

Point Post

Round 11, 2016

Editorial

It was good to have Swans players Xavier Richards and Tyrone Leonardis at training and Pie Night on Tuesday. See photos at the end of this issue. Next round is July 17th – enjoy the break!

U9 White

George R.R. Martin has been warning us that Winter is Coming, and on Sunday the prophesy came true. Furthering the analogy (not too much, with this being a family publication) the early omens from the Hornsby Berowra Reds camp showed we would be in for a major battle, and indeed that's how the game panned out, right from the

opening bounce.

Will displayed early toughness, with a tackle, run and bounce, before the Reds returned the favour with a big tackle on Will. Tommy also started quickly with good ruck pressure, a nice smother, and forcing a free kick with a tackle. Lincoln took a nice mark, offloaded to Archie, who in turn connected with Alex for the opening goal. Really excellent teamwork which paid off handsomely.

Lincoln was really busy, fighting for the ball, earning a free, and defending hard – well-supported by Oliver and Nathan. Archie pulled



U12's in action against Westbrook

off a goal-saving tackle, and in an early portent of things to come, earned another free kick with a tackle. Coby's return this week was coming in handy as he made an absolute nuisance of himself in the rucks.

Notwithstanding our good play, the Reds started to fire up under close supervision from their Coach, and they scored their first behind of the day. Aarish, Lincoln and Will were working really hard in defence, in the face of a Reds onslaught. We also saw some nice kick passes between them as we tried to break out of our defensive pocket. Lincoln made a nice block, and Tommy and Aarish made tackles right in our goalmouth, before Tommy rushed through another behind for the Reds.

Coby cleared the ball out for Archie to earn another free kick, and Coby made a nice handball before Nathan's hard-fought possession was cruelly cut short by the timekeeper...

The second quarter opened with a lovely tap from Archie, good work by Lincoln, a lovely tackle by Oliver, but the highlight was some great work by Friyana with a beautiful handball, and a clean win out of a messy ruck. Xavier smothered

nicely and Lincoln cleared well, and Aarish, Coby and Archie were everywhere.

The combined pressure by the Dockers led to Tommy banging through a goal, with a Reds defender hanging on for dear life. Will's physical play led to a big collision and a short substitution, and Aarish and Archie quickly took over the enforcer role, with big runs and tackles. Lincoln took another clean mark, and Archie kept on banking free kicks. Jackson, Reid, Oliver and Kaelan were providing crucial support. At the main break, the Dockers were going well, against the most physical team we have seen this year.

The Reds coach seemed to have used some sorcery at halftime, as they came out with an amazing intensity. Despite gallant early defense from Tommy (nice mark!), Lincoln, Aarish, Xavier, Will and Harvey, the Reds simply laid siege to our goal. Against this run of play, Aarish earned a free, quickly played on and kicked long for Will who converted a long behind. Unfortunately this seemed to really inspire the Reds into some lovely and consistent teamwork, and despite some amazing defensive work, particularly by Tommy, with

tackles, clearances and a rushed behind, the Reds stormed the gates with 3 quick majors, before Tommy stopped the flow with another rushed behind.

Archie, Will, Nathan and Lincoln had just started to reassert some Dockers pressure when the quarter finished, with our guys (and gal!) a little shellshocked by the brilliance of the Reds teamwork. The constant pressure from the Reds was best evidenced by Aarish's nagging presence in the defensive line, doing lovely work, before finally being questioned by the umpire, who noticed the red armband, but had been nicely tolerant...

Our defensive line was still stunned as the final quarter opened with a breakaway goal to the Reds. It's always good to see a tight contest, and the Dockers responded really well, with Archie everywhere in the rucks, and his pressure helping Aarish kick deep for Tommy to contest, with Will cleaning up and banging through a strong goal. Aarish pulled off a sequence of tackles and smothers, displaying all the skills of a gun mid-fielder. Obviously the coaching staff had focussed on tackling during the week, as our team started to copy the masterclass we were

witnessing from Archie. Oliver, Aarish and Nathan all earned solid free kicks with great tackles. Archie, Will and Aarish continued to match it with the big and mobile Reds line. Will copped another big hit, and bravely shook it off to help Tommy score a nice behind with a sharp cross-body kick which was only just touched by the Reds defence.

