

JAME⁵HIRD

A C A D E M Y

WELCOME MESSAGE



Hello and welcome to another jam-packed issue of the James Hird Academy Newsletter.

Unfortunately, the 2014 AFL Season has come to a close for the Bombers with the boys narrowly going down to a much-improved North Melbourne team in the Elimination Final.

However, the JHA is still firing on all cylinders, with the year to date having been another overwhelming success.

The Next Generation training program has been in full swing with the first of 2014's bi-yearly camps providing plenty of fun and entertainment for all involved.

Jake Long also made the news, taking another step in his football development by pulling on the boots for Essendon's VFL side in the last game of the regular season. Jake performed well in his first hit-out at VFL level, finishing the match with a goal and displaying an irrepressible

willingness to relentlessly chase and tackle the opposition.

Many Academy Members have enjoyed impressive seasons in 2014, with Tom Wallis stringing together a number of notable performances for the Calder Cannons in his first year of TAC Cup footy and Harvey Daniher making a successful comeback to the playing field after starting the year with an injury-interrupted pre-season. Quite a few JHA boys will also be playing finals this year – best of luck lads!

Don't forget, you can stay up to date with the latest developments from the James Hird Academy by visiting the following address: www.essendonfc.com.au/team/james-hird-academy

Good luck to all Academy Members with their continuing football commitments for the rest of the season.

Go Bombers!

JAMES HIRD ACADEMY - ACCELERATION GROUP

PLAYER	AGE	FATHER
Jake Long	18	Michael Long
Tom Wallis	17	Dean Wallis
Jett Bewick	17	Darren Bewick
Harvey Daniher	16	Chris Daniher
Matthew Neagle	16	Merv Neagle

JAMES HIRD ACADEMY - NEXT GENERATION

PLAYER	AGE	FATHER
Jaxon Neagle	14	Merv Neagle
Mason Fletcher	14	Dustin Fletcher
Ricky O'Donnell	13	Gary O'Donnell
Darcy Denham	13	Sean Denham
Kurtis Barnard	13	Paul Barnard
Tom Hird	13	James Hird
Max Fletcher	11	Dustin Fletcher
Joshua Misiti	11	Joe Misiti
Nyawi Lovett-Murray	11	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Alex Hird	11	James Hird
Tex Wanganeen	10	Gavin Wanganeen

JAMES HIRD ACADEMY - BABY BOMBERS

PLAYER	AGE	FATHER
Luca Alessio	9	Steve Alessio
Alwyn Jr Davey	9	Alwyn Davey
Jayden Davey	9	Alwyn Davey
Will Hamilton	9	Paul Hamilton
Luke Barnard	9	Paul Barnard
Noah Caracella	8	Blake Caracella
Alex Alessio	7	Steve Alessio
Aljiah Davey	6	Alwyn Davey
Taj McPhee	6	Adam McPhee
Logan Daniher	6	Chris Daniher
Mara Lovett-Murray	5	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Aidan Ramanaukas	5	Adam Ramanaukas
William Hird	5	James Hird
Koby Bewick	5	Darren Bewick
Max Alessio	5	Steve Alessio
Thomas Caracella	5	Blake Caracella
Lucas Ramanaukas	4	Adam Ramanaukas
Taitum Dempsey	4	Courtenay Dempsey
Cove McPhee	4	Adam McPhee
Rylan Johnson	2	Mark Johnson
Cruz Davey	2	Alwyn Davey
Noah Peverill	2	Damien Peverill
Lenny Solomon	2	Dean Solomon
Jacob Lloyd	1	Matthew LLoyd
Connor Stanton	1	Brent Stanton
Harlan Ryder	1	Paddy Ryder

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The James Hird Academy wishes to announce the availability of major and individual player sponsorship opportunities for season 2014. This is a fantastic opportunity to promote your product, service or brand in conjunction with the Academy. If you are interested in entering a sponsorship agreement, please contact Chris Goodwin on 0434 182 351 or cgoodwin@essendonfc.com.au for more information.



MARTY'S MESSAGE

"Hello to all members of the James Hird Academy."

I hope each of you has enjoyed your footy this year.

I know most of you have improved and some even played finals. I certainly hope that was you! If not, I hope you improved and had an enjoyable season.

Playing finals and performing is something that all footballers strive to achieve. Finals are the reward for a successful season and all players strive to win a premiership. However, finals are more important than that.

