

UNITED STATES AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

# Executive Board Annual Report 2018





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## Year in Review

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2018 was a pretty good year. And here's why.

### **Busy Busy Busy Busy**

Preluding the 2018 playing campaign was one of the busiest off seasons that anyone who has been around the USAFL can remember. From a league standpoint, it was the beginning of a new stage in league history with the election of a new board at the 2017 AGM in October.

Six of the seven positions were filled by new members; the only exception being longtime veteran player and

coach, Sebastian Aguiari. The California native, who began his career with Golden Gate before going to Orange County, Portland, and then back to OC, became Western VP in 2016. He was elevated to president in late December, 2017, when Steve Grandfield stepped down.

Since taking over as president, Aguiari has overseen the creation of a number of committees, including the Development, Sponsorship, and Competition Committees, to help develop ideas and actions to get more people involved and to help grow the league's structure and sustainability.

From a club standpoint, by fusion and fission and all points in between, USAFL club membership ballooned to 42 teams, with representation in 27 states. It started last year, when Tulsa and Oklahoma City merging to form the Oklahoma Football Club in October. Then in December, the Baltimore-Washington Eagles expanded into the Baltimore Dockers and DC Eagles. 2018 saw the creation of a second team in Phoenix, with the Arizona Outlaws joining the fray in February, followed by the Maine Cats in April. The next month saw two more teams come in from the South, with the Jacksonville Saints and Rome Redbacks being added to the family.

Finally, in June, the Columbus ARFC aligned themselves with the Geelong Football Club and took on the Cats moniker.

### **Foreign Legion**

More than a dozen American born-and-raised players played football in Australia in 2018 as part of the league's Australia-US exchange program. Pulling on jumpers for clubs in four states and the Northern Territory, our men and women made their mark this year and continued to make progress for themselves and for others going over in the future.

On the women's side, Sacramento's Katie Klatt had a sterling season at fullback in her second season for Melbourne University Muggers of VFLW. Playing alongside and against many AFLW players over the course of the season, Klatt made the team best four times during the season, including a best-on-ground performance in April against Geelong. Portland's Jess Blecher experienced a meteoric rise in her stock;



after starting the year with Nightcliff of the NTFL, she moved to Keilor FC of the Essendon District league in Victoria and helped lead the Blues to a Grand Final appearance. Her play garnered attention from AFLW and VFLW clubs, especially with the women's competition expanding over the next couple of years.

Columbus midfielder Katrina Scherer arrived at Bond University late in the season to provide goal scoring ignition, including a two game stretch when she booted home eight goals. Late in the year, Seattle's Amelia Kahr and April Lewis travelled over to take part in a combine as part of the CrossCoders program alongside prospective players from Europe, Canada, and Fiji.

Several American men led the charge overseas in 2018, led by Los Angeles' Sam Murphy; the Dragons' tall man appeared for the West Perth Falcons reserves, making the most of his chances in the ruck. Alex Aurricchio, the former New York Magpie ruck, made an impression with the SANFL's South Adelaide at the end of the season, impressing observers in the Festival State as the Panthers made a run to the finals. Columbus Cat Clyde Simpson took the Jeparit-Rainbow Storm to an impressive premiership run in the Country Victorian league of Horsham Districts. Tyler Ames (Denver), Gabe Martin Del Campo (Los Angeles), Buddy Spohn (OC Bombers), Brian Traut (Minnesota), and Brian Rippetto (Denver) also put in solid campaigns at the regional level across Victoria.

### **Roll Up -- It's the Magical Mystery Tour!**

The Great Summer Road Show rolled on for its fourth year, as the Regional Championships Series took place in Philadelphia, Nashville, and Sacramento. Last year saw favorites take out the cups, and though Austin, Golden Gate, and the Denver Lady Bulldogs all held serve as champions, there were some upsets in the offing.

On a rainy day in Philly, the ERC produced two stunning results, as the reign of New York as the unquestioned beasts of the East came to an end. The homestanding Philly Hawks upended the 'Pies men to take home their first regional D1 title, while Baltimore-DC and Boston combined to defeat the Magpies women in a tough encounter that was decided late in the second half. Columbus nudged out Boston on percentage to take out D2.

There were no real surprises in the Central Region, as both Austin's men and Denver's women plowed through the competition to take home the bikkies in Nashville, and Ohio Valley claimed their first ever regional title out of the men's D2. Out west, Golden Gate marched to their third straight Western flag from men's D1, but the hot afternoon in Sactown was a great day for the Rose City. The Portland Steelheads teamed up with the Arizona Hawks to win the men's D2, while the Sockeyes ladies lifted their second Western chalice in three years, teaming up with a talented grouping from LA.

### **Revos in Ireland, and the Summer Camp**

With IC17 in the rear view and 2020 dead ahead, Tom Ellis took a team of perspective national team players to Ireland. Some of the 25-man squad had missed out on the Cup roster from the year before, while others were new recruits getting their first crack at the National team level. Topped off with



Revos veterans such as Philly-turned-LA gunner Ryan McGettigan and Denver/DC defender Peter Taylor, Ellis and company spent a week on the Emerald Isle playing three games.

All reports from the coaching staff and observers report an encouraging showing from the red-white-and-blue in two losses to the Irish Warriors, sandwiched around a midweek loss to the Belfast Redbacks. The Revos led three-quarters of the way through the final match against the Warriors but fell in the end by 25 points. Still, there was a great amount of upside from the trip, as players took in the tour and used it to further their game for club and country.

Three weeks after returning home, Ellis held the first IC2020 Revolution Camp in Richmond, Virginia. Over 50 players were put through their paces as the staff eyes talent for the next world carnival in Melbourne – which is now in just twenty months' time – and the 2021 Trans-Atlantic Cup in Great Britain. The Revos are aiming for three teams in Melbourne: the seniors, a seconds, and a youth team.

### **Freedom Camp, and the Growth of Women's Footy**

From her time in Arizona with the Lady Hawks through her role in co-founding the New York Magpies women's side and her stint with the national team, Christina Licata has seen just about everything in the USAFL's women's program. In 2018, she was selected to take it into its future as head coach of the Freedom, becoming the first American, the first woman, and the first former player to take up the role.

Her first glances towards IC2020 and the T-A Cup 2021 began with camp in Denver in the shadows of Dick's Sporting Goods Park. Dozens of women, among the best in the nation, came with hopes of wearing the Statue of Liberty as part of the Freedom and Liberty.

As has been the case in almost every season since the first women's competition in 2005, more clubs added women's programs to their ranks this year, and start up programs saw their numbers rise as well. Chicago and Nashville were two of the biggest stories, as both were on display at the Central Regionals as part of the Midwest All-Stars side. Philadelphia, Columbus, Baltimore-Washington, and North Star Blue Ox all had new players, while Portland made their Division 1 debut at Nationals.

### **Hello, Mr. American Pie!**

Mason Cox's first twenty games in the AFL were feast and famine. In his maiden two seasons with Collingwood, the big Texan slotted home 25 goals, but his presence with the club was met with polarizing opinions from the Magpie faithful down under, with many calling for him to be sent back to the VFL to improve, or to be sent back to the oil fields of Dallas.

But coach Nathan Buckley had faith in his big, angular ruck, even when he was suspended for one game following an incident in the opener. Still had faith him after a rough patch through the first two months of the season. Then, Cox's production picked up. In an eleven game stretch, he kicked goals in ten of them – Fifteen in all, including a bag of five against Melbourne in Round 12.



Collingwood finished second, and Cox became the first born-and-bred American to play in an AFL finals match. After two non-descript games in the first two rounds of the finals, many expected the same from Mason Cox in the preliminary final – even if he didn’t know what that was.

Instead, Cox booted home three goals, bringing a full and raucous MCG to its feet, chanting “U-S-A!” over and over again. Not even a president could do that. His performance and the Magpie win brought media attention from both sides of the Pacific, boosting the profile of the man and highlighting his journey and the footballing community here in the States. Cox and the ‘Pies fell to West Coast in the Grand Final, but the legend of the American Pie has grown, and may continue to grow in 2019.

### **Aussie Rules, On Wisconsin**

The city of Racine rolled out every sort of figurative red carpet they had on hand. Never had a host city embraced the carnival the way the Belle City did, and it not only welcomed players and fans, but an array of names from the sports world. Mason Cox, Erin Phillips, Sarah Perkins, and Matthew Dellavadoya were all among the names who came to Nationals and to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of USA-Australian Mateship.

For the first time since the expansion of divisions in 2001, none of the seven competitions were contested with eight teams. This led to semi-finals and finals matches being played on Sunday, and out of the five divisions that had Grand Finals, four of them were rematches from Saturday afternoon. The Austin Crows staked their claim to dynasty status for the 2010s, dispatching of Golden Gate for their fourth Men’s D1 title in six years. The reserves side turned away Denver to complete their first ever double premiership. Elsewhere, The San Francisco Iron Maidens became the third women’s team to three-peat at Nationals, shutting out surprise package Seattle in the D1 decider.

Minnesota (6 years) and Philadelphia (16 years) erased championship droughts in Men’s D2 and D3 respectively on the weekend, the former denting Portland’s unbeaten record not once, but twice. Baltimore ended their marathon first year with a D4 victory over a combined Arizona Outlaws/Las Vegas/Seattle-B outfit, and the Sacramento Lady Suns, Montreal Angels, and Wisconsin Wombats came together to win their first National Championships out of the Women’s D2.



## USAFL Member Clubs

Club	City	State	Region	Founded
Arizona Hawks	Phoenix	AZ	Western	1999
Arizona Outlaws	Phoenix	AZ	Western	2018
Atlanta Kookaburras	Atlanta	GA	Eastern	1998
Austin Crows	Austin	TX	Central	2002
Baltimore Dockers	Baltimore	MD	Eastern	2017
Baton Rouge Tigers	Baton Rouge	LA	Central	2004
Boston Demons	Boston	MA	Eastern	1997
Chicago Swans	Chicago	IL	Central	1998
Cincinnati Dockers	Cincinnati	OH	Central	1996
Cleveland Cannons	Cleveland	OH	Central	2014
Columbus ARFC	Columbus	OH	Central	2008
Dallas Magpies	Dallas	TX	Central	1998
DC Eagles	Washington DC		Eastern	2017
Denver Bulldogs	Denver	CO	Western	1998
Des Moines Roosters	Des Moines	IA	Central	2010
Ft. Lauderdale Fighting Squids	Fort Lauderdale	FL	Eastern	2005
Golden Gate AFL	San Francisco	CA	Western	1998
Houston Lonestars	Houston	TX	Central	2005
Indianapolis Giants	Indianapolis	IN	Central	2013
Las Vegas Gamblers	Las Vegas	NV	Western	2005
Los Angeles Dragons	Los Angeles	CA	Western	2010
Louisville Kings	Louisville	KY	Central	1996
Little Rock Coyotes	Little Rock	AR	Central	2016
Milwaukee Bombers	Milwaukee	WI	Central	1998
Minnesota Freeze	Minneapolis	MN	Central	2005
Nashville Kangaroos	Nashville	TN	Central	1997
New York Magpies	New York	NY	Eastern	1998
North Carolina Tigers	Raleigh	NC	Eastern	1997
North Star Blue Ox	St. Paul	MN	Central	2017
Oklahoma FC	Oklahoma City	OK	Central	2017
Orange County Bombers	Orange County	CA	Western	1998
Philadelphia Hawks	Philadelphia	PA	Eastern	1998
Portland Steelheads	Portland	OR	Western	1998
Sacramento Suns	Sacramento	CA	Western	2009
San Diego Lions	San Diego	CA	Western	1997
Seattle Grizzlies	Seattle	WA	Western	1998
St. Louis Blues	St. Louis	MO	Central	1997



