



GOLD COAST TITANS
MEMBERS ALLIANCE

4th MEETING SUMMARY – 29/01/2019



#THRUNTHRU

Venue: Parkwood Village, Media Room

Attendees:

Brendan Reeves
Dan Cooper
David Allsopp
David Armstrong
Deborah Marshall
Gary Bourke
Jack McDonald
Jennifer Cole
Judy Meikle
Judy Puna
Lee Dungey
Lisa Forrest
Lyndon Revell
Matthew Brown
Michael Pulford
Peter Campbell
Peter Morichovitis
Rhonda Toms
Santino Patane

Apologies:

Adam Brown
Adam Johns
Guy Freeman
Israel Rensen
Kevin Liggins
Steve Dwan

Staff in attendance:

Chris Knell
Adam Barry
Liam Faithful
Dennis Watt

Members Alliance Meeting Agenda - 29/01/2019

- **Welcome and Introduction**

- **Address from Gold Coast Titans Executive Chairman Dennis Watt regarding the progress made across the club both on and off the field** – Opportunity for questions from Alliance Representatives to follow

- **Formal Introduction to Membership and Group Ticketing Coordinator Liam Faithful** – Including overview of Group Ticketing and how the club can help you to encourage your family/friends/work contacts to get behind the club

- **2019 Membership update/trial and home game ticketing**

- **Update on progress made to address the 5 key club issues identified by the Members Alliance** – These identified issues were:
 1. **Food, Drinks and Entertainment offerings to enhance the match day experience**
 2. **Parking Options**
 3. **Team Song**
 4. **Post-match space or venue for members**
 5. **Enhanced awareness of the positive stories and developments emanating from the club. And controlling the public narrative that is often dictated by the media**

- **Early suggestions and feedback for 2020 Membership Program** – Opportunity for Alliance Representatives to have a say and shape the future membership program, in terms on merchandise and inclusions, and anything else that could be considered

- **Open Floor** – Alliance Representatives can raise any other thoughts/ideas/feedback/suggestions so the club can take them on board

- **Meeting wrap-up**

Members Alliance Meeting - Summary and Notes - 29/01/2019

- **Welcome and Introduction – Provided by Chris Knell, outlining structure of the meeting and the agenda**

- **Address from Gold Coast Titans Executive Chairman Dennis Watt regarding the progress made across the club both on and off the field**

- Dennis gave us a background on his involvement in Rugby League and how he came to the Titans.

- He also sees pockets within the club that are Best in Class in Sports Administration, as well as a real resilience overall within the club.

- The core value that Mal Meninga has identified that the club is aligned to is “Resilience”.

- Mal has come in to allow Garth to purely focus on coaching the team.

- Michael Westlake has been appointed as the club’s new “Brand Strategy Manager”. This role will place an emphasis on telling the story of the club, and how the story is told.

- Dennis outlined plans for the Oxenford Community Club (Leagues Club). The purpose of this project is to help fireproof the club and also to support the Oxenford area. Oxenford was chosen as the site ahead of other parts of the Gold Coast since it had been identified as an area lacking this type of facility, which gives the project the best chance of success. Its purpose is not to be a pre and post home match venue for 11 or 12 days a year, but rather a destination 7 days a week throughout the whole year.

- Dennis is committed to ensure the success of the Titans as there will be no more Gold Coast teams in the NRL if we don’t succeed, he is confident in the goal we are aiming to achieve – a Gold Coast club fully equipped to be sustainable and successful for the long term.

- It was mentioned that new CEO Steve Mitchell has been in the office over the past few weeks getting involved ahead of his formal commencement in the role on Monday 11 February 2019.

- It was confirmed that the club made a small profit last year.

- Dennis also spoke about the change in training staff at the club. Dan Ferris is setting a great standard. He now has the resources he needs and wants to be here with his pre-existing links to the region.

➤ **Formal introduction to Membership and Group Ticketing Coordinator Liam Faithful**

- Focus on Group Ticketing (targeting local businesses, JRL, social, community groups and junior non-profit organisations), looking at 20+ people.
- In 2019, we aim to attract larger groups to games and build exposure for the club.
- The Titans have led the NRL in this space. We have the highest number of group tickets sold of any club during 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- Large groups can access one of a variety of different game day experiences (on-field etc) as part of the ticket package they purchase.
- Alliance representatives are urged to think of how our personal networks (friends, family, work colleagues etc) can be utilised to introduce potential groups to the options available through these packages. Liam can follow up with any potential groups that might be interested.
- Discounts of between 10 - 20 percent are available for group ticket packages (discount available depends on the size of the group). Packages also include merchandise.

