

# JAMES 5 HIRD

## A C A D E M Y

SEPTEMBER 2016

EST. 2010

### WELCOME MESSAGE



### Hello and welcome to another edition of the James Hird Academy Newsletter

2016 has been a big year for the JHA, with Academy Coach Jacob Thompson taking the reins for the first time to great effect.

The JHA also celebrated the annual Guard of Honour Game during Essendon's Round 22 clash with the Western Bulldogs at Etihad Stadium.

It was great to see so many past champions of the Club turn out with their families in support of the senior team and the Academy itself - keep reading this Newsletter for a full recap of the Guard of Honour Game!

Although the home and away season has drawn to a close for the Bombers, the JHA program continues with many of our younger brigade involved in junior footy finals. Well done to all JHA members who have taken part in successful finals campaigns this year and good luck to those still in the race for the Premiership!

The Academy is also hosting a Next Generation Development Day on September 20th, as well as an end of year celebration with more details to come shortly.

Stay up to date with all things JHA by checking out the all new and improved James Hird Academy homepage here: <http://www.essendonfc.com.au/team/james-hird-academy>

Until next time, go Bombers!

#### JAMES HIRD ACADEMY - ACCELERATION GROUP

PLAYER	AGE	FATHER
Jett Bewick	19	Darren Bewick
Harvey Daniher	18	Chris Daniher
Matthew Neagle	18	Merv Neagle

#### JAMES HIRD ACADEMY - NEXT GENERATION

PLAYER	AGE	FATHER
Jaxon Neagle	16	Merv Neagle
Mason Fletcher	16	Dustin Fletcher
Ricky O'Donnell	15	Gary O'Donnell
Darcy Denham	15	Sean Denham
Tom Hird	15	James Hird
Kurtis Barnard	15	Paul Barnard
Max Fletcher	13	Dustin Fletcher
Joshua Misiti	13	Joe Misiti
Nyawi Moore	13	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Alwyn Davey Jnr	12	Alywn Davey
Jayden Davey	12	Alywn Davey
Tex Wanganeen	12	Gavin Wanganeen
Alex Hird	12	James Hird
Will Hamilton	11	Paul Hamilton
Luke Barnard	11	Kurtis Barnard
Luca Alessio	11	Steve Alessio

#### JAMES HIRD ACADEMY - BABY BOMBERS

PLAYER	AGE	FATHER
Noah Caracella	10	Blake Caracella
Alex Alessio	9	Steve Alessio
Alijah Davey	9	Alywn Davey
Mara Lovett-Murray	8	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Logan Daniher	8	Chris Daniher
Aidan Ramanaukas	7	Adam Ramanaukas
Taj McPhee	7	Adam McPhee
William Hird	7	James Hird
Koby Bewick	7	Darren Bewick
Max Alessio	6	Steve Alessio
Thomas Caracella	6	Blake Caracella
Taitum Dempsey	6	Courtenay Dempsey
Cove McPhee	5	Adam McPhee
Lucas Ramanaukas	5	Adam Ramanaukas
Rylan Johnson	5	Mark Johnson
Noah Peverill	4	Damien Peverill
Lenny Solomon	4	Dean Solomon
Jacob Lloyd	3	Matthew Lloyd
Connor Stanton	2	Brent Stanton
Harlan Ryder	2	Paddy Ryder
Cruz Davey	2	Alywn Davey
Edward Mercuri	1	Mark Mercuri
Bohdi McPhee	1	Adam McPhee
Aidan Stanton	1	Brent Stanton
Henry Mercuri	4 Mths	Mark Mercuri
Mekhi Dempsey	3 Mths	Courtenay Dempsey

### 2016 - 2017 Sponsorship Opportunities:

The James Hird Academy wishes to announce the availability of major and individual player sponsorship opportunities for season 2016 and 2017. This is a fantastic opportunity to promote your product, service or corporation in conjunction with the Academy. If you are interested in entering a sponsorship agreement, please contact Brenton Humphreys on (03) 8340 2182 or [bhumphreys@essendonfc.com.au](mailto:bhumphreys@essendonfc.com.au) for more information.