## Executive Board Members - 2018

• Seb Aguiari, President	• Jon Loring, Secretary
• Scott Morris, Eastern Vice President	• Richard Horden-Gibbings, Treasurer
• David Bryant, Central Vice President	• Tegan Hamilton, Member At Large
• Heather Serpico, Western Vice President	

## USAFL Staff

• Doren James, Executive Director	• Brian Barrish, Media Manager
• Kathryn Hogg, Webmaster	• Horacio Gutierrez, Accountant

## USAFL Umpires Association

• Jonathan Mills, President	• Toby Persson, Umpire Goal Coach
• Steve Arnott, Vice President	• Jeff Persson, Field Umpire Coach
• Sid Caesar, Treasurer	• William Conway, Member at Large
• Seth McElvaney, Secretary	• Laurie Rupe, Member at Large

## USAFL Women's Association

• Lisa Arredondo, President	• Anna Thexton, Treasurer
• , Vice President East	• Emily Smuder, Member At Large
• Kathryn Hogg, Vice President Central	• Valerie Barber Axthelm, USAFL Liaison
• Laure Kwoka, Secretary	

## USA Revolution Coaching Staff

• Tom Ellis, Head Coach	• Matt Dinauski, Assistant Coach
• Jason Becker, Assistant Coach	• Brad Anderson, Team Manager
• Dan Sarbacker, Assistant Coach	• Steve Budrick, Head Trainer

## USA Freedom Coaching Staff

• Christina Licata, Head Coach
• Martin Coventry, Assistant Coach
• Jess Whisney, Team Manager





## 2018 Regional Championships

### Central Regional – Nashville, TN



Footy in the US is a summer sport. It's a complete 180 from the climate in Australia, where it is dead in the middle of their winter and that's where the game thrives.

That's why footy in the US is a completely different beast, and in Nashville, the winners were those who could handle not just the teams in front of them, but the neigh-triple digit temps that greeted them at Metro Soccer Complex. With planes landing at Nashville International behind them, 13 teams from the breadth and width of the Midwest came in search of a cup.

In the end, the Austin Crows sliced through their three games like a hot knife through something melty, Ohio Valley's veterans stoked them towards their first regional championships tournament title, and a competitive women's competition with new players on new teams complimented another championship for the Denver Lady Bulldogs.

#### **MEN'S DIVISION ONE: AUSTIN RUNS THROUGH FIELD FOR THIRD REGIONAL CROWN**

In the opening game of Pool A, Chicago had no answers for Austin's Mitchell Dell and Nolan Cox, as the Crows applied their scoring touch early and often en route to an 87-0 whitewash over the Swans in the cool morning temps. The Swans would fare slightly better in their second group game against Denver, with Jeff Kraemer helping to pull the Windy City boys into a fight against the 8-time D1 National Champs. But Brandon Kauffman's dominating middle play, and the agility of Lachlan Fleet was too much for the Bloods, as Denver came home 52-point victors to set up a preliminary final with the Crows.

The Austin-Denver dynamic has been viewed as a changing of the guard from one USAFL dynasty to the next, and the last time the two met at a regional championships in 2016, it was Austin who had to claw their way from behind to knock off the Bulldogs. Here, though the Crows would win by 50 points and go through to the final, Denver played them the toughest of all, as Kauffman, Cameron Freeman, and the Bulldogs forced 11 misses on goal and scored the only point that Austin would surrender on the day.

Pool B began with Dallas taking on hometown Nashville, and the Magpies came out of the gate faster than the planes taking off from Nashville International behind the field. The Kangaroo defenders, skilled



as they are, simply couldn't contain Ben McIntosh in the first half, as the big Aussie kicked six straight goals to give the 'Pies a flying start in the first half. Dallas changed their look in the second half, however, and that allowed the Kangas to open things up on their end through midfielders Mo Howell and Kersei Davis. Each team would get two goals in the second half, and though Dallas won 49-16, Nashville used their second half spurt to propel them into their next game against Houston.

Firing on all cylinders now, it was Nashville who came out hot in the second game, with Howell and John Freeman controlling the middle of the ground and setting up Eric Toepfer in the forward line for a couple of goals. Trailing at halftime, however, the Lonestars came out of the break with the upper hand, as rookie Chance Mire took charge in the ruck, which allowed Sam Donnelly to take a couple of cool marks around the goal and convert. Kicking a string of goals to see out the second half, it was Houston who would get up by nine points in a thriller, and set up a match against Dallas in the prelim final.

On paper, the Magpies were favored here, but, as has been said hundreds if not more times, they don't play footy on paper. A tug-of-war the whole way, Houston and their inspirational talisman Dave Bryant kept Dallas at arm's length the entire game, and though Dallas would claw back in the last minute to come to within one point, that the way the game would end. 34-33 Houston, and a date against Austin in an all Lone Star State clash in the final.

Austin arrived in the final with confidence, and they would exude it in miserly fashion over their in-state rivals, who battled intensely for forty minutes. Daniel Brown stopped any Houston sorties forward and turned them into advance, setting up Matthew Foster for two early goals. Grant Campbell, the veteran Peter Daicos-type of the Crows, scored an early goal and then worked the Houston defenders into the ground to create a second a couple of minutes later. The Crows would continue their dominance into the second half, and kick away to a 56-0 win to lift their third Regional Championship trophy in four years. Brown would take out MVP for the final, while Dell would be named best and fairest.

Down the hill, Dallas staked itself to an early lead behind Indianapolis Giant hired-hands Shane Branscum and Phil Lash to hold onto a four point win for third place, while Chicago wore down Nashville in the late afternoon heat to take home fifth place.

*POOL A: Austin Crows (2-0), Denver Bulldogs (1-1), Chicago Swans (0-2)*

Austin 12.15.87 def Chicago 0.0.0

Denver 10.7.67 def Chicago 2.3.15

Austin 5.11.51 def Denver 0.1.1

*POOL B: Houston Lonestars (2-0), Dallas Magpies (1-1), Nashville Kangaroos (0-2)*

Dallas 8.1.49 def Nashville 2.4.16

Houston 5.5.35 def Nashville 4.2.26

Houston 5.4.34 def Dallas 4.9.33

**CLASSIFICATION MATCHES:**

Grand Final: Austin 8.8.56 def Houston 0.0.0



3rd Place: Dallas 4.5.29 def Denver 3.7.25

5th Place: Chicago 7.4.46 def Nashville 3.6.24

#### **WOMEN'S DIVISION: LADY BULLDOGS DANCE TO VICTORY, TEXAS, ALL-STARS SHINE BRIGHT**



That the Denver Lady Bulldogs would win both games in their Central Regionals debut by handy margins should surprise no one; the six time defending champions were heavily favored coming into Nashville against a second-year team and a mixed bag of players from clubs in their infancy. But the story here was how the other two teams fared against each other, and against the mighty Bulldogs, and what they can take into the future.

The opener saw the Texas Heat face the Midwest All-Stars, a team made up of players from Nashville, Des Moines, Chicago, Minnesota, and Cincinnati.

Chemistry is a buzz-word in footy, but for a team of near strangers, they had it early against the Texans, pressuring the Heat defense until Des Moines' Emily Rice got the first goal of the match. Pressure by Nashville's Carson Moore and Minnesota's Kathryn Mullin produced scoring chances, while Chicago's Tess Maisey and Nashville's Lauryl Desch kept the Heat to just one behind in the first twenty minutes, as the All-Stars led 10-1.

Texas kicked into gear after halftime, as the Heat's two gunners, Taylor Ballinger and Aubrey Bagley, took control and started creating opportunities of their own. Bagley hit two quick goals, while Kate Smith kept the ball away from the All-Stars midfielders, and six-foot rookie Hailey Rebar threw herself at the footy with the frequency of a Florida thunderstorm. Rebar's efforts netted her a goal in her first game, and the Heat picked up a handsome 24-12 win in a game that both sides could be proud of.

Now the All-Stars had to face Denver, and considering that this was a group of players spread all over the Midwest against The Mighty Lady Bulldogs™, they put on a pretty good show. Moore and Maisey were not afraid of Denver stalwarts Hallie Kastanek and Allison Bremner, going after the footy and taking marks away. But they didn't have an answer for two other veterans, as Anna Thexton finessed her way to three goals, and Kaitlyn Mascher-Mace muscled home three more in a 57-point victory. Despite the convincing win, the All-Stars played extremely well to their credit, and hopefully we'll see the likes of Moore, Desch, Maisey, and the rest back at Nationals in October.

The nightcap was another convincing Denver win, but this time it was their rookies who took center stage. Alexis Koo buzzed like an angry bee to collect possessions like pollen, and both Zoe Do and Lyssa Gad created a number of chances for Mascher-Mace, Sara Rohner, and the forwards to convert. The Texans managed two points against the Lady Bulldogs, but their play impressed all, including their opponents themselves. Bagley had another strong game running from the back, both Rebar and Julia Wells held their own against the taller Bulldog onballers, and USAFL women's original Beth Nollenberger



used her experience to collect double digits in possessions. Bagley would take home the MVP medal, while Kastanek's domination of the middle led to the best & fairest nod.

Denver's ladies lifted another trophy on the day, but women's footy continues to grow in the nation's heartland, with the hopes that more teams will compete in next year's tournament.

*Final Ladder:*

Denver Lady Bulldogs (2-0), Texas Heat (1-1), Midwest All-Stars (0-2)

Texas 4.0.24 def All-Stars 1.6.12

Denver 8.10.58 def All-Stars 0.1.1

Denver 7.10.52 def Texas 0.2.2

**MEN'S DIVISION TWO: OHIO VALLEY'S VETERANS TURN ASIDE D2 FIELD**

The Ohio Valley River Rats know how to win a title; they had done it five times in Divvy Four at Nationals since the 2008 season, and the Cincinnati Dockers were one of the league's first power teams. On this sweltering day in Nashville, the Rats would have to deal with the defending D4 champs Oklahoma FC, a resurgent Atlanta side, and the ever dangerous Des Moines Roosters/Baton Rouge Tigers combo, who had the assistance of three members of the Minnesota Freeze.

Ohio Valley started the day with a straight-forward 51-point win over Atlanta, though the score belied a strong effort from the Kookaburras, led by Braden Medders. The Rats' veterans, led by midfielder Kyle Strenski and forward Matt Seuling, were too much for the Kookas however. Up the hill, Des Moines, bolstered by Minnesota halfback Brent Mergen and Baton Rouge rover Lachlan Miscamble, were holding play against OFC, and with a complete team effort, accounted for the Buffs by six goals.

Oklahoma used their setback to the "Tiger-Cocks" as motivation in their afternoon game against Atlanta, and with stalwart forward Alex Mirakian and rookie sensation Jordan Colero leading the Charge, the Buffs hung three digits on the game Kookaburras, accounting for Atlanta by 96 points and keeping their cup hopes alive. The Rats, meanwhile, had no difficulty with DSM/BTR, as Strenski, Jack Jacobs, and the rest of the white-and-purple overcame an inaccurate combination side by seven majors.

That left the winners of the last two Divvy 4 National Championships to play for the regional title, with Des Moines/Baton Rouge waiting in the wings on percentage. Both the Rats and Buffs had experience in spades, but it was Ohio Valley's that shown through. Strenski, who would be named best and fairest on the tournament, was again the dominant force to get the ball forward, and the OFC defense had no answer for Seuling, who would kick a bag of four and hold off the comeback-minded Buffs by eight points to get the chocolates. The "Tiger-Cocks" conglomerate finished in second by virtue of their win over Atlanta in the nightcap.