Finals is the time you play against the best teams and test yourself against the best players. This is how you measure your development.

Continuously striving to improve and develop means preparing well for training and games.

It means hard work throughout the season but this can also be fun.

Preparing for finals against the best teams and best players is paramount – I hope you got plenty of rest, ate the right food and kept yourself well hydrated in the lead-up to the game.

And finally, we come to the most important thing... have fun!

I hope you had a fun season with loads of improvement and played finals. I look forward to seeing a number of you at the second Next Generation Camp in a few weeks.

Go Dons!



Coach Marty Allison with The Boys

MEMBER IN PROFILE



Jake Long - VFL, RD 20 - 2014



Michael Long - 1989



JAKE LONG	
FAVOURITE PLAYER	Nathan Fyfe
HOBBIES & INTERESTS	Fishing & Playing Guitar
FAVOURITE MUSICIAN	Wu-Tang Clan
FAVOURITE TV SHOW	Suits

CONGRATULATIONS

The James Hird Academy would like to congratulate Courtenay Dempsey on playing his 100th game for the Bombers in Round 18 against the Western Bulldogs. The milestone ensures that Courtenay's son, Taitum, is eligible to potentially be drafted to Essendon via the Father-Son Rule in the future. The JHA looks forward to officially welcoming five-year-old Taitum to the Academy ranks soon.



Taitum Dempsey



JHA BEHIND THE SCENES: VIRGIN AUSTRALIA FILM



As many of you would have already seen, a trio of Academy Members recently became film stars for a day as part of the Essendon Football Club's video submission to the Virgin Australia Short Film Competition.

Jake Long, Josh Misiti and Tex Wanganeen ventured out to the True Value Solar Centre in the early hours of a frosty Melbourne morning to participate in the project, which revolves around the youngsters pulling on the red sash and emulating the feats of their famous fathers.

The film crew gathered out on Essendon's main training oval and the shoot was soon underway with the arrival of 'Smokin' Joe Misiti and his son Josh. The crew busily worked with the younger Misiti to replicate his dad's famous goal against the Hawks in the 2001 Preliminary Final at the MCG. While the scene only comprised ten seconds of the final video clip, the segment took the best part of an hour to shoot in cold, blustery Tullamarine conditions – who said showbiz was glamorous?

The filming troupe retreated to the warmth of the Essendon locker room where Brownlow medallist Gavin Wanganeen and his young son Tex were waiting to shoot the next scene. While filming equipment was reassembled, Gavin and Joe caught up on old times and even shared a special moment with Premiership teammate, Dustin Fletcher, who had arrived early for training. The trifecta of 1993 'Baby Bombers' looked on as their younger counterparts took centre stage with the cameras rolling.

A break in filming presented Tex and Josh with the opportunity to take part in a condensed training session with JHA Coach, Marty Allison. The air was peppered with the sounds of exuberant laughter and the satisfying thump of footballs hitting targets.

The shoot recommenced with the arrival of former AFL CEO, Ross Oakley, who took great joy in presenting another young Wanganeen with a Brownlow medal during a recreation of the 1993 ceremony. Gavin couldn't wipe the smile from his face while watching on with pride as the medal that represents the game's highest individual honour was placed around his son's neck.

After breaking for lunch, the group was joined by Jake Long and the three Academy members gathered in the players' locker room to hear a stirring address from EFC coach, Mark 'Bomber' Thompson.

It was Jake Long's turn to step into the spotlight as he donned the red and black jumper with the number 13 on the back and turned back the clock to the 1993 Grand Final. Bouncing and darting his way through the centre of the ground, Jake emulated his dad's breathtaking running goal that drove a dagger through the heart of the Blues.

Time will tell whether Jake, Josh or Tex will follow in the footsteps of their fathers and go on to play for the Bombers but as the film proves... everything's possible.

You can view the video at JHA :
www.essendonfc.com.au/news/2014-08-18/anythings-possible

The Essendon Football Club needs your help in winning the battle against the nine other clubs in this year's Virgin Australia Short Film Competition.

You can help us win the competition by watching, sharing, liking and commenting on the video.

Share our video from Virgin Australia's Facebook page (10 points). While you're on Facebook, **Like** the post (3 points), **Comment** on the video (5 points) and **Watch** the video





ACADEMY REVIEW

Next Generation Camp #1 - July 2014

While most kids were spending their school holidays on the ski slopes or wearing out Xbox controllers in front of the TV; several youngsters from the James Hird Academy's Next Generation program arrived at the True Value Solar Centre ready for their first official training camp of the year

Bright-eyed boys with famous Essendon names including the likes of Barnard, Daniher, Denham and Bewick pulled on the boots bright and early on a crisp July morning, ready for a day full of fun and excitement.

