

SBA President's Message – April 2020

SBA Community,

First of all, I hope that you and your families have been coping as best you can during these recent, unprecedented times. As a basketball community, no doubt we are all looking forward to the day when we can return to the court and re-connect with one another.

I wish to provide you with an update on the recent activities at SBA and some insights into our thinking about the future. Whilst our decision on the 13th March to take a lead and withdraw our playing members from all domestic and representative basketball competitions given the increasing risk of COVID-19 was challenging, it was no doubt the right decision. The health and well-being of our members is our No.1 priority.

Immediately after, we moved into a phase of containment where we identified the following key areas for the SBA Board and Management to focus on:

- Communication
- Welfare of our Staff
- Financial forecast

Craig Weir (CEO) and his team have done a fantastic job with the regular communications on the SBA website including passing on the messaging from our governing body, Basketball Victoria. Above all, they have done great work keeping our junior players in particular engaged through a series of online training drills. This has also involved planning out workloads with our staff immediately after the shut down through to the point that we are now at. It has been very important to keep our staff engaged as much as possible during this time.

Finally, it was essential for the SBA Board and Management to understand in the early stages the potential impact financially COVID-19 would have on our Association. We held a number of sessions to assess financial forecasts coupled with a series of financial modelling scenarios to help manage the unknown future that was before us. This was done swiftly to control immediate costs and work with our suppliers who have been very understanding. This has included the Bayside City Council, various schools that we hire facilities from, and the service providers that support us at Tulip Street. Above all, due to the restructuring and streamlining of our Association over the past two years, I am pleased to report that the SBA has maintained its strong financial position while weathering this storm which has allowed us to maintain our staff, protect our new 4 court funding reserves, as well as position ourselves for when basketball is permitted to return - hopefully in the very near future.

Last week following our monthly SBA Board meeting, Craig and I held online briefing sessions with our Domestic Club Presidents and SBA staff to share our progress to date and our views on the immediate future ahead. We are grateful for the unanimous support we received and the continuous offers of help from our loyal Domestic Club base and Staff. This is very much appreciated and augers well for the culture that we are building here at the Southern Basketball Association.

While at time of writing, we do not have a definite date of when basketball will recommence, there is certainly strong positive indications from the broader federal and state government environments that community sport is a high priority in terms of resuming in some form in the very near future. I have asked our Staff and Club leaders to start thinking about not just the restart but the opportunities that we as an Association can identify now and act upon to assist in accelerating our growth plans for the remainder of 2020, 2021 and beyond.

Phil McFarlane



SBA President