*Final Ladder:*

Ohio Valley River Rats (3-0), Des Moines/Baton Rouge/Minnesota (2-1), Oklahoma FC (1-2), Atlanta Kookaburras (0-3)

Des Moines 7.4.46 def Oklahoma 1.4.10

Ohio Valley 10.9.69 def Atlanta 3.0.18



Ohio Valley 8.7.55 def Des Moines 2.7.19  
Oklahoma 16.7.103 def Atlanta 1.1.7  
Des Moines 12.19.91 def Atlanta 0.1.1  
Ohio Valley 5.1.31 def Oklahoma 3.6.24

## East Regional – Philadelphia, PA



The forecast called for thunder and lightning, very very frightening.

There was rain, and mist, but there was no physical lightning. But there was a change of the guard across all three contested divisions at the Eastern Regional Championships in suburban Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Hawks and Columbus Cats won their first ever men's regional championships, while the Boston, Baltimore, and DC Eagles ladies combined to lift their first ever trophy on the women's side.

### **MEN'S DIVISION 1 – HAWKS SOAR OVER TIGERS, EAGLES, WIN FIRST REGIONAL CROWN**

In their previous meeting, North Carolina held Philly at arms' length through a truncated win. On this day, similarly misty and moisty, it was the Hawks who were on the front foot from the beginning. On offense, Ryan Henry was busier than a bee in a beehive, helping to rack up possessions and get the forward liners involved early and often. Jonathan Ginsburg and rookie Brian Simkus were the key targets, and they peppered the Tiger goal often. Despite the efforts of attacker-turned-defender Austin Doerr and midfield playmaker Michael Hoffman, the Philly's pressure was just too good, and they took home the opener, 46-3.

Next up for the Tigers was the New York Magpies, who had brought a full complement down from the Big Apple, trying to regain their regional championship for the first time since 2016. 'Pies Coach Shane Lowry led by example, diving in after the footy just about anywhere he was required. "Jersey" Mike Fietta, a one time member of Philadelphia, and longtime superstar Marcus Jankie, both pressured and kept the football, helping to suffocate any sort of attack by the Tigers. New York's defensive play was limited, and they showed their class over the game Carolina bunch in a 59-0 victory.

That left the Hawks and Magpies, two old rivals, for the Division 1 title. Three weeks before, the Hawks beat New York by 27 points in Raleigh, though the Magpies' hadn't travelled as well then as they had on this day. The team was much stronger, and on paper, at least, New York would be the favorite.





It's a good thing they don't play these games on paper. (And when I say that, you know what is going to happen next.)

Jankie, Mike Murphy, and Nick Bowman tested the Hawks backliners early, but the defense, led by Revo Ryan McGettigan and coach Jon Loring, held firm. The difference maker for the Hawks was 20-year USAFL veteran Dustin Jones, who began his footy career with the old Lehigh Valley Crocodiles. Jones showed that he has lost none of his ability over the years, helping to spur the midfield against the dangerous Magpie centers. Though Philly would only get two more scoring shots in the game than New York, they would make the most of theirs, and when the final siren had gone the Hawks were winners by seventeen points.

To put this, and the previous win in Raleigh into context, prior to this month, Philadelphia had only defeated the Magpies once in their twenty year USAFL history – at home in 2011. In three weeks, they've managed to do it twice. Not bad for a team that had been unsteady since its D3 Final appearance in 2014. Jones and Henry tied for the divisional best and fairest award, and both deservedly received medals on awards night.

#### **MEN'S DIVISION 1 FINAL STANDINGS:**

Philadelphia Hawks 2-0

New York Magpies 1-1

North Carolina Tigers 0-2

Philadelphia 6.10.46 def North Carolina 0.3.3

New York 9.5.59 def North Carolina 0.0.0

Philadelphia 5.5.35 def New York 2.6.18

#### **WOMEN'S DIVISION – “LADY D-GLES” HOLD BACK MAGPIES TO LIFT FIRST CUP**

The equilibration of the Eastern regional women's programs had been apparent over the past two seasons, with the Baltimore-Washington Lady Eagles, Columbus Cats, Boston Lady Demons, and Philadelphia Hawks all bolstering their numbers. All four came to Philly to take aim at the New York Magpies, three-time defending regional champs. Columbus and Philly combined as the “Kitty-Hawks”, while Boston and BWE combined as the “Lady D-gles”

While the Kitty-Hawks would lose both of their games on the day, first by 14 to the Lady D-gles and then by 32 to New York, they played both teams innumerably





tough. Columbus defender Christine Nguyen stopped a bunch of scoring opportunities coming through from the back, and rookie Melissa Suslowitz got a number of clean possessions through the middle as well. The Philly contingent saw two breakout performances; Jackie Kershaw handled herself amazingly well in the ruck contest against more seasoned opponents, and Lindsey Turse, playing her first games of competitive footy, roved with cutlass-like efficiency.

Coached by recently retired Boston Lady Demon stalwart Cailin Deal, the BOS/BWE combo looked impressive in their opener, relying not only on the experience of Alex Mims-Pike and Karen Stablein, but also the gumption of several newcomers. New York, meanwhile, was their typical New Yorkian selves in their midday opener. Rookie Jani Boal was the offensive prime mover for the 'Pies, with Natalie Wolff acting as the attacking lightning rod. Wolff's goals, balanced by Grace Koplow playing forcefully across halfback, gave the 'Pies a convincing first game win, and momentum going into the de-facto Grand Final against the Lady D-gles.

Though the Magpies were the favorites, the opening set of chances belonged to Deal's charges, and it was up to Koplow, Casillas, and the Magpies to parry them away. Christina Licata's team would be tested early when Wolff went down with an injury, and oddly enough that seemed to wake up the New York Attack. But first gamer Kristin Lough was not going to be deterred at fullback, taking a dozen defensive marks, some of them contested, and help hold New York to a single, solitary point at halftime. But trailing 1-0, the D-gles knew they would have to get points from somewhere.

What followed was probably the most intense twenty minutes of women's footy in recent memory, a half that rivalled the 2016 Nationals Grand Final. Both teams went back and forth, and back and forth. BOS/BWE tied the game at one, and then with Koplow off the field following an injury, they saw their chance. Katie Anderson found a cutting Meriam Mehter, who handballed to Mims-Pike for the game's opening goal. It turned out to be the winning score. New York pushed forward, at times with most of their players in the offensive half, but Lough and back pocket Belinda Edwards kept saying no, and Mims-Pike, who would win the MVP award, would apply the coup-de-grace seconds before the siren.

#### **WOMEN'S FINAL STANDINGS:**

Boston/Baltimore-Washington 2-0

New York Magpies 1-1

Columbus/Philadelphia 0-2

Boston/BWE 2.4.16 def Columbus/Philly 0.2.2

New York 5.5.35 def Columbus/Philly 0.3.3

Boston/BWE 2.1.13 def New York 0.1.1

#### **MEN'S DIVISION 2 – CBUS EEKS OUT CUP OVER DEMONS IN WILD CHASE**

Four teams did battle for the Division 2 crown, and all six of the matches were affected by the wet conditions. The early games pitted the DC Eagles against the Boston Demons, while the Columbus Cats squared up against the Baltimore Dockers. A back and forth battle between the Cats and Dockers became clearer when Rob Adams and Columbus began to kick away, and the Ohioans came home by 18



points. Meanwhile, the Eagles' attack, led by Ryan Raybold and the omnipotent Harrison Griffiths, put the screws to the Dees defense early, and though Boston's defense put up a tough fight, the Eagles were just too good, winning by eight straight kicks. No one knew it at that point in the day, but the Demons' heavy loss would come back to haunt them.



The Demons would right the ship against Baltimore, as the rain picked up for a bit during the day. Geoff Hamshar had his hands full with Ben Crenca in the middle, but the supporting cast was able to pick up the slack as Boston won, 43-25. On the other side of the trees, Columbus pocketed win number two, as the Cats were able to account for the speed and skill that had doomed Boston in DC's earlier win. Aussie youngster Declan Stimpson led the Buckeye charge as the Cats, in a game where both teams could only manage six scoring shots, made the better use of their chances.

That left the 2-0 Cats to play the 1-1 Demons, while the 1-1 Eagles faced the 0-2 Dockers in the final set of games of the day. DC was still in it; their big win over Boston meant that if they beat their beltway rivals, and Boston just got up over Cbus, that their percentage would be enough to claim the title. The Dees needed to win big to overcome their mathematical hole, while the Cats just simply had to win.

DC-Baltimore is shaping up to be a big rivalry; with all of the history between the two cities and the split into two clubs, that's no surprise. The Eagles had taken both games earlier in the season but on this day the Dockers were keen to not only break their duck for the series, but also on the day. Travis Flight, who goes by "Rocket", was exactly that, as he flew around the Eagles defense en route to the division MVP award. It was a physical encounter, but one that the Dockers welcomed, and they held DC off the major scoresheet with a 30-3 triumph.

As the Dock show was lighting up DC, Boston was furiously trying to win and overcome the percentage gap between them and Columbus. Jordan Madigan and defender-turned-attacker PJ Devine were up to the task, and put the Demons in front for most of the game. But it was the work of Adams, Matt Begghley and Cats defense that kept the deficit within reason, and though Boston skipped home 50-27 winners, it was Columbus that skipped off with the regional championship.

#### **MEN'S DIVISION 2 FINAL STANDINGS:**

Columbus Cats 2-1 (115%)  
Boston Demons 2-1 (93%)  
DC Eagles 1-2 (106%)  
Baltimore Dockers 1-2 (88%)





Columbus 4.8.32 def Baltimore 2.2.14  
DC Eagles 8.4.52 def Boston 0.4.4  
Columbus 5.1.31 def DC Eagles 2.3.15  
Boston 6.7.43 def Baltimore 3.7.25  
Baltimore 4.7.30 def DC Eagles 0.3.3  
Boston 7.8.50 def Columbus 4.3.27

## West Regional – Sacramento, CA

It's a true as anything else in Aussie Rules; every team comes into every game and every tournament with something to prove.

With many teams, it's about being the best. With others, it's showing how far you've come with new players, or with a new team altogether.

The Golden Gate Roos proved that they are still the best team in the US, turning aside all three challengers and locking up their third straight Western D1 title. The Portland Sockeyes and Los Angeles Dragons came together to prove that their talent is among the best in the USAFL's women's ranks. And Portland's men's team, the Sockeyes, took on a bunch of new players from the Arizona Hawks and proved that their contrail is still rising on the USAFL skyway.

### **MEN'S DIVISION ONE: ROOS RUN THROUGH FIELD FOR THIRD STRAIGHT CROWN**

The Golden Gate Roos had a reputation to uphold; as the number one team in the country, as the defending D1 National champions, and as two time Western D1 premiers. They asserted their intentions in the opening game against the San Diego Lions and part of the Arizona Hawks contingent that had come up to Davis. Ben Dowdell controlled the center of the ground, allowing Justin Mann to kick the opening goal. Despite the efforts of Brandon Blankenship as the Lions backliners, Mann, Chris Smith, and Jake Ryan were overpowering over the forty minutes, and the Roos started the day with a 61-3 win. While that was going on, Los Angeles was accounting for a surging Seattle outfit, and though Max Depina and the Grizz made the Dragons earn every point, Julian De Vizio and David Higgs' play in the half-forward line led the Californians to victory, 52-26.

