline Hogan: 0476 617 976

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For Probus and Railway Committee Members . . . Christmas Comes Early

(By Maureen Donnellon)

The annual lunch for Probus and Mens' Shed catered for by the Railway Committee was held with a "Christmas in July" theme at the Birchip Senior Citizens' Hall on July 25, 2025.

It was a great success, with tables and the hall beautifully decorated by Sarah Botheras and her parents, Brian and Lorraine Lea, who also arranged the entertainment.

A tasty Christmas feast of turkey, ham and roast vegetables, plus Christmas pudding and fruit salad with all the trimmings, was catered for by the Railway Restoration Committee as one of their fundraisers to help keep the restored railway station looking spick and span.

Speaker

A quick meeting was held by Probus, and the guest speaker, Alana Morrow was welcomed. Some of us knew Alana, as she is the dynamic lady who welcomes us to the Morning Melodies held at Horsham RSL, and where Probians have enjoyed the wonderful performances of county music legends of the past and newer performers. It was a wonderful morning of nostalgia as Alana spoke about all the shows she has organised and the many singers and musicians she has worked with, as well as the coming shows and the various venues and performance tours she has travelled with, supported and organised.

Morning Melodies

She particularly loves the Morning Melodies which follow night performances in most cases, as music is something enjoyed by people of all ages, and particularly something which is still able to be beneficial to people with various forms of dementia, something with which Alana has dealt with in her own family.

She is well qualified in marketing as well as growing up with country music, and Tammy Wynette, Loretta Lynn, Patsy Cline are still her favourites as well as Katherine Britt, Alan Jackson, Dolly Parton, Elton John, Jade Hurley, the Delltones and many Australian groups of musicians we all knew. She also works at Horsham hospital part time, so has seen the joy that can result from experiencing music. She had a long held dream to bring music to older people and with the support of the RSL in Horsham, and their venue, she is now able to do so.

Reception

She spoke about all the work that goes into bringing top acts to the country, made easier because Horsham is midway between Melbourne and Adelaide. The reception given by older people to country singers and musicians is always so enthusiastic, that once artists have experienced country audiences, they are keen to come back. She spoke about the latest tours she has worked with such as "Man I Feel Like A Woman" by Amber Joy Poulton and the Johnny Cash/Roy Orbison Tribute Show she is bringing to Warracknabeal in December, as well as Issy Dye and Don Costa, who were very well followed.

Bootscooting

Bootscooting has also made a comeback each month in Horsham, which made us all reminisce when we were dancing in Birchip every week in 1995 to the early 2000s, with Kathy McLoughlan as our leader. We were interested to hear that Jenny

Mitchell, who used to come to Birchip each week from Beulah and who now lives in Horsham area, is the instructor.

Flyers were handed out for future concerts and then to get us all more excited, Alana ran a music quiz with snippets of songs and chocolate prizes. Judy Living and Norma Khan were amazing with their memories of singers, bands and songs and both amassed piles of chocolate. We all sang along and had a great time. Special winners of lucky tickets were Florence Ferrier and Judy Living who will both be off to a Horsham Show.

Santa

Alana was thanked and joined us for lunch, which we enjoyed while listening to the welcome rain, and were most surprised when the door opened and in came Santa Claus with chocolates and messages for each recipient. It is uncanny how Santa seemed to remember each one of us from many years ago, and reminded us that he was checking up on our behaviour and would be back in the area in December.

So concluded our most enjoyable day with special thanks to our caterers, the Railway committee, whose members are combined from the Birchip Lions' Club, Historical Society and Landcare. All three organisations help keep our little town going as well as the Men's Shed and Probus Club and all are keen for new members, as the senior residents become more senior and the tasks require younger people, too. If you cannot become a member, Probians could do with some financial support to keep their organisations viable.



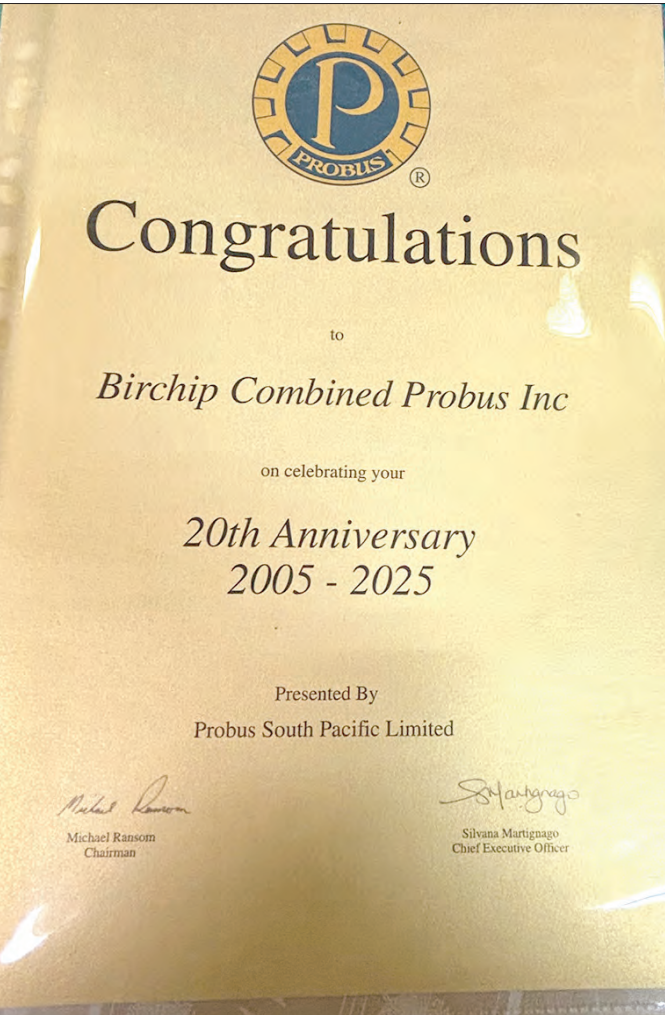
• Santa chats to guest speaker Alana Morrow and Lorraine Lea at Probus/Railway lunch in Birchip.



• Combined Birchip Probus/Railway Committee members enjoy Christmas in July.



• Santa checking the behaviour of President Brian Lea at Birchip Probus/Railway Committee lunch.



• Birchip Probus turns 20 in September.



• Guest speaker Alana Morrow with Lorraine Lea (left), at Birchip Probus/Railway Committee lunch.

Trash to Treasure

One person's Trash is another's Treasure!

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“Gather and Work” on Mount Wycheproof

[From “The Friends of Mount Wycheproof”]

The Friends of Mount Wycheproof volunteers have struck a winning rhythm, alternating their official monthly meetings with easy-going community work gatherings (better known as “Gather and Work”).

The latest was held on a sunshine-filled Sunday morning in early August, capped off with another barbecue feast that had everyone smiling.

Some folk wandered up simply to soak in the spectacular views and chat with passing visitors, while others grabbed a rubbish bag and made light work of litter, and removing eyesore structures.

Many energetic weed warriors got busy tackling a particularly stubborn patch of Sedum.

Topics

As always, the lunch gathering was where ideas sprouted just as fast as the conversations flowed. Topics included:

- How the Kurrajongs are thriving.
- New plans to tackle gaza-nias with the steam weeder.
- Inviting a plant expert to help with tricky identifications.
- Progress on the historic “Basin” sign storyboard to be erected soon.
- Plus plans for interpretive markers and more.

Chairperson Martin Duke summed it up perfectly: “It

was wonderful to see volunteers naturally gravitate to the jobs that matched their skill level – whether it was hands-on clearing, fine-tuning details, removal of now un-used iron structures or simply welcoming visitors.”

The friends were once again delighted to meet a steady stream of curious visitors who paused at the Mount, some travelling through and stopping for a break, many tourists too – all were happy to share feedback, stories, and compliments – especially regarding the walking tracks, meals enjoyed at local hotels, accommodation provisions and the evident community spirit.

The Friends of Mount Wycheproof extend thanks to all those who joined in and warmly invite everyone to future “Gather and Work” sessions. After all, what better way to care for the world’s smallest registered mountain than by rolling up the sleeves, enjoying good company, and contributing to the upkeep and presentation of a unique natural treasure in the Wycheproof community?



• Above: Perfect Paths – Martin Duke got stuck into tidying the Mount’s walking trails, hauling away everything from scraps to sheets of corrugated iron.



