



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

NORTH MELBOURNE FOOTBALL CLUB

ARTWORK (FRONT COVER)

2018 Sir Doug Nicholls Guernsey Design

The design is an aerial view of a winding river, running through a series of communities that represent today's football talent. It is symbolic of the North Melbourne Football Club – a place where the wider community can come together, and feel like they belong.

The design acknowledges our Country's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors, and celebrates those who've come before us. The artwork pays tribute to the club's ancestry and the connection between past, present and future.

Artist: Tarrise King



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

The North Melbourne Football Club strives to meaningfully engage and collaborate with our communities; to create safe, welcoming, culturally-affirming and inclusive environments for all peoples. We believe in celebrating every person's unique attributes, knowing that these differences enrich and strengthen our country, community and organisation.

Australia's First Peoples have championed inclusion, knowledge sharing, and storytelling for thousands of years, and have preserved the memories and traditions of this land. Everyone born, or visiting this country, walks on the land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and has a responsibility to honour and uphold their incredible and continuing legacy. It is through this legacy that North endeavours to be bold, never beaten and real in operating our club and to ensure all people feel like they belong.

The North Melbourne Football Club and its not-for-profit community arm, The Huddle, respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of our training and home game venues, particularly the Wurundjeri, Wathaurong, Palawa and Muwinina Peoples. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging; and recognise the resilience, strength, pride and passion of Australia's First Peoples.



CEO MESSAGE

As the North Melbourne Football Club enters 150 years of rich and vibrant tradition, we celebrate and reflect on our proud shared history with Australia's First Peoples, that continues to be a solid foundation for the club. It enables us to grow and build a community that celebrates, welcomes, and understands the strength in diversity.

In May 2016 we launched our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), and have since worked together to produce a second RAP, Innovate RAP, which will be launched in February 2019.

North's vision for Innovate is to celebrate, honour, and promote the club's deep and shared connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; creating a community that champions respect and belonging for all.

With "belonging" being one of the four club values, we continue to explore ways that we can deepen reconciliation and honour the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who represent North and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the land on which we practice, play, and work. Whether that is in North Melbourne, Tasmania, Werribee or interstate.

This RAP isn't an end point, but another step in our journey towards reconciliation and equality. And a commitment to this goal.

This report summarises the North Melbourne Football Club's contribution to reconciliation from 2017-2018 under the area of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities. This report highlights some of the innovative approaches our club is delivering to:

- Celebrate, honour, and promote our deep and shared connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; creating a community that champions respect and belonging for all.
- Raise awareness of the thriving and culturally enriching contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made to our Club (and Country).
- Strengthen our engagement with First Australian communities, and meaningfully collaborate together to drive reconciliation outcomes.

We are delighted to share this report with you.



Carl Dilena
Managing Director & CEO



RELATIONSHIPS

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND TRAINING

With a rejuvenated commitment towards making sure the entire club is educated and committed to the RAP goals and values, the entire club underwent an extensive Cultural Awareness Training. The four-hour training was run by Leon Egan; a proud First Australian man with strong Yorta Yorta/Bangerang, Wiradjuri and Gunditjmara heritage. Egan's training, through his organisation Bundyi Gilang, acted as an introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history and culture, and highlighted the significance of creating a safe, inclusive and culturally-affirming workplace. Players and staff had an opportunity to learn, ask questions and share personal experiences.

Since this initial training, the club has recognised the need to establish an ongoing curriculum to maintain cultural competence, and is working collaboratively with local Elders and emerging leaders to create a program for all staff.

As a club, North also supports cultural awareness training at community football clubs, to build initiatives that support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players in North Melbourne, Wyndham and Tasmania.

GRAND FINAL BREAKFAST

The Mazda North Melbourne Grand Final Breakfast is one of the largest events of the year, and this year we were lucky enough to have Aunty Joy Murphy, a senior Wurundjeri Elder of the Kulin nation in Victoria, and her Granddaughter Chenille, perform a Welcome to Country and Call to Country.