# FROM THE COACH

## JACOB THOMPSON

Greetings to all Academy Members and your families!

Firstly, I'd like to thank those of you who took part in our Guard of Honour event - it was a great afternoon and it was fantastic to see such a strong turnout.

For some of you, it was your first official JHA function and I hope you all thoroughly enjoyed

the experience. The Guard of Honour Game is a fantastic initiative that I'm proud to be a part of.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all over the next few months and I hope to see a number of you at the upcoming Next Generation Development Day.

Go Bombers!

Jacob Thompson - JHA Senior Coach



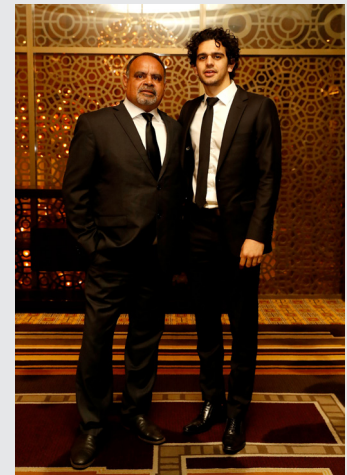
## NEWS & NOTES

### Congratulations: Jake Long

The JHA congratulates Jake Long on making his AFL debut in Essendon's Round 21 victory over the Gold Coast Suns at Etihad Stadium. The son of Bombers legend Michael Long, Jake finished the game with 13 disposals in a promising debut performance.

A passage of play that fans will remember involved Jake delivering the ball from the wing into the waiting arms of Joe Daniher, who then wheeled onto his left and converted from outside the 50-metre arc. This passage exemplified all the hard work that has gone into the James Hird Academy, with two JHA Graduates combining to the benefit of the Essendon Football Club.

Jake went on to hold his spot in the seniors for the remainder of the 2016 season, finishing with 3 AFL games for the Bombers. Well done on your debut Jake - we look forward to seeing you run out for the Bombers again next year!



### Congratulations: Joe Daniher

The JHA would like to congratulate Academy Graduate, Joe Daniher, who has finished off the 2016 season as Essendon's leading goal-kicker for the third consecutive year.

Joe's career-best tally of 43 goals in a single season is the most kicked by a Bomber since Matthew Lloyd back in 2008.

Joe also finished equal runner-up with veteran James Kelly in the Crichton Medal count - a fantastic achievement to come so early in the young forward's career.

During his acceptance speech, the Essendon spearhead thanked the ten top-up players who joined the Bombers this year and also expressed his gratitude for the coaching staff before setting his sights on 2017 and the opportunities that the new season will bring. "I'm really excited about the challenges we face next year about getting this Club back to where it needs to get to" Daniher said.

Congratulations on a fantastic year Joey!



# AROUND THE GROUNDS

Spring is here and so are finals footy! Here's a quick whip around through the JHA ranks of who's playing where and when this September

## **HARVEY DANIHER (JHA ACCELERATION GROUP)**

After moving back home late last year, Harvey has enjoyed an impressive season with the Wagga Tigers in the Riverina Football League Senior competition. Harvey will line up for the Tigers in the RFL Grand Final against Leeton Whitton after defeating them (82 - 38) in the Semi Final. The Grand Final will be played this Sunday September 18th at Robertson Oval (3:15 PM).

## **MATTHEW NEAGLE (JHA ACCELERATION GROUP) & JAXON NEAGLE (JHA NEXT GENERATION)**

After competing strongly in the Ovens & Murray Senior Football League last season, Matt Neagle continued his good form with the Wodonga Raiders on their way to another Finals campaign. Unfortunately, the Raiders fell to Yarrawonga (70 - 65) in a Semi Final loss that saw Matt Neagle and his younger brother Jaxon both hit the scoreboard with a goal a piece.

## **MASON FLETCHER (JHA NEXT GENERATION)**

Barely a year has passed since Dustin Fletcher's retirement but already the Fletcher name is once again being whispered through the halls of the Essendon Football Club. Mason Fletcher played his part in Aberfeldie's Premiership win against Hillside (75 - 67) in the Essendon District Football League Division 1 Under 16's competition. While his famous father carved a legendary career from stopping goals, young Mason relished in booting a goal in his team's Grand Final victory.

