

THE Roar



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BALMAIN DISTRICT FOOTBALL CLUB

Balmain & District Football Club P.O. Box 1020 Rozelle NSW 2039

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EDITION 4 - AUTUMN 2009

Give us back our game....

"As coaches we need to let go and allow kids to find their own solutions before we interfere and do their thinking for them".

The above quote is from Paul Cooper who runs a U.K. Based organisation called Give Us Back Our Game. It really encapsulates the thinking that Paul Cuscuna and I, as coaching coordinators for the club, want you all to take on board. Obviously, winning is more fun than losing but when we (as parents and coaches) place too much importance on it we invariably start over-instructing our kids in what they're to do or not to do. Spend any of your weekend on the sidelines and you'll hear coaches and parents yell things like, "get rid of it", "get it out of there", "cross it", do this, do that ...you know the drill.

continued inside...



Paul Cuscuna



Dario Bicego



WELCOME FROM PRESIDENT JILL



Are you having fun?

Hi there members, I trust the 2009 season has begun with all the energy and fun you expected.

It's a pleasure to drive around our area and see the pitches full of footballers, young, old, skilled and learning.

In particular, we have implemented the new format for our younger players, "Small Sided Games" (SSG). A BIG thank you to Paddy Denvir for pulling this together. Though we have had a few teething issues, I believe the system is now running well as parents come to grips with the different jobs to be done.

JTS, Junior Training Squad, is once again a great success with nearly 100 budding players attending each week. I encourage our teenagers to get along and help with the coaching and pass on the skills you have developed over the years.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The only disappointing note this season centres on behaviour. Folks, our Code of Conduct is on the web site and I ask each of you to be aware of your responsibilities as a player, official and spectator in representing our Club. Your behaviour will be noted by others, in particular kids, so let's be the Club others are told to watch and copy, not only by other Clubs, but our own family and friends who come along in support.

COACHES AND MANAGERS

I would take the opportunity to extend the Club's thank you to all of our coaches and managers, without you teams could not function, for the time and effort taken in looking after your squad. Our new coaching initiatives, centered on those coaching our younger players, are proving a great success and we aim to build on these initiatives to provide support for all coaches.

I finish with a thank you to one of our founding members, Alan Kennedy. Many of you will have met Alan in his current role of Equipment Officer. Alan has decided to 'retire' from this role though no doubt will continue to support the Club. Alan is deserving of far too many accolades to note here, so, to put it simply, without Alan we would not have the Club we all enjoy today.

To all our players, officials, mum & dads, family members and supporters, enjoy the season, play hard and fair and above all, HAVE SOME FUN.

continued from page 1...

HAVING FUN, STAYING FIT AND DEVELOPMENT

We need to remember that junior football is supposed to be about having fun, staying fit and about development. What do we mean by development? These kids are learning a new activity much in the way they learn how to read, how to do ever more complicated maths and play musical instruments. All of these activities take years to develop and require lots of practice and patience and playing good football requires it too. We're not just talking about winning, but about skilful kids playing an intelligent creative game and really enjoying themselves.

IT'S ALL ABOUT POSSESSION

If there is one instruction we would encourage you all to give your children, it is to value possession of the ball. Discourage them from speculatively kicking the ball away or needlessly kicking the ball out over the sideline. By kicking it away they've denied themselves the opportunity to solve a problem either by passing it to a team mate or by testing their skills in dribbling past an opponent.

COACHING TECHNIQUES

Paul and I are currently providing a weekly training program to coaches of kids in the age groups up to twelve that are designed to assist in developing their technique (control of the ball) and game awareness. What we'd like you as parents and coaches to remember is that the best way for kids to get good at football is to play a lot of it and for them to work out as much as possible themselves. There will be mistakes,

but this is a fundamental part of creativity and learning. Also, all training at this age should involve the ball – no laps, push-ups or sit-ups.

Even Jose Mourinho is quoted as saying...
"A great pianist doesn't run around the piano or do push ups with the tops of his fingers. To be great, he plays the piano. He plays all his life and being a footballer is not about running, push-ups ..."