Aunty Joy has demonstrated outstanding leadership and advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for over 30 years. She is also the co-chair of North's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RWG). As part of this role, Aunty Joy advises the club on reconciliation initiatives, and often performs traditional ceremonies at significant club events.

It was a culturally enriching experience for the 1,300 guests who experienced the Call to Country in the Woiwurrung language for the first time.

North also hosted a table of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander emerging and established community leaders. This was an opportunity to celebrate their amazing contribution to reconciliation, and facilitate new meetings and connections between the group.



RESPECT

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

All of North's 2018 home games, both in Victoria and Tasmania, start with the club's Welcome to Country, featuring Elders from Wurundjeri and Palawa respectively. The club's current Aboriginal players helped design the video, and also feature in the Welcome to Country which now forms part of the match day ritual.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

SIR DOUG NICHOLLS ROUND

North Melbourne Football Club has continued to develop initiatives that celebrate and promote reconciliation through industry-led events like the Sir Doug Nicholls Round, which is played during National Reconciliation Week (NRW). In the lead up to the Round 11 match, North prominently displayed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at Arden Street, as well as painted them on the club's oval. North also released a number of articles and stories to highlight the achievements and continuing contribution that past and current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players provide to the game.

Celebrating the iconic round, North hosted a Sir Doug Nicholls themed function at Marvel (formerly Etihad) Stadium. The function featured a display of former and current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players, as well as culturally significant artefacts loaned to the club by the Koorie Heritage Trust.



GUERNSEY

22 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players that have represented North Melbourne were immortalised on the Sir Doug Nicholls Round guernsey, titled 'Origins'. Past players Percy Johnson, Barry Cable, Winston Abraham, Byron Pickett, Daniel Wells, Lindsay Thomas, and current players Jed Anderson and Jy Simpkin had their names featured in the design.

The artist, Tarris King (sister of Sarrita, who designed 2016 and 2017 guernseys), created the amazing artwork based on her 'Earth Images' series - which acknowledges her ancestors and those that have come before us. The club's 2018 jumper paid tribute to North's ancestry and the connection between past, present and future.



CULTURAL WALK

In partnership with the Koorie Heritage Trust, North's 2018 first-year players (Luke Davies-Uniacke, Tristan Xerri, Billy Hartung, Alex Morgan, Tom Murphy, Will Walker, Gordon Narrier and Kyron Hayden) took part in a three-hour cultural walk along the Birrarung, otherwise known as the Yarra River, marking National Reconciliation Week.

Several football and administrative staff also accompanied the players as they gained a deeper knowledge from a Kulin perspective about significant landmarks and people that have influenced Australia's history – past and present.

A highlight of the cultural walk included entering a traditional Kulin Nations meeting place, which is thousands of years old, and has become a significant meeting place for Melbournians and Australians today, the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) precinct. The significance of this meeting place was highlighted by the protected and cultural heritage sites known as the Scar Trees.

IGGY BOYS

As part of National Reconciliation Week celebrations, the 'Iggy Boys' – a school troupe from Queensland – performed some traditional Torres Strait Islander dances for the North Melbourne players to pay homage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players, past and present, ahead of the Sir Doug Nicholls Round.



OPPORTUNITIES

NEXT GENERATION ACADEMY

North Melbourne Football Club's Next Generation Academy continues to support emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Players in North Melbourne, Wyndham and Tasmania. The success of the program cannot be understated, with the club's first draft selection (pick eight) being Next Generation Academy prospect Tarryn Thomas in the 2018 NAB AFL Draft.

INNOVATE RAP

The club's second Reconciliation Action Plan, and first Innovate RAP, will be launched in February 2019. North's Innovate vision for reconciliation is to celebrate, honour, and promote the Club's deep and shared connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; creating a community that champions respect and belonging for all.





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