

# ON THE BALL

# 2026

## WINTER SPORT PREVIEW



**AFTER MISSING THE 2024  
FINALS, THE TIGERS SCALED  
THE MOUNTAINTOP IN 2025  
USING THEIR...**

*Nuri  
fury*

**GAWLER & DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION**

# **GDNA WINTER NETBALL**



## **THURSDAY NIGHTS**

**Commencing 30th April 2026**

**Juniors, seniors, boys, 9U-program**



**GAWLER AND DISTRICT  
NETBALL ASSOCIATION**

For more information:  
E: [secretary@gawlernetball.com.au](mailto:secretary@gawlernetball.com.au)

12844416-CS08-26

# ON THE BALL

**ADVERTISING:**

Paul Miles  
Tony Swan  
Wendy Griffiths

**EDITORIAL:**

Liam Phillips  
Ben Lennon  
Bevan Jones

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**

Mark Willoughby  
Michael Slattery  
Barry O'Brien  
Lisa Schulz

**PRODUCTION:**

Creative team at SAToday

*The Bunyip SAToday*

Phone 8522 1233  
9A Adelaide Road, Gawler South SA  
www.bunyippress.com.au  
facebook.com/bunyipnewspaper

BL&G Men's	4-25	BL&G Netball	40-47
Angaston	8-9	Angaston	41
Barossa District	10-11	Barossa District	42
Freeling	12-13	Freeling	43
Gawler Central	14-15	Gawler Central	44
Kapunda	16-17	Kapunda	45
Nuriootpa	18-19	Nuriootpa	46
South Gawler	20-21	South Gawler	46
Tanunda	22-23	Tanunda	47
Willaston	24-25	Willaston	47
BLGW	26-39	Adelaide Plains	50-59
Angaston	30	APNA	60
Barossa District	31	Central District	61
Light	34	Bulldogs	61
Gawler Central	35	Trinity Old Scholars	62
Nuriootpa	36		
South Gawler	37		
Tanunda	38		
Willaston	39		

FRONT PAGE: Nuriootpa's Levi Krause and Jarrod Schiller show off the BLGFA A grade premierships trophy.

**WELCOME TO SEASON 2026**

THE Bunyip is proud to present our 15th annual On The Ball magazine, where we take a deep dive into the upcoming local winter sports season.

Featuring more than 30 interviews from coaches representing A grade football, Senior Women's football, Senior 1 netball, and Central District's SANFL/SANFLW teams, On The Ball is your one-stop-shop to catch up on a busy offseason.

The reigning premiers in the BLG and APFL A grade men's competitions will have a target on their backs after Nuriootpa prevented Willaston from back-to-back titles and Mallala snapped a streak of four consecutive Two Wells flags.

Gawler Central and Mallala both defended their premierships to make it two-in-a-row in both the BLG and Adelaide Plains netball competitions, each finishing 2025 without a single defeat.

Central District Football Club will have to deal with major list upheaval on the men's side, but the Bulldogs women will be bolstered by the return of five-time Best-and-Fairest Shelby Smith as she looks to guide the SANFLW team back into finals.

Whatever sport you favour, there is guaranteed to be something for everyone in the Gawler, Barossa Valley and surrounding regions – and if you want to be ON THE BALL, you came to the right place.



**WISHING ALL FOOTBALL AND NETBALL CLUBS**  
*a successful season in 2026*

MAJOR SPONSOR



Platinum Sponsor



Contributing Sponsors



12841846-CS14-26

# BAROSSA, LIGHT & GAWLER FOOTBALL AND NETBALL FIXTURE

## ROUND 1 Apr 18

Nuriootpa v South Gawler  
Willaston v Freeling  
Kapunda v Barossa District  
Gawler Central v Tanunda  
**BYE:** Angaston

## ROUND 2 Apr 25

Tanunda v Barossa District  
Freeling v Kapunda  
South Gawler v Willaston  
Angaston v Nuriootpa  
**BYE:** Gawler Central

## ROUND 3 May 2

Willaston v Angaston  
South Gawler v Kapunda  
Freeling v Tanunda  
Gawler Central v Barossa District  
**BYE:** Nuriootpa

## ROUND 4 May 9

Nuriootpa v Barossa District  
Kapunda v Tanunda  
Angaston v Freeling  
Willaston v Gawler Central  
**BYE:** South Gawler

## ROUND 5 May 16

Kapunda v Nuriootpa  
Tanunda v Angaston  
Gawler Central v South Gawler  
Barossa District v Freeling  
**BYE:** Willaston

## ROUND 6 May 23

South Gawler v Barossa District  
Angaston v Gawler Central  
Nuriootpa v Tanunda  
Willaston v Kapunda  
**BYE:** Freeling

## ROUND 7 May 30

Tanunda v Willaston  
Nuriootpa v Gawler Central  
Barossa District v Angaston  
Freeling v South Gawler  
**BYE:** Kapunda

## JUNE LONG WEEKEND

## ROUND 8 Jun 13

Gawler Central v Kapunda  
Willaston v Barossa District  
Freeling v Nuriootpa  
South Gawler v Angaston  
**BYE:** Tanunda

## ROUND 9 Jun 20

Angaston v Kapunda  
Nuriootpa v Willaston  
Gawler Central v Freeling  
South Gawler v Tanunda  
**BYE:** Barossa District

## ROUND 10 Jun 27

South Gawler v Nuriootpa  
Freeling v Willaston  
Barossa District v Kapunda  
Tanunda v Gawler Central  
**BYE:** Angaston

## ROUND 11 Jul 14

Barossa District v Tanunda  
Kapunda v Freeling  
Willaston v South Gawler  
Nuriootpa v Angaston  
**BYE:** Gawler Central

## COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS July 10-12 – Barossa Park

## ROUND 12 Jul 18

Angaston v Willaston  
Kapunda v South Gawler  
Tanunda v Freeling  
Barossa District v Gawler Central  
**BYE:** Nuriootpa

## ROUND 13 Jul 25

Gawler Central v Willaston  
Tanunda v Kapunda  
Freeling v Angaston  
Barossa District v Nuriootpa  
**BYE:** South Gawler

## ROUND 14 Aug 1

Nuriootpa v Kapunda  
Angaston v Tanunda  
South Gawler v Gawler Central  
Freeling v Barossa District  
**BYE:** Willaston

## ROUND 15 Aug 8

Barossa District v South Gawler  
Gawler Central v Angaston  
Tanunda v Nuriootpa  
Kapunda v Willaston  
**BYE:** Freeling

## ROUND 16 Aug 15

Willaston v Tanunda  
Gawler Central v Nuriootpa  
Angaston v Barossa District  
South Gawler v Freeling  
**BYE:** Kapunda

## ROUND 17 Aug 22

Kapunda v Gawler Central  
Barossa District v Willaston  
Nuriootpa v Freeling  
Angaston v South Gawler  
**BYE:** Tanunda

## ROUND 18 Aug 29

Kapunda v Angaston  
Willaston v Nuriootpa  
Freeling v Gawler Central  
Tanunda v South Gawler  
**BYE:** Barossa District

## QUALIFYING FINAL September 5 – Angaston

## ELIMINATION FINAL September 6 – Gawler Central

## PRELIMINARY FINAL September 12 – Freeling

## GRAND FINAL September 19 – Willaston



**RayWhite®**



LIST AND SELL WITH  
**RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE**  
AND WE'LL REFER \$500 BACK TO YOUR  
NOMINATED SPORTING CLUB

## UNDERSTANDING THE REAL ESTATE MARKET CAN BE A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

*Get in touch with the team from  
Ray White Gawler East & Angle Vale.*

**08 7806 8227**

Shop B03, 4 Mullamar Way, Gawler East SA 5118  
120 Murray Street, Gawler SA 5118  
Shop 10, 121 - 123 Heaslip Road, Angle Vale SA 5117

12844747-CS11-26



# BLG gets tighter as cellar-dwellers take big swings

THE 2026 Barossa, Light and Gawler Football Association A grade season could look very different from this past year's edition, with major departures from the reigning grand finalists.

Both champion Nuriootpa and runner-up Willaston have named new captains after superstars Nicholas Gregurke and Tyson Irlam decided to take on new opportunities, leaving enormous shoes to fill for the past two premiers.

With the omissions at the top of the ladder, things are set up beautifully for Tanunda, with player-coach Sam Colquhoun able to retain the core of his list while also adding standout full forward recruit and former BLG 2023 goal-kicking leader Darren Shillabeer.

Expect the Magpies – who have played in back-to-back preliminary finals and only finished below third in one of Colquhoun's five seasons in charge – to be firmly in the mix when the whips are cracking in September.

Angaston and Barossa District could only be separated by a fraction of a percentage point to decide the fourth finalist in 2025, and the Bulldogs will be looking to leapfrog the Panthers into the top-four this time around.

Both clubs feature a reigning Schluter Medal winner since Angaston's Tom Corcoran and

Barossa District's Ethan Gant shared the award, and both have lost key contributors.

Steven Summerton in the middle and Gavin Shephard up forward will be hard to replace for the Panthers, while the Bulldogs' meaningful outs include key defender Jack Carpenter, the SANFL-tested Austin McDonald, and dual-sport star Will O'Brien.

Unfortunately for last year's top-five, a rare down season from South Gawler will likely not be repeated by a Lions club who played in four consecutive grand finals from 2020-2023.

South has been hampered in recent years by a lack of recruiting points due to that sustained success, forcing coach Gavin Chaplin to award opportunities to juniors and reserves who may not have normally been in the A grade picture.

But that experience has created a surplus of depth coming into 2026, and a strong offseason – including the return of former South Gawler junior Marcus Barreau from Central District, still in his prime at 28 years old – could catapult the 2021 and 2023 premiers back to the very top.

That leaves just Freeling, Kapunda and Gawler Central, and each member of this past season's bottom-three will feel excited about

their prospects.

Kapunda's signing of former AFL talent Jesse Lonergan as the Bombers' new player-coach could end up being the most important signature secured by any team this offseason, while Gawler Central also welcomed a new player-coach in former multiple-time Barossa District Best-and-Fairest Brendan Dew.

Those player-coaches will slide straight into their respective midfields and inject a level of ball-winning and class that can change the trajectory of a club.

Freeling's new coach Matt Stelzer is also incredibly decorated, winning the inaugural Hurn Medal as Best-on-Ground as he captained Barossa District's 2006 premiership. It would end up being one of five flags during Stelzer's magical run with the Bulldogs, and he will be hoping to use those lessons he learned to get Freeling back on a path towards finals football.

In a year where all nine clubs will enter Round 1 full of optimism and excitement, come September 19 only one will be able to hoist the premiership trophy on grand final day at Willaston's Elliot Goodger Memorial Park.

## GAWLER LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

With a strong sense of community Immanuel Gawler and Zion Preschool provide learning environments where each person develops their best self, inspires others and is empowered to contribute to the world around them.

*Our values are Love, Grace, Teamwork and Quality.*



**ZION** Preschool  
EARLY • LEARNING • CENTRE  
Learners growing together in Christ

Caters for 4 year old children.  
Provides opportunity for children to grow, learn and develop in a stimulating, creative, caring environment.



**IMMANUEL** Gawler  
LOCAL • GLOBAL • CONNECTED  
A primary school of the Lutheran Church

Caters for children starting in Foundation through to Year 6.  
Encourages students to live active and healthy lives by offering experiences in various Sporting competitions, and Kitchen / Garden programs.  
Has a strong focus on numeracy and literacy in a ITC rich environment.



### COME AND VISIT US

Our next Open Day dates are :

Thursday  
14 May  
9.30am

Sunday,  
17 May  
3.00pm

Wednesday,  
3 June  
9.30am

Zion taking applications for 2028 and beyond


Immanuel taking applications for 2029 and beyond

Immanuel: 11 Lyndoch Road, Gawler East | Phone 8522 5740 | [www.ilsg.sa.edu.au](http://www.ilsg.sa.edu.au) | [mail@ilsg.sa.edu.au](mailto:mail@ilsg.sa.edu.au)  
Zion Preschool: 5 East Terrace, Gawler East | Phone 8522 4187 [www.zionpreschool.com.au](http://www.zionpreschool.com.au)  
[director@zionpreschool.sa.edu.au](mailto:director@zionpreschool.sa.edu.au)

12842575-CS10-26



2025 A grade premier Nuriootpa.

*The Teeth,  
The Skin,  
The Smile...*

**SPORTS MOUTHGUARDS AVAILABLE**

finally, **ONE** place in Gawler that can do it all!

Oral health is fundamental to overall health, wellbeing and quality of life. It enables people to eat, speak and socialize without pain, discomfort or embarrassment.

*Meet our team for Cosmetics, Implants, Family Dentistry and anti-wrinkle injections.*

**Gawler DENTAL CLINIC**

**8522 1223**  
177 Murray Street, Gawler

[www.gawlerdentalclinic.com.au](http://www.gawlerdentalclinic.com.au)



12844513-CS06-26

T96198



**COACH »**  
Stephen Carr

**MOST RECENT  
PREMIERSHIP » 2003**

**HOME GROUND »**  
Angas Recreation Park

## Coach chat with Stephen Carr

**Coming from the SANFL system, what was it about Angaston that made it an enticing opportunity?**

"I'm originally from a small country town in Victoria, and I totally enjoy the small, tight community clubs due to the fact they all get behind the club and make it one big social gathering on a Saturday afternoon.

"This was my driving factor in choosing Angaston – it's a great little community club."

**What has been your focus during your first preseason in charge?**

"My main focus during preseason has been bringing a new game style in and help develop the players to play a different way than they have been used to.

"This is always challenging, but the players have been excellent in their commitment to learning and developing their craft."

**What do you think will be the strengths of your side?**

"If we are in the top three for defence and offence I think this will show our game strengths."

**How aggressively have you been recruiting this offseason? Have you landed any surefire A-graders?**

"With recruiting we have focused on getting players in that are team focused, and players that are totally committed to driving our game style and standards.

"We are very lucky to have 2025 Schluter Medal winner Tom Corcoran re-sign, and with his connections he has brought some ex-teammates from Port Districts, which has been a huge bonus."



Corbin Schubert

**Who have been some of the preseason standouts?**

"During preseason we have seen the group grow and develop, there have been lots of standouts – it wouldn't feel right to name them individually as everyone has been excellent.

"All you can ask for as a coaching group is growth in players, and I'm definitely seeing that."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"We had the under-17.5s train with us pre-Christmas and also in January.

"By allowing this, it has given us a good look at the list and we have seen a number of young players that could force their way into senior football this season.

"This really excites the coaching group as our focus is developing youth on the run."

**Having made the finals in 2024 and 2025, what would you consider a successful first year?**

"I see success a little different than just playing finals – my aim is getting the playing group to play a way that allows us to stay in games week-in, week-out.

"If we can achieve this, it gives us a good chance to be at the pointy end when it matters."



Dylan Tuckwell

## KEY PLAYERS

### Tom Corcoran

The reigning Schluter Medallist, having shared the 2025 award with Barossa District's Ethan Gant, Corcoran will headline the Angaston midfield in 2026.

Following the departures of veteran Steven Summerton and gun forward Gavin Shephard, Corcoran will be relied upon to deliver some scoring punch as well as his standard tough work on the inside.

Over the past two seasons he has kicked 28 goals and earned 25 best player selections from 35 total appearances, and if the Panthers are going to make the finals for a third consecutive year, Corcoran will be a driving force.

### Archie Hadden

A success story of internal development, Hadden has continued to prove himself at every level and force his way up the grades.

Having played 22 combined reserves games in 2021 and 2022 after graduating from the junior ranks, Hadden became an every-week A-grader in 2023 and 2024, and then took things up a notch in 2025.

He set career-highs in goals (nine) and best player honours (11) while also earning his first ever selection in the BLG's representative team against the Riverland, kicking a goal in that game as well.

Hadden provides a level of speed and dash out of midfield and through contests that is a perfect complement alongside Corcoran's tough, contested style in the clinches.



William Moulds

PETER PAGE



# CHERY ON TOP

BUYING A NEW CAR HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER.

### TIGGO 4

From \$23,990  
Driveaway  
#1 BEST SELLING  
SMALL SUV\*



### TIGGO 7

From \$29,990 Driveaway  
5 SEATER MEDIUM SUV



### TIGGO 7 SUPER HYBRID

Now from \$34,990\*. Was \$39,990  
URBAN | 1,200KM RANGE | 5 SEAT

SUPER  
HYBRID

#### INCLUDES:

- ✓ 7 YEAR UNLIMITED KM NEW CAR WARRANTY
  - ✓ 7 YEAR ROADSIDE ASSIST\*
  - ✓ CAPPED PRICED SERVICING
- and the cherry on top...

**GET A WEEKLY FINANCE  
PAYMENT FROM  
MATTHEW HILLS TODAY.**

45 ELIZABETH WAY, ELIZABETH SA 5112 | PH: (08) 8256 2688 | [peterpagechery.com.au](http://peterpagechery.com.au)

Prices for new cars are accurate as published on 27 Feb 2026 when this artwork when to print. If Chery Australia has changed the prices between that date and the time of publication, please talk with us and we will get you the best deal available in the market at that time. \* Terms and conditions apply. See in-store for details.



**COACH »**  
Ash Barnett

**MOST RECENT PREMIERSHIP » 2017**

**HOME GROUND »**  
Barossa Park

## Coach chat with Ash Barnett

**You had some impressive wins in 2025, but ultimately just missed the finals by a fraction of percentage. How would you assess your first year in charge of the Bulldogs?**

"We had a reasonably consistent year and some unusual results to go with this (two draws against the eventual premier Nuriootpa in the one season being a good example).

"The injury curse hit us the last four or five rounds of the season and this ultimately cost us a finals berth."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this offseason?**

"For our ins, we have Riley Robinson from Mypolonga. He is tall midfielder/half-back who has some great footy experience, having previously played in Div 1 premierships, and he also shows great leadership qualities from captaining Mypolonga to two of the past three grand finals in the River Murray Football League.

"Jack Wilkins, also from Mypolonga, will be a great asset as a forward/midfielder and brings great character to the group. He also has good football experience, having been successful in several leagues he has played in.

"Our outs are Jack Carpenter (South Mildura), Austin McDonald (Goodwood Saints), Jaydn Goodfellow (Angle Vale), Will O'Brien (Mallee league), Ben Cummings (retired), Riley McDonald (Wagga Tigers) and Sam Dunn (North Haven)."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"Sam Young, Stephan Mercuri



Leigh Ryswyk

and Jameson Schilling are having good preseasons and will get their opportunity at some stage this year to have a crack at senior footy."

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or train this year? Or do you firmly believe sticking with the plan and getting another year in the same system will be beneficial?**

"You obviously tweak a few things depending on personnel and we have lost some key players, especially with Carpenter and Cummings, we lose a fair bit of experience, so there will be a need for others to step up.

"Our group as a whole are in their prime, meaning we have a dozen players now with that 35-40 games of A grade experience and it's now their time to shine."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"Hard to go past last year's Schluter Medallist and club captain Ethan Gant.

"Sam Sibbick had a good year last year and will be ready to fire having a great preseason, Riley Robinson can make an impact immediately, and the footy nous of Leigh Ryswyk will see him collect votes."

