



Steve 0:00

Jason Dooley, president of the Hepburn Football Netball Club, welcome to the Sports Community podcast.

Jason Dooley 0:07

Very happy to be here Steve.

Steve 0:09

Jason, I'm so excited that you are here because when I first heard about what your club had done, and it was probably 12 months ago, maybe a little bit more when I was talking to one of the competitors in your football netball league, the president of the spring bank football netball club, and he was telling me about this club that was going to run a raffle for truck 1000 tickets at \$1,000, that's a million dollar draw. I kinda thought, I actually don't think that's possible. And so for the last 12 months, I've been following what your club's done and been telling people quite regularly and the response has been the same. We don't think that's possible, but the reality is not only is it possible you've actually done this raffle, haven't you?

Jason Dooley 1:07

Yeah, It's done and dusted. It was drawn early last year, so almost 12 months ago.

Steve 1:15

Yeah, it's been amazing and in I guess so we just want to explore that from every which angle. So take us through a little bit of the history of where the idea for the truck raffle came from because it's not necessarily the club's first major major raffle is it?

Jason Dooley 1:36

No it's actually the fourth truck that the club has raffled. Back in the 90s the club came up with an idea to raffle a Kenworth T900. And did so, and did so successfully in fact that they've sold it out virtually in no time and had another 1200 people or something like that wanting to buy a ticket. The structure was a little bit different back then I think there was, might have been 2000 tickets at \$250 a ticket or something like that. I'm really not able to say how it all worked. They did another one virtually straight away. And yeah, so that was two and then a couple years later they want another one of the same trucks, a Kenworth T900 and it went alright as well. So the club's got a history, a successful history of running these sort of raffles that have got a higher price I suppose for a ticket. But you know, very good odds in a way that there was only 1000 tickets. You had a thousand to one chance of winning. The one we're currently raffling is a Harley and a boat which is 1500 tickets in that one. So you know without giving away too many of our secrets, we wouldn't want every sports club in Australia trying to jump on what we do, but you know we've built up a

database and all that sort of thing now, so we've pretty much got our captive audience and we just let them know what we're up to and they buy the tickets.

Steve 3:30

That a really interesting point I was actually going to explore that a little bit later on that you've actually got over time, you've build that database, build it up, build it up, and you've now got quite an audience outside of the immediate club supporters to draw on which is really important, because for those listeners around Australia and in fact around the world Hepburn's a country town outside of Melbourne in Victoria, so very small community. So you don't necessarily want to be drawing on that same community for all your fundraising. So this is a great way of getting outside your community Jason.

Jason Dooley 4:14

Yeah, absolutely. You just can't keep hitting the same people up for the dollars year after year after year and season after season. It's a good way to bring some money from outside.

Steve 4:28

So the truck itself, if we kind of looking at the raffle design, and I'll ask also in the same question, what are the other prizes that you had with the truck, but how important was the fact that it was a truck, and a significant truck, and it was a special edition truck as well. So how significant was the prize, how relevant was the prize in your ability to sell tickets at the value of \$1,000?

Jason Dooley 5:00

It was the only truck that would have been possible to do this raffle. So Kenworth released a limited edition legend 900 so, the same truck that we raffled back in the 90s but that's a reproduction obviously of that. They hadn't made 'em since I think maybe 97 something like that and the trucks themselves probably one of the most legendary in the transport industry. Lots and lots of them still on the road and there's not many get retired, they either get rebirthed once they've sort of worn out, or they just keep going, they're that legendary. Hence the name the legend 900. Kenworth released a legend 950 which is a very similar truck about five years ago, and I sort of always knew that with the success of that, that they would do a legend 900 which was a great tie-in for us considering the truck's the same truck that we raffled years ago. We pretty much had our money saved up, and we were waiting for the truck to be released and there was a specific ordering day. You had to order on, there was only one day that they were taking orders. You had to order that day and you had to pay your deposit that day to secure one to be built. So the truck was ordered and then we had to obviously wait for it to be built as well. Logistics around that I think it was about, it was close to 12 months for us to take our turn for our vehicle to be built. And you know the raffle sort of kicked off, probably just before it went into production I think.

Steve 7:20

So just going back to the nuts and bolts of running a raffle of this magnitude. Obviously, you had to get a license to do a raffle of this size?

Jason Dooley 7:34

Absolutely. Yep. So anything over \$5000, you've got to get a license for, so you just go through the process with Victorian gambling licensing commission, you just got through that with them.

