



Williamstown Lacrosse Club

Est 1898

2017 STATE LEAGUE COACHES REPORT

To begin with I would like to issue my thank-you's:- There are the usual suspects in our scorer Georgia Flaherty and manager Wayne Butson. Both contributions are huge in value to myself and the team and it doesn't seem enough to just issue thanks and gifts at season's end. The embodiment of our team and club, and its success, is only possible with contributions as selfless as they both make season after season.

Alex D'Agostin has figuratively and literally held the team together for three seasons now; next season her presence will be missed by all. Alex has been on loan from Williamstown Osteopaths, as part of their sponsorship package for the club, and we have enjoyed her expertise and experience as well as her friendship. I wish Alex all the best in her future career and if by chance we can get her back to WLC she will be welcome with open arms.

Lee Davis has had another stellar year and brought a lot to the assistant coaching role. Lee multi-tasked as head coach of division two, official for juniors and when needed for seniors, player (until injury forced him from the field) and as already mentioned state league assistant coach. I cannot think of a worthier recipient of the Mal Taylor best club man award. Lee's study and love of lacrosse was a major factor in getting our team across the line for it's 33rd premiership in 2017. He injected life and system into our play and best of all an energy that helped steer our young team in a direction that bought us ultimate success. Congratulations on leading division 2 to the 2017 premiership as well. All accolades well earned.

Our season:

12 wins 5 losses 1 tie

Ladder position 3 rd

Goals for 240 Goals against 128 Goal difference 112

Over all outcome: Premiers 2017 (it's a Grand old flag)

This year we found ourselves milling around the 3rd-4th position on the ladder in part due to an unfortunate weather event in round one of the season but also due to the rise of Camberwell and the offensive strength of Footscray. Although we languished in the lower echelons of the top four by seasons end only seven goals were the difference between first place and our position. There was plenty to be confident about come finals time. Even though we stumbled late to Camberwell. The strength of our comeback in that game built an awareness that we could do more with our potential but needed also to improve our play. With the mantra set to stick with our youth we played out an outstanding finals campaign defeating Surrey Park 13-6, Footscray 14-7 and eventually claiming our 33rd premiership over Camberwell 8-6. An aggregate score of 35 for and 19 against. The strength of our goalkeeping and defence was the telling factor in our premiership run.

Captain Matthew Price again led from the front. Unafraid of any lacrosse challenge Matthew led the 2017 team with outstanding conviction to task. We will laud the youth who emerged this year but we should not underestimate the leadership and drive that Frogga provided for them.

Vice-Captain and best and fairest Huw Wilson compiled an outstanding season on the field and admirably took the reigns as leader when leadership was needed. Huw's focus on his own game set an example for the team to follow and his administration of the fines system was truly a master-stroke of genius that galvanised the team.

Vice-Captain Tom Pike unfortunately missed the finals campaign in State League due to commitments elsewhere but upon his return, Tom stayed true to the team and helped with off-field encouragement and was ready to step in if needed.

Adam Dobson made one of the storied appearances in State League in 2017. Evan Willis was unavailable, due to the arrival of his second child, for a pivotal clash against Surrey Park in our late season. If we were to lose the game we may have been facing dropping out of the four and possibly not making the finals. Adam lead the team to victory on the back of a 15 save performance and earmarked the turning of the tide for the 2017 flag-run as it was our first win over a top four team for the season.

The collective defense of Chris Welsh, Huw Wilson, Matthew Neumann-Duffin, Lachlan Russell and new comer Brian Bach were colossal through the season. Cameron Molloy, Cardin Flaherty and Josh

Robinson pitched in to fill the roster when injuries occurred.

In the mid-field Troy Butson played a season of distinction. No one will forget his low to high blast in the grand-final but that is a very small representation of the season he forged. Troy's midfield play, clearing and defense was the quill that wrote the story of the season.

Sean Clarke continues his rise to prominence as a leader of the team and at the club. He lifted his work ratio in the offence this season and as a result teams could not get a fix on who to honour in our attacking game.

Noah Jenney also battled away in the face-off and gave us the invaluable luxury of first use of the ball. Sean and Noah are the best one-two face-off unit in the competition.

Brendon Mcguire joined the club from Providence College Rhode Island and led the team with 42 goals. It was great to have him onboard as part of our US player program.

Liam Clarke had the distinction of winning his first grand final for the club at any level. A rare distinction at Williamstown for a player of such ability.

Liam, Brendon, Kade Robinson Alex Pike and Cal Gibson all pulled together this season, particularly in the finals, to create an offence that was very young but as we saw very formidable. Brendon lead the team in points but the spread of points was very even among the team as a whole.

Gil Cordell-Radford emerged through the season and put in an MVP performance in the grand final and although he did not receive official recognition of this the coaches and players were very aware of his performance and its quality.

To round off this report it is very import to record what set us on the path to being premiers in 2017. Mark Butler was never afraid to pick up the phone and offer advice and motivation. Darren Gibson provided excellent advice and service heading into the finals and Simon Brown's record keeping of every player and their qualification status in seniors is a resource I have always been fortunate to have.

The club's health is blossoming and this was very evident across our Grand Final weekend. Friday Night's junior presentation in which well over 100 people attended, the huge crowd that attended the Grand Final at Footscray, family day's perfect weather combined with fun on the bouncing castle and finishing with 'Herbie' Taylor's magnificent fair on Monday morning all capped off a busy season with aplomb.

Damien S Orr

State League Coach