

FOOTBALL

After the death of one of their teammates, members of the Ringwood Spiders Football Club are uniting behind the family who lost their son to depression. Team manager GAVIN ROSS explains.

Team pulls together to help family

LAST November, the Ringwood Spiders experienced first hand the effects of depression when player Christian Ampt lost his battle to the debilitating illness in tragic circumstances.

Based at Jubilee Park in Ringwood, the Spiders provide football and recreation opportunities for people in Melbourne east, who have mild to medium intellectual disabilities.

Committee member Frank Sullivan said the club was a very close-knit bunch.

“They decided they would like to help Christian’s family, who also have their battles.”

Under the watchful eye of Ian Barnes, Ringwood football club senior head trainer, about 20 players and families lopped trees, pruned and weeded at the Ampt family property in Croydon. They also cleared rubbish, mowed the lawns and built a new back fence.

Maroondah councillors Ann Fraser and Natalie Thomas were among those to lend their support.

The council also had the rubbish and tree branches removed from the property the next day.

Tony Hart, Maroondah 2010 citizen of the year and Bakers Delight Heathmont owner, came by and cooked the team a barbecue lunch.

Mr Sullivan said it was a community effort and a great day for all.



United stand: The Ringwood Spiders supported the family of late teammate Christian Ampt at a gardening day.

“It just shows what can be achieved with a bit of teamwork, which is something we instil in our players.”

The football club and the council urge anyone suffering from depression to seek help. Being involved in community and positive experiences

is one way to reduce its effects.

Organisations such as beyondblue raise the profile of depression and are available to provide support.

Beyondblue spokesman and retired AFL player Nathan Thompson will be supporting the Spiders at their

jumper presentation evening later this month. The Spiders will also be announcing a perpetual trophy in Christian’s honour.

Details: www.beyondblue.org.au and www.ringwoodspiders.com