Switching opponents, it was now the Roos turn to deal with Seattle, and here again the Golden Gate front liners made their foes work in the half back line. Depina, Alex Jessup and company had their hands full with Mann, Smith, Ryan, and Jack Lucas, but they did force the Roos into only converting of eight of their nineteen scoring shots. Seattle went down fighting by forty points, but the Roos were into the de facto Grand Final match, where they would face Los Angeles. San Diego managed to get their first goal of the afternoon against the Dragons, but they didn't have any answers for big Donald Lee in the ruck and Di Vizio's attack, but LA kicked away to a 60-7 win.



Thus, that left Roo-Dragons for the chocolates, the first time the teams had played since they met for the Divvy 1 Nationals Grand Final last October. It was also a meeting between the #1 and #2 teams in the USAFL Top 20 Poll. Dowdell and Lee locked horns again in this decider played in the Sacramento dusk, and the Dragons moved the ball well through Paul Jackson and Paul Loakim. The Roos, however, hit early and often. The forwards staked the Roos to an early lead and then kept LA at arm's length, though the Dragons did fight back hard in the third quarter through Higgs and Justin Hall. Manly Johnson played an understated role throughout the afternoon, and he led the Roos home as they sealed the tournament with a 53-18 triumph.

San Diego and Seattle duked it out in the undercard in another Grand Final rematch for third place in the group. And just like their match nine months ago, it was one of the more competitive games of the day. On this day, however, it was the Lions who came out victorious, as Domenic Graves and Daniel Hall led San Diego to a nine-point win over the defending D3 National Champs.

**Final Standings: Golden Gate Roos (3-0), Los Angeles (2-1), San Diego/AZ Hawks (1-2), Seattle (0-3)**

*Golden Gate 9.7.61 def San Diego/AZ Hawks 0.3.3*

*Los Angeles 8.4.52 def Seattle 4.2.26*

*Golden Gate 8.1.59 def Seattle 3.1.19*

*Los Angeles 9.6.60 def San Diego/AZ Hawks 1.1.7*

*Golden Gate 8.5.53 def Los Angeles 3.0.18*

*San Diego/AZ Hawks 6.3.39 def Seattle 3.2.20*

**WOMEN'S DIVISION: SOCKEYES HOLD OFF IRON MAIDENS, FIELD, FOR SECOND TITLE**

In their opening game, the San Francisco Iron Maidens dealt with a hungry homestanding Sacramento Lady Suns, who were looking to pick off their cross-state rivals. After surrendering an early goal, Nicolette Clark slotted home two straight for the Lady Suns to give them the lead. Jessica Lund would kick two of her own in the second quarter to put San Francisco back on top at halftime, where they would stay. Both teams had members of the Arizona Lady Hawks playing for them, and veteran Melissa Wilhelm was making the biggest impact, willing the Suns in the fight, but the Maidens' defense was too strong en route to a seventeen-point win.

Coming into the season, many tipsters had eyed the young and emerging Seattle Grizzlies as the heir apparent to San Francisco's throne in the women's division. But in their opening game against Portland/Los Angeles, it was their southern rivals who would open the day with the full points. Despite the heroics of eventual best-and-fairest April Lewis, the Sockeyes led by Aussie veteran Lucy Parrington and tall rookie Brandy Machado, went on to triumph by twenty points.

The long awaited Maidens-Grizzlies match was a bruising affair, but one that the Maidens had in control for most of the game. The Seattle/Arizona Outlaws defense had its hands full with Robin Leslie, who punched in three major scores, and the Maidens were home 33-9. Down the hill, Portland, led by Dragon midfielder Yuie Kawakatzu, ran through the Lady Suns by seventeen points, but not for the want



of trying by Sacramento. Makenzie Carr had a standout performance in defeat, recording several tackles and putting the pressure on the Portland Forwards.

The Sockeyes now came into the final against the Maidens. Two years ago, the Sockeyes had combined with Minnesota to take out the Western Regional title. Their final opponent that day? San Francisco.

Trailing 2-0, the Sockeyes' Parrington sent a homing missile on a free kick found a wide open Simone Shepherd in the goal square, and she tapped home the go-ahead goal. A couple of minutes later, Heather Serpico scored the biggest goal of her footballing career, turning aside two defenders and flying home a major through a great individual effort. Another American veteran, Courtney Sherman-Johnson, kicked a major for the Maidens to bring the margin back to three points and give her team a chance. But Minnesota loanee Paige Kiecker, taking several key defensive marks in the final frenzied ten minutes, preserved a 13-10 victory. Portland had won their second regional trophy, while L.A. women's team had its first in just their second full year.

The hometown side did get their win on the day, in a low scoring tug of war with Seattle. Carr and fellow defender Lauré Kwoka held the Grizzlies off the major scoresheet with a 7-3 win.

**Final Standings: Portland/Los Angeles (3-0), San Francisco (2-1), Sacramento/AZ Hawks (1-2), Seattle/AZ Outlaws (0-3)**

*San Francisco 5.0.30 def Sacramento/AZ Hawks 2.1.13*

*Portland/Los Angeles 3.4.22 def Seattle/AZ Outlaws 0.2.2*

*San Francisco 5.3.33 def Seattle/AZ Outlaws 1.3.9*

*Portland/Los Angeles 5.6.36 def SAC/AZH 3.1.19*

*Portland/Los Angeles 2.1.13 def San Francisco 1.4.10*

*Sacramento/AZ Hawks 1.1.7 def Seattle/AZ Outlaws 0.3.3*

#### **MEN'S DIVISION TWO: PORTLAND, AZ HAWKS COMBINE TO CLAIM FIRST REGIONALS**

The four clubs that contested the Division Two round seemed to be, at least on paper, pretty evenly matched. The first set of games seemed to bear that out, as Gareth Allen and Orange County held off the Sacramento Suns by two points, and the Portland/Arizona Hawks outfit, led by forward guns Elliot Boys and John Kim, broke free of an early challenge by the Arizona Outlaws/Las Vegas Gamblers combine to come home winners by 34.

The Suns and Steelheads would lock horns in what was one of the best games of the day in the second round, as Best & Fairest winner Saleh Tyebjee, timely defender Toby Simmons, and the Suns gave Portland its toughest challenge of the day. But Scott Wagoner would kick a couple of pretty goals, and Kim would have another strong game in a nine point Steelhead win as the Cascadians went to 2-0. Orange County kept their sheet clean as well, behind MVP William Mounce, and they withstood Joey Lutostanski and the Outlaws by two straight kicks.

Part of the benefit of the partnership with the Hawks was that the Steelheads had the services of Revo ruck Jason Wilhelm. In the final game, Wilhelm dominated the ruck and made himself a connecting



option in the midfield, allowing rookie Jovan Mason to set up Boys and Kim during the course of the game. Mounce, who would get the MVP honors for his efforts, kept the Bombers in the game with good ball movement to help get OC's offense in gear, but the Steelheads/Hawks team were much the best, ending the day with a 40-19 win.

The third place matchup pitted Sacramento and the Outlaws/Gamblers combine, which embodied the Wild West in a respect, at least on the scoreboard. The newcomer Outlaws and hearty Gambler bunch that teamed up for the weekend was full of fight, and was led by Outlaw Joey Lutostanski and Vegas's Jason Nunes. But for the Suns, looking to make a run for their first National title since they won D3 in 2014, this was a statement that they will be hungry in Racine, as Tyebjee locked up his award in a sixteen point victory.

**Final Standings: Portland/AZ Hawks (3-0), Orange County (2-1), Sacramento (1-2), AZ Outlaws/Las Vegas (0-3)**

*Portland/AZ Hawks 6.7.43 def AZ Outlaws/Las Vegas 1.1.7*

*Sacramento 2.7.19 def by Orange County 3.3.21*

*Sacramento 3.3.21 def Portland/AZ Hawks 4.6.30*

*Orange County 4.2.24 def AZ Outlaws/Las Vegas 2.2.12*

*Portland/AZ Hawks 5.10.40 def Orange County 3.1.19*

*Sacramento 6.6.42 def AZ Outlaws/Las Vegas 4.2.26*



## 2018 National Championships

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The 2018 USAFL Nationals were the second largest in history; nearly 1200 players, 45 teams representing over 40 clubs competed on October 13-14 at the SCORE complex in Racine, WI.

This was the first Nationals held in Wisconsin since 2005 and was a massive success. None of it would have been possible without the leadership of Doren James, National Tournament Director, the Executive Board and the dedicated support of countless volunteers.

The USAFL would also like to thank Coopers Brewery and Michael Shearer for their continued, long time support and sponsorship of the USAFL Nationals. Special recognition to AFL & AFLW guests Mason Cox and Erin Phillips, AFL Umpires, Shane McInerney, Ray Chamberlain, Chris Donlon and Hayden Gavine. Ron Watt from the AFL Coaches Association returned for the second year and was again instrumental in delivering coaching and umpiring accreditation courses on the weekend. Thank you to the Australian Advisory Board represented by Rod Buncle and Doug Drinkwater for their continued and reliable support across the weekend.

## USAFL Honors

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Life Membership of the USAFL is a recognition of an individual's excellent service to football in the USA. It is given for a combination of service beyond normal expectations, tenure and specific skills that has a National component. This year, two long time and well respected members of the USAFL community were recognized as Life Members for their significant contributions to the league.

### Leigh Barnes

Leigh Barnes first started the beginnings of the GGAFL in Santa Cruz in 1997. The first game was held in 1998. Then as more joined, the GGAFL was born in 2001 with 14 members. From there the roots and foundation was set for what now has become the present day GGAFL (Club President from 2002 - 2010). Additionally, Leigh was the Iron Maidens Head Coach in the inaugural year, Roos Head Coach from 2012-2013, GGAFL Life Member, and Coach of the USA Freedom from 2011 - 2017.

Barnes served the USAFL admirably as USA Freedom Head Coach from 2011 through 2017. During his tenure the Freedom competed in the first three AFL International Cups. Under his vision, the USA Liberty development squad was created with goals to provide a pathway and pipeline to the freedom but more importantly to spread the football acumen throughout the women's football community. Barnes has shared his love of the game in the US for over 20 years and has been a pillar of the USAFL.



## Jason Becker

Jason Becker has been involved with Footy in the United States for two decades now at various capacities. He started playing with Milwaukee Bombers in 1999, winning a USAFL D1 National Championship in 2003. In 2005 he moved to Minnesota to join a fledgling Minnesota Freeze club as a player and assistant coach where he won a D3 National Championship in 2005. He became the Head Coach for the Freeze in '07 to '09, also winning a D2 National Championship in 2007.

He focused on footy at the National Level from 2008 onward but became the Head Coach of Freeze again in 2014 and 2015. At the national level, he played for the USA Revolution National Team from 2000-2003 as a CHF with excellent on field leadership. He made history by kicking the first ever goal in International Cup. Since 2008 he has been an assistant coach for the USA Revolution team at various competitions including the International Cup. Becker has been a constant presence at both the local and national level with many years of leadership, service, integrity and sportsmanship. A lot of players, coaches and administrators of football operations consider him as a mentor, inspiration and adviser. His general attitude and overall demeanor is one of inclusiveness and of fostering good-will across both the USA and international football communities.

## Administration Excellence Awards

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Each year selected USAFL leaders are recognized for their contributions to the overall development of the league. The awards are named in honor of USAFL Founder and Hall of Fame member, Paul "Plugger" O'Keeffe.