**Have you spoken to the group**



Ethan Gant

**about expectations for this year? What would you consider a successful season?**

"Expectations have not been mentioned at all, but with the mass exodus of key players from all BLG clubs this upcoming

season, anything could be a possibility."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"Tanunda is due."

## KEY PLAYERS

### Ethan Gant

Gant made a massive impression in 2025, sharing the Schluter Medal despite only playing 13 games for a team that did not make finals.

The former Central District SANFL talent has seemingly been at the bottom of every pack since returning to his junior club in 2024 – a year where he was named in the Bulldogs' best 14 times from 15 starts.

One of the BLG's very best contested beasts, it should surprise nobody if Gant is right amongst the top vote-winners on medal night once again.

### Leigh Ryswyk

A former BLG goal-kicking champion – slotting 55 majors during the 2023 campaign – Ryswyk reinvented himself at Barossa District in 2025 after returning from a one-year stint at Angle Vale.

The crafty small forward began the campaign in typical fashion, kicking at least one goal in each of his first six appearances, before being redeployed in the back half as the Bulldogs' quarterback out of defence.

His pinpoint foot skills made him one of the BLG's most damaging score-launchers from kick-ins, taking aggressive avenues through the corridor to rip opposing zones to shreds, and his versatility will be invaluable for coach Ash Barnett – who also coached him at Angle Vale.



Xander Bates

Creating your financial future

CONNECT • PLAN • ACHIEVE

**WEALTH**  
**EVOLUTION**  
FINANCIAL PLANNING GROUP

COREY ROBERTS • LAUNCE KENT • DAMIEN NANGLE

Gawler • Adelaide • Sydney • 8223 3774

[www.wealthevolution.net.au](http://www.wealthevolution.net.au)

12751299-CS10-25



**COACH »**  
Matt Stelzer

**MOST RECENT PREMIERSHIP »** 1994

**HOME GROUND »**  
Emmetts Park

## Coach chat with Matt Stelzer

**Arriving at the club after a one-win season, what are some realistic goals you have set for this year, as well as going forward?**

"Last year is done. Our goal this season isn't a number on the ladder, it's raising the standard.

"We want to be harder to play against every week. That means contest first, team-first behaviours, and four-quarter consistency.

"Long term, it's about building sustainability. Clear identity, strong development, and accountability across the group.

"If we get that right, results will follow."

**What have been the focuses of your first preseason in charge? How do you go about building your culture?**

"The focus has been clarity, accountability, and identity.

"We've simplified how we want to play so everyone understands their role. Pressure, contest, and connection have been big themes.

"Culture isn't talk. It's behaviour. Consistency at training, honest feedback, and calling standards out when they drop.

"We know who we are and what we want to represent."

**Clubs further out of Adelaide like Freeling and Kapunda have traditionally had a tougher time recruiting – how have you found your first offseason on the recruiting table?**

"From day one, one of the priorities our VP Tommy Carmichael set was filling our points properly, something we've struggled with in recent years. "We've attacked that hard and



Jacob Wright

we're now almost at full capacity.

"We've brought in Alex Deinhoff, Nick Organ and Jordy McKinnon from Port District, Mitch Nappa and Zach Kessner from Tea Tree Gully, Jake Butterfield from Balaklava and previously Henley, Cooper Carpenter from Willaston, and Andrew Marshall from Angle Vale, who'll also coach our under-17.5s

"They're not just talented players, they're quality people with strong attitudes who want to contribute to what we're building.

"We've lost a couple through retirement in Adam Cockshell and Travis Muster, and the Holloway brothers (Aaron and Joel) have moved on."

**Who do you expect to be some of your key players this season? Have there been many preseason standouts?**

"Standards start with our leadership group. Benny Heinrich, Heath McCluskey, Jono Ross, and our young leaders Austin Poulton and Harvey McDonald have been strong voices.

"Scott Dutschke brings high-level experience and is setting the tone with his voice, preparation and fitness.

"What's been really pleasing is the consistency. The new recruits have added leadership and energy, and there's genuine



Austin Poulton

competition for spots.

"That's what lifts a group."

**With Jay Schulz coming to the club as head of player coaching and development, have you guys discussed a plan for pushing your most promising juniors into senior footy early? Or do you want them playing against kids their own age?**

"Having Jay Schulz overseeing player coaching and

development is a huge asset.

We're aligned on developing players properly before exposing them too early.

"If a junior is physically and mentally ready, we'll back them in. But the priority is long-term growth.

"We want them coming into senior footy ready to compete and contribute, not just make up numbers."

## KEY PLAYERS

### Austin Poulton

Arguably Freeling's best local athlete, Poulton leads the town's cricket and football clubs in admirable fashion.

Freeling was by far the lowest-scoring team in the BLG in 2025, and Poulton spent the bulk of his time in the midfield, but he was still able to pile up 22 goals in 16 games to finish eight majors clear of his closest teammate and 12th overall in the competition.

In consecutive games at the tail-end of this past campaign Poulton snagged a bag of five against South Gawler, and then followed up a week later with four more against finalists Angaston.

An unbackable favourite for the club's Best-and-Fairest.

### Heath McCluskey

Having come through Port District's Division 1 program, McCluskey made the move up to Freeling in 2024 and has established himself as a stalwart in the Redlegs' defence.

Playing in a backline under constant bombardment McCluskey has earned 14 best player selections from his 29 total games in Freeling colours, and has been flagged by new coach Matt Stelzer as an integral part of his new leadership group.

For the Redlegs to move up the ladder they will need to improve defensively, having conceded 1914 points last season (119.6 per game) while no other club allowed more than 1564, and Freeling should feel good about McCluskey being one piece of that puzzle.



Joel Cochrane

12760203-JM19-25

# COMPLETE Bathroom Packages

FROM ONLY **\$4,000**

All your tiles, taps & tubs... **THE LOT!**

**BEAUMONT TILES**  
Gawler

5/485 Main North Road  
Ph: 08 8523 1550

#ichosebeaumonts  
[Farmhouse value package shown]

f p YouTube tile.com.au



- + Accounting
- + Taxation
- + GST and BAS
- + Self managed Superannuation
- + Business Advice

BAROSSA OFFICE  
Telephone: 8562 4688  
24 Gawler Street, Nuriootpa

KAPUNDA OFFICE  
Telephone: 8566 3433  
23 Main Street, Kapunda

admin@dito.com.au

www.dito.com.au

12844707-CS12-26



**GAWLER CENTRAL**  
EST 1889

**COACH »**

Brendan Dew

**MOST RECENT  
PREMIERSHIP » 2020**

**HOME GROUND »**  
Gawler Oval

## Coach chat with Brendan Dew

### Moving into a player-coach role, will this be your first time in charge of an A grade team?

"Yes, this will be my first time leading an A grade side and I'm genuinely energised by the opportunity.

"Coaching at this level is something I've been building towards for a long time. I'm passionate about helping players grow not just as footballers, but as people off the field as well."

### What have been the focuses of your first Gawler Central preseason?

"Our preseason has had a heavy emphasis on defence. We've invested an enormous amount of time into building a high-pressure, team-first defensive system.

"We want to be known as a side that hunts the ball, works relentlessly for one another, and makes it incredibly difficult for opposition teams to move the ball cleanly.

"But once we win it back, that's where the fun begins. I've given the boys the licence to play without fear, to take the game on, back their skills and express themselves.

"We want to play an exciting brand of football that our supporters love watching. High pressure without the ball, bold and attacking with it – that's the identity we're building."

### Having spent the past few years near the bottom of the ladder, what are your expectations for 2026? And what would you consider a successful season?

"For me, success this year won't be defined by our position on the



Andrew Wright

ladder or the number of wins we have.

"Of course, we want to be competitive every week and put ourselves in a strong position, but the bigger picture matters just as much.

"The club and I are deeply committed to building an inclusive, welcoming environment, a place where players, families and supporters genuinely want to spend their time.

"We want Gawler Central to be a club people are proud to represent.

"What excites me most is that we've laid some fantastic foundations this preseason in standards, culture and system.

"2026 is about growth and momentum. We're setting ourselves up not just for this year, but to springboard into 2027 and beyond with real belief and stability."

### How aggressively have you been recruiting?

"We've been proactive and purposeful with our recruiting, targeting players who not only add quality on the field but also strengthen our culture.

"Mitchell Slater joins us from Golden Grove. He's a dynamic, hard-working ruckman who competes fiercely and gives our midfield first use. His work rate around the ground is outstanding.

"Dylan Pilkington returns home after a stint at Golden Grove. He's a fantastic distributor with the ability to impact both inside and outside the contest. His composure and decision-making will be invaluable.

"Josh Goss, coming in from Mildura, is a great kick and mover. He's incredibly versatile and has the capacity to play anywhere on the ground, which gives us enormous flexibility.

"Jared Jenner also returns, a lively, talented forward who brings energy, creativity and scoreboard impact.

"It's exciting to welcome these players into our system."

### Are there any juniors pushing for A grade selection?

"Kayde Ward has had a tremendous preseason. His work ethic has been first class, and he's put genuine pressure on for selection.

"Mason Dohnt, returning from Woodville-West Torrens, has impressed with his aerial strength and strong understanding of his own game. He knows what he does well and plays to it, which is a great trait for a young player.

"Seeing juniors step up and demand opportunities is exactly what we want as a club."

### Who do you expect to be some of your key players?

"There have been several players who have really caught the eye.

"Lachy Warner, formerly of Barossa District, has come back in terrific shape. He's super fit and has enormous upside, and his energy around the contest is infectious.

"Brad Mitchell, returning from an ACL injury, is in fantastic condition. His commitment to his rehab and preparation speaks volumes about his character.

"Michael Vidal has also put together a strong preseason and looks ready to make an impact.

"Ryan Williams, one of our key pillars down back, continues to grow as a leader. His aerial ability and communication are critical in setting us up defensively, and he drives standards within the group."

### Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be the favourites in 2026?

"I genuinely think it's shaping up to be a very even competition.

"A number of clubs have recruited well and a couple of key additions can dramatically change a season in local football.

"That said, the experience and class of Nuriootpa will likely see them start as favourites. They've built strong continuity and know how to win.

"But we're focused on ourselves, if we can execute our system and bring the intensity we've trained for, we believe we can compete with anyone."

**KEY PLAYERS**

**Brendan Dew**

The Tigers' new coach will also step straight into the starting midfield, with the former Central District and Barossa District Bulldog returning to the BLG in 2026 following a year away where he won a premiership with Mildura.

He was named among Mildura's best in that two-goal grand final victory, which was par for the course for the classy contested specialist.

Barossa District's Best-and-Fairest in 2022 and 2023, as well as runner-up in 2024, across those three years Dew produced 44 goals and 44 best player selections from 50 games.

A star signing can make a big difference in local footy, and Dew is in the running for most valuable addition of the offseason.

**Ryan Williams**

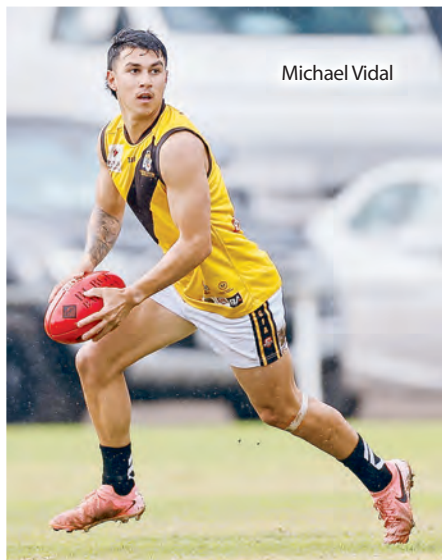
A member of the BLG's Team of the Season and a standout for the Central Zone at the 2025 SA Country Football Championships, Williams has become one of the league's premier intercept defenders.

Formerly from Henley and Woodville-West Torrens, Williams has put together back-to-back stellar campaigns since arriving at Gawler Central.

Earning zone selection in both years, Williams was named in the Tigers' best performers in 25 of his 29 games, providing an invaluable centrepiece to build around in the back half.



Jake Asher



Michael Vidal



Austin Harris



Howard Thorp

We Bring The Whole Team!

ROSS WHISTON  
0418 643 770

SALLYANN VIVIAN  
0419 849 168

RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE





## THE BOMBERS



### COACH »

Jesse Lonergan

### MOST RECENT

PREMIERSHIP » 2005

### HOME GROUND »

Dutton Park

## Coach chat with Jesse Lonergan

**Taking over a team that has struggled in recent years, what do you think is the key to building a winning culture? And how have you been implementing this during your first preseason in charge?**

"Peter Rolfe and the leaders laid important foundations around our trademarks and connection, and we're building on that rather than starting again.

"A strong culture is built on accountability, connection and clarity, knowing what we stand for and how we compete.

"We've had Jason Fairall from High Performing Teams come in and facilitated sessions around this and been effective.

"We've been getting great buy-in from the guys and creating some clear trademarks and behaviours that we're all aligned on. Results follow behaviour.

"This preseason we've reinforced those standards while also bringing energy and enjoyment.

"The coaches Travis Opitz, Wes Farley, Nathan Brady and Kym Mosey have been pivotal in that space, driving enthusiasm and helping create a positive training environment."

**As a playing coach with AFL credentials, where do you think you can make the most impact on the field?**

"As a playing coach, I think I can have the biggest impact with my experience and composure in key moments.

"Having played at a high level, I've been exposed to strong systems and standards, and my role is to help drive those on-field through voice, positioning and decision-making.



"I'll spend most of my time through the midfield and forward this year, and support our younger players around stoppage and structure.

"From a recruiting perspective, we've added some good depth across the ground, which gives us flexibility.

"The beauty of this time of year is we're still experimenting and will be moving the magnets to find what works best for the team while also putting individuals in positions where they can thrive. "That flexibility will be important across the season."

**Clubs further out of Adelaide like Freeling and Kapunda have traditionally had a tougher time recruiting – how have you found your first offseason on the recruiting table?**

"Recruiting is always a challenge but that's the beauty of trying to build an environment where people genuinely want to be part of.

"I've been really impressed with the work Lachy Mickan, David Leslie and Sam Ryan have done in the offseason. There's been a real focus on bringing in quality people first, not just players.

"We've been able to attract some strong additions from good programs, as well as welcome back a couple of familiar faces, which gives the group a healthy mix of youth, experience and

versatility.

"Team selection at this current stage is a genuine unknown which makes things exciting."

**Who are this year's A grade ins and outs, as well as what positions the new additions will play?**

"We're losing Scotty Taylor and Connor White, who had a lot of experience in our side. Unfortunately we couldn't retain due to a number of reasons.

"The exciting prospect for us is that we have a number of guys who have come from strong Div 1 programs, SANFL or interstate leagues.

"It provides our group with a different perspective and vital experience. Selection is going to be a challenge this year, but a great challenge for us coaches.

"Our new arrivals include Angus Ralph (forward), Josh Ainsworth (fwd/ruck), Jake Ellis (mid/wing), Callum Fairall (mid/half-back), Hamish Ralph (key position), Tom Lockwood (backline), Mitch Bidmade (mid/fwd), Zack Diekman (half-back/mid), Nathan Dyer (key position) and myself (mid/fwd)."

**Based on what you've seen so far, who do you anticipate being some of your key players this year?**

"I'm really impressed with Aidan Mudge. He has some seriously

great agility and leg speed and will provide us with a lot of run-and-carry, which is exciting to see.

"Harry Wuttke as a midfielder has caught the eye, and Riley Menzel has a lot of forward talent, but I've also seen bits and pieces of what he could do inside as well.

"Jake Kelly and Max McCarthy are both juniors of the football club and have moved full time into the senior program now. They both show great talent well above their age and I'm very excited to see them grow this year.

"Zack Diekman and Callum Fairall are both new to the club and have had exposure to SANFL programs and have genuine talent for higher grades. There's plenty more I'm missing."

**What would you consider a successful season?**

"We want to be playing finals and start competing with the top teams that have proved themselves over the last few years, understanding that we are coming off a few lean years.

"This time of year we're very optimistic of what we could achieve, but without the games starting to find out where we sit, our main objective is to create standards and culture that will hold us in good stead for years to come – and most importantly, enjoy it.

## KEY PLAYERS

### Jesse Lonergan

It's not often that a player with AFL experience arrives in the league, and injecting a talent of Lonergan's quality directly into the midfield should have an immediate impact that speaks for itself.

As well as his work in the contest and clean skills on the outside, it is as the Bombers' new head coach that Lonergan will have his chance to truly make a difference.

It remains to be seen if his players can pull it off, but expect to see a far more organised and professional style from a club that believes it can jump out of the bottom-three and into the finals picture.

### Riley Menzel

Having made his A grade debut back in 2022 while splitting his time with the under 17.5s, Menzel has quickly developed into one of the BLG's most promising young forwards.

After two A grade goals from 11 games in 2022, Menzel improved to kick nine majors in 2023, and then exploded in 2024 with 35 to finish sixth in the competition.

He backed it up in 2025 with 33 goals – fifth-most in the A grade, and more than any other player on a non-finals team.

Kapunda was the BLG's second-lowest scoring team last year (52.3 points per game), so if the Bombers take a meaningful step forward, Menzel's opportunities should skyrocket.

Jacob Lochowiak



Wyatt Ryan





**FAMILY OWNED  
& OPERATED**

- ANTS • TERMITES • BIRDS
- SPIDERS • SILVERFISH
- BORERS • FLEAS • POSSUMS
- RATS & MICE • COCKROACHES • BEES & WASPS

**8566 2556** 74 MAIN STREET, KAPUNDA  
WWW.GOTABUG.COM.AU

12845091-C512-236

**Cover Up With Our Tints  
PROTECT YOUR ASSETS**



**HOME, SHOP & OFFICE TINTS**

PROTECT AGAINST HARMFUL UV

- Lower energy cost • Block UV by 99%
- Reduce summer heat • Increase privacy



**VEHICLE TINTING**

PROTECT AGAINST HEAT & GLARE

- Increase security • Reject IR heat up to 99%
- Darkest legal • Improves safety



**CELEBRATING  
27 YEARS**

16 Paxton Street, Willaston | [www.tintacar.com.au](http://www.tintacar.com.au)

12845091-C507-726



**COACH »**  
Nicholas Madden

**MOST RECENT  
PREMIERSHIP » 2025**

**HOME GROUND »**  
Centennial Park Oval

## President chat with Josh Norton

**Nuriootpa closed out 2025 as clearly the league's best team, dominating both finals games by 40-plus points. Do you feel like the favourite in 2026?**

"Not really. 2025's done and dusted now. It was a great year for the club, but once the new season starts it honestly means very little.

"Every team resets, every ladder starts at zero, and what happened last year doesn't win you a game this year.

"We know other clubs will come back stronger and everyone's chasing improvement. For us it's about getting back to work, putting in the effort again, and earning everything week by week.

"If we focus on the standards we set for ourselves and keep improving, the results will take care of themselves."

**Mindset wise, how do you approach the preseason after a premiership? Do you try to carry that momentum, or do you want your group to start from scratch and prove it all again?**

"Mindset-wise it's about building on what we did last year, but also understanding that nothing is guaranteed.

