



## **AFL Coaching Newsletter - December 2009**

AFL Coaching this month provides details of the 2010 National Coaching Conference which will be held in Adelaide for the first time. We also ask for your feedback on the proposed new AFL Trainers Policy. We'd like to know what the broader Australian football community thinks about the proposed policy and training support structure for sports trainers in community Australian football and how best to support associations, clubs, teams and individual volunteers to meet the policy requirements. This month we provide a feature on the 2009 Victorian AFCA Award winners whilst also acknowledging the 2009 QLD coaches of the year. There is a brief preview of the next edition of the Coaching Edge with an article on finding the right head coach and we introduce you to the new Coach AFL Logo. The newsletter also highlights the latest articles in the Coaches on Coaching series. Again, we encourage you to update your coaching details through Footyweb. We wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.

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The 2010 AFL National Coaching Conference will be held in Adelaide from Friday 29th – Sunday 31st of January 2010. The conference will begin at 7pm on Friday evening and conclude at 4pm on Sunday afternoon.

The conference will take place at AAMI Stadium in the new Adelaide Crows Training and Entertainment facility. The conference attracts over 400 coaches from across Australia.

Please go to the link below to gain access to the 2010 AFL National Coaching Conference brochure which includes:

- General information on the conference;
- Costs for the various conference packages;
- Conference program; and
- How to register.

CONFERENCE BROCHURE – [www.afl.com.au/coachingconference](http://www.afl.com.au/coachingconference)



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### **AFL Trainers Research**

#### **Community Consultation on AFL Sports Trainers in community Australian football policy and training structure**

The AFL would like to know what the broader Australian football community thinks about its proposed policy and training support structure for sports trainers in community Australian football and how best to support associations, clubs, teams and individual volunteers to meet the policy requirements.

We would like you to read the draft policy and training and support structure carefully and then provide us with feedback on whether we have covered all the necessary issues. We would also like you to let us know how feasible and practical you think our proposal is. You can provide as little or as much information as you wish. It will take you about 30 minutes to read the two documents and another 15 minutes to complete the survey.

Before participating in the survey, please download and read the:

1. Research Plain Language Statement for this project. You will not be able to complete the online questionnaire unless you indicate that you have read and understood the plain language statement.
2. Draft AFL Sports Trainers in Community Australian Football Policy that has been proposed for community-level Australian football sports trainers.
3. Draft AFL Sports Trainers in Community Australian Football Training Structure that has been proposed to support sports trainers to develop and maintain the required competencies.

Please click the link below to provide your feedback:

<http://www.afl.com.au/news/newsarticle/tabid/208/newsid/87457/default.aspx>

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### **VICTORIA'S BEST COACHES HONOURED**

Victoria's finest coaches were recently honored at the MCG at the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Victorian Australian Football Coaches Association (AFCA) Awards.

More than 270 guests attended the awards ceremony that included an address by St. Kilda champion and AFL Coaches Association CEO Danny Frawley.

AFL Victoria Coaching Development Manager Steve Teakel said more than 60 coaches had been recognised by their regional AFCA branch for excellence in coaching. From there, 15 Victorian finalists were chosen across five award categories.

“The Victorian AFCA awards night provides an opportunity to celebrate football at all levels and to acknowledge the significant role coaches play in the development of individual players and teams,” Teakel said.

AFCA Victoria President Stan Alves also presented the Lifetime Achievement to Community Coaching Award which acknowledged Ray Allsopp’s contribution to football in Victoria over a 34 year period which has seen him at the fore front of game development activities.

Some of Ray’s achievements include executive officer for the Coordinating Council for the Promotion of Football (established in 1974), policy for the conduct of junior football and modified rules, formation of coach education courses and resources to support the ongoing education of coaches, and his most noteworthy achievement was the establishment of the Victorian Primary School Clinic Scheme which has evolved into what is now known as NAB AFL Auskick.

The 2009 Victorian AFCA winners were:

**NAB AFL Auskick Coach of the Year:**

**Ray Gallagher – Swifts Creek Auskick**

“Ray started the Swifts Creek Auskick in 1995 with its base at the local school. He is well organized with a strong focus on skill development, basics of positional and team play. Ray is an excellent coaching role model for the secondary students who also assist at the clinic. The remoteness of the Swifts Creek community is no barrier to Ray’s enthusiasm for football where he assists with football clinics, AFL player visits and involves his Auskickers in half time games of the local senior league”

**Junior Coach of the Year:**

**Kevin Hernan – Russell’s Creek Junior Football Club (Warrnambool)**

“If you have progressed from the Russell’s Creek Auskick into the Under 12 team over the past 11 years then Kevin Hernan would have been your first junior coach. He is a well respected coach who ensures the training sessions are prepared and conducted in a manner to maximise participation. Kevin encourages the involvement of parents to assist with training and uses his experience to mentor other club coaches.”

