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



• Frances McClelland starting on her crochet project for the Birchip Flower Show.

EWHS Annual Birchip Flower Show: It's Time to "Get Crafty"

The much-anticipated EWHS Annual Birchip Flower Show will return on Friday, October 17, 2025 – and what better time than these chilly winter evenings to dig out your knitting needles, crochet hooks, and sewing machines to get creative.

This year, the Craft Section has undergone a thoughtful revamp, with updates made in response to community suggestions and feedback. Whether you're an avid knitter, an enthusiastic recycler, or a talented patchworker, there's a category for every crafty soul.

The changes aim to better reflect the diverse skills and creativity of local artisans, and organisers hope the revised section will align perfectly with the projects already under way in lounges and craft rooms across the region.

Wide Range

The Craft Section now includes a wide range of categories, from traditional

knitted and crocheted garments to innovative entries made from recycled materials and diamond art. Quilters, painters, woodworkers and even cross-stitchers will all have their time to shine, with categories recognising both hand-crafted and machine-assisted work.

This year Section Three items are: 1. Knitted Rug, 8 ply; 2. Crochet Rug, 8 ply; 3. Knitted Patterned Hat/Scarf, 8 ply; 4. Knitted Baby Garment, no ribbon; 5. Crochet Baby Item; 6. Article of Patchwork; 7. Quilt, any size-handmade or machine made; 8. Christmas Article or Decoration; 9. Article Suitable for Gift; 10. Article made from Recycled Goods; 11. Soft

Toy, any medium; 12. Utility Bag; 13. Article of Diamond Art; 14. Painting, under A4 size; 15. Piece of Canvas Art; 16. Item of Woodwork, exhibitor to supply display unit; 17. Article of Handmade Clothing; and 18. Tapestry/Cross-stitch.

Full Schedule

While the full 2025 Show Schedule is yet to be released, organisers assure the community that it will be available soon to allow for baking, photography, and other preparations.

If you have any questions or need more information about entries or categories, please contact Carol on 0417 854 232.



• Spirited renditions of songs by Liza Lehmann featured during the first half of the program presented by the Dunolly Gilbert and Sullivan Society at The Rex last Saturday. Pictured (left to right) are pianist Geoff Urquhart, vocalists Ian Woolford (bass), Brett O'Meara (tenor), Helen Hill (contralto), Amelia Le Plastrier (soprano) and Rachel Buckley (narrator).

Musical Interlude Delights at the Rex

The life and times of Edwardian composer Liza Lehmann was brought to life through narrative and song in the presentation of "In A Persian Garden" by the Dunolly Gilbert and Sullivan Society at The Rex Theatre last Saturday afternoon.

A quartet of accomplished vocalists, along with pianist Geoff Urquhart and narrator Rachel Buckley related the evolution of the composer's life and her journey as a singer before her transition into the creation of songs and song cycles.

As a "maker of songs" Liza's privileged upbringing and connection with the musical elite through her parents

and extended family made for fertile ground upon which to build her career. Through quotes and anecdotes Rachel Buckley wove the narrative, which during the first half of the program, showcased a number of the composer's whimsical and heartfelt songs.

Singers Helen Hill, Amelia Le Plastrier, Ian Woolford and Brett O'Meara presented individual numbers

ranging from the quirky ("If No One Ever Marries Me") to the rousing ("Constables of Hammersmith"), the nonsensical ("Lobster Quadrille" for four voices), the touching ("When 'er a Snowflake Leaves the Sky") and finishing with Rachel Buckley's rendition of "There are Fairies at the Bottom of the Garden".

This introductory segment not only revealed the caliber

of the performer's talents, but also set the scene for the song cycle of "In A Persian Garden" which comprised the second half of the performance.

Featuring words selected from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam – a medieval Persian poem which gained great popularity following its translation and publication in 1859 – Liza Lehmann's handling of the text and using four voices instead of just one to portray elements of the poem was an unusual approach. The program notes

explain the breakdown of singers as follows: "the tenor represents a young lover, the bass, a philosopher, the contralto, something of the harbinger of doom, the soprano, again a lover, but with a tendency towards spiritual exploration."

While only a short piece (just 40 minutes), the work is vocally demanding as pianist Geoff Urquhart explained after the show. The opportunity for the audience to meet and talk with the cast following the performance was also bonus for both, and

something which was very much appreciated by the singers who spent time conversing and receiving praise as the crowd dispersed.

The Rex would like to acknowledge the enthusiasm which Rachel Buckley has shown for the venue and which, through her many musical networks, has created opportunities for bringing quality musical content to the region.

From the audience response last Saturday there is a strong appetite for more of the same!

A Blow to Rural Providers: Plan to Cut NDIS Travel Allowances

[From National Rural Health Alliance]

The proposed changes to travel allowances for allied health providers under the NDIS Pricing Arrangements and Price Limits 2025–’26 raise serious concerns for rural, regional and remote communities, severely impacting the delivery of essential support services.

Under the proposed changes, providers will face limits on the travel they can claim when supporting participants in harder-to-reach areas. This poses a major threat to clinicians working in rural Australia assisting people with disability, where long-distance travel is a necessity, not a choice.

“These changes effectively discriminate against people based on their location of work or home, or mobility challenges,” said National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) Chief Executive Susi Tegen.

No Choice

“Clinicians will have no choice but to reduce or cease services to rural areas due to the financial disincentives created by these new pricing arrangements. Rural, regional and remote communities are already facing persistent healthcare access challenges, where service access is well and truly below the urban average, especially in MMM 3-7 regions or towns, which have between 100 to 50,000 people.”

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) had only begun to make a difference by supporting more equitable access to allied health and disability services in rural areas. The proposed cuts risk undoing that progress.

“We were just beginning to see a positive momentum. Rather than building on the progress, these changes could reverse it. The government’s good work in extending care and equity could be severely undermined,” Ms Tegen said.

Hardest Hit

Smaller providers, many of them locally owned businesses employing local staff, will be the hardest hit. Small and medium enterprises play a vital role in maintaining the health and economic wellbeing of rural towns. Faced with tighter margins, many may be forced to close or scale back. This would result in no service or make way for larger, city-based providers who operate at scale but with less local connection or understanding of local context. It will be a revolving door of people who fly/drive in –

fly/drive out with little continuity of care.

“This is not just a health issue. It’s a social and economic one too,” said Ms Tegen. “Removing or reducing viable services from rural towns has ripple effects far beyond healthcare, affecting employment, community resilience, and quality of life.”

The NRHA urges the government to reconsider these proposed changes and to consult with rural providers, consumers, and communities to ensure equitable access to disability support, regardless of postcode.

The National Rural Health Alliance (the Alliance) comprises 54 national organisations committed to improving the health and wellbeing of the over 7 million people in rural and remote Australia. Our diverse membership includes representation from health professional organisations, health service providers, health educators, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector and students.

Letter to the Editor



Net Zero by 2050?

(The Editor, “The Times”)

Dear Editor.—For starters I won’t be here, if I am, I will be 110 and net zero won’t happen anyway.

How a country so blessed with natural resources can reject using such a resource for its energy needs “beggars” belief. And then to export the resource so that others can use it for whatever because of the fiscal gain is morally unacceptable.

Sure, renewable power seems cheap, when the sun shines and the wind blows but the need for a secure backup makes the whole equation very expensive and will result in a lower standard of living for us in the west, famine and starvation in the third world.

Added to the cost of back up is the cost of the original infrastructure to build the solar and wind farms, and as well, the cost of replacement panels, and blades, let alone the huge interconnect towers and lines.

The question of climate change and the use and implementation of renewables such as wind and solar and new transmission infrastructure connectors have divided our communities and serves no useful purpose, I believe.

Just as humans need oxygen to survive, plants need carbon to survive and thrive.

Quote from NIPCC (International Institute Panel on Climate Change): “From a quarter to half of Earth’s vegetated lands has shown significant greening over the last 35 years, largely due to rising levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide,” according to a new study published in the journal

“Nature Climate Change” on April 25. An international team of 32 authors from 24 institutions in eight countries led the effort, which involved using satellite data from NASA’s Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectrometer and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Advanced Very High-Resolution Radiometer instruments to help determine the leaf area index, or amount of leaf cover, over the planet’s vegetated regions. The greening represents an increase in leaves on plants and trees equivalent in area to two times the continental United States.

“Results showed that carbon dioxide fertilization explains 70 per cent of the greening effect,” said co-author Ranga Myneni, a professor in the Department of Earth and Environment at Boston University. “The second most important driver is nitrogen, at 9 percent. So, we see what an outsized role CO2 plays in this process.”

Close to home, the high yielding barley crops last year showing above average water use efficiency could well be the increasing atmospheric carbon available.

The warming effect of carbon is real and is a lot better for living than being cold.

Scientists tell us the medieval period was warmer, and I figure humans did not cause it then, and I am sceptical about humans causing it now.

The good book we were raised on, the Bible, in the very beginning tells us the earth and all its vast resources was made for us to use and enjoy. My task as a farmer

and manager is to leave my land better than when I first worked it.

The challenge is to quietly sift through the information readily available and find the real inconvenient truth.

Ian McEwen.
Donald.



Police Beat

Robinvale

Burglary: At about 10 p.m. on Wednesday the 18th of June, the occupant of a home in Manangatang heard the rear door of her home open. Her dogs, which were inside with her at the time, started barking and have chased someone out of the house. This investigation is ongoing.

Swan Hill

Burglary: Between 12 p.m. on Friday the 20th of June and 4.30 p.m. on Sunday, offenders have attended a home in Murlong Street, Swan Hill, and stolen a black 2015 Kawasaki 250B.