• Lizard Lounging – Hidden under a pile of corrugated iron, a sleepy Shingleback Lizard – also called a Sleepy Lizard, Bobtail, Pinecone, or Stumpy Lizard – made a surprise appearance. Mount Wycheproof is truly a haven for Australian wildlife, from birds and echidnas to lizards and more.



• Not all Heroes Wear Capes! FoMW’s own Sandra Ryan was snapped mid-mission, pouring heart and muscle into clearing pesky Sedum from the slopes of Mount Wycheproof, while soaking up sweeping views.



• Loaded to the brim - Alex Morrison’s ute was on weed duty throughout the morning, ensuring Sedum says goodbye for good across the Mount.



• Rotunda Recharge – With many tasks actioned and rubbish cleared, volunteers kicked back and enjoyed some refreshments on a lovely winter morning. Left to right: Alex Morrison, Buloke Shire Councillor Stephen Barrett, Martin Duke, Mary-Anne Duke and Prof Milburn (partially hidden), alongside Andrew Borg.

Historical Engines and Machinery: Wedderburn Society Prepares for Rally

The Wedderburn Historical Engine and Machinery Society is busy getting ready for its annual rally. The rally is held over two days and welcomes exhibitors from all over Victoria and Interstate.

Last year the Society had 260 plus stationary working engines on display, some large, some small, but all played an important role on properties in times gone by. Car clubs are welcome to join in the friendly atmosphere and have their vehicles on show. A tractor trek will run on Saturday for those who like to drive around the countryside.

Shearing

There are working demonstrations throughout the weekend. Shearing takes place in the shearing shed. A Lister 5 h.p. "L" (1921) model provides the power for the shearers. Blade shearing is

often demonstrated by guest exhibitors. Chaff cutting is popular with the public. Members have cut sheaves and these are thread into the chaff cutter, the chaff separates out and is bagged providing feed for horses.

Power Source

The club is home to two 116 h.p. Twin Cylinder Ruston Hornsby engines. One was the original power source for the town of Wedderburn and the second one was donated to the club by the Flour Mill in Bridgewater. These massive machines are a magnificent sight in operation.

This year the Society is lucky to have the model

railway trains coming from Ararat. Saturday night entertainment thanks to Trevor Sleeman and a few market stalls will be selling their goods.

The club members will have a large range of food available from barbecue, pies pasties etc, soup, sandwiches, cakes and slices and freshly cooked roast pork sandwiches, not to mention the yummy pancakes.

This is the club's main fundraiser for the year. Entry is \$5 and school children are admitted free of charge. This event is a cash only event. September 13th and 14th, 2025, details as per advert.



• Some engines in one of the compounds.



• Shearing demonstration.



• An old fashioned sewing machine working.



• Tractors on the tractor trek.



(By Course Language)

With fine weather on the Saturday and a few showers around Sunday, the golfers around Donald must have been worn out from the tournament the previous weekend, as there were only a couple of true stalwarts having a hit over the weekend, but not enough to run the monthly medal.

Dad's Army

Similarly with Dad's army there were only a couple fronting for roll call.

Junior Golf

The juniors turned up last Friday eager for golf after missing the previous week because of the tournament. In the "A" grade, the winner was Luca Rice with Oakley Brennan runner-up, and in "B" grade Lyric Davis was the winner just in front of Myles Hollis.

Coming Up

Friday at 4.30 sees our first night of "Chicken Run". All are welcome for a relaxing 9 holes of golf with the bar open after to discuss those unbelievable or mysterious shots on the course.

Ultimate Seed Cleaning is sponsoring the Stableford competition this weekend. The season has gone quickly, so let's make the most of the course, which is in great shape at the moment before the season is done.

Dad Jokes

A friend of mine is in rehab for his hiking addiction

– he's going o.k. but he's not out of the woods yet.

Another friend of mine said that as a child he had to walk the plank – I said why was that and he replied – because they couldn't afford a dog.

They're running an event at the next Olympics for

insomniacs – If you snooze you lose.

Why did the mechanic sleep under a car? – He wanted to wake up oily in the morning.

I've just bought some gloating cream from the chemist – I can't wait to rub it in.

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Donald Netballers Count Their Votes

Last Saturday, the Royal Blues capped off the 2025 season with their annual Vote Count Presentation Night, celebrating the achievements of senior hockey, netball and football.

Netball president Belicia Francis welcomed guests, thanking sponsors, weekly award donors, and the executive Xanthi Rice (VP) Jess Nunn (Secretary), Michelle Donnellon (Treasurer) Kim Griffiths (Umpires Convener) and general committees (Alicia Robinson, Jo Beavis, Courtney Doak, Caitlin Cavanagh and Katie Gillahan) for their support over the season. She also thanked Emma Green and Sarah MacDonald for being general board members at NCNA level, as well as Sara Adams, who was NCNA Junior Development Officer.

In netball, the vote count kept everyone on edge, with the final tallies in “A”, “B” and “C” grade all coming down to the last game of the season against Birchip-Watchem.

“C” grade winners were Julia Pearse (Most Valuable Teammate), Molly Harrison and Olivia Wollerman (joint

Best & Fairest), and Belicia Francis (runner-up).

“B” grade awards went to Jess Nunn (Most Valuable Teammate), Megan Tonkin (Best & Fairest), and Courtney Doak (runner-up).

In “A” grade, Ally Doak claimed Most Valuable Teammate, Milla Adams took out best and fairest, and Anna Sudholz was named runner-up.

Sponsors

A huge thank you went to Gilchrist & Co for their generous support of the club, sponsoring both the weekly awards and the Senior Player of the Year. After every game, votes are collected across “A”, “B” and “C” grades to recognise standout players, team contributors, and sportsmanship. At season’s end, those votes decide the Gilchrist of the Year – celebrating the skill, teamwork, and spirit of the Royal Blues. Nicole and Chloe from Gilchrist & Co congratulated

Milla Adams, who received the 2025 Senior Player of the Year. At just a young age, Milla has already stamped herself as a key “A” grade player, and now an “A” grade best and fairest winner, who combines pace, agility, defensive pressure and sharp shooting with a determination that makes her one of the club’s most exciting rising stars.

The club recognised Kim Griffiths, named Best Senior Club Person. From 2003-2024 this award was proudly known as the Ro Wood Memorial Award. Late in 2024, Ro’s mum, Jan South, approached the club requesting a change, feeling it was time to remove Ro’s name. While the name has changed, the spirit of the award remains the same – honouring those who give above and beyond. Kim’s tireless commitment as “C” grade coach with daughter Abby, umpires convener for numerous years, mentoring umpiring to help obtain their “C” grade umpiring badges, a committee member and all-round volunteer made her a fitting recipient. Kim was very humbled by the receipt of the award and thanked her family and the club.

A special mention also went to Jo Beavis, who received her “C” grade umpiring badge – a fantastic achievement.

At the conclusion of the netball presentations, Jess thanked the local sponsors and donors once again, asking the crowd to support these businesses and personally thank them next time they visit.

The club is excited to continue growing in 2026, and expressions of interest for coaches and new players are welcome at any time. The Royal Blues also look forward to celebrating their Junior Presentations on Saturday, August 23.



• “A” Grade: left to right; Ally Doak, Milla Adams, Anna Sudholz.



• Jess Nunn presenting Kim Griffiths Best Club Person.



• “B” Grade: left to right; Jess Nunn, Megan Tonkin, Courtney Doak.



• Chloe Jones and Nicole Nunn from Gilchrist presenting Milla Adams.



• Belicia Francis, Molly Harrison, Olivia Wollermann, Julia Pearse.

Charlton 100 Years Ago

(Information from “East Charlton Tribune”)

August 15 to 19, 1925.



• 1923 Telegraph Hotel.

GWMWater Commits to Recreation Lake Supply

GWMWater will continue its long-standing commitment to supply recreational water across the Wimmera and Mallee after confirming plans to allocate water to support pipeline-supplied recreation lakes this summer.

The GWMWater Board has approved the transfer of up to 1,850 megalitres (ML) from its urban and rural water holdings to the Recreation Water Entitlement, ensuring critical water supplies for 14 popular lakes and weirs across the region. A further 680 ML of high reliability Murray and Goulburn entitlements will be used to supply Ouyen Lake and Green Lake at Sea Lake.

Priority

GWMWater Managing Director, Mark Williams, said supply to recreation lakes was a priority outcome for the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.

“Water for recreation remains a high priority for our communities and visitors alike. It supports local economies, encourages tourism, and adds significantly to the liveability of towns across the Wimmera and Mallee,” he said.