Congratulations to **Vicky Schoennagel, President Sacramento Suns** who was awarded for her leadership in guiding the Suns as both President and Head Coach of the Men's team. Vicky was also instrumental in partnering with the league to host the 2018 Western Regionals, one of the most successful Regional tournaments in league history.

Congratulations also go to **Adrian de Booy, President Seattle Grizzlies** who was awarded and recognized for his leadership and efforts in the continued growth and development of the Seattle Grizzlies. The Grizzlies had the largest growth in participation in 2018 across the league and their women's team were Division 1 runners up after just their third season.



## Division I Results

### Golden Gate Roos



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	4	1	25

#### Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest

*Chris Bagot, Los Angeles*

#### Coopers Medal for Most Consistent

*Ben Carpenter-Nwanyanwu, Austin*

### Austin Crows



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	4	6	30

#### Geoff Cann Medal for MVP in Final

*Grant Campbell, Austin*

#### Hayden Kennedy Medal for Grand Final

#### Umpiring

*Steve Arnott & Ross McLaren*



A year's worth of debate, of back and forth, of questions as to who was the best USAFL team of them all boiled down to forty minutes in America's heartland.

There, with the northern sun sinking lower than a student unsure of his answer in open class, the Austin Crows rode off into the sunset with not one, but two more cups.

Claiming their fourth Men's Division 1 title in six seasons, the Crows knocked off

the reigning D1 champion Golden Gate Roos 30-25 in front of a teeming crowd of old and new footy enthusiasts at the SCORE Complex in Racine, Wisconsin.

What everyone will remember about the main event, however, isn't just that the Texan side took back their crown after a year of fermenting feelings, but rather that it was a game that showed the courage and resolve of both teams.

Of the six teams in the competition, all eyes were on the Crows, Roos, and LA Dragons on advancing to the Grand Final. From Group B, the Crows and Dragons each knocked off a plucky but overmatched group from Quebec in their first matches to clinch their spot in Sunday's semifinals. Playing for top seed





in the group and an avoidance of the champs the following morning, Nolan Cox and Austin outlasted Pat Nicholls and the Dragons, 25-13.

Over in Pool A, it was all Golden Gate. Led by Jack Lucas, Ryan Clark, and Steve Balstead, the Roos got by New York and Denver by a combined 87-7 score. The Magpies' exciting 15-13 win over the 8-time D1 champion Bulldogs secured the other semifinal spot.

On Championship Sunday, the Roos were put to their paces by the Dragons, whom they accounted for in last year's final to win their first D1 premiership. They would triumph again by nine points, with eventual Paul Roos medal winner Chris Bagot and LA giving Kyle Johnson's team everything they could handle. In contrast, the Crows' got off to a fast start over New York and romped to a 44-7 decision in their semi.

Despite the long rest in between games, Austin's relatively bigger win had many thinking they were the form side, despite both teams playing their best games of the year over the course of the weekend. Both undefeated, both coming into the final showdown with a full head of steam.

And all of it in front of a National TV audience on ESPN 3.

The Crows' draw the first turns of the Cooper's scoreboard with a behind two minutes in, and applied all of the early pressure. Hemming the Roos into their own fifty meter arc, it took a few minutes for the Gaters to switch the direction of the ball and find openings. Just past the five minute mark, a center clearance found its way into the hands of forward David Jennings, who somehow got a kick away with Cox breathing down the back of his jumper. The effort was true, and Roos were on top 6-1.

Sensing that the game now had a thick heartbeat about it, the Crows went back on the attack and Golden Gate parried away all that they could. But Johnson, the Roos' inspirational leader, made an uncharacteristic mistake. Kicking from his defensive right half back flank, "Manly" made an unforced error, turning the ball over to Austin coach Stefan Barr. Barr's free kick found another Aussie veteran in Ben May, who recovered his own fumble and had the composure to slot one home from 15 meters out across his body to put his team back on top, 7-6.

Two minutes later, Austin went down through four kicks to set up a free kick for another veteran, Grant Campbell, to slot home their second in a row. Cox and fellow American wunderkind Daniel Brown smelt the blood in the water, but Johnson and the Roos stood tall to stop the bleeding. Austin had the sway of play in the opening term, leading the inside 50 count 18-8, but only leading 14-7 on the cash register.

Champions seize the moments that are given to them, and Campbell, having been through several of these sojourns with the murder, kept things rolling for his side. 35 seconds into the second stanza, an outside checkside goal extended the lead. Despite the impending tsunami of navy, red, and gold heading their way, defenders Robert Humann and Matt Lege remained composed and stood in the way





of the game becoming a rout. Those deflections of attack led to Jake Ryan getting a genuine Roos scoring chance that was marked on the last line by Clements, who quietly had a solid game on the defensive side.

With Ben Carpenter-Nwanyanwu racking up the possessions en route to a Geoff Cann Medal, and with the crowd entertained by AFL umpire Ray Chamberlain faithfully performing boundary umpire duties, an Austin Crows victory seemed imminent.

But all was not over just yet; with six minutes left in the contest, young Josh Warren converted from a free kick to draw Golden Gate within fourteen points. Kenrick Tyrell took the mark of the day for Austin down the stretch, but he could only manage a behind off the free kick. Two more minors followed, putting the game at 30-13.

The Crows opponents on the day didn't get to where they were on talent alone. They got there on heart. Miles and miles and miles of heart. And the conclusion of the game wrought the most frantic two minutes in the 22 year history of the Men's D1 Grand Final.

Warren took another mark and kicked his second in a row from 55 meters out with two minutes left to make it 30-19. Scurrying back into the middle to make the most of the time remaining, Justin Mann won a quick hitout and again the Roos scratched out another free kick with Carpenter-Nwanyanwu was called for contacting Warren high. When the Crow talisman failed to give the ball directly back to Warren, he was penalized fifty meters, bringing the Gater forward directly in front.

Warren kicked the apparent goal, but as the umpire hadn't set the mark, meaning that Warren would have to retake the kick. By the time the ball was retrieved from his first attempt and he properly kicked the six pointer, a further thirty precious seconds had eternally ebbed from the clock. When the ensuing ball up was called, Austin had too many men in the enter square, giving Mann a free kick with ten seconds left, enough time for one last probe forward.

Mann gave the ball a mighty boot into a gaggle of players, but the ball fell harmlessly to the perfectly manicured grass. The hooter followed soon after. Game over. Austin 30, Golden Gate 25.

#### MEN'S DIVISION 1 Results:

POOL A	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Golden Gate Roos	2	0	0	8	88	7	1257.14
New York Magpies	1	1	0	4	16	45	35.56
Denver Bulldogs	0	2	0	0	19	26	73.08

POOL B	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Austin Crows	2	0	0	8	81	19	426.32
Los Angeles Dragons	1	1	0	4	50	36	138.89
Quebec Saints	0	2	0	0	17	93	18.28

Golden Gate	6.4 (40)				
Los Angeles	5.1 (31)				
Semifinal #1					
Austin	7.2 (44)				
New York	1.1 (7)				
Semifinal #2					
Golden Gate	4.1 (25)				
Austin	4.6 (30)				
Division 1 Grand Final					
Denver	2.4 (16)				
Quebec	5.3 (33)				
5th Place Game					



## Women's Division I Results

### Seattle Grizzlies



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
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Final	0	0	0
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#### Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest

*April Lewis, Seattle Grizzlies*

#### Coopers Medal for Most Consistent (2 way tie)

*Twania Clark, Denver Bulldogs & Cathy*

*Georgiadis, Minnesota Freeze*

### San Francisco Iron Maidens



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
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Final	3	2	20
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#### Geoff Cann Medal for MVP in Final

*Nikole McKenzie, San Francisco Iron Maidens*

#### Hayden Kennedy Medal for

**Grand Final Umpiring**

*Peter Dinnick, Brendan Dye & Liam Dye*

For the third straight year, the San Francisco Iron Maidens navigated the crowded waters of the USAFL Women's D1 competition to be crowned National Champions.

But the story here wasn't just that they did it, but who they defeated to get to the top in 2018. The Seattle Grizzlies, just three years into their existence as a women's program, reached the Grand Final in just their second go at Division 1. Though they were whitewashed in the final game by twenty points, their campaign was a successful one, and planted the flag for future seasons to follow.

Both Grand Finalists advanced from Pool A. Seattle blanked New York 20-0 in the early game and went into their duel with the champs with a full head of steam. Their performance over the Maidens in this year's pool match was an improvement over their showing last year in San Diego and earlier this summer at the Western Regionals. They only fell 15-0, and put together a solid effort behind ruck April Lewis, key defender Amelia Kahr, and rover Marian Dickinson. The Maidens, led by their own star on-baller Elise Gallagher, accounted for San Francisco by six goals to clinch top spot in the group and secure Seattle's place as runner up.

Pool B was billed as anyone's to win, with upstart Portland, well-stocked Minnesota, and six-time champion Denver in the mix. Portland's defense in their Division 1 debut was superb; they allowed both opponents just 12 points each, but could only muster 10 against the Freeze and two against the Lady Bulldogs. Though Minnesota and Denver knew they were onto the semi-finals, the winner of their game would ensure that their path to the Grand Final wouldn't go through San Francisco. In one of the best games of the tournament, Sara Rohner kicked two magical goals in the span of a minute to give Denver a 23-21 comeback triumph.



The semifinals were both even arm wrestles. In both cases, the teams who combined for the last eight women's D1 National championships faced upstarts who had played excellent football on Day 1 of Nationals and were looking to make their first Grand Final appearances. The Maidens saw off the Freeze 10-7, though the Freeze announced themselves as contenders for the immediate future. The Grizzlies, however, would end the Denver Lady Bulldogs' eight year stay in the USAFL's top two women's sides. Amanda Boe would account for all of the Emerald City scoring, kicking two goals as the Grizzlies defense held off Rohner and Denver by a 12-8 count.

Come the Grand Final, and though Seattle was still riding high from their semifinal triumph, they were down several players due to injury, and had no bench to supplement their fight against the defending champs. That said, their determination and skills kept the contest a contest.

Early in the Grand Final, any probing opportunities by Seattle were easily marked. Defensive star Bevin English may have been out of Nationals with a hand injury, but Meg Leone, Nikole McKenzie and Julie Marks took easy interceptions to hem Seattle in for most of the first half.

McKenzie, however, would be the lightning rod for the three-peat. If the San Francisco Iron Maidens are the USAFL equivalent of the Beatles, McKenzie is perhaps their George Harrison. Sometimes overlooked in the analysis of the team's success, but equally as brilliant as the more well-known members of the squad.

The Modesto, California native was the impetus of the game's first goal two-and-a-half minutes in. After having a kick from fifty smothered by Stephanie Peterson, Julie Marks picked up the ball and handballed to Jessica Estrada who went back to Marks. McKenzie cut through to relieve Marks of the ball as she was tackled by Lateah Holmes and booted home a pretty punt from 35 out to make it 6-0.

Then minutes later, after a behind made it 7-0, three more cogs of the Maidens machine manufactured another clockwork goal. After Sara Magallón intercepted the ensuing kick-in, she floated the free kick in for Brette Brower, who dropped the ball but gathered her own crumbs in time to find Milli Bruce. The Victorian forward instinctively snapped for goal and fitted it just inside the left goal post to extend the lead.



San Francisco held their structure well for the rest of the half; McKenzie's rove work was cutting off the circulation to the Grizzlies bloodflow to their forwards, and Panda Nguyen was spoiling plays around the



ground. In all, Seattle could only penetrate the 50 meter arc twice in the opening twenty minutes, while San Fran had fourteen sorties forward.