The camp began with a quick presentation in the player's auditorium, delivered by JHA Coordinator Adriano Leti and JHA Coach Marty Allison. It presented the young lads with a chance to introduce themselves and foster the beginnings of new friendships, while their fathers caught up with old teammates over coffee.

The importance of the JHA Values (1.Family 2.Education 3.Football) was once again underscored by the Academy officials in attendance.

After the youngsters were presented with their brand new JHA polo shirts, the group was herded through the corridors of the True Value Solar Centre for a guided tour of the Essendon Football Club's new base of operations.

Runners were quickly exchanged for footy boots and with socks pulled up, the fleet of baby Bombers gathered on the turf of the undercover Hangar, ready for an intensive skills session.

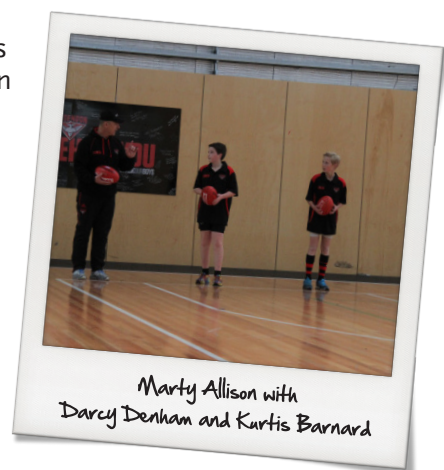
The younger members of the Next Generation squad were paired up with more senior counterparts from the JHA Acceleration Group; the older boys frequently commenting that the new crop of Academy members seemed to get better and better each year.

Coach Marty Allison guided the boys through a series of short, sharp drills – with the focus of each exercise varying from handballing to a moving target, to kicking technique and bouncing the football.

The boys seemed particularly thrilled once the tackle-bags were distributed; laughter and smiles abounded as they got stuck-in while learning to gather the loose ball under pressure.

The camp concluded later that afternoon with the Melbourne sun hanging high in the sky, as the boys joined with their fathers and officials for a catered lunch in the Bomber Café. The resounding consensus appeared to be that the youngsters couldn't wait to come back for another session... a sentiment shared by their proudly beaming dads.

Thank you to all JHA Academy members, parents and officials for making our first Next Generation Camp of 2014 a success. We look forward to seeing all of you again at the Essendon Football Club very soon!



The Denham's and the Barnard's



BOMBER BLOODLINES

JHA Q&A



While their young sons ran amok at the True Value Solar Centre during the first Next Generation Training Camp of the season, proud fathers Paul Barnard and Sean Denham took some time out to have a chat with the JHA Newsletter...

So, what have you guys been up to since hanging up the boots?

Paul Barnard: I'm the GM of the enemy camp! (Laughs) I've been the General Manager at the Box Hill Hawks for two years now. Prior to that, I spent four years at Essendon in the commercial department and then two years at the Bendigo Football Club. I also ran my own business for a year or two, so life after footy has been fairly busy.

Sean Denham: Obviously the kids keep me pretty busy. I've got three kids that are now 19, 17 and 13, so I spend a lot of time with them. I'm also a qualified accountant, but in my spare time I run around with the kids and I'm really enjoying it. Since finishing footy, I've tried to spend as much time as possible with the kids because they grow up so quickly, you don't want to miss it because you can't get that time back.

Barney, you've played for both Essendon and Hawthorn, and you've also worked for both clubs in administrative roles; does your heart still bleed red and black?

PB: I'm definitely red and black... will anyone from Hawthorn read this? (Laughs). Look, I'm a Life Member of the Essendon Football Club; the kids are red and black so that's it... brown and gold are bad colours for my complexion anyway.

Speaking of your playing days, what do you consider to be the most memorable achievement of your football careers?

PB: I think with Seany having played in a Flag in 1993 and myself in 2000; they're obviously the pinnacle of your career. I think you've always got that connection with the club, there's that camaraderie and respect you've got with your fellow premiers teammates. Success is one thing and that's what you set out to achieve but to me, it's always been about the mateship and friendships you take with you from footy - that's the most pleasing and satisfying thing to reflect on.

