

# Sydney Junior Rugby Union

## Annual Report 2019



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## OFFICE BEARERS

### **SJRU Board**

Tony Cooper -	Chairperson
Anthony Hunt -	Finance
Tricia Waters -	Competitions
Michelle Nisbet -	Girls Rugby
Luke McCormack -	Rep Rugby
Kate Page -	Rep Rugby
Michelle Taylor -	Marketing & Sponsorship
David Ogier -	Minis Rugby
Daniel Smith -	Western Zone
Nicole Roberts -	Southern Zone
Sandy Basten -	Northern Zone

### **Administration**

John Glen -	Youth Manager
Tricia Waters -	Competition Administrator (to end August 2019)

### **Judiciary**

Andrew Hourigan  
Grant Whatley  
Linda Hutton  
Lyndon Burke  
Chris Shaw  
Tina Brunton

### **Life Members**

Tony Fisher  
Geoff Ferris

# OFFICE BEARERS

## District Presidents

Eastern Suburbs  
Baron Alder



Eastwood District  
Michael Larkin



Gordon  
Mark Fredrickson



Manly  
Peter Gibson



Northern Suburbs  
Paul Rathbourne



Two Blues  
Mike Donaldson



Penrith  
Chris Hicks



Randwick  
David Caple



Southern Districts  
Chris Hilton-Beck



Sydney University  
Adam Dunn



Warringah  
Alistair Keep



West Harbour  
Paul Lockington



## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

[To be included]

[Photos]

# FINANCE REPORT

I am pleased to report that the Association had a strong financial result in 2019 with around \$41k profit recorded for the year compared to a loss of \$27k in 2018. Revenue increased by \$40k over last year and Expenses were down by \$28k from 2018. This was mainly attributed to:

- A significant increase in sponsorship and grant income from \$15k to \$52k
- Growth in Girls' Income from increased playing numbers and better collections
- Growth in Competition Fees from increasing the SJRU Levy from \$7.50 to \$10 (incl GST)
- Collecting Club and District Affiliation Fees
- Rep Revenues were down from 2018, largely due to a lower number of Rep teams in 2019. Rep Expenses were down even more, leading to a \$4k net improvement in the overall cost of Reps
- First Aid costs were reduced as SJRU no longer supplied First Aid
- Social Media costs were down because of reduced website costs

On the Balance Sheet the Association's Net Assets and liquidity are very strong. Our Cash at Bank is almost \$65k ahead of last year's position reflecting the surplus accrued during the year and also strong collections of outstanding debts. Debtors have also reduced.

Looking ahead, SJRU has formulated an Operating Plan for 2020 that involves a number of new commitments. The Association is in a strong financial position to be able to meet the commitments set out in that plan. We have already committed to funding an Administrator to run the Spring 7s

competition and will seek to have other similar resources in place during 2020.

The SJRU Board resolved at its November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting to approve and adopt the Association's Financial Statements For the Year Ending 30 September 2019 that have been audited by the Auditor, Mr Joseph Spano of Hill, Rae and Embrey.

The Financial Statements are appended in full to the Annual Report.

Anthony Hunt  
Director, Finance

## COMPETITION REPORT

Congratulations to all Rugby participants for their efforts in 2019.

To all those players, who managed to win Premierships, Plates, Sizzling 7's and Frosty 7's competitions during very well done, however everyone in the ~350 teams playing in SJRU competitions deserves a pat on the back for a well-played season.

## MINIS REPORT

This year has seen yet another wonderful success from all districts in Sydney. The Minis programs in the majority of districts continues to grow from strength to strength and the culture of support continues to be outstanding in the majority of instances.

This year's Interdistrict Gala Day, the second since it was started by now Director of Finance Anthony Hunt saw 310 Teams from the Under 6 to Under 9 Age group participate in the cross Sydney event. This event put on a show case of close to 600 games of minis rugby played at 9 Venues.

Normally the seven Sydney Districts run and control their own Minis Programs but once a year we like to shake it up and mix together different districts as to expose the kids to as many different clubs as possible.