Recreational lakes supplied via the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline have been consistently underwritten by GWMWater for more than 15 years, using unused growth

water. In 2024/25, 2,699 ML was delivered to Grampians-supplied lakes, with 753 ML carried over into the new season. This leaves a shortfall of about 1,850 ML, which will now be made up from GWMWater’s urban and rural holdings.

Mr Williams said the supply would not compromise water supply to other GWMWater customers.

“Transfers will start this month, which is normally a low demand period in the rural pipeline network,” he said.

Recent Study

A recent study revealed that 10 key pipeline-supplied recreation lakes contributed \$8 million to the regional economy per year.

In addition to these allocations, the storage manager has authorised the transfer of 12,360 ML from Rocklands Reservoir to Taylors Lake, beginning 18 August 2025. This transfer is essential to ensure an adequate supply is held in Taylors Lake to meet expected environmental demand for the 2025/26 water year, while also providing recreational

value and acting as a backup supply for the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.

Users Group

GWMWater will continue engaging with stakeholders and recreation users through its Regional Recreation Water Users Group, scheduled to meet in September, to discuss seasonal conditions and reaffirm the organisation’s ongoing commitment to water for recreation. Recreation Lakes and Weir Pools to receive water allocation:

1. Beulah Weir Pool.
2. Brim Weir Pool.
3. Donald Caravan Park Lake.
4. Green Lake (near Sea Lake).
5. Lake Lascelles (Hopton).
6. Lake Marma (Murtoa).
7. Ouyen Lake.
8. Rainbow Lake.
9. Tchum Lake (Birchip).
10. Walkers Lake (Avon Plains).
11. Warracknabeal Weir Pool.
12. Watchem Lake.
13. Wooroonook Lake.
14. Yaapeet Lake.

City Bias Fails Regional Women

The Nationals’ Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, has slammed the Allan Labor Government for failing to deliver free period product vending machines to the Mildura electorate, saying it is yet another example of regional women being ignored.

“Outside of public schools, not a single vending machine has been installed in the Mildura electorate,” Ms Benham said. “This Government claims to be tackling period poverty, yet it ignores one of the most disadvantaged regions in the state.

“The Mildura electorate has some of the lowest incomes in Victoria, with per-

sonal, family and household earnings well below the state average. Many local families are already under extreme cost-of-living pressure, yet metropolitan areas are being prioritised while regional communities miss out.”

“It’s astounding that Melbourne stadiums and cultural venues now have free sanitary products, yet our communities, where the need is greater, are ignored.”

Ms Benham said this was yet another example of the Labor’s failure to address cost-of-living pressures in regional Victoria.

“The needs of women in the Mallee are no less impor-

tant than those in Melbourne, but you wouldn’t know it from Labor’s priorities,” she said.

“When you’re choosing between paying a bill and buying essentials, sanitary products shouldn’t have to be in question.”

She called on the Minister for Women to immediately commit to installing vending machines in health clinics, schools, food banks and transport hubs across the Mildura electorate.

“If Labor is serious about supporting all women, it must start delivering to all of Victoria,” she said.

Base Hospital: The District Inspector has directed to all the teachers in the Charlton Inspectorate a commendation of the appeal which is being made in connection with the Bendigo Base Hospital. He would like all schools in the Inspectorate to make a special effort to raise the quotas assigned to them. The Charlton School quota has been fixed at approximately £65.

With the Greyhounds: All things considered, Charlton dogs made a good showing at the Kyneton meeting. Present from this district were Messrs J. Egan, Martin Egan, S. J. Dew, I. Dew, R. Luth and E. R. Dabron. M. J. Egan’s Boree decisively captured the All Aged Stake. The hares ran well.

No Contests: Nominations for the Shire Municipal elections closed at 4 p.m. on Thursday last, when it was found that the following had been nominated for the seats rendered vacant by effluxion of time; North Riding, Cr S. Wood (retiring member); South Riding, Mr Tom Wright (son of Cr J. Wright), who is not seeking re-election. Consequently there will be no contests.

Donald H.E.S. at Charlton: Teams representing the Donald H.E.S. visited Charlton and were decisively defeated at football and

basketball by the local H.E.S. The Charlton boys played splendidly, and won by 16-13 to 5-7. At basketball, the “A” team of Charlton was victorious by 33 goals to 8, and the Charlton second team won by 16-3. The visitors were entertained to a sumptuous afternoon tea.

Trotting Club: The annual meeting was held at the East Charlton Hotel. Correspondence from the Victorian Railways, forwarding a refund cheque for £43/3/10, the guarantee lodged for the special train run in connection with the meeting held 19th Nov., 1924. The secretary stated that he had asked the Railway Department for a statement of passengers and horses carried, and also the revenue earned by the special train. The reply read, “That 73 passengers and 16 horses travelled by the train, and the total earnings were £58/19/9.” No rebate could be allowed on race trains, the railways thus making a profit of £15/15/11 out of the meeting.

Odds and Ends (by “The Onlooker”): On the street corner we recently heard it said that every M.P. should go all round the Empire at least once. To which we add: “And not come back.” First Impressions of Charlton: 1 Motor cars, 2 Schools and Churches, 3 Pubs, 4 Golfers, 5 Children, 6 Dogs.

On the Links: The Ladies’ Golf Club held its President’s Trophy match on the local links. Mrs P. Spain (president) donated the trophies which, as there were two divisions, numbered six, being 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in each division. The result of the play was: “A” division, won by Miss D. Frahm, 64-11-53. “B” division, won by Miss C. Curnow.

Woosang Whispers: Sid Cossar, Kennedy, W. Stewart, Jack Hando, A. Black and W. Round were among those who caught the eye against Charlton. Round looks like a footballer with a future. Hugh McGurk and he did well with what chances came their way.

Splendid Result: The receipts at the Blind Concert lately held were as follows: Sale of tickets by Mr Braybrook £228 5/-; door takings £15 9/-; sales of song £1 18/-; Total £46 2/-. Expenditure: advertising, rental of hall. After deducting expenses, Mr Alex Roberson, local hon. Secretary, forwarded to the Association a cheque for £44 9/-.

Brass Band: The band, under Bandmaster Grinham, played a pleasing programme at the junction of Armstrong and Watson on Sunday. The recital was greatly appreciated.



Share Your Local Knowledge to Inform the Environment Effects Statement

Local knowledge is extremely valuable for a thorough environmental and social assessment of the VNI West project area — and we’re looking for your input into existing conditions.

The Environment Effects Statement (EES) covers a range of topics, including:



VNI West Environment Effects Statement 2025 community session details

Kerang	Murrabit	Charlton	Stawell
Tue 19 August 3–6pm	Tue 26 August 3–6pm	Wed 27 August 9am–12pm 3–6pm	Thu 28 August 3–6pm
Kerang Memorial Hall	Murrabit Public Hall	Charlton Park Complex	Stawell Entertainment Centre

- Speak with the TCV team and technical experts
- Learn about the EES and what it means for VNI West
- Get involved: Share your insights on the local environment, land use, and community values in the VNI West project area

Scan the QR code or visit the project website to learn more and share your input into existing environmental and social conditions in the VNI West project area.



Contact us

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Royal Blues’ Best Acknowledged

The Anderson Blue Room was buzzing on Saturday for the Donald Royal Blues end of season presentation night across all codes of sport, as well as the livestreamed Feeny Medal vote count.

The black tie affair was well attended and guests enjoyed catered dining as the awards were presented.

For the Donald Football seniors, the season has been somewhat disappointing on the scoreboard, but the club celebrated its many members, volunteers and sponsors, as well as players’ individual achievements on the field.

Football Club president Danny Forrest addressed those assembled, full of pride for the club’s long history and that it has survived for so long on the backs of the many who so generously give their time. “Tonight isn’t just about who kicked the most goals,

who laid the biggest tackle, or who took the mark. Tonight is about US – the people who give their time, their energy and their heart to keep this great club alive as a standalone club, since 1882,” he said.

Danny went on to thank his committee, the sponsors and many helpers at the club before the awards were presented.

Senior

Senior best and fairest (Lynette Griffiths) was presented to Daniel Pearce; runner-up (Gwen Anderson Memorial) was Charlie Campbell. Most consistent (Steve and Helen Amos) was

awarded to Dyson Bell-Warren. Most determined (M. Davidson and M. Raynes), Kalon Green; Best Utility (Graeme and Sandra Harris), Charlie Campbell; Most Valuable Player (Daniel Pearce), Harry Forrest; Frogga Rookie Award (Davidson family), Luca Rice.

