



True Sport

Cultural Education Initiative

FORRESTFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB NAIDOC ROUND CASE STUDY

WHY NAIDOC ROUND MATTERS

Forrestfield Football Club's NAIDOC Round is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the rich Aboriginal history, culture and contribution of First Nations people within our club and the wider community. The round is particularly meaningful to our club because of the strong connection between the Forrestfield area and Whadjuk Noongar Country, as well as the significant number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players, families and volunteers who are part of our football community.

In 2026, the number of First Nations participants across our club nearly doubled, with Aboriginal players making up close to 20% of our senior playing group—significantly higher than the national average. As a result, NAIDOC Week is more than a celebration; it is an opportunity to acknowledge the important role First Nations people play in shaping the identity and success of our club.

NAIDOC Week represents respect, recognition, education and connection. It provides an opportunity for our members to learn more about the history of the land on which we play, celebrate the achievements of First Nations people and strengthen relationships across our community.

Through our cultural inclusion program, we are committed to creating an environment where everyone feels valued, connected and proud of their culture and identity.

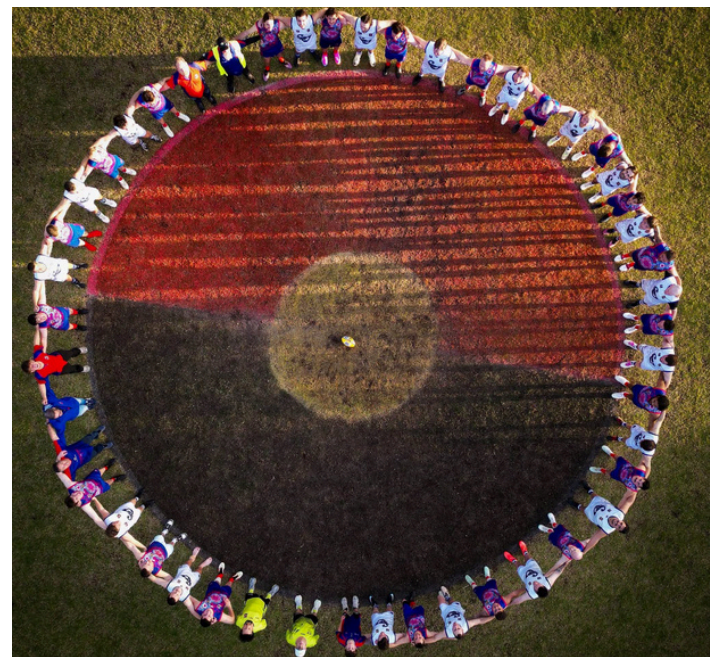


Image Credit: J. Donald Photography



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WHAT THE CLUB DOES

As part of our broader cultural inclusion program, Forrestfield Football Club has developed a range of initiatives to recognise and celebrate NAIDOC Week.

The centrepiece of our 2026 celebrations is the adoption of the name **Woondaming** during NAIDOC Week. Following an extensive consultation process involving a local Elder, the club's Cultural Coordinator Neil Winmar, the Forrestfield Football Club Committee, the Whadjuk Corporation, WA Football, the Perth Football League and the City of Kalamunda, the club will proudly be known as Woondaming across both senior and junior competitions from 3–12 July.

NAIDOC Round Fixture will provide players, members and spectators with meaningful opportunities to engage with and celebrate First Nations culture through:

- Welcome to Country
- Smoking Ceremony
- Traditional Dancing
- Didgeridoo Performance



Image Credit: Aussies in Action



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WHAT THE CLUB DOES

The club has also commissioned a unique Woondaming logo, designed by senior player and Cultural Coordinator Neil Winmar. The artwork tells the story of the local area and the club's connection to Country. The waterways represent Lesmurdie Falls and Whistlepipe Gully, the animals reflect the surrounding bushland, and the Rainbow Serpent acknowledges a significant Noongar cultural symbol. The central gathering circle represents the football club and its members, while the didgeridoo symbolises connection, culture and the next generation of First Nations players within our community.



