

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY SPORT ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING 1/2021 – 18 March 2021

The minutes of meeting 1/2021 of the Melbourne University Sport Advisory Board held on Thursday 18 March at 11:30am via Zoom.

PRESENT:

Professor James Angus (Chair)
Professor Kerri-Lee Krause
Professor Sarah Biddulph
Professor Richard James
Ms Lara McKay
Mr James Marburg
Ms Joanna Weston
Mr Shawn Ingle
Mr Michael Dardis

APOLOGIES:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Tim Lee (Director)
Mr Jean-Luc Garlick
Ms Julie Caundle
Mr Eugene Toh (minute taker)
Ms Ruby Craven for item 1.3
Mr Rod Warnecke for item 2.3

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed all present and noted the appointment of Mr Michael Dardis as a new Student Member of the Advisory Board.

1.2 Apologies

No apologies were listed.

1.3 Club Presentation – MU Surfriders

The Chair welcomed Ms Ruby Craven, President of the Surfriders Club. Ms Craven provided an overview of the club's membership base which currently sits at approximately 400 members with an even gender split.

The club had represented the University in intervarsity competition including taking second place in the recent University National Championships and first in the Women's National Championships. In 2019, the club also celebrated its 50th anniversary since being founded in 1969.

One of the club's challenges included the transition of its membership base. In the past, the Surfriders had largely focused on exchange and international students by providing them opportunities to travel and participate across Australia. COVID has posed a significant challenge to this strategy and the club is now transitioning towards focusing on the domestic student cohort. This has largely involved setting up more advanced camps and training sessions for experienced students. The club also has a long-term goal to increase and improve

its level of diversity and is encouraged by MU Sport's progress in this space and will focus its efforts on engaging with these ongoing programs and services. Additional funding from the department would go a long way to supporting the club in achieving these goals. It would also enable the club committee to pursue formal surfing qualifications which currently costs members a significant amount.

Professor James thanked Ms Craven for her leadership, noting the great work the club has done to keep its membership base engaged during the pandemic. Mr Ingle asked what specific qualifications the Surfriders committee required. These include qualification certificates for Surf Coaching, Water Safety, First-Aid and Community Surf Life-Saving. Mr Dardis asked how the club manages the risk associated with non-patrolled beaches. The club has guidelines in place for these locations where formally qualified committee members supervise these activities. The Director asked what the Surf rider's experience was with international students seeking out surfing opportunities in Australia. The club often receives requests from prospective students overseas interested in joining. Engagement of the University's international cohort has also previously been a significant strategic focus of Surfriders.

The Chair thanked Ms Craven for her presentation.

1.4 Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

1.5 Business Arising/Action Item Updates

There were no business arising/action item updates.

2. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

2.1 Return to Campus Update

The Director welcomed all present and provided an overview of the organisation's return to campus status. All outdoor activities resumed in October last year in support of students and staff on campus including club training and on-campus activities. Opening hours have gradually increased since October and are now operating at approximately 80% of pre-COVID levels.

Government and University restrictions in February impacted Orientation week resulting in visitor numbers less than anticipated. As a result, the organisation has increased its focus on online promotions through a QR code system enabling students to register their interest with clubs and other activities. These promotions will continue into the semester providing an opportunity for all incoming students to see our programs and services on offer.

Since returning from the recent 5-day lockdown, MU Sport has seen a steady increase in participation with a positive spike in March due to the return of college students to campus. Pleasingly, there has also been a significant increase in membership reactivations in line with the University's gradual increase to the number of students and staff on campus. Despite this, overall participation data for 2021 is down on 2019. To account for this, ongoing adjustments are being made to the organisations forecasts and expenditure.

The most recent data from the University indicates a drop in commencing international students, however there has been an increase in the number of part-time students enrolled. Mr James noted the difference in student numbers and highlighted the large proportion of international students studying offshore. Most students onshore have had the opportunity to learn in-person and remotely. This has resulted in less students on-campus which has likely influenced engagement with MU Sport.

Other interesting data relates to the University's demographic with almost 60% of student's female, 0.7% Indigenous and 5.4% stating they have a disability. This will be useful for MU Sport's longer-term planning. The Chair opened the floor for questions.

Ms McKay gave an update on the colleges. Most of the colleges are close to full despite the restrictions currently in place. Managing spectators for college and sporting events has been a challenge, however, college activity is returning to normal.

Mr Dardis asked how the University's demographic data translates to the use of MU Sport programs and services as it only provides an understanding of the number of students the University has enrolled, not the number of students on campus at any given time. The Director outlined that he asked the University to provide heatmapping data which will provide more accurate data around campus visits.

