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## **YARRA JETS REFUSE TO KICK OTHER KIDS AROUND**

The Yarra Jets Football Club in Clifton Hill has made a significant commitment to reducing child labour by purchasing Jinta brand sports balls, which are Fairtrade certified.

Cheryl Kernot, Chair of the Fair Trade Association, said of the purchase: 'It's very encouraging to see Sports Clubs making the decision to use their purchasing power, however small, to drive social change. Fair trade sports balls are a wonderful way to show our children that the balls they enjoy using are not made by the low paid work of other children in countries where they don't have time to play. A great lesson for teachers, too!'

The reality is that many sports balls are made in developing countries under poor working conditions, often using child labour. However, the Fairtrade certification and labelling system guarantee that workers have good labour conditions, no child labour has been used, and money is put back into local communities.

Yarra Jets spokesperson Nick Petroulias said, 'The Yarra Jets wanted to be fair in our social dealings when we started the club two years ago. About 15% of our registrations go to kids on scholarship who we know won't be able to afford the cost of registration. But mostly, when we think of our juniors, we think that we don't want to kick a ball around that is made with slave labour by kids their age. We don't want our kids kicking other kids around.'

A Fairtrade accredited manufacturer in Pakistan makes all the Jinta sports balls and the purchase of these balls helps fund pre-school programs for kids, health care for families and micro-credit programs to help people in the local community set up their own enterprises.

The Yarra Jets have purchased several hundred Jinta balls over the last two years and have gotten two seasons out of them so far, with most easily lasting another season at least.

'This year's retro style is so in demand, they are regularly stolen on match days by visiting kids who can't resist them,' said Nick Petroulias.

'So we need to buy more. We'd prefer a new daggy design just to keep them. But we'd rather everyone else bought them, so we could keep ours.'

Up to five per cent from the sale of each Jinta sports ball goes to the Mt Theo Program, which helps disadvantaged young people improve their lives with the support of mentors and elders in the Warlpiri region of Central Australia. The money is used to fund sports programs for school-aged Warlpiri children, including sports equipment, uniforms and a regular sports carnival.

The Jinta sports balls are produced by ESP, a fashion and sports business that is dedicated to providing ethical alternatives to mainstream products. Nick Savaidis from Etiko says, 'We thought this would be a good way to not only help kids in developing countries, but also to help kids in Australia. We want to see more schools and sporting associations supporting Fairtrade and as a result helping make a difference to workers in third-world countries.'

ESP has won numerous state and national business awards including the 2008 Banksia Environmental Foundation Award for Business Sustainability and the 2008 Telstra Business Award – Social Responsibility (Victoria).

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