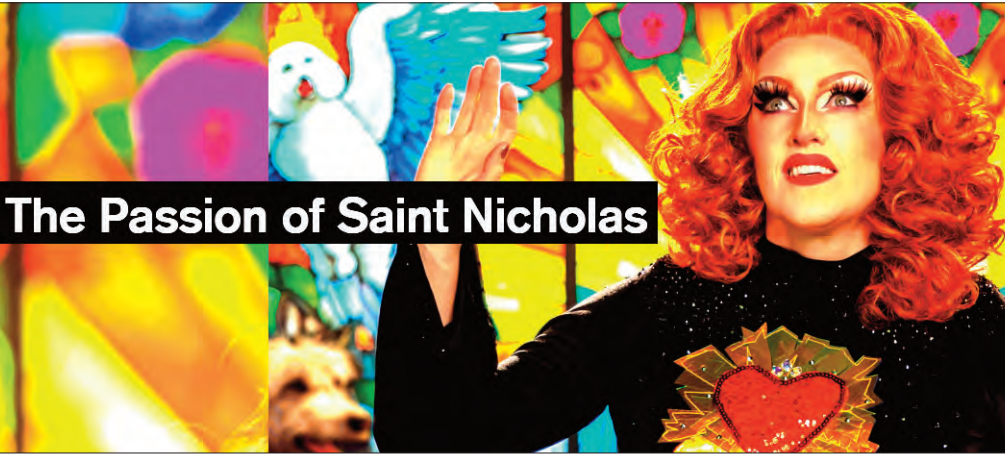
Theft from a motor vehicle: Between 5 p.m. on Wednesday the 18th of June and 8 a.m. the following day, Makita power tools have been stolen from a ute parked outside an address in Gillespie Street, Swan Hill. Further items including a set of Pro Tools have been stolen from a second ute in the vicinity. During the same time, a Mimco bag was stolen from a vehicle parked in Whittaker Street.

Burglary: Between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. on Monday the 16th of June, offenders have gained entry to a home in Boys Street, Swan Hill, and caused damage.

Buloke

Theft: Between June 13 and 16, offenders have forced entry to a yard off Camp Street, Wycheproof. At that location, they have syphoned fuel from machinery located in the yard with close to 500 litres of diesel stolen. During the same period offenders have forced a roller door to a facility across the road and stolen Husqvarna tools from a vehicle. These offences occurred during the same times as the copper cable theft mentioned last week.

During that same period 200 litres of hydraulic oil have been reportedly stolen from a rural property in Charles Street, Wycheproof. The investigation into these recent thefts is ongoing.



• The Passion of Saint Nicholas will be held on Friday, July 4, at 7 p.m. at the historic Rex Theatre, Charlton.

Reality at the Rex

The Charlton Neighbourhood House in conjunction with Regional Arts Victoria is proud to be presenting a live production of Passion of Saint Nicholas.

This is a fantastic tale about following your heart and keeping the band together when you lose your biggest cheerleader.

Ever since the 1991 St John’s College, Dandenong, Talent Quest, Geraldine and

her brother Nick shared a passion for music. But he got a “normal job”, and she went into musical comedy. Could things get worse? Spoiler: they did...

The Passion of Saint Nicholas takes the audience

on a journey through growing up in a huge family in Wagga Wagga, being arty kids in a sporty school and shared sibling dreams of a music career. Packed with original music, and with a profound message of moving forward with love and loss in your heart, “Saint Nicholas” moves audiences to tears of sadness and joy all at once.

The Passion of Saint Nicholas will be held on Friday, July 4, at 7 p.m. at the historic Rex Theatre. Tickets available via Humanatix or call the Charlton Neighbourhood House on 0473 759 456.

Trash to Treasure

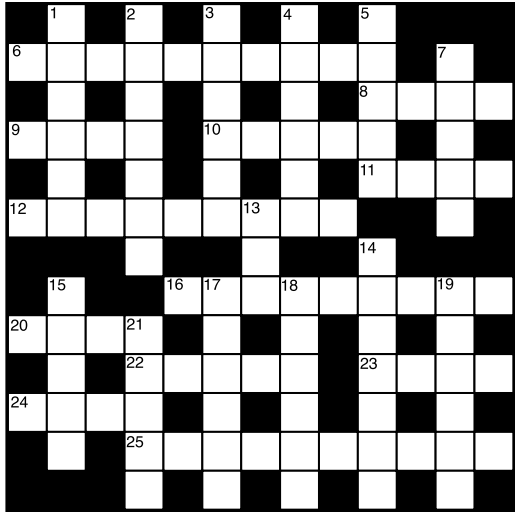
One person’s Trash is another’s Treasure!

Turn your Trash into Cash by advertising it for sale in the “Times” classified pages.

Phone the Donald office (5497 1222), or Birchip (5492 2735); Fax direct (5497 1407); or email advertising@buloketimes.com

“Times” Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8183



ACROSS

- Poison (10)
- Mend (4)
- Essence (4)
- Dance (5)
- Flower (4)
- Cape (9)
- Meal (9)
- Snare (4)
- Let in (5)
- Open (4)
- Box (4)
- Absurd (10)

DOWN

- Pace (6)
- Disease (7)
- Garment (6)
- Gloomy (6)
- Tree (5)
- Attire (5)
- Employ (3)
- Friendly (7)
- Fumble (5)
- Cure (6)
- Fasten (6)
- Standing (6)
- Ward off (5)

• Solution next issue.

BCG Expo to Deliver Practical Innovation

Farmers, researchers, advisers, and agribusinesses will come together on Wednesday, July 16, for Birchip Cropping Group (BCG)’s highly anticipated Ag Tech Expo, a full-day event showcasing cutting-edge digital tools and technologies designed to support the future of farming.

Held in Charlton at Charlton Park, the Expo will spotlight automation, precision agriculture, sensor technologies, and weed control innovations through a practical, grower-focused lens.

“With tighter margins and more data than ever, it’s critical we help farmers translate technology into decisions,” said event organiser, BCG’s Jess Bidstrup.

“This event is a step toward building the digital confidence and capability that the future demands. Growers are often told they should be using more data or digital tools, but this expo will help them understand exactly how to use what they’ve got, and where to go next.

“The event is designed to take some of the guesswork out of ag tech. We will cover what’s practical and profitable

on-farm right now, but also what’s possible and perhaps not so far away,” said Jess.

Speakers

The Expo will feature an impressive lineup of speakers, with representatives from organisations such as Pairtree Intelligence, Society of Precision Agriculture Australia, CSIRO, Charles Sturt University, Single Agriculture, and INCYT, presenting alongside farmers.

“We know that the most powerful learning often happens between growers. When farmers can share experiences and ask practical questions, it accelerates understanding and adoption,” says Ms Bidstrup.

The Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Grain Automate program, led by the Society of Precision Agriculture Australia (SPAA), will feature

throughout the day with facilitator Edward Scott, delivering workshops about variable rate technology (VRT), farm mapping, and getting your farm ready for autonomy through data collection. The sessions will provide hands-on demonstrations in VRT, data mapping, and system integration.

Highlight

A highlight of the day will be a panel discussion addressing “The future of weed control technologies” featuring Charles Sturt University’s Professor Michael Walsh, Ben Single (Single Agriculture), Bailey Kilpatrick (Swarm-Farm Robotics) and Warakirri Cropping’s Baingarra site manager, Jono Robinson, and “on-farm sensors for more informed decision making” with Gallagher Animal Management and INCYT.



• The Ag Tech Expo offers hands-on opportunities for growers to explore different technologies, such as a SwarmBot.

Attendees at the BCG Ag Tech Expo will also have time to view technology demonstrations and interact with a range of exhibitors such as O’Connors, AgCloud, Swarm-Farm Robotics, Precision Ag, Weed-IT Australia, Magrow-Tec, and Single Agriculture,

showcasing practical tools and innovations.

The Ag Tech Expo is proudly supported by the Grain Automate program, facilitated by SPAA. Grain Automate is a Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) initiative on behalf of

Australian grain growers aimed at accelerating the adoption of machine automation, autonomy and digital technologies in the Australian grains industry.

Registrations are essential and now open at www.bcg.org.au.



• Birchip RSL sub-branch president Shane McLoughlan overseeing the raising of the flag.

Korean War Anniversary: Flags Raised at Birchip Cenotaph

On Wednesday, the Birchip RSL sub-branch quietly marked the 75th anniversary of the Korean War with flags raised in solemn tribute.

While no formal service was held, the sight of the Australian and Returned Services League flags flying served as a dignified reminder of a war that profoundly shaped the post-World War II era yet is often referred to as the “Forgotten War”.

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel and invaded South Korea. In response,

United Nations forces, including over 17,000 Australians, were sent to defend South Korea.

The war continued until the signing of an armistice on July 27, 1953. During those three years, Australian troops served with distinction in some of the conflict’s most intense battles, including the Battle of Kapyong and the Battle of Maryang San. More than 1,200 Australians were

wounded and 340 lost their lives.

Birchip RSL sub-branch president Shane McLoughlan and wife Debbie oversaw the symbolic flag-raising, ensuring that the sacrifice and service of those involved in the Korean War continue to be honoured, even in the absence of ceremony. The gesture provided a quiet but powerful moment of reflection for the community.

In coming months the Birchip Cenotaph will see some exciting developments as the committee’s refurbishment plan comes to fruition. Birchip RSL sub-branch committee members Noeline Hogan and Debbie McLoughlan have been working diligently to secure grant funding for a major upgrade of the site and their efforts will result in a revitalised memorial space that incorporates interactive historical elements.

Welcome to Commonwealth Home Support Clients

(From East Wimmera Health Service)

In light of the upcoming closure of Annecto’s community services in July 2025, East Wimmera Health Service (EWHS) acknowledges the impact this may have on individuals and families across the Mallee region.

We understand that this news may create concern, and we want to reassure our community that Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) services are readily accessible in Buloke Shire.

