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## **Junior Soccer to Choose Respect in the South West**

The Choose Respect Initiative will be implemented by the Country Coastal Junior Soccer Association this season with coaches, players and spectators being encouraged to treat others with 'care and consideration'.

The Country Coastal Junior Soccer Association voted to adopt Choose Respect in early March and they will commence the roll out of the Initiative this season, at the end of April.

The CCJSA is the body that coordinates junior soccer in the greater Bunbury region and includes clubs in Bunbury, Harvey, Australind, Eaton, Burekup, Collie and Blackwood.



Linesman wear the Choose Respect vests during a Junior Soccer game in Australind.

Former president of the Australind Junior Soccer Club Clark Edmeades had been looking for something that would help the sport to discourage inappropriate behaviour and encourage a level of respect to develop between players, referees, coaches and parents.

After hearing about how the Choose Respect Initiative was working in schools Clark decided it could be just what the junior soccer association was looking for.

“With local young people learning about Choose Respect at school I thought this would be a good way for sports associations, such as the CCJSA, to reinforce the message while introducing a code of behaviour which could easily be applied across all the clubs.

“Over the more recent years we had seen a decrease in the levels of respect towards linespeople and coaches, and between players in the clubs - we wanted to do something about it.

“Junior soccer is about participation, learning new skills and working in a team - the focus shouldn't be on winning alone.

“I think the Choose Respect code of behaviour will help us to reinforce that message.”

Clark said that they would start implementing Choose Respect at the start of this season.

“The clubs have already started an education campaign with the coaches,” Clark said.

“Choose Respect banners will be hung around the grounds and the linespeople will wear the Choose Respect bibs as a reminder to everyone involved to ‘Choose Respect’ and consider others.”

Choose Respect Managing Director, Mr Gary Butcher said, “This is the first time we will be rolling out Choose Respect across a whole sporting association.”

“I think it will work really well and I'm keen to see what the reaction is from team members and spectators.”

It is great timing for the Australind Junior Soccer Club with Australind on its way to becoming a Choose Respect community.

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