Halftime came with the score 14-0, but the Grizzlies were still playing top quality football and still very much alive. April Lewis was winning the ruck battle against Panda Nguyen; in the back line, Dominique Gaudyn was talking timely marks, Amelia Kahr was keystoneing plays forward, Alesandra Alcocer was throwing shepherds to spring Holmes, and Peterson and Marian Dickinson kept fighting away to win crucial possessions.

Dickinson settled the Grizzlies down to start the second half for Seattle, who came out with a renewed vim and vigor, considering that they were down to their final twenty minutes of their season. Nicole Kepron and Allison Leonard were chiseling out more inside 50 chances, with Amelia Kahr and Valerie Barber-Axthelm and Amelia Kahr pushing the ball forward.

But the Maidens had been here before; for all of the Grizzlies' athleticism, the Maidens experience was enough to ensure that the Grizzlies would not trouble the scorers. The Iron Maidens were better at maintaining possession, and up stepped Savannah Green, who earned two key free kicks including one from the doorstep at a slight angle. Her kick on the latter was true, and at 20-0 with 13 minutes, the issue seemed settled.

With thirteen minutes left, Green's connection would be the final score of the match. That the Maidens kept the Grizzlies off the scoreboard was one thing, but that shorthanded Seattle kept San Francisco off the board other than that one kick for all of their final twenty minutes of the season was arguably more impressive. Kahr, Corie Hou, and Rhyann Johnson earning possessions and digging forward. Kahr, Johnson, Barber-Axthelm, and Dickinson kept throwing caution to the wind and desperately going after the ball and willing their team to remain in it with Estrada and Green pushing for another knockout blow.

The siren came and went with the Maidens joining the 2005-07 Atlanta Lady Kookaburras and 2010-2015 Denver Lady Bulldogs as three-peat winners, 20-0. Nikole Mackenzie rightfully pocketed the Geoff Cann Medal for MVP of the Grand Final.

For the third straight year, San Francisco came through the fog of a bumpy campaign and soared into the blue skies of premiership glory. Even with missing two of their best players in English and Carly Smolak, the rest of the squad stepped up throughout the weekend.

Gallagher, who played a pivotal role in her own right, was proud of her own team but also praised the Grizzlies in their Grand Final debut.

"The Grand Final was exciting for the Maidens because we have played the Grizzlies a few times in 2018," the midfielder and GGAFL women's director told USAFL.com, "but everything is different in the Final. Teams with less experience can come out winners because they have that desire and drive that got them to the championship in the first place. It's who is the best team on the day.



"As a team, we took deep breaths to calm down and remind ourselves to play our game, and we did. The Maidens play and thrive as a whole team and will continue to do so. We enjoy playing the Grizzlies, they are talented and play hard and clean. We look forward to seeing them on the field next year!"

Much like the Lady Bulldogs before them, the Maidens know the rest of the field is coming up to them fast, a challenge Gallagher recognizes and welcomes:

"The development in women's footy has been incredible with better skill, new teams, and growth of existing teams. Seattle is a prime example! They have grown a full D1 team in one year and then made it to the National's Grand Final in 2018, that's truly incredible. We are impressed and excited for more to come. Even as one of the largest clubs in the country, we still struggle with recruitment and development, but we will continue to work hard to grow the game and better our players."

For Seattle's part, Valerie Barber-Axthelm has seen the team she started bloom into a Grand Finalist in just two short years. From a promising showing in D1 last year through this year's finish and a team led by Roos Medal winner April Lewis, Val and the Grizzlies know this is just the beginning.

"To return to D1 this year was huge accomplishment, but we were hungry to do better than just play in D1," the Oregon native said. "We wanted to be contenders, to show that we had learned from a frustrating regional tournament and we were not to be overlooked. Beating two very established and experienced teams, Denver and New York, did just that. Neither victory was handed to us, our team earned them."

"Of course, next year our goal is to come home with the trophy. I am so incredibly proud of what we have achieved in the past year, especially with so many women playing their first full year of footy this year. How quickly we grew and progressed as a team is a testament to the support from the club, both men and women, and the Grizzly Community."

POOL A	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
San Francisco Iron Maidens	2	0	0	8	60	9	666.67
Seattle Grizzlies	1	1	0	4	20	15	133.33
New York Magpies	0	2	0	0	9	65	13.85

POOL B	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Denver Lady Bulldogs	2	0	0	8	35	23	152.17
Minnesota Freeze	1	1	0	4	33	33	100.00
Portland Sockeyes	0	2	0	0	12	24	50.00

San Francisco	1.3 (10)
Minnesota	1.1 (7)

Semifinal #1

Denver	1.2 (8)
Seattle	2.0 (12)

Semifinal #2

San Francisco	3.2 (20)
Seattle	0.0 (0)

Division 1 Grand Final

New York	1.1 (7)
Portland	1.5 (11)

5th Place Game





## Division II Results

### Minnesota Freeze



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	5	7	37

**Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest**

*Tyler Mounce, Orange County*

**Coopers Medal for Most Consistent**

*Tom Cramer, Chicago*

### Portland Steelheads



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	3	0	18

**Geoff Cann Medal for MVP in Final**

*Ryan McLuen, Minnesota*

**Hayden Kennedy Medal for**

**Grand Final Umpiring**

*Anthony Hendrie & Dean Schwab*

Minnesota and Portland had both defeated Calgary early in the morning before their meeting to decide the automatic semi-finalists from Pool A. In a monumental tug-of-war in the mud of the hinterlands of Field 5, the Freeze won out 10-7 to punch their ticket through to the semis and end the Steelheads' perfect season. Pool B was taken by the Chicago Swans, who had accounted for Houston and Orange County, and Pool C went to the defending D3 champion Seattle Grizzlies, who took care of San Diego and Dallas in their matches on Saturday. The close loss, coupled with their big win over the Kangaroos, put Portland through as the wild card on percentage.



Because of the quirk of the nine-team format, two regional rivalries would punctuate the D2 semis; Minnesota and Chicago, and Portland v Seattle. The Swans, who had pocketed wins over the Freeze during the season, were no match for their northwestern foes on this day falling by 52 points. Their tournament was a strong one, however, and saw Tom Cramer win the Cooper's Medal for Most Consistent. Portland, who had had their way with the Grizz during the regular season, got all they could handle from their Cascadia neighbors in a 31-21 triumph. The Grizzlies, behind Melbourne-bound lighting bolt Max Depina and defender Alex Jessup, were the most improved team during the season and proved that they

will be among the contenders for some time.



Meeting for the second time in 24 hours, the Steelheads and Freeze traded goals back and forth in the early going through their key forwards; Portland's Scott Waggoner and Minnesota's Ryan McLuen. McLuen, nicknamed "Hanga" for his leaping ability inside fifty, would bag three goals during the game and take home a deserved Jeff Cann Medal. Fellow veterans Brent Mergen, Brent Fisher, and up-and-comer Nirnanjan Sathianathen were not having many problems moving the ball against the Steelhead defense.

Despite going into the half down 21-6, the boys from the Rose City were playing good football, with their inspirational leader Martin Coventry leading the way. Coventry provided a steady hand to the frantic opening twenty minutes, and at halftime, urged his teammates on; they had stayed with them for forty minutes the day before, and they could out play them over twenty to lift their third trophy in three years. Dave Quinn heeded said advice and slotted home a major score from dead in front after thirty seconds of the second stanza, and Portland had momentum.

When it seemed the tides would turn, Minnesota's defense lived up to their name and froze the Steelheads into tasty filets. Fischer, Steve Fashant, and David Meissner stopped the Portland surge and converted it into chances of their own. McLuen topped off his hat-trick, and 18-year-old CJ Adams, who learned the game under his dad's wing in the DC suburbs, collected a goal of his own to go beside his championship medal. Portland's best season in their decade-and-a-half history came to an end with a 37-18 loss, but their ascendancy will continue, if this season is any indication.

But today was Minnesota's day, and quite a few of the veterans had been around for the previous two D2 titles they had claimed – 2007 in Kentucky over Baltimore-Washington, and 2012 in Ohio over Los Angeles.

POOL A	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Minnesota Freeze	2	0	0	8	36	8	450.00
Portland Steelheads	1	1	0	4	42	22	190.91
Calgary Kangaroos	0	2	0	0	13	61	21.31

POOL B	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Seattle Grizzlies	2	0	0	8	75	29	258.62
San Diego Lions	1	1	0	4	47	49	95.92
Dallas Magpies	0	2	0	0	39	83	46.99

POOL C	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Chicago Swans	2	0	0	8	53	27	196.30
Houston Lonestars	1	1	0	4	14	26	53.85
Orange County Bombers	0	2	0	0	14	28	50.00

Minnesota	9.4 (58)	Semifinal #1	Minnesota	5.7 (37)
Chicago	1.0 (6)		Portland	3.0 (18)
Division 2 Grand Final				
Seattle	3.3 (21)	Semifinal #2	San Diego	2.3 (15)
Portland	5.1 (31)		Houston	3.5 (23)
5th Place Game				
Dallas	3.3 (21)	8th/9th Playoff	Orange County	2.6 (18)
Calgary	6.10 (46)		Calgary	2.3 (15)
7th Place Game				



## Women's Division II Results

### Sacramento/Montreal/WI



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	4	7	31

**Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest**

*Dani Marshall, Arizona Hawks*

**Coopers Medal for Most Consistent**

*Valerie Moreau, Montreal Angels*

### Columbus/Chicago/Philadelphia



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	3	2	20

**Geoff Cann Medal for MVP in Final**

*Valerie Moreau, Montreal Angels*

**Hayden Kennedy Medal for Grand Final Umpiring**

*Derek Govier & Ryan Minmier*

In just its fourth year of existence, play in the Women's D2 competition has improved steadily with each carnival, and 2018 was no exception. Bringing together established and emerging women's clubs, five entries took to the ground on Saturday in a straight round robin. It was also a chance for long time participants of women's footy for redemption, and there were a couple of takers on the weekend in that department.

The Texas Heat, fresh off an impressive 2-2 debut at the '17 Nationals, were fancied to go even further here in Racine in combination with a talented group from Los Angeles. Emerging Texan talent Nadira



Smith combine with Dragon sentinels Yuie Kawakatsu and Lani Silvio to take their opening match by two goals over an improved Columbus/Chicago/Philadelphia team. They would come crashing down to earth in the afternoon, when Sacramento/Montreal/Wisconsin handed them a 46-0 hiding. The Suns and sundry, boasting Canadian National teamer Valerie Moreau and up-and-comers Susan Cadman and Isabelle Senecal, stamped themselves as the new favorites, and finished the day with a 27-2 triumph over Calgary/North Star/Nashville/Arizona Hawks.

At sundown on Day 1, Sacramento was in the driver's seat at 2-0, but three hungry teams tailed them. Columbus, Texas, and Calgary were all 1-1, bit had a lot of takeaways from Saturday to keep their fire alive. DC/Baltimore/Boston/Des Moines

were 0-2 in their openers, but had impressed with good play in both matches and were optimistic as Sunday loomed.





There was still frost on the ground at 8am Central time when four of the teams tipped off for their third games, all trying to keep their trophy hopes alive. Texas and DC scrapped for forty minutes with scoring a premium. The Heat only found the posts twice during that time, but it was enough for Aubrey Bagley's team to win 7-4 and eliminate DC. Next door Columbus, locked in a low scoring battle of their own, also only needed one major score to put aside Calgary 9-3. Katrina Scherer, Erica Sacci and the "Kitty Hawks" were now a half game out of first, and now very much alive for the cup.