The Minis have received large amounts of support from various organisations and I would like to mention:

- The Rugby Club Foundation who provided funding support to the Interdistrict Gala Day;
- Summer Lawyers for providing balls to our minis;
- From NSW Rugby, Mark Green and Erin Morton who assisted in arranging numerous appearances for various clubs; and
- Alex Richards was responsible for assisting in the arrangement of training for young referees, which assisted the districts in the running of their programs.

Western Sydney Minis completed a field test of rugby Xplorer for the distribution of the draw. This has proven to be a large success. This will pave the way for other districts to utilise the same draw management system that the juniors utilise.

Unfortunately, I will be unable to remain on the SJRU Board as the Army is posting me to Townsville for the next 12 months. It is with

regret that I spent most of this year learning and observing and preparing myself to tackle some exciting opportunities in 2020. This will fortunately flow over to the new director appointed to Minis.

I would like to thank all the district Minis Coordinators for their efforts and resolve this year as they are an outstanding bunch of volunteers. I would like to also thank the other directors and Tony as the chairperson of the board. It has been a pleasure working with each and every person. I can vouch that this team bleed, slept and breathed junior rugby with the best interest at improving the game. I look forward to returning and seeing the leaps and bounds that minis rugby will become over the next 12 months.  
Yours in rugby,

David Ogier  
Director Minis



## SOUTHERN ZONE REPORT

What another eventful year for Rugby in 2019. It has again been an honour to represent the Southern Zone and to be able to work with a fantastic and dedicated group of people. This includes of course the players but equally as important, all the volunteers working hard together so those players can take the field and play the game they love. It takes many people across a large number of roles to make each year successful and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those in the Southern Zone for helping to continue to grow this game.

Whilst numbers remained steady generally, it was great to see an Opens team (Southern Districts) back in the competition. I hope that in 2020, we potentially could have a couple of teams to assist in growing the numbers back up in the Opens category.

Southern Zone successfully hosted one of the Minis Gala Day locations at Rockdale. A great carnival atmosphere was created and success was both on and off the field. An increase in mini numbers in 2020 will be crucial in turning around the numbers of the future and with so many new initiatives on offer hopefully this will help.

Southern Zone performed well across the representative program this year but more importantly, the number of boys gaining selection into the U15 and U16 pathways was very strong and most exciting for the future. There are quite a few years with depth coming through and retaining and harnessing these boys' talents and further increasing their skills is quite exciting to see. All districts across the Zone have dramatically increased their involvement with Senior Clubs and increasing the professionalism of their representative programs. This assists the players to increase their skills and hopefully increase the number of amazing players from the Southern Zone gaining selection into higher representative honours.

2019 has been another huge year for Girls Rugby. Again, we saw an increase in participating numbers, an increase in competitions for them to compete in and an

increase in representative selections from the Southern Zone. It was most exciting to see the U13 and the U15 age groups take off at XV a side State Champs this year and the camaraderie between the girls and across the teams was fantastic to see. The Spirit of Rugby was in full force. Whilst the XV a side weekly competition did not get off the ground in 2019 I am sure that with the increase in numbers, interest and awareness the 2020 competition will be successful. The 7's competition saw the U13's hit the field as well.

Whilst on the topic of 7's, the inaugural SJRU Spring 7's competition kicked off in Term 4 2019 with several teams from the Southern Zone entering. It will be very exciting to see this competition go from strength to strength each year. A fantastic opportunity to keep up the fitness levels year-round, to grab a friend and introduce them to rugby and assist in growing numbers and gain registrations for the following year. Well done to all for putting in the effort to keep the players on the field and to getting this competition off the ground.

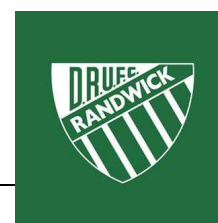
Finally, I was most excited to be able to find enough volunteer independent selectors to cover U14 to U16 Representative teams this year so that both at a Regional Level and Sydney Level we had a voice on the panels. I cannot thank enough those that volunteered and very much hope to see you around the grounds again next year. It is a lot to give up long weekends and holidays purely for the love of the game and the players from the Southern Zone very much appreciate it.

Another huge year awaits us in 2020 with several new competitions to get off the ground, each giving us an opportunity to grow the game.

