

## President's Report 2021

If the previous season I described as challenging this season would be best described as different. It started under the cloud of COVID and with a split in the Friday evenings we managed to start the season. Whilst we understand that the split times made it harder for some of our families, we at least managed to get the season underway. The split times also reduced our congestion in some of the events and allowed our Coaches to train the older athletes between 530pm and 630pm.

We had great attendance with 25% higher participation compared to last season and managed most nights with not too much fuss. We were fortunate again to have so many Age Managers and Assistant Age Managers take the groups around. Our thanks to our age managers as they are the key to ensuring we can hold a successful event.

Our competition team excelled despite the challenge of no zone carnival for any athlete and no regionals carnival for the U13 -U17 athletes. Despite this we achieved a record number of 47 athletes qualifying for State Titles. These athletes won 13 medals with many achieving personal bests and reaching finals.

We just missed a few medals and injuries ruled out some of our normal medallists, so I am sure we can improve again next year. There were some stand out performance with our Junior Girls winning the Junior 4\*100m relay by a good margin thanks to an awesome team effort from Marnie, Aria, Marli and Venus. Also, Capri Vincent won four medals two gold (70m and 400m) and two bronze (100m and 200m). The challenge for Capri in the 100m and 200m was that her Friday night rival, Marnie Laurence, won gold in the 100m and 200m. This was on the back of Capri winning silver at the State Multi Event Championship and Marnie winning Bronze. With Chloe Antony getting 4<sup>th</sup> in the hurdles and 6<sup>th</sup> in the high jump, to win an event in the ESLAC under 9 girls on a Friday night you must beat a state finalist or medallist.

We also had seven athletes qualify for 2021 Australian Track and Field Titles in the U14 to U18 events. Lara, James, Evan, Harry, Jack, Eliette and Piper. Again, these qualifiers are a great reflection of the talent and commitment from our athletes, the parents/carers and their coaches. Our thanks goes to our Club Coaches Mal, Leo, Maxim, Jemima and our part timer Mimi. Also, it was great to have assistance with the younger age groups from Gabriella, Max, Fred and Richard.

This season I need to thank the small number of people that keep the club going and have done for many years now. They are all a pleasure to work with and our no fuss approach makes the many tasks more bearable. Thank you, Robert, Noreen, Ilana, Paul, Amanda, Kimi, Dan, Danielle, Bronwen and Adam. A special thanks goes to Paul, Vanessa, Anika and Max for running the BBQ this year. Many a long term member/committee member has been challenged by this task but this season the Dunstan-Wende group did it with a smile.

We introduced Club Captains again after around a 10 year absence and it was great to see Max Wende and Lara Roets represent us so well with Lara competing at State and Nationals and Max covering everything from coaching, to starting and the BBQ on a Friday night.

Unfortunately, this is Robert Dohan's last year with us. Our club would not have been in existence over the last five seasons without Robert. From organising the program to printing the sheets, our website, our weekly results, running the timing gear, entering results, organising the presentation, helping to run the zone carnival, or attending all the meetings. There is no job Robert has not done all with his usual positive attitude, thoroughness, diligence, and accuracy. It is hours of work each week and to think that last season he did not even have any athletes at the club. We need to

acknowledge Roberts massive contribution to our club. I must admit I am concerned with how we will cover Robert's absence. I can say I enjoyed working with Robert over so many seasons and sharing our interest in athletics and our desire to improve the club. The results at State titles and the number of athletes at the club are just two examples of how much we have improved at the club thanks to Robert's commitment and hard work.

Our longest serving committee member is also hanging up her clip board at the end of this season. Ilana Guthrie has been with Eastern Suburbs since the 2011/12 season and has served as our Registrar since 2012/13. Ilana has put in a huge amount of time and effort for the club for almost a decade and is the perfect example of how individual commitment builds strong community based clubs like ESLAC. Ilana's sons Adam and Josh have not threatened too many club records but their participation has always been stellar with Josh earning the second highest attendance points for any athlete at the club this season.

Danielle has also advised this is her last season with us as her son Tommy will not return. Danielle has been a fantastic committee member in the Treasurer and Secretary roles and a great supporter of the club. We wish her and Tommy all the best.

Clearly next year will have more challenges but with help from our committee members and hopefully a few more new members, I am sure we will be able to offer our young athletes to chance to learn, enjoy and develop their athletics. Please spread the word that Eastern Suburbs Little Athletics is a great club to join to develop athletic skills in a fantastic environment.

Drew Richardson

President