**Youth Coach of the Year:**

**Darren Boulton - Montmorency Junior Football Club**

“Darren has a player centred coaching philosophy which is based on getting to know each of his players, identifying their strengths and weaknesses and preparing a plan to further develop their football skills. He delegates responsibility to his support staff encouraging them to be active in the development of the players and ensuring the plans and objectives for each session are carried out.”

**Female Coach of the Year:**

**Alyshia Souter – Rosebud Junior Football Club/Olympic Park Auskick**

“Alyshia has taken on the dual role of coach at the Olympic Park Auskick and Rosebud JFC. Using a rotation policy she is able to manage and play 30 Under 10’s who have developed

into a confident and skilled team. With a focus on skills, parents have been recruited to assist with the one on one coaching. Her leadership program at the Auskick using older children to demonstrate skills for the preps has been a resounding success. Alyshia's well organised approach, emphasis on enjoyment and self improvement has drawn positive comments from the parent group and her coaching peers."

### **Senior Coach of the Year:**

#### **Stuart Farr - Horsham Football Netball Club**

"Stuart has coached Horsham for the past four years, previously being senior captain of the club for three years. He has improved enormously in his coaching and is now a mature, professional and confident coach. He has a very good work ethic – designing the fitness needs, game requirements and skill development for each player – which is reflected in his own preparation for coaching and playing. He has developed a strong interest in the junior coaching group – communicating regularly and providing his insights into the game."

[We thank and congratulate all the nominees and winners of the 2009 awards.](#)

[By Steve Teakel - AFL Victoria Coaching Development Manager](#)

#### QLD Winners

We'd also like to acknowledge the 2009 Coaching Award Winners from QLD, who have also done an outstanding job in developing their players and providing exceptional football environments.

- **Anthony Stothard (Maryborough)**
- **Lance Nunn (Nambour & Hinterland)**
- **Brad Grogan (Bundaberg Juniors)**
- **Breeanna Brock (Women's)**

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#### **New Logo**



A new logo has been developed specifically for Coaching Development, the logo is aimed at promoting coaching in general, the coaching pathway and better acknowledging the importance of coaching in the football environment.

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**Take a sneak peek into the December issue of Coaching Edge with an article providing some advice on finding the right head coach for your club.**

#### **Finding the Right Head Coach – the Coaching Merry Go Round**

**By Wayne Goldsmith**

With all the movements and changes in the head coaching ranks in the major football codes

across Australia in recent times, it is worth having a closer look at how to go about hiring the right coach.

The most important step for any club, is to first clearly understand what they want from a head coach!

- Do they want a leader – an inspirational head coach?
- Do they want someone who is an expert in change management – someone who can make hard decisions and radical changes to the Club’s culture and performance environment?
- Do they want a technical expert – someone with great skills in one element of the game, e.g. attack?
- Do they want a coach skilled with dealing with the media?
- Do they want a hard nosed, disciplinarian with a strong work ethic and uncompromising nature?
- Do they want someone who can build effective teams and get people working together towards a common goal?
- Do they want someone with knowledge and skills in sports science and performance enhancement?
- Do they want someone who has played the game at the highest level and has an understanding and empathy for the playing group?
- Do they want someone who can create leaders in the player group and create a player driven culture?
- Do they want an innovator? Someone who can accelerate change and implement new ideas?

The answer most clubs will give is – “all of the above”.

Most clubs will seek a single person who can meet all of these expectations and more – and they are very, very, very hard to find.

However, most clubs **do not NEED** a head coach with all these attributes.

The head coach needs of a club will vary over time depending on a range of factors.

A young club may want an experienced coach who can establish a winning culture, systems and structures to help the club get started.

An older club with a more established culture may want the injection of new ideas and energy to revitalise the club, players and program and recruit someone with a new, fresh approach to winning.

Regardless of the needs of the Club, there are some common principles to put in place to increase the likelihood of recruiting the right person.

#### **Five essentials for recruiting the right head coach:**

##### **1. Clearly determine what your club needs right now**

Don’t go on the coach’s reputation alone or what the coach has done for another team.

Think about the **UNIQUE** needs of your club right now. A coach who has been successful at one club may not be able to replicate that success in the new environment because of differences in the player group, Club culture, resources, management structure, location etc. The key question you are trying to answer is **“Can this coach deliver the outcomes we want at this club now and in the future”**.