EWHS Home Support Program continues to provide a wide range of services to older clients living in the Buloke Shire under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). This program assists people aged 65 years and over (or 50 years and over for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people) to remain independent and live safely in their own homes.

Our services include:

- Domestic assistance (house cleaning and laundry).
- Home maintenance (general garden care).
- Personal care (help with bathing, eating, dressing and grooming).
- Delivered meals (available in Donald and Birchip).

We warmly welcome new CHSP clients from within the Buloke Shire and encourage anyone affected by the upcoming changes to contact our team for support.

To access our services, individuals must be registered with My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

For more information, please contact the EWHS Home Support team on (03) 5478 6244.

EWHS remains a trusted and experienced provider in community and aged care, and we are committed to supporting residents through this time of transition.

For more information about EWHS services, please visit www.ewhs.org.au or see our Community Newsletter.

Speech Pathology Coming to Buloke

Bendigo Speech Works is pleased to inform that it will be providing speech pathology services in Charlton and the surrounding communities.

Donna Buxton, a Charlton resident and speech pathologist, is working with Bendigo Speech Works to provide services to the local region.

Donna will be providing services to people of all ages in areas around Charlton, Wycheproof, Donald and Birchip.

Bendigo Speech Works is a registered NDIS provider and will accept both private

clients and participants funded under the NDIS.

Places are limited. If you would like to enquire about this service, please contact Bendigo Speech Works on (03) 5443 9912 or send an email to admin@bendigo-speechworks.com.au.

If you would like to make a referral, please go to the Bendigo Speech Works website and complete a referral form.

“Times” Classifieds

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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
COOK.—**

Stewart Thomas
12/04/1930 - 25/06/2025
Passed away peacefully
at Hope Aged Care
(Swan Hill).

Loved son of the late Fred
and Alice.

Loved brother, brother-in-
law and uncle of Ron and
Pauline, Sue, Ken, Jillian
(dec.), Jennifer (dec.), Ray,
Garry, Ian (dec.), Alan
and their families.

Resting peacefully.

For funeral
arrangements please see
our website where
tributes can be left.

Raelene & Mark
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AFDA 5032 1011
O’Halloran

**DEATH
HICKMOTT**

(Shepherd).—
Valda Mary

23/06/1938 to 25/06/2025
Passed away peacefully
at Arcare Nursing Home,
Castlemaine.

Loved wife of Norm (dec).
Loved mother and friend
of Vickie, Kaylene and
Peter, Daran and Colleen,
and Carina (dec).

Loved grandmother of
Elle and James, Brett and
Milana, Marc and Renee,
Madeleine and James, Jay
and Scarlet. Loving great
grandmother of Willow,
Ira and Milicia.

Forever in our hearts.

**DEATH
KELLY.—**

Peter Alexander
9/10/1949 – 21/6/2025
of Donald
Passed peacefully

Loved husband of Evelyn
and much loved Dad of
Brett, Jason, Luke and
father-in-law of Leeann
and Jo. Adored Grandpa of
Leigh, Shayne and Jacinta.

*Loved and
remembered always
Go PIES*



**DEATH
KELLY.— Peter**

The members of Donald
Golf Bowls, regret the
passing of Peter, a valued
worker and Life Member
of our club.

We extend our deepest
sympathy and condolences
to Ev, Luke, Brett, Jason
and families on their per-
sonal loss at this sad time.

**DEATH
KELLY.— Peter**

The members of the
Donald Bowling Club have
lost a valued member and
player with the passing of
Peter.

Bowls may not have been
Pete’s first love, as bowls
could not compete with
golf.

Our sincere condolences to
Ev and Luke.

**DEATH
KEMP.— Gerald Leslie**

09/04/1936 - 26/06/2025
Passed away at
Grandview Lodge,
Wycheproof

Loving husband of Gwen
(dec.). Loving father of
Christine, Dianne, Colin,
Roger (dec.), Angela, Na-
dine and Nathan.

Loving father-in-law, Poppy
and Great-Pop to all.

*Mark and Raelene O’Halloran
KELLY FUNERALS BIRCHIP*



**FUNERAL
KELLY.—**

A graveside service for
Peter Kelly will be held at
the Donald Lawn Cemetery
on Tuesday, July 1 2025,
at 1.30 p.m..

KELL FUNERALS
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the office of “The Buloke
Times”, 6 McCulloch Street,
Donald.*

**FUNERAL
HICKMOTT.—**

Requiem mass for the
repose of the soul of Valda
Mary Hickmott will be
held at St Mary’s Catholic
Church, Swan Hill, on
Friday, July 4, commenc-
ing at 1.30 p.m. Followed
by burial at Swan Hill
Memorial Park, Lawn B
section.

Val’s service will be live
streamed. Please go to the
Live Streaming tab.

A tribute can be left on
our website: [kellyfunerals
birchip.com.au](http://kellyfuneralsbirchip.com.au)

*Mark and Raelene O’Halloran
KELLY FUNERALS BIRCHIP
5492 2547*

**Gardening and
Pruning
in Donald and
surrounding towns:**

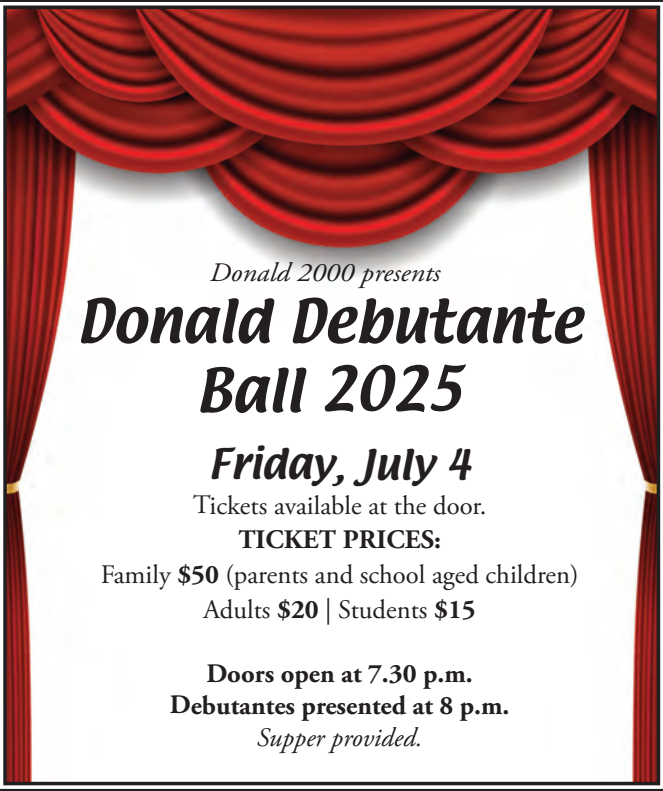
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Friday, July 4
Tickets available at the door.
TICKET PRICES:
Family **\$50** (parents and school aged children)
Adults **\$20** | Students **\$15**
Doors open at 7.30 p.m.
Debutantes presented at 8 p.m.
Supper provided.

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Donald

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St Arnaud

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Education Coordinator

Further information available at
<https://ewhs.org.au/careers>

EWHS is an Equal Opportunity Employer, we welcome applications to all positions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, LGBTQI+ People, and People of All Abilities.

“Times” Classifieds



Truck Driver

Reeves Earth Moving Pty Ltd are currently seeking experienced Truck Drivers to join our growing team.

Reeves Earth Moving are a family-owned business based out of Wedderburn, Victoria. We operate trucks and machinery, carting quarry products and completing earthworks including but not limited to shed pads, driveways, sheep yards, dams etc.

Essential Requirements:

- Current HC or MC Drivers Licence
- Ability to work unsupervised and follow directions.
- Available Monday-Friday with optional Saturday work

Non-Essential Requirements:

- Ability to Operate Heavy Machinery including but not limited to: Front End Loader, Grader, Excavator, Bulldozer, Roller, Bobcat is advantageous but not a requirement.

Benefits:

- Above award pay rate
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Support for Victoria's Proposed Fair Fuel Plan

[From RACV]

RACV welcomes mandatory fuel price reporting but urges the Victorian Government to share pricing data to support more Victorian motorists.

RACV this week announced its support for Victoria's proposed Fair Fuel Plan, subject to the data being freely available to all platforms so that fuel price data remains open and accessible through existing consumer platforms.

In a submission to the Department of Government Services, RACV endorsed the plan's goal of improving transparency and access to real-time fuel prices but stressed the critical importance of sharing this data with third-party applications that Victorians already use to find cheaper fuel.

"We strongly support mandatory fuel price reporting across Victoria, but the real benefits will only be realised if this data is made available to all platforms that help consumers save money," said RACV Head of Policy, James Williams.

"RACV's fuel finding apps already help our 2.2 million members find cheaper fuel, but we're currently missing about 25 per cent of the market because some independent retailers don't participate in voluntary reporting schemes. The Fair Fuel Plan addresses this gap."

Immediate Consumer Benefits Through Existing Apps

RACV operates two fuel finding platforms – the RACV App for members and the free Arevo app – which together provide real-time fuel price comparisons updated every 15 minutes. Unlike the proposed Service Victoria

platform, these apps also provide access to member fuel discounts, including up to 5c per litre savings at EG Ampol stations.

"Victorian motorists are already using our apps to save money on fuel. If the government shares its comprehensive data with us, we can deliver immediate benefits to consumers rather than asking them to download yet another app," Mr Williams said.

"The more places consumers can access this pricing data, the greater the potential savings across the community."

Victoria Risks Creating Commercial Monopoly

RACV warned that Victoria would become the only Australian state with a commercial monopoly on fuel price data if third-party access is not provided. Every other jurisdiction with mandatory fuel price reporting, including New South Wales, makes this data available through public APIs from day one.