Reserves

Best and fairest (Tom Donnellon Memorial), George Morgan; runner-up (Della Vedova Memorial), Joe Sheridan. Most consistent (M. Davidson and M. Raynes), Brod Harrison; Most Determined (Michaels of Donald), Glen and Marty Burke; Best Utility (Brian and Lynne Walsh), Jesse Lopes; Coach’s Award (Kalon Green/Sam Beavis), Zack Mehenett.

Club Awards

Mr Football (Guild family), Daniel Pearce and Dion Hawkes; Best Club Person (Brian Pearce Memorial), Kalon Green and Dennis Adams.

In president Danny Forrest’s address he said: “Looking ahead to 2026, we can bounce back and we will bounce back. And we’ll do it the same way we’ve always done it – together! When everyone chips in and does their bit, nothing can stop the Royal Blues. Because of that, we live to fight another day – and win another day. Tough years have happened before, they may happen again, but we have survived another year.”

Also held on the night were the award presentations for Donald netball and hockey clubs. Information can be found elsewhere in today’s “Times”.



• Seniors, left to right: Harry Forrest, Charlie Campbell, Daniel Pearce, Kalon Green, Luca Rice



• Daniel Pearce and Luca Rice, Frogga Davidson Memorial.



• DFC Special Awards: Dion Hawkes, Daniel Pearce, Kalon Green.



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• Reserves, left to right: Brodrick Harrison, Zac Menhennett, Joe Sheridan, George Morgan, Glenn Burke, Marty Burke, Jesse Lopes.

Clean Sweep For Bulls Netballers

In the final round of the home-and-away season Birchip-Watchem hosted Donald on the purple courts in the prelude to the final series, commencing at Birchip tomorrow.

The final game for the Net Set Go season saw Birchip-Watchem field both teams – the Blueberries against the Strawberries. Some Grade Ones were provided the exciting chance to play on Saturday which included special dance moves to keep themselves warm in the chilly wind.

Phoebe Tyler, Imogen Noonan, Amber Hogan, Heidi Kilroy, Bridget McAuliffe, Lucy Noonan, and Jaylah Haslam starred in their first game and Mel McLoughlin, who was having her debut on the whistle. Everyone shared the ball around, managed to spread out, and showed great calling with their passes. It was wonderful to see so much enthusiasm.

The graduates from the Net Set Go program include Ari Richmond, Zayvier Sagers, Sadie Bourke and Greta McClelland, as they will move on to the Junior 14 netball grade for which they are very prepared for. Many thanks to Lauren Baker, Ada Bourke, Lana Angel and Beau Haslam for their commitment to the program this year. Birchip-Watchem awards: Jaylah Haslam and Bridget McAuliffe.

14-&-Under “B”

On a chilly Saturday morning, the 14-&-Under “B” netball teams faced off in a spirited match. Despite the cold conditions, both teams showed great determination and energy from the first whistle.

Birchip-Watchem quickly settled into the game, displaying strong teamwork and accurate passing. Their defensive pressure and sharp shooting gave them the early advantage, and they maintained control throughout the match. Donald fought hard,

never giving up and showing great resilience across all four quarters.

In the end, Birchip-Watchem came away with a well-deserved win, defeating Donald 22-5. Both teams should be proud of their efforts in a game played with great sportsmanship.

Birchip-Watchem awards: Addison Hamilton and Hannah Hogan. Donald awards: Anisia Podasca and Charlotte Perry.

14-&-Under “A”

On Saturday, 2nd on the ladder Birchip-Watchem took on 3rd on the ladder Donald, but it was the Bulls who got away to a strong start leading by 5 goals at the end of the first quarter with Gemma Tynan and Awhina Kahukura’s goaling accurately. Donald’s defensive pressure increased in the second quarter, and the Bulls only extended their half-time to 6 goals. Lucy Coffey, in her first year of juniors, had a great game helping the Bulls’ defensive end and they eventually won 22-17. Birchip-Watchem awards went to Alana Caldwell and Lucy Coffey. Donald awards: Neveah Pearse and Chloe Halia

17-&-Under “A”

The two previous encounters were a one sided affair with the Bulls dominant, but Donald came to the game strongly, creating the first turnover of the game and following up quickly to get the first three goals of the game, with strong attacking drives from Laila Reilly and Alyssa Hepworth.

With Birchip-Watchem on the back foot, the Royal Blues showed that they weren’t going to be a push over, going goal for goal in the early part of the game before a tactical change by the Bulls to inject

more height into defence. Eva Coffey slowed the run Donald had started and created a swing in momentum. Zali Angel and Beau Haslam started to find their rhythm in the goal ring and quickly put the Bulls in the lead, 19-13 at the first break.

Bringing fresh legs on the court with Cassie Tynan and Gracie Ferrier, allowed the Bulls to continue to dictate terms, with the Donald defenders needing to work hard, and to their credit they did not give up. At half-time the Bulls were ahead 38-20.

In the third, Esther Bourke was relentless in WD, picking up loose balls and feeding them back into the Bulls attack, while Halle Rice, Donald centre player, tried to steady the flow in the Royal Blues mid court. Despite the continued fight, the Bulls kept building their lead, going into the final break 57-31 up.

In order to finish with some fun before the business end of the finals series kick in, the Bulls decided to mix it up in the final term. Normally in defence, Eva Coffey lent her hand to the goal circle in combination with Cassie Tynan and Zara Lowry who shared the GA role for the term. This did not affect the flow of the game, with Zali Angel shutting down any attempts at Donald’s end with her height, and allowing the Bulls to stack on a further 20 goals to Donald’s 6, with the final score being 77-37.

Award winners for the Bulls were Zara Lowry who, normally in the mid court, showed great confidence in the goal ring sinking many long bomb shots, and Esther Bourke who picked up many loose balls in defence and backed up her team in amazing fashion.



• Milla Adams reaches for the lob as Cheyenne Parsons defends.

Award winners for Donald for a solid effort in attack were Laila Reilly and Alyssa Hepworth.

“C” Grade

Birchip-Watchem “C” grade claimed a strong 42-19 win over Donald. Ash Tierney and Steph Coffey were relentless in defence, applying constant pressure the entire game. In the midcourt, Hannah Wilson, Asha Lee, Maddy McQueen and Jay Connelly-Chase moved the ball swiftly down the court. Immy Boyle and Megane Greenaway combined well in the goals. Birchip-Watchem led 19-10 at half-time and continued to build throughout the second half. The Bulls’ awards went to Megane Greenaway and Maddy McQueen and the Donald awards, to Olivia Wollerman and Hyacinthe Ipassac.

“B” Grade

The “B” grade Bulls put together a commanding four-quarter performance to claim a strong 63-36 win over Donald, with standout efforts across all areas of the court.

Birchip-Watchem came out firing in the first quarter, setting the tone early with Jenna Angel and Toni Jones shooting with accuracy and confidence. Their movement in the ring and smart positioning saw the Bulls take early control on the scoreboard.

The second quarter saw the midcourt come into its own, with Sammi Mitchell, Tylah Haslam, and Sophie Parfrey attacking hard and moving the ball quickly through the centre. Their drive and vision opened up the court and created plenty of opportunities for the goalers. By half-time, Birchip-Watchem had established a commanding 32-14 lead.

Coming out of the break, the defensive unit stood tall. Eva Coffey, Stacey Hamilton, and Meghan Noonan worked cohesively to shut down Donald’s attacking plays, picking off intercepts and applying constant pressure in the circle to keep the opposition’s scoring limited.

In the final term, the injection of fresh legs from Maddy McQueen and Beau Haslam added even more energy to the court. Their impact was immediate, with sharp movement and attacking play that created further scoring chances and helped the Bulls finish the match strongly. It was a comprehensive team performance from Birchip-Watchem, with all players contributing to an impressive win and a well-earned four points.

Birchip awards: Sammi Mitchell and Sophie Parfrey. Donald awards: Courtney Doak and Millie Lydom.

“A” Grade

Birchip-Watchem had the narrowest of chances to make the finals if they pulled off a massive win and Calder United was defeated by Sea Lake-Nandaly, however neither eventuated. The Bulls outplayed Donald, whose season is also over, to win 62-42 but Calder defeated the Tigers to thwart any chance of September action for the Bulls “A” graders, who had started the season strongly. Birchip-Watchem awards: Mackenzie Ryan and Khiana Brooks.

