

Dear Members,

It is with a heavy heart that I have to announce that the Asquith Magpies will not be resuming the 2020 Ron Massey Cup or Sydney Shield Competitions. Furthermore, the Board have reluctantly decided that we will not be entering in either of these two competitions in 2021. This latter decision was not required to be announced until later in the year, however given all the uncertainty around COVID-19 and its ultimate impact on our licensed club, we have made the announcement now in the best interests of our players and coaching staff so that they can plan their futures now rather than later in the year when there won't be the same opportunities.

Asquith Rugby League Club Limited trading as Magpies Waitara along with many other licensed clubs are experiencing unprecedented financial difficulties due to COVID-19 and unfortunately the costs incurred participating in the Ron Massey Cup and Sydney Shield Competitions have become unsustainable for our Club in these difficult times.

The doors of our Club have been closed for a little over 10 weeks and whilst we have now reopened, it is with significant restrictions and we have no idea how long these will be in place or for what period of time social distancing will be with us. All of this impacts on our revenue and costs making it difficult for us to accurately forecast our financial position over the next 12-18 months.

Whilst most of our staff were retained on Job Keeper, we still have staff doing it tough and I'm certain the same can be said for many of our members and their families as a consequence of COVID-19.

Financially we have been impacted. It has been a tough 12 months with droughts, fires, floods and now COVID-19 all having a significant impact on our economy. It is critical that the Board and Management take all necessary steps to ensure that our Club is best positioned to meet the challenges ahead of us so that we can come out the other side bigger and better and serve our members and community as we have for the past 40 years. This has led to our unanimous decision to withdraw from the two competitions mentioned.

Magpies Waitara are a proud Club built on the back of rugby league and I am certain we will come through these challenging times so that we can continue to provide the levels of service our members have become accustomed to over the years. The Club will continue to support rugby league, cricket and netball both at a junior and senior level, we just won't be able to participate this year or next in the semi-professional major rugby league competitions run by NSWRL.

The decision to withdraw from both the Ron Massey Cup and Sydney Shield was not an easy one, but one that had to be made nonetheless. None of us have seen or experienced what we are all going through at the moment and tough times call for tough decisions. The Board's priority must be with the club and the business it generates and our responsibility is to all members of this great club.

I would also like to make special mention of our three Senior Coaches, Pat Weisner, Brendan Perenara and Daniel Hutton who each came to the Club at the end of 2017, as well as their coaching staff and all the players that these outstanding individuals have brought to our Club. All of these men and women have been of exemplary character and have helped our Club to become a consistent force in both competitions. Our decisions will have a huge impact on all of these people, however we sincerely hope that in making the decision early on 2021 it will enable all of them to find positions with other Clubs. The Board and Management certainly wish them all the very best and hope to see them back in Asquith Magpies colours soon.

Just in closing, we will keep all members updated on what is happening in the Club and we would encourage you to come and see us at your earliest opportunity.

Brian Fulmer
Board Chairman
Asquith Rugby League Club Ltd t/as Magpies Waitara