

DETECTIVE BLOODHOUND REPORT

26th April 2006

It was a long week waiting for the Norwood game, after the disappointment of Encounter Bay and your Bloodhound arrived at Broadspectrum Oval in a bit of a pensive mood. How would we respond? The Reserves boys looked to be dominating their contest most of the day, with Lance Oswald on fire and Murray Hamblin, Kris Vanderloo and several others in good form, but again we just went down at the last minute. Too many points, not enough goals. So my mood wasn't much better when the main game started. Twenty minutes later it was. We made a great start, but we then seemed to keep making just enough errors to let Norwood back into the game.

In the end, another loss, but a much improved performance, although there's still plenty to work on with our skills and decision-making.

What did it tell us? We're not yet quick enough, we have some defensive problems and several of our senior players haven't yet hit their best form. Now you're probably going to get a bit tired of me talking about the journey we're making, but facts are facts. To illustrate this, take young Scott Bricknell. His form has been excellent, but nobody's really talking about him much, because he's just one of a large group of new players. The reality is that he's only 18 and has played 3 games of league football.

Each week provides questions, but it also provides a few answers and I think things are slowly starting to fall into place. Jason Porplyzia added enormously to our on-ball strength, Marc Dragicevic looked a lot better, Adrian Bonaddio and Ben Fisher continue to improve, Ryan O'Sullivan showed plenty, Charles Slattery gave us good run out of defence, including a great goal and Ash Wedding looked as if he'll be an asset up forward.

I suspect it will only take one win to start the ball rolling and Centrals at Elizabeth would be a good place to start.

Ever thought about watching training one night? The League and reserves train at Broadspectrum Oval Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights at 5.30pm. Tuesday is the main training night and there are always some regulars happy to have a chat about Westies.

Brydan Morgan has been hampered by playing with a fracture in his hand. Unfortunately the healing process hasn't gone well and as he needs a break from football, he is returning home to continue his football career.

Under 17's coach Wayne Slattery was certainly positive about the abilities of Hamish Hartlett when giving the runner-up award for the game against Norwood. Hamish, a member of the State Under 16 squad, is the younger brother of Adam, now with Carlton and is certainly one to watch. After such a big wrap for Hamish, how good is the player who got best-on-ground for us.

Under 19's coach Ben Coleman is also bringing his boys along nicely. The 19's got up in a close one against Norwood to maintain an unbeaten start to 2006, with plenty of talented juniors in the team. Aaron Fielke was best this week.

I'd back Nick Prokopec to kick a goal 9 times out of 10 from 40 metres out with no angle to worry about. If he missed the first one, he'd certainly kick the next. Or the next. Or the Next. Imagine how he felt after opening the Reserves game with 4 behinds from his first 4 shots. His first goal came from a wobbly grubber kick that just got through an open goal. My nerves would have been shot by that stage, but Nick calmly proceeded to slot the next six out of six.

Who would want to be a selector? Everybody, of course, but it's a bit tougher than it looks. Each week a different forward puts pressure on the selectors and they can only pick some of them. The Bloodhound has read and heard plenty of solutions. The aforementioned Mr Prokopec has put his hand up and Lance Oswald was excellent in the Reserves and would be getting closer. Murray Hamblin again showed out and keep an eye on Matthew Cragg-Sapsford who gave an impressive rucking display as well. Hopefully Matt Illman and Andrew Purchase will be available again, although David Piasente didn't appear after half-time with a calf injury.

The Bloodhound likes to keep an eye open for some of the less obvious happenings at a game. This week I thought I'd have a look at the training staff and I was a bit surprised at how much they do, I must say. One of my helpers managed to be a fly-on-the-wall for the day and I also kept an eye on proceedings from my secret vantage point. They were all there before we arrived and they were all still there after we left. They strap the teams, they massage the teams, they run water to the players in both games, they attends to injuries on the ground and in the rooms and they obviously don't get much time off. They're also there in varying numbers on each training night as well. Well done to Keera, Kelly, Ally, Catherine, Jenny, Lee, David, Chris and Rocco.

As far as some of the less obvious happenings are concerned, I noticed Assistant Head Trainer John attending to a youngster who'd taken a tumble from the Westies bunker and I also saw Head Trainer Lee jumping the fence to attend to a little girl who had been hit on the arm by a footy that cleared the fence after a Westies goal.

It's time the clock was fixed.

That was quick, The clock has been fixed!

From memory, Jimmy Wright kicked 10 goals against South Adelaide at the Adelaide Oval in 1958 as Westies kicked their record score of 33.23. Jim is still a regular at Milner Street and wore No 6 for most of his impressive West Adelaide career. 1983 Premiership player and All-Australian Craig Williams was another proud wearer of No 6. After an impressive first season, it was good to see current wearer Marc Dragicovic in good form for the Bloods last Saturday.

The early leaders in the hairstyle stakes were Kyle Archibald and Simon Munn, but the current leader is Ryan O'Sullivan. Looking at Luke Mensforth and Ben Grieger, it's obvious that Weed has decreed that a beard is to be feared if worn by the full-backs. I also hear that Ryan Borowski is still a runaway leader in the ear piercing stakes.