## **NYAWI MOORE (JHA NEXT GENERATION)**

The spring-heeled son of former Essendon utility Nathan Lovett-Murray, Nyawi and the Woorinen Tigers earned a Preliminary Final berth after beating Koondrook Barham (40 - 29) in the Poole Accountants League Under 14.5's. Unfortunately Woorinen went down to the Cohuna Kangas (53-20) last Saturday but were sure Nyawi will be back at it next year.

## **TEX WANGANEEN (JHA NEXT GENERATION)**

Over in Adelaide, the Macca's Under 13's Finals Series is underway. Unfortunately for Tex Wanganeen and his Red Walkerville Junior Footy Club, Mondbury snatched a six-point victory in the Semi Final (40 - 34). We're sure Tex and the Walkerville Cats will be back bigger and better than ever next season!



JHA Members and brothers Jett & Koby Bewick snapped together after Koby won the Best & Fairest Award for the Airport West Football Club. Congratulations Koby!

## **LUCA ALESSIO (JHA NEXT GENERATION)**

The eldest son of Essendon Premiership ruckman Steve Alessio, Luca is celebrating a Grand Final win in the Essendon District Football League Division 1 Under 12's. Strathmore was too strong for Maribyrnong Park on the big day, winning by 28 points (50 - 22). Great effort Luca!

## **WILL HAMILTON (JHA NEXT GENERATION)**

Fresh from being elevated into the Next Generation Group, Will's team St. Francis has earned a spot in the big dance after claiming the minor premiership in the Bendigo Junior Football League Under 12's B team. The Falcons will face Quarry Hill this Sunday at Strathfieldsaye Main Oval from 10:30AM, after defeating the Hill in the Semi Final (30-14).

## **ALEX ALESSIO (JHA BABY BOMBERS)**

Coming close to making it a family double, Alex was unable to emulate his big brother with a junior Grand Final win, as Strathmore's EDFL Division 1 Under 10's side went down to arch rivals Keilor by seven points in the decider (25 - 18). You'll get 'em next year Alex!

# JHA MEMBER IN PROFILE

## KURTIS BARNARD

Age: 15

Position: Wing

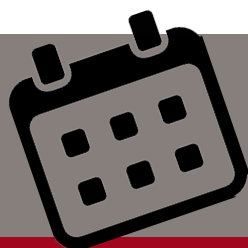
Football Club: Aberfeldie FC

Favourite AFL Player: Playing table tennis, swimming

Favourite AFL Player: David Zaharakis

Favourite Musician: DJ Snake

Favourite TV Show: Australian Survivor



## JHA 2016 Events Calendar

Development Day #2 – Tuesday September 20th 2016

### *JHA SPOTLIGHT*

## NEAGLES TAKE OVER BOMBERLAND

The Neagle family enjoyed an earlier start than most on the day of the JHA Guard of Honour Game a few weeks ago.

While most youngsters were still in bed dreaming of the day ahead, Matthew and Jaxon Neagle met with Academy Coach, Jacob Thompson, for a one-on-one skills session at the Essendon Football Club.

The Neagle brothers were put through their paces with high intensity, tackling, marking, kicking and handball drills.

16-year-old Jaxon relished at the chance to have a kick with older brother Matt – the 18-year-old has been enjoying another solid year across halfback for the Murray Bushrangers.

The JHA would like to thank the entire Neagle family for their continued support of the Academy program and we look forward to tracking Matt and Jaxon's progress over the coming months and years ahead.



# ***JHA IN REVIEW***

## **GUARD OF HONOUR 2016**

The 2016 instalment of the James Hird Academy Guard of Honour Game was another outstanding success. The most celebrated event on the Academy calendar, the annual Guard of Honour Game facilitates the coming together of generations of the Essendon Family.

An exceptionally strong turnout of over 50 guests attended a fully-catered pre-match function in Etihad Stadium's Limelight Room. Whilst former Bomber's champions Matthew Lloyd, Paul Barnard and Darren Bewick caught up over a few drinks, their young children enjoyed romping around the function room – kicking mini footy's at will and launching themselves on the red and black decorative beanbags.