Donald awards: Zoe Grigsby and Abby Griffiths.



• Elise Cox defends the pass to Alyssa Hepworth.

Good Luck to all teams competing in the finals series of the North-Central football, netball and hockey. From the staff at the “Buloke Times”.



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Juniors Share Success

Birchip-Watchem under-14s capped off their season in style with a hard-fought win over Donald, in a game that kept the crowd on edge right until the final siren.

The first quarter belonged to Donald in general play, but wayward kicking in front of goal cost the Royal Blues dearly. Their inaccuracy allowed the Bulls to stay in the contest, and at the first break Birchip-Watchem held a slender one-point advantage, with neither team registering a goal.

The Bulls wasted no time stamping their authority on the second term. From the very first centre bounce, Samuel Ferrier found space and slotted a crucial goal to give his side momentum. Missing captain Willow Ryan, the Bulls relied on fresh leadership across the field, and several players rose to the challenge. Toby Kemp, Denley Tyler, Oscar Sharp, and Fred Hogan combined brilliantly along the boundary line in one of the plays of the day, only for the shot to drift through for a behind. By half-time there was still only 1 goal on the scoreboard, and the Bulls were ahead as a result of this as Donald had registered 5 behinds, to the Bulls 1.2 (8).

Donald continued to press, and the game remained tight with both teams applying heavy defensive pressure. For the Bulls, Eligh Dean, Jed Coffey, and Liam Spezza were rocks in defence, driving the ball out of danger and setting up attacking opportunities, and Donald was again denied a major as the Bulls led 1.3 (9) to 0.7 (7) at the final change.

Again, the behinds were accumulating as the Bulls added three and Donald 1, before Archie Tyler finally kicked a goal in the final 3 minutes to give the Bulls a 10-point lead, as the excitement intensified.

In the end, Birchip-Watchem showed the composure and teamwork that has defined its season, finishing

strongly to seal a well-deserved victory over Donald. Donald will have a chance for redemption this week as it faces off against Boort in Birchip. Coaches Richard Riley and Mark Mortlock will be hoping they can straighten up their goal kicking and with efforts like Emmett Geddes's 100-metre run into defence to stop what looked like a certain goal, they are sure to acquit themselves well, to keep Donald's football chances alive in 2025.

On the other hand, the Bulls were excited to close out the year with a thrilling win!

Final scores: Birchip-Watchem 2.6 (18) to Donald 0.8 (8). Best players for Donald: Emmett Geddes, Samuel Mortlock, Nullah Clapham, Larou Clapham, Caleb Michael, Riley Jones.

For Birchip-Watchem: Archie Tyler (Noonan Tyres and Jake and Billy Noonan), Fred Hogan (TMC Enviro), Liam Spezza (Bulls' Canteen), Denly Tyler (IGA Birchip).

Under-17

In a highly anticipated final home-and-away season clash, Donald emerged victorious against a spirited Birchip-Watchem, overcoming a deadlock at half-time to claim a decisive win. The stage was set for a thrilling encounter at Birchip's home ground, with both teams eager to finish the regular season on a high.

The first half was a see-saw battle, and with Donald lending the Bulls some players in a good show of sportsmanship, neither side was able to gain a significant advantage.

Donald's relentless attack, spearheaded by Oakley Brennan (4 goals) and Charlie Bourke (2 goals), was matched by Birchip-Watchem's determined defence and the sharpshooting of Cam Jones (2 goals).

The siren for quarter-time sounded with scores astonishingly close, with only 1 point separating the two teams which reflected the intensity, of the contest. Donald led 1.2 (8) to Birchip-Watchem 1.1 (7).

The second term was still close with both teams adding two scores, fortunately for the Bulls, theirs were both majors and they extended their lead to 3.2 (20) to 2.2 (14).

However, the third quarter saw a shift in momentum. Donald, through strategic clearances and precision kicking, began to assert its dominance, kicking all eight scoring shots to surge ahead 6.6 (42) to 3.2 (20).

Players from both teams were giving their all in the final term but key goals at the right time helped Donald establish a commanding lead. Birchip-Watchem fought valiantly, but fatigue and Donald's superior execution in the final quarter saw the visitors extend their advantage. Donald's defensive pressure stifled Birchip's attempts at a comeback, securing a well-deserved win in a memorable season closer.

Final score: Birchip-Watchem 3.2 (20) Donald 11.8 (74).

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Ollie Cook, Cam Jones, Noah Dean, Bailey Kemp. For Donald: Oakley Brennan, Jesse Lyndom, Jam Borden, Ethan Clapman, Joshua Nuske, and Samuel Mortlock.



• Judd Geddes is tackled by Max Field as Noah Dean also applies pressure.



• Donald's Caleb Michael is under pressure from Oscar Sharp.

Boort Ready for Netball Finals

[From Charlton Netball Club]

In their Round 16 clash, Boort netballers had a clean sweep at home against Charlton.

14-&-Under "A"

Charlton 9 def. by Boort 39. Charlton awards: Steel's Butcher Best, Rosie Fitzpatrick; Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Marley McGurk; Nutrien Ag & Roberts Windrowing "Have a Crack", Lilymae McPhee. Boort awards: Tracey & Adam Bird Award, Carrie Byrne; Boort Newsagency, Ella Howe.

17-&-Under "A"

Last game of the 2025 season and Charlton's under-17 girls showed what they had, taking the challenge to Boort. The attackers worked hard and moved beautifully, working with different combinations, using all opportunities coming their way, courtesy of some strong rebounding from defenders. All down the court Charlton players had great hands over pressure creating some great turnovers. Congratulations on a great season to the entire team including, coach Holly Thompson and team manager Issy Soulsby. Charlton 28 def. by Boort 35.

Charlton awards: Bendigo Bank Best, Sarah Blair; Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Maggie Riley; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Lacey

Smith. Boort awards: Graeme Hayes Real Estate, Bella Quinn; Streader Constructions, Eliana Haw.

"C" Grade

For their final game the Charlton girls showed some great competition over the whole court. Ebony McCarthy really thrived in the WA position finding some great space down the court with some great support from Lily Campbell in the C. Charlton's defenders were once again strong with Tahlia Holmes-Brown showing great capability out in GD and backed well by Annie Olive in GK and Kirsty McKenzie in at WD showing us she has not missed a beat! Congratulations on a great season – many new faces and positions in the side showing some great promise for the future. Well done to Charlton coach, Jac Leslie and team managers, Chelsea McCallum, Jess Giles and Remi Jeffrey. Charlton 40 def. by Boort 52.

Charlton awards: Vale of Avoca Best, Talia Holmes-Brown; JS Plumbing Coaches, Emmy Nelson; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Emily Wright. Special

mention, Kirsty for quick defence skills. Boort awards: Matt Wilkinson Plumbing, Ella Streader; Cobram Estate, Anna Marcus.

"B" Grade

A tough game for the final of the season, but Charlton fought the whole game. An early injury to Bec Sexton meant some changes through the midcourt with the girls adapting well. Once again Holly Thompson and Anika Holmes-Brown held strong in the defence end with plenty of tips, rebounds and intercepts. Plenty of things to be proud of this season – look forward to seeing what all players can do next year! Congrats coach, Leah Smith and team manager Amy Nicolson. Charlton 27 def. by Boort 49.

Charlton awards: Teys Charlton Feedlot Best, Holly Thompson; Teys Charlton Feedlot Coaches, Stella Nicolson; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Emmy Nelson. Boort awards: DWT Transport, Belle Hosking; North West Ag, Bridie Doyle.

"A" Grade

What a start for the final game! Charlton's girls came out firing and had Boort on its

toes. Chloe Walsh and Claudia Lee showed how well they can work in the ring together after plenty of time playing alongside each other.

Remi Jeffrey in the C had another great performance showing exactly why she was this year's best and fairest winner. Charlton's defenders were also on fire, Claire Smith matching for height well against a tall GS, with plenty of rebounds going Charlton's way.

Unfortunately, Charlton ran out of legs in the second half, but boy did it have Boort worried! Congratulations on season 2025 – let's come back even stronger next year. Well done to coach Leah Smith and team manager Abby Mulquiny. Charlton 35 def by Boort 54.

Charlton awards: Walsh Motors Best, Claire Smith; Walsh Motors Coaches, Isabel Soulsby; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Remi Jeffrey. Boort awards: Meering West Wind Farm, Roxy Train; Boort Natural Therapies, Sophie Perryman.