"The premierships gives the group confidence and shows that the standards we set work, so we want to carry that belief and momentum into the preseason.

"At the same time, we're very conscious that 2025 doesn't win us anything in 2026. Every season starts fresh, and the group knows we have to prove ourselves again.



Mitchell Norton

"The focus through preseason is on working hard, improving in the areas we think we can get better, and making sure the hunger is still there.

"If we can bring the same work ethic and standards that got us there last year, while continuing to improve, that's the best way to give ourselves a chance to compete again."

**Can you please let me know the full list of A grade ins and outs?**

"We're not 100 per cent sure who our ins will be, but our confirmed A grade outs are Nick Gregurke, Kyle Jenner (retired), Willem Schluter-Prouse and Jackson Baldwin (retired)."

**Schiller and Norton are considered Team of the Season locks, assuming they stay healthy -- who are some other Tigers who could get in the club's Best-and-Fairest mix?**

"Jarrod Schiller took out the club's Best-and-Fairest last year after a really strong and consistent season. Looking ahead, there are

a few others who could certainly feature in that mix if things go well.

"Jack Henke is one of the young guys who's been working really hard and continues to develop, so he's one to watch.

"We've also had a group of first-year senior players who have been really consistent on the track so far, which is encouraging.

"Sam Falland keeps putting in the work and setting a good standard, while Rhys Cannizzaro and Kai Rosenzweig are both quality players who are capable of having big seasons as well.

"If those guys can keep building on what they're doing, they'll definitely give themselves a chance to be right up there."

**Have there been any juniors catching the eye this preseason and putting their hand up for an A grade spot?**

"We've had a few juniors catching the eye across the preseason, particularly some of the first-year senior players who were playing under 17s last year.

"The likes of Archie Davies, Mason Feltus and Lachie Dunstan have all shown good signs.

They've come back keen, worked hard on the track and have really put their hand up to be around the senior group.

"Hopefully we'll see those guys get the opportunity to play plenty of senior footy in 2026 as they continue to develop."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you expect to be the top contenders?**

"Based on what we're hearing around the league, we'd expect the Angaston Football Club to be right up there again. They've been a strong side and you'd imagine they'll be one of the main contenders.

"But across the board, every club is aiming to improve. That's the nature of the competition – teams are always looking to get better year to year.

"Hopefully we see that league-wide again in 2026 with a really competitive season."

**KEY PLAYERS**

**Mitchell Norton**

Arguably the BLG's best defender of the 2020s, Norton has been a star for a Nuriootpa team that has played in three of the past four grand finals, winning in 2022 and 2025.

The Tigers allowed the fewest points in the league during this past year's premiership campaign (51.3 per game) and went on to dominate their two finals games by a combined margin of 225-105.

Norton and Simon Furnell were the only non-goal kickers to make Nuri's best players in the grand final, putting on a masterful performance to stymie a Willaston side that led the BLG in scoring (97.7 points per game).

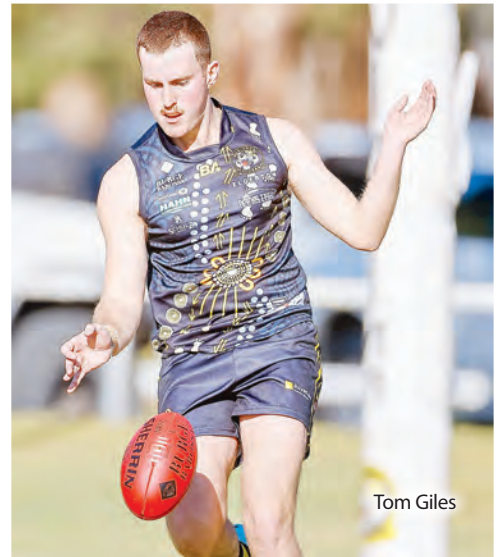
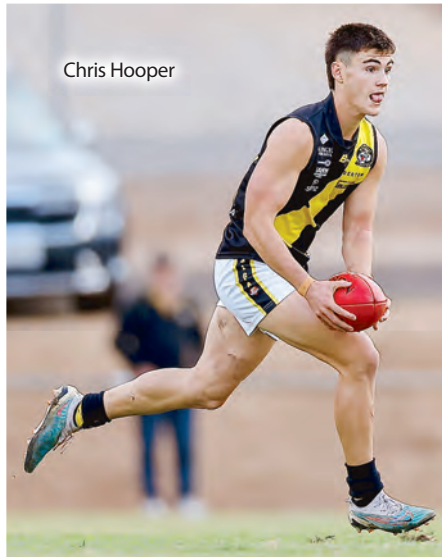
**Jarrold Schiller**

Nuriootpa's reigning Best-and-Fairest, Schiller made a seismic impact when the three-time Central District Best-and-Fairest retired from SANFL football to return to his junior club.

He kicked 14 goals in his return season, playing primarily in the midfield.

His elusiveness and burst made him a weapon breaking away from stoppages, while his skills and smarts help Nuriootpa retain possession of the ball and go slow when necessary.

Schiller is one of the more influential players in the BLG in regards to dictating how his team plays around him, and with the departure of superstar Nicholas Gregurke, he will have more responsibility than ever in 2026.



**RayWhite**

**We Bring The Whole Team!**

**SALLYANN VIVIAN**  
0419 849 168

RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE





**COACH »**  
Gavin Chaplin

**MOST RECENT PREMIERSHIP » 2023**

**HOME GROUND »**  
Eldred Riggs Reserve

## Coach chat with Gavin Chaplin

**For the first time in the 2020s South Gawler is coming off a season with no finals appearance. What are your expectations for 2026?**

"Our expectation is to play finals and finish top-two. That's where we've been during most of this stretch prior to last year.

"Over the past five seasons I'm not sure how many games we've dropped – but it hasn't been very many. We would expect that we'd bounce back pretty quickly."

**Having recently dealt with a lack of recruiting points due to your sustained success, have you had more wiggle-room to add to the team this offseason?**

"When you win you don't accrue recruiting points, and since we've been on three points for a long time, it meant that last year we lost six really good players, which was a big hit.

"That's how the competition tries to be evened out, and it is what it is, but we'll be a lot better than we were. A lot better.

"Our points have doubled now from three to six, although that's only enabled us to get one extra player in, so you've still got to develop your own – that's how it is in the Barossa – otherwise you're going to get left behind.

"In saying that, we're really happy with what we've done this offseason.

"We've got Marcus Barreau back from Central District – he's a former South junior who has now played 80 league games at Centrals – and I think he'll be one of the best players in the competition.

"We've also got young Beau Ryan from Central District's reserves, he was another junior of ours and



Cameron Rogers

he'll be a really good player at this level.

"Also Joel Holloway, former Best-and-Fairest winner at Willaston, and late last year we added Ryan Marini from Adelaide Uni where he was a previous captain of their footy club and top-up player with Adelaide's SANFL team.

"For our outs, Joseph Fenwick has been training out at Glenelg at the moment, and Cody Gilchrist is out trying to make the Port Magpies – the work they're doing in those programs will only make them fitter and stronger when or if they come back to us."

**Do you have any juniors who have been making their case for an A grade role?**

"Our under 17s won the grand final last year, and eight of those lads were then asked to train at Central District, so we think we might see half of them some weeks, it's hard to say this early.

"Again, that's the future. We think they've got some real talent and we're looking forward to seeing them in South colours.

"Ayden Nicolai, Jye Gordon and Josh Saunders are the three that I've seen a fair bit of, there's another five still down at Centrals, and there's also some reserves who have now been with us for three years and therefore cost us no points.

"Guys like young Domenic De Ruvo and Anthony Bullock have



Joseph Arnold

done their time in the twos and they're going to be A-graders now."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who would you expect to be competing for that award this year?**

"Lachie Arnold was our Best-and-Fairest, he trained a little bit down at North Adelaide but he's back.

"Josh Wittwer came second by one vote and he's great nick, then guys like Flynn Pisani and Jaden Gurney should be around the mark again, Marcus Barreau obviously, Joel Holloway, Ryan Marini – there's 10 blokes who could realistically win it."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think will be this season's top contenders?**

"That's a hard one to answer this year because it's been really quiet on who's in and who's out, but I would think Tanunda will be strong, they're always around the mark and I don't think they've lost too many.

"I think Willaston will still be strong, Barossa has lost some, but I think the competition will be really even, with Freeling, Gawler Central and Kapunda having all picked up a heap of players."

## KEY PLAYERS

### Lachlan Arnold

The Lions' reigning Best-and-Fairest and 2023 Hurn Medallist, Arnold has already established himself as one of the most influential players in the competition.

The long-armed, high-leaping standout boasts a unique blend of size and movement, out-jumping the BLG's biggest rucks and outrunning those who like to cover more ground.

After kicking three goals from 17 games in 2024, Arnold showed another string to his bow with 14 majors from 14 starts in 2025, earning best player honours in eight of his last nine outings as he finished in stellar form.

Having already proven he can be a centrepiece of a premiership-calibre outfit, Arnold is firmly in the discussion of the BLG's best ruckman.

### Marcus Barreau

With 76 SANFL games and 35 league goals to his name, Barreau returns to the BLG at 28 years old with an opportunity to stamp himself as one of the competition's top talents.

Having split his time in 2025 between Central District's league team and reserves, Barreau made one appearance for South Gawler in Round 9, where he gave Lions fans a small taste of what's to come.

In that outing Barreau kicked two goals in a shock upset against eventual premier Nuriootpa – the only non-finals team to defeat the Tigers all year – and was named the Lions' second-best player (behind Lachlan Arnold).

Robert Briggs



Bailey Thorp



Patrick White

RayWhite

# We Bring The Whole Team!



## ROSS WHISTON

### 0418 643 770

RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE



1284363\_CS17\_26



**COACH »**  
Sam Colquhoun

**MOST RECENT  
PREMIERSHIP » 2019**

**HOME GROUND »**  
Tanunda Recreation Park

## Coach chat with Sam Colquhoun

**Coming off preliminary final appearances in 2024 and 2025, do you look at making slight changes to get over the hump, or do you view it as a sign that things are going well in Tanunda?**

"Preliminary finals are winning seasons, however we are left hungry to try and make a grand final."

"We will continue to develop players within the group, with improvement to come within the squad as well as some added depth."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this year?**

"We have signed Darren Shillabeer this offseason who will play forward of the ball."

"Matthew Prior returns from Eudunda Football Club, and Isaac Feltus will also return after a year off."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest, and who are some players you think will be in the mix for the award this year?**

"Lewis Cowham is our reigning Best-and-Fairest winner, and he will be in line to win the award again this season along with the likes of Jackson Docherty, Tom Hahn, Rune Gilfoy and Todd Falkenberg."

**Have any juniors caught your eye this preseason and put their hand up for an A grade spot?**

"Noah Schultz made his A grade debut last season as an underage player, and is completing his first senior preseason."

"He will be a chance to play some senior football in 2026."



Lewis Cowham

Additionally Jordan Rosenzweig will play his first year of senior football after winning the goal-kicking in the under 17s last season."

**What would you consider a successful season?**

"I would consider making a grand final a successful season – that is clearly the goal after featuring in three preliminary finals in the past five years."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you expect to be the top contenders?**

"I expect Nuriootpa to be flag favourites, with South Gawler improving significantly on their record from last year."

"I also anticipate Willaston to be a strong outfit as usual."



Rune Gilfoy

## KEY PLAYERS

### Sam Colquhoun

Once again Colquhoun will come into the BLG season among the main favourites for the Schluter Medal, having already won the league's top individual honour in 2022.

In his five seasons since arriving at Tanunda in 2021 Colquhoun's Magpies have only finished lower than third on the ladder once, winning the 2024 minor premiership and reaching each of the past two preliminary finals.

Despite often taking kick-ins and guiding the Magpies out of defence Colquhoun has still managed to put together an outrageous goal-kicking record, slotting 129 majors from 76 games with limited time up forward. Many teams around the BLG believe it may be Tanunda's time, and now at 31 years old, with all the experience in the world, it's up to Colquhoun to lead the way.

### Darren Shillabeer

There has been something of a key forward drought in the past couple BLG seasons, with Jed Durdin (61 goals for Angaston in 2024) the only one to crack 40 goals in 2024 or 2025 (small forward Jack Henke kicked 50 for Nuriootpa in 2025).

Shillabeer shared the league lead with his Barossa District teammate Leigh Ryswyk back in 2023, kicking 55 each, before making the move to Myponga-Sellicks. There, he immediately ripped the Great Southern Football League to shreds, tallying 100 goals and a premiership in his first season and another 64 snags in 2025, finishing his two-year run with multiple majors in 39 of his 42 starts.

His addition to a Tanunda side that has played in back-to-back preliminary finals could end up in the running for best signing of the year.



Hugh Smart

**kwi**

**YOUR LOCAL SERVICE TEAM, BACKED BY A NATIONAL NETWORK WITH GLOBAL SUPPORT FROM THE WORLD'S LARGEST INSURERS**

**c b n** COMMUNITY BROKER NETWORK

**BUSINESS & TRADES ► RURAL & FARM | WINERY | LIABILITY | HOME & LANDLORDS | MOTOR**

**T 08 8562 1956 | E info@kwi.insure | www.kwi.insure**

**Couthard House, 66-70 Murray Street, Nuriootpa**

**Steadfast**  
THE STRENGTH YOU NEED

1284-8087-0512-26



**COACH »**

Damien Herzick

**MOST RECENT PREMIERSHIP » 2024**

**HOME GROUND » Elliot Goodger Reserve**

## Coach chat with Damien Herzick

**Coming off a premiership in 2024 and a runner-up finish in 2025, what would you consider a successful 2026 season?**

"This year is about continuing to develop our list and keep our winning culture going.

"We have had a big turnover of players, so introducing a new group is exciting.

"We set out every year to play finals, and this year is no different."

**Two years in a row Willaston has led the A grade in total points scored – how do you prepare your side in preseason to create such an explosive attacking system?**

"We have been lucky to have the group together for a few years now so our offensive play has been built on speed of ball movement.

"We have some players that are explosive, which allows us to get the ball to forwards quickly one-on-one."

**Long-time captain Tyson Irlam is arguably the biggest departure in the BLG this offseason – have you been able to bring in any recruits to offset that? And how restrictive is your points situation after your recent success?**

"As well as Tyson we have also lost Heath Growden, Nicholas Lehmann, Enrique Mazzeo, and the Mondello brothers (Luigi and Antonio) are trying again at league level.

"Our ins are Chris Knapp, Mason Warner and Mack Bowman. They fill up our nine points available to us, and Bowman will also be one of our three SANFL top-up



Ethan East

talents along with Saxon Evans and Harry Elbow."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest, and who are some of the guys you think will be in the mix for the award this year?**

"Our reigning Best-and-Fairest is Isaya McKenzie, and I would expect Izzy to be high in the votes again.

"Also Justin Hoskins, Adam Connelly, and depending on how many games our top-up players get, they will also figure."

**Have any juniors impressed enough this preseason to put themselves in position for an A grade spot?**

"We have been lucky with success in the reserves the past couple of years as well so I am looking forward to Hudson Cole, Jay Warrior, Cooper Reid and also young Ethan Siddall has been training very well."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you expect to be the top contenders?**

"It looks like the comp will see real improvement from the teams that have been finishing lower the last couple of years, but I expect South Gawler, Nuriootpa and Tanunda to be up the top-half come the end of the year."



Ash Fry

**KEY PLAYERS**

**Isaya McKenzie**

The Donnybrooks' reigning Best-and-Fairest, there may not be a more eye-catching player in the BLG when at the top of his game.

The bushy-bearded, raking left-footer always seems to be streaming through the 50m arc lining up a shot on goal, posting back-to-back seasons with at least 20 majors for Willaston team that won the 2024 flag and finished runner-up in 2025.

He will be even more important to Willaston this year after the departure of longtime captain and midfield dynamo Tyson Irlam.

**Harrison Elbrow**

The 2021 Schluter Medal winner may spend a fair few weeks playing with Port Adelaide's SANFL team, but any game that he runs out in Willaston colours Elbrow will be one of the most impactful players on the park.

Still just 26 years old, with 37 SANFL games of experience for North Adelaide from 2022-2024, Elbrow missed the first month of the 2025 season as the Donnybrooks tried to defend their title.

He made up for lost time with a sparkling last month of the regular season, kicking eight goals across four games while being named in the bests each week.

A star of the competition.



Harrison Elbrow



Isaya McKenzie



Joshua Waldhuter



Justin Hoskin

We Bring The Whole Team!

RayWhite



ROSS WHISTON

0418 643 770



RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE

# BAROSSA, LIGHT & GAWLER FOOTBALL ASSOC. SENIOR WOMEN FIXTURE

## ROUND 1 Apr 26

South Gawler v Tanunda  
Gawler Central v Light  
Willaston v Barossa District  
Angaston v Nuriootpa

## ROUND 2 May 3

Willaston v Angaston  
Nuriootpa v Gawler Central  
South Gawler v Barossa District  
Tanunda v Light

## ROUND 3 May 10

Angaston v South Gawler  
Light v Nuriootpa  
Gawler Central v Willaston  
Tanunda v Barossa District

## ROUND 4 May 17

Willaston v Light  
South Gawler v Gawler Central  
Tanunda v Nuriootpa  
Barossa District v Angaston

## ROUND 5 May 24

Gawler Central v Barossa District  
Angaston v Tanunda  
Nuriootpa v Willaston  
Light v South Gawler

## ROUND 6 May 31

Gawler Central v Tanunda  
Willaston v South Gawler  
Light v Angaston  
Nuriootpa v Barossa District

## JUNE LONG WEEKEND

## ROUND 7 Jun 14

South Gawler v Nuriootpa  
Barossa District v Light  
Tanunda v Willaston  
Angaston v Gawler Central

## ROUND 8 Jun 22

Nuriootpa v Angaston  
Barossa District v Willaston  
Light v Gawler Central  
Tanunda v South Gawler

## ROUND 9 Jun 28

Light v Tanunda  
Angaston v Willaston  
Barossa District v South Gawler  
Gawler Central v Nuriootpa

## ROUND 10 Jul 5

**JULY 4** Barossa District v Tanunda (6pm)  
Willaston v Gawler Central  
South Gawler v Angaston  
Nuriootpa v Light

## COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS July 10-12 – Barossa Park

## ROUND 11 Jul 19

Light v Willaston  
Angaston v Barossa District  
Nuriootpa v Tanunda  
Gawler Central v South Gawler

## ROUND 12 Jul 26

Tanunda v Angaston  
Willaston v Nuriootpa  
South Gawler v Light  
Barossa District v Gawler Central

## ROUND 13 Aug 2

Barossa District v Nuriootpa  
Tanunda v Gawler Central  
Angaston v Light  
South Gawler v Willaston

## ROUND 14 Aug 9

Light v Barossa District  
Nuriootpa v South Gawler  
Gawler Central v Angaston  
Willaston v Tanunda

## QUALIFYING FINAL August 16 – Venue TBD

## ELIMINATION FINAL August 16 – Venue TBD

## PRELIMINARY FINAL August 23 – Venue TBD

## GRAND FINAL August 30 – Venue TBD



**RayWhite®**



LIST AND SELL WITH  
**RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE**  
AND WE'LL REFER \$500 BACK TO YOUR  
NOMINATED SPORTING CLUB

## UNDERSTANDING THE REAL ESTATE MARKET CAN BE A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

*Get in touch with the team from  
Ray White Gawler East & Angle Vale.*

**08 7806 8227**

Shop B03, 4 Mullamar Way, Gawler East SA 5118  
120 Murray Street, Gawler SA 5118  
Shop 10, 121 - 123 Heaslip Road, Angle Vale SA 5117

12844753-CS11-26

# Donnybrooks seek eighth straight trip to Senior Women's grand final

FOLLOWING back-to-back grand final heartbreaks in 2023 (by one point) and 2024 (by two points), Willaston scaled the mountaintop once more in 2025 by defeating Barossa District 2.7 (19) to 1.4 (10).

