



Photo: Jane Larkin



**QUIDDITCH
AUSTRALIA**

2020 Mid-Year Reports

Board of Directors and Major Departments



Contents and Introduction

Written by Ajantha Abey on behalf of the Board of Directors – admin@quidditchaustralia.org

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Document Purpose

The purpose of providing this mid-year report is to provide transparency on the activities of the board and other divisions of Quidditch Australia over the last period, from December 2019. It has also been provided to give a clearer sense of what Quidditch Australia has been doing and what directors do.

This document contains reports from each individual Director pertaining to their own portfolios and responsibilities, as well as the two major long-running initiatives in Quidditch Australia - NSO recognition, and the Gender Engagement Committee.

This document has been compiled by Ajantha Abey, with individual reports being written by the respective directors or departmental heads.



The 2020 Board of Directors

This year the board has been comprised of:

Luke Derrick - President

Jamie Turbet - Secretary

Nicola Gertler - Treasurer

Alistair Yap - Events Director

Kelsey Collins - Gameplay Director

Scott Palmer - Membership Director

Ajantha Abey - Media & Communications Director



In addition to scheduled general board meetings that occur on a roughly monthly basis, there have also been a number of emergency meetings this year pertaining to Dropbears and Covid-19 that have meant that the board has met roughly once/fortnight this year so far. The minutes of these meetings, as well as departmental meeting minutes, can all be found at www.quidditchaustralia.org/official-documents.

Some of the major agenda items that have involved whole or near-whole board input/discussion/comment this year have included Dropbears (jerseys, merchandise, suppliers, decisions in response to Covid-19, campaign planning, etc.), Events decisions (State Shield and QUAFL locations), Event and Gameplay policy updates and document formats, a couple of complaints/incidents, and a revision of board roles and expectations, and the various policies instituted in response to Covid-19.



Board Roles and Responsibilities

As **President**, Luke has usually been responsible for chairing meetings, and provides a report overviewing the activities of Quidditch Australia over the last seven months.

As **Secretary**, Jamie is responsible for organising meetings and taking minutes, is in charge of managing complaints, and also has taken responsibility for governance (updating policies), and board oversight of the NSO recognition initiative. She is also the board's representative to Dropbears management, providing oversight to the National team, and is closely involved with the Gender Engagement Committee, Strategic Planning, and other initiatives such as our partnership with Deadly Sports Plus, and fundraising.

As **Treasurer**, Nicola produces financial reports, monitors all of Quidditch Australia's transactions including membership purchases and refunds, is in charge of the organisation's budget, and organises Quidditch Australia's member insurance. She has also been involved with fundraising and sponsorship efforts and is naturally closely involved in the memberships process.

As **Events Director**, Alistair has been responsible for reaching out to and/or coordinating with locations for State Shield and QUAFL 2020, as well as updating our events sanctioning policies, documents, and forms for the new post-Covid season.

As **Gameplay Director**, Kelsey has largely been focused on a thorough revision of the Gameplay policies, with input from other board members, as well as working with the Gameplay committee on a number of proposals including referee reviews and other policies. She has also been involved with the Strategic Planning process.

As **Membership Director**, Scott is responsible for organising, reporting, and updating information regarding Quidditch Australia memberships. Scott has also taken responsibility for Quidditch Australia's merchandise.

As **Media and Communications Director**, Ajantha has been responsible for shifting Quidditch Australia's IT infrastructure from Webmail to Gsuite and creating a new website for the organisation, in addition to running our social media platforms and promoting Quidditch Australia's initiatives and activities. This has included development and promotion of policies and information with regards to Covid-19, close involvement with the Strategic Planning initiative and Gender Engagement Committee, running several social media campaigns, and writing/curating various articles. Ajantha has also taken on responsibility for a major HR restructuring within Quidditch Australia, designing a census of the community, was in charge of Qeurovision in Australia, and acts as Australia's representative to the International Quidditch Association.



Quidditch Australia Departments and Initiatives

Outside of the Board of Directors itself, the major initiatives and departments of Quidditch Australia include the Dropbears, the Gameplay Department, the HR Department, The Gender Engagement Committee, and The NSO Recognition Department.

Reports on the Dropbears have been included in Jamie's Secretary report, and HR have been included in Ajantha's Media & Communications report, and Gameplay in Kelsey's Gameplay report.

The Gender Engagement Committee, formed in 2019, is led by Courtney Buckley, who has provided a separate report on the committee's activities.

The NSO Recognition Department, also established in 2019, is led by Eleonora Leopardi, who has also provided a separate report regarding progress on this front.



Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography



President's Report

Written by Luke Derrick – president@quidditchaustralia.org

This year has been a struggle for everyone all over the country. Bushfires, the Covid-19 pandemic and large spread protests and calls for change about police brutality have created a year in which we as an organisation have struggled to find purpose.

However, many special people working in Quidditch Australia have done this. Eleonora Leopardi, along with the work of Jamie Turbet and Alison Newton, have done amazing work on furthering the goal of getting Australia officially recognised as a sport. Their wonderful work has led to the multiple forums that have occurred which I believe have advanced the sport in the best way possible during this time.

Our events, gameplay, and membership departments (led by Alistair, Kelsey and Scott respectively) have been working on policy and regulations to further better Quidditch as both a social and a competitive sport. Our media department (led by the wonderful AJ) has been amazing at keeping everyone engaged and in the know about what is happening in regard to coming out of isolation and what the board has been doing in the meantime. I also have to thank the work of Nicola and Jamie who do so much work that is hardly seen apart from those who like to delve deep into board meeting minutes or financial summaries.

All we can do as a community now is do our best and slowly move back into playing the sport we all know and love. We must endeavour to continue protecting ourselves and our teammates however by continuing to enact social distancing and sanitisation as best we can. We have done great work at the beginning of 2020 by coping with all of these circumstances as best we could/can and I feel we deserve to come back and enjoy the sport we all want to be playing right now.

Thank you all for understanding and accepting the regulations, cancellations or restrictions which have occurred and may further occur down the line. We may not be out of the woods completely yet but I for one can feel the sun peeking through the thinning treetops and it feels ever so sweet.



Secretary's Report

Written by Jamie Turbet – secretary@quidditchaustralia.org

Governance Committee

The Governance Committee currently has one member working with myself, Eleonora Leopardi, who at the moment is doing a review of all our policies, as most have not been reviewed in 5 years or more. Eleonora is currently working on the Extreme Weather Policies (hazardous air quality, extreme heat etc.) and once we start working on the Membership Protection Policy we will be contacting the NSW Ombudsman to gain their assistance, as we are hoping to improve upon the policy and ensure it is fit for the community. We are hoping to get this work done by the end of 2020.

Another goal of the Governance committee is to review our constitution, propose any necessary amendments as well as create By-laws for Quidditch Australia. This work is necessary as our constitution is missing some key sections, such as a voting system, and there are some changes that will need to occur to ensure our administration is up to scratch for Sports Australia recognition. Our goal is to present our work at the 2020 AGM.

Dropbears

It's been a rocky road for the Dropbears this year with some major changes to the squad. Due to the situation with COVID-19 and the postponement of World Cup to 2021, we have decided to move the current squad in its form of 21 players, 4 alternates and 5 training squad members to one squad of 30, for the reselection of the team to take place at a later date. There is also the potential for extra applicants to be added onto the squad through an application process that will be advertised at a later stage. This decision was made by the Board of Directors with consultation from the Dropbears management team and the community through our Club representatives.

