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IMB WOLLONGONG LIONS ROUND 5 NEWSLETTER 2008

SENIORS

Wollongong Lions	12.7 (79)
St George	17.4 (106)

A brilliant 3rd quarter saw us have 11 scoring shots to get within 2 points of the lead at the final change. However, a few wasted chances going forward when the momentum was well and truly in our favour was enough for St George to sneak over the line, albeit by a rather unflattering 27 points. Although another loss is hard to take, the boys got themselves into a winning position on the back of a good defensive effort in an otherwise very disappointing first half. To play only 1 ½ good quarters and still nearly knock off last year's runners up is heartening. However, more hard work is needed if we are to produce our best football often enough to win games.

In this vein I have to acknowledge Scott Dennis who has again shown why he was awarded 'Most Consistent' in the seniors last years. Scott showed up St George's star forward Peter Dugmore with his work rate and attack on the ball. Graeme Batty who seemed to thoroughly enjoy the challenge of his new role in defence brilliantly held Dugmore all night. Similarly,

Matt Adamson bounced back from an ordinary first half to end up just outside the awards, demonstrating his determination to make the transition to on-field leader. After an up and down start to the season, Brad Patterson had an excellent game across half back and in the midfield, using his creativity and foot skills to full effect in the 3rd quarter fight back. Brad was rewarded with team of the week selection in a back pocket despite professing that he's got no real idea what's going on down there. Tom Heath also had his best game for the Lions against his old club, as did Ricky Neels who booted 3 goals and more importantly, worked hard to set up goal scoring opportunities for team mates.

If we can produce four good quarters instead of one poor one, two average ones and a blinder, a bucket of wins are just around the corner. And no I didn't mention the fact that Troy Bartlett made the best again, I will stroke his ego when he kicks a bag!

ROUND 6 PREVIEW

This Saturday is a danger game if ever I've seen one. Balmain have put in a couple of good



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performances so far this year and will have targeted this as a must win game if they are to turn their season around. Similarly, a solid win against the Dockers is just what we need heading into the break. A win this week will hopefully allow us to leap frog Campbelltown on percentage who have a tough assignment against St George. That would keep us in touch with the Top 5 heading into a vital clash with traditional front-runners East Coast who have been shaken by our accountability in the past.

RESERVE GRADE

Wollongong Lions 9.9 (63)
St George 10.10 (70)

Needless to say I was wrong about the strength of the St George side. They came out and played in a much more competitive manner than we did, running a lot harder in both directions. There is no question that there is plenty of talent in the reserves, but the efforts they are putting in look like a team who is barely interested in the result of the game, let alone ensuring it ends up in their favour. From a spectator's point of view the Lions lacked intensity, which wasn't helped by a complete absence of any form of communication, outside of the good work by book ends Brad Ainsworth and Jared Nelson, who were clearly frustrated with their team mates. Communication is the key to any form of football, especially the brand that has been promoted right across the club by Jason Philp.

In the end it was inaccurate kicking that stopped the reserves recording what would have been a lucky win, registering 2 goals 4 in a frantic final term. The mystery is why this rise in energy levels was left till the game was almost over. This is a problem that needs to be addressed if the reserves are to start winning games of football. It's with this in mind that the best players list reads like a roll call of who had a crack. Nick Mitchell, Adam Patterson and Tim Robb were all solid in defence and were well supported by ruckman Guy Bartlett, who worked extremely hard on the ball. Pete Veerhuis put in a performance indicative of his reputation around the football club and Daniel Posch used the ball intelligently wherever he gathered it around the ground. An improved effort, rather than simply a win should become the focus heading into this weekend's game against the Dockers.

U18's

Wollongong Lions 15.10 (100)
St George Crows 7.10 (52)

The U18's had what turned out to be a very strange win against the Crows. The score line suggests a demolition and that was the case for 3 of the 4 quarters. They got out of the blocks extremely well, playing one of their best quarters for the year without really capitalising on the scoreboard. The performance in the second quarter is a complete mystery. Apparently the boys felt that a 31 point lead at the first break would be enough to get them home, completely



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undoing their good work. Reverting to what looked like a lazy, U14's style of football they were only spared the lead by some inaccurate kicking from the Crows. Thankfully, the second half was a much more resolute performance with the Lions forwards working hard and kicking straight to record their 3rd win from 4 starts.