• Ollie Cook and Ethan Clapham ruck.

Another Shared NCFL Trophy!

Hard on the heels of the tied scores by joint winners of the Feeny Medal for North-Central football's senior "best and fairest" (reported in Tuesday's "Times"), has come news of another "dead heat", this one in the League's reserves voting, by Boort's Alex Cockerell and Sea Lake-Nandaly's Brody Weir, with 15 votes each.

Runners-up were Sea Lake-Nandaly's Joel Clohesy and Boort's Cam Ross, with 13 votes apiece. The following is the complete list of those who received votes for the James and Jenny Goldsmith Trophy for North-Central's 2025 reserves "best and fairest".

15: Alex Cockerell (BFC), BrodyWeir (SLNT).

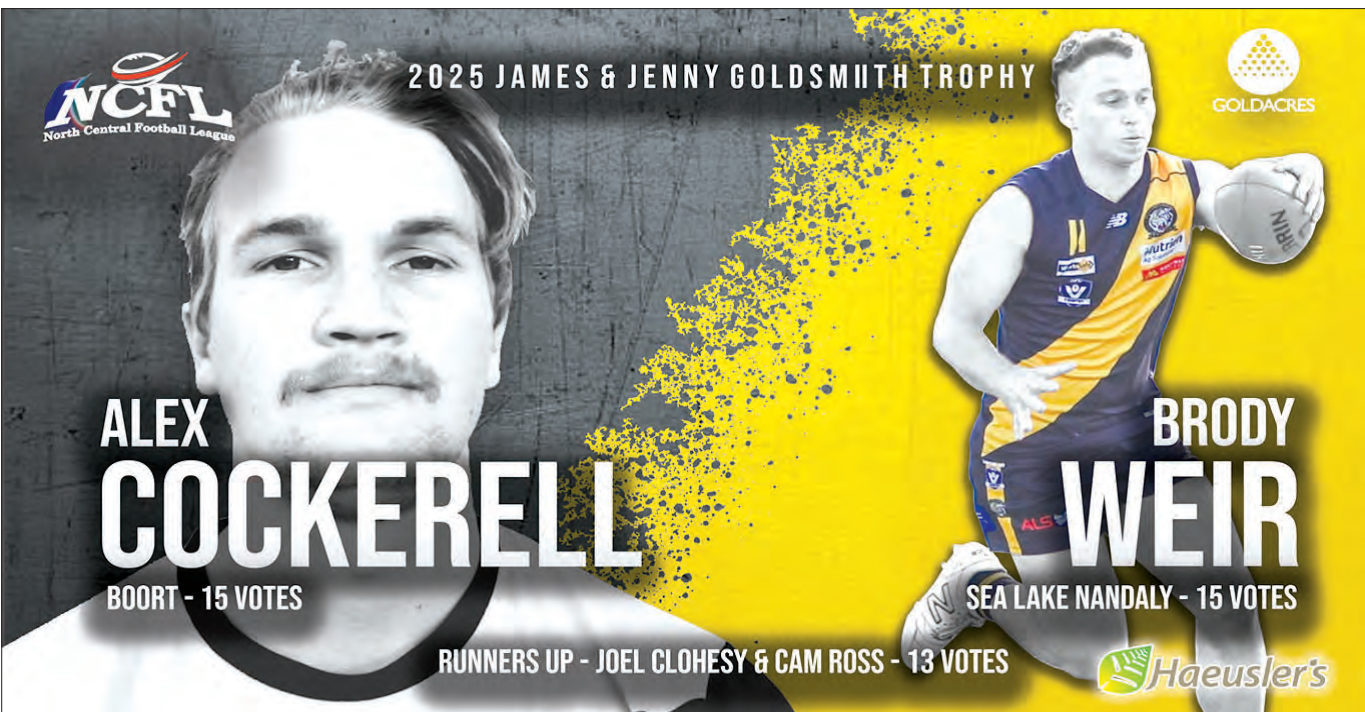
13: Cameron Ross (BFC), Joel Clohesy (SLNT).

11: Ben Greenaway (STA), Harry Weaver (BFC), Jack Lee (x) (BWFC).

9: Angus Forrester (CU), Fraser Millar (BFC), Jake Hicks (STA), Stefan Pye (BWFC).

8: Connor Michael (x)(SLNT), Luke Dunne (CFC), Tom Gibson (BWFC), Zac Kelly (CU).

7: Alexander Hay (BWFC), Angus Trethowan (BFC), Ben Roberts (CFC), Charlie Fawcett (CU), Dude Kelly



(CU), Jarryd Kell (STA), Joel Turner (CU).

6: Ashley Younghusband (WFC), Joshua Hicks (STA), Max Beattie (BFC).

5: Codey Elliott (SLNT), Hunter Connolly (CU),

Matthew Rickard (BWFC).

4: Bodie Colbert (BWFC), Heath Senior (CU), James McKenny (STA), Sam Simmons (BWFC), Simon Elliott (STA), Thomas Trewin (CU).

3: Andrew Chalkley (WFC), Austin Dean (BWFC), Billy Forrester (CU), Chase Tait (SLNT), Cody Green (CU), Dane McLennan (CU), Daniel Murray (CU), David Isbister (CU), Fergus Bourke (CFC), Jack Ryan (BWFC), Jake Hayes (WFC), Jesse Lopes (DFC), John Summerhayes (SLNT), Riley James Hogan (BWFC), Robert Tonkin (WFC), Scott Driscoll (STA),

Sol Kelly (CU), Torin Petrie (STA), Ty Colbert (BWFC).

2: Ben Hogan (BWFC), Brandon Staddon (SLNT), Brodie Arnold (BFC), Connor Lee (BWFC), Darcy McCallum (CFC), Harry Cook (BWFC), Isaac Durie (SLNT), Jack Dowling (BFC), James Lindeback (BWFC), James McNamee (STA), Jayden Hall (WFC), Jordan Bath (SLNT), Kris Clifford (CFC), Matt Berry (BWFC), Mitch Woods (WFC), Patrick O'Rourke (BFC), Sam Toose (BFC), Samuel Hogan (CU), Willem Toose (BFC), Zac Wemyss (SLNT), Zach Notting (STA).

1: Alex Chamberlain (BFC), Angus Johnstone (CFC), Callan Noonan (SLNT), Chris Hatcher (BFC), Cooper Gooding (BFC), George Addis (BWFC), George Forrester(CU), Glenn Meuleydyks (x)(DFC), Harrison Saunders (STA), Jack Weaver (BFC), Jackson Needs (STA), Jackson Zagame (CFC), Joe Durie (CFC), Jordan Sheahan (CU), Kaleb Kennedy (CU), Kalon Green (DFC), Luke Jackson (STA), Matt Elliott (SLNT), Patrick Sait (CFC), Ryan Leeder (DFC), Tison Wiantara (BWFC), Tristan Ward (STA).

Ben Lanyon, Charlton's Best

Second year Charlton ruck-man Ben Lanyon has put together a fine season to be named the Barry Cossar Medallist as Charlton Football Club's Best & Fairest for 2025.

Barry's son John was on hand to present the medal to the winner, highlighting the connection Ben has to Charlton, and to Cossars' own Yeungroon roots. Ben is the grandson of Charlton premiership player John, and joined the Navies last season after moving down from Sydney for work and now study purposes. In his acceptance speech, on top of glowing praise for coach Collins and his teammates, Ben paid special tribute to uncle Des and auntie Francie for the room afforded him at the end of each week, no doubt making the transition so much easier. Ben has put together an outstanding individual season to reverse last year's count result, and overcome coach Mitch Collins; 12 months ago it was Collins finishing over the top of Lanyon, the two clear standouts for the battling Navies, Lanyon playing all 16 games and rarely out of the best each Saturday.

Seniors

In other seniors awards presented on the day, coach Collins named Mason Heenan this year's Alan Britton Most Determined recipient, acknowledging his growth and

development as a midfielder within the team.

Bailey Hooper-Dixon receiving the Coach's Award, often tasked with minding the opposition's best forward, was applauded for his commitment and resilient team first attitude throughout 2025. Elliott Fitzpatrick's contribution not going unnoticed, he was named as Charlton's Rising Star for 2025, his dash and intercept marking a feature from his regular half-back post.

Marcus Campbell's contribution on and off the field acknowledged when he was named this year's Graham Teasdale Annual Achievement Award recipient, Campbell as a player and a member of the senior committee praised for his dedication to the Charlton Football Club.

