



# THE BEAR FACTS



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CAULFIELD BEARS FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB

MARCH 2021 EDITION

## **Pommy Bears**

We've had the first fleet arrive on our shores, then came the 10-pound poms and more recently a number of lads from the Mother Country have lobbed at Koornang Park.

So we decided to send our scoop reporter Growler to catch up with this fine group of fellas at a recent training night and ask them why they decided to play the great Australian game.

First lad to be put in the hot-seat was **Adam Ballard** (who is currently Co-Captain of our 1<sup>st</sup> XVIII footy team). Adam was born in Bishop Auckland, County Durham (UK) and represented North England as a junior basketball player. He went on to play with the Durham Wildcats in the Mens National Basketball League and in 2008 began playing Australian football with his local pub team in Durham. The competition consisted of 4 teams of 9-players-per-team and his team won the premiership – and according to Adam, the victory was solely due “to his excellent ruckmanship”.

From 2008-2011, Adam played for (and was Captain of) the England national Australian football team and represented Great Britain from 2010-2015.



He also represented Europe's U23 team which played an exhibition match against a touring team of U18 lads from the Australian Institute of Sport – the AIS team consisted of aspiring AFL players (such as Jeremy Cameron, Will Hoskin-Elliott, Jaeger

O'Meara et al) and it would be fair to say the AIS team got the better of the Europeans beating them by over 200 points. Although Adam did say he managed to keep Jeremy Cameron goal-less in the quarter which he was his direct opponent (although Adam did fail to tell TBF that Cameron had been shifted to the Back-Pocket for that quarter).

Adam emigrated to Australia in 2011 and had aspirations to play for a VFL team. With the assistance of former Bears' coach Greg Ryan, we managed to arrange for Adam to complete some pre-season training sessions with Port Melbourne in 2012. We hoped the coaching hierarchy at Port Melbourne would have a look at him, realise he wasn't up to standard and immediately send him back to us. But we were wrong as Adam impressed the Port coaching staff and senior players and they invited him to play out the season with them – which he did.

Fortunately for us, he returned to the Bear Cave in 2013 and has been an instrumental player in our football program in the 134 games he's played so far.

Adam won our 1<sup>st</sup> XVIII Best & Fairest award in 2015 and was the recipient of our 1<sup>st</sup> XVIII Coach's Award in 2017 and 1<sup>st</sup> XVIII Tom Siegert Award in 2018. He was named in our 'Team of the 25 Years (1993-2018)' and has been Captain (or Co-Captain) of our 1<sup>st</sup> XVII footy team since 2014.

The next lad to face the searing questioning of Growler was **Pat Soan**.

Born in Eastbourne in the county of East Sussex on the south coast of England, Pat initially played soccer (he calls it football but in these parts there is only one sport that is rightfully called football). He represented Sussex as a central defender and trialled for Brighton & Hove Albion FC (which plays in the English Premier League) so he must have been handy at the round-ball game.

He also played for Waterloo Rugby Club in the National League 3 Northern Division.

In 2016, Pat decided to travel to Australia intending to play a season of cricket in Albury, pick up some part-time work and travel around Australia for a year or so. Whilst in Albury, Pat met his current partner (Kate Rossiter who is one of our star netball players) and they decided to move to Melbourne.

Pat had watched a couple of games of AFL football on TV and was keen to learn more about our indigenous game – so he ventured to the Bears and the past couple of years have been a steep learning

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curve for him.

And he has proven to be a fast learner. In his first season (2018), he played in our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII and in the following season the vast majority of his matches were played in our 1<sup>st</sup> XVIII which is evidence of his improvement and sporting dexterity.



Next up, Growler spoke to **Luke Murchie** who was born in Surrey, grew up in Southampton where he lived until moving to Birmingham for university. He played Rugby Union from age 6, playing for county and representative sides throughout his teenage years (which explains his penchant for the physical aspects of Australian football).

In 2016, he and his good mate Alexander 'Mini' Markham decided to travel to Australia for a 3-months working holiday. Obviously the boys like the place 'coz they're still here 5 years later – and we're mighty pleased they are.

Luke first played Australian footy back in the UK during his time at university and met other lads playing for local clubs and the national team before moving to Australia.



Luke has played 65 matches with our club and won our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII Best & Fairest award in 2018.

Next up Growler spoke to **Iain Slessor** who was born & raised in Edinburgh, Scotland where his main sporting passions were cricket and rugby union. He was a very handy 2<sup>nd</sup>-rower playing for Heriot's rugby club which is one of Scotland's senior rugby clubs in the Scottish Rugby Union.

