Presidents Report – 2026

Our AGM provides an opportunity to review season 2026 and reflect on some of the great achievements our club has accomplished over the past 12 months.

As I mentioned in my Presidents report last year, I think it is important that we firstly recognise and acknowledge our purpose, the reason we are here. In simple terms the reason we are here is to provide a game of netball and football for the young men, young women, boys and girls in our town that is played in a safe and supportive environment, and I believe on that front we have well and truly made a success of season 2026. We have had over 45 teams take to the fields and courts each week in season 2026, each team representing our club and community with pride, supported by enthusiastic and invested coaches along with a passionate volunteer and supporter base. Just as importantly, the extension of this purpose is to provide a place of connection for our local community, a place where people feel valued and important and a place where people feel they belong, and I believe the Ocean Grove Football and Netball Club continues to provide this to its people. Our footprint on the Ocean Grove community remains large and the number of people we engage with and support local sport continues to grow each year and no doubt this growth will continue in season 2027. This is not something that we take for granted and as a club we should be extremely proud of what we do in this space.

Our amazing and loyal club sponsors continue to be tremendous supporters of the Ocean Grove Football Netball Club; we can't thank them enough for their continued support. Without this ongoing support we would not be able to engage with our local community the way we do. A special mention must go to our major partner STEELLINE. Harvey and Claire provide great support to our club, and we thank them for their commitment to the Ocean Grove Football Netball Club. Special thanks must also be extended to MJS Built who are also enthusiastic and committed partners of our great club and we thank Mick and Tarryn for their continued support. We ask our entire club community to support our club sponsors as much as possible, please support them the way they support us.

I would like to say thank you to our 2026 committee, it has been another year of challenges at committee level with many changes taking place during the year. As a group we have overcome these challenges by still providing the club with leadership and support. An enormous amount of volunteer hours have been put in by our 2026 committee, and I think it is important to acknowledge the hard work that has been undertaken by this group of committed and passionate people. I also want to acknowledge the contribution made to the club by Rob Winter, Kev Nolan, Monique Sendeckyj and Cath Warren. All four are great Ocean Grove people who will not continue in leadership positions at the club in 2027 after many years of outstanding service.

To our 2026 Coaches we say a big thank you. Coaching is a very rewarding experience that has many bumps in the road. It is a tough business. In short, it's not easy to do. To our head coaches: Mel Holmes, Dave Farrell and Nick Bourke and their respective coaching teams, we say thank you. You are all passionate people who put hours of work into the coaching craft, your dedication and leadership have not gone unnoticed. To Dave and Nick, who will not continue in their head coaching positions at

the club in season 2027, we extend our gratitude for their service and wish them all best for the future.

To our volunteer coaches we also say thank you. We continue to have quality people put their hand up for our volunteer coaching positions at all levels within the club and these people provide important mentoring and leadership to our young people. The role you play within our club's environment is vital to our success and you have delivered quality coaching to your respective playing groups that is greatly appreciated by all. I also would like to extend a big thankyou to all of our coordinators, Team Managers and First Aiders who continue to step up week in week out to support our sports programs.

We must congratulate and acknowledge our Senior and Junior Netball Program on another exceptional season and finals series, culminating in another A Grade Premiership. 4 in a row! This was an outstanding team and club victory that rates equal to any premiership our great club has won in its history in football and netball. As a club we are witnessing GREATNESS with this playing group, and I believe it is very important that we recognise and celebrate this amazing history making achievement! Congratulations must also go to our premiership winning C Grade girls, also 4 in a row, and we celebrated junior netball premierships in U/13 Div1, U/13 Div2 and U/13 Div 8. A fantastic effort by all. Many other teams, through our senior and junior ranks, also made finals in their respective grades. Grand Final day was once again an amazing club experience with our famous Red and White Army out in force! Our Netball program is first class and is envied across the AFL Barwon region, to everyone involved we say thank you and well done.