Recognition also afforded to Carla Hooper-Dixon, shocked recipient of the Charlton Football Club Best Club Person honours for season 2025. Carla acknowledged for her tireless work around the club, at both junior and senior level, not to mention her support for club president, husband Kris. A most deserved acknowledgement.

In the reserves, Luke Dunn was named Best & Fairest for 2025. Dunn spent the majority of the second half of the year in the reserves' side, his commitment to harness race driving at Melton on Saturday nights making him unavailable for senior consideration, but his ability to rack up possession through his speed of foot evident in the voting, bolting up the leader board to claim top honours from Fergus Bourke, a masterful seconds tap ruck-man, Bourke often giving Charlton's onballers first look. Coach Ben Roberts was early leader before a season and possibly career ending injury curtailed his vote collecting.

The Alan Britton Most Determined in the reserves went to Marcus Campbell, Coach's Award to Lachlan Holmes-Brown and the Most Improved to Ethan Needs, who showed enough improvement to be rewarded with his first senior game during the year. Coach Ben Roberts was thanked for his efforts over the past two seasons as he now steps aside to allow someone else an opportunity.

In a twenty year first, all three codes, junior and senior, netball, hockey and football came together for a joint presentation day, all junior awards completed in the morning before players, families and supporters joined for lunch, and then into the senior awards. All three clubs are to be commended on how well they pulled the day together and how smoothly the day ran. Special thanks to the Charlton Lions Club, whose jumping castle expended any pent up energy!

Good luck to the Charlton women's, underage and under-12 hockey teams as they begin their finals campaigns and keep the Navies flag flying.



• Barry Cossar Medal Winner, Ben Lanyon, with John Cossar.



• Seniors Award Winners: Bailey Hooper-Dixon (Coach's), Elliott Fitzpatrick (Rising Star), Ben Lanyon (B&F), Mitch Collins (R/Up B&F), Mason Heenan (Most Determined).

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Bulls Reserves Ready for Finals

Birchip-Watchem tuned up for finals in style on Saturday, defeating the Donald by 59 points in the final round of the home-and-away season.

With both teams' ladder positions already sealed – the Bulls locked into third spot, with Donald destined for the wooden spoon – the game was more about form and pride than premiership points. Birchip-Watchem, however, showed its intent from the outset, while Donald fought hard to end its season with respect.

The Bulls dominated the opening quarter, locking the ball inside their forward half for long stretches. Ruckman George Addis set the tone with his aerial work, while Bodie Colbert was electric through the midfield, finding teammates with his trademark precision kicking. Wasteful finishing meant four behinds were registered before goals to Colbert and spearhead Alex Hay gave the Bulls a handy 16-point lead. At the other end, Alex Noonan was rock

solid at centre half-back, ensuring Donald went to the first break scoreless.

The Royal Blues lifted in the second quarter, with Glen Burke and Brod Harrison providing resistance across half-back. Their efforts paid off when Glenn Pearce slotted Donald's first major, much to the delight of the travelling fans. The Bulls, though, were efficient when chances came, with goals to Tison Wiantara and Matt Rickard extending the margin to 21 points at the half.

Birchip-Watchem's third quarter was its most dominant. James Lindeback worked tirelessly in the middle, Addis continued to control the stoppages, and the Bulls' forwards reaped the rewards. Hay booted two more goals, while Colbert and Noonan added their names to the scoresheet. Donald struggled to generate forward entries

and again failed to score, leaving the Bulls with an imposing 53-point advantage heading into the final term.

With the result beyond doubt, the last quarter lost some intensity, but both sides still had moments to savour. Jam Borden, backing up from the Under-17s, battled hard for the Royal Blues and combined with Burke to help notch another goal for Donald. Joe Sheridan was another prominent contributor for Donald, racking up an impressive possession count. At the other end, Hay capped off a strong day in front of goal, finishing with four majors as the Bulls cruised to a 59-point victory.

The Bulls now march into the first semi-final brimming with confidence, while the Royal Blues, despite a tough season, showed patches of fight that will give them something to build on for 2026.

Final score: Birchip-Watchem 12.9 (81) defeated Donald 2.2 (14).

Best for Birchip-Watchem: Bodie Colbert (O'Connors), James Lindeback (YBS), Tison Wiantara (Mick Foot Livestock & Grain Haulage), George Addis (Donnellon's Bulk Haulage), Joe O'Donnell (Nutrien Ag), Alex Noonan (Ryan Commodities).

For Donald: Joe Sheridan, Glen Burke, Brod Harrison, Jam Borden, George Morgan, Daniel Tatarskyj.



• Bulls' Alex Noonan lays a tackle on Christopher Slattery.



• Josh Woods is tackled by George Morgan and Joe Sheridan.

Tigers Begin Title Defence

• Continued from page 20.
better combination, and should repeat the result tomorrow.

In the men's game, it's Donald versus Boort, the rivalry between the two teams ensuring an action-packed and very entertaining final.

Last time they met, the result could not have been closer, the 2-all draw reflecting the evenness of the two line-ups.

The Royal Blues will be looking to Sam Hirst-Pearse and club "best and fairest" Henry Bouchier to have a big say in proceedings, while the Magpies need Harry Malone and Jake O'Flaherty to exert a constant influence on the game.

Donald should advance to the preliminary final, but cannot afford to relax against the very determined Boort combination.



• Donald's Oakley Brennan prepares to run with the ball as Elise Cox applies pressure.



• Bull's Denley Tyler and Zoe Nuske compete for the ball.

Hockey Juniors Wind Up Home-and-Away Games

Minkey

Birchip-Watchem's final game of Minkey hockey was played for the season against Donald. This created added excitement for all involved, including the large number of engaged spectators.

The Birchip-Watchem Hooked In2 Hockey program was very popular finishing up a few weeks ago. Subsequently a number of children have stepped up with their new hockey skills to join the Bulls Minkey teams for Saturday hockey fun, and the eager young guns were bees to a honey pot with enthusiasm second to none.

The enthusiasm has created a plethora of numbers enabling Birchip-Watchem to fill three Minkey teams and still share players to assist the opposition, which was the case on Saturday with Donald.

Kudos to Minkey coach, Julie McClelland as enormous growth in skills – trapping, pushing and dribbling – was demonstrated by the older children, who will be moving up to under-12s next season. Also a big thank you to parents and juniors, who have stepped up to help Julie and the club with coaching and umpiring.

Minkey hockey provides such a great opportunity for children to be involved in team sport in an inclusive environment. This positive energy was demonstrated in front of the large crowd when the final cheers for the season were made, and the healthy post-game energy replenishment options were handed out!

Under-12s Hockey

The Bulls hockey under-12s went into the game against Donald hoping to secure a second chance in the final series. And that they did.

The Donald players defended tirelessly all game but couldn't match the dominant Bulls attack.

Jakoby Sayers played one of his best games of the season, playing as an inner with dynamic attacking moves and managed to hit the back of the net in the second half.

The usual attacking suspects, Denley Tyler and Oscar Sharp, demonstrated their natural goal sense, also scoring two goals each. Milla Haslam also had a great day out and Jude McLoughlan, who put up his hand to try the goalie position, which was excellent to see.

Final scores were Bulls 5, Donald 0. Best Birchip-

Watchem: Milla Haslam (Sharp's Bakery), Oscar Sharp (Fiona Best & Lobe Candy), Jakoby Sagers (TMC Enviro).

Best Donald: Isaiah Stirling, Sadie Bourke (B-W).

Underage

The Birchip-Watchem underage team put up a spirited performance against third placed Donald in a high scoring match in their final game of the season.

Oakley Brennan had a day out for the Royal Blues, scoring 6 of their seven goals, with Sophie Burke chipping in for the final goal. The Bulls' goals were shared around, with Lana Angel, Sadas Gardiner-Paieka and Frances McClelland all scoring 1 each.

Donald enjoyed having a practice run on the Birchip-Watchem field and will be well placed to achieve a good result on Saturday against Boort in the first semi-final.

Awards for Birchip-Watchem: Jed Coffey (O'Connors), Des Coffey (Birchip Hardware) and Garth Kilroy (Andy & Sarah Barber).

Best Donald: Oakley Brennan, Nakya Clapham, Sophie Burke.



Tigers Begin Title Defence

(By Shane O'Shea)

North-Central's 2025 finals series gets under way at Birchip tomorrow, with defending title holder, Sea Lake-Nandaly taking on the resurgent Boort in the first semi-final of what promises to be a fascinating four-game series.