SMALL-SIDED GAMES

Finally for those of you with kids in the younger age groups, the small-sided game format is a fantastic and long overdue initiative in Australian football. The principles are quite simple, smaller teams will result in greater involvement for all the participants. This means many more touches on the ball, more shooting or dribbling at goal, more opportunities to pass and more opportunities to problem solve. Kids will be constantly involved rather than be on the periphery of the action. At training coaches should resist the temptation to throw a ball into a large group – set up two or more small games. You don't need to get that involved, and encourage them (as much as possible) to referee themselves and sort out their own "issues".

All the best, enjoy the football and don't stress about the scores.

The Adventures of the Red Lion Rovers # 4

vs Five Dock A, Cohen Park, 2 May 2009

Nice balance Tim, you don't even need a finger in your ear



Can the Rovers make it 3 wins in a row? Its going to be tough against Five Dock 'A'. The Dockers are a professional bunch comprising the best players of this soccer mad inner west suburb.



Clancy starts in goal and is under siege from the whistle but there was no getting past him - a natural shotstopper.

If I blow hard enough it might go in



Five Dock played a strong defensive game with two burly sentries protecting their nimble goalie.



Their counter attacking was swift and almost Catastrophic, but the Lions defence and Clancy's safe hands kept a clean sheet in the first half.

Hi Clancy



Chris was the keeper for the second half and with the Lions confident in his abilities they were able to apply more pressure on Five Dock.



Hi Dad

Wave after wave of orange shirts attacked the goal. With some deft passing they were able to sidestep Five Dock's defence.

Where did Five Dock go?



But their new goalkeeper was impenetrable for most of the 2nd half. With only 5 minutes to go Ben finally converted one of his many shots on goal. The Rovers quickly reshuffled positions with Clancy standing deep, making sure there was no equaliser.



The Rovers didnt give up attacking though and made sure Five Dock were stifled. The game ended with a 1 – 0 victory to the Lions and the trophy went to Clancy for his clean sheet as goal keeper and dedication in guarding the Lions goal.

5 Minutes with....Joe Orlando

1. **How long have been involved with the Club?**
This is my 4th year
2. **What is your role(s) in the Club?**
Junior club member with Balmain & District Football Club
3. **Whats your team?**
Under 8. Div 5. Exploding Boots. This my third year with the team. We are getting better every game!
4. **What position do you play?**
Striker. I have scored 36 goals so far in my career. This year I am trying to score a goal in each game!
5. **Career highlights... best goal you've scored?**
During a game this season, my best goal was a chip shot from outside the box that just snuck in under the crossbar. (And a hat-trick last week!)
6. **Favorite Player?**
Cristiano Ronaldo. (Manchester United & Portugal)
7. **Favorite team?**
Manchester United
8. **Best subject at school?** Maths
9. **Your favorite food?** Pizza
10. **Favorite movie?** Plains, Trains and Automobiles



Rosebud Food for Sport

Kids after training meal deal from 5.30 to 7pm on Wednesday & Thursdays throughout the football season.

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Rosebud is proud to be sponsors of the Balmain District Football Club. This year Rosebud will be holding the Coaches & Managers function on FA Cup Finals night May 30th, 2009.

5 Minutes with...**Antony Barca**

1. **How long have been involved with the Club?** 3 years
2. **What is your role(s) in the Club?** Junior player
3. **Whats your team?** Balmain hammers
4. **What position do you play?** Centre midfield
5. **Carreer highlights... best goal you've scored?**
In the grand final I scored 3 goals out of the box
6. **Favorite Player?** Totti
7. **Favorite team?** AS Roma
8. **Best subject at school?** Physical Education
9. **Your favorite food?** My mothers South African curry
10. **Favorite movie?** all the james bond movies



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Giving the game back to the player

Balmain is taking a long, hard look at the way football is played in Australia. By David O'Brien

The club is giving junior players the right kind of footballing tools by taking up a philosophy that encourages creative play and skills development.

The bottom line is to give the game back to its players.

There's a growing recognition that football needs greater technical skills and game intelligence. It's a process that begins from the day a six year-old pulls on boots to go training. The Balmain philosophy promotes skill and ball possession with intelligent defence and attack. "If you harness their skill you might produce great footballers who are having a really good time" says Balmain dad and coach Dario Bicego.

