**REWARD FOR EFFORT FOR REID**

At the end of his first TAC Cup season, promising defender Kyle Reid had a review meeting with his coaches.

Reid had shown plenty of potential as a bottom aged player, but talent only gets you so far. The feedback delivered was that he needed to work on his body and fitness if he wanted to take his game to the next level.

“I had a lot of deficiencies in my athleticism, speed and agility. I was a bit heavy in the legs. That’s pretty much what the chat was about, how I could improve myself and my footy” Reid said reflecting on the meeting.

Honest feedback can be hard to take for some, but For Reid, that meeting was a turning point.

Everything that his coaches discussed with him was taken on board and the hard work began.

Reid sourced his own fitness coach and running coach to make the needed improvements leading in to Gippsland Power’s preseason. As Reid puts it, “I pretty much just cleaned up where I needed to clean up.”

Reid worked hard on improving his running technique and fitness base, which led to a noticeable difference.

“Last year I felt like I was just heavy in the legs and couldn’t make second efforts but now I feel like I am running on top of the ground and that I am quicker and more agile and fitter.”

Reid’s strong start to this year’s TAC Cup season was rewarded with selection in the Vic Country squad for the 2018 NAB AFL Under 18 National Championships.

Whilst he didn’t really expect to play that many games for Vic Country, Reid ended up only missing the last game of the championships due to a slight hamstring injury.

“At the start of the season just making the squad was my initial goal and then I just kept playing good footy and kept getting picked. I just took it game by game and it panned out really well.”

Playing on and beating some of the best young forwards in the country, Reid’s confidence in his game and in his body shone through.

“Last year I wasn’t very confident and sort of doubted myself going in to every game. This year I just feel like anyone that I come up against I can probably beat, so that’s really made the difference in my form.”

He relished the whole Vic Country experience, soaking up and learning everything he could from the other players and coaches.

Reid’s team first attitude and the way in which he conducted himself led to him being awarded the Vic Country ‘Spirit Award’ named after legendary trainer Richard Embleton.

It wasn’t just Reid’s Vic Country coaches and peers that took notice of his contribution at the National Championships. Selectors for the 2018 Under 18 All Australian squad couldn’t go past him either.

Reid’s selection in the All Australian squad was the cherry on top of a fantastic experience which included playing a game on the MCG in front of a national televised audience.

He found out he had made the All Australia Squad by a text message, but the modest and humble Reid still couldn’t quite believe it was happening.

“I called Dad and I told him and he was like that’s awesome if it’s true!

“It came out on the AFL website so I went and looked at that and there I was, in at centre half back.

“It was pretty crazy over the next couple of hours, I was getting heaps of calls and texts.”

Reid attributes his early football development to his Dad who coached him as a junior. The countless hours in the car driving to and from training sessions and games the perfect opportunity to talk and learn about footy.

The back-yard battles with his younger but not so little brother Zach has also helped fine tune Reid’s competitiveness.

A member of Gippsland Power and Vic Country Under 16 squads, Zach has followed in his big brother’s footsteps. Something which Reid is quite proud of.

“He’s doing really well for himself.

“We are pretty competitive, we always get into an argument about who is better but now I think I have trumped him so I don’t think he can come back at me anymore.”

Gippsland Power coach, Leigh Brown is full of praise for Reid and the way he has responded to feedback.

“Credit where credit is due, for him to go away and do the real hard work has been fantastic,” Brown said.

‘We have seen him now cash in with his footy, his ability to play big minutes and play on very good opponents.

“Being named All Australian is a great reward.

‘I think it’s a really good story and it sets a really good example for the rest of the group.

An assistant coach for Vic Country, Brown also had a front row seat to Reid’s performance at the National Championships.

“His attitude at Vic Country was great, to play on some really good players to go out and not only beat those players but to win his own ball and then springboard off halfback was fantastic.

“We are really proud of what Kyle has been able to achieve.”

Reid will attend the 2018 NAB AFL Draft Combine leading into the draft, but isn’t looking that far ahead just yet. Reid is just taking it as it comes and focusing on his footy for now.

“I’m just taking it game by game and seeing if I can continue my form.

“Hopefully I will get picked up at the end of the year, that’s my ultimate goal, but the TAC Cup Grand final would be awesome.”

After a strong season, Power have secured second position on the TAC Cup ladder.

“I love all the boys so being competitive in the finals and winning with them would be amazing.”