Later on in the morning, Sacramento went to 3-0 behind Moreau, angular ruckwoman Joanna Rutkowski, and Sun stalwart Liz Danielson, accounting for DC by 57 points. Two hours later, Calgary, eliminated earlier in the morning by the loss to the Cats, played the role of spoiler in the best game of the division. Led by Nashville rookie Natalie Smith and Arizona Hawk rookie Dani Marshall, the Kookas withstood Bagley and the Heat and squeaked away with a 1-point win. With the loss the Heat were now out of the equation, and the final game of the day, Columbus v Sacramento, was for all the marbles.

Both flagship clubs representing the final two teams came to Wisconsin looking to erase a long period of disappointment at Nationals. Sacramento and Columbus, while high in development and passion for growth of the game, had little in the way of success to show for their efforts. That would change in forty minutes of footy. A Sacto win would give them a crown at 4-0. A win by Columbus would draw them and the Suns level at 3-1, but the Cats would be awarded the championship on head-to-head.

The final match had tension, excitement, and big plays by players who had risen to the occasion. Scherer, Margaret McFarland, and Philly defender Barb Dempsey made the Suns work harder than they had in any game that weekend. Sacramento built themselves out to a lead while the Cats ate into it. As hard as the Cats fought, however, it was not enough for Moreau, Danielson, Caroline LeDuc, Nafla Poff and the rest to outlast.

Sacramento, Montreal, and Wisconsin all claimed their first ever women's National championship. Moreau, who may very well find herself in AFLW in the next couple of years, took out both the Roos and Cann medals. For Columbus, however, it all was not lost. They got their highest ever showing of second, based on percentage over Texas and Calgary. Philadelphia, as part of the team, earned their third straight medal in Women's D2 play.

RESERVES	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Sacramento/Montreal/Wisc.	4	0	0	16	161	22	731.82
Columbus/Chicago/Philly	2	2	0	8	71	75	94.67
Calgary/BlueOx/Nash./AZ Hawks	2	2	0	8	50	55	90.91
Texas/Los Angeles	2	2	0	8	53	85	62.35
DC/Baltimore/Boston/Des Moines	0	4	0	0	18	116	15.52

Texas 4.3 (27) def Columbus 2.3 (15)  
 Calgary 3.7 (25) def DC Eagles 0.0 (0)  
 Sacramento 6.10 (46) def Texas 0.0 (0)  
 Columbus 4.3 (27) def DC Eagles 2.2 (14)  
 Sacramento 4.3 (27) def Calgary 0.2 (2)  
 Texas 1.1 (7) def DC Eagles 0.4 (4)  
 Columbus 1.3 (9) def Calgary 0.3 (3)  
 Sacramento 8.9 (57) def DC Eagles (0)  
 Calgary 3.2 (20) def Texas 3.1 (19)  
 Sacramento 4.7 (31) def Columbus 3.2 (20)



## Division III Results

### Philadelphia Hawks



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	7	4	46

**Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest**  
*Regan Smith, Ohio Valley River Rats*  
**Coopers Medal for Most Consistent**  
*Saleh Tyebjee, Sacramento Suns*

### Ohio Valley River Rats



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	3	2	20

**Geoff Cann Medal for MVP in Final**  
*Dustin Jones, Philadelphia Hawks*  
**Hayden Kennedy Medal for**  
**Grand Final Umpiring**  
*David Henara & Ryan Wilsmore*

2002 saw the introduction of a third men's division to the USAFL Nationals. That year, the Philadelphia Crows defeated the Milwaukee Bombers on a snowy Kansas City day to lift their first cup. In the years since the club, now known as the Hawks, has had a cyclic journey up to D2 and back down again, losing in the 2004, 2005, and 2014 Grand Finals. Jon Loring, who was a part of that '02 team, has helmed Philly for over a decade, and built a solid, positive culture that breeds championships. Now they just needed to win one.

After their best USAFL campaign in club history – 7 wins from 11 games, including two over New York and a first ever win in Boston – The Hawks were the top seeded team in D3, and were paired with Oklahoma and Ohio Valley in Pool A. Led by the Hinchin Brothers, Rob and John, the Hawks edged out OFC by 10 points. They encountered an underrated and hungry River Rats side on Saturday afternoon. Aussie speedster Regan Smith and vets Eric “Sleepy” Floyd and Matt Seuling capitalized on their chances and held on for a 22-16 decision.



The win put the River Rats as tops of the group and through to the semis. Philly left the field distraught; they had finished with a positive winning percentage, but their passage onto the knockout stage seemed highly in doubt.

But sometimes providence comes from unexpected places. Columbus dusted off Des Moines and DC to win Group B, while Boston took care of North Carolina and Sacramento to claim Group C. Though the Columbus-Des Moines and Boston-Sacto games were close, it was Philly who had the best percentage of the runners up and earned fourth and final spot. Suddenly, Loring, Pat Miller, and the



brown-and-gold were energized.

Sunday morning dawned with opportunity. Smith and the Rats got up over an emerging Boston Demons side by two straight kicks while the Hawks earned their first ever win over Columbus, 38-14, to reach their fifth Grand Final.

The Rats had been here before – five time D4 champions, D3 runners up, and their Cincinnati core part of a perennial contender in the competition’s dawning years.

Within two minutes of the Grand Final’s commencement, the Hawks had a wrench thrown into their plans. Target forward Jon Ginsberg went down with a ruptured Achilles, and suddenly Philly now had to find other ways to score. They wouldn’t have to wait or look for long. Once again Seuling, Smith, and Scott Schrader put points on the board against the stingy Hawks backliners, but Greg Glasgow, Tristan Webster, the Hinchey boys, and Aleks Fedoriw created buzz in their own forward line to counter on the Cooper’s scoreboard.

Webster, John Hinchey, and Fedoriw gained the Hawks only scoring shots of the opening term, but they were all straight, and their team trailed only 20-18 at the break. If the opening stanza was first gear, Loring’s side had more in the tank for the final twenty minutes of the season.

Two minutes into the ultimate frame, and lady luck shone on the Hawks when a clearing ball struck Fedoriw in the leg and ricocheted majestically through the goals. Another goal from John Hinchey followed and the Hawks had opened the game with five straight. They never looked back.

The Rats made Philly earn every ball and every point they got. But they were up against a team that had been at the depths of despair – not just this year but in the past – and wanted none of it. Dustin Jones, 21-year USAFL veteran and eventual Cann medal winner, applied the coup the grace with five to go.

Reverberating around the SCORE Complex, the hooter that sounded not only signaled a 46-20 result, but it heralded the end of a decade-and-a-half journey, and the deliverance of a premiership back to the Delaware Valley.

POOL A	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Ohio Valley River Rats	2	0	0	8	57	31	183.87
Philadelphia Hawks	1	1	0	4	39	35	111.43
Oklahoma F.C.	0	2	0	0	28	58	48.28

POOL B	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Columbus Cats	2	0	0	8	70	19	368.42
Des Moines Roosters	1	1	0	4	41	45	91.11
DC Eagles	0	2	0	0	18	65	27.69

POOL C	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Boston Demons	2	0	0	8	62	35	177.14
Sacramento Suns	1	1	0	4	40	41	97.56
North Carolina Tigers	0	2	0	0	18	40	45.00

Columbus	2.2 (14)				
Philadelphia	5.8 (38)				
Semifinal #1					
Ohio Valley	4.2 (26)				
Boston	2.2 (14)				
Semifinal #2					
Philadelphia	7.4 (46)				
Ohio Valley	3.2 (20)				
Division 3 Grand Final					
Sacramento	2.4 (16)				
Des Moines	2.3 (15)				
5th Place Game					
North Carolina	3.3 (21)				
DC Eagles	3.2 (20)				
8th/9th Playoff					
Oklahoma	7.5 (47)				
North Carolina	2.1 (13)				
7th Place Game					



## Division IV Results

### Baltimore Dockers



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	4	7	31

#### Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest

*Ian Payne, Baltimore Dockers & Adam Smith, Las Vegas*

#### Coopers Medal for Most Consistent

*Logan Monday, Nashville & Adam Ruggles, Nashville*

### Arizona Outlaws



	Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	3	1	22

#### Geoff Cann Medal for MVP in Final

*Travis Flight, Baltimore Dockers*

#### Hayden Kennedy Medal for Grand Final Umpiring

*Jay Kenealy & Barry Rook*

Division Four is an annual showcase of newer clubs dipping their toes into the competitive waters of Nationals for the first time, existing clubs keeping the flames of footballing passion going, and seconds players looking to make their mark en route to a National Championship.

The Grand Final ended up pitting a full side in their first year as a standalone club against a three-headed monster that included a new club, a surging club, and a band of talented seconds.



Playing in their first Nationals since splitting from DC last winter, the Baltimore Dockers brought a gaggle of players from the Charm City, having already gone through a sixteen game gauntlet in the regular season. Across the way stood the Arizona Outlaws, Las Vegas Gamblers, and Seattle Grizzlies-B. Both teams had met earlier in Pool A play, with the Outlaws and Co. holding off the hard charging Dock Show in a four-point thriller. The win put the Arizona combo into the semi-finals, while Baltimore needed –



and got – a win over Atlanta to secure the second spot form the pool.

The two finalists had relatively straightforward victories against challenging competition to get there. AZ/LV/SEA were 14 point winners over the Houston-B, Ft. Lauderdale, Indianapolis conglomerate, while Baltimore whitewashed Nashville, the only other full side in the Division. Coach Bryn Hansen's side knew, however, that Dockers' 3.9.27 spray-fest in the semi would not hold water on Sunday afternoon.

After surrendering the opening goal of the match, the Dockers' Aussie veterans put the clamps down on their opponents, led by the talented and dangerous Luto family and Las Vegas gun Adam Smith. Eastern Regional MVP Travis Flight, aerial specialist Kit Drury, and big man Ian Payne were able to find their targets and stake their team to halftime lead. It was a role-reversal from the pool match, and now the Outlaws, Gamblers, and Grizzlies side had to claw their way back if they wanted to drink from the cup.

The combined team sharpened their claws and dug into the lead, and while the Dockers continued to have trouble finding the sticks, Arizona and friends were making the most of their chances, converting on three of their four shots for goal. They were able to close the gap to nine, but time ran out on them, and they fell 31-22.

POOL A	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
AZ Outlaws/Vegas/Seattle	2	0	0	8	116	39	297.44
Baltimore Dockers	1	1	0	4	104	32	325.00
Atlanta/LA/Denver	0	2	0	0	13	162	8.02

POOL B	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Nashville/Quebec	2	0	0	8	60	9	666.67
Houston/Ft. Lauderdale/Indy	1	1	0	4	32	31	103.23
Wisc./Milwaukee/AZ Hawks	0	2	0	0	16	68	23.53

AZ Outlaws	4.7 (31)				
Houston	2.1 (13)				
Semifinal #1					
Baltimore	3.9 (27)				
Nashville	0.0 (0)				
Semifinal #2					
Baltimore	4.7 (31)				
AZ Outlaws	3.1 (22)				
Division 1 Grand Final					
Wisconsin	5.4 (34)				
Atlanta	4.2 (26)				
5th Place Game					





## Reserves Division Results

### Austin Crows



### Denver Bulldogs



	Goals	Behinds	Totals		Goals	Behinds	Totals
Final	3	5	23	Final	3	2	20

#### Paul Roos Medal for Best & Fairest

*Benjamin Crowe, Golden Gate Roos*

#### Coopers Medal for Most Consistent

*Ryan O'Malley, Austin Crows*

The Crows' reserve side won their second consecutive Reserves Division flag with a 3-0 record in the four team round robin format. A 72-6 win over New York was followed by a tight 23-20 victory over Denver on Saturday afternoon. Like their seniors side, the resses had to deal with Golden Gate, and they skated home 57-16 victors to take the chocolates. Ryan O'Malley took home the Cooper's Medal for Most Consistent.