"When New South Wales introduced fuel price transparency, they made the data feed available to third parties immediately, in line with their open data policy. Victoria should follow this proven model," Mr Williams said.

Key Reasons

The organisation highlighted three key reasons for sharing fuel price data:

- Improved competition and consumer choice through multiple access points.
- Alignment with Victorian Government's open data

principles under the DataVic Access Policy

- Built-in redundancy if the Service Victoria platform experiences technical issues

RACV emphasised its commitment to working collaboratively with the Victorian Government to maximise the plan's effectiveness.

"We're ready to harness our communication channels to 2.2 million members to increase awareness of the Fair Fuel Plan. We can also provide analytical insights and engage with users through surveys to help evaluate the program's success," Mr Williams said.

Partnership

"This is about partnership – the government providing comprehensive data and organisations like RACV using our established platforms and member relationships to ensure Victorian families get the maximum benefit, which comes at a crucial time when Victorians are experiencing costs of living pressures.

"We don't earn revenue from providing fuel price data – we do it to help our members and all Victorians save money. That's why open access to comprehensive government data makes so much sense."

RACV's submission reinforces that the Fair Fuel Plan represents a milestone opportunity to increase consumer choice and competition in Victoria's fuel retail market, with the greatest benefits achieved through collaborative data sharing with existing consumer platforms.



• RACV is reminding motorists in Victoria that from July first onwards, all drivers are required to slow down to 40 kilometres per hour when passing incident response vehicles.

RACV Reminds Victorians... Change to Road Rules

RACV is reminding Victorian motorists that from Tuesday, July 1, 2025, they will be required to slow down to 40 kilometres per hour when passing incident response vehicles that display flashing lights of any colour.

The change, announced in April this year, has been welcomed by RACV and its roadside assistance team, following a two-year campaign to review Road Rule 79A.

RACV General Manager Automotive Services, Makarla Cole, urged motorists to be aware of the rule change so that they could create the safest environment possible for roadside and incident response workers.

"We're grateful that the Victorian State Government has made this change to improve the safety outcomes and

working conditions of roadside and incident response workers," Ms Cole said.

Since 2017, Victorian motorists have been required to slow down to 40 kilometres per hour when passing stationary emergency services vehicles displaying red or blue flashing lights.

This rule has now been expanded to include:

- Accident towing vehicles.
- Breakdown towing services.
- Roadside assistance operators.
- Peninsula Link Incident Response vehicles.

• EastLink and Transurban Incident Response vehicles.

"Now that we have had an important and much-needed update to 79A, it's up to Victorians to do their part and ensure these vital workers can do their jobs without fear of harm and get home to their families safely," Ms Cole said.

Non-compliance with the updated 79A rule may result in a maximum fine of \$961.

For more information on road rule 79A and RACV's campaign, visit the RACV website.



• RACV today announced its support for Victoria's proposed Fair Fuel Plan, subject to the data being freely available to all platforms. Image: RACV.

EWHS June Board Report

At the June EWHS Board of Directors meeting the board reviewed the proposed budget for the 2025/2026 financial year. The board is pleased to report that EWHS should come in on budget for the 2024/2025 financial year.

The Board of Directors wishes to thank the staff and communities for their contributions towards the next strategic plan that is well into being finalised.

The recently completed student accommodation at the Birchip campus has been well received, with the board endorsing funds to renovate an unused area of the Wycheproof campus into a two bedroom unit.

These accommodation areas can accommodate students and other visiting health services. The board is seeking support from the Commonwealth and the Department of Health to demolish and replace the old accommodation block at Wycheproof, due to safety concerns.

The 2025 board appointments have been advised from the Minister of Health, with the reappointment of Philip Sabin and Diedre Missingham to the EWHS Board of Directors.

EWHS continues to partner with the Grampians and Loddon Mallee regions towards the establishment of the Local Health Service Networks.

CHURCH NOTICES

GRANITE Community Church
www.granitecommunitychurch.com
At Granite Church
10.30 a.m.
Speaker: Bruce Claridge (Sports Chaplain)
Baptist Union of Victoria

ANGLICAN "Parish of Charlton-Donald"
Enquiries: Rev'd Judi Bird 0435 593 395
Friday, July 4
St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.
Sunday, July 6
St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.



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Good Company, Great Views, and a Tidy Mount

(By Jackie Noonan)

The spirit of community was well and truly alive on Sunday, June 1, as the Friends of Mount Wycheproof (FoMW) held their monthly meeting, outdoors, atop of Mount Wycheproof.

While officially billed as a “meeting”, the relaxed gathering was more a celebration of shared pride, fresh air, and good company. Volunteers rolled up their sleeves for a light clean-up around the summit (weeds and rubbish), giving the much-loved local landmark a little TLC while enjoying a native walk, inspecting the kurrajongs, taking in spectacular views and engaging in conversation around historical data of the mount.

The walk also took in admiring the evolving rockery and pond being created at Wycheproof P-12 College, connecting with the mount. The school has done a fantastic job enhancing this area, which FoMW assisted with restoring in previous years. The entire space is now looking more welcoming for usage by the school, community and tourists, than ever before.

Landcare

Martin Duke, chairman FoMW, made a special shoutout to Andrew Borg from the Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, who was warmly welcomed at the gathering. Andrew generously shared his time and expertise during the walk, especially with Martin

and Alex Morrison, offering practical advice and insights that added depth to conversations about caring for the mount.

To top it all off, Andrew also proved unbeatable in the novelty “Unwrap the Mountain” game – cleverly answering mountain-themed questions to take out the mystery prize. A well-deserved win for someone who travelled from afar to participate in the day.

Peak Picnic

The morning peaked, flowing into a delicious barbecue style picnic, being enjoyed at the rotunda shelter, prepared capably by Mary-Anne Duke with assistance from Joy Morrison. The scent of grilled fare (from the Burke’s Butchery in Birchip) mingled with laughter and the hum of friendly chatter. With several locals joining the group for lunch too, the day doubled as a welcoming chance for others to connect with the Friends and learn more about their simple but meaningful mission: caring for the mountain at the heart of the community.

Visitors Hit New Heights

Adding to the atmosphere, the group enjoyed watching a

steady stream of visitors make their way to the summit for a pitstop break, a wander away from the Calder Highway, enjoying a coffee, some lunch, and the unmistakable Mallee views. Among the visitors was a tourist from Japan who was on route back to Melbourne, post experiencing the wonders of Lake Tyrell, Sea Lake. A perfect reminder that even the world’s smallest registered mountain can cause others to stop and leave a big impression – extending worldwide.

Such visitors illustrated that tourism across Buloke continues to gain momentum, with considerable impact occurring quietly and beyond official numbers being recorded.

Explore with FoMW

The gathering was the perfect blend of doing a little good and enjoying a lot of fun – proving once again that when locals gather on the mount, great things happen.

Plans are under way for the next mountain catch-up, and everyone is always welcome. Whether you’re keen to lend a hand or simply come along for the barbecue and share a story, the FoMW would love to see you there.



• A Local Landcare Legend: Andrew Borg from the Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, takes out the prize of the day – the novelty “Unwrap the Mountain” game – well deserved for tireless efforts nurturing the FoMW patch of the planet – Mount Wycheproof.



• Nature Walk and Talk: Local volunteers took to the slopes of Mount Wycheproof for a tidy-up, talk and nature walk. Caring for the mountain and community, one step at a time. Left to right: Alex Morrison, Andrew Borg and Martin Duke.

Backing Regional Voices – and Creative Pride

The Nationals Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, is encouraging local artists, organisations and community groups to apply for grants through the Victoria’s Pride Regional Activation Program, which supports inclusive events and creative projects celebrating LGBTIQ+ pride in the lead-up to the 2026 Victoria’s Pride festival.

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to support events and activities in regional and rural communities that showcase local LGBTIQ+ voices, stories and artistic contributions. This is a valuable opportunity to highlight the diverse experiences and histories of LGBTIQ+ people living in regional areas and to strengthen community connection and inclusion.

Applicants can propose a range of creative projects, including:

- The delivery of a new or expanded event or community activity that highlights local pride. The creation of artworks, digital media or installations that reflect the region’s unique pride history and identity.
- The recording or publication of stories, interviews, performances or podcasts that preserve and amplify regional LGBTIQ+ voices.
- More than 25,000 people took part in regional pride events last year, showing the



• Jade Benham.

impact of regional participation in state-wide pride celebrations.

“This is a fantastic opportunity for regional communities to tell their own stories and contribute to a broader celebration of diversity and inclusion. I encourage local groups, councils and creatives to apply and bring their ideas to life.”

Expressions of interest are now open and close on Tuesday, August 5, 2025. More information is available at Midsumma Festival – Regional Activation Program – Victoria’s Pride.

One Hundred Years Ago

From the “Birchip Advertiser”, July 3, 1925.

Football: Birchip Defeats Cope Cope. Birchip journeyed to Cope Cope on Wednesday and after a very indifferent display of football ran out winners with a margin of 29 points. Local followers were disappointed with the match as they expected to see a more evenly contested match and better football.

Cope played their permit men from Woosang, Cosser (2) and McQuirk, but did not

included any Maryborough players.

Birchip was without W. Allen and M. Sheahan and W. Beaton, a new player, shaped well and should prove a useful addition to the team.

Hempel, the central umpire, gave complete satisfaction and handled the game well throughout.

Players on both sides, were in a happy-go-lucky vein, and the barrackers and the umpire

were in turn smitten with the complaint.

The final score-Birchip 11 goals, 12 behinds; Cope Cope 7 goals, 7 behinds.

Birchip Golf Club: A meeting of members of the above club was held at the Mechanics Hall on last Monday eve for the purpose of arranging the annual golf tournament to be played at Birchip on August 18, 19 and 20.

There was a large attendance of members, and every effort was made to ensure a successful tournament.