For the Cubs Mal Picken continued his excellent goal kicking form in the ruck booting 3 majors, as did Trent Hurst who has capitalised on an excellent pre-season with some tenacious displays in the forward pocket. Steven Tibben has also been a revelation, not so much for his marking at full forward but the way he competes on the ground and creates opportunities for teammates. Little Richy Oehme snuck forward off the wing for 2 majors, as did the little mouth (and I'd like to think jive talking protégé) Ben Hyndes. The real stars on the day were senior players Paul Balding and Mitch Daly who worked hard to stop the bleeding in the second term. Mitch in particular was outstanding, working as hard around the ground as any under age footballer I've seen. Mitchell looks like a kid who is determined to get the best out of himself, which will hopefully lead to senior opportunities in the not to distant future. Oh and Grant Stylianou did what every U18 kid who loves the gym should do and palmed off as many opponents as he had possessions.

With just one point separating them from a perfect start to the season, the boys are looking forward to another tough assignment against a

Dockers side who will be desperate to record their first win for the season.

NOW FOR CAKE AND A CHAT WITH ...THE H-BOMMMMMMMBBBBB.

PROFILE: SAM JENNER

After booting a couple of quick goals then badly bruising my shoulder on the weekend against UNSW/ES I sat back with Loveshack (Michael Love), Sweeney and the Ressies bench and watched a young, vertically challenged man from Victoria fearlessly attack the footy. Seemingly always ending up on the bottom of packs in the backline. That man is none other than Sam "Runt shack" Jenner, one of the few boys from Campus East who is willing to sacrifice time away from his partying lifestyle to have a kick with the Lions. Sam was born in the original inland city of Australia...Goulburn, but spent most of his childhood in Colac Victoria, which is also called home by AFL stars Luke Hodge and Amon Bucannon. He attended boarding school in Ballarat where he gained the credible position of boarding house captain in his final year at the school though his close relationship with the boarding house masters daughter is believed to have helped. It's to be noted that after being appointed to this position he abruptly cut short this relationship.

Other major achievements whilst at school include marking up on Matt Rosa (now plays for



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West Coast) in his one and only 1st 18 match for the school and restricting the 'gun' midfielder to a respectable 45 kicks and a bag of goals for the game.

After leaving school Sammy moved to Western Australia to gain full time work and earn enough money to now receive Government payments for his entire time at university. It will be of interest to note that whilst playing reserve and first grade footy in Dongara (4 hours north of Perth) he was actually paid to play AFL and was considered an excellent tagger in the midfield for his club (WHAT A JOKE). This ultimately led to a best on ground performance in his teams Grand Final win during that season.

Sammy is now completing a commerce degree at UOW and has no future plans beyond going on exchange to Boulder, Colorado on a cultural/education/beer tour.

His prediction for dream team this year is Sam Fisher, even though he lost \$40 grand in value since the start of the season (amateur mistake). He bones Chris Tarrant and Alan Didak in the AFL and was bitterly disappointed that Adam "Vinnie" Patterson didn't take a massive hanger in his comeback game (coz he has sore glands). Finally for all those ladies out their chasing this illusive unit, his ultimate meal would be several schooners of VB and a pizza on the couch watching his favourite movie.... 'What woman Want' starring Mel Gibson.

I'm Harry saying "The latest taxation of pre-mixed spirits is a joke".

RACIAL/RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION

Given that the 2008 season has only just begun and the fact that already we have had to deal with two racial vilification cases, it is prudent that all clubs re-visit the Sydney AFL Racial & Religious Vilification Policy.

In summary it says: " No player/official/club member shall act towards or speak to any other person in a manner, or engage in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin".

Any player who is found guilty under this policy will be dealt with accordingly which could include a suspension or a requirement to attend an approved education program. Your assistance with this matter is most appreciated and if you have any queries please give me a call.

Regards, **Garry Burkinshaw**

Senior Football Operations Coordinator

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