He attended medical school in Glasgow and worked there for a couple of years before deciding on a 'change of scenery' and heading to Australia in 2018.

After hearing some great things from former colleagues & friends, Iain decided to settle in Melbourne (obviously his colleagues & friends lived in Melbourne before COVID-19 times).



Being a good Scottish lad he headed to the nearest pub where he caught up with Adam Coxsell (another pommy who was already playing at the Bears). 'Coxsy' was effusive about Australian football and with a few drinks in his belly, Iain was convinced to try his hand at our game. So he marched down to Koornang Park with another pommy mate (Frank White) to learn how to play this strange game – and we're pleased he did because he has been a great addition to our football playing group.

Iain has played just the one season with us (2019) and won our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII Best & Fairest award and



received the 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII Tom Siegert Award in this season. He is a fiercely competitive player and his perseverance & commitment to his chosen sport sets a fine example for his team-mates.

Growler next spoke to **Alexander 'Mini' Markham**. He was born & raised in Leeds and played under-age district level hockey and rugby union for central Yorkshire, as well as cricket with Yorkshire county academy.

At 18yo, he moved to Birmingham and whilst at the University of Birmingham he joined the university's Australian football team. Initially, Mini thought joining the team would be a great way of enhancing his social life (ie. drink a few more beers each week) but after watching his first AFL game on TV (2012 AFL Grand Final at 4am in a bar) he instantly fell in love with the sport. He played with the university team for 3 years and was the club's Treasurer for a year.

Whilst at university, Mini met & befriended Luke Murchie. The boys graduated in their respective degrees in 2016 and decided to travel to Australia for a 3-months holiday "before growing up and becoming adults". Five years on, Mini's love of Australian football is stronger and he's become an adult (according to him).



Mini has played a total of 68 games in the 4 seasons he has been with our club and was the recipient of our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII Coach's Award in 2017. He has been co-coach of our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII (with Anthony O'Shea) for the past 2 seasons – and he is coaching our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII again in 2021 – and is a vibrant member of our Social Committee. Since joining our club, Mini has always been prepared to roll up his sleeves to help wherever he can – and we're very grateful he does what he does.

The last pom to face the Growler grilling is **Adam Coxsell**. Coxsy was born in Bradford, West Yorkshire and grew up in a village called Baildon. He moved to Birmingham for uni when he was 18yo and lived there for 8 years.

As a young lad, Coxsy was a high-level swimmer, competing at regional level (which is the equivalent to our State level) and just missing selection to compete in England's national trials. When at the peak of his sport, he would complete 8 training sessions per week but when he commenced his university course the workload was too great and he stopped swimming and pursued other sports such as rock-climbing and soccer.



In 2015, Coxsy was looking for better work & living conditions so he packed his bags and headed to Australia, eventually settling in Melbourne in December 2015. Having a couple of former uni mates living in Melbourne made his choice to settle in Melbourne easier.

Coxsy started his Australian football career whilst at university. He also joined a local team in Birmingham as well as being selected for the national team and Great Britain in the International Cup series.

He met Adam Ballard whilst playing for Great Britain and it was Ballard who lured him to Koornang Park.

Coxsy has played 59 games since joining our club in 2016. He was Runner-Up in our 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII Best & Fairest Award in 2019 and received the 2<sup>nd</sup> XVIII Coach's Award in 2016 which is a reflection of his 'team-first' attitude to his sport.

TBF asked the boys to provide their comments on the following questions:

**TBF: What is your opinion of Australian football and how does it compare to your other sporting pursuits?**

AB: "I think footy is the most unique blend of skill, athleticism and physicality in any team sport. Ice-hockey would be a close 2nd. It's very hard to be successful, you have to do a lot of things right to be the best and that's why I love the sport and love the challenge of competing every year. The by-products of that competition (leadership, camaraderie, personal growth and most importantly friendship)



have been so valuable to me outside of the sport. I'm very grateful for having the opportunity to play again this year."

PS: "I first learned about AFL whilst studying at College where we watched some matches from yesteryear and saw how brutal the game used to be. When I began playing I did have some doubts about the physicality of the game however having a rugby background, it's fair to say I really enjoy the physical aspect of the sport."

LM: "I think Australian rules football requires all aspects of athleticism, hand and foot skills, speed, endurance, toughness and finesse."

AM: "It is now 5 years on, and I love the sport for the intense skill and camaraderie of team-mates."