Thanks for a great year and looking forward to 2020.

For the Love of Rugby

Nicole Roberts



## WESTERN ZONE REPORT

What a fantastic season of rugby across the Zone from Minis to Juniors!!

This is my first year in the role as Western Zone Rep after taking over from Kate Page 2018 and Gary Tunks in 2017. I have had the opportunity to talk with Presidents, coaches, managers and parents each week about rugby in the West. Rugby is certainly well and truly alive and is producing some amazing Junior players and results on and off the field.

I would like to personally thank all the clubs with the Western Zone and in particular the Western Zone District Presidents from Wests, Eastwood, Penrith and Western Sydney Two Blues for all their hard work and dedication in looking after all our village clubs.

**MINIS** - Our grassroots players have had a wonderful dry, winter of rugby. Minis in the Western Zone starts from U6 and continues to U9's, with some little ones starting as young 4yrs old!

The mini's via the Western Sydney Minis Comp again saw strong growth with 380 players from 35 teams within the Parramatta and Penrith Districts playing each week on a Sat morning at Central Venues across the 2 districts. Teams are streamed and allows for 2-3 clubs to be at one of 2 or 3 venues each week rather than home and away.

Wests Minis are at a centralised venue and play every Saturday at St Luke's Oval with all the minis coming together to play.

Eastwood District run a home and away system travelling from clubs each week including, Dural to Ryde to Pennant Hills to North Rocks. Minis had some great Gala Days hosted during the season by Redfield Rugby and Ryde Rugby. These are great days where Eastwood and the Western Sydney Minis join for a great day of rugby!

We also had the Inter-District Gala Day which saw minis families travelling to another district in Sydney for a fantastic day of rugby.

We look forward to seeing more kids playing rugby for their local clubs in 2019.

The Junior results from the Western Zone Sunday competition where again outstanding. Congratulations to the following teams and zones on your success in 2019 Grand Finals;

**Eastwood** – 10C Plate Final RYDE; 10E DURAL; 10G CENTRAL EASTWOOD; 11E PLATER FINAL NORTHERN BARBARIANS; 11E CENTRAL EASTWOOD; 12D RYDE AND NORTHERN BARBARIANS; 14C RYDE

**Penrith** – 10F BLUE MOUNTAINS; 12B PENRITH RSL; 12C WESTERN RAPTORS GREEN; 14A PENRITH RSL; 15A PENRITH RSL

**Two Blues** – 10C BLACKTOWN; 11A BLACKTOWN; 11F PLATE FINAL HILLS BLACK; 13A BLACKTOWN;

**Wests** - 16B WESTS PIRATES

U 16 AND U18 players no longer need to choose between rugby, league or soccer in 2020 on a Saturday. They can now play rugby on a Saturday and Sunday in an SJRU run competition.

Player numbers are steady in Juniors across the Western Zone, especially in the U10, 11s and 12's age groups.

Sadly, numbers are decreasing from U14s to U18's due to school commitments, however, we really encourage boys and girls to get involved in both Club and School rugby as it improves the skills and development of the players. Hopefully, with the U16 and U18 proposed Saturday competition in 2020 we may see kids coming back to the game.

**REPRESENTATIVE** - The Western Zone saw great success this year at the State Championships with the Zone taking out a number of Titles, from U12's to U17's in both girls and boys! Congratulations to:

U12 Boys – Penrith

U13 Girls – Two Blues/Eastwood

U15 Boys – Penrith

U17 Girls – West Harbour

**Congratulations** to those players selected to represent the Zone, Sydney and Gen Blue; NSW U18 and Australian U18's in 2019.

A big congratulations to the U15 Western Zone team who won the regionals v Northern Zone.

**Rep Transferring and Import Rule Zone -**

Presidents have been working hard this season with each other to ensure players are not travelling too far away from home or from their mates, where they should be playing for their local club. Its important players, parents and coaches are aware of the Rules in place and the impact it has when a Representative Player moves clubs or districts. Especially if it's not just one player and a whole team folds as a result of those multiple players moving.

We hope that in 2020, we see less player movements across Clubs and Districts, ensuring strength in the Districts of the Zone.

