**MATCH PREVIEW
CALDER CANNONS V WESTERN JETS
FRIDAY 23RD, 7:00pm – RAMS ARENA**Calder Cannons u18 boys will kick off the 2018 TAC Cup season against the Western Jets this Friday the 23rd March at RAMS Arena. After what has been a gruelling preseason, the boys have gelled together in a promising lead up to the highly anticipated season opener.

Calder will be playing for the McDonald’s Cup, a staple of the Jets v Cannons matchup since its inception in 2015. The boys will take a bit of extra feeling into the match, having been defeated in both 2017 contests in Rounds 2 and 18 respectively.

This won’t be Calder’s first look of the Jets in 2018, having played a practice match against them a fortnight ago, which was a promising exercise for the Cannons coaching staff.

Certain Cannons players have a liking to the Western Jets Matchup - Mitchell Podhajski collected 24 disposals, 6 marks and 4 tackles in the last matchup and Mason Fletcher tallied 15 disposals and 8 marks in a strong showing.

U18 boys Senior Coach, Ross Smith believes that the game will be won by being brave with ball in hand.

“We’re looking to play our own style of footy, we won’t be focused too much on the opposition,” Smith said.

“At the end of the day, the game at this level is about our own development, we’d like to think we can play as well as we did the other week against the Jets… We we’re really happy with how that game went.”

Smith said that the club has spent much of the offseason focusing on the way in which the Cannons would like to play the game.

“We will be more focused on getting our players to carry the ball, share the ball, use the ball and bring a lot of our teammates into the game.

“It’s about having courage with the ball rather than just kicking to a pack or trying to bite off too much by always kicking it into the corridor,” Smith said on the proposed game style.

Preparation for some of the more troublesome matchups on the oppositions list have been a highly debated topic, with many eyes on Stefan Radovanovic, who won the Jets 2017 Best and Fairest as a bottom ager.

When asked about the potential to put players in positions out of their comfort zone, Smith said that the coaching staff would be looking to play players in ways that would best prepare them for senior football.

“I think they need to be relatively versatile, for those of them who go to the next level, they’re going to find themselves playing positions that may not have necessarily been the positions they played primarily in u18(s).”

External eyes have started to focus on some of our more talked about players, Jack Bytel, Curtis Taylor, Rhylee West and Mason Fletcher have been amongst the Cannons names expected to have a strong seasons and push their case for selection in the 2018 draft.

The game will be played at RAMS Arena on Friday 23rd March at 7:00pm.