



## CASE STUDY

Brighton Soccer Club has one of the largest participation bases in Victoria. More recently, Brighton have grown their female participation base to become one of the leading clubs for females in Australia.

Below we asked the Clubs President, Ruth Kyte some questions about how their club is run and how they achieve their goals in relation to women's football.

**What are some objectives & strategies that you set out prior to each season to ensure that women's football maintains a strong presence in your club and how do you measure the success of these once the season is complete?**

We recognised that girls often lack awareness of the game and even if they are interested in playing can lack confidence.

Firstly we aim to create an awareness of girls and women's soccer and give girls a low or no cost introduction to the sport where they can see if they like it and gain confidence before they commit. We aim to keep the costs down for beginner players with the Free Come and Try clinics and have previously offered girls the chance to play the winter season with both mixed and girls teams for the same fee as just playing mixed.

Secondly we have a strategy of offering a mixture of programs to suit the girls and women's audience. Due to our size we are able to offer a variety including the Free Come and Try, Mixed teams and Girls only teams at every age from Under 8's up. In 2015 we realised there was a lack of tournaments for MiniRoos girls so set one up ourselves.

**How do you increase awareness and visibility of your programs (such as your free come and try clinics) and do you find that there is a strong conversion rate from these programs into playing traditional football?**

We started by advertising in the schools and have also done sessions in the local schools to increase awareness.

Once the news gets out, we have found people spread the word themselves among their friends themselves and it creates its own momentum. We have also focused on getting stories about girls teams in our club in the local newspaper at the right time to increase awareness before particular programs start.

Our conversion rate to playing traditional football has been very good and has powered the growth in girls throughout the club.

**What objectives/strategies do you have to ensure that your existing members feel valued and want to return to Brighton year on year and what have you found to be the most effective?**

We have put committee reps in place for both MiniRoos Girls and for the Junior and Senior Girls and also have a Head of Coaching for each of these two groups to assist and mentor the girls coaches. This focus enables us to provide a high level of service.

Our club has the stated philosophy that everything can always be done better and we actively listen to our members views, whether they are critical or supportive of our actions and look to make improvements based on the feedback we get.

Trying to keep the prices down has helped the girls and they are a large user of our boot swap services (preloved boots for \$20 or \$10 if you bring a pair to swap).

**How have you found it beneficial having a large female presence on your club committee and was this a deliberate or organic process?**

Having a female president and secretary has been good to present to the girls and women in the club as it gives a more welcoming feel to them (instead of feeling it is a "boys club"). This has been an organic process rather than a deliberate one. We pride ourselves to be a family oriented club with strong values and behaviours and this has had an impact in the high level of involvement of women in our club.