AC: "I think Australian Rules Football is one of the most underrated sports around, I haven't met anyone who hasn't enjoyed it once they have figured out what's going on. For me one of the best things about Aussie Rules is how it covers everything, fitness, endurance, speed, skill, physicality, not many other sports across the world demand so much of its players."

**TBF: How would you describe your experience playing Australian football?**

AB: "It's been an adventure. The highs and lows across almost 10 years of Australian footy have been amazing! From being the worst player on a VFL list, to becoming a leader of a community club, and bleeding navy, red and gold! From fighting relegation to competing for premierships. It's been an absolute blast! I've been very lucky to have landed at such a passionate, well organised, family club, which has given me the opportunity to develop as a player and a person. I'll be forever grateful to everyone who's been involved at the club since I arrived, and it is my singular focus to help steer the Bears towards premiership success in 2021 as a way of re-paying them all!"

PS: "I'm really enjoying being at a club like Caulfield who have been amazing on and off the field supporting my development. Not only that but also the family culture and the playing group who have been so welcoming. Let's hope for a few flags this year."

LM: "I love the sport and I love our club. I would not still be in Australia if it weren't for the sport, the people and the opportunities that have come from being a part of this club. (TBF: And Luke has recently become engaged to one of our netballers Hannah Shilling which may be another reason he's still in Australia)."

IS: "It can be challenging to pick up a new sport in your late twenties but Caulfield makes it a great environment for learning footy. They are a cracking group of blokes who are all looking to do big things in 2021 and beyond."

AM: "I have represented Great Britain and played an international game (vs Ireland) at Koornang Park which is one of my proudest moments in a footy jumper. I have no inclination to play any other sport while my body still permits and coaching also adds an additional new challenge."

AC: "I have loved playing down at the Bears over the last few years. It's great to have so many Brits down there and amazing how welcoming everyone has been towards us. A few of my highlights playing over the years have been playing for Great Britain in the International Cup, especially the game at Koornang Park (vs Ireland). Also watching the development of the other Brits has been enjoyable, playing in a Bears senior team with 3 or 4 other Brits more than once has been amazing to see, not many (if any) other clubs can "boast" that!"



From L-R: Adam Cossell, Adam Ballard, Alexander 'Mini' Markham, Iain Slessor, Luke Murchie & Pat Soan.





## **Sports Trainers Required**

We require qualified sports trainers for our upcoming football season.

Sports Trainers are required on game days (Saturdays b/w 10.00am–5.00pm) and, if required, training nights (Tuesday &/or Thursday b/w 5.30pm–8.00pm).

Key tasks include taping, massage, injury treatment & management, etc.

### **Remuneration to be negotiated.**

Level 1 Sports Trainer is minimum level of accreditation – courses are available at Sports Medicine Australia.

For more information on the role or to forward an application, please contact Dennis Nicol (Tel. 0412 520 957).

## **Premiership Family**

Since its inception in 2015, our netball program has won 3 premierships – and Barb Traeger has been involved with each premier team.

Barb coached our Div 3 team which won in 2015 and has played in both premierships with our Masters team (which won in 2017 & 2019). She was also coach of the 2017 team.



Barb proudly wearing her premiership medallions.

Barb is preparing for season 2021 and is quietly confident the Masters' team (which is playfully known as 'Barby's Army') will perform well again – and she may be proudly wearing another premiership medallion.

And together with her husband Rowan (aka Bull) who is a dual football premiership player of our club and daughter Jacinta who played in our 2015 netball

premiership, the family has a trove of premiership medallions.



## **Meet The Netball Coaches**

Our netballers are in good hands with a panel of quality coaches overseeing our netball program.

Sophie O'Shea & Julie Masterson will be playing coaches of our 1sts & 2nds teams respectively – both will be assisted by Hannah Shilling (who is currently recovering from knee surgery). Barb Traeger & Kelly Jamieson will co-coach the 3rds team and Tess Wardrop & Bella Whitton will co-coach the 4ths team. And the evergreen Tanya Hiscock will coach our Masters team.



From L-R Bella Whitton, Tanya Hiscock, Barb Traeger, Sophie O'Shea, Julie Masterson, Tess Wardrop & Hannah Shilling (Absent: Kelly Jamieson)

Our netballers have been training since mid-January in preparation for their upcoming season and recently have been playing a series of intra-club matches which will assist the team selection of players. Teams will be announced shortly.

