

## *Looking back at 2019...*

It's hard to believe that another year of programming has come to an end. We finished 2018 by undertaking extensive reviews and feedback sessions, and it's been great to see some ideas from those sessions come to life. Most notably, we have trialled our Buddy Program, and ran our first ever ski trip. We are again in the process of seeking feedback from our members and families, and look forward to having those ideas shape what is to come in 2020.

Here's a snapshot of what happened in 2019...

## Programs and Participation Opportunities

### *Still going strong:* Maccabi Dolphins



The Maccabi Dolphins basketball team is still going strong, with weekly training being well-attended by members. The team is coached by a

fantastic crew of coaches and volunteers, and this year we have loved being joined by young leaders from the Maccabi and wider community.

We would especially like to thank head coaches Barb Bejer and Dave Chester, and assistants Jess Pila and Charlie Beaconsfield.

### *Making a splash:* weekly swimming



The Maccabi Swimming Club runs training every Sunday morning for their swimmers. The All Abilities swimmers

train alongside the rest of the club and have a team in the annual Swimathon, ensuring that our athletes are able to experience everything the club has to offer.

The program is run by head coach Alexia Keats and assistant coaches Jamie Zaidenberg, Racheli Shnider and Ben Simkiss

### *Social fun:* Shmooze and Groove



Our Shmooze and Groove program runs fortnightly on Sunday afternoons and gives members a chance to catch up in an informal setting. Normally our shmoozers head outside for a

walk or roll around the neighbourhood. If the weather is unwalkable, then the group still meets indoors, to provide a regular social opportunity.

### *Feel the music:* dance programs



This year saw two different dance programs being run by two different – yet equally capable – instructors. Our first dance program for the year was

run by Jodi Block, and Aimee Raitman ran the second. Dance is always a popular addition to our calendar and we look forward to moving and shaking more in 2020.

### *Annual favourite: table tennis*



Table tennis was back on the calendar this year, with our favourite coaches Ben Rychter and Ken Dawber yet again taking the lead.

Block programs like table tennis give members the opportunity to brush up on their skills – or try something new.

### *Strike out: tenpin bowling*



Over 20 All Abilities members headed to Zone Bowling for our annual tenpin bowling afternoon. There was a fantastic sense of camaraderie, with members encouraging each other and sharing tips and techniques.

### *Branching out: cricket*



The Maccabi AJAX Cricket Club invited All Abilities to join them for training. Co-hosted by Cricket Victoria, the training session was

incredibly inclusive and got everyone involved. Following the training session, the club provided a BBQ and our members had the opportunity to put their skills into practice.

### *Dive right in: opportunities with DDA*



A group of swimmers went snorkelling with Disabled Divers in summer. Everyone saw some amazing sea life, including a Banjo shark and a ray.

Head swimming coach Lex said, *"it's amazing where our programs can lead. The confidence gained by these members led them to share new experiences with their teammates... Everyone can't wait to go again!"*

### *Australia Day: swim at Mount Martha*



The Swimming Club headed to Mount Martha for the annual MMAD Australia Day Swim. The Club invited the All Abilities members along to share in

the day. The Club organised beach activities for our members and then hosted a barbecue for all Maccabi swimmers.

### *Down on the green: Lawn bowls*



The Maccabi and Armadale Bowls Clubs hosted an afternoon of lawn bowls for our members. For some it was a chance to perfect their technique, but for others it

was their first time trying the sport.

### *Sail away with me: Sailability*



The year kicked off with our first ever sailing day. We visited Sailability and members, parents and even staff all had fun getting out on the lake in their own boats.

Sailability offers additional support, volunteers and equipment to allow people of all abilities to participate in sailing.

### *MCG adventures: AFL visit*



Maccabi All Abilities and Access Inc. went to see Carlton v Melbourne at the MCG. It ended up being a very close game with a nail-biting fourth quarter.

With fans for both teams in our group there was a lot of cheering and excitement, but ultimately the Melbourne fans had a better afternoon!

## Spotlight on: New Opportunities

### *Making new friends:* Buddy program



This year we have run a pilot of our new Buddy Program. This program aims to promote healthy lifestyles and build social connections by connecting Maccabi All Abilities participants with buddies from the wider Maccabi Community with a shared interest in sports and recreation.

This program provides more avenues for our members to play a sport or engage in a recreational activity they may otherwise be unable to participate in. We are excited by this program and the potential opportunities it can offer to both members and buddies alike.

*"Buddies are really fun...we have a great time!"* (Participant)

*"Definitely get involved...it's about connecting through sport...developing friendships"* (Buddy)

*"It's the best thing since sliced bread"* (Parent of a participant)

### *Hitting the slopes:* Ski trip



Maccabi All Abilities and Flying Fox joined forces this year to run our inaugural ski trip. This joint initiative saw 18 young adults spend four days at Mount Buller skiing, tobogganing and making new friends.

*"...it felt more like a group of friends going on a trip than a deliberate attempt to provide equal opportunities to people who might need extra support. In my opinion this was the aim and it was well achieved..."* (Ski trip buddy)

*"...it was the highlight of his life..."* (Participant's parent)

## Staff, Students and Support

### *hello and goodbye:* new staff



This year we welcomed Cara Davies to the role of program support. Cara has a long history with Maccabi as an athlete and came to us with experience in the disability space through her

involvement with Flying Fox and Friendship Circle. She has been a fantastic addition to the team.