I would like to thank all my fellow SJRU Board members for their support of Western Zone in 2019 and I look forward to working with you in 2020.

Daniel Smith

Western Zone Representative



## NORTHERN ZONE

2019 was a fantastic season of rugby across the North from Drummoyne, to Hornsby, to Newport. I had five kids playing rugby from the under 8's to under 15's and most age groups in between. It was great to be out watching lots of junior rugby, often from Friday night to Sunday afternoon. It also gave me the opportunity to talk to many coaches, managers and parents each week about rugby.

Rugby is certainly well and truly alive in the north. The 2019 season started on 16 February with the Waratahs playing their opening game at Brookvale Oval flanked by junior rugby players from the Northern Beaches.

Wahroonga hosted the Alex Nobel Sevens, over consecutive weekends February and March. Thanks to the Wahroonga Club, for hosting a wonderful event and raising much needed funds for Alex.

There were number of mini's gala days held across the Northern zone throughout the year, congratulations to each of the following clubs for hosting excellent events, throughout the year:

- Lindfield Junior Rugby Mini's Gala Days (Under 6's – 9's)
- Harbord Harlequins Cup (Under 8s and 9's)
- Chatswood Challenge Cup (Under 8s and Under 9s)
- Dufficy Cup (Under 9s – Hunters Hill)
- Tiger Cup (Under 6s and Under 7s – Wahroonga)

Lindfield Junior Rugby Club celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> year in 2019, congratulations to all at the Lindfield club on behalf of the SJRU.

The Northern Zone saw great success this year at the State Championships. Congratulations to the following teams:

- Gordon boys won the Under 14's
- Norths boys were runner up in Under 15's
- Warringah boys won the Under 16's

Congratulations to those players selected to represent the Northern Zone, Sydney and Gen Blue in 2019.

Going forward into 2020, I would like to encourage the upskilling of our coaches to increase Level 1 and Level 2 numbers across the North. We need to make sure that the necessary courses are held on the North Shore. Similarly, I would also like to see an increase in managers who have completed the online Smart Rugby and Assistant Referee courses through the Rugby Learning Centre.

I also understand that size for age has been an issue for the Northern Zone Clubs. I am happy to say and the SJRU is taking steps to make sure that policy is implemented and data is effectively captured and managed. Stay tuned for more information as we move into 2020.

Sandy Basten

Director Northern Zone



## SEVENS & GIRLS RUGBY REPORT

2019 has again seen girls and women's rugby grow exponentially across Sydney. Sydney Juniors has seen a particularly large growth in across the u11 and u13 age group, with the competition growing so significantly in these age groups that we were able to run A and B divisions in the Frosty 7's competition.

Sizzling 7's kicked off this year at Centennial Park for what was a very wet and soggy evening of Rugby. Thankfully, that trend did not continue and the remainder of the sizzling 7's lived up to expectations. As with any first round there were a few teething problems and SJRU worked closely with NSWRU to smooth out the creases. Wave 1 Finals were hosted at West Juniors at St Lukes Concord and was a wonderfully successful end to a lovely successful summer of rugby.

The Frosty 7's saw the most significant growth allowing for grading of teams. This was wonderful for the newer teams to the competition as this allowed for the more experienced teams to truly test their skills and speed and the less experienced teams were afforded the opportunity to learn from each other and focus on building their skill base while playing teams of similar capabilities. The decision was taken this year to avoid splitting into zones. This meant the competition needed to start at 3pm to allow for all games to fit into the evening and it meant we were limited with playing locations as a minimum of 3 fields were required to fit all games in, however we were able to alleviate the issue of the lack of variety that we experienced last year.

Frosty 7's was as is usual, very frosty. The talent and commitment of the girls never

ceases to amaze me and some fantastic rugby played on some very cold Saturday nights. The girls showed their enormous dedication, commitment and team spirit, and are a credit to themselves and their clubs.

The Frosty 7's Finals were again hosted by West Juniors at St Lukes Concord. Finals were played in A & B divisions with the winners of each division awarded a trophy to be crowned 7s Champions in their overall age group and division brackets. Structured 7's competition formats have also been successful in helping girls hone their skills and build confidence in contact. This approach was also evident by the number of girl's teams who competed in the 2019 NSW Rugby 7s State Championships, held in October up in Tuncurry.