Highlight of the match was a lovely strip and tackle by Friyana, earning a crucial free kick while the Reds were attacking our goal, and Archie just kept earning frees with excellent tackles. Tommy showed his speed and determination by tracking a Reds forward until he'd run too far, thereby shutting down the movement and earning a free kick. Will used this position to close the game with a behind, which sailed just outside the righthand post.

At the end of the game, the Dockers knew they'd been up against a really good team, but they also now know that they can mix it with the best.

Best on Ground: (Joint Award) Friyana and Nathan

Best off Ground: Archie's Dad on timekeeping, having found the desk after the first buzzer...

Quote of the Day (from the Umpire): "Aarish, maybe you could at least try to spend some time in your zone?"

– Andrew Loadsmen

U12

Our game against Westbrook began on a very chilly 5° morning with the our boys still on a high from a very successful match last week against St Ives, in what can only be described as appalling conditions as the second of the east coast lows deluged Sydney.

This week however the sun was shining, the ground only a little damp by comparison, and the boys excited to perform at their best. We also welcomed a new member Bill and the return of Simon to the team.

In the centre of the ground Tom was a consistent winner in the ruck tapping the ball to the advantage of Cameron, Zack, and Kyeton who all moved the ball to the forward line of Ibrahim, Adam, Luke, James, and Harry.

Although we dominated play in the early stages of the game, goals were difficult to achieve as the boys narrowly missed the big sticks, with plenty of points being the

result. Finally the boys locked onto their direction and range and goals soon followed. Tom scored 1 goal 5, Ibrahim 2 goals 1 (with one of these goals being an amazing, running away, over the left shoulder kick from the right pocket), Cameron 2 goals, and Harry 1 goal 1.



The back lines had their work cut out for them in the 2nd and 3rd quarters as Westbrook applied greater pressure. But as has been the case for the last 6 weeks led by the organisational skills of Matthew, Harrison and the final defensive clearing skills of Lachlan, the attackers were repelled time and again. Mitchell, Rhys, Cliff, Luke & Simon were all tested in different positions and they all worked hard & were crucial to the end result.



The final quarter arrived and the Dockers were comfortably in control of the game, so the coaches decided to shake the boys out of their comfort zones by playing the backs in the forward line, the forwards into the centre and then the centers into the back line. This resulted in confusion for the parents on the sidelines, but all the boys adapted to their new roles and the opposition did not score a goal in the last quarter.

The boys who normally play defensive roles took full advantage of their opportunities with a goal to Lachlan and, with 15 seconds left on the clock, Aiden found himself standing alone just in front of the goal line when the ball was rushed forward. He quietly bent over, picked the ball up, and as he was

tackled by a scrambling defence, snap kicked and squeezed the ball over the line for his first goal in AFL! Well done Aiden!!

Well done to man of the match Rhys for his hard tackling in defence. And a big thank you to the boys who played for the opposition, helping to ensure a more competitive game.

– Michael Reardon

U13

Wowsers, what a game this week. On a very chilly morning, the U13's travelled to play the Forest lions.



Playing a fresher and fired up Lions team after last weeks smashing defeat, the Dockers had to fight for the repeat win, making it come down to the last few minutes of the game to secure the ladder points.

Once again our U12 helpers played a major role in getting the points

with Tom and Cam coming away with goals. Our defenders worked hard including Flynn, Adam, Nathan, Harry and Ben all having good games.

The forwards paid the price on a couple of occasions leaving their man open with it coming down to a one point lead, however banded together to secure the points in the nail biting finish.



The last two weeks wins have put us back on top of the table. The next couple of weeks rest will be the key leading into the backend of the competition with some tough games still to come. Enjoy the holidays boys!