...Four goals in a Grand Final isn't too bad either...

SD: You'd take that!

PB: Yeah, it was alright. I actually got a handball receive off Darren Bewick that day, so that was probably the pinnacle of my career! (Laughs)

SD: For me, the highlight was definitely the 1993

Premiership. Winning a flag is something that's very hard to do so that's pretty special. As Barney was saying, winning a premiership is what you play for but the part I miss is just being around the guys. Being involved in a footy club and being around your mates - I reckon there's nothing better. It's not about the prestige or the money or anything like that; it's about playing the game you love.

Does it amaze you how far the game of AFL has come since your own playing days in terms of the professionalism of how clubs are run at the highest level and what's expected of elite modern footballers?

PB: Certainly, I probably see it a bit closer in my day-to-day role with the Box Hill Hawks. I actually just marvel at the modern players and the athletes they've become. Back in our day, guys were athletic but it was a bit more about kicking and catching, whereas today's footy is all about transition, running, zones and fitness levels. These players are getting taller, quicker and stronger as the process of evolution continues. You never used to see six-foot-four midfielders and now you see that every day of the week. The scrutiny these kids are under now is enormous as well, back in our day we were under pressure to perform but not with the level of scrutiny these guys face currently.

SD: I'm surprised how competitive the game is now. When I played, I did it because I enjoyed footy and loved to play the game. Now, there are representative sides, the TAC Cup competition - kids are playing sport at an intense level at a really young age. So the competitiveness is surprising to me when I look at it now.

What are your thoughts on the James Hird Academy?

PB: I think it's a wonderful program for not only the kids but also the fathers. We're all different and run in different circles work-wise and such, but to sit down with Sean and see our kids running around together - for me I think it's fantastic and I commend the football club for doing it. It's a program that most people don't get to experience and these kids understand how privileged they are but as fathers, we're also extremely thankful to the club.

SD: I think it's awesome. It's a great excuse for us former players to come down to the club, see the new facilities and catch up with familiar faces. To have someone like Marty (Allison) instructing and coaching the kids is great - someone that obviously knows what he's doing and has been involved with footy for a long time. You can see the excitement on the kids' faces - they love this stuff.

BOMBER BLOODLINES

JHA Q&A

You have your sons in the program; they're both still quite young but have you passed on any tips or advice in regards to their footy?

PB: It's a good question. I think you've got to be careful, there's going to be comparisons made between father and son no matter what. In our particular case, that's where the Aberfeldie junior footy club plays a role with their coaches imparting their knowledge. With my boys, I just try and encourage them, support them and provide a mechanism for them to learn and then develop. If they choose to follow a path into football then that's their choice – the onus is on them. That's all you want as a father; just to give your kids the opportunity, get them to the starting gates and then they have to get going themselves.

SD: I've been reluctant to actively push my boy Darcy towards football. You can't force the kids into it; they've got to want to do it. I don't know whether Darcy will go on to play footy at a higher level but he's certainly got the opportunity if he wants to.

I guess it's a long way down the track but how would it feel to see your boys run out for the Bombers one day?

SD: I've been getting excited just watching some of the other father-son picks come through. I actually played with Tim (Watson) for a year, so to then watch his son Jobe come through and see how well he's playing is fantastic. Then you've got the Neagles, the Danihers – it's bizarre when these kids are the sons of your mates you used to play footy with and you've seen them grow up. It's incredible to see that progression, let alone in regards to your own son.

PB: I think secretly every father would love their sons to represent the club that they once played for but as Sean said, they'll find their own way and if they're good enough and dedicated enough then they'll make it.

Do you have any tips or advice for the young members of the James Hird Academy reading this newsletter?

PB: To me the JHA Values (1.Family 2.Education 3.Football) are absolute gold. To rank football third behind your family and schooling means having a well-balanced life. It's not all about footy, very few people get the opportunity and the privilege to play at the highest level but there's so much more to life. That would be my advice – keep both feet on the ground, study hard and just live. If you don't make it in footy, it's not the end of the world.

SD: I've always told Darcy to just do the best that he possibly can in whatever he does. It applies to any kid – if you're going to do something then do it properly and give it your all, don't do anything half-hearted and get the most out of yourself.



Paul Barnard

151 Games

79 Goals

2000 Premiership

Father of Kurtis (13) & Luke (9)



Sean Denham

186 Games

65 Goals

1993 Premiership

Father of Darcy (13)