

I am delighted that Rosie is our first Woman of Sport to fill us in on her role at Netball Vic in this time of change and challenge. Here are her thoughts.

What are you most pleased to have done at/for Netball Vic since CVP closed us all down?

I'm really proud of the team at Netball Victoria who have risen to the challenges that we are facing during this crisis; they are such an incredible team....The extra efforts required at all levels under such enormous stress and pressure is remarkable. We responded pretty quickly and to some degree relied on our values as a touch point for decisions. Our number one focus was to ensure that our organisation will survive the downturn after all Netball Vic has been around for nearly 100 years surviving Wars and a Depression (and God only knows what other mountains they had to climb; our culture of resilience is second to none). On the day that the Executive Team was preparing to present an update to the staff reality hit us hard as our peers across the industry were being stood down, images of the lines at Centrelink were stretching for blocks and the world as we knew it was spinning off its axis.

We estimated when we would run out of cash and so we put it to the employees that we should all take a 20% pay cut (with no end date in sight) in order to save jobs. Not one person said no. So with that we went about cutting our cloth accordingly. Those who could, offered to take leave without pay, everyone was asked to use up their leave, some staff said they would pay their own phone bills (which they could otherwise claim), others offered to reduce their hours even more. Staff told me they would rather take a bigger cut in order to save their job. It's been a very humbling experience.

I am so grateful that our Board have backed us for the long haul. The women before us who led Netball Vic set us up beautifully. We had some money the bank for a rainy day and boy is it pouring now! As we know women are often disadvantaged during employment (wages, superannuation, casualisation of hours etc). Our workforce is over 90% female and so it was very important to us that we could support our team. I am in awe of those who are now juggling home schooling, working from home during this isolation and still managing to churn out quality work.

How are you managing your team remotely?

Like most others we had to pivot quickly and get our technology ready. We use Basecamp for general communications across different teams to stop clogging up emails that are kept for business communication. The Executive team meets daily at 9am through

Zoom. Whilst it feels a little like ground hog day it does keep us accountable as we have Action Items from each meeting that are captured in our Minutes. Similar meetings are happening across the organisation.

We are continuing with our regular rituals such as our Monthly All Stars meetings and Birthday celebrations but instead of Frothy Fridays we have Thirsty Thursdays, all done via Zoom. I miss being in the office and working with the team at Netball Vic which brings more meaning and satisfaction to the work I do.

There are a number of BAU projects being tackled that we haven't had time to do before; and there are other transformational projects that have been brought forward to ensure that we are in the right situation once netball is back. We are using cross functional teams to drive collaboration and to bring insights that we may have previously missed in our usual organisational structure.

What are you most looking forward to when sport can resume?

I think we will all breathe a sigh of relief as it will mean that there will be some normality in our world again. Our team is bloody good at what they do and I love seeing them excel. I get enormous satisfaction being around and involved in sport from grassroots to elite. I love watching friends and families coming together through sport whether as a participant or fan. The collegiality and sense of purpose that sport brings are very necessary to me and have left a big gap in my life right now. There is a lot of creativity in sport which is counterbalanced with discipline. I see the same in the Arts sector which I also admire enormously.

What keeps you awake at night?

I worry about the money of course. We have no income at the moment and juggling cash flow is a challenge however we have the best CFO going around which gives me confidence. We need our sponsors to stay with us and so without traditional netball, our team have to be creative about creating other value and sponsor benefits to fulfill our obligations. We are optimistic that we will have some netball this year and so planning for all scenarios is well underway which will ensure that our paid up members will also get their value this year. I find sending emails to myself in the middle of the night useful as it gets it out of my head and I'm sure I won't forget the idea or issue that has kept me awake.

I also worry a lot about the team. There is so much that you can't see via Zoom that you would usually be able to pick up over a cup of coffee; an inflection in a voice if someone is

feeling a bit wobbly about an issue. It's hard to read emotions and so hard to work out how to provide support or more direction.

What are you doing for yourself to stay well and positive right now?

Is this a trick question Margot? To be honest there have been days that I haven't been out of the house and that has been a big mistake. So now I try to get out for a brisk walk every day; I live on the Bellarine and so there is no excuse not to enjoy a walk on the beach.....even better on cold days where you can rug up and so I'll be even happier during winter. My big treat is to shop at the BIG supermarket so I can legitimately spend more time wandering the aisles. I am actually not kidding. I love gardening so that also gives me pleasure; oh and the Scotchmans Hill Chardy is pretty pleasurable too.