

MELBOURNE TIGERS JUNIOR BASKETBALL NEWSLETTER

Issue 9, February 2012



Tigers representing Victoria & Australia

U17 Australian Squad

Felix Von Hofe and Jack Purchase are still in contention to represent Australia at the 2012 FIBA U17 Men's World Championship will be held in Lithuania from 29 June – 8 July.

The final team of 12 will be announced late April/early May and we wish Jack and Felix the best of luck. Below is the current squad:

Sam Daly, SA, Sturt Sabres
Josh Derksen, QLD, Toowoomba
Mirko Djeric, NSW, Bankstown
Nick Duncan, NSW, Manly Warringah
Dante Exum, VIC, Keilor
Matt Jackson, VIC, Diamond Valley
Sam Johns, SA, Southern Tigers
Tanner Krebs, TAS, Grenadiers
Fabijan Krslovic, NSW, Northern Suburbs
Michael Luxford, VIC, Werribee Devils
Cher Maker, NSW, Newington College
Darcy Malone, ACT, West Belconnen
Jonathan Mbakwe, NSW, Sydney City Comets
Christian Petracca, VIC, Bulleen
Jack Purchase, VIC, Melbourne Tigers
Ben Simmons, VIC Metro, Knox
Cade Towers, QLD, Southern Districts Spartans
Felix von Hofe, VIC Metro, Melbourne Tigers

Under 18 State selection

Jack and Felix, along with Jeremy McKabe have also been selected to represent Victoria in the Under 18 State team. With Nick Abdicevic as head coach, we're confident they'll return from the U18 Nationals in April with Gold Medals!

Under 14 & Under 15 – Southern Cross Challenge

The inaugural Southern Cross Challenge conducted by Basketball Victoria in Ballarat on the 21st to 23rd of January was an overwhelming success. The Southern Cross Challenge gives selected Under 14 & Under 15 Vic Metro teams the opportunity to play against the best players from country Victoria.

Through a tryout process, two Vic Metro teams were chosen from approximately 80 club nominated players in each of the U14 and U15 age groups, so it was a great honour for Chan Hargraves (# 14 Vic Metro U14 Blue), Steven Collins (#10 Vic Metro U14 Blue), Riley Brammer (#9 Vic Metro U14 White) and Max Kooyman-Hardge (#13 Vic Metro U15 White) to be chosen.



The boys not only got the opportunity to play a high standard of basketball, but also had to adapt quickly to their new coaches and team mates, with only three training sessions together prior to the tournament. It also challenged them to prepare themselves for games as they were staying together without their parents.

I played both the Point and Shooting Guard positions and brought the ball up the court 50% of the time! The things I got out of the Southern Cross Challenge was playing with, and against, highly talented basketball players, learning new offenses and defences and making new friends. My favourite moment was when I shot a long 3 pointer and my team bench went crazy!!

- Steven Collins

I learnt a lot from my teammates and coaches Greg & Hannah. I played Point Guard/Shooting Guard positions which I'm not experienced at but really enjoyed. The Vic Metro teams staying together was really fun and all the players from the White and Blue teams got along and played together really well. My favourite moment was making a buzzer beating alley-oop!

- Max Kooyman-Hardge

Under 16 – East Coast Challenge

Blake Allison, Jacob Elordi, Cameron Hutton, Matthew Owies, Andrew Panayiotou, Jock Perry & Thomas Wilson all represented Vic. Metro and competed in the East Coast Challenge held in Sydney from the 11th to 13th January.

The ECC began in 2006 as an initiative between Basketball Victoria and Basketball NSW. It has since grown to include teams from South Australia Metro and ACT.

After a long bus trip, the boys separated into their White and Blue teams and ultimately turned from Tigers teammates to adversaries as Vic Metro Blue met Vic Metro White in the Grand Final.

The Final Result was: Vic Metro Blue (59) defeated Vic Metro White (37).