Ms McKay queried the data provided in the discussion paper regarding the University's Indigenous Engagement. A correction was made to the paper which now accurately reflects 0.7% of University student enrolments identifying as having an Indigenous background.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the Return to Campus Update.

2.2 Annual Review

The Director presented the 2020 Annual Review containing the highlights and the strategic developments from the previous year. A draft version of the Annual Video was presented.

In March last year it was announced that all University facilities would close and operations suspended as a result of the spread of COVID-19. As a result, MU Sport was required to pivot to providing services remotely requiring a significant review of work practices, service delivery and stakeholder communication. Despite these difficulties, COVID provided a great opportunity to be innovative with our service delivery and we were also able to improve our profile increased presence of our programs and services were on the University's student comms and website.

Progress was still made with many of our 2020 Strategic Tasks. The Sport Capital Plan was updated to align with the University's Estates Plan and to develop a broader strategy to build support for sport capital projects. The MU Sport Charter was also reviewed. Support from the University for the collection of SSAF funds was crucial to our continued service provision in 2020.

Significant financial and operational adjustments were made in response to the University's budget position and reduction in student numbers. However, our financial position remains solid due to our cash reserve position. The Director thanked the MU Sport staff, clubs and members of the Board, in particular the Chair and DVC (SL) Professor Kerri-Lee Krause for their ongoing support.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the 2020 Annual Review.

2.3 Sporting Club Performance Strategy

Mr Warnecke presented the Sporting Club Performance Strategy.

A discussion paper was presented to the Board in August 2019 aligned with the objective to 'ensure sporting clubs are the first choice of our student-athletes with quality coaching, professional administration, athlete development and student recruitment'. The discussion paper was circulated to stakeholders for further feedback later that year.

The strategy outlines a range of successful student recruitment initiatives introduced by the clubs including Rugby's Young Achiever Award; the cricket club academy for secondary school student cricketers; and the hockey club's appointment of a Director of Hockey which has resulted in their senior men's and women's teams being promoted into the state's top tier competition.

Feedback from the clubs and the Club Advisory Group to the Discussion Paper was generally positive however it was determined to replace student membership quotas with club targets. The Chair asked if the targets would be individual or combined and Mr Marburg asked about the consequence of non-compliance with the targets. The Director outlined that we would work with the clubs to ensure that targets (individual and combined) are aspirational and account for specific circumstance for each club. Furthermore, MU Sport would support clubs to meet these objectives as a collaborative approach as opposed to punitive.

Mr Ingle asked what the current student-membership breakdown was. Mr Warnecke confirmed that currently 49% of member are students in competitive clubs, compared to 75% and 60% of the instructional and recreational clubs. Information on the number of students in top tier teams is not collected but this will be done over time to measure progress. Mr Marburg supported the idea of an academy program and noted the importance of managing the risk associated with underage participants.

The Chair asked whether there is an opportunity for the organisation to match scholarships alongside the clubs. Mr Warnecke outlined the Peter Jopling and Buxton Scholarships and the provision of strength and conditioning, physiotherapy and other related support services to club members. The Chair suggested including a summary in the strategy which outlines the actions and targets and the support which will be provided by MU Sport. The Strategy will be updated to reflect the discussion with the Advisory Board and referred to the Club Advisory Group prior to distribution to clubs in June.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the Sporting Club Performance Strategy.

3. MATTERS FOR NOTING

3.1 Director's Report

The Director presented the Director's Report.

The Chair asked if the Elite Athlete Friendly MoU provides study and exam flexibility and recognition of academic standing which was confirmed. Professor Krause suggested that the MoU be brought to the attention of the Deans.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the Director's Report.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

5. MEETING FINALISATION

5.1 Meeting Close

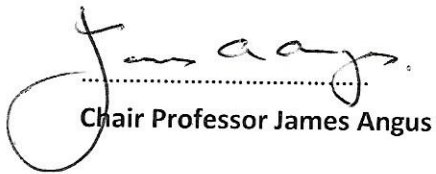
The Chair noted this was the last Board meeting for Professor Kerri-Lee Krause. He thanked her for her support for sport at the University. Professor Krause thanked the Board and recognised the efforts of the entire organisation throughout the pandemic period.

5.2 Next Meeting

Next meeting on Thursday 6 May 2021 at 9:30am – 11:00am.

Commercial in Confidence
Agenda item no. 1.4

Signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record:


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Chair Professor James Angus

6/5/21
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Date