



MEDIA RELEASE – MARCH 2021

Return of championships to help fire brigade recruitment

In his 50 years as coach of the Springhurst Fire Brigade championship team, Kevin Atteridge has seen as many success stories off the field as on it.

While the championships help brigade volunteers and juniors to hone their skills, they also serve as a volunteer recruitment tool.

The return of CFA / VFBV state championships at Mooroopna after a COVID-forced hiatus in 2020 has been good news for the volunteer movement.

“I’ve been doing this for over 50 years and I look back at the amount of people who’ve come through the junior championships who are now holding positions with Fire Rescue Victoria, police or volunteering with their local brigade,” Mr Atteridge said. “They still speak highly of Springhurst and what they got out of the brigade and the championships.”

This year Springhurst had three senior and two junior teams competing, a similar number to previous years.

“I’m rapt in the numbers and really happy the championships were back,” Mr Atteridge said. “We won’t get everyone in the junior competition to become a senior and train to become a volunteer firefighter, but we’ll get a proportion which is important for a small rural area.

“If you can get a junior involved, you can get mum and dad or boyfriends and girlfriends. That’s how we’ve done it for years.”

Springhurst is a strong brigade with 32 operational members and more than 100 members, including helpers behind the scenes.

Mr Atteridge said the championships bring the community together. “We’re only a small town, so it’s a good thing to get together. It’s very much social but when we started, I said do we want to have fun or are we here to win and they all wanted to win, so we have to put the miles in.”

The story is the same at nearby Eldorado where captain Brian Bowman says the championships have inspired generations of new volunteer firefighters.

“We’ve had a lot of success with both junior and senior competitions but the biggest thing is gaining younger firefighters for the future, not only for us but for smaller brigades that feed their juniors into our teams. They’re a success story that way.”

The brigade is well positioned with about 40 active members.

Both volunteer veterans said they were pleased the championships could be revived this year to ensure their long-term viability.

“We’ve been working hard to make sure it goes ahead,” Mr Bowman said.

For the first time, all CFA / VFBV State Championship events were held at the same venue at Mooroopna Recreation Reserve on consecutive weekends, with protocols in place to ensure the events are run in a COVID safe and child safe manner. The Junior Urban Championships were held on Saturday and Sunday March 20-21, and the Senior Urban, and Senior and Junior Rural Championships on March 27-28.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the championships were not open to spectators.

Volunteer Fire Brigades (VFBV) CEO Adam Barnett said championship events are an important tradition and part of the volunteer commitment to firefighter safety. “They play an important role in brigade discipline and morale as well as providing a terrific opportunity for members and families to come together to celebrate the incredible work that our volunteers do for their communities throughout the year.”

Springhurst Senior Results

Springhurst B 1st, Division 2, Low Down Pump and Ladder
Springhurst A 1st, Division 1, Tanker – Priming, Pumping and Ladder
Springhurst C 4th, Division 3, Tanker – Priming, Pumping and Ladder
Springhurst C 4th, Division 3, Hydrant and Tanker
Springhurst B 2nd, Division 2, Tanker – Drawing Water from Tank

Division 2 Aggregate

Springhurst B 3rd

Senior Firefighter Sprint

1st Male, Connor Cryer, Springhurst Fire Brigade

Springhurst Junior Results

Springhurst A 1st Hose and Ladder 11-15 yrs
Springhurst A 3rd, Tanker drawing water from Tank 11-15 yrs
Springhurst A 1st, Tanker Priming Pumping and Ladder 11-15 yrs
Springhurst A 2nd, Hydrant and Tanker 11- 15 yrs

Springhurst B 3rd, Tanker drawing water from Tank 11-13 yrs
Springhurst B 2nd Tanker Priming Pumping and Ladder 11-13 yrs
Springhurst B 5th Low Down Pump and Ladder 11-13 yrs

11 – 15 years aggregate

Springhurst A 2nd

Champion Team

Springhurst A 3rd

Junior Firefighter Sprint

11-15 yrs Female, Emma Beattie – Springhurst Fire Brigade
11-15 yrs Male, Lachie Lewis – Springhurst Fire Brigade

Eldorado Senior Results

Eldorado A 2nd, Division 1, Low Down Pump & Ladder
Eldorado A 3rd, Division 1, Hose and Ladder
Eldorado A 3rd, Division 1, Tanker - Priming, Pumping & Ladder
Eldorado A 2nd, Division 1, Tanker Drawing Water from Tank

Division 1 Aggregate

Eldorado A 2nd

Eldorado Junior Results

Eldorado A 2nd, Low Down Pump and Ladder, 11-15 years
Eldorado A 3rd, Hose and Ladder, 11-15 years
Eldorado A 3rd, Tanker – Priming, Pumping and Ladder, 11-15 years
Eldorado A 3rd, Hydrant and Tanker, 11-15 years
Eldorado A 4th, Drawing Water from Tank, 11-15 years

11-15 years aggregate

Eldorado A 3rd