Steve 7:53

Was there reporting requirements at the back end, did you have to report on the money?

Jason Dooley 8:00

You've got to you've got to report monthly, and everything's going to balance monthly as well so you know it's virtually a full time job for someone to run a raffle like this and keep everything you know, aboveboard and transparent because the transparency of the raffle and the integrity of it is absolutely paramount for people to consider shelling out \$1000 for a ticket.

Steve 8:34

Unquestionably, and that concept of it's almost a full time job leads me to beautifully to my next question was, how did you allocate the work? Did you create a special subcommittee or was the work allocated and overseen and marketed etc.

Jason Dooley 8:57

We just had a volunteer who was retired. Actually my aunty by chance. She had a background in sort of professional clerical work and that sort of thing, and also in design she did a lot of it, designed the flyers and our raffle tickets and all that sort of stuff as well as sending out the orders as they came in, balancing the books, reporting to the gambling commission and all that sort of thing.

Steve 9:35

So \$1,000 a ticket. Did you, again in the nuts and bolts of it, Did you only give the tickets out when the money came in? Or we were people creating syndicates, or were they paying off the tickets or how did the logistics of I guess...

Jason Dooley 9:58

Nah, there's no paying off tickets, if you want to buy a ticket either you round up the money or you save the money and buy a ticket. It's funny, the guy who actually won the truck is an invalid pensioner who, I asked that very question of his brother. The guy who won and had a stroke a few years back. He's an old truck driver, so he wasn't really comfortable speaking.

Jason Dooley 10:24

So he put his brother and I said, Oh, you know, we got the story's a pensioner and gee he must be good with his money to be able to save up and buy a ticket like that, and his brother said - he's unbelievable with money, he's very, you know, he does what needs to be done. He looks after himself. He does all of those sorts of things. But yeah, he's a great saver as well. And, and he saved and saved and saved and saved until he had the money and bought himself a ticket. And pretty much set himself up for the rest of his life.

Steve 11:00

Well, yeah, unquestionably.

How long, you talk about save and save and save. So that then implies that the raffle was open for, or at least announced, and open or tickets were for sale for a significant amount of time. How long did you have the tickets?

Jason Dooley 11:14

12 months. I'm pretty sure it was 12 months. We gave it 12 months. But, you know, always said that we would draw the raffle early should we sell it out. And, that's what happened. It was drawn, I think, a month for maybe six weeks early than the original draw date. So once again, you've got to go to the gambling commission and get that commission. To do to do that. But yeah, that's what we did. We sold it out early and drew it out early.

Steve 11:51

And doing it early has a number of benefits because effectively it sets up the next raffles kind of saying to people how you can't leave this to the last moment because they might sellout. And that's Yeah, that's what happened in this case. That's huge.

Jason Dooley 12:04

Yeah, that was good to sell it out early. Absolutely amazing.

Steve 12:11

I'm still struggling to believe it's even possible, which is why you're the first podcast back for the Sports Community podcast season this year. So I'll just get back to that. Did you have many ticket buyers that were syndicates? Like a lot of football clubs and sports clubs are full of younger people that wouldn't necessarily be able to afford \$1,000 tickets. Did they come together and group together in syndicates?

Jason Dooley 12:38

Yeah there was, absolutely. I couldn't tell you the data on that. How many but I'd say you know, there's probably less than 100 that was syndicates.

Steve 12:51

Wow, geez I would have thought it was the other way.

Now, Kenworth. There's a lot of if you google Hepburn truck raffle there's a lot of different articles on the internet about this actual raffle. And it appears that Kenworth were really got on board and supported the club in the raffle and what you were trying to do and gave you a lot of access to the truck. Is that how it actually played out?

Jason Dooley 13:21

Yeah, absolutely, you know, Kenworth were great. We promised them that you know, we would pay for the truck as soon as we possibly could. Which we did, and prior to us having paid for it, they took it to a couple of trucks shows for us and stuff like that and had it on display at Kenworth in Melbourne as well. So you know, we had access to go down and sell tickets at the yearly pallet sale and that sort of thing. Kenworth were very supportive so we couldn't fault them at all.

Steve 14:03

So, I mean, that's a good lesson for clubs, isn't it? That particularly where the prizes are significant that even if you do pay full price for the prize, I mean often clubs are trying to get the prizes donated, but you don't want to go the other way and go pay full price for the prize, but then how can you help us promote it? And it seems to be that you are able to access a really passionate group of people that are really interested in the prize and seem to really become a part of the fundraising project.

