



Community sport fights back!

- Looking after our mental health
- Legal liability and your COVID-19 Safety Coordinator

Plus:

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- Creating an LGBTI+ Inclusive Club online course
- New Positive Cultures Hub on Play by the Rules
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THE EDITOR

'The times they are a changin' said Bob Dylan. Aren't they just!

In this issue of the Play by the Rules magazine we give you a small snapshot of the outstanding work being done in community sport to get through this period. We have had a huge response to the annual Play by the Rules Awards—134 nominations! I'd like to congratulate every single one of these clubs and associations in not only getting through this period, but showing the strength, commitment and innovation that community sport has demonstrated in bucketloads in recent times. It's a shame there can only be two winners, as all nominees deserve recognition.

We also look at some outstanding work from NSW Wheelchair Sport in celebrating female role models in their sport; on our new Creating an LGBTI+ Inclusive Sport Club online course and our recently released Positive Cultures Hub. Andy Gibson considers the legal liability of the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator, and Clyde Rathbone takes an athlete's perspective on an issue that has been prominent in recent times—looking after our mental health.

Thanks, and stay safe.



Peter Downs
Manager - Play by the Rules

News:

How I Roll - celebrating female role models in wheelchair sport

Performed by Australian superstar and ARIA Nominee Casey Donovan, How I Roll is a song that showcases the extraordinary spirit of female role models in wheelchair sport.

Inspired and funded by the NSW Office of Sport's 'Her Sport Her Way' strategy, How I Roll recognises the importance of role models to encourage girls and women with disabilities to get involved in sport. Building on the phrase 'if she can see it, she can be it', this song and the music video are designed to build new role models of various ages and abilities.

"Everyone needs someone to look up to," said Eliza Ault-Connell, two-time Paralympian and star of the music video.

"In order for us to grow participation in wheelchair sport, we need to build more role models for girls and women with disabilities to know and love."

The music video for How I Roll features a number of emerging female athletes in wheelchair sport, from 9 to 38 years of age.

"Role models in wheelchair sport can be Paralympians, but they certainly don't have to be," Eliza explains. *"How I Roll recognises that being a role model is less about what you do, and far more about how you do it. The girls and women in wheelchair sport are fast and tough, they like to play rough, just like the song says."*

All proceeds from buying or streaming How I Roll will go to providing more opportunities for girls and women to get involved in the life-changing experience of wheelchair sport.

"Our female athletes are incredible, and everyone deserves the chance to see them in action," says Mick Garnett, CEO of Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT, who is behind the project.

How I Roll - featuring Casey Donovan

News:

Creating an LGBTI+ Inclusive Club online course

On 22 September 2020, Proud 2 Play, VicHealth, South West Sport and Vicsport launched the Proud 2 Play Resource Hub, a series of brand new resources on LGBTI+ inclusion for Australian sports clubs.

