

BROOKE HITS THE BIG LEAGUE

March 12, 2019

Brooke Wells of the Drysdale Lady Hawks football team participated in her very first VFLW game last Sunday when she represented the Geelong Cats in their practice match against the Western Bulldogs at Whitten Oval.

Brooke's story is unique and inspiring as her first ever game of AFL was for the Drysdale Hawks in 2017. With nothing but curiosity about the sport Brooke joined the Lady Hawks and has never looked back.

"I've always wanted to give footy a go and after the success of the first AFLW season I was keen to find a club. After moving to Queenscliff at the start of 2016 I searched online for a women's team and found Drysdale. I decided to go down to training and was immediately made to feel like a valued part of the group. That was huge for me as I was really nervous to go. I remember Stu saying to me at my first training 'you can kick, I like people who can kick', and it's funny now but at the time it was really encouraging. After the welcome at my first training I didn't think twice about joining the club."

Brooke joined the Lady Hawks for the club's first season fielding a senior women's team. In 2017 the Lady Hawks played in the Goldfields League as there was no league around the Geelong region. 2018 saw AFL Barwon put together a league of teams local to the Geelong region.

"Footy has become a huge part of my life. I've always loved sport and admired elite athletes, and before footy I had pursued a few other sports, but the atmosphere around footy, particularly on match day is something completely new to me.

When I moved down here I didn't know anyone and now I have a whole footy family and I couldn't be more grateful for that. The group at Drysdale has become a massive part of keeping footy fun for me.

I look up to the people close to me, Prue Davies, Stu Craven and Laura Taylor, in particular. Prue's incredible knowledge and passion in footy is something I really admire and strive for. She is also a great leader of our team and will always get us revved up to play. Laura, on the other hand, the way that she can balance VFLW footy, work and study in very impressive and something I struggle to do, so she is a great mentor and support for me.

Stu is someone that has supported me from day one and has always never failed to advocate for women's footy. Outside of footy, Stu has always looked after me, often checking just to see how I'm going. I'm so appreciative of that and I think it's something we should all strive for. Prue, Stu and Laura are never short of love and encouragement for the rest of the team and I really think that's a lot more important than their abilities in footy alone."

Drysdale Lady Hawks have begun their preseason training in preparation of the 2019 season which will begin in April. Head coach Stuart Craven and captain Prue Davies are always on the lookout for new players and encourage anyone to come down and see for yourself how inclusive and enjoyable footy is at the Drysdale Football Club.

Players of any ability are still wanted and welcome. If you are keen to give footy a go contact Stuart on 0417 010 364.



PRE-SEASON CAMP 2019

March 18, 2019

Yesterday the Lady Hawks had their annual Pre season camp at Bancoora Surf Life Saving Club. The day saw the girls endure a gruelling 'Amazing Race' where they were mentally and physically pushed to their limits. Challenges included climbing sand dunes, memory games, AFLW quizzes and even eating chicken hearts, to name only a few.

After lunch a training session saw a new level of silky smooth skill amongst the team before a relaxing swim in the ocean.

The day ended with team building exercises, and a leadership, standards & culture workshop before a leadership team was voted on (watch this space).

After some lengthy debate the 2019 team mantra was finally settled on as DISCIPLINED, PASSIONATE, STRONG which perfectly encapsulates the values of the team. The evening ended with the inaugural Lady Hawks Jimmy-Jab Championships and a few celebratory drinks.

Overall a fantastic team bonding day had by all!

Thanks to Bancoora SLSC for the hospitality - we'll see you again next year!!



LADY HAWKS DOING GOOD BY DOING GOOD.

September 24, 2018

In November this year, 8 of the Drysdale Football Club Lady Hawks will be travelling to Thailand to be part of a renovation Task Force to help improve the lives of at risk and orphaned Thai kids.

Joining forces with Australian charity Hands Across The Water the 8 Lady Hawks will complete a team of 26 Australians joining forces and undertaking a 'backyard blitz' of the orphanage in Chanthaburi, 4 hours South East of Bangkok.

New to the club this year, Erin Dodd has been the driving force of getting so many of the team onboard for this life changing trip.

"It takes a special type of person to put others before yourself, but after joining the Lady Hawks at the beginning of this year I knew I had stumbled across a team of very generous and hard working ladies and I knew that they would be more than willing to be part of such an amazing experience."

This will be Erin's fifth renovation task force with the charity but the first time that the Drysdale Lady Hawks will be represented on a charity mission of international scale. 'The work we do changes the quality of the lives that the Thai kids live, but what you don't expect is the way in which they impact our own lives. I am so excited to share this with the girls on our return and see how we can use this to have impact both on and off the field.'

