

Junior Interleague Carnival & Metropolitan Championships

By: Kirstie Fitzgerald

Whilst many of us enjoyed the mid-season break from the regular home and away season, over 200 of the league's best junior players from U12-U16 including the Youth Girls, competed in the 2013 Junior Interleague competition and AFL Victoria Metropolitan Championships.

Commencing on May 29 to June 19, the Junior Interleague competition saw our U16, U13 and U12 squads compete against the likes of Riddell District Football League and the Essendon District Football League.

Having gone down by 22-points in their first game against the RDFL, our U16 squad came back fighting against the EDFL, winning by 17-points at Avalon Airport Oval last night.

In slippery conditions, Riley Buckley, James Beilby and John Sesto were standouts for the WRFL side with Marco Lunedi, Ben Ronke and Aaron Brisco also named in the team's best.

In two nail biting matches, our U13 squad went down by less than a kick in their first two matches of the interleague tournament.

In a low scoring affair against the EDFL, our U13 squad showed some flair in game one, with accuracy in front of goal keeping the team in the match. Despite their efforts, our U13's went down by two-points at the final siren-the margin 6.3.39 to the EDFL's 5.11.41.

Game two against Riddell also saw a close scoring match, with the scores neck and neck all day, before our U13's suffered another heartbreaking loss, going down by three points- 6.5.41 to the 6.8.44.

The U13's will play their final match against the EDFL next week, at 6:30pm at Dempster Park on June 19.

Our U12 squad had much more success in their first two matches of the competition, first winning by a convincing 40-point margin against the EDFL. The final score 10.10.70 to the EDFL's 5.0.30.

The U12's dominance continued in their second game belting RDFL to the tune of 91 points, winning the perpetual shield on offer for competition between the three leagues.

Archi Manton and Joshua Kellet had best on field performances for the U12 squad, with multiple goals from Jake Moretti, Karan Bharathi, Oliver Libertore and Cooper Craig-Peters.

The U12's are set to play their final match against the EDFL on Wednesday June 12 at 6:30pm at Dempster Park.



One of our WRFL/EDFL youth girls showing the boys how it's done. Image by Darrell Jones

During late May and early June our U14, U15 and combined WRFL/EDFL Youth Girl squad have been competing in the AFL Victoria Metropolitan Championships, with the majority of their matches over the Queen's Birthday weekend.

Improving from their early loss to the EFL in game one, our U15A squad came home with the chocolates running away 37-point winners against the RDFL. Harrison Rocke was named best afield for the side, with Matthew Knezevic and Joel Ives handy contributors for the team.

In what can only be described as a white wash, our U15B side stamped their dominance on the competition early, with a 115-point win over Riddell Football League.

With a 62-point lead at half time, our U15's powered home with Jackson Fullerton kicking five goals and Christopher Dal Sasso's three goals, topping off an extravagant win.

Our U14 Division One and U14 Division Two squads also finished with one win and two losses apiece. Despite going down to the EFL in their first match, the U14A side came back all guns blazing with a 62-point win over Riddell. Lachlan Fogarty, Joshua Mould and Jayme Gilmore were amongst the team's best.

The U14B side started the competition on fire, comprehensively beating Riddell 14.14.98 to 5.2.32 before losing the next two matches against the Eastern Football League and Yarra Junior Football League.

Stephan Syme was dominant in the U14's game one win, with two majors, whilst Will Markovski, Jacob Smith, Ben Croft and Toby Kopa also booted multiple goals.

Our combined WRFL/EDFL Youth Girls squad, after experiencing some teething problems early in their training program, competed hard in all matches.

The team's only win came in match two against the Northern Football League 8.9.57 to 6.3.39. Brooke Eley and Caitlyn Balshaw were named in the squad's best, with Kacie Cook displaying stellar form, kicking four goals in the 18-point victory.

WRFL Football Operations and Club Development Officer, Tim Shellcot was pleased with how all our teams handled themselves throughout the course of the competitions.

"It was great to see all players across all squads represent the League with distinction, and the level of talent in the younger age groups is particularly pleasing.

"Thanks to the coaches, support staff and parents who gave up their time over the past few weeks to provide our best junior players with the opportunity to play representative football. Thanks also go to the WRFL clubs who provided facilities for training and who hosted matches."



U14's Interleague player, Toby Kopa taking a low mark over the weekend- Image by Kayla Wolf

