



Annual Report 2003

It's time to reflect the huge amount of work and achievements we have achieved as a league.

From the early days of trying to scratch a football game together (which usually entailed a few cities to make a squad) which was mostly made up of ex-pat Aussie's, to now reducing bench numbers to achieve second and third teams coming from that city...Since signing the deal with Burley Sekem in Australia as our official ball and apparel supplier we have achieved 150K turnover with Burley-Sekem in past three years and the league as a whole is estimated to be turning over well \$1,000,000 on an annual basis through all the affiliated clubs. With the launch of USfootyKids, more Metro teams to be added in 2004, the women's teams to kick off, and the exciting launch of the 2004 College National Championships we expect Burley sekems numbers to double in the next two years.

Economically the Nationals in the past two years have had around a \$800,0000 impact on the Kansas City area. With us taking majority of the rooms at the Westin hotel each year we have spent \$500,000 just there! The average player spent \$250 for the weekend and when you times that by 660 people you can see what we have to offer major cities when bidding for the events. This figure didn't include airline tickets in which the average would be \$200 a person....So as you can now see we have a million dollar event which is growing each year!

Metro footy, Tex footy, juniors, and women's footy have all come together in the last few years, which has helped everyone to get involved in the game. Regions have strengthened with the MAAFL in 2004 having 8 teams, to the CAFL reorganizing the structure in 2004 and splitting teams to make more games locally to help the growth of numbers of players to the local teams. Golden Gate took a huge step in 2002 in deciding to pull out of the CAFL home and away to start up a local Metro system, now four strong teams and at the most 1 hour to travel for games.

Texas really took the next steps in trying to develop three teams by having a Metro competition and Dallas taking the bold steps of joining the MAAFL in 2003, in which they finished one game short of the title.

The executive board has gone through some changes since the pioneer days of " Plugger" and the ever hard working Rich Mann and Sheri Archer. We now have 7 strong leaders on the Executive board, with 24 (and counting) on the USAFL board who all have areas of responsibility. With the work load now been divided across the board we have been able to achieve so much more. Andrea Caesar's full time position as "OFFICE MANAGER" has enabled us the get Nemours systems in place and streamline processes in the administration area.

Denis Ryan was employed full time in 2003 to run USfootykids which he saw over 20,000 kids from May-October. A huge achievement and self explanatory on how hard Denis is working to try to achieve our goals. With "FOOTY KIDS" backpacks been sold by Denis at courses and through the footy store, kids have now the ability to be taught the basic skills of the game and receive an exciting backpack which has a football, cap, CD rom, and football related reading material. With plans in 2004 to get more free give

away's added to the pack and a major sponsor behind the program junior football in the USA is heading in the right direction.

The launch of the footystore in late 2002 saw us generate our own Revenue. The re-design in 2003 boosted sales quickly with daily orders filtering through. The plans were that it was to be a self supporting area has now turned into a major revenue component for the USAFL. With the added product line and plans in 2004 to have AFL replica jerseys for purchase we should be turning over \$50,000 a year by 2005.

The on going financial and product support we have received from the AFL has been one of the major reasons we have transformed erred from a group of Aussie's trying to get a game of footy in the USA to now over 40 teams in most major Cities, around 80 metro teams, junior competitions in area's on a consistent basis, and the launch of the women's competition...We have shown we have the ability to grow, now we have to expand our minds and thinking to keep growing, whilst maintaining the structured backbone we have established..

The National championships have grown from 5 teams at the first Nationals, to 22 teams in 2003 and two competing women's teams. The Nationals have grown to a level where within the next year or two we will have to consider increasing game time for the matches played which may entail going to a three day format . The standard of football has increased so significantly that the round robin format may be inhibiting the skills of some potential top line players.

I have outlined a few achievements in each of the years from 2000. These are our major achievements, but far from them all! With everyone's support the potential of us being a major player in the international arena of Australian Rules Football isn't far away, or are we already there?

