

## ***Geelong Falcons: 2013 National Draft Player Profiles***

ON Thursday night, like hundreds of hopefuls Australia-wide, a group of Geelong Falcons will nervously await their football futures in the 2013 NAB AFL National Draft.

Being held on the Gold Coast, their fate rests in the hands of the 18 AFL clubs and recruiters who have been intensely studying their games over the past 12 months.

Geelong Falcons regional manager MICHAEL TURNER runs his eye over the TAC Cup club's main hopefuls for the November 21 national draft and the rookie draft on November 27.

### **NICK BOURKE**

Age: 18

Height: 187cm

Weight: 76kg

Position: Midfielder

Club: Kolora-Noorat (WDFNL)



**Turner says:** “Nick’s a bit of an enigma. His best is certainly good enough but some of the things he does on the field doesn’t inspire AFL recruiters that much. But he’s an AIS player, a Vic Country representative and played with a shoulder injury all year, so he did really well to manage that. I think he drifted out in (draft) calculations but now he’s probably come back in because, when he went to the draft combine, he was in the top five for speed repeat, his kicking was really good and he got really good results at everything. A couple of clubs that I’ve spoken to rate him in the 20’s - but that doesn’t mean he’ll get picked there or get drafted.”

### **MEYRICK BUCHANAN**

Age: 20

Height: 177cm

Weight: 77kg

Position: Half-forward

Club: Colac (GFL)



**Turner says:** “In my opinion, Meyrick Buchanan is still the same Meyrick Buchanan that played with us three years ago. You don’t lose your ability. He had two years playing cricket before he came back to us and, for the month he played with us, he played really well. But unfortunately Meyrick hurt his PCL and didn’t play again for the rest of the year. But there is interest in him from a couple of clubs as a rookie.”

## **AARON CHRISTENSEN**

Age: 18

Height: 174cm

Weight: 63kg

Position: Midfield/Half-forward

Club: Lara (GFL)/Geelong Grammar (APS)



**Turner says:** “I think Aaron’s a chance to be a late draft pick but I’d say he’s probably more likely to go as a rookie. He’s the brother of (Geelong premiership player) Allen (Christensen) and they (clubs) made a mistake (in 2009) when he went passed number 40 and I rated him as a first round draft pick back then. At the same age Aaron is very similar to Steven Motlop, and with his family background, so those two things probably help him a bit.”

## **FRASER FORT**

Age: 18

Height: 196cm

Weight: 84kg

Position: Key position utility

Club: South Barwon (GFL)



**Turner says:** “I rate Fraser. I like him because he’s a big unit, he’s probably going to grow to 200cm and he’s got a bit of Matty Scarlett about him. There’s queries (from clubs) about his kicking, but he’s getting better at that, like the rest of his game. He’s probably more of a rookie pick, but when a potential 200cm defender comes

along you've got to look at him - especially when he's just as aggressive as Darcy Gardiner. He's probably not as mobile as Darcy but he's a big unit and hopefully he gets a crack at it."

## **DARCY GARDINER**

Age: 18

Height: 192cm

Weight: 84kg

Position: Key defender

Club: Queenscliff (BFL)



**Turner says:** "He could surprise. Someone who likes a key defender might take him early, but I would have thought he's probably a second round (pick). Darcy is touted as being the best defender in the draft so if someone needs a defender, not a key defender but a third tall defender like a Tom Simpkin-type player or someone like that, then they will take him. He's very quiet off the field but on it, but he's very competitive and very aggressive and he's had some big scalps. He's built his reputation playing AIS and for Vic Country playing against some very good forwards and done very well."

## **ALEX HICKEY**

Age: 18

Height: 180cm

Weight: 75kg

Position: Half-back

Club: Geelong Amateur (BFL)



**Turner says:** "I actually think Alex has gone completely under the radar. He's got his fans because there's a couple of clubs very interested in him - one in particular. He's just one of the best kids I've ever seen and that's why he was our captain. He gets the ball a lot, he's a really good decision maker, an elite kick, his GPS results are massively high in a game for running, he's got good speed, good mobility and a plus 15 beep test. Alex is as good as any player around and I hope that he gets a chance."

## DARCY LANG

Age: 17

Height: 181cm

Weight: 75kg

Position: Midfielder

Club: Colac (GFL)



**Turner says:** “He turns 18 on the day of the draft, so that would be a nice birthday present. Obviously he broke his leg playing for Vic Country during the year and if you look at the Morrish Medal voting and our best and fairest voting, if he had kept playing he might have won both. He would have been a dominating player at the end of the season. He’s the one that’s come into calculations. He’s back running and kicking now. No one ever likes to break a bone, but he broke the outside bone in his leg. It’s been pinned, its straight and it’s never going to break in that spot again.”

## LEWIS TAYLOR

Age: 18

Height: 173cm

Weight: 73kg

Position: Midfielder

Club: Terang-Mortlake (HFNL)



**Turner says:** “I personally think he’s a top 10 draft pick. I know he’s small and they’ll take taller midfielders before him, but ability is ability and clubs might regret that in three years time. He’s a gun. He’s as good as any kid that I’ve seen come through our program. He’s highly motivated, very focused and whoever gets him, that club is going to be getting a very good player.”

## **JAMES TSITAS**

Age: 18

Height: 180cm

Weight: 77kg

Position: Midfielder

Club: Grovedale (GFL)



**Turner says:** “His best chance is as a rookie I think. But he’s a great kid, was our co-captain this year, he played for Vic Country, is as tough as nails, has a great attitude and wins a lot of the footy. He’s a really elite kick. He won the kicking at the draft combine for the whole of Australia. If he had the pace of Lewy Taylor he would be drafted inside the top 10. But that lack of pace and his size could go against him a bit.”