In doing so the Donnybrooks continued their remarkable decade, having reached the grand final in every season since 2019 while also winning it all in 2020 and 2022.

Behind Best-and-Fairest and grand final Best-on-Ground Lauren Smith, together with goal-kicking champion Lillian Bornholdt and a cast of Team of the Year guns including Akeira-Juliet Whichello in the middle and Lauryn Farr in defence, the Donnybrooks are unquestionably the team to beat in 2026.

Willaston's two losses this past season came against eventual grand finalist Barossa District and third-ranked Tanunda, and both of those clubs will be ambitious about their chances to flip the script this time around.

Coach Dean Woods is returning for his second year at the helm of the Bulldogs, and with his list primarily aged from 17-20 and led by reigning Best-and-Fairest Kirra Tonkin he is expecting natural progression to prevent any backwards step.

Tanunda, the 2024 premier, has enjoyed a more mature squad in recent years thanks



Willaston's premiership-winning Senior Women.

to the excellent SANFLW recruiting efforts of player-coach Nicola Biagi.

Best-and-Fairest Brittany Watt will go around again for the Magpies, and Tanunda also

boasts one of the competition's most exciting juniors, with 15-year-old Isabelle Zander already turning heads as part of Central District's new under 18 girls team.

LOCAL | PROFESSIONAL | KNOWLEDGE | INTEGRITY



**custom**  
conveyancing

Custom Conveyancing wishes all  
football and netball teams all the  
best for the 2026 season.



**8523 2514**

LOCATED AT 53 Adelaide Road, Gawler South

All three of those clubs will expect to play finals, as will the Angaston Panthers, who have posted a combined regular season record of 20-5-1 across the past two campaigns.

Coach Brett Burgess is not content settling for 'solid' years, and has swung big this offseason by adding SANFLW difference-maker Kate Case to the midfield where she will join 2024 BLGW medallist Hayley Henke and 2025 BLGW medallist Tiarna Grovermann.

Burgess also shared that if his other key signing gets finalised, it will be "the biggest recruit in BLGW history".

Trying to crack the top-four are the chasing pack of Nuriootpa, South Gawler, Light and Gawler Central, who all have new coaches in charge of their senior women's programs. Ella Mickan has stepped up into the head role at Nuriootpa, taking over from highly respected zone representative coach Shaun Ribbons, and other clubs around the league expect Mickan to make an immediate impact. Both South Gawler and Gawler Central have revamped their setups since the end of last year as Kaitlyn Harrison looks to lead the Lions up the ladder and Jim Daley takes control of a Tigers system that now features an under 16 team for the first time ever.

Both Gawler outfits have been aggressively recruiting, meaning their range of outcomes are as wide as anyone in the league depending on the quality of their new additions.

Lastly, Light has been trending downwards



Senior Women's Best-and-Fairest Tiarna Grovermann with Central District's Carrie-Anne Mewett.

in the past couple of seasons, going from eight wins in 2023, to three in 2024, and two in 2025.

New coach Anthony Graham will step in to try and turn things around, and while it will be a tough task after the Wheaties' under 16s and under 13s combined for a record of 0-27 last year, there is plenty of opportunity for players to establish themselves as pillars of the club

going forward.

Can anyone stop Willaston from reaching an eighth consecutive grand final? Or will the Donnybrooks' reign atop the BLGW continue into the second half of this decade?

Find out when the Senior Women's competition kicks off on 26 April, with a 14-round season plus finals leading to the decider on 30 August.

Peter Page Hyundai



# Drive The **DRIVE** Cars of the Year

**DRIVE** CAR OF THE YEAR 2026 | HYUNDAI SANTA FE BEST SEVEN-SEAT SUV <\$60K 2 X WINNER 2025 - 2026

**DRIVE** CAR OF THE YEAR 2026 | HYUNDAI PALISADE BEST SEVEN-SEAT SUV UNDER \$90K

**DRIVE** CAR OF THE YEAR 2026 | HYUNDAI KONA BEST SMALL SUV < \$60K 3 X WINNER 2024 -2026



**Test Drive the Winners at Peter Page Hyundai Today!**

17 Elizabeth Way, Elizabeth SA 5112 | Ph: 08 8228 3824 | [peterpagehyundai.com.au](http://peterpagehyundai.com.au)

12845115-CS12-26

# Coach chat

## with Brett Burgess

**Now in your third season in charge of the Angaston women, what is it about the opportunity that gets you excited to go around again?**

"Yes, third year for me, and it's the playing group that keeps me coming back. These girls are a fantastic bunch to coach.

"I'm also a very competitive person, so the fact we have been close in the first two years and not managed to win a premiership hurts. "I'd love to share the ultimate success with these girls and all the others that work hard behind the scenes to give us such a great club to represent each week."

**How different will this year's team look compared to previous seasons? Are there many ins and outs to report?**

"The team will once again have the same core girls in it. We have managed to retain most.

"We unfortunately do lose a couple girls for different reasons, and these girls will be missed.

"We have been able to add four or five new players to the club, a few that are returning and a couple brand new ones, which is exciting.

"Kate Case returns after last year playing closer to home, she is a gun player with SANFLW experience.

"We also welcome back past captain and very good player Kate Harris, and Aaliyah Kuhn returns to us after a season with Angle Vale.

"We do have another potential big recruit – but we'll have to hold that one close to the chest until it's 100 per cent over the line.

"What I will say is it will be the biggest recruit in BLGW history if it happens. Great for us and great for the competition as a whole."

**Angaston has had a relatively high number of juniors playing up at the senior level recently, will that be the case again this year?**

"I definitely feel that these younger girls playing senior women's football at such a young age has fast-tracked their development, and we will continue to encourage and promote the young girls to play up if we can.

"Just a couple of the younger girls coming up I'm excited about are Harper Kendle and Patience Leske – these two will be first-year officially as seniors.

"Harper has played two years already up in the seniors and is ready to be an integral part of our back-line, while Patience is yet to play seniors, but I have no doubt she will love it and have fun, she is a talented player who just needs some confidence and I can't wait for her to get that."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest, and who are some of the women you expect to be in the mix for the award this time around?**

"Hayley Henke is our club's reigning Best-and-Fairest, but Tiarna Govermann won the



Tiarna Govermann

league medal.

"Tiarna is having another crack at Central District in the SANFLW so fingers crossed she plays plenty for them, which will hamper us, but I would never stand in someone's way to chase their dreams.

"She is an incredibly selfless player/coach/mentor and has said she will still help as much as possible if she is down there playing. This is great for us as a club.

"Those two are the obvious ones, but if I was to throw a couple names out, Sage Logan and Ilinca Barbu are two girls who are very, very talented, but still very young.

"They both will continue to get better and better as the years go on.

"And I'll throw a dark horse in there: Ebony Halman. She had an incredible season last year, a player any coach would love to have, always willing to do anything asked of her and does it with a smile on her face."

**Coming off consecutive top-four finishes, what would you say are your expectations**

**for 2026? And what would be considered a successful season?**

"Finals footy at a minimum again. And although coaches don't normally like saying this, but I feel the group is ready, so we are all-in on winning the premiership.

"We won't be shying away from really having a crack to finally take the trophy home to Angaston this year."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites for the BLGW flag?**

"I think the usual suspects will be right up there. Tanunda's led by some outstanding coaches with Ralph and Nicola Biagi and they should once again be around the mark.

"But obviously last year's grand final teams in Willaston and Barossa will be hard to leapfrog. "It also wouldn't surprise me if Nuriootpa are the big improvers with Ella Mickan taking over the helm. They are definitely a team to watch."



# Coach chat with Dean Woods

**What was it about the opportunity at Barossa District that made you return for another season in charge of the senior women?**

"The camaraderie they have and their willingness to listen and learn made it an easy decision to take the opportunity of a second year as coach."

**2025 was obviously a great step in the right direction for the Bulldogs women's program, but what do you think your squad can do better this time around?**

"We have a young squad so we need to improve on the standards we set at training, and just our general knowledge of the game."

**I see you've brought on some new assistant coaches – how do you think they can help and what can they add?**

"The new assistants bring a wealth of knowledge from different sports and different levels of footy. That knowledge will be invaluable in us moving forwards as a team."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you expect to be in the mix for the award this year?**

"Kirra Tonkin is our reigning Best-and-Fairest after a great year in 2025.

"We have a very talented mix of players for 2026 and I would be expecting Rebekah Scharkie, Scarlett Wilkin, Madyson Woods and Kayla Collis to all have big seasons."

**Are there any juniors who have really caught your eye this preseason and put their hand up for a senior role? What will the age demographic of the senior squad look like?**

"The juniors that I think are ready to step up from our under 16 program are Layla Pentreath and Sienna Goddard.

"We also have a first-year senior that I think will have a real crack in Imogen Sharp.

"We have a couple of experienced players, but the age range for our squad is primarily 17-20."

**Coming off an 11-3 regular season and a grand final appearance, what are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful year?**

"With such a young squad I'm not willing to set any expectations, but as a coach, finals would be great.

"Our first priority though is making sure it's an enjoyable season for all involved and we grow the support and player base through the grades to make women's football sustainable at the club into the future."



Amalee Struck



Imogen Sharp



Kirra Tonkin



**TONY PASIN MP**  
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BARKER

*Supporting local sport  
in our community*

**FIGHTING FOR US**

Shop 5, Murray Bridge Green, Riverview Road, Murray Bridge SA 5253  
8531 2466 tony.pasin.mp@aph.gov.au TonyPasinMP  
tonypasinmp

Authorised by T.Pasin MP, Liberal Party,  
Shop 5 Murray Bridge Green, Riverview Rd, Murray Bridge SA 5253

12844708-CS10-26



**The Bunyip**

Stay up to date with all the winter sports action every week in The Bunyip.



HEALTH - WELLNESS - REHAB

# Advanced care of sports, musculoskeletal & rehabilitative injuries



BOOK NOW

## SPORTS INJURY PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION



### Individualised Exercise Prescription for:

- Injury Prevention Screening
- Graduated Return to Sport Programs
- Rehabilitation post surgery
- Sports-Specific Strength & Conditioning
- Improving Sport Performance
- Re-Injury Risk Reduction Strategies
- VALD Strength Technology
- Chronic Injury Management

Experience supporting athletes across multiple sports – from high-performance to recreational level

**TANUNDA/GAWLER LOCATIONS**  
SHOP 22, PHOENIX PLAZA, GAWLER EAST  
BAROSSA AQUATIC AND FITNESS, TANUNDA

**Ph: (08) 7081 2033**  
[www.moveep.com.au](http://www.moveep.com.au)  
Email: [admin@moveep.com.au](mailto:admin@moveep.com.au)



HEALTH - WELLNESS - REHAB



## SPORTS DOCTOR DR SANDY KLEINSCHMIDT

*Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (Reg)*

- Sports Injuries • Acute/Chronic joint injuries
- Osteoarthritis management • Access to rebatable MRI
- Works in conjunction with Physio's, sports trainers & GP's
- Foot/ankle/knee injuries • Shoulder Injuries
- Concussion assessment and management

**Book now for an appointment 8522 4232**



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF  
SPORT AND EXERCISE PHYSICIANS

TS6214



WAKEFIELD  
ORTHOPAEDIC CLINIC

## Dr. Andrew S. Comley

Sports Injury and  
Orthopaedic Surgeon

M.B.B.S., F.R.A.C.S. (Orth.), F.A.O.A.



Gluteal/Labral Tears  
Hip Replacement



Knee Arthroscopy, ACL and Ligament  
Reconstruction  
Robotic Knee Replacement



Shoulder Replacement,  
Arthroscopy and  
Rotator Cuff Surgery

### CONSULTING AT:

The Injury Hub, Willaston // Wakefield Orthopaedic Clinic  
Tanunda Medical Centre // Glenelg Community Hospital  
Gawler Hospital Consulting Suites // Mount Barker

TS6164

**For appointments phone 8236 4193 | Email [admincomley@woc.com.au](mailto:admincomley@woc.com.au) | [woc.com.au](http://woc.com.au)**

12850785-CS12-26

**OPEN**

**MONDAY - THURSDAY 8.00am-7.00pm FRIDAY 8.00am-6.00pm SATURDAY 8.00am-midday**



6-8 Main North Road, Willaston | Phone (08) 8522 4232 | [www.theinjuryhub.com.au](http://www.theinjuryhub.com.au)



ONLINE  
BOOKINGS  
AVAILABLE

# THE INJURY HUB

HEALTH - WELLNESS - REHAB

See the professionals for all your injuries.  
Get the best and most updated treatment.

Our experienced clinicians have worked with a number  
of elite and professional sporting teams and athletes



**This modern facility is a multidisciplinary clinic,  
home to a number of different medical and health services**

- ❖ Titled Sports & Musculoskeletal Physiotherapists
- ❖ Hamstring Tears
- ❖ Knee Injuries
- ❖ Sprained Ankle
- ❖ Shoulder Dislocations
- ❖ Advanced Physiotherapy to get the best results



MONDAY - THURSDAY 8.30am-7.00pm

OPEN

FRIDAY 8.30am-6.00pm

SATURDAY 8.00am-midday



6-8 Main North Road, Willaston | Phone (08) 8522 4232 | [www.theinjuryhub.com.au](http://www.theinjuryhub.com.au)

1284705-CS08-26

# Anthony Graham leads Light into 2026



Coach Anthony Graham has his work cut out for him to turn around what has been a downward trend in recent years for Light's senior women, having slipped from a finals berth in 2023, to 3-9 in 2024, and 2-11 last time around.

It is no secret that recruiting and retaining players up at Light is its own headache, which is what ultimately forced Freeling and Kapunda's women's programs to combine in the first place.

The writing was on the wall in Round 1 of 2025 when the Wheaties went down by 140 points against a Nuriootpa team that did not end up making finals, and it ended up being one of nine 100-plus point defeats for the campaign.

Former Central District representative Tess Gerhardy is the star of the senior side, with talent that could see her walk into any midfield in the competition, while junior product Madison Muir has also been a bright spot, playing nearly every game across the past five senior seasons as a teenager.

Both Muir and Gerhardy were named in the best players on eight separate occasions in 2025 to lead the club, while Charli Colbourne led the team in goals (five) while splitting her time between the seniors and under 16s.

Colbourne, Macee Leske, Meghan McElroy and Kira Harteveld were some of the most consistent performers in the under 16s, and while they may be in for another major learning experience of a season, the hope is that all these trials and tribulations can eventually lead to success.

While finals seem out of play, the Wheaties will still feel competitive against some of the competition, having defeated South Gawler in a close one and dominated Gawler Central



Jess Jones

6.6 (42) to zero as Colbourne and Judy Key snagged three goals each.

Keeping a group together for continuity between seasons will be a giant priority for coach Graham as he looks to build something

sustainable and ongoing.

That all starts with fielding a team every week and ensuring it's a fun experience for all involved, which is what everyone is hoping to see from Light in 2026.



Tess Gerhardy



Alana Healy



GAWLER CENTRAL  
EST. 1980

# Coach chat with Jim Daley

**Taking over a team coming off a winless season is a unique challenge – how have you tackled your first preseason in charge? And what do you view as the most important aspects of turning things around?**

"I love the word challenge. To me, challenge creates clarity and focus, it gives you something to chase.

"From day one, my priority was building genuine connection with our players. We sat down, had honest player-coach conversations, and asked what they wanted from the preseason and what success looks like to them.

"Our biggest strength in 2026 will be our unity. We've built real alignment across the group, and when everyone is moving in the same direction, that's when momentum builds – and that's when powerful things can happen."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And based on what you have seen so far, who do you think are some players who will be in the mix for the award this year?**

"Our 2025 Best-and-Fairest winner Emily Holland has put together a terrific preseason and is looking stronger and better again heading into 2026.

"Keep an eye on Kate Bradwell, Chloe Tidswell, Shinae Brodie and Charlize Mosey, they've all been building impressively.

"Truthfully, I could name the entire team. I have genuine confidence in every single player on our list and what they're capable of delivering this season."

**What are your numbers like in the seniors this year? Will you be relying on juniors topping up the senior squad, and if so, who are some of the juniors who have stood out and put their hand up for a role?**

"We're really pleased with where our playing group sits at the moment. Across the preseason we've seen strong consistency, great buy-in, and steady growth and that momentum continues to build as the season approaches.

"Our Monday sessions alongside our under 16 girls have been a real highlight, strengthening the connection between our current seniors and the next wave coming through. Building that pathway and club unity is a big focus for us.

"There's some exciting talent developing, and if opportunities arise in 2026, we're confident some of those young players will be ready to step into senior footy. The depth and energy within the group has been really encouraging."

**I understand a few Gawler Central women's players have been up in the NTL for the summer – do you expect many of those ladies to return for the BLGW season?**

"We are incredibly proud of our past Gawler

2026



Evie-Grace Pettit



Daisy Saint



Vanessa Broughill

Central women who continue to shine in the NTL. It's been fantastic having such positive conversations with a number of these players, and we can't wait to welcome them back to SA.

"We fully support them in finishing their NTL season strong before locking in plans back home. It's exciting to see some already secured at SANFLW level – and there are a couple of ladies we would absolutely love to see in the yellow-and-black in 2026. Watch this space."

**What are your expectations for this year, and what would you consider a successful season?**

"My biggest expectation this season is that

our coaching staff and I continue to guide and lead these wonderful women both on and off the field.

"When it comes to success, I measure it in many ways, and certainly not just in wins and losses. Success will be reflected in each quarter, each half, and in every area of the oval.

"I know for a fact that the ladies who have been part of this group for a number of years will feel that success in moments that matter – kicking multiple goals in a game, embracing their growth, and experiencing the joy of singing our club song after a hard-fought performance built on effort, resilience, and team focus."



# Coach chat with Ella Mickan

## What has been your focus during your first preseason in charge at Nuriootpa?

"My main focus has actually just been getting to know the crew, understanding their strengths and their own goals for the season, building the connections early on.

"From a training perspective, we've started with a strong emphasis on fundamental skills and reinforcing how crucial those are within game situations.

"We also had a trial match against Saint Ignatius, which gave us a really valuable snapshot of where we're at as a team and what we need to improve."

## How important do you feel recruiting is in the BLGW?

"Recruiting is really important in the BLGW, particularly when it comes to bringing players in from outside the league.

"As an association, we're a strong feeder into the Central District Football Club zone, which is something we're incredibly proud of. Seeing players progress into the SANFLW is a fantastic achievement, but it does mean we can lose numbers at the local level.