It was decided on the motion of the chairman, seconded by Mr. E. Ramble, to notify all district clubs of the date of the annual tournament and to extend a cordial invitation to their members. The chairman stated that Mrs. Cardwell had generously donated a pair of silver-plated scissors used at the opening ceremony of the new club house. He moved,

and Mr. Paine seconded, that the donor be thanked for her generosity.

The chairman intimated that the that the links would be very thoroughly prepared for the tournament and he was pleased to acknowledge, with thanks, the unsolicited donation for that purpose; £2. 2s from Messrs. Hogg Brothers and £1. 1s from Mr. E. C. Hannah.

It was resolved that the ladies call a meeting to arrange for the catering.

Donald Football Club presents its **ONLINE**
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We are still accepting donations, that can even be added while auction is open.

Auction closes with a function in the Anderson Blue Room and a live stream projection of the auction bidding on the big screen Saturday, July 5. There will be a meal available. Look out for links and feature items across the Royal Blues social media platforms over the coming days and throughout the auction.

No.	Goods or Service item	Supplied By	No.	Goods or Service item	Supplied By
1	Donate now option		99	Majestic palm & pot	Joan Pearce
2	King Deluxe Dream ambient firm 28cm mattress	Forty Winks Horsham	100	Beef packs, scotch fillet, porterhouse, rump valued over \$1200 rrp	Your Regional Butcher
3	6 bottles of wine, 3 reds, 3 whites	Marc & Sara Adams	101	Evaporative Aircon service & sanitisation	Buloke Plumbing
4	3 nights accommodation @ "The Shop"	Dion & Lauren Hawkes	102	Custom DFC fire pit	Josh Talty
5	Semi load of cartage	Jackson's Transport	103	Trailer load of wood	DFC
6	8 hrs labour	Eddie Landwehr	104	Evaporative Aircon service & sanitisation	Buloke Plumbing
7	Hamper of groceries	Junior netball players	105	Signed Carlton guernsey	Ross Young
8	Learn how to distill & BBQ day, all inclusive for 4	Donald South Blue Duck Inn	106	5 dozen mini chicken pies	Bev Darcy
9	Load of premium Buloke firewood	Didak & Bear	107	Round of golf @ Murray Downs 4 people 2 carts	Ryan Bath & Liv Wollerman
10	House clean	DAMS	108	Trailer load of wood	DFC
11	Yabby day all inclusive for 3 people	Joe Sheridan & Darcy Harrison	109	Box of mixed slices	A & B Grade netball
12	2% share of a "Tiger of Malay X Foxy Free"	Club Sport Syndications	110	Box of mixed slices - gluten & dairy free	A & B Grade netball
13	4 hrs labour	Downes Carpentry	111	Shuttle of firewood	Robinson family
14	Evaporative Aircon service & sanitisation	Ascot Heating Sos Donnellon	112	Coaches special	Tex
15	Full vehicle service	Michaels of Donald	113	Fully dressed lamb	DFC
16	1 day scissor lift hire	Leeder Carpentry	114	6 bottles of Block Series 2021 Heathcote Shiraz	Young family
17	1 fully dressed lamb	DFC	115	6 bottles of Block Series 2021 Heathcote Shiraz	Young family
18	Trailer load of wood	DFC	116	Kids fishing set	Didak & Julz
19	5 x pizza meal deals - large pizza, garlic bread & 1.25L drink	Harvest Café	117	Trailer load of wood	Kalon Green & Brenton Dixon
20	Portable single toilet hire 1 weekend	Buloke Hire	118	Trailer load of wood	DFC
21	Batch of yo-yo's	Rachel Meulendykes	119	1 day hire Dingo digger	Buloke Hire
22	1 fully dressed lamb	DFC	120	Filled sponge	Maree Cullen
23	2 stools	Greg & Maree Egan	121	Family photography session valued @\$300	Julia Pearce Photography
24	2 LED HI BAY Shed Lights	Reece Poyner Electrical	122	Hydro plant	Sara Adams
25	JCB esky	JCB Donald	123	Death by chocolate 1	Junior football players
26	240V electric cable reel	Jesse & Kiera Lopes	124	Death by chocolate 2	Junior football players
27	10 dozen sausage rolls	Bev Darcy	125	4 hrs labour on JCB	Shaun Sellick STS Mechanical
28	Trailer load of wood	DFC	126	2 nights accom Echuca + full car detail	Echuca Auto Group
29	2 dozen party pies & 2 dozen party sausage rolls	Donald Bakery	127	Triple hat hanger	Sara Adams
30	1 days labour	Harry Forrest	128	Single hat hanger	Sara Adams
31	Delivery of 100 lambs to Warracknabeal	Shags Sheridan	129	Kids fishing set	Didak & Julz
32	B-double of grain cartage locally at harvest	Brad & Carly Pearce	130	10 tonne seed cleaning with cruiser treatment	Luke Maffescioni
33	Pamper hamper	C Grade Netball	131	Load of firewood	Jett Adams
34	2 dozen party pies & 2 dozen party sausage rolls	Donald Bakery	132	Kids yellow Sherrin footy	Didak & Julz
35	Elders esky	Elders Insurance & Livestock	133	Shuttle of firewood	Jacob Donnellon
36	1 fully dressed lamb	DFC	134	Fully dressed lamb	DFC
37	Full vehicle service	Michaels of Donald	135	Esky	North West Ag
38	Membership & merch pack	Donald Jeffcott Cricket Club	136	1 fully dressed lamb	DFC
39	7 days hire 3m3 skip bin	Buloke Hire	137	6 pack 1 get bars	Dyson Bell Warren
40	4 piece bar set, wine, glasses & serving board	Garry Young	138	B-double of grain cartage locally at harvest	Brad & Carly Pearce
41	2024/25 taxation return x 2	Gilchrist & Co.	139	Trailer load of wood	Mak & Cam Anderson
42	Smoked meat, beer & bonfire day	Newelly, Webby & Brady	140	Kids green Sherrin footy	Didak & Julz
43	Shuttle of firewood	Richard & Cherie Reilly	141	LSKD pack	Rebecca Cumming
44	1 day painting labour only	Burke Painting Group	142	SZADE sunglasses	Mensland
45	\$500 voucher	Cabinets & Stone Horsham	143	SZADE sunglasses	Mensland
46	Weekend in brand new caravan park family cabin	DFC	144	SZADE sunglasses	Mensland
47	2 hrs labour	Bowles Mowing & Maintenance	145	SZADE sunglasses	Mensland
48	House cleaning (up to 2 hrs)	A & B Grade Netball	146	Fully dressed lamb	DFC
49	Oven cleaning - 1 oven cleaned back to 95%	Jess Nunn	147	Night for 2 people deluxe suite	Donald Motor Lodge
50	Ski day	Hayden & Logan Geddes	148	Light up archery set	Didak & Julz
51	General car service	Josh Smulders	149	Fully dressed lamb	DFC
52	2 bales vetch hay	Josh/Col Gilmour	150	Butter chicken family meal (or 6 individuals packs)	Xanthi Rice
53	1G merch pack	1G Building	151	Axe throwing game	Didak & Julz
54	Wood heater flue clean	Buloke Plumbing	152	24 mixed cookies	Sarah MacDonald
55	10 dozen sausage rolls	Bev Darcy	153	2 bales oaten hay	Mark Mortlock
56	Wood heater flue clean	Buloke Plumbing	154	1 Cheesecake	Belicia Francis
57	Box of mixed slices	A & B Grade Netball	155	General car service	Josh Smulders
58	10 tonne seed cleaning	Luke Maffescioni	156	10 x free sessions to Active Farmers	Sam Beavis
59	Bradmans Invincible print	Pazza	157	Fully dressed lamb	DFC
60	Weekend in brand new caravan park family cabin	DFC	158	Butter chicken family meal (or 6 individuals packs)	Xanthi Rice
61	Water skiing day all inclusive	Dennis Adams	159	1 cheesecake	Kim Griffiths
62	\$300 worth of tyres	Harbergers	160	Fully dressed lamb	DFC
63	4 hrs concreting labour only	Leigh Nunn Building	161	Saltbush lamb	David Manifold
64	Night for 2 people deluxe suite	Donald Motor Lodge	162	2hrs labour	Bowles Mowing & Maintenance
65	Superbox for 8 people all inclusive	DFC	163	24 mixed cookies	Sarah MacDonald
66	Custom furniture	Anne Snowy Landwehr	164	AFL tin bucket with drinks - Essendon	Fraggle
67	1 year subscription to Buloke Times (no postage included)	Buloke Times	165	AFL tin bucket with drinks - Carlton	Fraggle
68	500L diesel delivered	McLennan Bulk Fuel	166	AFL tin bucket with drinks - Richmond	Fraggle
69	A week powered site	Donald Caravan Park	167	AFL tin bucket with drinks - Geelong	Fraggle
70	Weekend in brand new caravan park family cabin	Donald Caravan Park	168	DFC Mini pennant flag - established 1882	Fraggle
71	Retractable hose reel	Donald Timber Yard	169	DFC Mini pennant flag - Thirds 1963	Fraggle
72	Lakers corporate day, 4 people all inclusive	Rohan Brown	170	DFC Mini pennant flag - Reserves 1963	Fraggle
73	1 load of 27 tonne St Arnaud gravel delivered	Wilkins Bulk Haulage	171	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 1963	Fraggle
74	Beef packs, scotch fillet, porterhouse, rump valued over \$1200 rrp	Your Regional Butcher	172	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 1979	Fraggle
75	Fully dressed lamb	Adam Flood	173	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 1980	Fraggle
76	JCB pack	JCB Ballarat	174	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 1987	Fraggle
77	Mirror	Beaumont Tiles Swan Hill	175	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 1992	Fraggle
78	Gun safe rrp \$595	Buloke Firearms	176	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 1993	Fraggle
79	2 tray slices caramel and hedgehog	Joylene Newell	177	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 2002	Fraggle
80	Set of Mongrel boots, any size	Mensland	178	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 2004	Fraggle
81	Auto Elec bundle	Donald Auto Electrical	179	DFC Mini pennant flag - Seniors 2006	Fraggle
82	50 lambs shorn	John Gretrix	180	Case of Montepulciano Rose	Young family
83	Semi load of gravel supplied & delivered	Ben & Karen Clark	181	Round of golf with cart @ Horsham 2 people	Luca Rice & Chase Campbell
84	9 bottles of Yellow	DFC	182	10 x small cereal straw bales	Litchfield Community Club
85	Fully dressed lamb	DFC	183	10 x small pea straw bales	Litchfield Community Club
86	Case of Montepulciano Rose	Young family	184	5L + 500ml Inox	Motion Ag Swan Hill
87	Scissor lift hire 3 days	Landwehr Electrical	185	Mixed relish & jams	Brent Barber & Alex Bouchier
88	Winter warmer pack	Jasper and Co.	186	3 bags garden compost delivered locally	Louise Barber
89	Superbox for 8 people all inclusive	DFC	187	\$100 voucher	Industry & Co. Hairdressing
90	Car service	Harbergers	188	Shear 12 sheep	Brent Barber
91	Additional 10% off battery rebate	Megelec	189	\$100 voucher	Industry & Co. Hairdressing
92	Family photography session with Julia Pearce	Sponsored by Leigh Hawkes	190	\$300 voucher for Kat the Label	Liston Newton
93	3 hrs labour	Dunstan Engineering	191	Yeti esky full of Carlton Dry	Oak Lea Agriculture
94	Kelpie puppy	Alex Bouchier	192	Rock art	Sara Adams
95	Filled sponge	Maree Cullen	193	3 pot hangers	Sara Adams
96	Wheelbarrow load of garden goodies	Donald Hardware	194	Ultimate steakhouse experience 2 people	Ryan Leeder
97	3hrs labour	Donald Auto Electrical	195	45t Reeves gravel carted locally	Glen Burke
98	Royal Blues cookies box	Kiera Lopes			