2000

- League blossomed both on and off the field.
- Played 175 games.
- 16 teams from over 20 cities at the National Tournament in LA.
- Formation of two additional Leagues, the South Eastern League and the Arizona League.
- The American Revolution National Teams, both junior and senior, went from strength to strength in 2000.
- The Senior team remained undefeated.
- Juniors team traveled to Canberra to participate in the Jim Stynes Cup, narrowly missing out on the Championship Game.
- Burley-Sekem came on board with a comprehensive sponsorship deal.
- Coopers Brewery from South Australia became the naming sponsor of the 2000 and 2001 National Tournaments, along with a League Sponsorship package.

2001

- The League's Constitution and Bylaws were ratified and implemented.
- League filed for official non-profit status.
- The National Team stepped up it's International Program.
- The Leagues first ever scholarship player, Dustin Jones from the Lehigh Valley Crocodiles, trained and played under the direction of the legendary coach Kevin Sheedy.
- Set up several new portfolio positions on the board.
- Added a 1-800 number and a mini-office.
- Second USAFL Handbook/Media Guide produced.

2002

- Granted 501(c)(3) Not-For-Profit status and set up an umbrella so all clubs could also have the advantages of the status.
- Sent our second scholarship player to Essendon, which also offered him a chance to play with their affiliated VFL side.
- Set up a new scholarship for 2003 to Macquarie University in Sydney - a full semester of study and football with the Kookaburras.
- Entered into a partnership with ACCLAIM entertainment to sell AFL live 2003 through the FootyStore.
- National team, Revolution, travel to Melbourne for the inaugural International Cup, competing against 11 countries and finishing a credible 5th, having 2 players selected to the All-Stars Team

2003

- Denis Ryan launch's USFootyKids, and reaches projected targets.
- Add new college teams, with a National Championship targeted for the end of 2004.
- Launch a new USFooty web site "footy store", with updated product range.
- Play with 3 divisions at the Coopers USAFL National Championships with 24-30 teams in attendance.
- Launched East vs.. West coast concept. East won in a hugely entertaining game of skill and commitment from both squads.
- Hosted the CAN-AM game in Western PA on August 2nd, where the revolution kept their unbeaten record intact against Canada.
- Persuaded big clubs to split into multiple teams, which has helped players in big teams get more game time.
- Encouraged clubs to run metro competitions (12 per side). The Arizona Metro Cup is an amazing achievement with over 20 teams in 2003 participating, including a team from Canada. 2004 will be even bigger!
- We had Barry Stoneham from the AFL at a USAFL-AFL Grand Final telecast in New York City. 2004 we will try once again to get a live feed into the telecast.
- Produced our first ever " USAFL" commercial on FSW, with help from Third Eye Productions and Macquarie University in Sydney. We aired the commercial on Fox Sports World during the AFL weekly telecast - including contact banners for the USAFL. This was a major achievement which produced many new players and the awareness to the USA public that the game is being played at a semi-professional level in the states.
- Ran our fourth coaches clinic with 35 attendants over the 9 hour course (was held during East Coast v West Coast clash). In 2004, Level 1 accreditation will be made mandatory for all coaches and umpires in the USAFL.
- Continued player scholarships to Australia with Essendon with Josh Loring doing an amazing job. We have plans to expand to other clubs in 2004. Also, continued with the Macquarie University scholarship with Tim Weir flying the flag successfully in 2003.
- We had two AFL umpires at the 2003 Nationals, Adrian Panozzo and Stuart Wenn who gave huge support and knowledge to the umpires involved.
- We had an Australian commentator doing announcing at the Nationals with live feed into the filming of the games. Dvd's will be available on sale through the footy store late December.
- Once again filmed the 2003 Nationals with plans to run new commercials on TV in 2004. Plans are being made about showing the games on local stations in the effort to raise awareness.

Hope this has given you some idea on what we have achieved, and the direction needed to continue for 2004 and beyond.

Yours in football,
Mark "wheels" Wheeler
USAFL President.