The ECC was a big win for Victorian basketball and an memorable experience for Tom, Jock, Matt, Cameron, Jacob, Andrew and Blake.



Eltham/Dandenong Tournament

Despite the hot conditions, the Eltham/Dandenong tournament was a resounding success for the Melbourne Tigers Boys and a great way to get back into condition after the Christmas break. Nine teams made the finals, four took out the Grand Final and two were runners-up. Thanks to the teams who contributed the following tournament reviews.

14.2's

A very slow start meant that the 2012 Australia Day tournament was primarily a learning experience for the 14.2s. The boys were rusty after the Christmas break, which showed in their 20-12 loss on Friday night to eventual finalists Knox 2.



Things had only improved slightly 12 hours later when they lost 35-25 to Sturt 2. However, as the Saturday warmed up, so too did the 14.2s. Just before the lunchtime game against Mornington 1, Coach Ben rightly pointed out some home truths and demanded a proper Tigers team effort. The boys responded and played well to win 28-16.

After an afternoon in the pool at the home of a generous Tigers family, the team returned to the Dandy stadium furnace for the final game of the tournament. They again ran the plays and defended strongly to notch up a 32-22 win over Traralgon 1. It was enough for 3rd and the prize of an extra training session on Sunday in lieu of the finals. So, no celebrations, but a lot of team bonding and healthy momentum as we start the next round of grading.

- Team Manager Anne McKendry

14.3's – Grand Final winners

Melbourne 14.3 defeated Frankston 14.3 in the Grand Final (Grade 14 B3). Final score 22 to 9. Melbourne were the under dogs as Frankston won the match on Saturday. But in the Grand Final we took charge from the outset, never giving Frankston a look in.

Mark Bradke (coach) and John Allison (assistant coach) rotated the players every 3-4 minutes which allowed the boys to play with intensity, in the heat that never let up. After beating us the day before, Frankston were given a reality check in the Grand Final. The score was 9 to 0 at half time which turned out to be a match winning lead. Congratulations to Austin Bradke voted MVP by the referees.

- Team Manager Ashleigh Levin



14.4's – Grand Final winners

The Eltham Dandenong tournament was a great success for the 14-4's on many levels. The team has many players new to representative basketball, so the tournament gave all a chance to continue individual & team development.

The Preliminary round was completed with three wins & a loss. Most learning came from the loss against Pakenham (1), which saw 14-4's go from a half-time lead of 21-11, to finish with a 26-28 loss. Coach Av Bajram emphasised to the team the need for continued pressure & concentration for the whole game.



33-19, saw the 14-4's move to the Grand Final.

Whilst the team slept in (& recovered from the heat) on Sunday morning, Av returned to the courts to see our likely semi-final opposition play. This was valuable & resulted in a change to the team defensive structure to deal with a smaller & faster team, Mornington (2), who had some players with terrific ball handling skills. Defensive pressure was maintained & our height advantage gave us great use of the ball. Av's early morning sojourn paid off & a good win,

Our Grand Final opponent was Sandringham 3, another small & fast team, with some very good shooters. The adjusted defensive structure was maintained & team members applied the concentration & pressure required by Av. An early lead was established & this increased as players were rotated in from the bench. Final score was 27-13 with great contribution from all team members.

A great tournament, getting team member's minds & bodies back in to basketball mode, in preparation for second round of grading. Well done boys, thanks to Av & parents.

- Team Manager Richard Mason

14.5's

The boys played extremely well in patches, and they played with strong team chemistry and fast ball movement and our ability to score off a fast break was second to none.

We were playing teams that had some taller kids, and I felt that our bigger kids handled it fairly well, as well as our guards who were able to step up and help on defence.

We qualified through to the semi-finals where we lost to Nunawading 4 by 8 points, and I think the fact that we only had 6 players got to us, as the boys were becoming tired and frustrated and we began to foul a lot.

All in all, I thought that we did very well under the circumstances and I was very pleased the way that we composed ourselves and the way we played on the court.