We also farewelled Alexia Keats from the office, however we've very glad that she has stayed on board as our head swim coach.

### *learning by doing:* student placements



This year we were lucky enough to have two student placements join us.

Both Peter and Caitlin were studying

Health Sciences / Health Promotion at Deakin University. Caitlin and Peter were enthusiastic, adaptable and willing to tackle any challenge we threw at them. We wish them both the best of luck with their future.

*Sharing their joy: Simcha support*



Simchas are always a time to celebrate, and we love it when people share their celebrations with us.

Several generous community members asked for donations to Maccabi All Abilities to mark their special occasions.

*With thanks: our amazing funders*



We are incredibly grateful, not only for our regular donors, but

also for the people who very generously directed their Charidy donations to Maccabi All Abilities. We recognise and appreciate their support and invaluable contribution.

**Special Thanks**

*Coaches and volunteers: we couldn't do it without you*



We are so lucky to have an incredibly dedicated team of coaches and volunteers who help ensure our All Abilities programs run smoothly. Our programs wouldn't be where they are today without support from our volunteers, and those from the wider Maccabi community.

*New gear: thanks BV!*



The Dolphins were lucky enough to receive new basketballs this year, courtesy of Basketball Victoria

*More than burgers: thanks Grill'd*



Maccabi All Abilities was one of the featured charities/causes at Grill'd Elsternwick in June.

We were delighted to be told that we came second!

**Collaboration and Learning**

*Board commitment: Maccabi Victoria*



This year the Maccabi Victoria Board adopted an Inclusion Commitment Statement. This outlines Maccabi's vision of creating a truly welcoming and inclusive community organisation. It also included a range of inclusive guidelines to be adopted more broadly.

*Key learning: National Sport Conference*



Shari presented at the recent National Disability Sport Conference, run as part of the National Sport Convention.

She spoke about the importance of sport in helping people with a disability build social, cultural and community ties.



## Jewish community: Services Guide



First created in 2015, the Jewish Disability Services Directory is a 'one stop shop' with details of all the Jewish community disability services.

Revised this year by our student Caitlin, the updated guide includes a broader range of information and contacts than previous copies.

You can access the guide [here](#).

## Future planning: DSR



plan and shaping their future focus.

We were invited to be part of a sector partner community consultation for Disability Sport and Recreation to assist them in reviewing their strategic

## School holidays: inclusive fun



running a very full day of activities.

We partnered with Jewish Care to run a sport day as part of their Summer school holiday program. A big shout out to Alexia (swimming/ All Abilities), Ricki (soccer) and Nick (AFL) for

## Changing our game: upskilling



the aim of being able to design, (re)develop and deliver appropriate training materials around both inclusion and member protection.

Inclusion Coordinator Shari was the successful recipient of a Change Our Game scholarship grant. She will complete a certificate 4 in training and assessment, with

## Part of a team: AJAX involvement



All Abilities members were again involved in the AJAX footy clubs as volunteers (senior) and assistant coach (junior).

This year, the Club also presented its inaugural award in memory of Josh Ferenbach, z"l. An active participant in Maccabi All Abilities and a fantastic volunteer for the AJAX football club, the award celebrates Josh's passion and enthusiasm for sport. This year it was jointly awarded to Trevor Mills & Michael Konsky.

## Solid support network: JDN

The Jewish Disability Network is a collaboration between the disability services organisations in the Jewish community. It gives community organisations, such as Maccabi All Abilities, Access Inc., Flying Fox, Jewish Care and UJEB, the opportunity to support each other through sharing knowledge and experiences.

## Knowledge sharing: AAA Play



in valuable volunteer roles.

Maccabi All Abilities partnered with AAA Play for their May educational newsletter ("Let's Learn About..."). Being distributed during National Volunteer Week, we shared tips and case studies to encourage clubs to engage more people with a disability

## Something for everyone: Maccabi Life



community what we do. All Abilities members took on volunteer roles in the lead up to, and on the day, and also ran a skills session in conjunction with senior women's basketballers.

The inaugural Maccabi Life Expo provided our members with the chance to not only give back to the community but also show the

## More Community Connections

- Maccabi All Abilities were involved in a social inclusion 'co-lab' held at the Launchpad Hub. This session brought various stakeholders from the Jewish community together to discuss key issues around disability and inclusion that we are facing as a community.
- All Abilities staff have attended a number of communities of practice being run by the Department of Sport and Recreation. These have given sport organisations in the AAA space a chance to connect and undertake discussions and development specific to the sector.
- Second year Health students from Deakin visited Maccabi All Abilities for a professional practice field visit. It was a great opportunity to talk to the students about what is involved in community organisations.
- Inclusion Coordinator Shari ran a session at Sandy Beach Centre around the importance of sport for building life skills and finding your place in a community.

### *Looking ahead...*

Planning is already well underway for 2020 with many exciting things in the works. We are looking to roll out our buddy program more broadly, as well as explore new opportunities with sports such as tennis and AFL.

We would like to thank you for your support over the last 12 months and look forward to sharing the coming year with you.

*- Shari Cohen, All Abilities Inclusion Coordinator*

*Cara Davies, All Abilities Program Support*