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Donald Juniors Hit Top Form

(By Blake Lee)

Donald’s junior football teams flipped the script on Saturday, recording impressive wins over Birchip-Watchem in both the Under-14s and Under-17s.

With growing numbers and plenty of promising talent, the outlook is bright for the Donald Football Club as it looks to rebuild and develop across the next few seasons.

Under-14s

Donald showed its intent early, restricting the Calves to just two goals for the entire match. From the opening bounce, Nullah Clapham made an impact in the ruck, using his height to give rovers Sam Mortlock and Emmett Geddes clean access to the footy, helping Donald get it forward.

Despite the scoreboard pressure, Birchip-Watchem didn’t back down. Denley Tyler, Des Coffey and Oscar Sharp worked hard at ground level and continued to put their bodies on the line. At half time, Donald had opened up a 3.4 (22) to 1.0 (6) lead.

In the second half, Donald continued to dominate around the contest. Toby Lydom and Lithil Hitihamillage were

active across the ground, winning key possessions and moving the ball forward. For the Bulls, Archie Tyler continued to compete well, using his reach and athleticism to take several contested marks.

Up forward, Maximus Wardlaw proved reliable with strong hands, adding to Donald’s growing goal tally. At the other end, Isaiah Stirling was solid in defence, intercepting and clearing the ball out of the back 50.

Willow Ryan’s pressure and work rate stood out for Birchip-Watchem, while Laikyn Holland and Noah Michael showcased strong kicking from long range for the home side. Donald’s Wiremu Anderson also added to the highlights, kicking his first career goal.

Sadidas Gardiner-Paieka took one of the marks of the day with a clean grab overhead in the final quarter. Garth Kilroy and Sammy

Ferrier also played their roles, making the most of limited forward entries.

Despite a final goal from Archie Tyler right on the siren, Donald proved far too strong, winning 12.7 (79) to 2.0 (12).

Best for Donald: Noah Michael, Nullah Clapham, Jake Italia, Toby Lydom, Samuel Mortlock, Lithil Hitihamillage. For Birchip-Watchem: Willow Ryan, Sadidas Gardiner-Paieka, Garth Kilroy, Sammy Ferrier.

Donald’s Darcy Burke received the headspace award for his support of teammates, in line with the round’s #strongertogether message.

Under-17s

Donald’s Under-17s side continued the winning streak in the junior grades with a solid performance against Birchip-Watchem.

The home side got away to a fast start, piling on 4.2 (26) in the opening term while keeping the Bulls to just a



• The Bulls’ Denley Tyler attempts to evade the grip of Donald’s Jhonrick Embate.

single behind. Jesse Lydom was influential early, showcasing speed and skill, including a clever soccer-style goal.

Chase Campbell put in a strong performance in the ruck, holding his own throughout the match despite also backing up to play in the reserves, where he again took on the same role with solid effort.

Birchip-Watchem worked hard to steady in the second term. Liam Spezza put in a solid effort across half-back, while Noah Dean ran hard to contest and win the ball. However, Donald’s ball movement remained clean

and the Royal Blues continued to push forward.

Jesse Lydom kept finding ways to score, finishing goals from tight angles. Baxter Donnellon was also a key contributor in the midfield, consistently winning clearances and driving the ball into attack.

With a 69-point lead after half-time, Donald took the opportunity to rotate players and share the ball around.

Bayley Kemp stood out late in the match, running the ball from defence into attack and slotting several goals for the Bulls. Jack Knights covered plenty of ground on the wing, trying to get the visitors

moving, but Donald’s backline stood firm and turned away multiple forward entries.

Nullah Clapham added some physicality with a strong fend-off, while Charlie Burke fought hard around the ball for the visitors.

Donald finished full of run and slotted several late goals to finish the game strongly, coming away with a 20.10 (130) to 5.2 (32) win.

Jesse Lydom received the headspace award.

Best for Donald: Jesse Lydom, Baxter Donnellon, Charlie Burke, Judd Geddes.

For Birchip-Watchem: Noah Dean, Bayley Kemp, Jack Knights, Willow Ryan.



• Donald’s Jesse Lydom runs from the centre square under pressure from Noah Dean.



• The Bulls’ Willow Ryan grabs Donald’s Sam Mortlock as Darell Clapham prepares to assist.



• Birchip-Watchem’s Ollie Cook gets the hands away under pressure from Baxter Donnellon.

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• Under-12s Hockey with headspace award winner, River Ryan (centre).

Bulls Dominate Under-12s Hockey

What a beautiful day weather-wise for the young ones to be out playing sport!

Both Birchip and Donald players were full of enthusiasm as they took to the field eagerly listening to the headspace rep as she gave her spiel and tossed the stick.

Birchip has an amazing young team whose players have clearly been putting their training to good use, leaving the Donald team pretty defenceless to their strategy. Though Donald kept its fight going with much improved defensive play since the season began.

It was refreshing to see the drive both teams displayed regardless of what the scoring showed, hearing both teams eagerly encouraging each other really conveyed the message of the day from

headspace about teamwork and camaraderie.

Final scores: 0-7 Birchip's way.

Donald awards: Best on, Isaiah Stirling; Coaches Champ, Madeline Morton.

Birchip awards: Milla Haslam (Sharp's Bakery), Lucy Coffey (TMC Enviro).

Headspace awardee is selected by the umpires based on set criteria. Awardees must conduct themselves in a respectful manner whilst respecting all players and officials. This awardee demonstrates the characteristics of a real "team player" by being disciplined, encouraging and supportive.

This year's headspace awardee is River Ryan from Birchip-Watchem. Congratulations.

Underage Hockey Win for Donald

In perfect hockey weather last Saturday, the Donald Royal Blues claimed a strong 5-1 win over the Birchip-Watchem Bulls in a fast-paced underage match.

Donald came out firing, with Oakley Brennan feeding the ball to Darcy Burke in the D early. Although the first few shots were blocked by the Bulls' keeper Eligh Dean, Donald kept up the pressure. Birchip-Watchem responded with a solid run led by Elise Cox and Ben Horton, but Donald was strong in defence and blocked. Lana Angel turned the play around and a short corner soon followed but the Bulls were unable to convert.

Ellie Burke and Victory Davis worked the ball back into Donald's attacking D. Although Birchip's defenders

held firm at first, Oakley broke through with a clean shot to open Donald's scoring.

Nevaeh Pearce continued to apply pressure, while Birchip defenders Garth Kilroy and Sadidas Gardiner-Paikea made Donald work hard. Oakley struck again to give Donald a two-goal lead. Birchip responded with a short corner, and Archie Tyler scored a great goal to put the Bulls on the board. Fired up, the Bulls launched another attack, but Donald 'keeper Kailie Krause made several impressive saves to maintain their lead.

The second half started with Oakley pressing hard and eventually earning another short corner, converting on the second attempt to make it 3-1. Lana Angel made strong contributions in the midfield for the Bulls, forcing Donald's defence to stay alert. Lilly Nuske stepped up with a strong tackle to shut down another Bulls' advance.

Donald finished the game with two more goals – both from Oakley – one off a short corner and another clean strike, taking the final score to 5-1. Birchip had a late push

with two attempts from Lana, but Kailie stood tall once again.

Standout Performances:

Donald: Oakley Brennan, Ellie Burke (Coaches' Award), Victory Davis (Encouragement Award), and Kailie Krause (Headspace Award) for her incredible goalkeeping and leadership.

Birchip-Watchem: Lana Angel (O'Connor's Towel), Beau Haslam (Bishop's Hardware Bag).

A great contest played in good spirit, with strong efforts from both teams and a bright future ahead for these young players.



• Isaiah Stirling and Sammy Ferrier compete for the ball as River Ryan watches closely. –Photos by Blake Lee.