Jason Dooley 14:40

Yeah, well, you know, we've got a few guys on the committee, including myself that are in the transport industry, so you know, just I guess having your finger on the pulse is what sort of got us organised I supposed to have a go at doing this raffle. As far as Kenworth was concerned, you know, they fantastic but yeah, there's no special discounts or anything like that but they treated us like they would treat any customer paying, you know \$400,000 for a vehicle. Which, which generally is pretty good.

Steve 15:32

So you took, or you were selling tickets at the truck show, so roughly how many tickets do you think was sold within the normal club community and how many do you think were sold outside of the community?

Jason Dooley 15:49

Maybe 100 tickets sold locally. The rest of the tickets were sold all around Australia, even had a guy from New Zealand who bought a few tickets. So, yeah, all over the place really.

Steve 16:05

And that's so important because the true definition of fundraising is to reduce the cost or the reason we fundraise is to reduce the cost of participation to the participants and the members and so every time we go back to them, it's not actually reducing the cost. It's just charging them in a different way. So to get such a significant portion of the money from outside of the community is just a phenomenal fundraising event.

So how did you how did you sell the tickets, I notice that you've got the website which is www.hepburnfnclubraffle.com, which, if any of the listeners were to type that into the internet, you'll see your latest raffle there which is a Harley Davidson motorbike, and a fishing boat and some other great prizes. Where did most of the sales come from? Was it the truck shows? Was it the internet?

Jason Dooley 17:15

That's a bit of everything, you've just got to work hard at selling tickets. Yeah, you just can't expect to put on a raffle and, you know, it's just going to come to you, you know, you've got to be out on the road selling tickets, every weekend, you've got to find somewhere to go to sell tickets and you've got to find volunteers to do so. Some come from, well probably a lot in this raffle was word of mouth. Just with, you know, with the prize, and so forth. And there's advertising, we advertised in all the big truck magazines, and all that sort of thing and there's getting off your bum and get on the road and selling some tickets.

Steve 18:07

So when you say on the road, which is really timely I guess for a truck raffle, but where was some of the things that you were going to, you've already mentioned, or the places you were going to, you mentioned the truck shows, the Deniliquin truck show that came with Kenworth sales and Kenworth showrooms, but where were you going, on a weekly basis it sounds like? What were the different places you were going to sell the tickets or raise the profile or start the conversation.

Jason Dooley 18:38

Once again Steve, I don't want to give away all of our secrets.

Steve 18:45

Patty from Springbank won't be listening you know that don't you?

Jason Dooley 18:48

I'm not worried about Patty mate, he's alright.

But yeah, at the same time, you know, you don't want every man and his dog trying to raffle a Kenworth because they will fail, but you find something on somewhere, you know, there's something on somewhere where people are going to be and you just, you know you call book site and, and go and sit there and try and sell tickets.

Steve 19:20

I think what you just said was so accurate, that if most clubs went and tried to sell a Kenworth, they would fail and they would fail dismally but just listening to you there was a reason that you were selling a Kenworth, your club had a history of it, it has special significance, but you also had people in the game that could take you easily into inside Kenworth take you inside to the industry and so if you are recommending, not so much a truck raffle but a large scale raffle to other clubs. That'll be one of the tips that sounds like is that find something that's relevant to your committee, to your club and to your audience and link it in that way, don't just copy what other clubs have done. Would that be a good summary of what you've learned so far?

Jason Dooley 20:25

Yeah, perhaps, finding something that's going to work in your community but also something that's gotta to be appealing to the community as well. So you know, I'm just not sure that this type of thing, or you know, you change to a different brand of truck or you know, it's just not gonna work. This was a one of the million chance this raffle of coming off just because they built that that legend truck. The same truck as we'd already raffle back in 90s. All planets had to align for it to work and they did, and the raffle did work.

Steve 21:15

Yeah, absolutely and I guess to reinforce that point your Harley Davidson raffle that you're running you is currently open and people can buy tickets for via the website and that's significantly less money and significant lift tickets, isn't it?

Jason Dooley 21:31

So look, we generally run a raffle like that once a year, we've done all sorts of things over the years like spending sprees and world travel, cars, boats all that sort of thing, caravans, but at the moment, we're just doing the Harley and a Quintrex fishing boat, a couple of great prizes, there's about 70 odd 75 something like that thousand dollars worth of prizes in the raffle. And if we sell it out, and it's 100 bucks a ticket 1500 tickets at 100, if you sell it out after your costs, all that sort of stuff, you gotta pay GST on every ticket. There's so many things that you just don't realise until you're involved, we hope to make, if we sell it out, we hope to make \$50,000 or \$60,000 out of that which will be our bread and butter for the year, which means we don't have to keep hitting up our members year after year, function after function to raise the money.