There will also be other opportunities advertised to be a part of other aspects of the squad: management, selection and coaching. We in particular are looking for a diverse group of people to come on board to help #ReclaimTheGold in 2021. We will also be introducing steps that allow the community to be involved in this process by encouraging teams to submit members they believe would be good for the role. It will also be necessary for all new applicants for management, coaching or selector positions to have their application endorsed by two clubs, similar to the process of board member applications. We are hoping this process will ensure the community



has fair input into the individuals that represent the community at a national and international scale as well as encouraging a diverse array of applicants.

The Dropbears management team has also worked hard for the board in securing uniform and merchandise suppliers and designs.

We decided to partner with Ora Designs for the creation of the Dropbears image and related merchandise and uniforms, a business run by USC Dementors player Abbey Ashfield-Crook. She was a pleasure to work with throughout this process and a major asset to the team, producing high quality products we can't wait to share with the community.

For the majority of our uniform and merchandise kits we will be working with the supplier ISC. Whilst our plans with them have been put on hold due to the COVID-19 situation, we look forward to working with them soon.

We are also sadly saying goodbye to Ruth Creffield, who has been the Dropbears manager for the past year. She has put in an enormous effort into the team thus far, securing for us jerseys designs, merchandise and player kit suppliers as well as a million logistical requirements such as training locations. She has been the glue that held the team together for the past year, and will be dearly missed by the rest of the team.

Portia Ashton has been promoted to the role of Dropbears Manager from her previous role as Assistant Manager. We have full confidence in her ability to take over the management of the Dropbears team and look forward to working with her for the rest of the campaign.

Complaints Management

For the past 6 months I have been researching ways in which we can improve the complaint management system for Quidditch Australia, and implement some training to equip the leadership of clubs to better understand their responsibilities and how best to handle a complaint.

This has started with the review on the Membership Protection Policy by the Governance committee and has extended into looking at training resources to be given to clubs, which I am looking at introducing in the near future.

The aim of this reform is to remove barriers and misunderstandings that come from lodging a complaint and to create clearer pathways for who to go to for a complaint, as well as what level it should be handled, ie. club, state, or QA. I am hoping this will create a safer environment for our members, and to empower them to come forward when they have concerns. I am also hoping this will assist the leadership teams of clubs and make their job a little easier.



Deadly Sports Plus Partnership

Quidditch Australia has partnered with Deadly Sports Plus from 2020 this year for the Dropbears team. Deadly Sports Plus has committed to each of the Dropbear training camps and travelling to the USA as the Head Sports Trainer, providing essential healthcare to the team.

Furthering their dedication to the sport, Deadly Sports Plus has created a Concussion workshop for Quidditch Australia members. This training provides members of the community with an understanding of what a concussion is, how to identify a suspected concussion, how to assist an individual with a suspected concussion, as well as what the short and long term effects of a concussion are. These workshops have been greatly beneficial to the quidditch community and will lead to a safer playing environment for all. There have been 5 workshops to date hosted on the following dates, with more to be offered throughout the year:

3rd of May
6th of May
9th of May
7th of June
27th of June

With the following dates planned for July, August, and September:

7th July, 7pm
25th July, 3pm
6th August, 7pm
22nd August, 3pm
9th September, 7pm

We would like to give special thanks to Nic Radoll, our representative from Deadly Sports Plus, for all the hard work they put into the community and the dedication they have shown in making our playing environment a safer.

Gender Engagement Grant

In December 2019 we applied for a grant to further the engagement of women in the sport through a player growth program that was proposed to be hosted around the country. This would have entailed workshops aimed at improving the skills and confidence of women as players, referees and snitches.



Unfortunately, Quidditch Australia was unsuccessful for this grant application, namely due to the work that still needs to be done in the professional planning of the organisation. This has largely been improved upon this year with the work being done for our Strategic Plan as well as the publication and accessibility of the organisation's AGM minutes. There is still more work to be done, however, which we aim to complete in the latter half of 2020. These include auditing our financial records, updating our contact details with NSW Fair Trading and formalising our spending policies.



Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography



Treasurer's Report

Written by Nicola Gertler – treasurer@quidditchaustralia.org

Overview

The conclusion of 2019 saw Quidditch Australia sitting in an excellent financial position comparative to our net negative position at the conclusion of the 2018 calendar year.

Quidditch Australia will be renewing our insurance policy in line with the commencement of the new financial year and will be making our annual insurance payment as of July 1st 2020.

Quidditch Australia intends that funds from memberships, as well as profit made from the 2019 Australian Quidditch Championships and hopefully the 2020 Australian Quidditch Championships shall fund future quidditch initiatives, including National Sporting Organisation recognition, committee events, and providing incentives for volunteers, referees and such.

From the 1st January 2020 to the 30th of June 2020, Quidditch Australia invested in a new website and email platform intending to better promote our association and make communications more accessible for members, the Board and volunteers. Further investments have not been made in areas such as listed above due to the Covid-19 outbreak and suspension of quidditch for the first half of 2020.

Due to the cancellation of the Quidditch Australia's State Shield this year, the board have determined to drop club player membership prices to \$50 for the 2020 calendar year. Refunds of \$10 per membership will be issued to those who purchased club player membership already for this year in the coming month. While this is only a small decrease, our intention is always to reinvest all membership fees back into the development of Australian Quidditch while covering our administrative and insurance costs.



Financial Report FY2019-2020

Opening Balances & Income:

QAI Yearly Financial Summary			
July 1st 2019 - June 30th 2020			
	OPENING TOTAL	\$	31,843.15
	COMMONWEALTH BANK	\$	10,278.64
	PAYPAL	\$	21,564.51
Income			
Category			Amount
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	HEAD REFEREE PAYMENT (BOUNCED)	\$	20.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	MERCHANDISE	\$	4,997.83
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	REGISTRATION	\$	10,778.47
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	SOCIAL TICKET	\$	1,226.87
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	THANKYOU GIFTS (BOUNCED)	\$	35.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	MERCHANDISE	\$	1,174.05
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	REGISTRATION	\$	1,486.76
CLUB MEMBERSHIP 2020	CLUB MEMBERSHIP 2020	\$	1,795.30
MEMBERSHIP 2019	MEMBERSHIP 2019	\$	3,265.83
MEMBERSHIP 2020	MEMBERSHIP 2020	\$	15,163.90
SCAM CHARGE	SCAM CHARGE	\$	543.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	BANNER REFUND DUE TO INCORRECT SIZE	\$	65.57
STATE SHIELD 2019	TICKETS AND MERCHANDISE	\$	305.95
STATE SHIELD 2019	MERCHANDISE STALL	\$	1,492.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	SOCIAL TICKET	\$	1,326.26
STATE SHIELD 2019	TEAM FEE	\$	1,250.00
Total Income		\$	44,926.79



Expenses & Closing Balances:

Expenses		Amount	
Category			
ADMINISTRATION	EMAIL ACCOUNT FEE	-\$	79.60
ADMINISTRATION	INCORRECT TRANSFER FEE	-\$	2.50
ADMINISTRATION	JOTFORM FEE	-\$	633.18
ADMINISTRATION	JOTFORM FEE	-\$	29.06
ADMINISTRATION	WEBSITE	-\$	531.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	FIELDS	-\$	259.90
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	FIRST AID	-\$	2,772.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	HEAD REFEREE PAYMENT	-\$	1,180.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	MERCHANDISE	-\$	4,273.83
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	MISC	-\$	56.52
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	THANKYOU GIFTS	-\$	157.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	FIELD	-\$	828.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	MEDALS AND TROPHY	-\$	487.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	REGISTRATION REFUND	-\$	140.00
AUSTRALIAN QUIDDITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019	TRADING CARDS	-\$	1,060.02
CIE LEGAL FEES	CIE LEGAL FEES	-\$	1,052.91
CLUB MEMBERSHIP 2020	REFUND	-\$	25.00
CONCUSSION EDUCATION WORKSHOP	CONCUSSION EDUCATION WORKSHOP	-\$	390.00
DROPBears 2020	FIELD HIRE	-\$	739.35
DROPBears 2020	UNIFORM DESIGN	-\$	400.00
INSURANCE 2019 - 2020	INSURANCE 2019 - 2020	-\$	17,910.42
INSURANCE CLAIM PAYOUT	INSURANCE CLAIM PAYOUT	-\$	1,200.00
MEMBERSHIP 2019	REFUND	-\$	60.00
MEMBERSHIP 2020	REFUND	-\$	420.00
QA AGM 2019	AGM VENUE	-\$	385.00
QUIDDITCH AUSTRALIA STRATEGIC FORUM	TEA AND COFFEE SUPPLIES	-\$	72.94
SCAM CHARGE	SCAM CHARGE	-\$	543.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	FIRST AID	-\$	150.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	SNITCH PAYMENT	-\$	65.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	WELCOME TO COUNTRY	-\$	770.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	BANNER	-\$	144.86
STATE SHIELD 2019	EQUIPMENT LOAN	-\$	50.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	FIRST AID	-\$	800.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	HEAD REFEREE PAYMENT	-\$	320.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	LIVE STREAM	-\$	3,410.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	MEDALS	-\$	383.66
STATE SHIELD 2019	MERCHANDISE TO VQA	-\$	132.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	SOCIAL TICKET REFUND	-\$	9.74
STATE SHIELD 2019	SOCIAL VENUE	-\$	850.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	SUPPLIES	-\$	47.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	TROPHY	-\$	49.90
STATE SHIELD 2019	FIELD HIRE	-\$	2,585.00
STATE SHIELD 2019	THANKYOU GIFTS	-\$	100.00
Total Expenses		-\$	45,555.39

Net Income			
		-\$	628.60
	CLOSING TOTAL	\$	31,214.55
	COMMONWEALTH BANK	\$	26,329.76
	PAYPAL	\$	4,884.79



Photo: Maddi Moulton Photography



Membership Report

Written by Scott Palmer – membership@quidditchaustralia.org

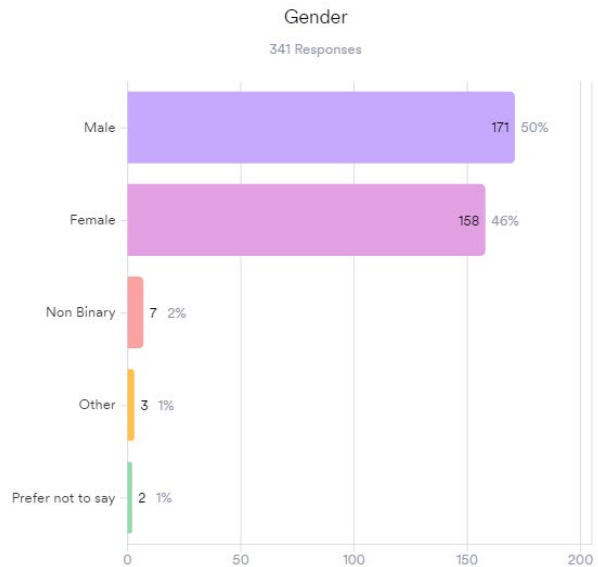
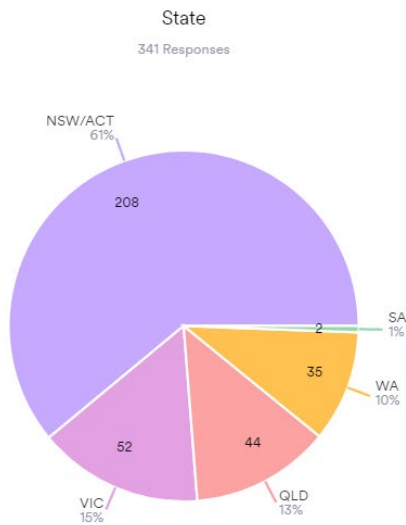
Memberships

We have seen a slight decrease with memberships this year but that is expected with the circumstances that we are in. We currently have 327 memberships across the states and territories. We also have only 22 clubs signed up this year, however this is also slightly down but we have a few conglomerate clubs in NSW now, with UTS and UNSW having merged into Eastern Universities Quidditch Club, and the Weasleys, Wollongong, and Illawarra having merged into the Greater Southern Quidditch Clubs.

The table I have below shows where the memberships are coming from. We, the board, had introduced 2 new types of memberships this year: social and non- player, with many individuals taking these options to be a part of the Quidditch Australia community.

STATE/TERRITORY	# Of Memberships	Breakdown
QNSW/ACT	206	2 SOCIAL; 15 TRIAL; 5 NON PLAYER; 184 FULL
QAQ	42	5 TRIAL; 1 SOCIAL; 36 FULL
WAQA	22	1 TRIAL; 3 NON-PLAYER; 18 FULL
VQA	55	3 TRIALS; 3 NON-PLAYER; 49 FULL
SAGA	2	2 FULL

The following charts show a breakdown of the number of memberships so far from each state, and the gender break down across the country. This is the first year Quidditch Australia has recorded gender as part of our membership data.



Let's hope that the second half of the year allows us to grow even more. We are currently looking into a new membership system for next year as we seek recognition to become a sport in the eyes of Australia. But we will keep you updated on this.

Merchandise

The other area of my portfolio is merchandise, with the delayed World Cup to 2021 - we will have some exciting merchandise for our Dropbear team and community. With this will come a range of new merchandise that Quidditch Australia will be selling, so keep your eyes and ears out for the launch of this campaign. I am always open to suggestions for new types of merchandise, as we start to think about QUAFL this would be the great opportunity for you to let me know. Just send me and email on membership@quidditchaustralia.org.



Gameplay Report

Written by Kelsey Collins – gameplay@quidditchaustralia.org

Gameplay Policy Document

The Gameplay Policy Document is currently under review. Many updates and minor changes have thus far been instated. The plan is to “future-proof” the document, so that it does not need a full review every time a new rule book is implemented, or when the Gameplay Director is replaced.

There are several specific parts of the document which require a lot more work, and collaboration from the board as a whole, as well as more input from the Gameplay committee which is currently quite small, with only three members including the Gameplay Director.

The most obvious change that has been implemented is the removal of separate policies from the Gameplay document; an example would be the removal of the Extreme Weather Policies (such as Hazardous Air Policy), where these documents are now referenced, with embedded links rather than being a part of the full document. Some of these policies have been reviewed by the Events department and will be further reviewed before the new Gameplay Document is released.

It is slow-going, as the document is quite extensive and there are many changes to be made. We hope to release the new document for 2021. Releasing it before then would be ill advised as we are just about to change rule books, and the current 2020 season has been in a period of postponement due to the COVID19 shutdowns.

Australian Referee Review

The gameplay department has been working on several proposals for improving refereeing in Australia, specifically; referee certification, rewards systems, field testing and an Australian specific uniform. It is now a plan to have a strategic meeting with interested parties to further develop these proposals before implementing them, hopefully in the new year. Alongside the referee review, a Snitch review is also underway, with many of the referee strategies to be discussed and implemented being relevant to the requirements to further the development of Australian Snitching.



