



BEHIND PLAY

Born: 16 April 1978 **Height:** 190 cm **Weight:** 80 kg

Nickname: Just "Lloyd" at the moment.

Recruited from: Western Jets.

Guernsey number: I'm hoping for number 18. My Dad wore 18 for Carlton (John Lloyd played 29 games for Carlton between 1965-67) and I've worn that number for the last eight years of my football.

Foody hero as a kid: Bernie Quinlan and over the last five years Gary Ablett.

Who did you barrack for? I went more for certain players like Ablett and Wayne Carey.

Favorite food: Lasagne and pasta.

Least favorite food: Vegetables.

Favorite music: Top 20 radio music.

Least favorite music: Classical music.

Favorite TV: Models Inc.

Least favorite TV: Current affairs shows.

Most admired sportsperson: Mark Waugh and Wayne Carey. Waugh just does it so easy - he probably doesn't do it enough, but when he does he does it with ease, with his fielding as well. He's just a marvel. I'd love to model myself on Wayne Carey and Jim Hird as well.

What do you like most about football? I've grown up with it. As soon as I was born I had a footy. I love the high marking, which is something the other sports haven't got.

What do you like least about training? The injuries that hold you back, I suppose.

What is your ultimate sporting fantasy? Before footy took over I used to be a keen cricketer and I always wanted to be a bowler for Australia.

What do you hope to achieve out of football? I would like to play 15 years with the Essendon Football Club.

Who is your least favorite sporting commentator? Don Scott, he raves on a bit.

Which three League footballers would you invite to a dinner party? Carey, Ablett and Kernahan. And I'd like to have Tony Modra there as well.

Young Man in a Hurry

Matthew Lloyd is a very young man with a very big future... and he knows where he is going. Interviewed by Gary Walsh.

"I'm pretty hard on myself. The club was pretty happy with my practice game (against Collingwood reserves), but I know I can do a lot better. It's just a matter of getting used to playing at a higher level of football. I should be right."



One of the highlights of Essendon's pre-season has been the form of 16-year old Matthew Lloyd, a priority selection in the February draft after a deal with Fremantle. In his first outing, ironically against Fremantle, Matthew caught the eye of a few astute judges with his play. But that was nothing compared to the attention he created a week later, when he starred in the triangular round-robin challenge with Carlton and Collingwood. He took big marks, kicked impressive goals and stamped himself as one of the hottest prospects in football. This kid has a very bright future, so we thought it was a good time to introduce him to you.

You came from Western Jets in the under-18 competition. Tell us about last season.

I just spent one year in that comp. I kicked 50 goals playing at centre half forward and full forward.

How did it feel when you learned you had been drafted by Essendon?

I couldn't be happier. I'm learning so much from Kevin Sheedy and all the blokes.

Have you been happy with the way you've been going?

I'm pretty hard on myself. The club was pretty happy with my practice game (against Collingwood reserves), but I know I can do a lot better. It's just a matter of getting used to playing at a higher level of football. I should be right.

What has been the biggest challenge for you?

I'm used to being able to take a mark whenever I want to, whereas here everyone's equal in ability. That is probably the hardest thing I've had to cope with.

So in a sense it's been easy for you until now?

At a junior level I've always been better than everyone else. As a 16 year old in the under-18

competition I did pretty well, so I have probably done it pretty easy. Now playing for Essendon is a dream come true - I've wanted it for so long.

What are your hopes for this season?

Short-term, even though I'm only 16 I really want to play senior footy this year. I'm in there now (for the Dockers game). Hopefully I can just stay in now and take the opportunity and have a go at it. I'd like to start off this year on a flank and hopefully end up at centre half-forward.

Are there any parts of your game you have to work on?

I've been in the gym a lot lately, but I suppose I have to get a bit stronger, and work on my opposite side. I'm a left-footer, but my right side has improved a lot since I've been working on it. **B**

"I've grown up with it. As soon as I was born I had a footy. I love the high marking, which is something the other sports haven't got!"