Congratulations to all the players, teams, village club administrators/volunteers that made for another successful 2019 Rugby 7's season. In particular, thank you to all of the support staff and first aiders, the back of house and on the ground support from Bippy Power, Tricia Waters, both from SJRU, and Michael Doyle and Claudia Bell from NSW Rugby. Most of all I would like to thank the referees, for all of their commitment and dedication to assisting us when we were very short or referees, it is important to remember, without the referees, we do not have a game to play.

I would like to personally thank everyone who has assisted me over the last 2 years to build and grow this amazing competition. I will be stepping down this year and plan to keep involved in other areas. I hope to see you all around the grounds.

Michelle Nisbet, SJRU Director Girls Rugby/7s

# 2019 SJRU REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

The Sydney Junior Rugby Union Representative program had a very successful year in 2019, with a host of new players experiencing Rep Rugby for the first time, and a new wave of coaches and support staff contributing to the development of youth rugby. I would like to thank all of those volunteers who spent countless hours on the sidelines, training paddocks, turning sausages, coordinating, officiating and ferrying players as well.

The program has multiple phases and ensures that players with talent and the desire to achieve, can be exposed to a higher level of competition, and a taste of the elite level of our sport. The program culminated in a highly successful day of rugby in Newcastle – with the annual City v Country clashes across the age groups.

## NSWJRU State Championships

The first step in the Representative XVs pathway was the NSWJRU State Championships (U12 to U17 with U10s and U11s holding Gala / Development day formats) which kicked off in early June. This year we had the following venues host State Championships and the winners of each age group:

U12 – Camden Rugby Club, Camden Rugby Park at Camden

**State Champions = Penrith**

U13 Boys – Maitland Blacks Rugby Club, Marcellin Park at Maitland

**State Champions = ACT Brumbies**

U13 Girls – Hunters Hill Rugby Club, Boronia Park at Hunters Hill

Finals at Wests Juniors, St Lukes Ovals at Concord

**State Champions = Two Blues / Eastwood**

U14 – Orange City Rugby Club, Waratahs Sports Club at Orange

**State Champions = Gordon**

U15 Boys – Wests Juniors, St Lukes Ovals at Concord

**State Champions = Penrith**

U15 Girls – Hunters Hill Rugby Club, Boronia Park at Hunters Hill

Finals at Wests Juniors, St Lukes Ovals at Concord

**State Champions = Brisbane Juniors**

U16 – Narrabeen Tigers Junior Rugby, North Narrabeen Reserve at Narrabeen

**State Champions = Warringah**

U17 Girls – Hunters Hill Rugby Club, Boronia Park at Hunters Hill

Finals at Wests Juniors, St Lukes Ovals at Concord

**State Champions = West Harbour**

Opens (U18) - Narrabeen Tigers Junior Rugby, North Narrabeen Reserve at Narrabeen

**State Champions = Hunter**

## NSWJRU Regionals

The Representative XV calendar continued with the NSW Regionals for the older age groups. This year the regionals were successfully hosted at Grantham Reserve by the Blacktown Junior Rugby Club.



Many thanks to the team of volunteers for making this weekend a success (and at very short notice).

These games are primarily trials for the respective Sydney and Country teams in the U14, U15 & U16 age groups. This carnival is always one of the most enjoyable, with high quality rugby and further selections opportunities adding to the drama.

This year the format was as follows:

- U14 Possible vs Probables, U14 Select XV vs Country U14
- U15 Met West Zone, Met North Zone, Met South Zone and Barbarians, plus U15 Country Black and U15 Country Gold (Round Robin)
- U16 SJRU Blue, U16 SJRU Red, Presidents XV, Country U16

## Sydney vs NSW Country

Due to the nature of this year's representative calendar the U18 Sydney vs NSW Country game was played on a Saturday night at Chatswood Oval following the Shute Shield game. It was a cracking match with spots in the NSW Juniors U18 team up for grabs for the players and the winning coaching team would also get the coaching gig for the NSWJRU I team.

