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# AFL Outer East

(Yarra Valley Australian Football Commission Limited. ABN 84 160 417 818)

## SEASON 2020 UPDATE

With yesterday's announcement of a return to Level 3 restrictions and lockdown, the AFL Outer East commission has made the immensely difficult decision to cancel all football and netball competitions for the season 2020.

We understand that we will have many disappointed footballers, netballers, coaches, and community following this news. The staff and Commission of AFL Outer East share this disappointment. As a community we are passionate about football, netball, our clubs, and competition, but we face an unprecedented situation, beyond any of our control.

We have a responsibility to our community, our clubs, and our participants to provide clarity in such uncertain times, to prioritise health and safety in our community and to minimise the significant burden and stress on our volunteer network.

Our position has been throughout this process that we would exhaust every avenue to return to football and netball this year, until a return was no longer possible. We feel we have done this, however with no guarantee of a return post lock down, continuing to hold off for a return would be irresponsible on our behalf and unfair on our community.

## UNDER-AGE FOOTBALL 2021

With no junior sport in 2020, we are mindful of all participants in transition age groups and are keen to ensure that these participants are able to enjoy a final year with their mates and clubs, before moving into Saturday and Open age football.

Therefore:

**AFL Outer East will transition to odd age core age groups (9,11,13,15,17, 19) from 2021.**

This move will see our football and netball age groups align, as well as enable us to have all participants in development/talent age groups playing in the same age groups moving forward.

## PLAYER REGISTRATIONS

AFL Outer East can confirm that it will offer two options for participants who paid their league player registration fees for season 2020:

- Refund of the fee to the participant
- Player registration fee provided to the club

The process of refunding registration fees will begin in August, once all fees and completed registrations have been audited and confirmed. We will make a separate announcement of the process in regard to this shortly. Netball Victoria have advised that they will be making a decision on their process for VNA's over the next few months.

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## CLUB SUPPORT

AFL Outer East will work with all clubs over the next few months to provide support and guidance through this period. Particular focus will be on ensuring that our volunteers and committees are supported through such a challenging period.

## JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT

AFL Outer East will look to provide development programs for Football, Netball and Umpiring through Spring and Summer. We will utilise the lockdown period to develop programs, events, and days for our junior participants to participate in and engage with through the off season. Stay tuned for more announcements over the coming months.

## THANK YOU

AFL Outer East thanks all clubs, volunteers, officials, umpires, players, sponsors, commercial partners and the broader AFL Outer East community for their support and co-operation during these challenging and unprecedented times. We are immensely proud of the way our clubs, community and staff have met this challenge head on. Though disappointed there will be no football or netball in 2020, we shift our focus to returning bigger and better in season 2021.

Please stay safe and we urge all associated with our respective communities to heed the advice and regulations in place by order of the State Government. We all have a role to play in ensuring that our community remains safe and healthy and that we can all return to football and netball in season 2021

Tony Mitchell  
Chair  
AFL Outer East

Aaron Bailey  
Region General Manager  
AFL Outer East

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