Other Policy Documents

As mentioned above, several other policies have either been reviewed or are pending review, not all will be named in this report as there are many.

In conjunction with the new requirements for teams to participate in the Concussion Workshop, the Concussion Policy has been under review, with several updates. This has yet to be finalised and released.

The Hazardous Air Policy is being reviewed in conjunction with the feedback from QUAFL 2019.



Photo: Maddi Moulton Photography



Events Report

Written by Alistair Yap – events@quidditchaustralia.org

Events Policy Document

One of the primary focuses for the year was a review of the event sanctioning process and the policies and procedures involved in the process. The event sanctioning process was not very clear and well known by the quidditch community so streamlining the process and making it easier to follow was a priority before the commencement of the season. Despite the obvious setbacks that COVID-19 has presented, a new event sanctioning process has been developed and ready to be implemented once the quidditch season can finally get underway for 2020. Several policies that were also present in the Gameplay Policies Document have been removed and placed either in their own document or the Event Policy Document.

State Shield Update

We had originally decided on and planned for a State Shield again to be held in Sandringham, Victoria, at Trevor Barker Oval, continuing our relationship with this venue and trying to consolidate the expansion of the Victorian teams we had seen in 2019. It is with great regret that we have had to cancel State Shield 2020, due to uncertainty with Covid-19. State Shield is regarded as the showpiece event of the quidditch calendar and we feel that with the limited time for states to select and train their respective teams, it would not be possible to produce a tournament that showcases the high level of quidditch that the event is known for. Additionally, with how close State Shield is to QUAFL, we feel that individuals will be somewhat forced to choose between one of the 2 tournaments. However, we are looking at the possibility of hosting State Shield or an event of similar calibre in early 2021 but this is still very much in the early stages of discussion.

QUAFL 2020 Update

At this point we have a location set for QUAFL 2020, as well as a back-up location, and have set ourselves a hard deadline of August to make a final decision on whether the tournament goes ahead or not.



QUAFL 2019 Feedback Summary

Considering the adverse weather conditions that were around at the time of QUAFL, the tournament ran really smoothly with overall positive feedback from the community. Many praised the tournament format, schedule, field layout and overall organisation of the event while the location received average reviews. The lack of the rain in the preceding months and overall hot and dry weather conditions resulted in poor field quality that gradually deteriorated as the weekend progressed. The poor air quality due to the bushfires resulted in an Air Quality Policy being developed on short notice and feedback on this was positive with praise given to the actual policy and communication of it considering the short timeline. However, many felt that further consultation with appropriate healthcare resources were required but unfortunately, the timeline did not allow us to do so.

From a Gameplay perspective aside from the tournament format, the MVP voting system received positive feedback with particular praise for the new female/non-female voting format. There was much discussion before the tournament about the MVP voting system and whether it should continue to exist at QUAFL but seeing this feedback shows that the community still very much considers it an important aspect of quidditch. Suggestions were given to improve the system such as recognising 'Best and Fairest' players or 'Player of the Tournament' in addition to MVPs and a gender split that also ensures that non-binary and AFAB (assigned female at birth) players are recognised too. The quality of refereeing at the tournament received mixed feedback with the HRs and snitches receiving good feedback. The quality of ARs was the area that most felt needed improvement on. With Gameplay conducting a refereeing review, we hope that future tournaments will see an improvement in the quality of refereeing.

Other aspects that received positive feedback were the schedule banner, merchandise and the knowledge of exactly who to approach should they need any information.

The area that received the most negative feedback was the social venue due to the fact that it was very far away from the fields. A lack of suitable locations near the fields made it difficult to decide on a venue as the tournament social is a vital part of the quidditch tournament experience. Hopefully moving forward, future venues would be in areas with greater accessibility to adequate venues to hold a tournament social.



Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography



Media & Communications Report

Written by Ajantha Abey – media@quidditchaustralia.org

Abbreviations

QUK - Quidditch UK

NGB - National Governing Body

SGB - State Governing Body

IQA - International Quidditch Association

QARPP - Quidditch Australia Resumption of Play Plan

IWD - International Womens Day

IDAHOBIT - International day against homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia

Introduction / Abstract

2020 has seen an extremely busy year for the Media and Communications front. As Media and Communications Director, I have run a number of social media campaigns, published articles, and built a new website for Quidditch Australia. I have also been responsible for publishing QUAFL footage, feedback, have been closely involved in in the Gender Engagement and Strategic Planning Initiatives, and have begun work to reform Quidditch Australia's volunteering and HR systems, having transitioned our IT infrastructure from Webmail to GSuite. I have also been responsible for our COVID-19 response, policies, and messaging, as well as representing Australia in the International Quidditch Association's Assembly of Members. All of this is outlined in more detail below.

The second half of the year will focus on consolidating what reforms I've been able to make over the last 18 months and ensuring that these are sustainable into the future. I will be aiming to produce a large number of internal handover documents detailing how to run the new website, how to operate GSuite, etc., for future Media Directors, as I am moving overseas and will be stepping down from the board at the end of the year. Until then, I will also be continuing other major projects supporting the Gender Engagement and Strategic Planning Initiatives, running and analysing the QA Census, and consolidating our HR reforms.



IT Infrastructure Changes - GSuite

On the backend of QA, one of the first things we were able to do was transition from Webmail to Gsuite for our email and web services. Webmail was difficult to access and use and problematic for a variety of reasons, while Gsuite is not only a free service for NFPs and vastly more user friendly, giving us access to a wide range of Google apps and services as well.

This application process has been a long time coming with a lot of groundwork laid by Cameron Caccamo as the previous Secretary and Media Director before that. Transfer involved migration of all email data from our old systems onto the Google system, creation of new emails and the new domain name (@quidditchaustralia.org), a significant restructure of a file storage system into a new Shared Drives system, and setting up new organisational groups, etc.

Gsuite also gives QA potential access to a large amount of Google Ads credit which I was in the process of applying for in February, but has been on the back burner with Covid-19. As we head into the second half of the year, this will become a priority again as we seek to raise our online profile, and we are planning to bring on expert staff to help in this regard.

This was also conducted in conjunction with construction of the new website...

New Website – www.quidditchaustralia.org

Overview & Features

The previous website was extremely non-user friendly, difficult to access, difficult to change, and hugely disorganised on the back end. I decided to shift to a new hosting platform (Squarespace) after battling against the system for all of 2019. In migrating, I was able to construct a new website format more geared towards recruitment, with a greater emphasis on visuals and drawing people in. The Squarespace platform is extremely user friendly, even for future media officers who may or may not be familiar with web building, very easy to use, and flexible enough to suit our needs, with extensive support and guides when required.

