

Southland Women's Football Annual Report 2011

Southland Women's football is continuing to grow with one new team entering the competition in 2011—Queens Park 2, which made it 9 teams in the Southland Women's competition. There is still a big gap between the top teams and the bottom teams, but I think all the teams have raised their standard of football, which is very positive.

QP2 was mainly made up of players new to the game, and was looking to just play socially, but as we didn't manage to get a social league up and running; they decided to enter in the main league. It did make for very high scoring games, but I congratulate them for sticking at it. Overall though, in the main competition, there were a lot of high scoring games this year. I'm not quite sure why, because it wasn't just in the games where the top teams played the bottom teams.

I think part of the reason is the style of football all teams are concentrating on playing now. Not just kick the ball away or up the field and individual runs, but really good quality passing football, which creates a lot more opportunities to score. I love this attitude from coaches and players as it makes it a lot more fun and rewarding to play and better to watch.

Having great quality grounds also makes a difference. It's always going to be difficult to have good grounds during winters in Invercargill, so having the turf now has been great to assure all women still get the opportunity to play good quality football.

It has also been exciting to see lots of junior girls playing in the woman's league. I noticed a big growth in the confidence of these girls. I hope clubs will continue to look at their junior players and slowly introduce them to the women's league.

I would like to thank all the referees who put their hand up to ref women's games this year and to Peter McNally for organizing it. We had a lot of games refereed by official referees this year, which was great. The high standard of football played by women in Southland today makes it crucial to have good referees.

I would also like to thank the people who have taken their time to come to committee meetings. There was a few challenging issues, but these things only come up because people are passionate about improving the competition and the game, which is great. A special thank you to our Women's Committee's secretary Wendy Boniface and draw conveyer and cancellation-decision-maker Tracey McGibbon for all the hard work they have done again this year. I'm sorry Tracey is not able to do it next year.

Southland women's 2011 football season started in March with a pre-season tournament at Old Boys. Thanks to Old Boys for organizing this. All teams apart from Queens Park 2 entered, and a girl's high team requested a few friendly games.

The Kolk Trophy competition got underway the weekend straight after pre-season, starting Sunday 3rd April. We had an Easter break but otherwise had great weather until July, where we had to cancel three weekends in a row due to bad weather. This was a shame as there was only meant to be two more games left of the competition, but with the big break, lots of women seemed to be less interested in playing and were "hanging out" to finish the season.

With the late finish of the main competition only 4 teams were interested in playing the knock-out competition, which then all got played in one day, 11th September.

We again this year had an U14 and a 17th grade girls teams going to tournaments in October. Congratulations to the girls for getting selected and thank you to coaches and managers for their commitment to these teams. The teams played well, finishing 6th and 7th respectively, and the girls had great trips, and the experience for our Southland junior girls to play at a higher level is very valuable to improve the competition in the South.

Regrettably we didn't have a Southland Women's team this year, as there was no tournament for them to play in and there wasn't much interest to just play a friendly against Roslyn after a long season. We are looking into starting a tournament here next year, to create games for a Southland team.

Congratulations to the following winners of the various trophies:

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| • PRE-SEASON TROPHY | Queenstown |
| • KOLK TROPHY | Southend United |
| • OTTLEY CHALLENGE TROPHY | Southend United |
| • KNOCK-OUT TROPHY | Waihopai |
| • PLATE | Winton |
| • GOLDEN BOOT | Mary Fraser |
| • U21 PLAYER OF THE YEAR | Sammi Murrell |
| • SOUTHLAND PLAYER OF THE YEAR | Mary Fraser |

I'm looking forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Tove Crosswell
Chairperson,
Southland Football Women's Committee