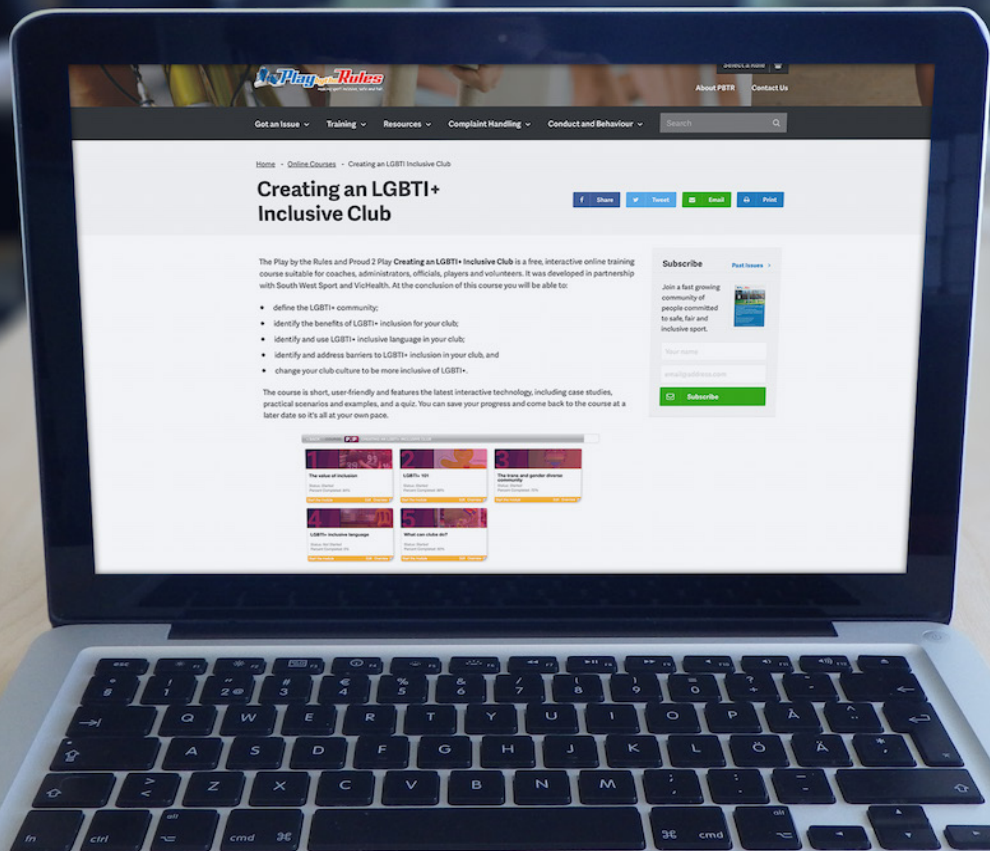
The launch gave sports access to an Australian-first e-learning course, developed with Play by the Rules, on creating an LGBTI+ inclusive sports club, as well as a range of additional resources such as tip sheets, posters and checklists.

The Play by the Rules Creating an LGBTI+ Inclusive Club is a free, interactive online training course suitable for coaches, administrators, officials, players and volunteers. At the conclusion of this course you will be able to:

- define the LGBTI+ community
- identify the benefits of LGBTI+ inclusion for your club
- identify and use LGBTI+ inclusive language in your club
- identify and address barriers to LGBTI+ inclusion in your club
- change your club culture to be more inclusive of LGBTI+.

The course is short, user-friendly and features the latest interactive technology, including case studies, practical scenarios and examples, and a quiz. You can save your progress and come back to the course at a later date, so it's all at your own pace.

To access the Resource Hub go to <https://www.proud2play.org.au/resources>



Go to the course page on Play by the Rules -

<https://playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/creating-an-lgbti-inclusive-club>

Feature article:

Community sport fights back!

A lot has happened since the June issue of the Play by the Rules magazine. COVID-19 has impacted community sport like nothing else in modern history, but in a time of crisis it seems community sport is responding and fighting back.

Since 2017, Play by the Rules has been running the annual Play by the Rules Awards to recognise the outstanding work being done by clubs and associations in keeping sport safe, fair and inclusive. You can see previous Award winners at <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/pbtr-award>.

This year has been a bit different and we did consider not running the Awards given the increased stresses on community sport over the last few months. However, we decided that now was a good time to recognise and celebrate the amazing work being done in community sport to get through this crisis.

The Award nominations closed on 13 September with a record 134 nominations! Here's a snapshot of what community sport has been up to over the past few months:

- Many sports have tapped into online platforms such as Zoom to run meetings, training sessions, debates, competitions, engagement sessions, updates, social programs, etc. For example, Broadmeadows Netball Association started the [Broncos at Home](#) program focusing on providing weekly Zoom sessions on mental health, fitness and tips for coaches. They partnered with Headspace Craigieburn to ensure members were getting the best support possible.
- Given that none of us know when this period of uncertainty will end, many sports have thought about how to make their programs sustainable, fun and challenging. The Mosman Junior Hockey Club initiated the [Mosman Hockey Challenge](#). About a week after lockdown commenced, they started the Challenge—a virtual trip around Australia with each minute of exercise equating to 150 metres. Over 47 days participants logged over 120,000 hours of activity and virtually travelled 17,475 km!
- Many of the nominations show tremendous innovation and commitment. [Darwin Speedway Riders and Drivers Association](#), teamed up with media production companies, professional commentators and production assistants to help train volunteers, keep people engaged and deliver the Chariots of Thunder iRacing Sprinter series.