"For Nuriootpa, recruiting from outside the BLGW helps us maintain strong numbers on the track, which is essential for training standards and overall team development. It also creates opportunities to build new connections within the broader football community, which can be really valuable for the club both on and off the field.

"While we've certainly made an effort to reach out and attract

new players, a big focus for us has been investing time and energy into the group we already have at the club.

"Creating a fun, positive, and driven environment is what ultimately brings people in. When others see their family member, neighbour, or friend genuinely enjoying their footy, it naturally sparks interest and makes them want to get involved.

"We've also noticed that past players are keen to return, which is a great sign. They can sense the energy and enjoyment around the group, and that's been one of our strongest recruiting tools."

## Who are your ins and outs for the Senior Women's squad?

"We're really excited to welcome Harley Gerlach back to the Tigers this season. She brings great speed and agility to the side and will add plenty of drive, particularly through the midfield and across the flanks.

"We've also had some strong retention, with Renai Richardson, Nicole Maher, Tayla Ley, Jamie Connell and Jazz Elsworthy all re-signing, which provides a solid core of experience and consistency across the team.

"Another new addition is Poppy Moyle, who is coming into her first season of football. Despite being new to the game, she's already impressed with her skills and natural game awareness.

"At this stage, she's likely to develop into a versatile player, with potential to play through the midfield or forward line as she continues to build her experience.

"In terms of outs, we've had a number of key senior players retire, including Courtney Smith, Rachel Thomas and Amy Schulz. We've also lost a few younger

players this season, with some of our recent high school graduates taking time away for travel, work, or university commitments."

## Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest, and who are some ladies you think will be in the mix for the award this year?

"Jasmine Elsworthy is our reigning Best-and-Fairest after a strong 2025 season. Having seen a lot of her football over the years, I wouldn't be surprised to see her right up there again this season, she sets a really high standard.

"There are also a number of players who have been really impressive on the track throughout preseason. I'm looking forward to seeing how they perform in the games, and I think a few of them could definitely put themselves in the mix."

## Who are some of the club's most promising juniors? And how do you view the value of getting them senior experience early as opposed to playing against kids their own age?

"We're really fortunate to have a number of strong under 16 players stepping up into the senior side this year.

"Charlotte Riebke is an especially exciting player to watch. She loves taking the game on and brings great energy, along with a real eagerness to learn and improve.

"Leila Hahn and Taylah Leibich are also making the move into seniors, and both will provide great versatility across the ground, which is really valuable for us.

"In terms of development, we see real value in giving juniors

exposure to senior football early. It provides a fantastic opportunity for them to learn the physicality, and decision-making required at a senior level.

"At the same time, it's not just about their learning. Some of our juniors actually come in with more experience than a few of our senior players, so it becomes a two-way exchange.

"Creating an environment where they feel confident to contribute is key, and our senior group has been incredibly supportive in helping those younger players settle in which is so beneficial."

## Coming off back-to-back six-win seasons, what are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful season?


"I'd obviously love to push into finals this year, and I genuinely feel like we've got the side capable of doing that.

"That being said, our expectations go beyond just results. We're focused on continuing to develop as a team each week.

"We'll be setting clear, measurable goals, whether that's hitting certain score benchmarks or limiting opposition forward entries and then working hard to tick those off consistently.

"For us, success won't be defined solely by wins and losses. It's also about the growth of our players, the way we perform on game day, and the environment we create.

"If we can build a strong, positive culture where players are enjoying their footy and improving week to week, that's just as important as where we finish on the ladder."



**JAE**

**Justins**  
AUTO ELECTRICS

**AUTO ELECTRICAL**

- Repairs • Plug-in Testing
- Supercharge Batteries
- Dual Battery Systems
- Custom Rewiring

**AUTO AIR-CONDITIONING**

- Regas/Service
- Repairs

**17 Craker Drive,  
NURIOOTPA**

**8562 1166**

12843155-CS12-26



Jorja Yorath



# Coach chat with Kaitlyn Harrison

**What has been the focus during your first preseason in South Gawler’s head coaching role? And what inspired you to step up into the position?**

“I’m very passionate about the women’s program and its ongoing success. I wanted to step into this role to bring back excitement and passion, to inspire our teams to grow together and get back to what footy should be about... fun!

“My focus has been allocating training blocks in which we develop the teams’ skills, but also fostering a positive culture – this has already proven successful as the teams’ skills have improved and grown week-on-week.

“But the best part, the girls laugh and have fun too.”

**How different will this year’s team be compared to last year’s?**

“This year’s team looks very different! We have many new faces, which means new to footy – but this is exciting. We get to show how great the league and the game is, and further grow our program.

“As far as our new recruits, I’m looking to play Chantelle Harrison in our back-lines as she shows great strength and defensive skills.

“I’m also hoping to position Tia Dedman and Tahlia Malins as midfield/forward hybrids as they have shown great speed and agility, crucial to seeing some key plays done successfully.

“Player coaching means I also get to be among the action again, which I’m so excited for!”

**Who are some of the club’s most promising juniors, and how do you view getting them**



Amy Meyers

**senior experience as early as possible as opposed to playing against kids their own age?**

“Our juniors are continuing to grow, so I don’t want to name names just yet. However, our under 13s and under 16s have all been training with the senior women for preseason.

“This has shown great positives in that the program feels inclusive, but that we are wanting our junior girls to build relationships where they feel they can ask questions and grow in learning alongside each other.”

**Who is the club’s reigning senior Best-and-Fairest, and who are some players you expect to be in the mix for the award this time around?**

“Julia Linarello is our reigning Best-and-Fairest and I expect her, Chantelle Harrison and Tia Dedman to all be great contenders for this title in 2026.”

**What are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful season?**

“I consider a successful season to be where positive culture grows and is fostered – where my girls find fun and purpose in footy! Where footy is not about winning, but about the women celebrating growth in themselves and each other.

“My expectations are that we continue to grow further and show why SGFC is the place to be.”



Alannah Watts



Jasmine Knevitt



# Coach chat with Ralph Biagi

**Now taking over the head coaching role, what has been your focus during your first preseason running the show in Tanunda?**

"I am continuing the program that Nicola and I implemented three years ago, focusing on skill and fundamentals, plus improving fitness."

**Coming off a premiership in 2024 and a preliminary final in 2025, what are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful season?**

"A successful season would be having a full list of players enjoying their football."

"You always strive for a premiership, set the goals high, and then see what the season throws at you."

**Have you been actively recruiting this off-season? Who are the senior ins and outs?**

"We are always looking to add to our playing list and have a few new faces at training so far."

**Who are some of the club's most promising juniors?**

"Isabelle Zander is an outstanding junior and is standing out at Central Districts in the under 18s, and Lakeesha Howard is also a promising junior, but is still recovering from a knee injury."

"We have a lot of young girls aged 17-to-19 who have excellent skills and are consistent performers."

"It's great for the girls who are physically and mentally able to play at a higher age group



Nicolai Biagi

and it sets a good foundation for the future, but they should also enjoy and have fun with the girls in their age group."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you expect to be in the mix for the award this time around?**

"Brittany Watt is our Best-and-fairest, she is an outstanding player with great game awareness."

"I hope all of our team strives to be the Best-and-Fairest this year."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites this year?**

"Willaston are the reigning premiers and are always around the mark, and Nuriootpa with Ella Mickan at the helm will be very competitive."



Bonnie Dodds



Isabelle Zander

# Coach chat with Max Bornholdt

**Having finished runner-up in 2024, you bounced back with a premiership in 2025. What are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful season?**

"With the team I see us putting on the park this year, we would be expecting a similar result from last season unless injuries hold us back."

**What is your preferred mindset for the group coming into this season as defending champions? Do you want them playing with that confidence and swagger, or is it all about resetting and proving yourself all over again?**

"Last year's result was last year, it's a new season so we start from scratch and earn the respect from the opposition."

**How different will this year's team look compared to last year's?**

"Similar team to last season with a couple of returning players from previous years that will only

make the side stronger."

**Who are some of the club's most promising junior talents, and do you expect many juniors to get selected in the seniors this season?**

"We have a few young girls down at Central District, which is unknown when they will return."

"With our under 16s also winning the flag last year it gives us a lot of talent to pick from and they will be rotated through when suitable."

**Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you expect to be in the mix this time around?**

"Our Best-and-Fairest last season was Lauren Smith, winning by a couple of votes. This year will be close again with such a large, talented group."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the flag favourites?**

"We don't pay close attention to outside noise. We are just focused on what's going on in-house and will tackle each week as it comes."



Kiarra Leopold



Lauryn Farr

**BRING  
YOUR  
BRAND  
TO LIFE**



- BOOKLETS & CATALOGUES
- BUSINESS STATIONERY
- MARKETING & PROMOTION
- POSTERS & SIGNAGE

🌐 [theprintmarket.com.au](https://theprintmarket.com.au)

✉️ [sales@theprintmarket.com.au](mailto:sales@theprintmarket.com.au)

12856648-CSI4-26



# Tigers and Lions earn Senior 1's top billing

OVER the past two Barossa, Light and Gawler Netball Association Senior 1 seasons the Gawler Central Tigers have been nearly unbeatable on their way to back-to-back premierships.

Under the leadership of head coach Leigh Waddington and assistant coach Scott Waddington the Tigers have put together a two-year regular season record of 30-1-1, capping their stellar run of form with a 21-goal grand final blowout of South Gawler in 2025's decider. Unfortunately for the rest of the league, Gawler Central is showing no signs of slowing down.

The Tigers will welcome back 2024 premiership player Casey Black after she spent 2025 with South Adelaide in the Premier League, and 2024 club Best-and-Fairest Erin Scheepens will return from a serious knee injury.

That duo will add to reigning league medallist Zahra Schumacher – arguably the BLG's best defensive player – while Dayne Schmid will slot in down the other end as one of the competition's premier goalies.

For as strong as Gawler Central has been in recent years, the South Gawler Lions have been hot on their tail.

Across the past two seasons South Gawler's three total regular season losses (29-3) have all come against the Tigers, and while Gawler Central had a down year in 2023, the Lions have reached the grand final in every campaign since their most recent premiership success in 2022.

Tenayah Lange's departure to the Premier League will hurt South, but Best-and-Fairest Emily Green will lead the way yet again with



Gawler Central's Senior 1 premiers have secured back-to-back flags.

some help from Nicole Lindsay and Jess Watts as they each return from a year off.

Everything is set up for another Gawler Central versus South Gawler showdown on the last day of the season – that is unless Kapunda or Angaston has something to say.

The Bombers (11-4-1) and Panthers (10-6) were the only other teams in 2025 to win more than five games in the top-heavy Senior 1 competition, and Angaston in particular will be a wild-card with the addition of Premier League defender Olivia Taylor and her Tango teammate Mikayla Sheffield in the mid-court.

Kapunda was the only club to take a premiership point off Gawler Central last time around, drawing with the Tigers 41-41 to prevent a perfect season, and with dual league medallist Tayla Meaney on the court the

Bombers will feel they can go goal-for-goal with anyone.

It is also worth noting that Kapunda's Inter 1 team has been an absolute buzzsaw in recent years.

Following a 2023 campaign where they went 15-1 and lost in the grand final, Kapunda's Inter 1s have not lost a single game across the past two seasons, winning the two grand finals by dominant margins of 66-31 and 59-29.

Charlotte Leslie and Alyssa Valentine have been the first from that group to make their mark at the Senior 1 level, with Peyton Burgess and Ruby Twartz to follow in what could end up leading to a Kapunda golden generation.

There was a massive chasm back to the rest of the chasing pack, with Willaston, Barossa District, Tanunda, Nuriootpa and Freeling all acknowledging there is plenty

of work to do.

Steve O'Brien at Tanunda – brother of Angaston coach Michael O'Brien – has brought across some junior standouts from his time at Willaston to bolster a new-look Magpies outfit, while Barossa District's Teresa Grovermann will take charge of a Bulldogs team where her daughter Jorgia Grovermann is the reigning Best-and-Fairest.

Having spent the past few years coaching in the Premier League, Teresa will hope to use the lessons she has learned to get the Bulldogs back to being the top-four regulars they once were, and the promotion of last year's Senior 2 association medallist Kasey Turnbull will certainly help.

Sarah Shanahan's Freeling Redlegs will have an interesting mix of youth and experience as excellent defensive duo Megan Cocks and Haylee Puckeridge hold down the fort, while Nuriootpa coach Lynlee Mangelsdorf will receive a major boost as back-to-back APNA premiership player Liana Shinnick returns from a successful stint in Mallala.

Lastly, Willaston's Damian Gower will get his opportunity to coach the Senior 1s after proving himself in the lower grades, and the addition of Gawler Central's premiership shooter Zara Gidman could completely change the fortunes of a Donnybrook outfit that was the second-lowest scoring team in 2025 (41.1 goals per game).

Will it be more of the same? Or can someone rise up the table and throw a wrench in the Gawler teams' plans?



**BAROSSA MAZDA**

*Proudly supporting the BLGNA*

PH: 8562 0630 | [barossamazda.com.au](http://barossamazda.com.au)  
153 - 157 Murray Street, Nuriootpa  
**Ben Rasmus A/H 0439 837 471**

12842755-CS07-26

*For all your baking supplies*

as well as providing professional advice to assist you in your baking journey

Custom Cakes and Cookies	Cake and Baking Supplies
Gluten Free / Keto / Low Carb	Cake Mixes, Icings & Sprinkles
Supplies	Cookie Cutters and Tools
Ready made cakes & cupcakes available	Candles, Toppers & Edible Images

**BOOKING FAST FOR CUSTOM CAKES!**

**Skysies Cakes & Supplies**

Shop 7/67-73 Murray St, Gawler  
Corner of High Street/Calton Road  
(behind Harvest of India restaurant)

**0479 152 586**

12843055-AW16-26

# Coach chat with Michael O'Brien

**Coming off a 10-6 record and top-four finish in 2025, what would you consider a successful 2026 season?**

"Finals success is the goal after the loss to Kapunda in the elimination final. It has certainly made the group more driven."

**What do you think is the strength of your team?**

"There's a lot of flexibility in our team, which will definitely come in handy over the course of a long season."

**Gawler Central did not lose a game last year, and South Gawler only lost to Gawler Central – have you spent much time thinking about how to tackle these top teams? Does it require a different strategy or just better execution of the current game plan?**

"No I wouldn't say we are spending time thinking about those clubs specifically – but as a group we have learnt a lot from last year."

"It's an extremely strong competition no matter who you play, so our game style will change depending on who we play each week."

**Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs for this season?**

"Our outs are Lilly Miles, and Alannah O'Brien is recovering from an ACL injury so there is a chance she could return mid-season."

"Our ins are Olivia Taylor (Tango Premier League) who will play goalkeeper or goal-defence, and Mikayla Sheffield also from Tango will slot into our mid-court in wing-attack, centre, or wing-defence."

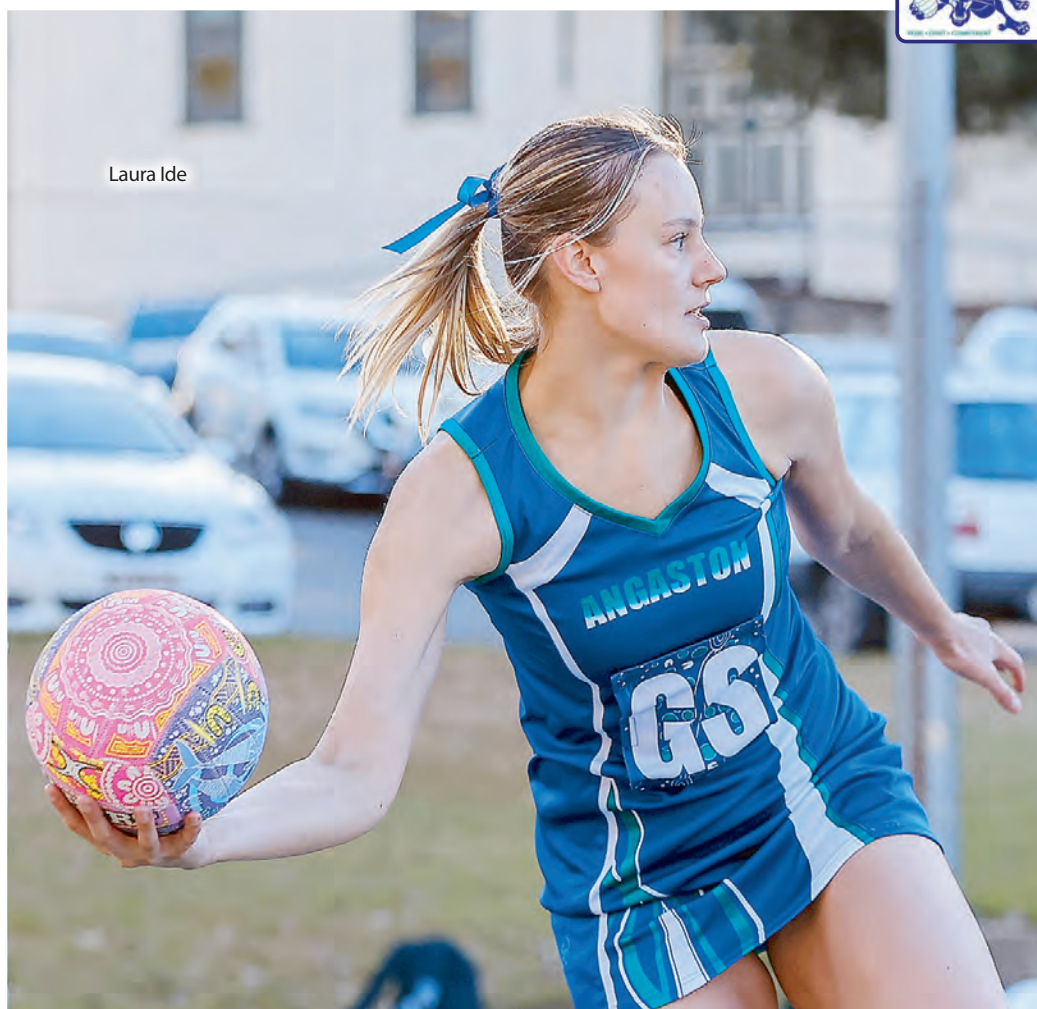
**Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?**

"There will certainly be opportunities for our Inter 1 players. Harper Kendle is a very talented mid-courter, plus we have promoted some of our talented Juniors to jump straight into the Inter 1 team."

**Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you think will be in the mix this time around?**

"Our reigning Best-and-Fairest is Bec Higgins, and really anyone in our Senior 1 squad has a chance to win it this year."

"I'm looking forward to seeing what our new recruits can bring to the group, plus the experience of Laura Ide and Liz South."



Laura Ide



Maggie Hadden



Jonela Zenunaj

# Coach chat

## with Teresa Grovermann

**I understand you have a long history with Barossa District and have just returned after a five-year stint coaching in the city – how have you changed as a coach over the years, and what do you feel like you learned during your time in the Premier League?**

“Over the years my coaching has developed with the help of many mentors, who maybe didn’t even realise they were mentors for me, and opportunities that seem to have fallen in my lap.