The netty girls will play a series of grading matches on 20 & 27 March 2021 – these matches will be organized by the SFNL and will assist the SFNL to allocate all teams into the respective grades (eg. Div 1, Div 2, etc).



### **Football Practice Matches**

Our footy boys are scheduled to play the following practice matches:

Sat March 13 vs Albion @ Albion

Sat March 20 vs Tarwin Lower @ Tarwin Lower

Sat March 27 vs Bungaree @ Bungaree

### **Bears Inaugural Corporate Golf Day**

Our inaugural golf day was held on Friday 26 February 2021 at Spring Valley Golf Club in which 56 players enjoyed one of Melbourne's finest golf courses.

The players had a light lunch before hit-off at 1.45pm and dinner following the round plus some refreshments to quench their thirst.



The scoring format for the day was Aggregate Stableford and the winners were:

Winning Group (131 points) comprised Rob Southam, Matt Perry, Chris Perry and Scott Broadbent.

Individual winner: Joel Kearney (43 points).

NTP's: Russell Allen, Nick Timms, Benn Harris & Matt Perry.

Longest Drive: Joel Kearney.

Encouragement Award: Paul O'Brien.

A big thank you to Spring Valley GC for hosting our day, Dan Adamek of Tomem for the donation of prizes and Matt Casey & Pete Fitchett who also sourced donations.

### **Wedding Bells**

Congratulations to Rory Hunter who recently married his sweetheart Paula Adrichem.

The love birds were married at Inglewood Estate in the Yarra Valley on Sat 20 Feb 2021 and we wish them all the very best for their future.





## **2021 Football Fixture**

Our football fixture for Season 2021 is shown below:

Date	Opponent	Venue
10 Apr	S'vale Dists	Koornang Park
17 Apr	Hampton Park	Away
24 Apr	Murrumbeena	Koornang Park
1 May	East Brighton	Away
8 May	Keysborough	Away
15 May	Hampton	Koornang Park
22 May	Chelsea Hts	Away
29 May	Skye	Koornang Park
5 June	Heatherton	Away
12 June	No games	
19 June	S'vale Dists	Away
26 June	Hampton Park	Koornang Park
3 July	Murrumbeena	Away
10 July	East Brighton	Koornang Park
17 July	Keysborough	Koornang Park
24 July	Hampton	Away
31 July	Chelsea Hts	Koornang Park
7 Aug	Skye	Away
14 Aug	Heatherton	Koornang Park

The finals' series will commence on the weekends of 21/22 Aug 2021 and Grand Final to be played on Sat 11 Sept 2021.

The fixture for the netball season will be finalized after grading matches (which will be in early April).

## **Club Sponsorship**

We have partnered with many businesses whom provide financial support for our club which enables us to deliver 2 quality sporting programs to our local community.

These businesses are shown throughout this publication and other mediums (such as Facebook, website, etc) and I encourage all Bears' supporters to support our sponsors whenever & wherever you can.

And if you would like to partner with us, we're sure we have a sponsorship package that will suit your business and your budget.

For as little as \$500 (+ GST) we will promote your business to our players, members & supporters which will drive sales to your business – and you'll be helping your favourite community sporting club.

Contact Darren Stait (Tel. 0407 559 383 or [staity29@bigpond.com](mailto:staity29@bigpond.com)) for more details.



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### **Bears Golf**

Our social golf group (Bears Golf) was formed in 2019 and is a great way for our current players, past players & supporters to catch up for a friendly game of golf. We aim to play each month and the details of the rounds for 2021 are:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Course</u>
Sun 7 Feb 2021	Growling Frog
Fri 26 Feb 2021	Spring Valley
Sun 7 Mar 2021	Club Mandalay
Sun 11 April 2021	Cardinia-Beaconhills
Sun 2 May 2021	Ranfurlie
Sun 6 June 2021	Medway
Sun 4 July 2021	X-Golf Mentone
Sun 1 Aug 2021	Flinders
Sun 5 Sept 2021	Mt Derrimutt
Sun 3 Oct 2021	Devil Bend
Sun 7 Nov 2021	Eagle Ridge
Sun 5 Dec 2021	Yering Meadows

Cost to play is usually \$80-\$90pp (or \$300-\$350 for a group of 4 players). The fee includes green fees and lunch (incl. a beer) following the round.



If you're interested in joining the group, please contact Darren Stait (Tel. 0407 559 383).

And thanks to The House of Golf & X-Golf Mentone for their support of our golf program.



