

A Werribee Tigers promotion

West Wing

There are just on 100 people involved in getting our two teams on the field each week, that includes trainers, water people, physios, doctors, property stewards, team managers, statisticians. The job of making sure it all runs smoothly is in the hands of Stuart Balloch.

SW: What is your title and what do you do?

SB: Operations Manager, which is a pretty broad role. I look after the footy side of things, match days, the events, memberships, and the list goes on. We are doing everything AFL clubs do, but on a slightly smaller scale.

SW: What do you enjoy most about the role?

SB: It was football that got me into the role. Certainly enjoy seeing the likes of Mick Barlow and Kyle Hartigan get their chance and Brad Mangan when he was drafted. That's what I am really in it for is player development. We try and provide the resources so they can be the best player they can be.

SW: Do you have ambitions at AFL Level?

SB: I don't think I would be here doing what I do if I didn't harbor aspirations to make it to a higher level, much like the player pathway I suppose. I would love to get into a roll at AFL level. I think it would be good for my personal development. It certainly is on my radar but whether it happens short of long term who knows.

SW: You are a keen golfer, ever had a hole in one?

SB: Yes I have. I was with a couple of our players at Sanctuary Lakes; it was before training one day. Former captain Dom Gleeson presented me with the ball in front of the boys at training that was pretty good. Our Sports Physc Andy Demetriou is a member at 13th Beach, so I get to play there frequently and beat him; at least I think I beat him.

SW: Who do you barrack for?

SB: The Bulldogs, they are the team I followed as a kid, but with our alignment with the Kangaroos I think you have a soft spot for them, you want to see them do well. The Bulldogs are in a rebuilding phase and you'd like to see some positive signs in the next year or so. You'd like to see some new talent come through like Stringer and their top ten draft picks. You hope they are not too far away from having more success.

SW: Must have been a thrill to have Doug Hawkins pop into training last week?

SB: Yes it was. For my 21st the boys got me a signed Hawk Team of the Century print so it was good to have a chat with the great man. Sort of a bit in awe of those people that you grew up watching and aspired to be like.

SW: You are recently married? What is news on the home front, the patter of little feet?

SB: Yes I did get married. We are renovating our house at the moment so I don't think the environment is right at the moment. But having a family would be good sometime in the future and I will be looking for some tips from you, seeing you are a father of four. You can help me cope with bringing a child into the world.

SW: You mentioned home renovations, you doing it?

SB: I am useless with the tools so I am very happy to have someone else do all of the work. I actually have a couple of past players doing some of the work.



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