

## **AFL VICTORIA RELEASE**

AFL Victoria is particularly pleased to again see over half of the new talent selected in the NAB AFL Draft come from Victorian football. 36 Victorian players were selected in last night's NAB AFL Draft, with 33 players recruited from the TAC Cup competition and three from the Peter Jackson VFL. Victorian community football and the talented player pathway produced 55% of new draftees while South Australia produced 21%, Western Australia 18%, Tasmania 5% and Queensland 1%.

AFL Victoria General Manager Grant Williams believes the results reflect the strong talent development pathways in Victoria.

“The NAB AFL Draft continues to highlight the variety of pathways in which talented players are being developed in Victoria, starting at a local community Club level and working their way up through the talented player pathway either via the TAC Cup or VFL competitions.”

Victoria produced eight out of the first 10 draft selections, with Dandenong Southern Stingrays Lachie Whitfield becoming the eleventh number one pick from the TAC Cup competition in its 21 year history, and the fourth Dandenong top pick. Whitfield joined the likes of former Stingrays Jeff White (1994), Travis Johnstone (1997) and Tom Scully (2009) all of whom had their name read out first on AFL Draft night.

“The TAC Cup competition continues to be the premier drafting ground for AFL footballers, with over 1,000 players having now been drafted over the 21 years of the competitions existence.”

“Congratulations should go to each of AFL Victoria's Talent Managers who manage quality programs in each of Victoria's twelve regions that field teams in the TAC Cup competition. Also, congratulations and well done to the local community Clubs that helped start the football journey for these 33 players who will next year take the leap into the ranks of the AFL.”

The Peter Jackson VFL was seen again as a breeding ground for readymade AFL players, with all three drafted players – North Ballarat's Dean Towers, Frankston's Dylan Van Unen and Box Hill Hawks' Matt Jones – aged in their early to mid 20's.

“This year's three VFL draftees again prove that the “draft window” does not close if a player is not drafted after their 18<sup>th</sup> year. If a player's time in the TAC Cup competition comes to an end, graduating to the VFL competition is another potential avenue for players that still dream of becoming an AFL footballer.”

One of the pleasing aspects of this year's draft for AFL Victoria was to see the first player – Dean Towers - recruited from the AFL Victoria VFL Academy in its inaugural year.

“The AFL Victoria VFL Academy was established to enhance the talent pool existing in the Peter Jackson VFL competition by exposing players to elements of the AFL Victoria Academy structure, philosophy and resources.

“The selection of Towers as a first round draft pick by the AFL premiership team, Sydney, highlights that the Academy is a welcome addition to the VFL competition and will, in time, fulfil its role to help develop talent at a state league level.”

#### AFL Victoria Draft Facts:

- Over half of the first round draft selections (13) were Victorian
- All of GWS Giants five draft selections were from the TAC Cup competition, with their list now containing close to 30 former TAC Cup players
- Calder Cannons had the most draftees in 2012 with seven, including three of the top 10 players including Jono O’Rourke (2 – their highest ever draft selection), Lachie Plowman (3) and Joe Daniher (10)
- Dean Towers became the seventh Fothergill-Round Medallist (VFL award given to the most promising under 23 player in the competition) in a row to be drafted to the AFL, joining the likes of Ahmed Saad, Michael Hibberd, Michael Barlow, Robin Nahas, Shane Valenti and Jason Davenport.
- For the fourth year in a row Box Hill Hawks and Frankston have had at least one player drafted in the AFL Draft or Rookie Draft
- The last four players drafted from Frankston have all been recruited by Essendon (Marcus Marigliani 2009, Michael Hibberd 2010, Mark Baguley 2011)
- North Ballarat has had a player drafted in the AFL Draft for the third year in a row, with Isaac Smith in 2010, Orren Stephenson in 2011 and Towers 2012.

See below the full list of Victorian draftees:

Pick	Name	Club Drafted From/Junior Club	AFL Club
1	Lachie Whitfield	Dandenong Stingrays / Mount Martha Junior FC	GWS Giants
2	Jonathan O'Rourke	Calder Cannons / Gisborne Rookies	GWS Giants
3	Lachlan Plowman	Calder Cannons / Macedon	GWS Giants
5	Jake Stringer	Bendigo Pioneers / Eaglehawk JFC	Western Bulldogs
6	Jack Macrae	Oakleigh Chargers / Kew Rovers Football	Western Bulldogs
7	Oliver Wines	Bendigo Pioneers / Echuca Junior	Port Adelaide
9	Nick Vlastuin	Northern Knights / Eltham	Richmond
10	Joe Daniher	Calder Cannons / Aberfeldie JFC	Essendon
12	Kristian Jaksch	Oakleigh Chargers / Kew Rovers Football	GWS Giants
14	Aidan Corr	Northern Knights / Macleod JFC	GWS Giants
15	Taylor Garner	Dandenong Stingrays / Rowville	North Melbourne
21	Nathan Hrovat	Northern Knights / Mill Park FC	Western Bulldogs
22	Dean Towers *	North Ballarat / Otway Districts	Sydney Swans
24	Nathan Wright	Dandenong Stingrays / Berwick JFC	St Kilda
25	Spencer White	Western Jets / Spotswood	St Kilda

Pick	Name	Club Drafted From/Junior Club	AFL Club
26	Jack Viney	Casey Scorpions / Ashburton JFC	Melbourne
27	James Stewart	Sandringham Dragons / Glen Iris JFC	GWS Giants
29	Thomas Clurey	Murray Bushrangers / Katamatite Football	Port Adelaide
32	Michael Close	North Ballarat Rebels / Harrow Balmoral	Brisbane Lions
33	Liam McBean	Calder Cannons / Aberfeldie	Richmond
34	Jason Ashby	Oakleigh Chargers / Kew Rovers	Essendon
35	Tom Temay	Sandringham Dragons / Prahran JFC	Carlton
36	Tanner Smith	North Ballarat Rebels / Kalkee Football & NC	Fremantle
41	Mason Wood	Geelong Falcons / Geelong Amateur	North Melbourne
43	Josh Saunders	Geelong Falcons / Geelong Amateur	St Kilda
46	Tim Membrey	Gippsland Power / Tedas Junior Football Club	Sydney Swans
49	Lachlan Hunter	Western Jets / Williamstown JFC	Western Bulldogs
50	Joshua Prudden	Murray Bushrangers / St Mary's JFC	Western Bulldogs
51	Dylan Van Unen *	Frankston / North Ringwood	Essendon
52	Matt Jones *	Box Hill Hawks / South Croydon	Melbourne
53	Martin Gleeson	North Ballarat Rebels / Koroit Football Netball	Essendon
54	Nicholas Graham	Gippsland Power / Tedas Junior FC	Carlton
64	Matthew Dick	Calder Cannons / Macedon Junior	Sydney Swans
75	Lewis Pierce	Dandenong Stingrays / Mount Eliza JFC	St Kilda
81	Rory Atkins	Calder Cannons / Maribyrnong Park	Adelaide Crows
88	Sean Gregory	Calder Cannons / Rupertswood AFC	Essendon

*Note: All players above from TAC Cup, except those from VFL marked with an asterisk.*



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