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Department of Education



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Clean Sweep for Boort Netballers

14-&-Under "A"
Charlton 14 def. by Boort 39.

Charlton awards: Teejet Best, Anna Fitzpatrick; Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Isabella Stahl; NWAG & Charlton Caravan Park "Have a Crack", Marly Morkos.

Boort awards: Boort Newsagency, Bridget Perryman; Bendigo Sportspower, Indie Gooding.

17-&-Under "A"
Attackers combined well using front cuts and strong movements to bring the ball down the court and create valuable scoring opportunities. The midcourters fed well into the ring. Charlton defenders once again worked tirelessly to shut down Boort's attacking end by applying consistent pressure. Overall the girls started really well and were with Boort for most of the game. Unfortunately a lapse in the second half allowed Boort to pull away with the win. A huge congratulations to Rosie Fitzpatrick who stepped up for her first game of under-17s and

earned herself the "Have a crack" award.

Charlton 22 def. by Boort 34.

Charlton awards: IGA Best, Sarah Blair; Ladies Auxiliary Coaches, Maggie Riley; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Anika Holmes-Brown.

Boort awards: Graham Hayes Real Estate, Sophie Gilmore; Streader Constructions, Laci Streader.

"C" Grade
With lots of speed in their legs the attacking end tried to keep the ball down Charlton's end, but the second half of the game saw some strong defenders which challenged Charlton's game. Its defenders looked just as strong this week with Erin Blair particularly bringing more determination and fight to the game. Both ends of the court were privileged to have the very promising up and coming juniors. The girls were competitive the whole game, even keeping the score line within 10 goals at the first half break. Well done to all.

Charlton 19 def. by Boort 49.

Charlton awards: Jack Thompson Construction Best, Ebony McCarthy; S&D Consulting Coaches, Erin Blair; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Taylah Boyle.

Boort awards: Matt Wilkinson Plumbing, Annie Perryman; Cobram Estate, Hannah Spencer.

"B" Grade
Starting well particularly in Charlton's attacking end; however, shooting accuracy wasn't helping its score line. Boort came out very strongly with Holly Thompson and Anika Holmes-Brown kept busy with a very tall shooter. Few more things for Charlton to focus on as a team as it gets into this last half of the season.

Charlton 38 def. by Boort 69.

Charlton awards: Teys Charlton Feedlot Best, Abby Mulquiny; Teys Charlton Feedlot Coaches, Sarah Blair; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Sarah Blair.

Boort awards: DWT Transport, Emma Darker; North West Ag, Ella Streader.

"A" Grade
Tough game for the Charlton girls this week, a few positional changes in the attack end to try and make things work. Claudia Lee stepped back into GA and shot beautifully. A great consistent game for Charlton's defence end with Claire Smith providing the height the team needed against Boort's GS. Unfortunately Navy Blue girls just couldn't get a full 4 quarter performance, with Boort pushing its lead out by the final whistle.

Charlton 30 def. by Boort 60.

Charlton awards: Walsh Motors Best, Megan Bruns; Walsh Motors Coaches, Claire Smith; Caffeinated Chaos Captains Coffee, Isabel Soulsby. Connect Coffee and Stacy's Dental Volunteer of the Day, Hayley Soulsby.

Boort awards: Meering West Wind Farm, Grace Hosking; Boort Natural Therapies, Bridie Doyle.



• "A" Grade: Claudia Lee (WA) passing into Charlton's attack end with Isabel Soulsby (WD) backing up.




• U17s: Lacey Smith (C) looks into Charlton's goal ring with Taylah Giles (GS).



• U14s: Lila Schofield putting up a shot.

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Bulls' Reserves Hold Royal Blues Scoreless

Birchip-Watchem's Reserves proved far too strong for the Royal Blues on Saturday, securing a 156-point win in a dominant performance at Donald.

The Bulls kicked 22.24 (156) to Donald's 0.0 (0), with inaccurate kicking across the four quarters the only blemish in an otherwise one-sided affair.

Wearing retro jumpers for the occasion, Birchip-Watchem started well through ruckman Alex Hay, who gave his midfielders first use at stoppages. Sam Simmons and

Bodie Colbert were active early, helping drive the ball forward.

Donald's backline, including Glen Burke and Kalon Green, held up under pressure and worked hard to rebound the ball, but a lack of movement up forward left the Royal Blues unable to create scoring opportunities.

Alex Noonan provided plenty of run through the middle for the Bulls and helped set up the opening goal to Tison Wiantara. Riley Hogan also gathered a high number of disposals, consistently winning the ball at ground level around contests. Matt Berry was a reliable target up forward, finishing the match with seven goals.

The Bulls had 10 scoring shots in the first quarter for just three goals, but gradually found their rhythm and maintained scoreboard pressure. They capitalised on several Donald turnovers, including intercepting multiple kick-outs, and generated repeat forward entries throughout the match.

Josh Woods and George Addis rotated through the ruck with Alex Hay and gave Birchip-Watchem further control around the contest.

Donald's Brod Harrison worked hard across half-back, with Ben Farmer and Glenn Pearse also putting in solid efforts through the midfield. However, the side struggled to move the ball forward, as James Lindbeck and Jack Ryan cut off multiple attacks and set up counterattacks for Birchip-Watchem. In the end, the Bulls were simply too strong, controlling the game from start to finish and delivering a 156-point thrashing.

Birchip-Watchem, which sits third on the ladder, will now turn its attention to tomorrow's match against Sea Lake-Nandaly, currently in fourth. Sea Lake-Nandaly won the last encounter between the two sides, but each club has since had the opportunity to build form. With several players available for senior selection, it should be a close match with quality footy.

headspace award went to Sam Simmons.

Awards for Birchip-Watchem: Sam Simmons, Riley Hogan, James Lindbeck, Matt Berry, Matt Rickard, Tison Wiantara.

For Donald: Kalon Green, Glen Burke, Ben Farmer, Glenn Pearse, Brod Harrison, Chase Campbell.

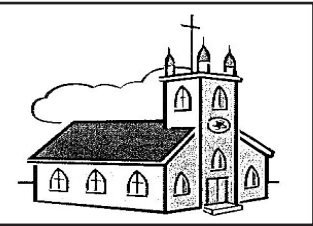


• Donald's Ben Farmer gets the handpass off to Kalon Green under pressure from Bulls' Josh Woods and Connor Lee.



• Chase Campbell and Rhona Conboy ruck as Sam Simmons and Jesse Lopes, Glenn Pearse and Connor Lee, and Kalon Green and Bodie Colbert await the outcome.

CHURCHES



DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES "East Wimmera Parish"

Birchip	No Mass
Boort (Sat.)	7.00 p.m.
Banyena	11.00 a.m.
Charlton	No Mass
Donald	No Mass
St. Arnaud	No Mass
Wycheproof	8.30 a.m.

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(By Course Language)

Cool but pleasant weather for golf saw players grace the course both Saturday and Sunday last weekend for the third round of the club championships.

With new Life Member Bill Livingston, giving the tractor and mower its first run for the season proper, the holes that had been mown looked terrific. I'm sure he's enjoying the comfort of the new outfit and has the tunes going as he turns a paddock into a golf course.

The winner last weekend was Brad Bath with a 76-5-71, followed by Kelvin Clark on 89-17-72. There were two birdies for the weekend with Brad having one on the Donald Tyre and Exhaust 2nd and Richard Gallagher on the Matthew "Smiley" Spencer sponsored 11th.

The Nearest the Pins were: Donald Auto Elec 3rd, Sam Beavis; Weirs IGA 7th, Stuart Potter; Nufarm 14th, Brett Kelly; Bendigo Bank 16th, Kelvin Clark.

Great to see Gerard Burke having a hit last weekend after a few years off. No doubt it won't take him long to get back to his old handicap and having a few wins. PS - Burkey, don't fill your car up with fuel at 12.30, that's when we hit off.

Very sad news for the Donald Golf Club on the weekend with the passing of Peter Kelly after a short illness. Peter was presented with a life membership in 2022 for the enormous amount of work he had done for the club and also for his outstanding record as a golfer, both at the Donald Golf Club and at District and State competitions. Up until a few weeks ago he was still spending many hours every day working around the course, getting it ready for upcoming season. Our deepest sympathy to Ev, Luke, Brett, Jason and their families at this sad time.

Dad's Army

The Dad's Army battalion is having a change of attack. They will now hold their manoeuvres on a Wednesday for the near future. If you wish to play, answer roll call at 12 noon for a 12.30 hit off. There were 5 players last week, the winner being Bill Livingston.

Coming Up

The final week of club championships are to be held

this weekend. It is once again a stroke event sponsored by Mensland Donald.

Next week will see the start of the Kara Kara tournament events. Birchip is the first cab off the rank starting with a 4BBB on next Friday.

Dad Jokes

A mate of mine has been working at a door knob factory for a couple of weeks now... He's finally getting a handle on it.

I can't understand why people dislike vegans so much - I've never had a beef with them.

I bought a first aid kit the other day - I thought I'd treat myself.

I thought I'd try to wear a jumper two sizes too small - I couldn't pull it off.

I went for a job interview the other day and the manager said, "We're looking for someone who is responsible." I replied, "Well I'm your man, in my last job, whenever anything went wrong, they said I was responsible."



• All three North Central Netball grades and coaches.

Triple Treat for North-Central Netballers

(From Kath Lanyon, North Central Netball Association Secretary)

The NCNA is thrilled to announce that its representative squads have won the “AFLCV Gala Day Trophy” for the third consecutive year.

Full credit to all those involved with NCNA teams on the day!

Loddon Valley, North-Central and Heathcote District representative sides come together to play netball and football matches against each other.