- Coach Jack Maloney

16.3's – Grand Final runners-up

The U16.3s had a solid preparation for the Eltham/Dandenong tournament last weekend. After a tough start to grading at the end of last year the boys were eager to prove the advancements they had made.

Our first game against Sturt 3 was a back and forth contest, with the momentum constantly changing from one minute to the next, but we were able to control Sturt to win by 6 with a strong shooting performance from Tahj Mande and great defensive hustle coming out of our bench, especially Jesse Kaeser.

Our first game on Saturday morning would prove to be our first confrontation with Sandringham 3 who we would later meet in the Grand Final.



Despite some trouble with shooting and finishing around the ring, the boys only went down by 3 points, leaving us in a precarious 1-1 position leading into our game against Cranbourne 2.

This game would prove to be our best team performance of the tournament with the boys shooting 55% from the field, including Jack Owen scoring repeatedly off the same play. This resulted in a comfortable 30 point win.

Needing one more win to cement our spot in finals the boys were determined to defeat Nunawading 4 that night, which would see our newest recruit James Harland facing off against his old club. After a scrappy start that could possibly be attributed to the exploits of the boys in the Zagames children's play area and alleged fraternisation with anonymous females before the game. The boys lifted to clinch a narrow victory that should have been much more comfortable.

Heading into finals on Sunday Dandenong 5 was standing between us and berth in the grand final that afternoon. Dandenong were a well-structured opposition that slowed down our scoring through our offenses, yet excellent rebounding and defensive hustle by Saul Williams and a good offensive effort from Max Kooyman-Hardge helped us hold on for a 6 point victory and lead us to the Grand Final.

So it was in the sweltering heat at 3.30pm on Sunday afternoon we faced off against Sandringham 3 once again. Early on Sandringham's height made it hard for our boys on defence and gave them an early lead. Our bigs Aden Price and Andrew Hardy had their work cut out for them at both ends of the floor.

Despite attempts at pressing and a late minute run we could never quite break the early lead that we gave up. Some foul trouble and questionable calls did not help matters, but the boys fought it down the last seconds. Although the game resulted in Sandringham's victory by 7 points, my co-coach Luke Hughes and I believe the tournament was a resounding success for the boys, with great developments made both on and off the court.

Notable mentions must go to Tom Maloney for winning the Grand Final MVP and playing through 6 games in 35 degree heat as our only point guard and Zach Benson for bravely supporting the boys throughout the weekend despite being sidelined with an ankle injury. Thanks again to all the boys and parents for a great weekend.

- Coach Tom Chambers

16.5's – Grand Final runners-up

We started Tournament with a very good game structure in place, which worked well all week end. Game structure built around our team strengths, in depth, plays and very strong physical defence against opposition teams. To break down opposition and cause fatigue due to our lack of height and bottom age players.

The team we selected at the start of the season has now already produced great depth, team spirit, which is very pleasing over such a short distance. We fell short in the Final due to last minute heat rule on game start, which threw our game structure into disarray.

We were extremely pleased with the team effort by the Guys hope came up short at the end. Sherbrooke (2) 35 V Melbourne (5) 18. Final. The positives we achieved on individual levels by players were very impressive.

Many thanks to assistant coach Lindsey Wright, team manager Alana Hollenberg and OHS officer Tony Murphy.

- *Coach Wayne Duff*

16.6's

Friday night, our first game was a low scoring match. By half time Kilsyth (Champions) lead by 2-4. Eventually with a few fast breaks they beat us 7-12.

We hit the lead in many of our games, but couldn't capitalise to secure a win.

The tournament was an awesome warm up and learning experience, the boys are starting to gel and trust in each other.

There's no doubt, it will give them lots to work on this season!

A big thanks to our coach, Lucky, who always made sure the boys were eating healthy carbs and hydrating. (No Macca's)

- *Mike Mills*

18.1's – Grand Final winners

Preparation for the tournament had been intense and somewhat interrupted for the number one Tigers under 18 boys team. Coach Gaze held several training sessions in the lead up to the tournament but some players were unable to train due to injuries and holidays - and also geographical reasons.

