Victoria Police leads the way for new Reclink Ballarat Bushrangers Football team

25 March 2018

The Reclink Australia Football League facilitates partnerships between multiple community service providers to unlock the potential for each organisation to collaborate and combine efforts. Football is used to create pathways for those most disadvantaged to re-engage with their local communities.

Reclink Australia received funding in July 2017 through the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation’s Prevention Partnership Program to create two new Reclink Victorian Football Leagues in regional Victoria. These new leagues, operating in Central Victoria and Gippsland, will support 10 communities, breaking the cycle of disadvantage and pathways to risky behaviours, such as gambling.

The Central Victorian Reclink League has begun by establishing two new teams, one in Ballarat, the other in Maryborough.

The Ballarat team, named the Bushrangers, is run by the Victoria Police, Ballarat Division with support from local agencies Sports Central, Uniting, Ballarat Community Health and CMY. The Ballarat Council has also supported the program in helping the team find suitable grounds to use each week. The team itself brings together people from all kinds of backgrounds from the community who enjoy football but also get a lot out of the team socially. The program itself aims to attract players of all abilities, genders and ages 16+, it is free to all participants and all players are supplied with uniforms from the Guernseys down to a pair of socks and shoes.

So far the team has about 15 players but Coaches Brendan Everade and Ross Andrews would love a few more on the field, “It’s awesome to be a part of this program personally and professionally, so far the team has bonded well and is training well every Wednesday, we are encouraging all the players to promote the new team in the community and we would love to have 25-30 regular players.”

Ross Andrews also commented that Reclink “is a great initiative to be a part of and a natural extension of what we try to do at Vic Police to improve the lives and wellbeing of our community.”

“Being a part of a league is a really transformative experience. The benefits of participation are huge; they include better physical and mental health, greater social connectedness and employment outcomes. This project is going to have a hugely positive impact on these communities.”

John Ballis, Reclink Australia CEO

Reclink Australia has been transforming the lives of people experiencing disadvantage through its Victorian Football League for more than 25
years. This all age, all ability, all gender competition involving 13 teams has recently been evaluated by La Trobe University, which in its Social Return on Investment for the Victorian Reclink Australia Football League report found that for every $1 invested in cash, staff time, volunteer time and other resources to operate the Victorian Reclink Australia Football League, it generates at least $8.94 in social value.

Reclink Australia is a not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to enhance the lives of people experiencing disadvantage or facing significant barriers to participation, through providing new and unique sports and arts opportunities and specialist recreation program.

Training Day Details: Every Wednesday 11am ? 12:30pm at White Flat Reserve, Ballarat

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