

FFWPU Australia's Very First Sports Festival in Belgrave Heights

William Saver
September 25, 2016



On the 23rd – 25th of September 2016 over seventy participants of different ages, from across three Australian states and abroad gathered together in the leafy green outer Melbourne suburb of Belgrave Heights to participate in what was FFWPU Australia's very first sports festival.

The weekend kicked off in an informal manner with participants arriving sporadically throughout the Friday afternoon. This provided the participants the opportunity to spend the afternoon catching up with their friends from different communities. In the evening the participants enthusiastically took part in various icebreaker games facilitated by Jessica Greenall and Sarah Boyd. These activities helped set the tone for the weekend, competition was fierce yet a spirit of encouragement and inclusion was also evident throughout the evening.



Saturday morning was spent playing volleyball, netball and ultimate Frisbee in teams which consisted of a mixture of young and old male and female participants from different communities around Australia and abroad. This allowed participants the opportunity to get to know people from other communities and provided a space to further strengthen existing friendships.

In the afternoon the flame of interstate rivalry was fanned when teams consisting of participants from NSW and VIC played off in a much anticipated soccer match. Two games, one male and one female were played simultaneously with the VIC male team and the female NSW team taking the honours in their respective games. In the late afternoon the ladies once again did battle, in another grudge match between NSW and VIC, this time in the netball. All those dedicated hours of practise performed by the NSW team in the lead up to the game showed, as NSW performed like a well-oiled machine in their comprehensive win over the VIC team.



After a long hard day of sports, the evening was filled again with fun of a different kind. Saturday evening featured an exciting night of trivia, hosted by Julia McInerheney. Participants of all ages were able to contribute to their team's success by answering various age and genre specific questions. In the end team eight narrowly seized victory after being chased late in the final round by team five.



Sunday's activities took a different pace. After youth service, which featured a profound message about letting your inner light shine from Pierre Moreau, thirty-two hot shot table tennis aficionados entered into a knockout tournament to determine who was the best of the best. As the tournament drew closer to its final stages, competition became intense with it all culminating in a duel between the experienced tried

and true defensive king Mr. Arai, and a young, talented and mentally tough challenger who was less than half the age of Mr. Arai, Josh McInerheney. Over the course of the three set match the number of spectators grew rapidly until nearly all of the attendees of both the Sports Fest and Sunday service were spectating the epic finale, creating a fever pitch atmosphere. After many intense rallies the match was eventually won by Josh. I'd also like to make a special mention to the preliminary finalists James Robertson and Yves Moreau who performed admirably and narrowly missed out on the finale.

After lunch the remainder of the daylight hours were spent in an epic game of Capture the Flag in the muddy terrain rife with hazards that was the lower half of the Belgrave Heights property. Teams tapped into tribal warfare vibes by showing their allegiances by covering their faces in fearsome war paint....okay, it was actually just kindergarten paint. The afternoon of strategic chaos was led amongst many others by the cinematographer and cameraman Sam Orman from Connecticut, who led multiple attacks in an attempt to capture the flag and free captured prisoners. Unfortunately, his attacks did not amount to either goal being achieved, but his actions inspired his comrades to leave their fears behind and follow his lead to sacrifice oneself for the greater good. Such was the helter-skelter nature of the game that both Lucas and Matt inadvertently decided to run off the cliff and fall into a muddy cesspit in an attempt to free the captured prisoners and escape being captured themselves. At the end of the afternoon, when a truce was finally called, the participants walked off the oval a great deal muddier but full of lively stories which were shared over dinner.

The final evening of the Sports Fest wrapped up with the presentation of awards for the winning teams in the interstate competitions and various individual prizes awarded for excellence, sportsmanship and effort amongst other things. The night concluded with various board game like activities which allowed participants to engage in healthy competition until the very end, albeit in a less physically strenuous form.

All in all, the vast majority of participants had a fun filled weekend and left Belgrave Heights full of fond memories. It was a great occasion for community members of all ages and generations to be involved, either as a spectator or as a player, in a combination of competitive and social sports and activities. Such a rich experience would not have been possible without the ongoing efforts of a host of valued contributors who helped prepare the Belgrave Heights property, clean the property and leave it in a pristine state, prepare meals, organise, coordinate, and officiate during individual activities, and put everything together to make it a great weekend. Thank you to all those individuals for their contributions. The Sports Fest would not have been as much of a success without each of your contributions. Let us also appreciate the support of the ever present, ever supporting Heavenly Parent who blessed us over the weekend with beautiful weather across all three days. Hopefully together we can make the Sport Fest be even better next year.