Former Dons enforcer and 2000 Premiership defender, Mark Johnson, considers the Guard of Honour Game a must-attend event for his young family.

"Essendon was such a huge part of my life and it helped make me the person I am, with the culture of the place and the friendliness of the people around it, so it's great that my kids now get to be a part of that and to have them be a part of the Club that I grew up with," Johnson said. First-year Academy Coach Jacob Thompson took the opportunity to meet with many JHA members and their families for the first time before taking to the stage and addressing the group. Speaking of his excitement to be at the helm of such a fantastic group of people, Jacob also rubbed shoulders with his predecessor Marty Allison, who made a much welcomed appearance.

Former JHA Program Coordinator Adriano Leti also took time out from his new role with the Bombers to catch up with some familiar faces from the Academy ranks.

Essendon CEO Xavier Campbell hosted a fantastic on-stage interview with VFL Coach Matthew Egan, who provided updates on the first-year fortunes of Jake Long and Tommy Wallis – the most recent Academy Graduates.

After enjoying a surprise visit from Skeeta, the young members of the JHA and their families made their way down into the under-croft of Etihad Stadium and filed up through the players' race to form the customary Guard of Honour for the senior team.

Injured Essendon defender Courtenay Dempsey leapt at the chance to be part of the guard with his young children Chenae and Taitum, while cradling newborn Mekhi in his arms.

JHA Next Generation member Kurtis Barnard also played a starring role in the afternoon's proceedings and was interviewed in front of over 25,000 fans up on the Etihad Stadium big screen.

After providing a rousing reception for the senior Dons, the Academy members and their families retreated to the stands to watch the Bombers take on the Bulldogs.

Although the finals-bound Doggies would prove to be too strong for the red and black, the day was an undoubted success for the JHA and provided memories to last a lifetime for all who took part.

The James Hird Academy would like to thank all JHA members, their families and EFC support staff for joining us for another Guard of Honour Game. We look forward to seeing you again soon at the Essendon Football Club!



Lining up for the Guard of Honour



Young Bomber Scarlett Peverill



Mark Johnson with kids Charli and Rylan



The Round 22 Essendon Banner



JHA families with Essendon Senior Coach John Worsfold



The Lloyd Family - Matthew, Lisa, Jaeda, Kira & Jacob



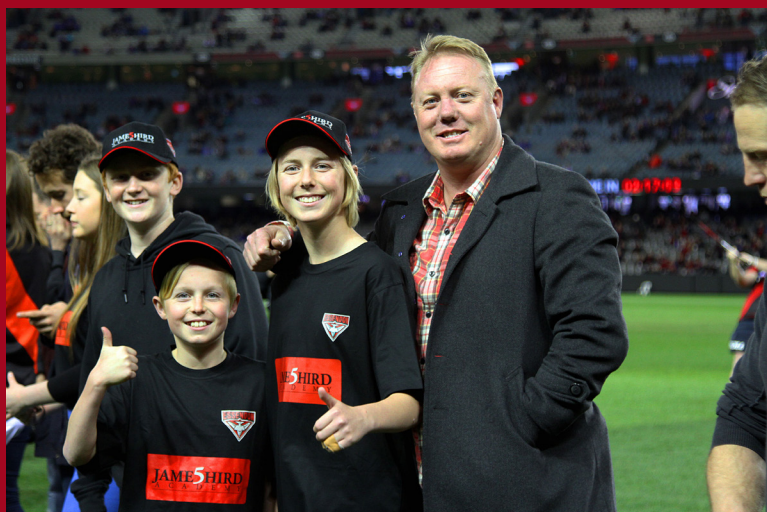
Donna, Jaxon & Matt Neagle with Brianna Galvin



Dempsey kids Taitum & Mekhi enjoying a moment with Skeeta



Matthew Lloyd sharing an embrace with son Jacob



Paul Barnard with JHA kids Kurtis and Luke

## GET SOCIAL!

Want to stay up to the date with the James Hird Academy? Make sure to follow the JHA on Facebook and Instagram for all the latest news, behind the scenes pics and more. Hash-tag #JamesHirdAcademy to feature on our page!



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