Sydney won the game meaning the coaching team of Mark Houston, Brett Fawcett & Mark Rechner assumed the NSWJRU I role for the second year running, with the NSW Country crew taking over the NSWJRU II team.

### *Sydney U18 vs NSW Country U18*

U18 (Michael Brial Cup) SJRU 24 defeated CJRU 18

A big and parochial crowd was one of the highlights of the NSW Positive Rugby Foundation City v Country Carnival which was held at the fantastic Newcastle Sports Ground No.2 on Sunday 4th August.

The Wanderers club hosted NSW Juniors for the annual clash of the junior affiliates in Sydney Junior Rugby Union (SJRU) and NSW Country Junior Rugby Union (CJRU). It was a beautiful day for rugby at a superb venue which saw five fixtures on the schedule - the traditional boys' games in the U14, U15 and U16 age groups, to be joined by the girls U17 fixture. Making its debut was the girls U15 fixture, certainly a great display of rugby from all. Our traditional U18 fixture was played earlier in the year as a one-off game.

The U14 Game was first up and a very strong and physical Sydney team proved too strong for a valiant Country team, taking the **'Tim Gavin Shield'** with a 48-7 win.



The U15 girls were welcomed to the field with a HUGE tunnel for both teams as they ran on for the very first clash. In a cracking game the Country girls scored first and looked like they might run away with it before the Sydney team hit back with a try of their own. Scores were locked at 5-5 for the majority of the game before 2 late tries sealed the deal for Sydney.

The Sydney girls holding the '**Mahalia Murphy Shield**' for the first time.



The U15 Boys then came out and lifted the bar again - Sydney scored two wonderful tries with very slick backline moves to take the early lead but NSW Country came back to level the game up and a draw looked likely. But as with the girls game prior - Sydney scored late and their right winger sealed the match with his third try to clinch the win 27-17. SJRU win the '**Steve Tuynman Cup**' for 2019.





The '**Grace Hamilton Shield**' was up for grabs in the U17 Girls match - NSW Country had been the only team to have won this fixture so far, but Sydney were coming off a win in their most recent encounter at the Australian Schoolgirls & U18 Nationals.

Sydney moved into their groove quickly and raced to a lead, but the Country girls showed plenty of grit to hold their own. A few more tries flowed later in the game and Sydney won their first Grace Hamilton Shield 46-5.



The U16 boys clash had double meaning for the teams - as well as being the traditional City vs Country clash it was also the sixth and last game of the NSW Positive Rugby Foundation U16 Invitational (which is the selection tournament between, SJRU, CJRU and NSW Schools for places in the two NSW teams to contest the U16 Nationals later in the year). Selectors were on hand to finalize their squads and 'sheep stations' were up for grabs. Sydney started the better and rushed to a lead which they held reasonably comfortably at halftime. But the Country boys had other ideas and stormed home in the second half to snatch the win and take home the '**Ella Cup**' for 2019.



There are always so many people to thank, and I apologize if I miss anyone, but I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the efforts of Kate Page (my partner in crime), Nicole Roberts, Anthony Hunt,

Michelle Nisbett, Andrew Skelly, Tony Cooper, Kerry Brady, Tricia Waters, Matt Evrard, Mark Green and of course the NSWJRU President - Ben Gregory. Ben is an absolute rock and should be commended for his recrafting of the junior pathway.

I would also like to pay tribute to the tireless work done by coaches, managers and selectors who volunteer their time for the sole purpose of youth rugby development. These people are the heart and soul of our game!

To the parents who ferry players across Sydney and the State – thanks for all you do. We strive to give your children a great rugby experience – and hopefully you are pleased with the dividends of your support.

To the players – I hope you left the program as better players – and more importantly better people. Rep Rugby is a gift built on the hard work of your clubs – so hopefully your club teammates and more broadly the SJRU is stronger as a result of your commitment!

Finally, I would like to thank SJRU Chair Tony Cooper. ‘Coops’ is as rugby as rugby gets, and his mentoring and sage counsel was always welcome.....Thanks Coops!

Luke McCormack - Director of Representatives

# GRAND FINAL RESULTS 2019

*Sunday Competition*

*Friday Night Competition*

***Sizzling 7's***

***Frosty 7's***