Our football program also delivered some terrific success in season 2026. The highlight was watching our famous red and white jumper once again run around on Grand Final day at Kardinia Park in the U/18 Division 1 Grand Final. Whilst the result did not go our way we had the privilege of watching some exciting talent on the big stage that will no doubt transition into a strong senior football list over the next few years. A huge congratulations is also extended to our U/18 Division 3 team who played in the Grand Final. Whilst we did not win the game, our endeavours and commitment to playing strong team football was evident and this gives us a lot of confidence and belief in our U/18 football pathway.

The senior football season was once again cruelled by injury; this impacted both our senior and reserves teams. Despite this we still had some outstanding team performances at senior and reserves level with both sides having some exceptional wins across the season. Whilst we don't currently sit where we want to be in either grade, we have tremendous confidence in our ability to begin the climb back up the ladder in the most competitive football league in the AFL Barwon region.

Our female football program continues to grow and thrive with the highlight being our U/17 Division 2 premiership. Our inaugural junior girls football premiership. With a large red and white army in attendance the girls played terrific team football and represented the club with pride. This was an exceptional victory that the club is extremely proud of. In addition to this success, we also had a number of our junior girls' teams play in finals, which is a terrific sign of the depth of talent we are developing in this program.

Our junior boys football program also had a strong season in U/16 and U/14 competitions with our U/16 Division 1 team playing in the grand final. Although we did not get the chocolates in a hard-fought encounter, this was a great result for the club. We also had several of our junior boys' teams make finals in their respective divisions, which we are also very proud of.

Overall, we had a great amount of growth and personal development in our junior girls' and boys' footballers and netballers in season 2026, but more importantly we had a lot of our junior athletes having fun, smiles on faces and enjoying the team and club environment. I believe we have a strong foundation to build on in our junior football and netball ranks and we look forward to seeing what our junior programs can deliver in 2027.

Nothing happens in a football and netball club without the support and dedication of volunteers. Our club is blessed to have such an amazing band of volunteers, from people working in subcommittee positions to people manning the can bar, canteen and BBQ's. To our all of our dedicated and loyal volunteers, we say thank you. You are the heartbeat of our club. Without your work ethic, enthusiasm and dedication we would not be able to deliver the sporting programs we do. Volunteers make things happen; they enable us to do what we do for our community.

We also extend a big thank you to our loyal and dedicated club members. The engine room of our club! We feel your dedication and love for the red and white and we want to let you know that without your support we would not be the great club we are.

We continue to improve our facility infrastructure at Ray Menzies Oval and Memorial Reserve. This season at Memorial Reserve we had netting behind the goals replaced, our famous old change rooms received a complete refurbishment, and our canteen was once again in operation, in addition to this we have also installed a new coffee machine. At Ray Menzies Oval we have replaced the existing deep fryer and completed some minor work to the canteen. It is important to recognise Jan Farrell and Stephen Bishop who have been the driving force behind these projects, and the club thanks them for their outstanding contribution. Great support has also been received from Libby Coker (Federal MP), Alison Marchant (State MP) and the City Of Greater Geelong in funding some of the above-mentioned upgrades. We have also received tremendous support from the Shell Road Pavilion Board Of Management, thank you Kev and team.

We have continued to implement and expand some of the new initiatives that were undertaken by the club 2025. These include the Grubbers Hill bar and the Car Park bar, the club apparel store and the continuation of our Super Sundays to support our junior football programs. In addition, we also ran a social night on Friday evenings during the season at Memorial Reserve that was well received by all. We have also trialed serving hot food from our kitchen post home games at Ray Menzies Oval which was a success. Moving forward we will continue to search for ways to connect with the people in our club and provide a great match day experience for everyone.

Lastly, I would sincerely like to thank all the amazing athletes that have represented our club in their chosen sport in season 2026. You all play with immense passion and pride and your dedication to our great club and community is something that we all deeply appreciate. You are the most important people in our club, we care about you, we respect you and we will continue to support you to the best of our ability in season 2027.

In closing I would like to declare that I am stepping down from the President position. Serving the club as President for two years has been an extremely rewarding experience that I have undertaken with great pride. We have many very capable and skilled people within our club that are ready to lead the club with great passion and enthusiasm, and I firmly believe we are in great position to move forward in a positive and successful way.

Go Grubbers

Greg Mervin
President
Ocean Grove Football Netball Club