“I believe you can never stop improving and can learn something new from anyone whether that be other coaches or players. Roz Fraser was the main person to push me to develop my coaching and has been invaluable with her advice.

“Being in the Premier League space for the past few years has also been a big learning curve, I have learnt a lot from coaches and players – whether that be positive or negative – it is all helpful in changing and developing my coaching perspective.”

**Coming off a 4-11-1 record in 2025, what do you think are the keys in building a winning team?**

“Team culture and motivation to succeed are extremely important. Players need to be playing for the team and not be self-absorbed, be accountable for their own mistakes, wanting success for each other.

“I want to instill a very positive team culture this year and so far the girls have been fantastic, very encouraging to each other and willing to listen to advice and improve their game.”

**What do you feel is the strength of your team?**

“I believe we have good strength across all areas of the court – we have strong shooters, mid-court, and defenders.

“Our list is mainly young players with netball ability who are wanting to learn and improve. I am excited to see them perform this season.”

**Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs for this season?**

“Not so much a new recruit as she has played for Barossa previously, but Lisa Emes is back to play Senior 1s this year and she is a very experienced, accurate shooter.

“Meg Mosey, who is still an intermediate player, but has impressed with her intelligence and skill, and Jacinta Barnes is new to the club, a very strong mid-courter.”

**Who is your club’s reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you think will be in the mix this time around?**

“Our reigning Best-and-Fairest is Jorgia Grovermann, she is back this year and looking strong on court.

“Kasey Turnbull polled well in the Senior 2 association medal last year and she will get her Senior 1 opportunity defending alongside



Coby O'Driscoll



Jordan Allman



Caitlin Hanson



Zoe O'Brien

Jorgia, both young and ready to push their games to another level.

“Tiarna Grovermann in the mid-court will be a massive plus (only if she is not chosen in the SANFLW for Central District Football Club, which is her top priority in 2026), she is fitter and stronger than she has ever been and her experience and intelligence in the mid-court will be invaluable.

“Hannah Robinson has been training up a storm, another player who is fitter than I have ever seen and may be looking to swap ends

this year. Her experience and voice is a huge asset.

“Lisa Emes as well, she is an amazing shooter with experience that lifts the attacking end – can’t wait to see her out there each week.”

**What would you consider a successful season?**

“Realistically a successful season obviously would be to improve the win/loss ratio from 2025, but myself and the girls would be much happier to make the top-four and play finals.”

# Coach chat with Sarah Shanahan

**Now that you're in charge, what have been some of the focuses of your first preseason with this group?**

"We've been concentrating on building strong team connections, improving fitness, and putting in the hard work needed to be at our best for the start of the season."

"Everyone in the Senior 1/2 squad is pushing themselves and working hard with the goal of earning a place in the Senior 1 team."

**What do you think will be the strength of your team?**

"Our team's greatest strength is our versatility. We have players who can confidently adapt to different positions, allowing us to respond to any situation during a game."

"This flexibility gives us depth across our squad and ensures we can maintain a high level of performance no matter the challenge."

**Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs for this season?**

"We have had a few new faces in our Senior 1/2 squad we haven't finalised teams as yet so that we give all players a chance to prove themselves and allow them to be available to be picked in the Senior 1 team."

**Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you think will be in the mix this time around?**

"Our Senior 1 Best-and-Fairest in 2025 was Haylee Puckeridge, who will again play an important role in our Senior 1 team this season."

"With Haylee and Megan Cocks anchoring our defence end, they'll put the opposition under constant pressure."



Sadie Shanahan

"We retain Amelia Schuster and Sadie Shanahan in the team along with Megan Cocks, and Haylee, so together with some new faces we are hoping to see a big improvement this season."

**Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?**

"We have Tori Munday who has come up into our Senior 1/2 squad from our intermediate team from last year."

"Tori is an exciting player who has come through our junior program and is someone to watch over the course of this season."

"We look forward to her continuing to

develop and become an important player for our club this year and in years to come."

**What are your expectations for this year, and what would you consider a successful season?**

"My expectations are to focus on consistency, effort, and maintaining high standards at training and on game day."

"If we can stay disciplined and keep improving across the season, I'm confident it will translate into strong performances."

"Ultimately, I'm aiming for more wins for the team, to be competitive in every match, and to finish the season in the top-six."



Abby Menzel



Megan Cocks



GAWLER CENTRAL  
EST. 1989

# Assistant Coach chat with Scott Waddington

## What is the mindset during preseason coming off back-to-back premierships?

"We are always looking for improvement in not only the playing group, but the actual pre-season program as well.

"So coaches have put together a program to continue to focus on their personal development, which will also benefit the team in the long run."

## Does your recent success create a pressure of expectation? Does it feel like a flag is the only acceptable result?

"No not at all, (head coach) Leigh and I are so focused on improving the team/squad/club that we don't get caught up in the hype of the final game of the season.

"We will continually reassess our goals as the season progresses though."

## Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you think will be in the mix this time around?

"Zahra Schumacher won the 2025 Best-and-Fairest after being runner-up to Erin Scheepens in 2024, and each year Zahra continues to amaze us with her personal growth.

"Erin did not play a game in 2025 after suffering an ACL injury in our pre-season, but she has been doing everything right in her rehab and is expected to play Round 1

"Casey Black also returns from the city after spending a year playing Premier League with South Adelaide. Casey will team up with Erin and Hayley in the mid-court to continue with our speed of ball movement.

"Hayley Mundy played Senior 2 in 2024 before being elevated into the Senior 1 squad last year and we thought she showed an enormous amount of growth in her first year in the 1s.



Hayley Mundy

"We believe Hayley will continue this growth in 2026 and expect her to be one to watch."

## Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs for this season?

"As well as Casey Black returning from the city and Erin Scheepens coming back from injury, we do have a new player Melissa Hedger from Myponga who can play both ends.

"Melissa will be more than capable to play her role in either goal-shooter or a defensive position."

## Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?

"We have four youngsters who have been invited to join the Senior 1-2 squad this

preseason.

"Tahlia Longman, Tahlia Noble, Madi King and Ellie Ward are all training hard with the club's best and this is really assisting their development.

"We hope that our program will produce clear pathways to be the best that you can be in your selected grade, while also having eyes on becoming a Senior 1 player in the future."

## What do you think is the strength of this year's team?

"I believe we have a strong culture that is driven by our leaders to have a team-first mindset. Our style of play will be very similar to last year, with strong work ethic and disciplined play."



Zahra Schumacher



Kira Buckskin

# Coach chat

with Deb and Tayla Meaney

**Kapunda had a strong 2025 season, going 11-4-1 and winning an elimination final. What are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful season?**

“To continue with the standard set in season 2025, and to play consistent structured netball for the duration of 2026.”

**Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs for this season? And if you do have new recruits, where did you find them and what position do you expect them to play?**

“Kim Seelander and Kelsey Wilksch are our outs, and Alex Lang will come in and play defence.”

**Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some other players you expect to have a big year?**

“Tayla Meaney is our reigning Best-and-Fairest, and a couple players to watch in season 2026 are Charlotte Leslie and Alyssa Valentine, in her second season of Div 1 netball.”

**Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?**

“Ruby Twartz and Peyton Burgess are the intermediate players currently training with the Senior 1/2 squad.”

**What do you think is the strength of this year's Senior 1 team, and what areas would you like to improve throughout the season?**

“The strength is our versatility this season. We'll continue working on player connections on and off the court.”

2026



Tayla Meaney



Hannah Hahn



Charlotte Leslie



Ella Johnson



Amy Bruce



# Coach chat with Lynlee Mangelsdorf

## Coming off a 4-12 season in 2025, what are your expectations for 2026?

"We had a very young side last year, and 2025 provided a valuable opportunity to build senior-level experience in our younger players.

"Heading into 2026, our focus is on developing greater consistency and becoming more competitive each week."

## What are some improvements you have been focusing on during this preseason?

"Throughout preseason we have focused on two key areas. The first has been improving fitness, with players committing strongly to developing their individual conditioning.

"The second area has been accountability – concentrating on getting the fundamentals right, slowing play when needed, maintaining possession, and reducing unforced turnovers."

## What do you feel will be the strength of this year's team?

"This year we have gained several experienced players.

"One of our key strengths will be the experience and maturity of our senior players, who will be positioned across the court to provide leadership, guidance, and support to

our younger players."

## Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs for this season?

"Our ins are: Amehlia Shmidt, Georgia Beaton, Kailah Dalle-Molle, Coco Patterson, Liana Shinnick, Jade Poland, Bree Norton and Rachel Summers.

"Isla Baum is the only out."

## Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who do you expect to compete for the honour this year?

"A few key players to watch this season include our reigning Best-and-Fairest Sophie Newcombe. We're excited to see Sophie continue to grow and shine, particularly with more experience around her to support her development.

"Liana Shinnick returns after back-to-back premierships with Mallala and, as a former Nuri intermediate premiership player, we're really looking forward to welcoming her back and seeing the impact she can make.

"Kailah Dalle-Molle joins us after playing A1 at Imperials and being part of a Contax premiership side in previous seasons. We're excited to see the experience, composure, and high-level knowledge she will bring to the group this year."

## Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?

"This year the Nuriootpa Netball Club is placing a strong emphasis on junior



Sophie Newcombe

development. We have three top-age intermediates who will regularly train with our Senior 1 and Senior 2 squads to support their progression and exposure to senior-level standards.

"Keep an eye on Aasha Gerhardy, Charlotte Riebke, and Harper Fitzgerald. Each of these players has shown great potential, and the opportunity to train alongside experienced senior athletes will play an important role in their continued growth and development within the club."

# Coach chat with Jess Montgomerie

## South Gawler has now had three runner-up finishes in a row since the most recent premiership in 2022. Most teams would kill to be in the grand final every year, so do you view these past few grand final losses as successful seasons by the Lions' lofty standards?

"Getting to a grand final is definitely something we don't take for granted – however we are disappointed we have fallen short the past three seasons.

"We are always striving to win the grand final as any team would."

## Do you gameplan during the preseason about Gawler Central specifically? Or do you feel it's more beneficial to focus on your own playing style and not worry about what the other top clubs are doing?

"Our focus this preseason has very much been on our own game plan. We have a strong belief that if we focus on playing our brand well we will be able to beat any opposition."

## Who are your Senior 1 ins and outs for this season?

"We have lost Tenayah Lange to Premier League, and we have both Nicole Lindsay and Jess Watts returning from a year off."

## Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who do you think could challenge for the award this year?

"Emily Green was our 2025 Best-and-Fairest. We are looking forward to seeing her continue to build her confidence in our team this season.

"We are also very excited to have Nicole Lindsay back from having a baby in 2025."

## Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?

"No Inter 1s in our team this season – however Krysta Seccafien has been elevated from the Senior 2s."

## What do you think is the strength of this year's Senior 1 team, and where would you like to improve throughout the year?

"I believe we have a really strong team connection this year. We will be focused on playing consistent four-quarter netball each week.



Emily Green



## Coach chat with Steve O'Brien

**After spending 2025 in charge of Willaston, how did you end up taking the Senior 1 role at Tanunda this time around?**

"Just went our separate ways at Willaston, so a mutual agreement, and Tanunda were advertising the year before.

"I reached out to them and they said come in for an interview – so I did, and got the coaching gig."

**You've taken over a team who went 4-12 in 2025. What have been your moves this preseason to get things trending in the right direction?**

"We've lost three goalies who were school teachers that were only there for a year, but I've brought over four girls from Willaston that will all be in our Senior 1/2 squad.

"I've done a lot of player development with them and I was fortunate enough for them to follow me to Tanunda.

"Lily Watts and Rachel Burgess will come and play goalie for us, and Naomi Johnston and Tianna Marra are the others coming across. Lily and Naomi still have another year of eligibility with the Inters."

**Do you have any other Senior 1 recruits?**

"Joanne Boots from Myponga will come and play in the mid-court.

"Gawler Central's Leigh Waddington coached her about three years ago – she came to us through her, and with her partner playing football for the club.

"All the local girls are still here, but we have lost a couple of shooters that I mentioned before."

**Who have been some of the standouts during your first preseason?**

"Joanne Boots has plenty of experience and played premier league at Metro Jets. She'll play centre and make a big impact.

"Lilly Watts has fit in well at goalie in our trial games, we've got another young talent who played Inter 1 at Metro Jets – she's really impressed me at goal-keeper."

**With a couple trial games now under your belt, what do you think will be the strength of this year's side?**

"Control in the front half will be a strength. If we don't rush or force the ball – we will surprise a few sides.

"We have no height, so we'll use our speed and play smart around the front half. We've trained a lot around that.

**What would you like to see your side improve in?**

"Win some games – Tanunda has struggled for years and I want to turn that around.

"I'm running the juniors too, and I want a better pathway for the club through to our

Senior 1 side.

"We have some talent there – we just need to work on structure, body-positioning, shooting techniques, and fundamentals like that."



Chloe Petersen

## Coach chat with Damian Gower

**I understand you have been coaching at Willaston for a number of years now – how exciting is it to get the opportunity to take over the Senior 1s?**

"Yes, I have been around for a while now. It's extremely exciting to take over the role and work with some very talented people.

"Having the club backing you is a great feeling, also having someone of Jess Earle's calibre and knowledge in your corner is a good way to start the role."

**What is your vision for this team, and what have been your focuses during your first preseason in charge?**

"To create an environment of trust and confidence within each other. Also, for everyone to understand their roles and being competitive within the squad, which creates results on the court.

"We have had a great response from the players throughout fitness sessions, our squad bonding outings, through to our court work."

**What do you think will be the strength of your team?**

"Great leadership within the squad and a hunger to be connected and be better every time we take court. This is evident through

what we are seeing at training."

**Can you let me know any Senior 1 ins and outs?**

"We have recruited Zoe Gidman from GC, who will be prominently playing in the goal circle. Possible WA to change things up if needed. Outs for the squad are Bailey Mandemaker and Jasmine Gower."

**Who is your club's reigning Best-and-Fairest? And who are some players you think will be in the mix this time around?**

"Our reigning Best-and-Fairest is Caitlin Muhs, who had a fantastic season last year.

"That's a hard question to answer right now – the squad is very even – I'm very interested to see how this turns out myself."

**Have any Inter 1s at the club put their hand up for a Senior 1 role?**

"Ebony Dilena has made her way into the Senior 1 squad. She has a bright future – works hard, always learning, great attitude. One to watch in the future."

**What are your expectations for this season? And what would you consider a successful year?**

"My expectations for this season are commitment, team culture and a never give up attitude.

"I think making finals this year would make it an extremely successful season."



Caitlin Muhs



# ADELAIDE PLAINS FOOTBALL LEAGUE FIXTURE

## ROUND 1 Apr 18

Hamley Bridge v United  
Mallala v Two Wells  
Balaklava v Angle Vale  
HW Eagles v Virginia

## ROUND 2 Apr 25

Angle Vale v HW Eagles  
Virginia v Two Wells  
Hamley Bridge v Balaklava  
United v Mallala

## ROUND 3 May 2

HW Eagles v Hamley Bridge  
Mallala v Virginia  
Two Wells v Angle Vale  
Balaklava v United

## ROUND 4 May 9

Angle Vale v Mallala  
Hamley Bridge v Two Wells  
United v Virginia  
Balaklava v HW Eagles

## ROUND 5 May 16

Two Wells v Balaklava  
HW Eagles v United  
Virginia v Angle Vale  
Mallala v Hamley Bridge

## ROUND 6 May 23

Two Wells v United  
Angle Vale v Hamley Bridge  
Mallala v HW Eagles  
Virginia v Balaklava

## ROUND 7 May 30

Hamley Bridge v Virginia  
Balaklava v Mallala  
United v Angle Vale  
HW Eagles v Two Wells

## JUNE LONG WEEKEND

## ROUND 8 Jun 13

Virginia v HW Eagles  
Angle Vale v Balaklava  
Two Wells v Mallala  
United v Hamley Bridge

## ROUND 9 Jun 20

Mallala v United  
HW Eagles v Angle Vale  
Balaklava v Hamley Bridge  
Two Wells v Virginia

## ROUND 10 Jun 27

Angle Vale v Two Wells  
United v Balaklava  
Hamley Bridge v HW Eagles  
Virginia v Mallala

## ROUND 11 Jul 4

Balaklava v Virginia  
HW Eagles v Mallala  
United v Two Wells  
Hamley Bridge v Angle Vale

## COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS July 10-12 – Barossa Park

## ROUND 12 Jul 18

Two Wells v HW Eagles  
Angle Vale v United  
Virginia v Hamley Bridge  
Mallala v Balaklava

## ROUND 13 Jul 25

Virginia v United  
Two Wells v Hamley Bridge  
HW Eagles v Balaklava  
Mallala v Angle Vale

## ROUND 14 Aug 1

Balaklava v Two Wells  
Hamley Bridge v Mallala  
United v HW Eagles  
Angle Vale v Virginia

## ROUND 15 Aug 8

United v Angle Vale  
Mallala v Balaklava  
Hamley Bridge v Virginia  
HW Eagles v Two Wells

## ROUND 16 Aug 15

Angle Vale v Hamley Bridge  
Virginia v United  
Balaklava v HW Eagles  
Two Wells v Mallala

## ELIMINATION FINAL August 22 – Two Wells

## QUALIFYING FINAL August 29 – Virginia

## PRELIMINARY FINAL September 5 – Hummocks Watchman

## GRAND FINAL September 12 – Long Plains



**RayWhite**



LIST AND SELL WITH  
**RAY WHITE GAWLER EAST | ANGLE VALE**  
AND WE'LL REFER \$500 BACK TO YOUR  
NOMINATED SPORTING CLUB

## UNDERSTANDING THE REAL ESTATE MARKET CAN BE A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

*Get in touch with the team from  
Ray White Gawler East & Angle Vale.*

**08 7806 8227**

Shop B03, 4 Mullamar Way, Gawler East SA 5118  
120 Murray Street, Gawler SA 5118  
Shop 10, 121 - 123 Heaslip Road, Angle Vale SA 5117

12844753-CS11-26



Mallala's premiership-winning A grade team.



# RETIRE IN GAWLER

Walk to the main street from secure independent living or choose to enjoy a country atmosphere with easy expressway access

## Gawler Community Retirement Homes (GCRH):

- Independent retirement living; its your home!
- Six Villages in Gawler & Willaston
- Homes ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms
- Maintenance of units & villages by GCRH staff, including emergency number; plus weekday administration support
- Homes refurbished prior to settlement
- Two types of entry agreements
- Live there as long as you want, no expiry date on agreements
- Pay no stamp duty or brokers fees

*\* If there is not a suitable home available, register with us to be kept updated on latest vacancies.*



Phone 8523 4255  
www.gcrh.au | admin@gcrh.au  
19 Dawkins Ave, Willaston 5118

Discuss your options with us today!

12750278-SA10-25

# Can anyone prevent a Roosters and Magpies two-horse race?

THE streak of Adelaide Plains Football League A grade premierships won by Two Wells was snapped at four in 2025 as Mallala pulled off a spectacular grand final upset.

Up until the big dance the Two Wells Roosters appeared unbeatable, posting a flawless 16-0 regular season before dominating Mallala by 10 goals in the qualifying final.