Initially, many of the pages that were set up from scratch included:

- Image and recruitment focused homepage
- About Section, featuring explanations of Quidditch, the Organisation, and the Board of Directors



- A new home for "QA Today" for all news pieces, articles, and announcements, that could be funnelled onto topic specific pages where necessary
- A new events page with integrated downloadable calendars for events in all states
- Landing page for information about the Dropbears
- A resource hub including resources for rules and refereeing, coaching and skills development, diversity and inclusion, media and expansion, and more, all consolidated into the one place.
- Landing pages for official documents, policies, rules, etc.
- A comprehensive page explaining quidditch to the uninitiated
- Pages recognising community photographers whose work is recognised and credited across the website
- A new teams page featuring
- An interactive map of all the teams in the country
- A state by state list of all active / member teams (in order of size of each state from smallest to largest)
- An individual landing page for each team or club, featuring 'about' information, training times, contact information, photo galleries, maps, videos, etc.
- Comprehensive contact information, contact forms, media exposure, etc.
- Volunteering roles and membership sign up pages

After the initial creation of the website at the start of the year, the following developments have also been undertaken:

- Landing page for all updates on COVID-19 including maps and trackers for what QARPP level each state is at, easy to access information on all policies and updates
- Landing page for the Strategic Planning initiative, including explanation of the plan, feedback mechanisms, links to recordings and videos, summaries of the Sydney Strategic Forum, etc.
- Landing pages for the Community Stories and ASportForEveryone campaigns
- A new Diversity and Equity page focusing on resources for supporting marginalised groups in quidditch (in response to the BLM movement in June as well as Pride Month)
- A new landing page for the Gender Engagement Committee featuring their created resources, articles, meeting notes, reports, and summaries of their initiatives and activities
- Information on our Deadly Sports Plus partnership and Concussion Education Workshops
- Newly streamlined information about (applying for) event sanctioning and events policies



Areas of the website under constant development / constantly being updated include:

- Community Stories page
- The various resource hubs
- The Strategic Planning and Concussion Education Workshops with new events, links, notes, etc.
- Official documents page with QA board meeting notes
- Teams page (when new or updated submissions are made)
- Covid-19 information pages

Plans for future development on the website include:

- Setting up pages for QUAFL and State Shield
- Creating an easy access landing page for all historical State Shield and QUAFL footage
- Developing the Dropbears Page
- Updating the events page and calendars for the post-COVID season
- Encouraging the (many) remaining teams who are yet to complete the Website Update Form to submit details for me to create a web profile for them on the website
- Information and documents for claiming Quidditch Australia insurance
- Board of Directors history a

Website Statistics

Statistics (year to date):

- 5652 unique visitors to the site, mostly in February and March (1800+ each)
- 65% access the website via mobile, 60% access it from Facebook
- After Australia (75%), most views come from the USA (10%), UK (3%), Germany (2%), and Ireland (1%)
- Almost half of all views come from NSW, with half as much from Victoria, a further half as many as that from QLD, and another half again from WA.

The most popular buttons on the site are

- 'Find a team near you' - 140 clicks
- 'Register for a [concussion] workshop here' - 79 clicks
- Learn how quidditch works - 58 clicks



The top pages by views are

- 936 - Community Stories
- 842 - How No One Benefits from the Gender Norms of Chasing (recently mostly viewed by people in Germany, apparently)
- 687 - Teams
- 664 - Individual Memberships
- 486 - Covid-19
- 339 - Covid-19 Pandemic Response Plan
- 332 - The three waves of on-pitch inclusion
- Other pages of interest (by views):
- 300 - Resumption of Play Plan for Covid-19
- 235 - Concussion Education Workshops
- 218 - Volunteer with Quidditch Australia*
- 188 - Resource Hub
- 161 - How do you play
- 102 - Strategic Planning 2020
- 39 - A Sport for Everyone
- 34 - Sydney Strategic Forum 2020

The most viewed team pages are:

- 39 - University of Sydney Quidditch Club
- 34 - Melbourne Ravens Quidditch Club
- 28 - University of Newcastle Quidditch Club
- 25 - South Melbourne Centaurs Quidditch Club
- 23 - Monash Mudbloods Quidditch Club
- 22 - Monash Mugles Quidditch Club
- 21 - Brisbane City Quidditch Club

(*While I can be optimistic and hope that over 200 people have at least shown interest in volunteering for Quidditch Australia, I suspect a large number of these are a result of a fake April Fools Day link that appeared to be a April Fools Compilation link, but in reality took unwitting clickers to the volunteering landing page.)



#ASportForEveryone Campaign Graphic | Photo Credit: Taylor Angelo Quidditch Shots

Social Media

Part 1 - Campaigns & Promotion

Another large part of the role of Media and Communications director has been organising our social media content over the course of the year.

This has largely focused on Facebook, though I have plans to bring on new staff later in the year and expand further again into Instagram, Twitter, and newer social media platforms like Tik Tok, as well as reorganise and promote our YouTube channel.

Following QUAFL at the end of 2019, social media messaging largely focused on promoting QUAFL feedback, publicising the new Board of Directors, Publicising QUAFL results via the bracket graphics that I used for the large QUAFL banners, and promoting the Strategic Forum, 2020 Dropbears, and Volunteer Roles. February also saw a number of gender focused articles around the Macarthur Fantasy, before heading into recruitment season in March.



For this part of the year, I had planned for the **A Sport For Everyone** campaign, designed to be a major recruitment strategy in producing a large number (45) of posters with high quality photographs to promote different aspects of the sport and drive traffic to the new website. This campaign, though interrupted by COVID-19, was highly successful, with many posts hitting between 50-100 engagements, and forms a useful recruitment resource for the future, now accessible in its entirety at www.quidditchaustralia.org/a-sport-for-everyone, with subsets of the posters featuring on the QA homepage, and diversity and equity pages.

Another major campaign during COVID-19 has been the **Community Stories** project, which so far just over 20 people have contributed to. While submissions to the project have been disappointingly few, those that have made submissions have garnered a lot of attention and been extremely wholesome, and make a feature on the website that now highlights players from all walks of the community, not just the board of directors. The project remains open and ongoing.

Other focuses for social media promotion have been:

- Regular COVID-19 updates
- Qeurovision
- IDAHOBIT & Pride Month
- Strategic Planning Forum recordings and online forums
- Volunteer roles such as Volunteers Coordinator and Dropbears Asst. Manager
- Concussion Workshops
- Dropbears Action Plan Feedback

Overall, while I have been able to streamline the process of creating social media content by creating a large library of photoshop templates and 'stock photos' from QUAFL, World Cup, and State Shield albums, this remains a highly time consuming part of the role, especially in writing statements on sensitive subjects and monitoring our public image not just on our Facebook page, but elsewhere on the social internet, such as in public forums like the IQA All The Regions facebook group.

While I have continued to use the same and similarly styled graphics styles to what I began to use for QA branding last year, I have also developed new MS Office document templates along the same colour scheme, and amassing logo files, etc.

General insights into the Facebook page:

- As usual, our most popular/engaging posts include those made for things such as IDAHOBIT, Mardi Gras, and IWD.
- We also had the most success (traction/engagement) with posts from
- The ASportForEveryone campaign



- Announcing partnership with Deadly Sports Plus
- Suspending quidditch for COVID-19 / Cancelling State Shield
- Several community story posts
- Assessing Racial Diversity and Gender Norms of Chasing articles
- New website launch
- Announcing the 2020 Dropbears (by far the most popular post of 2020 so far, with 461 Reactions/Comments/Shares)
- Total likes on the Facebook page have remained relatively stable over the last two years, only increasing by as much as 100 likes.
- More efforts to advertise the Facebook page to new and potential members, especially as it forms one of our most significant forms of communication, through invitations, sharing, paid advertisements, etc., will be on the agenda.



IDAHOBIT Day Graphic | Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography

Part 2 - Articles

Despite constantly advertising for article submissions, there have been very few articles to publish this year, one of which was my own, and several of which were actually submitted in 2019.

The majority of these were published as part of the **gender series** in February, including an article from Courtney focusing on the Gender Engagement Committee, an article from Taylor Angelo on Gender Norms in Chasing (which



remains one of the top viewed pages on the whole website, at 840 views), another article from Courtney about degrees of female participation in quidditch, and a report from Laura Smith and Alise Fox on the various Gender Engagement events in QLD that were run in 2019. While these were largely well received, feedback clearly indicated that QA needed to be doing more work to engage people outside the gender binary as well. Since then, not only has the gender engagement committee brought on more non-binary and trans people, but we also have articles and resources in the works specifically focusing on these areas.