Our squads and umpires represented NCNA incredibly well. Thank you to our parents and supporters for your time and effort over the past few months. Huge thanks to our NCNA Junior Development Officer, Sara Adams, for your organisation throughout our 2025 representative season. Our biggest thank you should go to our coaches for their dedication, time and knowledge. This is a big commitment, and we acknowledge and thank you for your efforts. To U17 coaches Kylie Walsh and Claudia Lee, U15 Eliza Lockhart and U13 Roxy Train – amazing effort ladies!

A big shout out to one of NCNA major sponsors,

“North West Ag Services” for our new NCNA marquee – this looked terrific courtside on Sunday. Thank you!

Congratulations to Willow, Milla and Libby for being awarded Most Valuable Player throughout their tournament campaigns for their respective squads.

Well done to all on the tournament season which saw NCNA compete in four events over May and June. It is a great opportunity and we encourage girls to attend trials early next year when it’s time to do it all again! See you at the courts!

Gala Day Results 2025

13-&-Under: Match 1, HDFNL 15 lost LVFNL 19. Match 2, HDFNL 13 lost NCNA 23. Match 3, LVFNL 18 lost NCNA 20.

Most Valuable Players: Michala Keele (HDFNL), Lana Medhurst (LVFNL), Willow Vearing (NCNA).

15-&-Under: Match 1, NCNA 25 lost HDFNL 37. Match 2, NCNA 21 lost LVFNL 22. Match 3, HDFNL 28 won LVFNL 16.

Most Valuable Players: Milla Ryan (HDFNL), Ashlee Medhurst (LVFNL), Milla Adams (NCNA).

17-&-Under: Match 1, LVFNL 16 lost NCNA 44. Match 2, LVFNL 14 lost HDFNL 41. Match 3, NCNA 33 won HDFNL 18.

Most Valuable Players: Ruby Loverso (HDFNL), Alina Gould (LVFNL), Libby Thompson (NCNA).

Under-18 Football
HDFNL: 13, 15, 93 to LVFNL: 3, 2, 20.

HDFNL goals: James Brentnall 2, Charlie O’Toole 2, Seb Barnett 2, Ari Morrissey 1, Elijah Hurley 1, Ryan Foster 1, Nicholas Mitchell 1, Liam Westerway 1, James Matthews 1, Sam Hancock 1.

LVFNL goals: Harrison Goodes 2, Cooper Murphy 1. HDFNL best players: Nicholas Mitchell, Ben Miller, Seb Barnett, Lochlan Basham, Jett Grundy, Will Malone.

LVFNL best players: Harrison Goodes, Tyler Rasmussen, Lincoln Hancock, Ryley Doorty, Blake Gibson

Most Valuable Players: #45 Harrison Goodes (LVFL), #6 Nicholas Mitchell (HDFNL).

AFL Central Victoria Gala Day Cup winner – North Central Netball Association – three years in a row. These were played at AFLCV Gala Day, which was held at Marist College in Maiden Gully.



• Individual MVPs, left to right: Kim Fitzpatrick (NCNA President), Libby Thompson (U17 MVP), Milla Adams (U15 MVP), and Willow Vearing (U13 MVP).



• HDFNL MVP winners and chairperson.



• LVFNL MVP winners and chairperson.

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Can Tigers Tame Raging Bulls?

(By Shane O'Shea)

Defending title holder Sea Lake-Nandaly finds itself in somewhat of an unfamiliar position, having dropped to fourth place in the North-Central pecking order following a comprehensive trashing at the hands of Calder United last Saturday.

While still firmly entrenched in the top four and on track to defend their premiership crown, the Tigers face another probing challenge tomorrow, when they head to Birchip's George Cartwright Oval, to take on the all-conquering Birchip-Watchem.

It will be the second time this season that last season's grand finalists have clashed, with the Bulls prevailing narrowly in round 3.

Last Saturday's loss was not the ideal lead-up to such an important match up, but can be attributed, in part, to the very impressive debut by Lions' first gamer, Dale Pearce, a former Central Districts player in the South Australian National Football League, whose contribution of 7 goals had a huge bearing on the outcome.

And then there are the players who weren't available for selection last Saturday, including multiple premiership players Matt Elliott and Luke Martin, both due to long-term injuries, as well as Josh Jenkins, Oscar Brownless, Jarvis Keogh, Jackson McMahon, Connor Michael, Lachy McClelland, Cooper Roberts and Kane Donnan.

Some, but not all, will return to take on Birchip-Watchem, and it will take a super team effort from Sea Lake-Nandaly to outscore the Bulls on their home turf.

Birchip-Watchem won convincingly against Donald

last Saturday, but was made to work overtime for the four premiership points by the Royal Blues, who set a new benchmark for themselves in terms of combined commitment and untiring effort.

The Bulls will be hoping ruck behemoth Hamish Hosking is fully fit to renew his ongoing duel with big Tiger Ryan O'Sullivan, and complement a wealth of talent at ground level that features Nic and Marshall Rippon, Lachie Ryan, Daniel Bell and Meyrick Buchanan.

Full-forward Ben Edwards remains on track to crack the century of goals by season's end, and is currently just 28 shy of that magical number.

Edwards is just one of Birchip-Watchem's goal kicking options, Rhona Conboy establishing himself as a very reliable alternative, while Dale Hinkley and Ben Lakin have combined to provide two pillars of strength in a formidable defensive unit.

With or without the missing ten listed previously, Sea Lake-Nandaly still possesses a powerful combination that includes Trent and Wade Donnan, Thomas Cox, Max Cahoon, Adam Pattison and ageless warhorse O'Sullivan, ensuring a very entertaining and enthralling clash between two very proud footballing units.

At home, Birchip-Watchem should extend its winning run.



• The Bulls' Cormac Wilson attempts to get the hands out under pressure from Tyson Mckenze, Adam Pattison and Thomas Cox in round three. —Photo by Blake Lee

Improvement Shows

It has taken half a season and numerous comprehensive defeats, but Donald is starting to show the fighting spirit exemplified by first year coach Daniel Pearce, who demands nothing of his players that he is not prepared to do himself.

To see Tom Reekie tackle Birchip-Watchem giant Hamish Hosking without flinching, a tight defensive unit including Charlie Campbell, Dyson Bell-Warren, George Walker, Nick and Daniel Atkins and Brady Griffiths, scrap and fight tooth and nail to restrict the efficiency of the Bulls' potent forward line, the Arho brothers, Ben, Brent and Sam, really get involved, and Luca Rice and Jett Adams take the game and their opponents on with relish, provided dedicated supporters with a much needed surge of pride.

Ross Young may be pushing 43 years of age, but the

inclusion of the veteran football and his sublime skills provided Donald with a massive boost last Saturday, his presence being sorely missed in recent weeks.

Such was Young's influence, even the best of the Bulls, Nic and Marshall Rippon, honoured his potential influence by manning him up at every opportunity . . . and yet he continued to win possession and weave his way through heavy traffic.

Donald could do with a dozen clones of the brilliant midfielder, preferably aged in the mid-twenties, so that supporters can continue to enjoy his talent for years to come.

Tomorrow, the Royal Blues will need to build on last weekend's impressive performance, if they are to have any chance of defeating Boort, which, having secured a finals berth, is gearing up for a red hot crack at September action.

Jhye Baddeley-Kelly, one of the early favourites for this season's Feeny Medal, Jayden Dick, Carlos Egan and Kane Rutley are some of the Magpies' most talented contributors who will need to be kept in check by Donald, to prevent a blow out on the scoreboard.

At home, and with a full head of steam generated by three successive wins, Boort will be very hard to beat.

Fifty-fifty Opportunity

Both host St. Arnaud and the visiting Charlton have an opportunity to savour a rare success this season when they clash at Lord Nelson Park. The Navy Blues hold a slight psychological advantage, having narrowly won their previous clash this season, in round 3, but from the first bounce, it will be game on.

Ben Xiriha, Pat Soulsby, Rhys and Jed Thompson have been in good form for Charlton, but will need plenty of support if the Navy Blues are to overcome the determined efforts of an improving Saints outfit.

Brad Organ, Kurt Torney, Owen Lowe and Jackson Needs provide plenty of run, generating scoring opportunity for St. Arnaud's big guns in attack, including Max Hungerford, whose influence could be the deciding factor.

If Hungerford fires, St. Arnaud can win, narrowly.

Redbacks Must Keep Winning

With its prospects of playing finals football virtually extinguished, Wedderburn needs a small miracle if it is to get back into calculations, but if it can set its sights on winning every game, starting tomorrow against a below-strength Sea Lake-Nandaly, the Redbacks' finishing position will take care of itself.

Knocking over the Tigers would see Wedderburn take a giant stride towards closing the gap that currently separates it from the top four.

To do that, they need to make every post a winner, from Mitch Jensen booting a bag of goals, to Joe Lockhart, Mitch and Jackson McEwen, Noah Furlong, Darcy Jackson and Hamish Lockhart controlling the midfield battles against the beating heart of the Sea Lake-Nandaly machine, as well as Adam Postle nullifying Ryan O'Sullivan and the Tom Metherell-led defence limiting the influence of the opposition attack.

Having suffered a comprehensive defeat at the hands of Calder United last round, Sea Lake-Nandaly can be expected to come out breathing fire, as it strives to reverse its downward spiral.

The return of two or three of the players missing last round would make a huge difference to the overall team balance, but the Tigers still possess the overall talent to account for the Redbacks.

NCFL
North Central Football League

EMERGENCY SERVICES APPRECIATION ROUND
SATURDAY JUNE 28TH, 2025

ROUND 10

BIRCHIP-WATCHEM BULLS	SEA LAKE NANDALY TIGERS
BOORT MAGPIES	DONALD ROYAL BLUES
ST ARNAUD SAINTS	CHARLTON NAVIES
WEDDERBURN REDBACKS	CALDER UNITED LIONS

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