

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN AMATEUR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION.
ANNUAL REPORT. I)

1938.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present for your consideration and adoption, the Sixteenth Annual Report of the Western Australian Amateur Football Association, covering the activities of this Association for the past year.

To my mind the 1938 Season will always stand out as the beginning of a new life for the Amateur Footballer in this State, and it should not be long before our West Australian Association will have to be recognised more fully as a true and valuable exponent of the Australian Game of Football.

At the commencement of the season, six new clubs affiliated with the Amateurs. These comprised five established teams who had been members of the Perth Suburban Association, and the newly formed Achilles Club, consisting of ex-students of the main Public Schools. Regarding the teams which came from the Perth Suburban Association, I take this opportunity of mentioning that although they were our very staunch and worthy opponents in past years, the wholeheartedness with which they combined in 1938 to strengthen the Amateur Association, was fully appreciated and recognised by the older members of the Association.

On account of the large number of teams playing it was found possible to play only one complete series of matches and five games in a second series. These combined with the finals made the season carry on until October, and I would suggest to the incoming Committee that an endeavour be made in future, to finish the season by the end of September.

It has been clearly discernable during recent years, that Junior footballers lose a certain amount of interest in the game towards the close of the season, due mainly, no doubt to their desire to witness the League finals, and it is for this reason, that the foregoing suggestion has been made.

It is pleasing to record that generally speaking all matches were keenly contested, and as the season progressed the true Amateur Football Spirit prevailed amongst the teams and players.

The Wembley team were successful in gaining the right to hold the Richardson Cup which is given for the team at the top of the list at the conclusion of the first round. This team contested the Grand Final with Mt. Hawthorn, and after a very hard game came out winners. This gave them the right to hold the Sandover Shield for the next twelve months. Both teams are to be congratulated on their play throughout the year, and in this game in particular. The standard of football has been good, and there is no doubt that the entry of new teams and players has had a stimulating effect on the game played by the Amateur Association.

The winner of the trophy debated by Mr. Wembley for the fairest and best player was won by Mr. J. Rowe, Captain and Coach of the successful Wembley side. Mr. Rowe secured nine first votes and three seconds, a total of thirty three points while nearest to him was Mr. A. Howe of Sandovers with six firsts two seconds and two thirds, a total of twenty four points.

The congratulations of the Association go to Mr. Eowe on his success, and to all those other players who were fortunate in obtaining recognition from the umpires. It might be of interest to record here that out of over 440 registered players, 139 secured at least one Umpire's vote.

Concerning the registration of players, the above total, I am sure, does not represent all those who played during the season. It has come to my knowledge that on quite a number of occasions, teams took the field with unregistered men playing under the name of another registered player, and while there is no actual proof of this, I consider it my duty as Secretary to report the matter.

The playing grounds used during 1938 left much to be desired, and until something can be done to improve them, the Junior Football Associations must suffer.

University Oval was once again our best ground, while Richardson Park and Maylands Oval, although slightly on the small side, had very good surfaces. Inglewood Oval is improving with use, and the installation during the year of dressing rooms, by the League, was greatly appreciated. The grass at College Park and Richmond Park will eventually cover these areas, but the lack of water during the summer months does nothing to improve matters. Beatty Park to my mind, is still only fit for schoolboys' teams, the play on this ground becoming so congested as to make good football practically impossible. In addition, the continued disappearing of goal posts, year after year, seems to have become a hobby with some-one, and some definite action should be taken in this matter. The long grass at the Polo Ground does not improve play there, while the slope and abundance of sand at Henderson Park is certainly not conducive to the playing of first class football.

As usual, the umpires appointed received their quota of criticism, but as every Club seemed to have a different opinion regarding the individual capabilities of the men selected, it can be assumed that their work was up to the required standard. Personally, having seen all the Umpires in action, on several occasions, I consider this Association was indeed fortunate in obtaining their services, and they are to be congratulated on their exhibitions throughout the season.

I regret to have to include in this report, that the Protests and Disputes Board had occasion to meet on several occasions during the past year. It is to be hoped that Club delegates and Officials will do their best in the future to keep their players' minds on the ball, and perhaps with a few wise words teach them to play the game for the love of the game and in the true Amateur Spirit.

As in previous years, officers of the St. John Ambulance Brigade were in attendance at our matches, and this service was greatly appreciated by all members of the Association.

X At the commencement of last season, the Committee thought fit to elect Mr. J. L. Robson to Life Membership of the Association. Mr. Robson was six years President of the Amateur Football Association in this State, and early in the year transferred to Adelaide. Members of your Committee agreed that his services to this body should be recognised in some special way and he was unanimously elected the first Life Honorary Member of the Association. A special gold medal was struck and this was presented to Mr. Robson when the Carnival Team was on its way to Tasmania in August last.

The second Australian Amateur Football Carnival took place in Launceston from August 15th to 20th inclusive Teams from all States, including the Federal Territory and excluding Queensland, competed, and in an interesting series of matches, Victoria were successful with a win in each of their three games. South Australia and Western Australia each lost one match, but our percentage was considerably higher than their's, so actually we finished in second place.

This was a very meritorious performance, and from reports received, the team was far more successful socially than on the playing field. Although away from home only three weeks, the party travelled over 5000 miles and took full advantage of the opportunity of seeing everything possible. The Captain and Coach, Mr. Farrell is to be congratulated on the perfect condition in which the team took the field, and once again I wish to express my thanks coupled with those of the Captain's and The Vice Captain's (Mr. Miller), to the members of the 1938 Carnival party, both players and supporters who made the trip, for their very loyal cooperation, during the whole of our absence from the State.

There is a possibility that the next Amateur Carnival will be held here in 1940, and should such eventuate there is no doubt about the impetus it will give our Association.

At the conclusion of the season, a very enjoyable social evening was held at the League Rooms. Delegates, Club officials, and members of the 1938 Premiership and Carnival sides attended, while representatives of kindred Associations were also present. Trophies won during the year were presented and the function was very successful.

Regarding the finances of the Association, these although satisfactory, could be much better. When it is considered that nearly £900 was handled on account of the Carnival and that there was only a matter of about £30 in hand at the commencement of the season, the Clubs are to be commended on their splendid effort. At the present time we have about £30 on hand, out of which a grant will have to be made to St. John Ambulance Brigade, also there is a small amount owing for a few of the photographs of the Carnival team which have been unclaimed.

Although there is a fair amount owing by Clubs at present, it is anticipated that most of this will be paid prior to the commencement of the new season, which should give a credit balance of about £50.

In conclusion I wish to thank Club Secretaries and Delegates for their assistance throughout the year, and also for the honour bestowed on me in my appointment as Manager of the recent Carnival team. Once again, I wish to thank the members of that team for their loyalty and cooperation, without which, the success of the trip could not have been achieved.

On behalf of the Association I wish to express our gratitude to the W.A. National Football League, and to its Secretary, Mr. Orr in particular for the assistance given us and sincerely hope that football in Western Australia in all grades will continue to improve in the future ~~eventually~~ as it has progressed in the past.

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This report would not be complete without some reference to our President, Mr. Veryard, who succeeded Mr. Robson in that office, and I feel sure I am voicing the opinion of all delegates in stating that we could not have had an abler man at the head of our Association.

Our prospects for 1939 appear very bright and if members continue to work harmoniously, the Western Amateur Amateur Football Association seems assured of everlasting life.

(sgd.) H. B. GROSSVENOR.
Hon. Secretary. 23.2.39.