



CROMER KINGFISHERS JRLFC

St Matthew's Farm Reserve  
Cnr Grover Rd & Fisher Rd North  
Cromer NSW 2099

PO Box 126  
Dee Why NSW 2099

ABN: 95 039 920 632

Wednesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

## **OFFICIAL CLUB STATEMENT**

As of Yesterday the Kingfishers JRLFC Committee made the decision not to register A grade or Reserve grade teams into the 2010 MWJRL competition, in favour of entering an A2 (Premier League) side.

This decision was not made lightly and was the basis of many discussions at committee meetings. In the end we had no alternative but to fold our A and Reserve grade teams, as the club was unable to fund the budget for these teams - a budget of 102k as set by their players and coaching staff. The coaching & management staff of these teams had been attempting (since October 2009) to secure funding to cover the short fall but to date have failed to secure the necessary funds.

I am aware that our decision has not been received very well by some groups and individuals. I am also aware that these persons have now begun a personal attack on myself and on the committee. These persons have been working to spread negative rumours in an attempt to shift any personal responsibility for the failure of these teams. The coaching & management staff have failed in their obligations to raise/secure needed funds, through sponsorship or planned club fundraising social events. They have also failed in their attempts to re- negotiate player payments.

Please do not give weight to these rumours or to the intentional smear campaign directed at the committee and myself. If you have any questions in regards to these matters please contact myself or another committee member, as we are always happy to answer your questions.

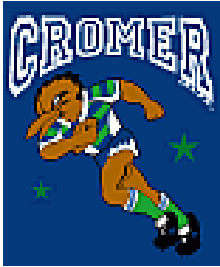
### **History / Overview:**

In 2008 both A and Reserve grade returned to the Cromer Kingfishers at a cost of more than \$100k.

For five years Chris Baily and Rob Gutherson ran the Thursday night meat raffles at the Time & Tide to raise funds to secure the return of these teams at the Kingfishers.

5 years of savings and any available funds in the club accounts was spent to ensure these teams entered the competition in 2008. Players were paid up to \$1200 per game, were provided with free meals from the BBQ and free drinks from the canteen. In return these players contributed little, if anything to the club. They did not associate with the other teams, attend club functions or assist with the ground or canteen duties as expected by all other teams.

In 2009 when the new committee was elected we were left with unpaid bills and player payments with insufficient funds to meet these debts, the club was on the brink of financial ruin. We set about seeking club sponsorship, organised fundraising activities / functions and both Chris and Rob continued with the raffles.



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During the course of the 2009 season we managed to successfully pay out the debts inherited from the previous committee and also raise the funds to meet our obligations to the A grade side in 2009, whom we had set a \$35k budget.

The 2009 A grade was not without problems. There was a \$10k budget blow out, attributed mainly to the coaching staff negotiating additional player payment deals without the clubs consent and the loss of all A Grade team jerseys.

I think that it is also important to mention that there were a number of occasions where A grade were asked to assist with the running of the raffles at the Time & Tide. Any money taken on these nights has to date failed to be banked into the club account.

In 2009 we had both player and coaching/management contracts drawn up and provided to the players, prior to the commencement of the playing season. These contracts (among other things) detailed both the player and management staff's responsibilities to the club. It included mentoring roles with the junior sides, attendance at club functions and a commitment to the major club sponsor, the Time & Tide (all players, coaches & managers were to return to the Time & Tide after all Sunday games for a team presentation and all were to be wearing their club polo shirts). The players and coaching/management staff all refused to sign these contracts but acknowledged their responsibilities and assured the committee that their obligations would be met in full.

A grade and the associated staff failed in their set obligations to the club and our major club sponsor and as a result the club has lost 50% of the sponsorship commitment from the Time & Tide, going into 2010. A grade / Reserve grade also failed to attend the organised club functions, golf day, trivia night and club presentation day, or to make themselves known to the general club. They did not provide a positive role model to our junior players or take part in any mentoring roles as expected. Unfortunately they also failed to assist the committee / club with any general duties including setup / pack away on Sundays or at any other time during the season. These issues were raised on numerous occasions throughout the season with the management staff of these teams, but failed to achieve a positive result.

Looking forward to 2010, the committee sat down with the nominated A & Reserve grade coaching and management staff to discuss the available budget and expectations for the teams in the coming season. The club agreed to put forward \$45k towards the team's budget. The club does not have these funds available in an account but were committed to raising these funds throughout the 2010 season. Achieved by fundraising, functions (golf day & trivia night), canteen sales, Time & Tide raffles and additional club sponsorships / donations.

This money was to cover all costs associated with the running of these teams, including team nomination fees, player payments, strapping etc. It was also agreed that the management staff would actively seek additional sponsorship and donations to fund any short fall between the clubs agreed contribution and the actual running costs. The committee advised the management team to be realistic in their budget and to negotiate minimal player payments, noting that payments should be for wins only and not per game.

The committee have been requesting updates from the A & Reserve grade management group in regards to their budget and secured funds since October 2009. A dead line was set for the

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management of these teams to have their budget and secured funds in place prior to team nominations on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2010. A Grade / A Reserve team(s) budget of \$102k was sent through to the committee, but as yet very little funds (by means of sponsorship or donations) have been secured, a total of approx. \$5000.00.

On the passing of the March 1<sup>st</sup> dead line, the Kingfishers committee elected not to enter A or Reserve grade teams into the 2010 competition and will instead run with a new A2 side (also known as a premier league team). This team will be built around a number of the players from last season's U19's side. The players will be asked to pay their own registration fees to demonstrate their commitment to the club and team but will in return be rewarded with club funded incentives such as a players kit, organised team BBQ's and money towards an end of season team getaway.

As a result of this decision the committee and myself have received much negative criticism. It has been stated that my personal handling of this matter and my lack of commitment to A & Reserve grade is detrimental to the Kingfishers as a whole. I do not make decisions on behalf of the club independently, all decisions are made by the committee and all discussions are noted in the minutes taken at all committee meetings. The committee and I believe that our decision (however unpopular) was made with the best intentions for the club as a whole. We cannot justify spending large sums of money every year to fund two senior teams, at the expense of our other teams.

As we no longer have to put such a large sum of money towards our senior teams in 2010, we as a committee have committed additional funds to our juniors and club development. Surplus funds are currently invested in term deposits; the club continues to seek sponsorship and plan fundraising activities and social events to take place in the 2010 season and Chris and Rob will continue to run the raffles.

Also the money saved by not entering these teams in 2010 will enable us to achieve our goals for the enhancement of the club sooner. Currently we are applying to renew our 10-year lease on the clubhouse and have plans to utilise savings to build an extension (function room / bar) on the clubhouse. This facility would enable the club to remain financial into the future, with the ability to hold additional club functions and also rent out the space to obtain additional club funds.

I hope that by releasing this statement, we can put a stop to the rumours and negative comments surrounding our decisions in regards to this matter. We as the club committee hope to move forward into the 2010 season with a positive outlook and anticipate a successful season for all teams. We respect that our appointment as the committee, by the club members comes with much responsibility. We are working to build a better club for all of our children!

Regards,

Simon Healey  
President  
Cromer Kingfishers JRLFC