##### **2. Think about the TOTAL COACHING SKILL SET you want.**

Instead of looking for one man to deliver the “entire world”, look to employ a coaching

TEAM who can deliver high quality, consistent coaching to the club. For example:

- A STRONG INSPIRATIONAL LEADER HEAD COACH plus “attention to detail” type, methodical, systematic assistant coaches.
- A YOUNGER HEAD COACH WITH A STRONG BACKGROUND AS A PLAYER plus a quality, experienced, older assistant coach with a long coaching background to play a role of guide or mentor.
- A HEAD COACH WITH OUTSTANDING FORWARD PLAY KNOWLEDGE plus assistant coaches with outstanding defensive or midfield knowledge and skills.

Think about the balance of skills, knowledge, character, personality and experience of the coaching and performance enhancement team rather than trying to find one person to do it all.

If you had a very skilful player, but then asked them to be captain, do the kick-ins, play in the ruck, do all the media and sponsor commitments, it is highly likely their playing performance will suffer.

Head coaches are the same. Expecting them to be all things to all people at all times will eventually result in a compromised coaching performance.

### **3. Establish the appropriate INTERVIEW / RECRUITMENT process.**

If you are looking for a coach with a strong technical background, have the candidates present detailed technical plans and programs at interview and have someone on the interview panel who can ask challenging technical questions.

If you are looking for someone with a new direction for the Club, ask them to present a detailed “VISION” for the future which covers critical areas such as recruitment, player development, playing styles, etc.

Match the interview and recruitment process to the outcome you want!

If you were recruiting a goal kicker – you would ask them to kick a few goals before signing them! Same principle!

### **4. The six C’S – CLARITY / COMPOSURE / CONFIDENCE / CREDIBILITY / CHARACTER / COMMUNICATION.**

The six principles of recruiting a quality head coach are:

**CLARITY** – Are they clear in their thinking, decision making, vision and direction?

**COMPOSURE** – Do they deal with pressure? Can they provide leadership in tough times?

**CONFIDENCE** – Do they believe in themselves and what they say?

**CREDIBILITY** – Can they get players, coaches, staff, management, sponsors and fans to buy in to what they are trying to do?

**CHARACTER**- Does who they are as a person enrich the club? Are their values (honesty, integrity, sincerity, humility, work ethic etc) consistent with you want for the head coaching role?

**COMMUNICATION** – Does the coach communicate well? Can they communicate effectively with players, coaches, staff, management, media, fans, sponsors? Do they communicate well in groups and one on one? As it is with most organisations, poor communication is at the heart of the majority of problems at footy clubs.

### **5. Establish clear expectations, time frames and deliverables.**

It is vital that the head coach, the Board, the Management, the staff and of course the players have a clear understanding of what the vision for the club is, the timeframe that has been established to achieve the vision and the specific goals and objectives for everyone involved in the program.

From the outset establish clear policies, principles and rules so that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities, the standards they are expected to maintain and the time frame to achieve them.

The Head Coach role is an important one for any club. They are often the public face of the organisation and the person held responsible for winning, losing and dealing with the implications of both.

It takes a special person to do it well – and an intelligent, thoughtful organisation to find that special person.

**Wayne Goldsmith is managing director of Moregold Performance Consulting and has worked with many of the world's leading sporting organisations and elite Australian sporting clubs.**

## COACHES ON COACHING

During the 2009 season the AFL Record, in association with the AFL and the AFL Coaches Association, featured a series of articles on coaching. Each week one of the 16 AFL Senior Coaches explored various components of coaching the game. This series provided a rare insight into the minds of the AFL Senior Coaches. The most recent additions to the series included:

- Alastair Clarkson on how mentoring systems are crucial to developing and maximising the attributes of all club football staff.
- Neil Craig explains how developing strong leadership and a team-first mentality is crucial to long-term success.

To view these articles please click [here](#).



### Updating Footyweb details

As the 2009 season winds down, we are doing some Footyweb administration and we need your help as we plan for the 2010 season and beyond.

The process takes roughly 5 minutes and is a tremendous help to us in providing you with quality service.

Please go to the AFL website [here](#), select your state and follow the on screen instructions.

In particular we require your **date of birth, current email address, your club and current position.**

In addition, monitor your email for a message from SportingPulse and AFL Coaching for further details. The email will also provide instructions on how to update and manage your details within the system.

Your cooperation with this process is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions about the process you can contact us at [coaching@afi.com.au](mailto:coaching@afi.com.au).

## PLAY BY THE RULES



*Play By The Rules* ([www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au)) is a free website which offers online training, information and resources for clubs and sporting organisations to ensure everyone involved in sport can do so in enjoyable, safe environments, free from discrimination or harassment.

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



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