The Tigers are aiming to win their third successive premiership crown, a rare feat only achieved by two other clubs, Wycheproof-Narraport on three occasions (1975, '76 and '77, 1983, '84 and '85, and 1995, '96 and '97), and Watchem-Corack (1960, '61 and '62).

Wedderburn is in even more rarefied air and in a class of its own, having won four consecutive grand finals, from 2011 to 2014.

Standing in Sea Lake-Nandaly's way at the first hurdle is Boort, which has not featured in a finals series since 2017, when, ironically, the Magpies also faced up to the Tigers.

Prior to that, Boort's most recent finals appearance came in 2011, with the club's last premiership coming in 2008.

Under current coach Dale Cameron, the Magpies have been building on the work of several previous coaches to end their lengthening finals drought. And their combined achievements have enabled them to secure a place in the business end of this season.

Boort enters tomorrow's "do or die" final with the

knowledge that it has already defeated its opponent, back in round 2, and then went within 11 points of repeating that achievement in round 11.

A lot has changed within the Tigers' line-up since that close shave, however, and to put that into perspective, Saturday's team will be vastly different to that of their last meeting, with Sea Lake-Nandaly expected to field a very different combination, with up to 10 changes, possibly more.

Early in July, Sea Lake-Nandaly's playing stocks were at their lowest ebb and sorely tested by a run of injuries, but such is the club's depth, it managed to work its way through, with minimal setbacks.

And tomorrow, the Tigers' senior line-up, as well as their reserves' team, will be very near to full strength.

For Boort to bring a sudden halt to Sea Lake-Nandaly's premiership quest, it will need to start strongly, matching the Tigers' relentless midfield output, as well as preventing the opposition's multi-pronged attack from

blowing them out of the game.

The Magpies will also need to generate their own scoreboard pressure, with Jhye Baddeley-Kelly, their most potent attacking weapon, needing plenty of support from the likes of Kayne Rutley, Peter Barbopolous, Ethan Coleman and James Keeble, who head up the team's more consistent scoring contributors.

Where Boort relies heavily on Baddeley-Kelly, Sea Lake-Nandaly boasts a bevy of reliable avenues to goal, including teenager Max Cahoon, veteran Adam Pattison, Lachy McClelland, joint coach Bryce Delmenico and the unobtrusive John Summerhayes, one of the players to come into the line-up during the team's time of need. During last Saturday's fierce contest against Calder United, Summerhayes's three goals at crucial times had a telling impact on the final result.

Add the huge frame of Josh Jenkins to the Tigers' attacking mix, and Boort's defence, led by Keiren Wilson,

supported by Jack Smith, Ryan McGhie, Matt Austin and Will Perryman, will be tested to the limit.

The possible return of strongly built full-back, Kieren Jakscic, would certainly boost Boort's prospects, but one suspects that the Magpies are going to need a little bit of luck, and huge performances from Carlos Egan, Lachlan Hall, Tom Potter and Jarred Fitzpatrick, if they are to advance beyond tomorrow.

Confronting the Magpies will be the Tigers' powerhouse midfield, led by dual Feeny Medallist, Wade Donnan, 2023 Feeny Medallist, Trent Donnan, together with Bryce Delmenico, Ryan O'Sullivan and Austin Mertz, who has worked his way back from long term injury.

There is also the prospect that talented duo, Tom Cox and Tyson McKenzie, could come under consideration after overcoming injuries.

As impressive as Boort's performances have been this season, it is impossible to go past the prospect of Sea Lake-Nandaly answering every challenge put to it tomorrow, to advance to the preliminary final at St. Arnaud.

Can Tigers Corral Bulls?

Last time Birchip-Watchem and Sea Lake-Nandaly reserves clashed, the Bulls recorded a strong victory and will provide another stern test of the Tigers' resilience tomorrow.

This time round, however, Sea Lake-Nandaly's line-up will be strengthened by the inclusion of rucking powerhouse Connor Michael, 2025 joint "best and fairest" Brody Weir, and joint leading goal kicker Joel Clohesy, their combined influence significantly improving the Tigers' chances of advancing to the preliminary final.

Birchip-Watchem could be strengthened by the inclusion of veteran Stefan Pye and teenager Harry Cook, who has been performing admirably at senior level in recent weeks.

If combined with the influence of the Colbert brothers, Ty and Bodie, the experience of James Lindeback, Jack Ryan and George Addis, the Bulls will be a formidable opposition that will push the Tigers to the limit, ensuring a tight, fierce contest.

Depending on Sea Lake-Nandaly's final 21 at senior level, its reserves' line-up could be the strongest fielded this season, but it may not be enough to conquer the powerful Bulls' unit.

Birchip-Watchem by 8 points.

Magpies to Fly High?

Back in round 12, Boort under-17s scored a comprehensive win over tomorrow's semi-final opponent, Calder United, the Lions' first foray into finals football as a combined club.

If Cooper Gooding, Jake O'Flaherty, Brodie McPherson and Darby Perryman can provide the Magpies with plenty of run and the team takes full advantage on the scoreboard, they will be hard to beat, but strong opposition will be provided by Tiger Vearing, Max Fawcett, Angus Cowell, Darcy Coles and Darcey Poyner, ensuring a very entertaining encounter.

Boort to win by 2 goals.

Youngest Royal Blues to Fly the Flag

Donald's only representatives in this season's finals, the Under-14s, come up against the fledgling Magpies, in what promises to be a lively start to the 2025 finals series.

Last time the two teams met, Boort soared high with a 7-point win, while Donald ruled the roost in round 2, winning by almost 9 goals.

To repeat that result, the Royal Blues will need Sam Mortlock, Liam Stopps, Emmett Geddes and Noah Michael to be at their best, to offset the influence of Liam King, Tyler Stringer, Matt Soumelidis and Luca Lanyon.

Provided Donald's forwards fire, the Royal Blues should win, by a goal.

Netball Rematch

After clashing in the final home-and-away round, third placed Sea Lake-Nandaly again takes on Calder United in the first semi., striving to reverse the result of that last meeting, when the Lions won by 4 goals.

Ash Roberts, Grace Farrell and Gabby Munari will head up the Tigers' challenge, knowing that they had their opposition's measure earlier in the season, while the Lions will be looking to Ella Sheahan, Gemma Fawcett and Meg Hogan to lead the way to a preliminary final berth.

Stung by last weekend's result, Sea Lake-Nandaly will be hard to beat tomorrow.

Diamond Association

Sixty years after first joining North-Central's winter sporting family, the local hockey fraternity has grown into a four-tier competition. Hockey has become an integral part of the annual inter-town winter competition, and will attract a huge crowd to Birchip's Recreation Reserve tomorrow.

In the women's first semi-final, Charlton will do battle with Wedderburn, with Jo Southcombe, Brooke Thompson and Elise Fitzpatrick key players for the Navy Blues, while the Giorlando clan of Samantha, Chelsea and Shelby, and Erin Polkinghorne will lead the Red-backs' quest for success.

Last time they met, the Navy Blues proved to be the

• Continued on page 19.



• Tigers' Josh Jenkins gets his hand to the ball against Boort's James Wilson. Others pictured are Tigers' Jai Wright and Boort's Jarrod Fitzpatrick. - Photo by Finding Focus Photography.

FIRST SEMI FINALS

SATURDAY AUGUST 23 AT BIRCHIP

SENIORS | 2:30PM
SEA LAKE NANDALY V BOORT

RESERVES | 12:35PM
BIRCHIP-WATCHEM V SEA LAKE NANDALY

UNDER 17'S | 10:55AM
BOORT V CALDER UNITED

UNDER 14'S | 9:30AM
DONALD V BOORT

A | 3:00PM
B | 1:45PM
C | 12:30PM

C RES | 11:15AM
17&U | 10:00AM
14&U 'A' | 9:10AM
14&U 'B' | 8:20AM

SEA LAKE NANDALY V CALDER UNITED
BOORT V BIRCHIP-WATCHEM
BOORT V SEA LAKE NANDALY
CALDER UNITED V BIRCHIP-WATCHEM
ST ARNAUD V BOORT
DONALD V CALDER UNITED
BIRCHIP-WATCHEM V CALDER UNITED

MENS | 3:15PM
WOMENS | 1:40PM
UNDERAGE | 12:30PM
UNDER 12 | 11:30AM

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