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IMB WOLLONGONG LIONS: Rounds 14 and 15.

ROUND 14

Premier Division Seniors

Wollongong Lions	7-13-55
St George	12-6-78

After a venue change and a change of date, we travelled to Mahoney Park (on a Sunday) to take on St George. Confidence was high after our victory over the Dragons earlier in the year. Unfortunately, we simply did not get going at all during the day, and let a great opportunity for a victory slip away. Having said that, our ball movement, was at times, the best that it has been all year, as we put together passages of play where we moved the ball from full back to centre half forward without kicking the ball. Disappointingly, we could not maintain possession for long enough periods of time to exert any real scoreboard pressure on the Dragons and we paid the price in the end. Shane Davis played excellently off a wing and provided plenty of hard run in both directions. Kenny Ewen-Chappell bobbed up for 3 goals whilst

dealing with a hard tag, whilst Aidan Riley, Dave Goodley and Paul Balding provided plenty of hard run off the half back line. It was also good to see Troy Bartlett returning to form across half forward. Still, there remains plenty of room for improvement in the coming weeks!!

First Division

Wollongong Lions	9-4-58
St George	14-13-97

The First Div boys were met with a somewhat surprisingly skilful St George side (winless until this week). Coupled with a number of late withdrawals due to the change of day, the challenge was always going to be a massive one for the boys. After a tight first term, the Dragons piled on 6 goals to none in the second term to establish an imposing 32-point lead at the main break. Admirably, our boys fought back in the third to take the honours for the quarter, kicking 4 goals to 2 to narrow the deficit to 21 points at the final change. To St George's credit, they came out full of running in the last quarter, and in the end thoroughly deserved the 39-point victory they came away with. Usual suspects Matty Brunton and Scott Hancock racked up a ton of the pill, with Brunts sneaking forward to kick 3 goals. Guy Bartlett continued his good form in the 2s, and will no doubt come into first grade calculations at the selection table this week, whilst Steve Rodgers and Christian Van Reede played their best games of the year. Next



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week the boys take on Pennant Hills, and with the return of a number of club superstars, the boys are primed to cause a major upset and secure their spot in First Division for next season!

Under 18s with Ross Picken

Wollongong Lions 5. 5 35
St George Dragons 21.12 138

We find out at 4.00pm Friday afternoon that the game's been moved to Sunday. Ruckman Jake Evans unavailable, Jack Mahoney promoted to Seniors, Michael Moss ill, Danny Perger suffering post 18th birthday syndrome and coach Siely committed to the 11s young talent Storm squad in Toronto. Looking good! In the absence of "The Seal", Boony was press ganged into taking the boys with the assistance of Mr Michael "just for" Love. We also had the services of Mason Thomson an U/15s Pigeon representative which gave us the grand total of 17 to take the field. Before the game Mason was given specific instructions that if things got a bit fractious on the field he was to stay right out of it. The boys started a bit slowly and the young Dragons, seething from their first round defeat at the hands of the young Lions, put on their running game and started to score through their powerful forward line. We were not winning the ball out of the centre and Boony and Lovey decided they needed a six-footer with attitude – enter the big red Ru. After a couple of

competitive rucks the young Dragons ruckman who has played Swans Reserves decided to lock horns with Rufus – bad move! The first person in to assist Rufus – you guessed it, Mason Thomson. This little encounter seemed to steel the boys and young guns Brendan Hogan and Nathan Kenny started to give us run from the centre ball up. However the quarter ended with the score 5.3 to 1.1 in favour of the Dragons. A lot of boys were playing out of position with centre Ryan Wells playing full back in an attempt to stop the Dragons scoring ability, FF Stephen Tibben also in the half back line with CHF Josh Mason playing CHB. With no bench and only 17 players the young Lions were put to the test in the second quarter with the young Dragons kicking 8 goals to our 1. At the long break we were down 13.6 to 2.3. The boys themselves were not happy and decided they were not going to lie down and came out in the third quarter and put it to the young Dragons who did not like our new intensity and we won the quarter 3.1 to 1.3. With the effort put in in the third quarter, the boys were spent and the fourth quarter saw the young Dragons kick 7 goals to nil and run out 103 point winners. Whilst the score indicates a thrashing, there were great efforts, which stand us in good stead for the future games. Rufus Picken did a great job in the ruck, BJ Hogan had the best game of his Lion's career, Mason Thomson settled well into 18s football and is definitely a future asset. Luke Rutter was steady and dominant all day especially presenting in our defensive fifty kick



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outs. Sandor Guggisberg was tough all day, Ryan Wells was dogged at the back and ably assisted by Stevey Tibben and Mark Mura. We were up against it from the start but never gave in. Gutsy effort fellas!

Best on ground: BJ Hogan, N Kenny, S Guggisberg, R Picken, M Thomson & L Rutter.

ROUND 15

Premier Division Seniors

Wollongong Lions **6-7-43**
Pennant Hills **15-15-105**

It was always going to be a tough challenge to overcome last year's premiers, especially considering the rich vein of form they have run themselves into over the past month. However, the early signs were very positive as we came out full of enthusiasm; running hard forward, and attacking the ball with a ferocity rarely seen this year. At quarter time we had established a 10 point lead, and had managed to keep Penno goalless. The second quarter was a tight and torrid affair until Penno managed to slot 3 late goals to open up an 11 point half-time lead. The less said about the second half the better really. Penno completely outplayed us and showed us how to transfer the ball from one end of the ground to the other. Importantly, we must learn how vital it is to make the most of our opportunities in front of goal if we are to

continue to improve in the coming weeks (and years). In the end, Penno were by far the better side on the day, however we can again take plenty of positives out of the match, and know that we can take on the best sides in the competition and match it with them. It is now important that we concentrate on 4 quarter efforts, and to maintain that Constant Relentless Pressure!!! Adam McConnochie continued his excellent season off half-back with another great captain's performance. Dave Goodley and Aidan Riley again gave him good support. Guy Bartlett returned to the team and was a revelation in the ruck, whilst young gun Jack Mahoney highlighted his huge potential with a pleasing effort. With just 3 rounds to go, we must ensure that we do not let the season just slip away, so get down to training and we'll finish the year off with a bang!!!