- Associations have been busy developing resources to help communities stay engaged and safeguard against the impact of COVID-19. Inclusion Solutions developed the [Club Renovation Toolkit](#), a 12-week course empowering community groups by sharing strategies and skills to improve and provide opportunities for all people. Weekly 30-minute live webinar sessions are delivered by knowledgeable staff and guest presenters, assisting community groups around Australia to rediscover their foundations, attract members and ensure a successful future.
- Clubs have put in a tremendous amount of work to make sure that COVID-19 Safety Plans have been implemented and planned events can take place. The Georges River Softball Association organised the first Softball Masters Tournament in NSW under the COVID-19 restrictions and Return to Play Guidelines. The event was a great success, attracting seven male and nine female teams, plus officials and umpires. A great effort!

This is only a snapshot of the amazing work being done to keep community sport going during this period. Winners of the 2020 Play by the Rules Awards will be announced on 2 October. While there can only be two winners, all the nominations should be proud of what they have achieved. We will do our best to highlight this work as case studies on Play by the Rules in the months ahead.

Broncos at Home program

Below: Online Sessions from August 23rd.

Broadmeadows Basketball Indoor Ball Handling

4:03 / 20:47

Broadmeadows Basketball Ball Handling with ...

8:55 / 32:40

Below: Online Sessions from August 16th.

Broadmeadows Broncos - Strength & Condition...

6:35 / 21:31

Broadmeadows Broncos - Individual & Post M...

5:13 / 38:28

Feature article

Looking after our mental health

Until recently, I don't think sporting organisations invested much time or effort on the mental wellbeing of their players and staff. With that said, one of the more encouraging trends in professional sport is the degree to which attitudes about mental health have shifted. It is now an issue that receives the full attention it deserves.

Nowadays in sport, mental health is addressed in much the same way that physical health always has been, which is to say that organisations and sporting communities are far more aware of mental health and utilise an evidence-based approach to set up their wellbeing programs.

As sport continues to be affected by the pandemic, I think it is worth looking at various ways to address mental health on a personal and community level and investigate how we can navigate through these uncharted waters together.

I spend a lot of time speaking with recently retired professional athletes, and I think this group provides us with interesting insights into the effects of sport on our mental health.

When I retired from rugby, I noticed a significant shift in my mood. When I was no longer training multiple times a day with my mates, I remember almost immediately

feeling a lack of energy and enthusiasm. Now I understand that when you exercise, your body releases endorphins that interact with receptors in your brain to trigger a positive feeling in the body, similar to the effect of morphine. Some of the chemicals released are dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin. These brain chemicals play an important part in regulating our moods and emotional stability.

It took me a while to figure out that exercise and training were much more than a job, they had become a fundamental part of how I maintained my health and wellbeing. When I speak with recently retired athletes, I notice how often they mention reaching this same conclusion.

All of which leads me to believe that while exercise alone isn't an entire solution to mental wellbeing, it is most certainly a major factor and one that is strongly supported by research.

As the weeks roll on and the pandemic continues to disrupt sport on all levels, many of us have been denied the usual access to exercise that our favourite sport provides. During this time, it is critically important that we all look to establish new routines that ensure the maintenance of regular physical activity.



And as much as we'd all prefer to be kicking around with our team-mates, now is the time to try new activities and explore different methods of training. If you take one thing from this article, please let it be a call to action for movement. Go hiking, ride your bike, play in a park or swim in the ocean. These activities are free and they always improve our sense of wellbeing.

At a community level, let's remember to support one another by sharing useful resources such as tips and articles related to maintaining mental health during this time.

Perhaps the single best thing we can do for our friends and family is to stay in regular contact with them. A good conversation with a loved one is far more powerful than we tend to appreciate, and it's all too easy to neglect these chats when our lives become stressful.

And if we notice someone who appears to be struggling during this time, let's have the awareness to encourage them to seek

help and take action to prevent things from getting worse.

The pandemic has disrupted all our lives to some degree, but we can support each other and look after ourselves. Let's not forget to take that opportunity and remain grateful for all the positive things in life.



Clyde Rathbone
Co-Founder of [Letter](#)

Feature article

Legal liability and your COVID-19 Safety Coordinator

The Think Tank 5 session on Tuesday 9 June, organised by Play by the Rules, was on the topic of 'How do we ensure the safe return to sport and mitigate the risk, using the Sport Australia Return to Sport Toolkit'. It was both interesting and informative for all who attended. Sport Australia's Return to Sport Toolkit is a proactive response to a difficult and complex problem for sports administrators planning a safer return to sport.