### **Social Memberships Available**

There's no better way to support your favourite community sporting club than becoming a social member.

We have **2 levels of social membership** for you to choose from – details are shown below:

<u>Benefit</u>	<u>Silver Bears</u>	<u>Golden Bears</u>
Complimentary drinks and finger food during at half-time	✓	✓
½ price drinks at the conclusion of all 1 <sup>st</sup> XVIII matches (*)	✓	✓
Bears Bucks	\$30	\$300
2 complimentary tickets to our match-day luncheons (value \$200-\$300)		✓
2 complimentary tickets to our Major Raffle (value \$200)		✓
Advertisement of your business on our sponsors' board		✓
Fence banner to be displayed on ground fence at all matches played at Koornang Park.		✓
Personalised Glass Tankard		✓
Voting rights at our AGM	✓	✓
The joy of supporting your favourite community sporting club	✓	✓
Cost (per person)	\$100 + GST	\$1,000 + GST

(\*) Please note, the ½ price drinks benefit mentioned above refers to drinks purchased by the member for his/her consumption and will not apply to other drinks purchased by the social member. The social member will be required to present his/her social membership card whenever purchasing drinks to receive this benefit.

What do you have to do?

Contact Darren Stait (Tel. 0407 559 383 or via email [staity29@bigpond.com](mailto:staity29@bigpond.com)) now to become a social member of your favourite community sporting club.







### **Player Sponsorship Program**

Our Player Sponsorship Program assists in funding our football & netball operations (such as purchasing footballs, netballs, training equipment, medical equipment & consumables, etc) and I encourage you to sponsor your favourite player (or we can select a player for you).

What are the benefits for the sponsor?

An A3-sized poster (sample below) showing a photo of the selected player and your name &/or business logo will hang on the wall of our social room at Koornang Park for all to see your support of our club.

And you will receive a 'Bear Bucks' card valued at \$30 which can be redeemed at our bar &/or canteen.

### **General Committee**

Our club's affairs are managed by our General Committee which was elected at our Annual General Meeting held in Nov 2020. Members of our GC are:

President	Darren Stait
Vice President	Dennis Nicol
Secretary	Christine Bugden
Treasurer	Maureen Nicol
Netball Operations	Barb Traeger
Football Operations	Dennis Nicol
Social Events	Prue McGowan & Alexander Markham
Fundraising	Shane Campbell
General Committee	Tess Wardrop

We also have a series of sub-committees which manage specific functions of our club's operations (such as social events, sponsorship, etc) – so **if you'd like to give us a hand running the club**, please contact Darren Stait (Tel. 0407 559 383 or [staity29@bigpond.com](mailto:staity29@bigpond.com)).



### **Club Apparel**

We have many items of club-branded apparel at very reasonable prices for you to purchase and show your support of our club. Some of the items we stock are:

- polo shirts
- hooded jackets
- scarves
- beanies
- anoraks
- sports bags

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## Julie Masterson



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What do you have to do?

Contact Darren Stait (Tel. 0407 559 383 or via email [staity29@bigpond.com](mailto:staity29@bigpond.com)) now to sponsor a player and support your favourite community sporting club.



**Hall of Fame**

In 2018 (which was the 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary since the formation of our club following the merging of St Kevins Ormond FC & St Andrews Gardenvale FC), we created a Hall of Fame and inducted 4 people in its inaugural uptake. Over the upcoming editions of The Bear Facts, we will showcase these inductees.

In this month’s edition of The Bear Facts, we celebrate **Phil Cox**.



Phil’s involvement with the local sporting community extends across 5 decades (so far) and 2 sports (football & cricket). He joined Ormond YCW (which later became known as St Kevins Ormond) as a player in the 1970’s (playing 86 games before retiring due to injuries).

Phil joined the club’s committee in 1972 and has had 3 terms as President of our club (1978-1981, 1984 & 2000-2003). He has been Club Secretary on multiple occasions and a member of our General Committee for many years. He has also acted as Team Coach &/or Team Manager of numerous under-age teams over the years.

Phil has also served on the Executive Committees of our club’s governing bodies (ESCFA & SFNL) and has been President of the local cricket competition (SECA formerly known as CMCA) since 2006.

Phil is a Life Member of our club and was inducted into our Hall of Fame in 2018.

He is a true champion of our local sporting community.

**Save The Date**

Our Season Launch will be held on Sat 10 April 2021 at Hotel Brighton.

Tix will be on sale soon.

Further details to follow.

HOTEL  
BRIGHTON