This process also brought to light some issues regarding QA's publishing policies - or lack thereof. There is no formal framework for which Quidditch Australia may decide to publish certain submissions, edit others, and not publish others - this is almost entirely down to the intuition of the Media director, and with a lack of clear policies, there is a lack of clear expectations for anyone submitting an article, which needs to be remedied.

Creating a formal portal and expectations around article submissions will help with this and is in development.

The most recent article published is of course, my own **assessment of racial diversity in Australian quidditch**. For an extremely long and detailed essay (that took almost three whole days to write and longer still to research), having over 300 readers was fairly successful for an important and hitherto undiscussed issue in Australian quidditch.

The essay was largely written as part of a social media response to the increasing attention brought to race around the quidditch community. It was becoming increasingly clear that Quidditch Australia's silence on the issue of race and racism in society and the quidditch community would be an issue, and it was clearly a topic that we needed to address. Nevertheless, I am strongly against 'virtue signalling' empty statements and branded messaging that occurs around such trends without any commitment to real, meaningful action. Thus, my response to this movement was to try engage fully and meaningfully with it, to produce further understanding and a plan of action for the community and for Quidditch Australia to follow in the future.

Similarly, June 2020 has been the first time (I believe) Quidditch Australia switched to a 'rainbowified' logo for Pride Month. While I recognise the importance of signalling solidarity with a community that is important to the quidditch community, and while quidditch is undoubtedly a welcoming place for the LGBTQIA community, Quidditch Australia as an organisation has only recently begun to take real, tangible steps such as the expanded focuses of the gender engagement committee and the building of the Diversity and Equity portions of the website, making me more comfortable in portraying us as an organisation that is actively supporting its LGBTQIA members, and not just jumping on a social media like gathering trend.



Photo: Maddi Moulton Photography



QUAFL 2019

The end of 2019 and early 2020 also saw a layover of work relating to QUAFL 2019. Following social media promotion of results etc., and formalising of the Hazardous Air Quality Policy that I had written for the event, I also spent time going through photo albums as they were uploaded, creating diverse stock photo library from a range of photographers aiding the creation of the website and social media posts. The post-quafl period also involved acquiring and editing the grand final footage, and writing a major history article about the Grand Final as well.

A noted event around QUAFL 2019 was the presence of ABC 7:30 reporters filming the Serpents - Manticores game on Saturday evening. This was a story that had been in the works for months in the lead up to QUAFL, arranging meetings and interviews with players, and having them attend the event for a story that, rather than focusing on 'wow look at this Harry Potter sport', would focus more on the every-day sports loving people who played quidditch and their stories within the sport. Initially, we were informed that the story would air within the fortnight after QUAFL, but after some delays, we didn't end up hearing back from 7:30, until early in 2020, when we were notified last minute that it would be airing February 20th. For reasons beyond our control, this did not go ahead, and again, have not heard back from 7:30 since.

Strategic Planning

While the strategic planning initiative has undoubtedly been in Jamie's domain as Secretary and Director responsible for the NSO initiative, and the projects more directly have been led by Eleonora and Alison, I have nevertheless taken a major role in this process as Media Director. This has involved:

- Sourcing and organising a free location for the Sydney Strategic Forum with sophisticated AV technology that allowed us to record and livestream the entire event
- Editing the footage and audio recordings from the two day event into shorter, more digestible, topic focused chunks that were uploaded onto the QA youtube channel and website, and published in the form of a podcast through Apple Podcasts, thus making the recordings easily available via most podcasting apps (by searching for Quidditch Australia Strategic Forum 2020)
- Attending and taking part in the Sydney Strategic Forum and all seven subsequent strategic forum meetings
- Publicising the strategic forum, recordings, and online meetings through social media



- Aggregating information on the strategic planning process on the QA website, including
 - Latest Updates
 - Uploaded forum notes (compiled by Jamie)
 - Ways to participate in the process
 - What is a strategic plan and why do we need one
 - Who is involved
 - How does it work
 - A detailed session-by-session summary of the Sydney Strategic Forum

Gender Engagement Committee

The other major QA initiative that I have a close and significant role in and partial responsibility for is the Gender Engagement Committee. Here, I attend and participate in committee meetings, and work regularly with Courtney Buckley, the committee's head, to organise and coordinate social media output and publicity for the committee, including things such as:

- Editing and publishing gender engagement articles & discussions
- Advertising for new committee members
- Publicising meeting notes
- Coordinating and writing social media posts around relevant 'days of recognition' such as IWD, IDAHOBIT, etc.
- Coordination with the French Quidditch Federation's committee for gender equity to share ideas, plans, and experiences
- Collating feedback from QUAFL 2018 and 2019 on MVP voting systems
- Bringing international articles, initiatives, and discussions to the attention of the committee
- Providing input and feedback on committee initiatives and plans
- Creating a website landing page for the committee

I am also working on:

- Rebranding the Women in Quidditch facebook group to be an official part of QA
- Working with the committee for input on the census (under planning)



COVID-19

Pandemic Response Plan

A major part of my Director role that I ended up taking on this year has been coordinating our COVID-19 response. When it became clear that the Coronavirus was taking hold in Australia and that QA would need to respond, the initial actions, published on March 15th were to:

- Create an easily accessible landing page on the QA website for all updates and information
- Research:
 - the science of the virus,
 - its impact on sports and society,
 - the government response to the virus,
 - the risks associated with spreading the virus (this occurring in late February, when we knew very little at all about the virus),
 - the news on different government actions across the country
 - Responses of other quidditch countries and NGBs
- Develop a comprehensive Pandemic Response Plan for how QA would gradually shut down activities should the virus spread in Australia, including initial hygiene and organiser requirements, providing recommendations to clubs and states and individual players, and warning that Quidditch Australia would likely suspend all activities across the country in the next few weeks, including Dropbears trainings.
- Publish and promote resources to help inform people about the virus and how to mitigate dangers associated with it
- Make a statement speaking out against anti-Chinese racism associated with COVID-19

The decision to suspend quidditch nationally was made by the board shortly after this, and nationwide suspension was announced on March 18th. (Cancelling quidditch was not on my 2020 bucket list). Decision timelines for State Shield, QUAFL, Memberships, and World Cup were published shortly after this on March 21st, following another emergency meeting of the board, and I also published an extensive article on March 22nd detailing on ways teams could continue activities online during the Corona Closedown Crisis, as part of our pandemic response and facilitation of the activities of teams. We also hosted an open office hours in the wake of this moment, to bring teams and volunteers together.

As is evident from the progression of dates from mid-March to March 22nd, this was an extraordinarily busy two weeks, with a huge amount of information to process, and a large volume of information put into writing and published through the website and on social media.



Resumption of Play Plan

In retrospect, this is nothing compared to the development of the Resumption of Play Plan, which has involved:

- Regularly following government press conferences, policy updates, both from the federal government and all quidditch-relevant states
- Staying on top of global COVID-19 research and understanding of the progression of the pandemic
- Researching AIS and Government and Sports Medicine Australia plans and recommendations for the resumption of sport
- Assembling a COVID-19 Resumption of Play Plan that would be able to work within the government framework
- Regularly having to update this Resumption of Play Plan every time the government policies changed, and accounting for changes at the state level as well
- Following updates on government re-opening plans and progressions in all quidditch-relevant states
- Publishing and publicising the QARPP, creating a new section on the website with graphics for easy understanding of requirements and steps, etc.
- Continually monitoring case numbers, transmission data, policy changes, etc. and updating the progression of states through the QARPP steps
- Regular emails to clubs and states as we reach different progression milestones through the QARPP steps (aided by the creation of email groups in Gsuite)

This remains an ongoing process.