One of the questions that arose out of the Forum was the issue of recruiting volunteer COVID-19 Safety Coordinators. As sports administrators are aware, clubs and associations find it difficult to recruit volunteers at the best of times. But in the case of COVID-19 Safety Coordinators, a lot of potential volunteers are not prepared to offer their services because of the complexity of the role, which in turn brings with it perceived potential legal liability issues.

There is no doubt that the duties of COVID-19 Safety Coordinators are both important and onerous. They are the main contact for all matters related to COVID-19 for their club or association, including overseeing the development and implementation of the safe return of their club or association to the sporting arena. They have the responsibility of completing the Return to Sport Checklist and Return to Sport Safety Plan and Checklist, and that they meet all the necessary legal requirements.

Can you protect a COVID Safety Coordinator from liability?

It is understandable that given the role and the responsibilities of a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator that a volunteer would be nervous. The position appears to be full of potential legal pitfalls, and that only a lawyer should consider the position. But is that really the case? Is the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator going to be the 'fall guy' and exposed to potential legal liability if something goes wrong?

The short answer to the question of legal liability insofar as a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator is concerned is 'probably not'. It is impossible to say never, but the person who takes on the role is a committee member or a volunteer from the general membership, and is highly unlikely to attract personal legal liability while carrying out the task of COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. Note the wording though. The Coordinator may not be personally liable (unless gross negligence can be established) but the club or association may be. Why, I hear people say?

Why the type of structure of the club or association is important

To minimise the risk of personal liability depends to some extent on the type of structure of the club or association. Is it an unincorporated or incorporated body? If it is unincorporated, it has no existence apart from its members and is the one with the most risks, particularly for the committee members. In this case, insurance becomes an important consideration and the

Coordinator should check whether the club has insurance coverage and ask what it covers. Does it extend to cover the activities of a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator?

If the club or association is an incorporated body under either Associations Incorporation legislation of the relevant state or territory, or a company incorporated under the Corporations Act, then it becomes a different ball game to the unincorporated body. Now the club or association is an independent body to its members and it has its own identity or legal personality.

An advantage of incorporation is protection from liabilities. In other words, liabilities are usually only enforceable against the club and not the members or the committee members personally. If the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator is already a committee member, then assuming that they act with due care and diligence in carrying out their duties as a Coordinator (that is, with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable person might be expected to show in the role), then they will be protected from litigation. The courts have consistently shown a reluctance to interfere with bona fide decisions.

If it is not possible to find a committee member who wants to take on the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator role, then the committee will have to find a person who is appropriately skilled to take on this role. A committee needs to be careful to only select a person who can carry out the role, or they may find themselves with a problem if things go wrong because they did not exercise due care and diligence.

Options for incorporated bodies

To allay a volunteer's concerns about exposure to potential litigation should things go wrong (short of gross negligence), and depending on the club

or association's constitution, there are at least three options for the committee. First, co-opt the volunteer on to the committee as the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. They can then take advantage of the protection offered to committee members under relevant incorporation legislation.

The second option is for the Committee to establish a safety sub-Committee and appoint the volunteer to chair that Committee. This gives the Coordinator a little more flexibility in administering the position if the club or association is large and requires the efforts of more than one person. The third option is to take out insurance. Most clubs and associations have insurance, and it is then a case of seeing what it covers and extending that coverage, if necessary, to include the Safety Coordinator.

In summary

There are options available to protect the COVID-19 Safety Coordinator from being personally sued. A Committee needs to be familiar with what their Constitution allows them to do and they must act in accordance with that. But it also needs to be remembered that it may still be possible for a Coordinator who acts in bad faith or is grossly negligent to be personally liable, and possibly make committee members liable as well. Hence the reason why care needs to be exercised in the selection of the person who is to be a COVID-19 Safety Officer.

Andy Gibson
ANZSLA Life Member and Academic
Southern Cross University

| New Positive Culture Hub on Play by the Rules

Play by the Rules recently launched a new Positive Culture Hub. In 2019, we embarked on developing our Theory of Change, visiting every state and territory and staging small focus groups to identify key issues that impact on safe, fair and inclusive sport. We also conducted an extensive survey of Play by the Rules subscribers and did our desk research to help narrow down the key focus areas for Play by the Rules in the years ahead.