Beyond NAIDOC Week celebrations, the club has introduced a Cultural Coordinator position and has commenced cultural awareness training for committee members. These sessions focus on Aboriginal history, reconciliation, cultural understanding and practical ways sporting clubs can foster inclusion and strengthen cultural connections.

Our cultural inclusion program has received support from Gambarra Building Supplies, the City of Kalamunda, Stephen Price MLA and WA Football.



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IMPACT ON THE CLUB

Celebrating NAIDOC Week has had a significant impact on the culture of our club.

The growth in First Nations participation across both our junior and senior programs has reinforced the importance of creating an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel recognised, respected and welcomed. Our cultural inclusion initiatives have helped strengthen relationships within the club and encouraged greater understanding and appreciation of First Nations culture among players, volunteers and supporters.

We have also seen increased engagement from members wanting to learn more about culture, history and reconciliation. The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive, with many recognising the initiative as a genuine and respectful effort to acknowledge local Aboriginal heritage and build stronger community connections.

Most importantly, these initiatives have contributed to creating a safer and more inclusive environment where First Nations people feel a sense of belonging and representation within the club.



Image Credit: Aussies in Action



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LEARNING AND GROWTH

Our NAIDOC Round journey has reinforced that meaningful recognition of First Nations culture requires listening, consultation and a willingness to learn.

One of the most valuable lessons has been understanding the importance of engaging with the right people and ensuring Aboriginal voices are at the centre of decision-making. The process of developing the name Woondaming highlighted the importance of respectful consultation and the responsibility that comes with sharing and celebrating local cultural history.

Through cultural awareness training and ongoing engagement with Elders and community representatives, our understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and the ongoing impacts of reconciliation has grown considerably. We have learned that even small actions can create meaningful opportunities for education, connection and understanding.

The depth of local Aboriginal history in the Forrestfield area has been particularly eye-opening for many members. Learning about places such as Maamba and the significance of Woondaming has strengthened our appreciation of the cultural heritage that exists within our own community.

The experience has also challenged us to think beyond a single round or event and consider how cultural inclusion can become part of everyday club life.



Image Credit: Aussies in Action

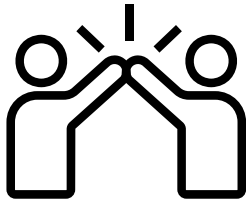


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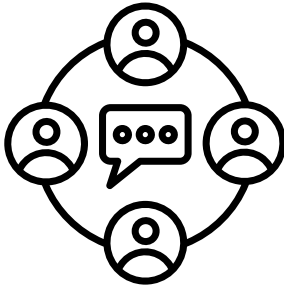
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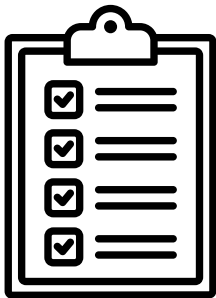
ADVICE FOR OTHER CLUBS



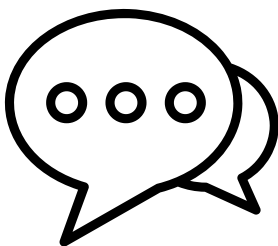
Our advice to clubs wanting to recognise NAIDOC Week for the first time is to start small, be genuine and focus on building relationships.



Engage with local Elders, First Nations community members and organisations, and create opportunities for First Nations people within your club to help shape ideas and influence decision-making. This could be through a dedicated cultural coordinator role, advisory group or other leadership opportunities.



Develop a simple plan or program with a few achievable goals and build on it each year. Meaningful change doesn't need to be complex, it's about creating lasting connections and a commitment to learning and inclusion.



If there is one thing we would encourage every club to do, it is to ensure First Nations voices are part of the conversation. The most successful initiatives are those that are guided by the people they are designed to celebrate and support.