But in the decider it was a red-hot 6.5 (41) to 1.2 (8) second quarter that put Two Wells on its rear end, falling behind by four goals at halftime on the way to a 26-point Mallala triumph.

Of the 22 official Team of the Year spots Two Wells and Mallala combined for 13 selections, including the star Roosters trio of player-coach Caleb Edmead (league-leading goal-kicker), former league medal winner Luke Barnett and 2024 grand final Best-on-Ground Jakob Thomson.

For the Magpies, ruck Kale Olds was spectacular all year and even more so on grand final day, while midfielder Jordan Clements and defender Jack Heaslip were also among the club's Team of the Year honourees.

It would take a borderline miracle for any other club to usurp the throne from the runaway top-two, but rival coaches still

believe the league will become tighter from top-to-bottom.

Hummocks Watchman finished third last time around, and while the departure of their two top key forwards Jamie Kovacic and Cody Duncan will hurt, the Eagles have filled the gaps by bringing in Jordan Brown and Jack Baum from the city, who are expected to be among the club's top talents.

Balaklava, with former 100-goal forward Shane Moss back at the helm in his player-coach role, will also have ambitions of going further than their elimination final exit in 2025.

Association-level ruck Sam Michael returning from a year overseas figures to make a meaningful impact, joining reigning Best-and-Fairest and league medal winner Bailey Arthur in an engine room that will hold its own against anyone.

Meanwhile, under 17 standouts Connor Willmer and Riley Ince are coming off junior campaigns where they were named in the best players in 16 out of 16 games.

With a healthy combination of youth and veteran experience, the Peckers are one of the most structurally sound lists with major upside.

Angle Vale, United, Hamley Bridge and

Virginia were the four clubs to miss out on postseason action this past season, and all four have been aggressive in their pursuit to improve.

Hamley Bridge, under the leadership of Brett Burgess, have been tipped by some rivals to be the division's biggest riser in 2026, using his BLG connections to bring over Malakye Kohlhaggen from Angaston and Darcy Thompson from Tanunda.

Angle Vale's Neil Rawlings has brought back Jaidyn Goodfellow following a year at Barossa District, and together with new ruck Josh Holloway, they will bring a massive injection of size and power into an Owls outfit that survived as a young outfit in 2025 thanks to a focus on speed and agility.

As well as on the recruiting table, Angle Vale has valuable reinforcements on the way after their under 17 boys went 15-1 and dominated their grand final, opening the door for standouts such as Central District duo Tyler Dark and Cooper Tamas to step up to the seniors.

United and Virginia are the wild-cards due to sweeping list turnover and will begin the season as favourites for the wooden spoon, but new coaches Charlie McIntyre and Sonny Greagan both have a vision and it remains to be seen how things will pan out.

**OUR LOCAL  
WILLASTON  
TEAM IS  
READY  
TO HELP.**

Visit us at **Reece Irrigation  
& Pools Willaston**

20 Holmes St  
Willaston, SA 5118  
Call us: (08) 8526 5240

**Trading Hours**  
Monday – Friday  
07:00am – 05:00pm





Jayden Ruediger

## Coach chat with Neil Rawlings

**In 2025 Angle Vale finished just out of the finals with a 6-10 record while showing some promising signs with the young players coming through. How would you sum up last season, and what do you need to improve on to play finals this year?**

"2025 was a year to understand the culture, assist all players in their journeys, develop a system driven by the players and be as competitive as we could be.

"In 2026 our expectations are to keep improving and developing the system, culture, and love of each other and the club to continue this journey."

**Have you spoken to the group about expectations for this year? What would you consider a successful season?**

"Success comes in many ways, from player development, to team success.

"Like most clubs we will be aiming to win as many games as we can and qualify for finals."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this offseason?**

"The players we've brought in are Joey's brother Stephen Tahana, who is a midfielder, and Stephen's mate Nick Gill has also come to play midfield for us.

"Ruck Josh Holloway is a mate of Isaiah Glancy, and big man Jaidyn Goodfellow is one of a few who have returned to the club

along with Jaimie Copperstone (wing/small forward), Xander Bates (utility/forward), James Pead (small defender), and Jordy Campbell (tall forward).

"Daniel Mason is one out we've lost, he will head back to Gepps Cross."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"Our top young player prospects include Tyler Dark and Cooper Tamas (who are boys currently at Central District), as well as Jamahson Davies, Ashton Bennett, Damien Manno, TJay Spinks, Jayden Karklis and Logan Harris to just name a few.

"We are lucky to have a lot of other exciting juniors coming through."

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or train this year? Or do you firmly believe sticking with the plan and getting another year in the same system will be beneficial?**

"The game plan is developed by the playing group and supported by the coaching staff, and it continues to evolve."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"Players to feature in individual awards could be many – our focus will be on playing good team footy and being as competitive as we can be."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"Probably the usual suspects Two Wells, Mallala, Hummocks and Balaklava – but the other three teams will be improving, same as us, so no easy games when you play Virginia, Hamley Bridge or United."



Jack Pessano

# Coach chat with Shane Moss

**Last year you finished fourth and went out in a tight, low-scoring semi-final against the Eagles. You will now step back into the head coach's seat – what excites you about taking on the role?**

"Last year's finals exit brought mixed emotions. We were proud to be competing in finals once again, but disappointed we couldn't take the season a little further, as we certainly had the potential within the group. "I'm excited to be back in the head coaching role this year. The group can still compete at the pointy end of what looks to be a very even competition in 2026, with a good blend of experienced players and promising youth. "I really enjoyed my previous stint as coach due to the group's coachability. With a few tweaks to our structure and processes, I'm confident we can be around the mark in the back half of the season."

**Have you spoken to the group about expectations for this year? What would you consider a successful season?**

"For us, success will be determined by how consistently we commit to our structure and processes throughout the year. "Obviously, we'd like to be playing finals football again, but we know that's no guarantee in what appears to be a very even competition. "As always, we'll be striving to win every game and see where that takes us."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this off-season?**

"We farewell James Batty (South Gambier), Tim Zavrl (year off) and Jake Butterfield (Freeling) from our 2025 squad. "We welcome Sam Michael (returning from overseas), Dylan Eleftheriadis (year off in 2025), Lachlan Antik (Pembroke) and Mitchell Larsson (West Gambier) for 2026. "Sam is a Balaklava lad who returns after a year away in England. He's a former association-level ruck and will strengthen our tall stocks being able to play a variety of positions across the field. We're excited to have him back as a leader within the group. "Dylan joins us after playing the majority of his football in the Riverland and taking a year off in 2025. He adds size and versatility across multiple positions. "Mitch has moved back to Adelaide from Mount Gambier. With experience in both Division 1 and zone football, he will bolster and help lead our midfield group this season. "Lachlan has played both junior and senior football with us over the past few seasons and has a family connection to the club through the Michaels. With his previous school football commitments at Pembroke now complete, we're looking forward to having him at the Peckers for the full 2026 season."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"We have several players who are still very



Bailey Arthur



Will Dixon

young in their senior careers and have been pushing their case for further A grade opportunity.

"Riley Hannaford, Lachlan Antik and Jack Pike are three names to watch in 2026.

"In addition, many middle and top-aged senior colts have been joining our senior sessions throughout pre-season, which is a testament to their desire to improve.

"Several will earn opportunities across both the A and B grades during the year."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best and Fairest this year?**

"Reigning Mail Medallist and Best-and-Fairest winner Bailey Arthur has returned in excellent condition and will again set the benchmark for the group.

"There's certainly a group of five-to-10 players

who could also feature prominently, so it shapes as a very open race. That depth of talent will be a real asset for us across the season."

**Based on your intel around the league, who should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"I suspect most teams believe they're a genuine chance to play finals this year. "Two Wells and Mallala have consistently been the benchmark sides, and I don't expect that to change significantly heading into the new season.

"Of the rest, Hamley Bridge have been building an impressive group of talented young players and, under the expert guidance of 'Burgo', I expect them to see them rising up the ladder this year."

# Coach chat with Brett Burgess

**In 2026 Hamley Bridge finished seventh with a 4-12 record. How would you assess the year, and what improvements do you hope to see this time around?**

"Frustrating would be a word I'd use to sum up the year.

"If you look at the results more closely, we were in the games at three-quarter time in 13 of the 16 games, but just weren't able to sustain the level we needed to get the wins.

"This was our negative, but also looking at it through a glass half-full, coming into 2026 we can use it as a positive.

"We know our best footy matches up against every team in this competition. We just need to continue to work towards four quarters of it."

**Have you spoken to the group about expectations for this year? What would you consider a successful season?**

"We have spoken as a group and for us it's just to continue to master what we know works.

"To continue our improvement is what I expect. Over the past four seasons we haven't gone backwards in any year, so if we can take more steps forward this year, we won't be far away when the whips are cracking."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this offseason?**

"Unfortunately we lost Sam McCabe and Campbell Simpson. Both guys hopefully for just a year, but both have moved away for work-related reasons and more than likely will be back in 2027.

"We wish them both luck for the next 12 months.

"We have gained four or five new guys that we think will help make us better and improve our depth as a football club.

"A couple of those lads are Max Zbierski, who comes to us from Broadview as a great runner with very good skills – he will really bolster our midfield depth – and we also picked up a couple young guys from the Barossa Valley.

"Malakye Kohlhaggen from Angaston and Darcy Thompson from Tanunda both have plenty of A grade experience in a very good league and I expect them both to make big impacts on our group."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"We certainly have some talent coming up from the 17s last year, and then a couple who are still playing in that grade this year.

"These lads just need to continue to get out to training and work hard – the talent is there, but talent only gets you so far.

"Attitude is just as important, so hoping that these lads can drive the preseason and

become the footballers we hope they can be for our club."

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or train this year? Or do you firmly believe sticking with the plan and getting another year in the same system will be beneficial?**

"We have made a few little tinkering, but as I mentioned earlier, we know when we get it right that the way we want to play holds up.

"So it's just about mastering this over and over, and being confident in what we are doing and believing in it."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"Justin Schahinger won it last year, and the blokes that continue to drive the standards are the ones that will always be in the mix for these awards.

"We are fortunate that we have some great young leaders that excel in this area and I'd expect them to be up the top end of the medal count this year."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"I would think Two Wells and Mallala once again would be right up there, both have been the benchmark for a long time and the teams that everyone else continues to chase."



Edward McCabe

Ethan Cain



Archie Yelland



Cooper Reschke

## Coach chat with Justin Cicolella

**Hummocks Watchman ended up third in the minor round, and ended up going down by five goals in the preliminary final. How do you assess 2025, and what would you consider a successful 2026?**

"Last year we were strong contributors for the whole year, and we were reasonably happy with winning a final and competing in the preliminary final.

"For 2026 we are optimistic about where we are at, but we have a lot of work to do leading up to Round 1."

**Who are your A grade ins and outs this year?**

"Our group remains reasonably similar, but we have lost a couple forwards in Jamie Kovacic and Cody Duncan who were very strong for us.

"Henry Wright has moved to Ardrossan over the break as well.

"We have a few additions though in Jack Baum and Jordan Brown. Jack has strong family ties at our club and has come from Flinders Park, and Jordan has come from West Adelaide."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"We have a good crop of young players coming from our junior program.

"Ignatius Stodart, Dylan Martin and Jai Walker are ready for senior footy this year."

**Who do you expect to be some of your key players? Have there been many preseason stand-outs?**

"Dylan Williams and Flynn Young are back full time with us this year, which is exciting.

"Some players ready to perform again are Cody Redpath, Archie Yelland, James Daly and Brandon Taylor – they have all had strong preseasons."

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or**

**train this year? Or do you firmly believe sticking with the plan and getting another year in the same system will be beneficial?**

"We will stick with our same game style but just try and improve our defence a bit."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"I would imagine our captain 'Jimmy' (James Daly) will be around the mark, along with our

reigning Best-and-Fairest Archie Yelland, new recruits Jordan Brown and Jack Baum, and Brandon Taylor will be strong as well."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"I would imagine Two Wells and Mallala will be around the mark, and I expect Hamley Bridge will be the big improver."

**Wishing all of the Mallala Football and Netball teams the best of luck for the upcoming season.**

**8527 2249**  
1 Adelaide Road, Mallala

**MALLALA HOTEL**



**THE HOME OF BACKYARD CRICKET**

12/27/2025 11:13:25

# Coach chat

## with Ryan Paget

**After such an amazing 2025 where you snapped Two Wells' dominant premiership streak, what are your expectations for 2026, and what would you consider a successful year?**

"I don't have any, to be honest. No ceilings. "There's a bit of turnover with our list, so it may take a bit to get going. I said the same thing last year and we eventually got there. "I'll never go into a season thinking the ultimate goal isn't achievable. It always is. We'll just keep putting the work in and see where we land."

**Who are your A grade ins and outs this year?**

"We've lost a few guys from the squad last year for different reasons.

"Sam Clements has moved back to his home town (Kimba) and Toby Maughan has moved to Perth for work. Harry Slee has retired, and Jack Heaslip is travelling around Australia for 12 months.

"Those guys have been huge for us and will be big holes to fill, no doubt.

"Jack Matthews (in from Gepps Cross) is someone I played some footy with about 10 years ago when he was a teenager, and will be a huge asset for us this year on the big decks.

"He lives and works in the Adelaide Plains area and I was rapt to get him to the club for 2026.

"He has genuine leg speed and the ability to break through lines and away from stoppage – he'll be really exciting for our supporters and members to watch."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**



Charlie Baker

"I'm really excited to see our young lads continue to progress.

"Hamish Wildbore will be with us all year this year, we think he can be a contributor every week at A grade level, balancing that with his senior colts games.

"Jesse Humphrys, Asha Mead and Josh May all got a good bit of A grade exposure last year in their first year of senior footy, and we'd expect them to become more regular contributors at the level this year.

"Beau Daniel has come back to us from a year of senior colts at Barossa District and he's doing some great work on the track as well.

"Dean McMillan is also a name to watch, a top-age senior colt who has real pace and could feature sooner rather than later."

**Who do you expect to be some of your key players? Have there been many preseason standouts?**

"I've been pumped with Jacob Baker's summer. He had an interrupted year last year,

but we've always known his best is very good A grade footy, and he's given himself the best opportunity to achieve that this year.

"He's at the top end of our running and looks primed for a great season – almost like a new recruit for us.

"Jack May has got through every session as well, crossing fingers that his body cooperates and he can see a full season. Everyone is aware of his natural ability, but he's still so young that some continuity with his body could see him go to another level."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"I think it's hard to go past Two Wells. Their core group knows each other so well, they have talent on every line, they're well-drilled.

"I'd expect Angle Vale to improve a fair bit too, they're well-coached by Neil and have added some real talent to the impressive group of kids they blooded last year."



Zac Eckermann



Toby Maughan



# Coach chat with Caleb Edmead

**After another rock-solid 2025 campaign where Two Wells made another grand final, what would you consider a successful 2026 season?**

"Really looking at the development of our younger guys coming through, and them carrying this side into the future."

**Who are some of the A Grade ins and outs this year? Please let me know where you found your recruits and what position you expect them to play.**

"No outs, which is really nice to maintain the squad. Just locals returning.

"Harry Gameau returns after a couple of years off. He'll boost our ruck stocks and give our midfield some really good use all year.

"Jack Hankins is a local lad who spent time with the Eagles but has committed to play at the club this year. He can play anywhere."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"Yeah we do have a couple who

have already played a few A grade games.

"One I'm really excited about is Noah Henwood. He played six games last year and kicked 18 goals – really excited to see him in a full year of A grade football"

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or train this year? Or do you firmly believe sticking with the plan and getting another year in the same system will be beneficial?**

"We have been more aggressive at training – running blocks – more competitive and trying to get more out of everyone."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"I could throw a lot of names in here but some of our key players this year will be Luke Barnett, Jakob Thomson, David Haydon, Dylan Wise, Jamie Humphries, Jack Hankins, Pat Binyon and Sam Harnas."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"Mallala coming off winning last year's premiership would be out-and-out favourites."



Alex Pool



Aaron Dart



Luke Barnett



**ANTHONY'S**  
REFRIGERATION & AIR-CONDITIONING PTY LTD

- Evaporative • Split System
- Reverse Cycle Ducted • Sales • Install
- Service • Repairs • Electrical

Anthony Cavallaro  
**0422 546 313**

BLD 332552 | AU 44253 | PGE 214713



12843162-C512-26

# Coach chat

## with Charlie McIntyre

**Bit of a tough year in 2025, finishing with four wins, 11 losses, but a draw against eventual premiers Mallala. What excites you about taking on this coaching role?**

"Being local to the club and community, I am really looking forward to taking on the responsibility of the role to help improve and develop the group of young lads that we have brought together.

"It's been exciting to blend our young core of local players with our new recruits and watch them improve and learn together throughout the preseason and I look forward to seeing how all of their hard work will pay off."

**Have you spoken to the group about expectations for this year? What would you consider a successful season?**

"The expectations for the playing group as a whole is to strive for consistency with our performances week-in and week-out.

"We know that to become the successful club we want to become, we have to keep our standards at training and match days at the highest of levels and have the expectation to perform at those levels each match, no matter who the opponent is."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this offseason?**

"Our ins this season are midfielder Charlie Turnbull (Cummins Kapinnie), forward Bailey Hume (TTG), defender Cooper Ridgway (TTG), ruck Riley Kop (Yarragon FC), ruck Beau Plummer (Virginia), defender Calder Ward (Gawler Central) and forward Matt Stevens (Gawler Central).

"Our outs are Dom Pratico, Josh Hart, Andrew McWhirter, Aaron Marchioro, Tadgh Marchioro and Max Bentley."

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or train this year? Or do you firmly believe sticking with the plan and getting another year in the same system will be beneficial?**

"With the changes we have made to the squad over the off season, we will be making the necessary changes to our gameplay to benefit the players that we now have playing.

"There will be some elements that will be similar to previous seasons, but there are changes we have made to hopefully improve the team."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"It's still way too early in preseason to know for sure but so far Bailey Jones and Tyler Sobey have come back from the offseason fitter than ever so they could be in the running."

**Based on your intel around the league, who do you think should be considered the favourites in 2026?**

"Two Wells have been dominant for nearly a decade and after last year's grand final heartbreak, I think they will be more determined than ever to win the premiership.

"Reigning premiers Mallala played some outstanding footy last year and if they play similar to that level they should be around the mark again."

Ethan Pepe



Austin Perris





# Coach chat with Sonny Greagan

**2025 was a difficult season for Virginia, finishing last with a 3-13 record. What excites you about taking on this challenge?**

"Although we finished with three wins last year I think we were a better side than what that shows.

"From what I've been told there were five or six games that were decided by less than two goals that we were in a position to win, but had patches or quarters that really let us down.

"So the challenge of turning those losses into wins and bringing this team back into the finals mix is what excites me the most."

**Have you spoken to the group about expectations for this year? What would you consider a successful season?**

"My expectation is that we start to build the foundations of what we hope can be a successful period for the club – not just this season – but in seasons to come.

"I wouldn't like to put a marker on a successful season because with footy clubs that are trying to turn things around there is more to success than just the number of wins you finish with.