Steve 22:56

And that's so important for clubs in this day and age, but I'm really interested, you said you did find somewhere to go each weekend and you book a spot and you'll sell the tickets or create the conversation which eventually sells the tickets. Did you get the players involved in that in that process at all, a lot of clubs frustrated by the playing group not participating in the fundraising activities a lot. Did you get much support from the playing group?

Jason Dooley 23:33

Mainly committee really. We really didn't get you know, too much involvement with the raffle from the players. But mainly committee and volunteers do that sort of legwork. And you know, there's always the occasional player who will help you out or whatever, you probably find that your committee and your older volunteers and that sort of thing, they're the people who perhaps their kids have grown up, they've got a little bit more time on their hands and not working full time. And probably a little bit more, I suppose community minded than young people can be these days. They're the people for us that, do that legwork. And the players do the legwork out on the ground.

Steve 24:26

Absolutely. And so, roughly, that pool of people that you had that you could draw on for those different activities, and that sort of thing. How many was that? Excluding the committee, was it a small group of 5, 10?

Jason Dooley 24:42

It was probably, 8 people that did most of that work, just sort of get getting in the car, and going up on the weekend even if it was just to the local Sunday market. As long as, if you get some where you can sell tickets if you don't go they're not going to sell themselves, you know? You've got to get out and about to make it successful, because if you don't just want that it doesn't matter what raffle you're running.

Steve 25:19

Well, I mean, that's certainly coming through loud and clear that it's a lot of work. I still am blown away that not only was it possible, but you sold out months in advance and drew the raffle early. Did it get much media I mean, I did read probably five or six different things on the internet but didn't get much media along the journey.

Jason Dooley 25:52

It probably didn't get a lot of, you know, TV coverage and all that sort of thing. But certainly, you know, print Radio and online media. There were there were certainly articles that were written and both in the online and in the print. Probably not a lot other than that, not a lot of radio I'd say.

Steve 26:21

In the show notes to this episode we'll put a lot of the five or six different links including the link to the club website so people can go and have a look at the raffle and buy a ticket because who doesn't want a Harley and who doesn't want a fishing boat?

Jason, you've been unbelievably generous with your time and I really, really appreciate it. So just before you go, again we're not talking about a truck raffle but if we're talking about a kind of a mega raffle type scenario, what would be some of the tips that you would kind of give to people that are contemplating this and make sure they've got in place before they go ahead because one of the things we don't want to do is invest a lot of time, and then for something to fail, so what would be some of the advice or tips that you would have for people considering it?

Jason Dooley 27:16

Firstly, I'd probably say, make sure that you've done your research and that you've got all of your legal stuff, sorted out and in place, it's paramount that you get all that sort of stuff done.

Secondly, probably transparency, be sure that people feel comfortable with what you're doing why you're doing it and that it is a legal and not illegal, a legal raffle. So it's about getting those permits, making sure those permit numbers are displayed on your tickets, and on your advertising sort of information and that sort of thing. And probably the most important thing is, don't think that you're gonna run a raffle and you know, there's \$100,000 raffle, and that's just gonna print the tickets and they're gonna sell itself, because it just doesn't happen. You got to get off your bum and you've got to get out and sell tickets. If you don't do that, you'll fail. And it's paramount that people are prepared to do the work to raise the money. Because if they're not it just doesn't work. So yeah, that's probably you know, three of the key things I reckon.

Steve 29:02

Well, I don't think there's anything more I can add to that. I think that's just unbelievably sage advice from a very experienced sports administrator and fundraiser. So I think, Jason, on that note, I'll say thank you very much for giving us your time sharing your insights. You didn't give away too much, so, and that was one of the conditions of the interview.

Jason Dooley 29:26

I might get hauled over the coals at the next committee meeting.

Steve 29:29

We will look to return the favour with our other interviews that we do through the year that the Hepburn Football Netball Club can get some ideas from.

Jason Dooley 29:37

No worries mate, I'd be only too happy to talk to you at any stage mate.
Thanks Steve.

Steve 29:41

Jason Dooley Hepburn Football Netball Club thank you so much for joining us at Sports Community podcast.

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