Senior Women's Coach Stuart Craven is a big supporter of the initiative & says it is indicative of the strong Lady Hawks culture. "It's fantastic to have a group of girls prepared to go that extra yard. Erin has been amazing & the girls have organized everything themselves & at considerable personal expense. From a leadership & teamwork point of view it will be invaluable, and I can't wait for the girls to get back to the group & share their experiences. We see this being an annual event with the goal being to get every member of the team to Thailand over the next 5 years. If you would like to support the girls and help them get over to Thailand your generosity would be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made via the link below.

https://www.gofundme.com/thailand-renovation-task-force?sharetype=teams&member=411312&rcid=r01-15374479514-904d0d5a692a4056&pc=ot_co_campmgmt_w

Stay tuned on the website and Facebook page for updates of the trip in November.



2018 VOTE COUNT & PRESENTATION NIGHT

September 3, 2018

The legendary Ladyhawks Vote Count & Presentation Night was held last night at the Clubrooms with attendees enthusiastically embracing the 90's dress-up theme. The atmosphere was electric as players, partners & volunteers celebrated in style while recognising the outstanding efforts of everyone who has contributed to a most enjoyable season.

Star Ladyhawks midfielder Gabby Deller capped off an amazing season by winning the Senior Best & Fairest. Gabby polled 91 votes despite playing 5 VFLW games with Richmond to finish 6 votes clear of Centre Half Forward Brooke Wells. Brooke Lowe finished in third position on 80 votes while captain Prue Davies rounded out the top 4 on 66 votes.

Other award winners were:

Most Courageous - Brooke Lowe

Most Determined - Prue Davies

Most Improved - Raylene Roberts

Best First Year Player - Kate Miller

Coaches Award - Erin Dodd

A new award - The Spirit Award was added this year to recognise the player who typified the team values of United, Committed, Fun. This was won by Amy Callaway.

To see all the highlights of what was truly a fantastic night please check out the photos on our Galleries page.



Gabby Deller, 2018 Best & Fairest



Brooke Wells, 2018 Runner Up

YOUNG GUN GOES BACK TO BACK

August 22, 2018

Drysdale Under 15 Captain, Tess Craven has won the Div. 2 League Best & Fairest for season 2019. In an amazing achievement, the win secured back to back medals after also winning the award last season.

In a thrilling count Tess trailed Barwon Heads's Poppy Johnston by 2 votes with just one round to go, with the girls playing against each other in a nail-biting finish. Poppy failed to attract a vote & when Tess was awarded 3 votes for best on ground she claimed victory by the smallest margin.

In an outstanding season Tess polled 34 votes from 15 games, & also won the League goalkicking. She has been rewarded for her efforts with selection in the Geelong Falcons U16 V-Line cup team, to take on the State's best at a carnival in Gippsland in late September.



Tess Craven in action on her way to a League Best & Fairest

END OF SEASON HONOURS FOR LADY HAWKS

August 20, 2018

Two Ladyhawks have been recognised for their outstanding 2018 season at last night's AFL Barwon presentation night.

After an outstanding debut season Gabby Deller was awarded the 'Rookie of the Year'. Gabby has been a revelation at Drysdale this year with her tireless work ethic & enormous courage seeing her dominate around the stoppages. She also proved valuable when pushing forward, using her class to regularly kick clutch goals. She is a fantastic trainer, rarely missing a session, despite her commitments with VFL side Richmond & is a valuable contributor off-field as well which was recognised with her elevation to the leadership group mid-season.

Ladyhawks Captain Prue Davies was selected in the Team of the Year after another brilliant season. Prue never plays a bad game & her determination & competitive nature set the tone for the whole team. Equally as dangerous on-ball or up forward her sublime skills & football smarts set her up as one of the competitors key playmakers.

In great news for the club both Gabby & Prue have committed to the Ladyhawks for next season as the club looks to continue to grow into an on-field force to be reckoned with.



Club Captain Prue Davies was rewarded with selection in the Team Of The Year

UNDER 15'S KICKING GOALS

August 17, 2018

The Drysdale Under 15 girls finished the home & away season in fine style, comfortably accounting for ladder leaders Barwon Heads 25 - 10. The win gives the girls confidence & momentum as they head into finals after finishing in third position.

In a great achievement for the club, Hawks players filled the top two spots in the League goalkicking with Tess Craven on 25 & Bianca Deckker on 19. The two-pronged attack has proved a real handful for opponents this season & will play a big part in their finals campaign.

And in more great news for the club Tess Craven & Emily Allen have been selected in the U15 V-Line squad. Tess is an attacking on-baller with over 100 games experience, while Emily is a strong marking ruck in just her first season of football. Congratulations girls, we wish you all the best.



Emily Allen



Bianca Deckker



Tess Craven

SEASON OVER FOR LADY HAWKS

August 13, 2018

The Drysdale Ladyhawks season has come to an end after a last round loss to ladder leaders Grovedale. The Ladyhawks needed to win by at least 25 points to secure an elusive finals berth but came up well short in blustery conditions, eventually going down by 7 points.

It has been a strange season for the club after playing the first four games in Division one before a restructure of the competition saw them play out the year in Div. 2. They always knew it would be a tough ask to make finals after effectively starting four games behind the top teams, but the players relished the evenness of the new division & enjoyed a number of memorable wins.