➤ **2019 Membership update/trial and home game ticketing**

- Currently over 5000 members YTD (at the bottom of the NRL). Relative to the fan base size, a realistic goal that Chris is aiming for is around 8000 (underlying membership figure which does not include season-pass entitlements for sponsors and other groups).
- Pre-season marketing campaign with Mal Meninga is kicking off in mid-February which should have some good returns in terms of boosting member numbers.
- Cowboys trial will be a game for fringe NRL players to stretch them and expose them to first-grade level.
- For the Broncos trial at Robina, people can park in areas surrounding the stadium if the attendance is under 7500 (no traffic management plan in place). At this stage the capacity of tickets sold for that match will be 7500.
- Home game tickets go on sale to the general public on Monday 18 February 2019
- Members pre-sale will be from Monday 11 February 2019

➤ **Update on progress made to address the five key club issues identified by the Members Alliance. These identified issues were:**

1. Food, drinks and entertainment offerings to enhance the match-day experience

- It is now a distinct possibility that some grassed areas of land around Cbus Super Stadium will be able to be opened up for food trucks etc in conjunction with Stadium Management.
- The club has been working with Cbus Super Stadium on the likelihood of moving the Members' Bar to the Goal Line Bar (north-west corner). Following the Members' Round match vs Melbourne Storm, there was a lot of positive feedback from members after the Members' Bar was moved to the Goal Line Bar for that match. As such, it has been identified as a perfect area for post-match functions/mingling with guests.
- At the same time, the club has also been working with the Stadium on the likelihood of the existing Members' Bar being opened before the gates open, while at the same time being opened to all patrons. It is intended to be a venue for people to go and enjoy festivities pre-game. This change has been identified as a potential opportunity for the club to entice non-members to engage more with club and the existing membership base on match days.

Other discussion from the Member Alliance representatives in relation to this topic included:

- Entertainment options were discussed, including elements of the BBL experience (interaction/engagement) for the kids during the game. It was identified that the Brisbane Heat use tools such as clappers handed outside the stadium, horns and "fire-up" messages on the big screen quite effectively to increase buzz at their fixtures. A point was made to follow this up with the Titans Event Operations Department.
- The question was discussed: How do we engage the crowd to "chant" and provide more vocal support to the team? The potential of a new Game Day Announcer that fires the crowd up was discussed, and the point was raised that Titans fans can be too polite/shy to make noise and create a rowdier atmosphere on game day. Alliance representatives agreed that the membership base may need to take responsibility and encourage those in close vicinity to fire-up and cheer proudly during games.
- A full confirmed list of curtain-raiser games is not yet available. Intrust Super Cup matches are an obvious option for curtain-raisers, however a barrier exists to getting these fixtures to be played before Titans matches due to those club's home games at their local grounds being revenue-raisers for their clubs. This year there will be another Legends game prior to the Broncos match, NRL Touch Football Premiership games, Titans Elite Development Squad matches etc. Alliance representatives agree that getting more high schools from the Titan's catchment area involved in curtain-raiser matches would be attractive for attendees to watch. However a key barrier to this was that most school-team players already had commitments playing for their own local clubs on weekends. The fact that there are three Friday 6pm games also means that those timeslots don't lend themselves to having curtain raisers.

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- The question was discussed: How we can get more players engaging with the fans? Titans Alumni doing more fan engagement and interacting with members was considered a possible effective option in this space. This solution would ease the load that is placed on inactive players. Furthermore, Alumni engaging with kids' post-game may also trigger word-of-mouth promotional activity.
- The Alliance believes that there should be a focus on member competitions and prizes towards the children's demographic, such as best-dressed during themed rounds etc.

2. Parking options

- The parking options adjacent to the Riverwalk Place won't be in place for the club to utilise for the entire season due to the 6pm Friday matches. As such, we will not take over the operation and selling of spaces within this car-park. Instead, the club will actively promote this option for members and fans to buy into for relevant games. The Membership Department will continue to work on parking options for future. The best chance is to work with the State Government through the Stadium Report.
- An alternative to parking at or near the stadium is to look at options for member exclusive park and ride from multiple locations. This could involve a member only bus travelling to and from Firth Park or potentially from the Boowaggan Road parking precinct which could be re-opened as a member only park and ride location (the Gold Coast Suns currently operate game-day shuttle from Boowaggan Road, and it used to be operational in the early years of the club for Titans matches).