Quidditch National Cabinet

One of the most significant parts of this process has been the formation of a quidditch national cabinet - a space where, for the first time as far as I am aware, we have brought the Quidditch Australia Board of Directors together with the SGB boards as well, to rapidly discuss and update on information regarding the QARPP. This has been a key part of implementing the plan, states have been responsive and cooperative, and in the future, this platform will be a huge opportunity for QA and SGBs to act more cohesively and coordinate closely. I hope in years to come we can look back on this as a significant step forward in how quidditch in Australia is organised. An important part of facilitating this has been obtaining a Slack for NFPs licence, which not only allows us unlimited messages in our communication platform, but enables a number of paid features (such as the national cabinet channel with state directors as single-channel-guests) in addition, for free.



Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography



Volunteering Reforms

One of the major failings I had in 2019 was effectively utilising staff. When I joined the board at the end of 2018, I was well aware that for two years I had been running Usyd Quidditch with an exec more than twice as large as the number of people running quidditch for the whole country. This was clearly a problem that would be solved by having more staff who could help support the board and expand the activities of Quidditch Australia. Of course, it was not so easy. There was no formalised way to bring on new staff, no staff structures in place, no HR system, and I myself was new to an entirely unfamiliar role. There were no clear expectations for staff, no policies that I was aware of, no way of tracking who was on staff, etc. We had no volunteering system, and clearly needed one. It was easier and faster to just do things myself (especially when things like social media are time sensitive) than bringing on and training staff to help, and while the formation of the Gender Engagement Committee last year was successful, most media volunteers have fallen through.

Enter 2020 and my decision to design a volunteering/HR structure for QA from scratch, facilitated by our transition to Gsuite, and inspired by the work and articles of QUK Vice President, Abby Whiteley.

To summarise what is a 12-page plan:

- There are many issues with volunteering with Quidditch Australia at the moment
- We have a limited number of staff meaning most roles are relatively time intensive
- Volunteering is mostly unappealing
- QA activities are largely untransparent
- There is no internal framework for staff management
- We lack any data on volunteering attitudes or staff issues etc.
- QA lacks any consistent internal structure
- Mostly staff and committees have been put together on an *ad hoc* basis

The broad vision for QA volunteering is to:

- Increase incentives for volunteers
- Professionalise volunteer roles for professional references and development opportunities
- Establish set protocols for onboarding and offboarding staff
- Increase professionalisation across communication systems, organisation nomenclature, etc.
- Establish a proper staff admin system and structure, through Gsuite
- Establish better reporting and management structures



- Increase transparency on staff and board activities
- Create centralised resources for staff, as well as a staff directory
- Increase advertising and accessibility of staff roles

To this end, I have brought on Manon te Riele and Ava McConnell as HR Managers (originally 'Volunteer Coordinators') for Quidditch Australia, who are largely in charge of executing this vision through the detailed plan I have laid out, and will run the system, and have already done a lot of incredible work just in the last two months and following only two meetings. This is largely still a work in progress but some of the highlights of our work so far has been:

- Designing a tiered staff system with different levels of roles depending on how much time and energy people are willing to commit to the role, and remapping current roles into this system
- Designing an IT infrastructure through Gsuite for QA Staff
- Reorganising the QA slack and writing a guide to using slack for new staff members
- Developing an onboarding pack for new volunteers (that all current staff will go through too) outlining expectations, confidentiality agreements, communication tools, and other induction material
- Developing a staff directory and on boarding checklist

It is my hope that by creating a self-sustaining system that facilitates volunteering, it will greatly expand the capacity of QA to take on staff and thus greatly expand the scope of QA activities, it will bring in a lot of new volunteers to QA through increased incentives, and provide the transparency the community has long been calling for. We are particularly excited for implementing ideas such as 'Micro-volunteering' (taken straight from QuidditchUK), and hope to begin implementing a lot of these HR policies and publicising these changes over the next few months.

The present 'mid-year reports' initiative that I instigated has also been a part of this larger effort towards further transparency on actions of the board, and further to this aim, I have set up a 'board log' channel in Slack, to regularly keep track of activities of all the board members and be able to easily report on this to the public on a regular and more frequent basis.

Census

As a part of the above volunteering initiative, and inspired again by QuidditchUK, I have also been wanting to run a census of the Australian quidditch population for some time, to gather data on attitudes to volunteering, and other aspects of the community. In the wake of the Assessment of Racial Diversity essay, and other discussions around strategic



planning, it has further become clear how valuable having concrete demographic information on Australian quidditch players would be.

I am thus in the middle of designing a first-of-its-kind census of the Australian quidditch population. This will likely cover the following areas of interest:

- Demographic information, including
- Age
- Gender
- Racial background / Ethnicity / Language
- Work / Education status
- Disability information
- Sports and Injury history
- Income status
- Volunteering attitudes and experiences
- Discrimination and Harassment
- Financial Priorities
- Engagement with QA Media and Club/State/QA Events
- General attitudes towards quidditch

The census will not focus on what teams and team types people are a part of, as this information can easily be gleaned from QA membership information. Similarly, the census does not focus on recruitment and retention data, as this has in part been collected through the Recruitment survey I began running at the start of 2018, and intend to re-promote and collect further data from separately, as a major additional project in and of itself.

National Representation to the IQA

Part of my role with Quidditch Australia is also to be Australia's representative to the International Quidditch Association, and represent Australia's interests in the IQA Assembly of Members, and discussions with other NGBs. The IQA communicates with member NGBs through a members slack group, and I relay key announcements and discussions back to the rest of the board and Dropbears management, and forward any questions back to the IQA.

The most significant discussions have of course been around World Cup in early 2019, with extensive debate over Getxo, Spain vs Richmond, USA. This came down to an NGB vote, and Australia argued strongly for and voted for a Richmond World Cup. Coming into the more recent period, the IQA updated their Membership Status System, and as a full member we continue to pay



fees (\$212 USD this cycle). The IQA has also released a new harassment policy that all members must abide by or adopt.

The IQA Assembly of Members (i.e. AGM) is held in February (at 6am on a Sunday), and Australia, along with the USA and UK, is usually relatively vocal in these assemblies, and I also take notes on the meeting for the rest of the board. With regards to voting in new members to the IQA board of trustees (three spots available), we voted for Kym Couch (USA), Borja Arbosa (Spain), and David Jonsson (Sweden), who were all voted onto the board. The meeting also included extensive discussions around IQA finances, operations, an advisory committee, and branding of the sport (i.e. the name of quidditch).

In early March, we also began taking part in the consultation process that resulted the postponement of the Quidditch World Cup to 2021, an outcome that was recommended/supported by Quidditch Australia. More recently still, we have been in discussion with the IQA and other NGBs regarding the potential relocation of World Cup due to the COVID-19 crisis in the USA, the safety concerns for players of colour and LGBTQIA players, and significant community concern over the location.

To this end, we are (Jamie is) collecting feedback from teams through team reps and the Dropbears in particular as well, and I will be collating this and providing a recommendation to the IQA. At this stage it is too early to predict what will result from this process, which likely has a long way to go yet. Nevertheless, QA is taking the open letter directed to the IQA regarding the relocation request for World Cup and all feedback from our members seriously.