– Bron Papandrea

U17

Canada Bay Dockers 9-5 (59) def. Heathcote/Bangor 8-8 (56)

I'm no clairvoyant but I'd suggest that if the boys take any lasting memories from U17s in 2016 it will be this game rather than any grand final win.

The portents were not fortuitous; in fact they were ghastly. A dramatically reduced squad due to injury, illness and holiday unavailability, laying an unfamiliar ground of curious character, playing immediately after Heathcote/Bangor's (H/B) well credentialed Division 2 team. Cue the theme from JAWS...

We managed to muster just 15 from the squad of 26 to Barden Ridge Oval. 'Twas only the Sydney Juniors holiday numbers concession that allowed us to play, though Lindon was prepared to kit up and stand in the goal square if one more body was needed.

Barden Ridge Oval is, well a large oval on a ridge. It has a good surface but falls a disconcerting 3m across the field and even more along its length. An uphill kick into the wind would test the skills of any footballer.

Heathcote/Bangor only had 11 Div 3 players there, but these were substantially reinforced by 9 from their top of the table Div 2 team, who'd just had not much more than an invigorating warm-up in shellacking the struggling Maroubra side by the mercy rule.

We won the toss and elected to kick with the slight wind and the substantial slope. For the first time this season we started well. Lots of positive movement with the ball, lots of handball, lots of running off the ball, patience and composure. A couple of well-constructed goals by LachlanJ and MattK were due reward for them and the team. Some polished defending and rebounding from our defenders led by EhsenS and LaytonH kept a clean slate on the scoreboard. The midfielders worked their collective tails off. BigHaz controlled possession at the stoppages. AngusM was fiercely competitive and kept at it all day, winning the "Played strong done good award". In the ¼ time huddle TimR looked like he'd blown a gasket and was totally spent. But he went back out, put his running gear into 4WD and chugged around the park for the rest of the game without slowing or stopping. Hereafter referred to as Diesel!

Could we keep the momentum going running uphill? Well, not on the scoreboard as we scrambled just the 2 behinds but we kept H/B to a single goal. It was achieved by hard work and commitment of the whole squad to the task. MichaelF and TylerF were prominent in their work rate and their ball skills were very good.

AngusM, DylanS and JeremyW all made telling contributions with ball in hand, but even more importantly tackled, harassed, pressured and made a contest on each occasion. LachlanJ was swung back to defence and gave a that bit extra steel and pace which really helped the cause. So we took a lead of two goals at the main break, thoroughly on merit.

But the match committee had plenty of problems, no additional resources, what we had were starting to visibly flag and few options to share the load around any thinner.

Chief amongst these were HarryL who'd had seven bells knocked out of him at centre half forward, being regularly double and triple tagged. He was still upright, just. All we could ask was that he stay upright. The second was JackT who was

obviously hampered by a leg injury. The option was there to switch MichaelF, who'd been having a barnstormer of a game, into the centre. But 30 seconds before the break MichaelF copped a knock, was taken off and took no further part in the game (medical reports are that he's quite OK).

In response to all the challenges the third quarter was as good as we've played all season. It started in the middle where BigHaz simply dominated. The ball was shared around with particularly with RoryB playing in and under with SamP sweeping the outside fringes. LachlanJ back in the forwards provide a height and speed that H/B couldn't adequately match up against.

The rapidly improving JeremyW got really involved and bombed a team-lifting goal. HarryL, playing more as a midfielder just kept winning the ball and creating opportunities for the faster men like TylerF. There were a couple of sparkling runs from DylanS. Diesel just kept on working. In the back half line AngusM lifted his physical contribution to another level.

LaytonH was dynamic in delivering intense defensive pressure without infringing. EhsenS was simply class.

MattK work up the ground and still was our main marking target close to goal that worried H/B. Not able to use his trademark speed, JackT worked on his distribution and showed us another way he can be a match winner. Unlike previous weeks we were methodical in front of goal and didn't blaze away haphazardly. Goals came consistently and in kicking 5-1 to 1-1 set up a winnable margin.