3. Team song

- ❖ The song we liked has hit a roadblock and will be revisited. The reality is that we need to use an existing tune. This option is not dead, however it needs reworking and will require more resources applied to it by the club to make it happen. Songs that have worked best (e.g. Sharks) are burnt in brains with a pre-existing well-known tune and have become quite catchy for fans to enjoy as a result.

4. Post-match space or venue for members

- ❖ The moving of the Members' Bar to the Goal Line Bar (as previously discussed) has unanimous support among Members Alliance. The Goal Line Bar location has perfect line of sight to watch the game and can act as a membership promotional tool – due to all spectators in the stadium being able to see the Members' Bar and the exclusive benefit that members will get by being able to access that area.
- ❖ Post-match events for members would be more easily arranged in the Members' Bar in this location with both the proximity to the dressing sheds and the extra space in the bar which would be more conducive to be used for these purposes.

Other discussion from the Member Alliance representatives in relation to this topic included:

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- None of the Members Alliance representatives were concerned if there is a limit on what alcohol can be purchased in the Members' Bar when it's moved to the Corner Bar. The one allowable bar on match days that will sell full-strength beers under the liquor licence will remain the North East Bar (original Members' Bar location), so it is likely that mid-strength beers will be the strongest beers available in the new Members' Bar location.
- It was agreed that having member's pricing available in the bars and concession stands would be ideal. It was also acknowledged though that having these entitlements is out of the club's hands due to licensing agreements with Stadium catering suppliers. Discussions with caterers to introduce these member discounts in the past have not resulted in achieving this outcome. Despite this, Stadium stakeholders are open to working with us to provide member-only incentives on game day where possible.
- Members Alliance representatives agree that the current Members' Bar can get a bit crowded and it is also obviously not possible to watch live action from current location.

5. Enhanced awareness of the positive stories and developments emanating from the club (controlling the public narrative that is often dictated by the media)

- ❖ The Appointment of Michael Westlake, Brand Strategy Manager, will greatly help the club to achieve this objective.
- ❖ There will be a story broadcast on the *Compass* (ABC) program around our Disability Team. It is a real feel-good story that will make people aware of our work in the community.
- ❖ The Alliance representatives are encouraged to like and share good news content from and about the club on Facebook and Twitter to get stories out. Engaging the most-recently signed-on members in this way will help to foster the perception that this club is doing positive things from both a football and wider sense.
- ❖ The club is desperate to grow and develop Women's Rugby League. This would have a hugely positive impact on the club and open up a lot more opportunity to grow the club within its own catchment area by engaging with more people.

➤ **Early suggestions and feedback for 2020 Membership Program**

- Members Alliance representatives suggested that the club should:
 - Continue loyalty events. Movie screenings and Trivia Night were well received in 2018.
 - Continue with the concept of the Christmas Party at Parkwood Village (which was done for the first time at the end of 2018).
- The Alliance representatives also think that having an exclusive Member's Polo is a good way to allow members to be visually unique both at matches and in the community.

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- There was also an agreement that as a group we should keep encouraging friends and family that are members to purchase as a Member's Polo as it improves the prominence of membership position
- It was suggested that a Titans second-team membership package might be worth considering. Barriers to this were highlighted in further discussion including not wanting to cannibalise match-day revenue for the club or compromise other teams' ability to sell membership to away fans.
 - In line with this idea, it was floated that existing packages be used to cater for away fans which encourage them to come back a second time to support the Titans when their 1st team isn't playing – i.e. Buy a Titans Club Membership with two tickets. Use one ticket to watch the team you support, and the other ticket to support the Titans in another match.
- **Open floor – Alliance representatives can raise any other thoughts, ideas, feedback or suggestions so the club can take them on board**
- It was acknowledged as an improved outcome compared to recent years that the bulk of merchandise has hit retail shelves early – assisted by commitment from Titans sponsors
- It was asked whether the White Ribbon jerseys will be available for adults this year
 - Chris has checked on this post-meeting and confirmed with the commercial team that they are only available in junior sizing since apparel with gambling sponsorship cannot be sold to minors.
- There was widespread support amongst the Alliance for having future "Retro" Jerseys showcase both the original design and colours of previous Gold Coast rugby league clubs the Chargers, Seagulls or Giants (i.e. exact copies of those designs).
 - By extension to this point, there was also support in general for the club bringing the heritage of Gold Coast rugby league back so that we recognise the entire history, including pre-2007.
 - It was also acknowledged that Mal Meninga is a key driver in achieving this with the work he has already undertaken.
- **Meeting wrap-up**
- Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday 26 March (Alliance Meeting No.5).