The team went into the tournament down two players. Michael Stanley could not play due to some jaw realignment for cosmetic reasons. We wish him good luck with the forthcoming botoxing and teeth whitening procedures which are rumoured to be occurring in the following weeks. Tom Frame could not play due to a final commitment with his former club, Shepparton. So we went into the tournament with only seven players.

The boys went through the "pool", stage winning all their games but having a worrying trend of starting games slowly and having to battle hard to gain ascendancy throughout every game.

The oppressive weather was taking its toll on the Tiger boys but every team was in the same boat so sooking about the weather was an unacceptable practice. Dandenong 1 was our opponents in the quarter finals and they shot very, very well and it took a massive effort for the boys to get over the line. The highlight was Jack Purchase's dunk, which broke the support of the basket causing game delay.

Semi-finals were against Kilsyth who were a surprise team in the semi-finals, having eliminated Diamond Valley, Kilsyth had great athletes but it was our boys who were good enough to advance to the Granny.

Sturt were an undersized team who shot the ball well. Australian Rep, Sam Daly, was their main player but his effect on the game was marginalised by the brilliance of Antony Vlitas, who starred throughout the tournament. Felix Von Hofe was tough on the boards and awesome with his scoring. Jeremy McKay was probably our most consistent performer on the day and his toughness saw him win game MVP. Jack Purchase was terrific with his rebounding, shot blocking and shooting and the big four were consistently well supported by Charlie (Chucky) Collopy-White, Keelan (KMan) Hartnett and new recruit, Jayden Robertson.

Our boys won the Grand Final comfortably for the second year running. Well done boys.

Coach Gaze was delighted with the win after an exhaustive weekend. Go Tigers.

- *Nigel Purchase*



Club Notices

Ken Watson Academy – Take your skills to the next level

The Ken Watson Academy is a tried and tested program, designed to improve individual skills. Classes are conducted by highly qualified and experienced basketball coaches and are available for age groups from under 12 to Under 20, both boys and girls. The school coaches develop a basketball program that will help you improve your basketball skills. These are strictly individual skills orientated sessions and not team sessions.

This program is similar to the ITCP program run by Basketball Victoria. Classes are available on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning 6.30am – 7.30/8.00am and cost \$30 per session.

PLACES ARE LIMITED SO PLEASE BOOK by contacting:

David Watson (Administrator) on davidwatson@bigpond.com or 9380 4474

Nick Abdicevic (Academy Coach) on na_bball@tpg.com.au or 0414 521 912

Tigers Girls Basketball Development

The Melbourne Girls basketball club is based at Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre (MSAC) and trains on Sunday mornings. For more info about the Melbourne Girls please contact Emma Brancatisano 0419 570 646, email: girls@tigers.com.au.

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Sportstek is offering a 15% discount to the Melbourne Tigers basketball community. Sportstek provides Sports Medicine, Physio & Fitness Supplies and is open Mon-Fri 8.30am 'til 6pm. Located at 6 Park Rd, Oakleigh (just near the Oakleigh Recreation Centre).

To activate the discount, please visit their website at www.sportstek.com.au. When you've made your purchases and are at the checkout, enter the coupon code of **TIGERS**.



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Key dates

Event	Dates	Details
Grading Phase 2	3rd, 10th & 17th February 2012	Check www.vjbl.com.au for fixtures
Cross-over Round 1	24th February 2012	Check www.vjbl.com.au for fixtures
Cross-over Round 2	2nd March 2012	Check www.vjbl.com.au for fixtures
Cross-over Round 3 (U14-18 only)	9th March 2012	Check www.vjbl.com.au for fixtures



Club contacts

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If you have any suggestions for news items or stories that you think might be of interest for future issues, please contact Viv at tigersjuniornews@hotmail.com.