Qeurovision

Another project that was organised through the IQA Slack was Qeurovision - a quidditch song contest organised by a group of players based in Belgium, as part of an international COVID-19 friendly competition. I was Australia's representative with regards to organising our division of the competition, promoting the competition on social media, encouraging and facilitating teams' participation and voting, creating submission and voting forms, sending submissions and votes to the Qeurovision committee, etc.

While the project did not make as much of a splash in Australia as it did in other countries, hopefully given the general success of the final event, future iterations of the competition will garner more attention from the Australian quidditch community.



Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography



Gender Engagement Committee Report

Written by Courtney Buckley – courtney.buckley@quidditchaustralia.org

The QA Gender Engagement Committee was created for the purpose of:

engaging under-represented genders in the quidditch community, develop initiatives to bridge gaps created by gender, and facilitate the aims of Quidditch Australia and the sport of quidditch as a mixed-gender sport.

Now in our second year, the committee is comprised of 9 members hailing from 3 different states and is always welcoming of more people joining. So far this year, the GEC has had two formal committee meetings, first in January and recently in May, to reflect on 2019 and identify our project priorities 2020. We have also collaborated with other QA groups and events, such as the Strategic Planning Forums and with the Media Director, to represent gender-related perspectives. Several projects are also currently underway at different stages of development.

Projects:

- A revision of the current awards system (ie. MVP and Best & Fairest awards) and proposal of a different system shared for community feedback, with the aim of creating a more inclusive awards system.
- Identified several key national days of recognition for QA to formally acknowledge, building upon the previous list of IWD and Mardi Gras.
- Exploring the rebranding of the 'Women in Quidditch' Facebook group, including developing conduct policies and protocols as well as determining the purpose of the group.
- Creating a coaching resource called the 'Empowerment Guide' which provides drills, skills, and greater knowledge to assist coaches in running diverse and inclusive trainings, with a focus on smaller-bodied, low sporting background, and under-confident players.
- The development of a document detailing problematic and inclusive language use for community education purposes.
- Exploring a change to the current gender rule.
- The development of a Selector's Rubric aimed at both encouraging community members to take on selector positions and to aid in greater recognition of diverse playstyles and valuable less-acknowledged skills.
- The development of a highlight reel elevating the performance of players from underrepresented genders.
- Regular updating of the QA Resource Hub.
- Aiding the media director in the creation of a gender-specific hub on the QA website.
- The development of community engagement and education events, including QA Today article contributions and online panel discussions.



Furthermore, we have other projects of interest which we intend to explore when practically feasible, including:

- In partnership with SGBs, facilitating short coaching sessions during league tournament events as a means of sharing inter-club knowledge and empowering players/community members more evenly.
- In partnership with SGBs and other QA bodies, facilitating shadow reffing and snitching programs to make those roles more accessible to community members and broaden genders and bodies in those roles.
- Create a video-based coaching resource to accompany the Empowerment Guide, so players and coaches have access to visual instruction and ideas on teaching and training a variety of skills.

Our aim by the end of this year is to have most of the projects completed and the remaining projects strongly initiated. We are also interested in expanding our committee to include more regular members to contribute to projects their passionate about, and to increase state-diversity as this will ensure our projects use more holistic approaches and have greater national reach. We are also working to create limited-involvement roles for those who want to contribute yet are unable to commit, primarily via initiatives of community consultation and discussion-based content.



Photo: James Layh Quidditch Photography



NSO Recognition Report

Written by Eleonora Leopardi – eleonora.leopardi@quidditchaustralia.org

Who are we and what are we doing?

In November 2019, a spontaneous initiative was born to promote the recognition of quidditch as a sport in Australia and to apply, as Quidditch Australia, to be recognised as one of the National Sporting Organisations by Sport Australia. With nation-wide support, the NSO Recognition Working Group began working towards this goal.

Since our latest update at the 2019 AGM, the NSO Recognition Working Group has been working intensely. While not all of the proposed Small Working Group have been active in the past six months, mostly due to significant overlap of human resources, two groups have achieved significant milestones.

SWG - Strategic Planning

Quidditch Australia is preparing its first Strategic Plan, to fulfil one of the requirements of Sport Australia, but more importantly to establish an overarching framework of values and priorities that will guide the progress of the sport for years to come. In order for this process to be truly valuable for the association, we decided to consult the whole association on the themes that we consider essential for the sport in Australia, and establish together the goals for QA to achieve by 2025.

During January we organised the first Quidditch Australia Strategic Forum, held on February 1-2nd in Sydney and online. The Forum was a small but successful two-day event featuring discussions, brainstorming sessions, and workshops, which are now available as a [recording](#) on the QA website. The outcomes of the Strategic Forum were two: an information document on [Changing the Sport's Name](#), and the first draft of our Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

Following a quick break due to the onset of the pandemic, the [Strategic Plan draft](#) was circulated and feedback was invited by all stakeholders via a dedicated [survey](#), a discussion Facebook group, via email etc. Thanks to the feedback provided, the Strategic Plan Working Group has identified areas that require additional input and Google Hangout forums have been held to gather the community's thoughts and ideas. To date, 6 Forums have been held:

- Recruitment and Retention, 24th May
- Quidditch Youth League, 30th May



- Coaching Skills Development, 6th June
- Australia on the World Stage, 12th June
- Gender Equity in Quidditch, 21st June
- Race, Ethnicity, and Culture, 28th June

One more forum, Affordability vs Revenue, is scheduled to take place in early July.

The updated draft for the Strategic Plan will be circulated in August (or so), and will be proposed for approval at the 2020 AGM. The approved Strategic Plan will guide QA's and the sport's development in a coherent direction for the next five years, ensuring that no work is unnecessarily repeated and that long-term goals can be achieved. Everyone is still welcome to contribute to the process! Join the consultations to add your thoughts and ideas, so that the Strategic Plan reflects thoroughly the voice of the entire QA community.

SWG - Membership

The Membership working group has contacted Sports Australia to confirm that previously active athletes are considered effectively athletes for the purpose of reaching the threshold of 1000, necessary for NSO recognition. As a result, all the formerly active members of QA, who are still members as per the Constitution, can be included in our athletes list, and an integration of the active members' ladders for the recent years has begun.

Another requirement to fulfil is the existence of a membership management system. QA's current membership management is organised by the Membership Director and relies on Jotform reports and spreadsheets. The SWG has investigated costs and usability of a range of membership management platforms, requesting quotes and demonstrations. While the current budget uncertainties do not allow QA to move its membership management processes to a dedicated software, a tentative plan has been made to work with Stack Sports, the creators of SportsTG, to iron out some software limitations and plan for a possible rollout in 2021.

Overall progress of the initiative

Overall, the NSO Recognition Working Group has been blessed with some of the most dedicated quidditch administrators ever to work for QA, and this enabled our progress so far. While we are making great strides towards the recognition, a substantial amount of work is still ahead of us, and we welcome any member who wishes to collaborate to the initiative.



In unpleasant news, Sport Australia has recently announced that no application will be accepted in 2020 and that starting in 2021, applications will only be accepted between April and June each year, a change from the two three-month windows previously available.

Nonetheless, it is foreseeable that in 2021 Quidditch Australia will be able to submit its application, and potentially make history by becoming the first quidditch organisation to be officially recognised by a government.

Many thanks to the NSO Recognition Working Group members, and specifically to the following exceptionally dedicated individuals:

- Jamie Turbet, QA Secretary
- Ajantha Abey, QA Media & Communications Director
- Alison Newton, SWG Strategic Planning



Photo: Ajantha Abey Quidditch Photography