The Crows have a rare luxury in the USAFL in that they have enough players to have a seniors-reserves structure, and they played three games during the league season to prepare them for their run in Racine. American Ben Altmann, who played in Sydney, brought a unique understanding of the game to the side's coaching role.

"We saw them as a development side," said Barr. "We gave them three standalone games during the year including against Houston, Dallas, and Oklahoma. We're lucky to have the numbers we got, especially with the Americans, and hope to see some of them come up to D1 in the next year or two.

"I had faith in the side, and a lot of it came back to the American talent. But we have a great culture; we keep ourselves hungry. We had a camp at the beginning of the season and set the goal of winning two cups, and everyone agreed on the goals we set from the start."

#### MEN'S RESERVES RESULTS:

RESERVES	W	L	D	P	F	A	%
Austin Crows	3	0	0	12	152	42	361.90
Denver Bulldogs	2	1	0	8	128	38	336.84
Golden Gate Roos	1	2	0	4	78	98	79.59
NY/MIN/POR	0	3	0	0	7	187	3.74

Austin 11.6 (72) def NY/MIN/POR 1.0 (6)  
Golden Gate 6.12 (48) def NY/MIN/POR 0.0 (0)  
Austin 3.5 (23) def Denver 3.2 (20)  
Denver 6.5 (41) def Golden Gate 2.2 (14)  
Denver 10.7 (67) def NY/MIN/POR 0.1 (1)  
Austin 9.3 (57) def Golden Gate 2.4 (16)



## *Financial Management*

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The USAFL is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that maintains its books on a cash basis. The primary sources of revenue are from the annual grant provided by the AFL, dues from member clubs, individual player memberships, and several sponsorships in relation to the National Championships. The primary expenses each year are a mix of training, supporting, and educating functions, all in accordance with the League's core programs and mission. Each year at the USAFL Annual General Meeting the Treasurer outlines the financial report of the prior year, and the status of the year at hand at the time.

The organization is the financial record keeper of all the events organized by the League, including the National Championships and training courses. The financial philosophy of the League is for events to be self-funding where possible. Consistent with past years, the League continues to maintain a part-time accountant for enhanced internal controls, compliance, and bookkeeping purposes.

The financial results, as presented, demonstrate the League is in sound financial condition, subject to the continuation of funding by the AFL. To comply with US tax requirements, each year the League submits reviewed financials to an external accounting firm, which provides the USAFL with annual audit and accounting services and assists with federal tax compliance and reporting to the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS"). The following pages present the USAFL's balance sheet as of Dec. 31, 2018 and income statement for the calendar year 2018. At the time of printing, the 2018 tax return is not yet complete, and the figures presented below have not yet been submitted to the IRS.

**Richard Hordern-Gibbings**

**Treasurer**

**[treasurer@usafl.com](mailto:treasurer@usafl.com)**



## 2018 USAFL Balance Sheet

	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
BofA, Missouri	86,486.18
Petty Cash	80.00
USBank - 1813	39.95
	\$
Total Bank Accounts	86,606.13
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
Accounts Receivable	0.00
	\$
Total Accounts Receivable	0.00
	\$
Total Current Assets	86,606.13
	\$
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	86,606.13
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	0.00
	\$
Total Accounts Payable	0.00
<b>Credit Cards</b>	
Credit Card	1,499.41
	\$
Total Credit Cards	1,499.41
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	





Other Accruals	0.00
Payroll Liabilities	
Federal Taxes (941/944)	5,422.05
TN Quarterly Taxes	900.00
	\$
Total Payroll Liabilities	6,322.05
	\$
Total Other Current Liabilities	6,322.05
	\$
Total Current Liabilities	7,821.46
	\$
Total Liabilities	7,821.46
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	13,166.47
Retained Earnings	75,843.73
Net Income	-10,225.53
	\$
Total Equity	78,784.67
	\$
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	86,606.13



## 2018 USAFL Profit and Loss Statement

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Income</b>	
1050 Capital Donations	80,428.58
1250 Donations	1,871.37
1375 Membership Dues - Clubs	12,969.12
1380 Membership Dues - Players	
1380-02 Arizona Hawks Football Club	2,400.00
1380-03 Atlanta Kookaburras Inc	1,650.00
1380-04 Austin Crows	4,600.00
1380-05 Baltimore/Washington Eagles FC	7,400.00
1380-06 Baton Rouge FC	1,650.00
1380-07 Boston Australian Rules FC	2,600.00
1380-08 Chicago United	4,050.00
1380-09 Cincinnati Australian Football Club	1,900.00
1380-10 Columbus Jackaroos	4,750.00
1380-11 Dallas Magpies AFC	2,550.00
1380-12 Denver Bulldogs AFC	8,252.20
1380-14 Golden Gate Roos	6,850.00
1380-15 Kansas City Power FC	100.00
1380-16 Las Vegas Gamblers	800.00
1380-17 Louisville FC	1,200.00
1380-18 Milwaukee Bombers ARFC	800.00
1380-19 Minnesota Freeze	6,450.00
1380-20 Nashville Kangaroos	3,200.00
1380-21 New York Magpies	5,950.00
1380-22 North Carolina Tigers FC	2,600.00
1380-23 OC Bombers	2,350.00
1380-24 Philly Hawks ARFC	3,025.00
1380-26 Portland Power AFC	5,150.00
1380-27 San Diego Lions FC	2,950.00
1380-28 Seattle Grizzlies	7,100.00
1380-30 St. Louis Blues FC	175.00
1380-31 Calgary Kangaroos	1,550.00
1380-33 Sacramento	4,800.00
1380-34 Des Moines Roosters	2,625.00
1380-35 Calgary Kookaburras	1,300.00
1380-37 Fort Lauderdale Fighting Squids	1,100.00



1380-38 Houston Lonestars	5,925.00
1380-39 Quebec Saints	3,450.00
1380-40 Los Angeles Dragons	4,800.00
1380-42 Tulsa Buffaloes	100.00
1380-44 Indianapolis Giants	800.00
1380-48 Edmonton	250.00
1380-49 Oklahoma City Flyers	2,700.00
1380-50 Tampa Bay ARFC	225.00
1380-51 Wisconsin Wombats	1,150.00
1380-52 North Star Blue Ox	400.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total 1380 Membership Dues - Players	<b>121,677.20</b>
1400 Sales of Merchandise Clothing	11,300.30
1600 Sales of Merchandise - Other	10,659.80
1700 Sales of Merchandise - Footballs	7,345.92
1710 Sales Merchandise - Play Aussie	15.02
1800 Sponsorships	64,400.59
1800-01 Sales Beer	14,912.96
1800-07 Western Regional Tournament	240.00
1800-10 Eastern Regional	500.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total 1800 Sponsorships	<b>80,053.55</b>
2000 US Revolution Donations	1,545.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total Income	<b>327,865.86</b>
Cost of Goods Sold	
3750 Costs of Merchandise - Clothing	
3750-01 Costs of Merchandise - Clothing Nationals	6,000.05
	<hr/>
	\$
Total 3750 Costs of Merchandise - Clothing	<b>6,000.05</b>
3800 Costs of Merchandise - Footballs	7,058.81
3800-01 Costs of Merchandise - Footballas Nationals	2,578.45
	<hr/>
	\$
Total 3800 Costs of Merchandise - Footballs	<b>9,637.26</b>
3825 Costs of Merchandise - Food and Beverage	17,286.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total Cost of Goods Sold	<b>32,923.31</b>
	<hr/>
	\$
Gross Profit	<b>294,942.55</b>
Expenses	
3150 Bank Charges - Fees	4,224.91
3250 Board Retreat	3,989.09
3950 Dues & Subscriptions	1,132.52
4350 Travel	1,926.38
Hotel	1,187.17
	<hr/>
Total 4350 Travel	\$



	<b>3,113.55</b>
4400 Insurance	9,134.00
4450 Legal & Professional Fees	3,754.51
4650 Office Expenses & Supplies	687.34
4660 Web Hosting	1,930.32
4700 Postage & Shipping	639.89
5000 Storage	610.00
5225 Western Regional Tournament	
5225-01 Umpires Hrs	2,270.00
5225-02 Rent or Lease	4,975.55
5225-03 Awards	526.00
5225-04 Hotel / Meals	2,418.07
5225-05 Supplies	308.57
5225-06 Airfare	1,337.70
	<b>\$</b>
Total 5225 Western Regional Tournament	<b>11,835.89</b>
5226 Central Regional Tournament	
5226-01 Umpires Hrs	3,940.00
5226-02 Rent or Lease	1,630.24
5226-03 Awards	465.00
5226-04 Hotel / Meals	1,993.45
5226-05 Supplies	1,458.80
5226-06 Airfare	366.40
5226-07 Coaching Stipends	700.00
	<b>\$</b>
Total 5226 Central Regional Tournament	<b>10,553.89</b>
5227 Eastern Regional Tournament	
5227-01 Umpires Hrs. Eastern	2,790.00
5227-02 Rent or Lease	1,525.09
5227-03 Awards	475.42
5227-04 Hotel / Meals	2,003.26
5227-05 Supplies	2,103.96
5227-06 Airfare	546.90
	<b>\$</b>
Total 5227 Eastern Regional Tournament	<b>9,444.63</b>
5250 Visa Transaction Costs	649.61
5300 Wages & Commissions	38,042.31
5400 Nationals	
5400-01 Airfare	5,275.10
5400-02 Hotel/Meals	24,156.79
5400-03 Rent or Lease	20,024.04
5400-04 Trophies	3,880.00
5400-05 Supplies & Materials	7,094.76



5400-07 Tournament Contractors	250.00
5400-08 Office Supplies & Shipping	455.83
5400-09 VIP	2,360.73
5400-10 Fees & Expenses	105.00
5400-11 Tournament Labor	5,490.00
5400-12 Storage	4,796.74
5400-13 Umpires	19,980.00
5400-14 Streaming / Video Production	9,449.04
5400-15 Promotion & Advertising	25.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total 5400 Nationals	103,343.03
5480 Coaches Association Grant	217.53
5483 Revolution Expenses	10,642.90
5484 USA Freedom Expense	14,148.78
5486 Umpires Grant	1,455.74
5486-01 Travel	1,490.00
5486-02 Umpires Hrs. Games	1,010.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total 5486 Umpires Grant	3,955.74
5489 Women's Assoc	394.40
Payroll Expenses	
Taxes	5,182.87
Wages	67,749.92
	<hr/>
	\$
Total Payroll Expenses	72,932.79
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Expense	0.00
	<hr/>
	\$
Total Expenses	305,377.63
	<hr/>
	-\$
Net Operating Income	10,435.08
Other Income	
Miscellaneous Income	278.73
Other Income	0.75
	<hr/>
	\$
Total Other Income	279.48
Other Expenses	
4600 Miscellaneous	69.93
	<hr/>
	\$
Total Other Expenses	69.93
	<hr/>
	\$
Net Other Income	209.55
	<hr/>
	-\$
Net Income	10,225.53



## ***2018 USAFL Contact List***

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### ***Executive Board - 2014***

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