



United States Australian Football League

A 501(C)3 Not-For-Profit Organization

9160 Hwy 64, Suite 12, #205, Lakeland, TN 38002

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Dear Presidents,

I hope this communication finds you healthy and well. The USAFL Board would like to first thank you so much for your flexibility and your patience as we have responded to this year's pandemic. This is an unprecedented time and your leadership and understanding has been instrumental in keeping our membership safe and engaged. We look forward to continued cooperation and to working together as we continue through 2020 and beyond.

Nationals 2020

The USAFL has conducted a detailed assessment to determine feasibility of holding Nationals in October. Based on several key factors including the recent surge in infections across the country, operational considerations provided by the Safety Task Force, USAFL member survey feedback, and the inability to ensure the safety of participants and communities, it is with heavy hearts that the Board has made the decision to cancel the 2020 Nationals Tournament.

This is an unprecedented situation and we are all learning from it as we go. Every week - sometimes every day - new rules and regulations are put in place from local authorities, only to be modified or revised as more data presents itself. While our survey indicated that over 60% of our members expected to be ready to travel to Southern California in October, there are simply too many unknowns and variables that could jeopardize a tournament and put our membership and communities at risk.

The final recommendation from the USAFL Safety Task Force was a driving factor in the Board's decision. The task force conducted an extensive and all-encompassing effort over the last two months, drawing on information from health departments, government agencies, and sporting codes from all over the world. Ultimately the Safety Task Force could not see a safe path forward to successfully holding the tournament this year without significant risk to participants and the community.

Through their diligent efforts to date, the Task Force have developed important documents providing guidance to return to footy safely. These have already been critical in assisting clubs safely commence their journey back to play. These efforts will continue over the coming weeks and months. A huge thanks to this highly dedicated group for their ongoing efforts.

The full Safety Task Force Report attached to the email.

Moving Forward in 2020

Despite the fact that Nationals and Regionals tournaments are not feasible in 2020, the USAFL Board still sees opportunity for a successful season. Our focus in the coming months is on supporting member club recruitment, player retention, and overall engagement. The goal of the Board and committees is to first facilitate a return to regular training activities, then to local metro competitions, and potentially to inter-club play only when and where it is safely possible to do so..

The pathway back to footy in 2020 requires the utmost commitment to every participant's safety. A systematic plan which will guide clubs toward safe, competitive footy will be shared later this month and discussed during Regional calls planned for later in July. This joint effort by the Board and Safety Task Force will detail steps and requirements clubs must meet to progress to competitive play and will provide the framework for the remainder of the 2020 season. More information on specific opportunities for support from the league will be released in the coming weeks as well.

Clubs can do their part by continuing to follow their local safety guidelines and regulations and, as much as possible, remain in line with USAFL Return to Footy Safely Guidelines and Phases. Club Safety Officers continue to be a critical connection with Regional Vice Presidents, so please thank your Club's Safety Officer for their continued support.

Further support in the form of online resources, webinars and forums will continue through the remainder of 2020. Member access to umpiring and coaching accreditation and resources will continue and USAFL Committees will continue to progress their plans through the remainder of 2020.



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2020 Membership

Club Dues are a vital component of our revenue and cover a part of our annual operating expenses. These will remain due in full for the 2020 season. If your Club is facing challenges meeting these, please contact your respective Regional Vice President to discuss options. Thank you to the majority of Clubs who have submitted their dues already.

We understand that our members are in challenging financial positions this year and considering the absence of National or Regional Tournaments, we have made the decision to offer flexible member dues options for 2020. Specifics will be released in the coming one to two weeks, but members will have multiple options to support the league in a way that makes the most sense for them given their level of involvement and financial situation.

Member support will help set us up for a successful 2021 and beyond. Payments made for 2020 will be considered tax-deductible donations and details on payment options and incentives will be made available shortly.

Members who have already submitted member dues will also be given several options whether they paid individually or through their club.

Other Considerations

The Annual General Meeting will take place virtually on Saturday October 10th. Please mark the date in your calendar. The format will be modified to accommodate a virtual setting.

Future 2020 communications will address plans for 2021 including Tournament preparation as well as Revolution and Freedom programs ahead of International Cup tentatively Rescheduled for 2021.

Regional Vice Presidents will schedule regional calls in late July to provide the opportunity to discuss this communication further. Calls will also cover the outlook for the 2020 season including the upcoming operational plan from the Board and Safety Task Force.

In Closing

Despite the many changes and challenges of the 2020 season, we are optimistic that we can still come away with a successful year. Our goal now is to keep our membership engaged and forward-looking, and to build the infrastructure we need to come back to footy even stronger than ever. While we are all disappointed that we will not see you all in person in October, we are excited and energized by the opportunity to build our local competition and to get creative with new ways to support our member Clubs and honor our mission - to grow this game and the community that we all love so dearly.

Very Sincerely,

Seb Aquinari

President, United States Australian Football League