First Division

Wollongong Lions **13-7-85**
Pennant Hills **9-10-64**

The First Division boys finally caused the upset they had been threatening to pull off all season on the weekend. After Penno opened up proceedings with the first 3 goals, some shrewd tactical moves by Michael Love saw a total momentum shift occur, as we kicked 5 goals to finish the quarter 19 points in front. By half time the lead had ballooned to 31 points, and by three quarter time it had been extended to 35 points.



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When we kicked the first goal of the final quarter, the result looked like a forgone conclusion, but as we are sometimes prone to do, the boys managed to give everyone in the crowd a few nervous moments, as Penno got a little bit of momentum. Thankfully, a steadying goal from Daniel McClure took the wind out of the Penno sails, and we were able to steady to record a well deserved 21-point win. We had excellent contributors across the field in what was a very even team effort. Mitch Daly and Dave Gardner (goal of the year??) were excellent all day with their explosive running. Erin Franklin was at his best, whilst it was good to see Daniel 'Bert' McClure back on the field. Welcome back also to Chris Hally-Burton who returned after his European adventure. Well done boys!!!

Under 18s with Ross Picken

Wollongong Lions **7-6-48**
Pennant Hills **5-12-42**

This was a meeting of third versus fifth and the result could only affect Pennant Hills standing in the top five. In their first meeting Penno smacked the young lions by 100 points at Ern Holmes Oval, one of the small Sydney grounds coach Siely describes as a dartboard. With the young lions already qualifying for the finals series, Mark was using this game to find the best positions for his players to play in the finals. With Jack Mahoney once again playing seniors, it was decided to use the consistent Nathan

Kenny on the ball with Rufus Picken the other rover. Jake Evans won the initial ball up, Rufus ran it out, hand passed to Nathan, back to Rufus, back to Nathan, kick to Trent Hurst – goal! It seemed the Seal had once again been proven a genius! In fact the first quarter saw Trent kicking two of our three goals and the boys playing good pressure football. Penno's wayward kicking allowed the young lions to go to the first break leading 3.3. to 2.5. The second quarter once again saw the young lions continually pressuring the Penno backdoor game and moving the ball wide, something the young demons found difficult to counter. The boys kicked 2.2 to the Demons 0.3 giving them a 15 point lead at the long break. Mark stressed to boys that the young Demons would come out spitting chips in the third quarter and they would have to stand up and close down the Demon's running game. The quarter was intense with the Demons constantly entering our defensive fifty only to be repelled by some solid defence. In an arm wrestle Penno won the quarter 1.2 to 1.0 to reduce the deficit to 13 points going into the final quarter. The last quarter was once again a torrid affair with the young Demons determined to take victory. Early both sides managed a point each and then Penno kicked to unanswered goals to level the scores. Once again coach Siely makes the decisive move. Young Mark Mura who had been excellent in the back pocket and playing as a loose defender was moved up forward and with four minutes to go crumbed a loose ball and goaled to give us a six point lead. The next four



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minutes saw bodies from both sides being put on the line, but no further scoring. A gutsy win to the young lions, with the back six laying the foundations. Once again the fifteen year olds stood up to the rigours of 18s football, with Mark Mura outstanding at the back, BJ Hogan also strong. Nathan Kenny was busy and tough around the middle and Rufus performed well in unfamiliar positions. Taylor Bell and Brendon Potter were very solid and tough ably supported by Luke Rutter and Michael Moss. In the goal kicking department Trent Hurst nailed two early, Josh Mason two with singles to Wellsy, Simmo and Mura.

Best on Ground: Mark Mura, Brendon Potter, Michael Moss, Josh Haddan, Brendan Hogan & Taylor Bell.

Weekly Award Winners

Round 14

Seniors:

1. Shane 'Nollsy' Davis
2. Aidan 'Ferret' Riley

First Division

1. Guy Bartlett
2. Matt Brunton

Volunteer of the Week

Not Awarded

Round 15

Seniors:

1. David Goodley

2. Guy Barlett

First Division

1. Mitchell Daly
2. DJ Dave Gardner

Volunteer of the Week

Not Awarded

Lions News and Reviews

AFL NSW Raffle

Amazingly, 3 of the 14 prizes given out in the massive AFLNSW raffle were won by Lions players!! Well done to Doug Sweeney (SCG package), Ryan Woodward (signed Richmond jumper), and Scotty Dennis (signed Hawthorn jumper). Both Doug and Ryan's prizes came from weekly awards given out by the Committee.

In great news for the club, Scotty has donated his prize to the club to use as a fundraiser.

Unfortunately a signed Hawthorn jumper has dropped in value by 500% over the past 19 rounds, but with tragics such as Andrew 'Buddy' Hopkinson floating around the club, I'm sure this will be a valuable piece of merchandise for the club. Make sure you get over and thank/buy a beer Scotty next time you see him!!

Excess Canteen Stock

As mentioned in a previous edition, the club has a selection of excess stock to be sold off at cost



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