"Every team wants to play finals, as do we, but even if we don't, I still want us to be building the culture on and off the field that we are hoping to.

"That may be considered success, but that is something we will look at come season's end."

**Who are the A grade ins and outs this offseason?**

"There's a fair list of turnover, honestly too much to go through them all individually, but we have been able to recruit some quality players.

"Our new additions through our midfield and forward line bring some high-level experience, and although every club wants to retain all players and add more to their depth,



Cooper Taylor

it's very unlikely you will do that and we are very happy with the ones that decided to stick around."

**Are there any juniors who have been putting their hand up for a spot in the As?**

"Yes, we have had a handful of juniors that have done the whole senior preseason and a fair few that have come through it at some stage.

"There might be a couple that will get an opportunity in our trials and we will go from there."

**Have you made any changes to the way your team will play or train this year?**

"I have tried to bring in my own game style, which isn't anything over the top or complicated, but also trying to keep what has worked in the past."

**Who do you think will be in the mix for the club's Best-and-Fairest this year?**

"It wouldn't be fair to name any individuals, especially when there are quite a few I haven't seen play before.

"I'll just focus on the team stuff, and the individual side of things will look after itself."



Connor Clery



Isaac Poole



Marques Graham



Mallala's premiership-winning A1 team.

## Magpies enter new A1 season amidst 32-game winning streak

ON the back of consecutive Adelaide Plains Netball Association A1 premierships in 2024 and 2025, Mallala will head into 2026 seeking a rare and historic three-peat in the top grade.

The Magpies will have to do so without Liana Shinnick, who has returned to former club Nuriootpa after an extremely successful two-year stint in Mallala.

But Mallala's undefeated 16-0 regular season and flawless finals run was a full-team effort, finishing second in the competition for goals scored (56.8 per game) and goals conceded (41.6 per game).

With Shinnick out, more responsibility will fall on her fellow shooter Brooke Wilson, while down the other end Ashlee Angus and Ella Thorne hold together a stout defence, and linking up through the middle will be mid-courtiers Emily Talbot and Zoe Francis – just to name a few.

Interestingly, second-placed Hummocks was the club to lead the categories of most goals (59.3 per game) and fewest conceded (41.4 per game), and their only losses in a 14-2 campaign came against Mallala (51-50 and 61-45).

The Magpies went on to defeat the Eagles in the qualifying final (52-46) and grand final (58-54) – but no other team in the APNA was able to handle Hummocks.

Despite being on the losing side, Eagle Ellie

Gould received the grand final Best-on-Court honour for her excellent work at goal attack, and together with Nicola Tiller they form an elite shooting combination.

Haylee Studham, Beth Reid and Ashleigh Williams will be among those tasked with feeding their dynamic duo, and if anyone is going to knock Mallala off its perch, Hummocks is the number-one candidate.

The only other club in 2025 to post more wins than losses was third-placed Two Wells (10-6), with the core of Maddison Thomson, Charli Thomson, Sienna Yarwood, Kyla Adams, Lucy Klingberg and Ruth Slattery each suiting up every week for the Roosters.

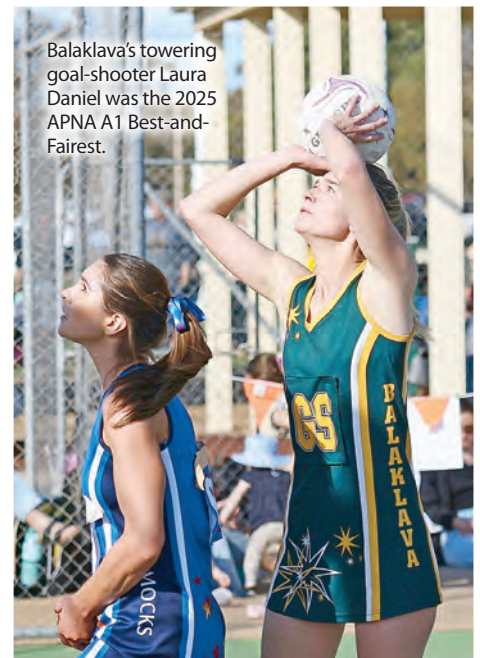
Two Wells' season came to an end with a heartbreaking 53-52 elimination final loss against Balaklava, which came just a week after the Roosters defeated the Peckers 50-47 in the last round of the regular season.

These two clubs will likely continue to jostle for third, although superstar shooter Laura Daniel and fellow every-week starters Emily Shepherd, Lauren Ruiz and Tae Tomney will have loftier goals than that in Balaklava.

Long Plains (7-9) was the clear fifth team last time around, coming within one game of finals places thanks to the consistent efforts of Holly Sobey, Ashlyn Sobey, Alicia Sharman, Alysha Gliddon and Catelyn Harkness.

Assuming the Tigers can keep their list

Balaklava's towering goal-shooter Laura Daniel was the 2025 APNA A1 Best-and-Fairest.



together, they will expect to be right in the mix with Two Wells and Balaklava, as evidenced by their single-digit margins of defeat against every member of the top-four (Mallala 48-41, Hummocks 60-52, Two Wells 55-48 and Balaklava 52-44).

Virginia, Angle Vale and surprise 2023 premier Hamley Bridge made up the numbers last year and will each be desperate to exclude themselves from the wooden spoon conversation.

To see how it all plays out, tune into The Bunyip's weekly APNA recaps.

# Dogs reload for 2026 tilt

## Ben Lennon

THE winds of change have once again swept through the Ponderosa, with Central District gearing up for two mammoth state league campaigns.

Last year saw both the men's and women's sides finish fifth, with Paul Thomas's men bowing out in the elimination final at Adelaide Oval.

What has followed has been nothing short of eventful, with plenty of familiar faces on the way out and one or two coming back in.

Arguably the greatest coup of the player movement period came in the SANFLW space, with the return of club legend Shelby Smith lighting up the faces of Doggies supporters.

Her resume is matched by few in the club's storied history, with the premiership captain taking a break from footy in 2025 to welcome her second daughter into the world.

She will inject plenty of skill and experience into Shaun Ribbons's midfield as the Dogs look to replicate the success of the 2023

season that saw them crowned SANFLW premiers for the first time.

Sophie Eaton will be a notable absentee as she joins Port Adelaide's AFLW set-up, but holding on to star goalkicker Katelyn Rosenzweig and the addition of GWS Giants academy product Ella Randall are both reasons for optimism at Elizabeth.

For the men, the challenge will be the same as it has been for a number of years under club legend Thomas - how can they bridge the gap to the competition's absolute elite? Losing talent will likely not help. Superstar half back Rhett Montgomerie has pulled the pin on SANFL footy, heading to South Mildura alongside Nick Lange, while Kade Dittmar has traded in the Ponderosa for the Parade where he will line up for Norwood.

A plethora of the club's brightest up-and-comers also found new homes, with youngsters Aidan Schubert, Matt LeRay and Cameron Nairn all landing at Hawthorn following the AFL Draft.

Seeing Dougie Cochrane line up in Port Adelaide colours in the SANFL this year will

sting, while Dyson Sharp has made a bright start to his Essendon career despite an early injury.

Meanwhile talented son-of-a-gun Jack Callinan has jumped at an opportunity to represent his home state of Tasmania.

All this is to say that the Dogs needed to recruited this off-season - and recruit they did.

GWS talent Josh Fahey looks poised to make a major impact, while fellow recruits Callum McCarty, Jack Saunders and Josh Smith all boast SANFL experience.

Thomas will be hoping this new blood, alongside the experience and skill of club stalwarts like Kyle Presbury and Aiden Grace will be enough to return the Dogs to the top of the ladder.

Despite the outs the list still packs plenty of talent - but talent has never been the cornerstone of success of great Centrals teams.

Textbook northern grit, togetherness and determination have been the pillars of success for the club in years gone by. These



2025 co-captain Laitiah Huynh with returning legend Shelby Smith. (File)

Aidan Schubert is one of three Bulldogs to have been drafted to Hawthorn during the off-season. (Mark Willoughby: 506452\_11)



# President Chat with Declan Stimson

## What divisions will the Trinity Old Scholars be entering teams in for 2026, and how do your numbers compare to previous years?

"For the first time in our history, Trinity Old Scholars will be having four senior teams this season.

"Three teams will be competing weekly in the Adelaide Footy League's Division 6 (A grade, Reserves and C grade), and for the first time we will have a team competing fortnightly in AFL Masters SA (over-35s) competition.

"We understand we are the first old scholar club to compete in this competition, which is a terrific honour, and we can't wait to form a healthy 'rivalry' with the Gawler Districts Bunyips who have been very supportive of our entry into the competition.

"Rob McLean, Michael Burdelfo and others have done a mountain of work since the middle of last year to get this team operational. They deserve recognition for ensuring this much discussed idea has become a reality.

"If you are over 35, want to relive your glory days or make your Australian Rules debut, we welcome anyone who wants to enjoy their footy in a safe and inclusive environment.

"Keith Hooker returns as club head coach for the second time after having a stint between 2007 and 2011.

"During his previous five-year run he took our A grade to four finals appearances and the club's first promotion.

"Despite going down a division, we have had excellent numbers on the track throughout the preseason with over 50 players coming out recently. A lot of the players want to right the wrong in going down last year and are determined to be back in higher divisions as soon as possible.

"Fresh from winning a Division 6 Reserves premiership with Adelaide Lutheran, Richard Crewdson has joined us to become our reserves coach and assistant to Keith.

"A collaboration of Nicholas Balchin, Korey Christensen, and Chris Grantham will be running the C grade.

"Whilst we are an Old Scholar club, you don't have to be a former student of Trinity College to join the club, we welcome anyone in the local area who either wants to take their football seriously or just wants to have a kick with his mates on the weekend.

"There will be a game at TOS for you."

## For a club that does not technically have junior teams it must be tough to consistently reload your senior stocks. How do you do it?

"The club considers all Trinity College students who play or have played football at the college as our juniors, so there are numerous players available at the end of each school year.

"Obviously the dynamic is different, where our juniors don't play before our seniors, but

we are still heavily invested in the revamped junior and senior football programs headlined by Trinity College staff members Luke Habel and Riley Hatley, as well as First XVIII coach Justin Platten.

"Occasionally, the First and Second XVIII will play in conjunction with our matches when the schedules allow, and there are mid-week knockout and intercol games to watch.

"It does involve a lot of messaging through social media and making connections with Trinity College students while they are playing senior football for the college.

"The SAAS First XVIII competition is the second-best junior football competition in the state behind the SANFL under 16s and 18s competition, so we have a focus on recruiting students from the First and Second XVIII programs that the college offers.

"We outline some of the advantages of playing for our club being that Waldeck Oval is one of the best surfaces to train and play on in the state, and we can also utilise the school's main oval.

"It is also about re-emphasising playing with your school mates again after school finishes and the fact that entry to all minor round games for spectators and players is free.

"With the challenge of promotion and relegation, there is always an unknown coming into the season as there are games against a minimum of four brand new teams each season. The standard of play also increases with each promotion, so there isn't any staleness with the competition.

"The club has the ability to have as many teams in the Adelaide Footy League as possible, as we aren't restricted to just two senior teams like other clubs in the area, we have this flexibility.

"We are always welcoming new players, so please message our club social pages on Facebook or Instagram. Alternatively you can email [president.tosfc@gmail.com](mailto:president.tosfc@gmail.com) or [footballdirector.tosfc@gmail.com](mailto:footballdirector.tosfc@gmail.com) to get involved."

## Who are your A grade ins and outs this season?

"We've lost Cameron Matters (Mallee Storm), Bailey Puvogel (Mallee Storm), Cameron Hankinson (work), Rhys Hankinson (work), Jack Henneker (Queensland), Caelan Hewlett (Gepps Cross) and Lachlan Hewlett (Gepps Cross).

"But we've been fortunate enough to bring in seven guys who I would consider major inclusions.

"Midfielder/forward Kim Kantilla is a quick, explosive 27-year-old who captained the Tiwi Islands this past Northern Territory Football League season and has played state level football at South Adelaide and Claremont in recent years.

"Inside midfielder Sean Baker arrives from Port Districts and he previously won Best-on-Ground in Gawler Central's 2020 grand final win, so he's a known big-game performer. His elite strength and conditioning background has come in very handy and the players have loved his positive voice on the training track.

"Key forward Robert Kovacic from Eastern Park is a natural goal-kicker and leader who has produced wherever he has played, so he will look to spearhead our forward line.

"Also from Eastern Park, Brenton Carter was one of the best rucks in Division 5 last season and we're expecting him to give our midfielders first use this season.

"Rounding out our Eastern Park recruits is utility Connor Peters, who will bring much-needed support to either our back or forward line when required.

"Steven Peter has the ability to play forward, midfield and ruck, so he will be a big asset to the club. He led Ingle Farm's goal-kicking last season and was awarded their Best Utility award.

"Lastly, backman Nicholas Ruciack is a former state junior and Trinity First XVIII player who is returning from Victoria for work and is back playing football after a few years off."

## Who is the club's reigning Best-and-Fairest, and who are some of the players you expect to be in the mix for the award this season?

"Nicholas Hooker is our reigning Best-and-Fairest after his first season back at the club since 2016.

"He will look to repeat this, but he will expect challenges to come from all of our major inclusions mentioned above.

"2024 Best-and-Fairest Dylan Winning and backman Trent Eves always have solid eight-out-of-10 performances and are amongst the vote-getters each game.

"Two dark horses could be Ryan Roberts and known ball-winner Bailey Hoare."

## What are the expectations for your A grade group this year?

"Wanting to play in the grand final is a very real expectation based upon our recruiting, but more important is growing our club to respond from a very disappointing 2025 season.

"Rebranding a culture of improvement from players to coaches to club. Making Waldeck Oval a fortress again and winning more than half of our away games.

"It will be exciting to see the development of existing young players such as Bailey Hoare and Blake Nykke, and honestly there are a number of different ways to measure a successful season.

"For every player in all three grades to enjoy the process – from training to game day – if the club does this well it will make winning become a habit again in all three grades and enhance club culture.

"For the Masters team, it will be about filling out a team sheet with at least 24 players each fortnight, rekindling old friendships and starting new ones.

"We are looking at having a few home games on a Sunday to coincide with the Adelaide Footy League teams playing at home on a Saturday, so some interstate TOSers can return for some guest appearances.

# There's more local news in SAToday

**Want to reach an even larger audience than ever before?**

Maximise your advertising potential by contacting your local sales team for a tailored marketing solution across print or digital media

[transcontinental.com.au](http://transcontinental.com.au)  
08 8642 2688  
Port Augusta, Quorn, Hawker & Stirling North

THE TRANSCONTINENTAL  
PORT AUGUSTA

[portpirierecorder.com.au](http://portpirierecorder.com.au)  
08 8633 9999  
Port Pirie, Crystal Brook, Port Broughton  
& Port Germein

Recorder

[whyallanewsonline.com.au](http://whyallanewsonline.com.au)  
08 8644 9400  
Whyalla

WHYALLA NEWS

[plainsproducer.com.au](http://plainsproducer.com.au)  
08 8862 1977  
Adelaide Plains, Lower, Mid North SA,  
Clare, Gilbert Valleys & Southern Flinders Ranges

Plains Producer

[bunyippress.com.au](http://bunyippress.com.au)  
8522 1233  
Gawler, Barossa & Adelaide Plains

The Bunyip

[fleurieusun.com.au](http://fleurieusun.com.au)  
08 8528 8400  
The entire Fleurieu Peninsula

Fleurieu Sun

[victorharbortimes.com.au](http://victorharbortimes.com.au)  
08 8528 8400  
The entire Fleurieu Peninsula

The Times

[epadvocate.com.au](http://epadvocate.com.au)  
08 8682 1055  
The entire Eyre Peninsula

THE EYRE PENINSULA  
Advocate

[portlincolntimes.com.au](http://portlincolntimes.com.au)  
08 8682 1055  
Port Lincoln, Cummins, Tumby Bay & Coffin Bay

Port Lincoln  
Times

[murrayvalleystandard.com.au](http://murrayvalleystandard.com.au)  
08 8532 8000  
Murray Bridge, Mannum, Tailem Bend,  
Karoonda & surrounds

THE MURRAY VALLEY  
Standard

[theislanderonline.com.au](http://theislanderonline.com.au)  
08 8553 4800  
Kangaroo Island

The Islander

[borderchronicle.com.au](http://borderchronicle.com.au)  
08 8752 1511  
Bordertown and surrounds

Border Chronicle

[limestonecoasttoday.com.au](http://limestonecoasttoday.com.au)  
08 8762 2555  
The entire Limestone Coast

Limestone Coast Today

[penolapennant.com.au](http://penolapennant.com.au)  
08 8741 8170  
Millicent, Penola and surrounds  
of the Limestone Coast

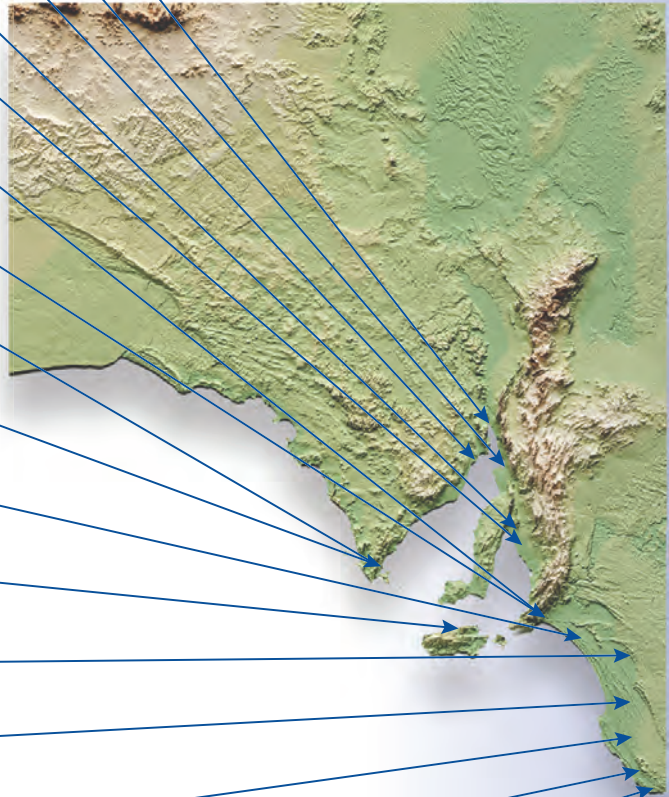
THE PENNANT

[borderwatch.com.au](http://borderwatch.com.au)  
08 8741 8170  
Mount Gambier

The Border Watch

[setimes.com.au](http://setimes.com.au)  
08 8741 8170  
Millicent, Penola and surrounds of the  
Limestone Coast

The South Eastern Times



SA Today is proudly independent and excited to be leading a revival  
of independent community newspapers by bringing back more content  
for our regional audiences.





# Welcoming the Community for over 25 years



Join us  
**today!**



- STATE-OF-THE-ART GYM & PILATES STUDIO
- INDOOR FOUR COURT STADIUM
- HEATED INDOOR POOLS

8522 0622 **STARplex** EVANSTON PARK

FREE Crèche available

[www.starplex.com.au](http://www.starplex.com.au)  

12843041-CS08-26