The result of that work helped us identify nine key focus areas, the first of which is support for developing positive cultures and welcoming environments in sport.

The launch of our Positive Culture Hub is the first direct initiative to support this key focus area. Creating a welcoming environment and a positive culture involves a variety of things. There's no single magic formula to creating a healthy and positive culture. The good news though is that there is a lot of help out there. There are always ways to improve your culture and it does not have to be rocket science! There is no need to reinvent wheels here. Clubs and associations right across the country are already tapping into the great work that's being done by community groups, state bodies and even national organisations in this space.

So, at the Positive Culture Hub you will find a menu of support resources and practical tools to help you and your club thrive and grow into one that connects and reflects local community needs. There are a lot of resources here and we suggest you look through and focus on the ones you think will make a difference in your context. Play by the Rules supports the organisations highlighted in the Positive Culture Hub, all of which do great work which contributes to creating welcoming environments and positive cultures in community sport.

To access the Positive Culture Hub go to <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/positive-culture>

COVID-19 awareness mini-course

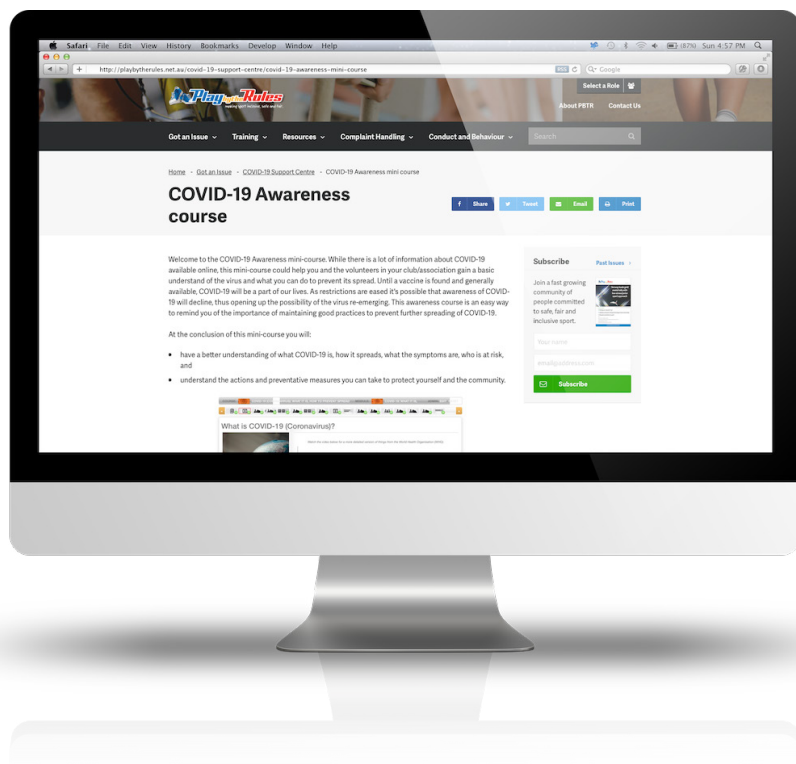
The COVID-19 mini-course is free and suitable for anyone and everyone interested in understanding a little more about COVID-19. This mini-course should take 10–15 minutes to complete and is a good baseline awareness program for your volunteers and staff. The course has many interactive components and is very user friendly to navigate and complete.

While there is a lot of information about COVID-19 available online, this mini-course could help you and the volunteers in your club/association gain a basic understand of the virus and what you can do to prevent its spread. Until a vaccine is found and generally available, COVID-19 will be a part of our lives. As restrictions are eased it is possible that awareness of COVID-19 will decline, thus opening up the possibility of the virus re-emerging. This awareness course is an easy way to remind you of the importance of maintaining good practices to prevent further spreading of COVID-19.

At the conclusion of this mini-course you will:

- have a better understanding of what COVID-19 is, how it spreads, what the symptoms are, who is at risk, and
- understand the actions and preventative measures you can take to protect yourself and the community

To access the course go to <http://playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/covid-19-support-centre/covid-19-awareness-mini-course>



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To make Play by the Rules possible, we also work with