The last quarter began with Dockers 36 points up and H/B, having kicked 2 goals to that stage, needing 7 unanswered goals to win. In theory, with cool heads and a couple of fresh legs we were home & hosed. In practice we had just 28 legs left on the park and exactly none of them were fresh.

We invoked Pagan's Paddock and got a couple of extra bodies behind the ball. H/B threw all their Div 2 contingent on. H/B quickly blew Plan B out of the water with an early goal and then a brace more by the 5 minute mark. A boilover was now on the cards and H/B sensed it.

As Edmund Blackadder might have said "We now proceed to Plan C, which was the same as Plan B but with an element of panic". But there was no panic, just steely

resolve. The defence lead by EhsenS and LaytonH was remorseless in defusing attacks, winning the ball and getting it back up the hill.

We got the ball deep into attack only once for a point. A couple more might have been enough. Our back trio prevented H/B from having a target close to goal and forcing them to rely on their midfield where they were constantly hassled by AngusM, JeremyW and SamP, who just kept on making a contest. Then the run of the ball tilted H/B's way and two more goals came despite valiant efforts.

Three points up, 7 minutes to play, and shutting the game down is not an option. Somehow we have to score. The mantra all day has been "when defending keep the ball on the down-hill side".

For reasons unknown from a kick-out Ehsen elected to go to SamP on the high side who was leading into space. The kick missed the target and two Tigers swooped. Then like the cavalry in a B grade western JeremyW arrived, and knocked the ball back to SamP. His kick was a long raking left foot helicopter punt to DylanS, his only option forward. But he got just enough

leather onto it to clear the defender in front and DylanS held on just inside the 50m arc. A mark? A free kick? ... who cares? Dylan went back, adjusted his socks, calmly checked the wind and for all money gave the impression of a forward with absolute confidence in kicking a long range goal to win. H/B bought the bill of goods so much that they didn't mark up on JackT's lead and a deft 15m short pass got the ball into just the right hands, the right distance, killed another critical 30 seconds, and he drilled the kick through the middle.

Now we had our insurance policy, but from the centre bounce a quick clearance, some hard running and H/B jagged another major. Bugger.

Three points up, 2 minutes to play and we need to get the ball forward and hold onto it with only fumes left in the tank. BigHaz won the ruck as usual but the ball went loose on the ground. He collected his own tap and got it to RoryB. The Sherrin was hot potatoed from RoryB to JackT and then to HarryL each with desperate black & yellow jumpers all over them. A long lateral handpass found TylerF with a bit of room and with composure his chip kick found MattK open on the half back flank. Half back flank? MattK hasn't been seen that far

back in defence since Auskick!

There was nobody in the attacking half of the ground. He ran his full measure and hoofed as far as possible toward the vacant forward 50 zone near the boundary. Somehow somebody had to prevent H/B from getting clean possession of the ball. Summoning every last cc of power Diesel charged forward in pursuit. When he started his run he was behind MattK. With the danger apparent, two H/B defenders went for the ball while their fullback ran back to the goal square. Diesel got there first, gathered it cleanly and let fly with a wildly optimistic shot at goal; 45m out, uphill; into the wind; from the boundary. He missed. By a long way. Out of bounds on the full. A long, long, long way out of bounds. In the context of the game it was a better result than if it had been on target. With the clock running the H/B fullback raced to get the ball from the car park and back into play. He did, but not much more and the hooter went.

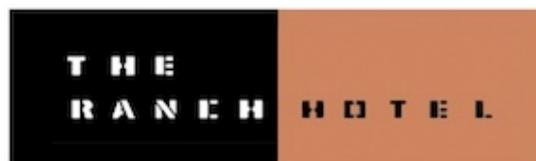
Too tired for exuberant celebration the team spontaneously gave three cheers for Heathcote/Bangor, which were returned.

To those of the logistics support teams who were able to make the journey, that warm glow you felt as you left the Lucas Heights precinct was pride.

– Graeme Durrant

Acknowledgements

Thanks to managers, coaches and parents for match reports and Craig for the photos.





Swans Tyrone Leonardis (left) and Xavier Richards (right) joined training on Tuesday!