The focus immediately turns to next season with recruiting already underway. Players with speed & height will be targeted as the athleticism of the stronger teams proved challenging this year. With most of the current list committing for next year it will only take a couple of quality additions for the club to be a serious Premiership contender in 2019.

The club will also be working tirelessly in the off-season to increase its profile & encourage greater participation rates. If you are interested in playing the world's greatest game at a progressive, supportive & inclusive club please contact Senior coach Stuart Craven on 0417 010 364.



Star player Gabby Deller has committed to the Ladyhawks for season 2019

LITTLE LADY HAWKS FINISH SEASON IN STYLE!

August 13, 2018

The inaugural season of the Little Lady Hawks drew to a close today and we were so fortunate to celebrate our historical season with one of the games of the season! In a curiosity of the fixture, we took on St Joseph's for the first time, in the last round. Those who keep abreast of the scores would have known that St Joey's were registering very similar results to the Hawks and this was going to be the most evenly matched game of our season.

With almost the entire playing list on board, we had 8 players on the bench and the magnets were worked furiously to keep the rotations up. This meant the first half whizzed past in a magnetic blur and not many notes were taken from the play!

However, we did dominate possession and were playing some brilliant football. Grace's clever bodywork in the midfield allowed her teammates clear access to the ball and it was wonderful to see Ava head straight back into the action after a lengthy spell on the sidelines with injury. We also welcomed back Sienna, who was playing nothing like someone who had missed two months of footy. Sophie, Kiarna, Ciarne, Molly, Ashlyn, Marley and Maya were putting themselves right into the packs to win the contested possession, which allowed our outside players like Katy, Amy and Ali to burst clear of the packs and run into space.

Despite the dominance, we were suffering a similar fate to previous weeks where we simply couldn't score. We didn't capitalise on the wind in the first quarter and it gave the advantage to our opponents. In the second quarter we managed to hold St Joeys scoreless with another huge defensive effort when they had the wind at their backs. At halftime, the huge Hawks crowd had braved the cold to witness a scoreless first half. We were winning all over the ground, yet scores were level. Even with a score line that best fit the soccer ground over the other side, you could sense that something was brewing.

The halftime instructions were to continue doing what we had done all year. Get to the ball first, win it, share with our team mates and when you get the chance, run. The Little Lady Hawks followed these to the letter and thanks to the efforts of those inside midfielders and forwards, Ali was able to burst the game open in the forward line. With a little more luck, and perhaps poise in front of goals, she could/should have kicked 4 majors. However, her goal and couple of points helped the girls to find a spark and they lifted to another level. When Sophie shrugged off a number of tackles to kick a stunning late and critical goal, we had rushed out to a valuable 16 point lead.

At the last break the instructions were to defend, defend and defend. Our opponents still hadn't scored and if we could repeat our first and second quarters, a season ending victory was there for the taking. But, like a Geelong Cats game, you just knew they were going to come rushing at us.

Ciarne and Amy may have been planning to rest their legs for the next game, but they were sent to the backline to give the girls some leadership and experience. Along with Ava, Maya and Ziva, they tackled, harassed and pressured their opponents and put together another spectacular defensive effort. St Joeys were sending ball after ball into the forward line, only to have it bounce back out over their heads. The weight of forward entries saw St Joey's register their first goal, our midfield then lifted their intensity and the game went up yet another notch. A second St Joey's goal saw the lead cut to a couple of points and this last game was well and truly up for grabs.

With the game on the line, there was one piece of play that pretty much sums up the Little Lady Hawks' approach to the game. Katy gathered the ball in the midfield after a nest of Hawks had won the ball out of a pack. With no team mates in front of her, she tucked the ball under her arm and took off. After months and months of training where the girls had been continually encouraged to back themselves, run and carry, break tackles and kick long, this play was going to decide the game. Despite the efforts of two opponents, a combination of her speed, confidence and desperation to get the ball into our forwards, saw her break their tackles and have them crash to the ground in a heap behind her. With one of the Joey's girls heavily winded, it was just as pleasing to see so many Hawks run over to check to see if she was okay. Just about every other teams' coach has commented how we play the game hard yet very fair and all have a great respect for our opponents. This one piece of play perfectly encapsulated all of that.

The siren sounded soon after the game was restarted and the Little Lady Hawks had won their third game for the year!

It was such a special occasion to have almost the whole team and all of their supporters there to experience the win and the team song in the rooms was one of the highlights of the year.

Special mentions must go to Lilly, who despite her illness, was desperate to play one last game and Hollie, who dragged herself out of her sickbed to join in the team photo before the game.

Awards were given out left, right and centre and we were fortunate to be able to present Ethan, our ever-reliable goal umpire, with an award as well.

It is also worth mentioning that every player handed their jumper in, which is simply unheard of in junior football. This is testament to the organisational prowess of our wonderful Team Manager, Faith Meyers.

A number of players now head off on end of season overseas trips and then we gather one last time for our presentation day on September 9.

What a game. What a day. What a season.

Well done Little Lady Hawks!