Many junior players go straight into training laps or do sit-ups and push-ups. "That's great for general fitness but has little to do with football. Why waste "football time" with kids standing around or doing fitness training?" asks Dario

The club is in a soft revolution driven by him and another dad, Paul Cuscuna. "The game is often reduced to long kicks and chasing the ball. Kids don't learn as much as they should or get much enjoyment out of it and drop out in the early teen years says Paul. Many kids are coached from a really young age with an obsession for winning rather than playing the game for fun and learning. You'll have coaches telling you not to hold on to the ball, not to get caught with it, to clear it etc. Other cultures emphasise ball skills first then the fitness and other stuff later" says Dario.

They believe junior players should be in touch with the ball at training session as often as possible. They advocate strong ball-skills training, lots of small-sided games and concurrent sessions of drills. "This way you don't have six or ten people waiting in a queue while one person has their turn. You have three or four sessions of the same simple drill, there's less waiting, everyone moving, touching the ball six times more than in a larger group.

He and Dario approached the club committee with their idea to promote this philosophy and provide a weekly coaching package. "What if we train these kids in this way from the age of six? How good will they be when they reach the under elevens? We can continually improve these kids" asserts Paul.

ENLISTING TEENAGE COACHES

One of the options currently being looked at is calling on the club's teenage players to train younger footballers.

Says Paul: "If we get teenage and older players trained and cognizant of our philosophy, we can attach them to younger teams to assist with training. We want to focus on this idea of older kids training up to be coaches. If you're coaching your son's team, you may know how to play a bit of football but when they see a skilful teenager come in, wearing a Man U shirt or something it can really motivate them to take in the lessons, train harder and play better. They look up to an older teenager

and pay greater attention. When we tried it with two under fourteens, the boys worked out which schools they went to and made their connections" says Paul.

"I like the model" agrees Dario, "I'm not saying it'll work perfectly, they'll still need official coaches and parental supervision but having older kids along is good for the younger players. They're more inclined to run the training sessions and it's good for their own football - and personal, development."

WEEKLY TRAINING PROGRAM

A weekly training program is sent out to Balmain coaches. "Before we came along a lot of the parent coaches would scour the net or buy books for drills. We've said 'here you go, just spend three or four minutes reading a few pages' It's not that you do one drill and its forgotten the next week. We do a variation on last week's or continue the same program. We bring continuity."

They're getting good feedback: "Coaches deserve a co-ordinated and consistent training program. What's been heartening are those using the programs who tell us they're working well."

Paul puts around 12 hours a week in preparing and running training sessions, watching matches and talking to coaches. He and Dario get together each week to organise the week's program. Not everyone is in favour: "Some say they don't have the time to read the weekly package, which is a shame as they've been designed to save time, and stress" says Dario.

CHANGING THE FOOTBALL CULTURE

Drawing inspiration from an organisation called 'Give Us Back Our Game', their aim is to eliminate over-coaching. "Its a weakness in Australian football over many generations that we don't produce enough skillful or very creative players. There's nothing intrinsic to make Brazilians better footballers than Englishmen or Australians, it's just the culture in which you learn your football. If you're encouraged to be creative and to spend a lot of time on the ball and to play in unstructured games you'll develop and play a particular style. Plenty of players are fast and strong and brave. But without technical skills or an intelligence that goes with it, you'll only get so far. Johan Cruyff is quoted as saying "football is a game you play with your brain" - we think there's something in that! There's little better than watching kids solve the various problems presented to them in a football game!

Both men are passionate about their cause: "I like to think we're putting the seeds in place. I think of it as a long term commitment. If we can get enough people to see what we're doing and understand the philosophy, we can leave a library of drills for coaches to use and an entrenched philosophy about the way to train and appropriate expectations about our junior footballers."

You can find the Balmain Junior Football Philosophy on our website via the Coaching Resources link.



Meet the Sponsor

Kate McMaster, Rozelle Chiropractors

1. How long have you been involved with the Club? A few months now!

2. Why did you get involved?

We love to support people of all ages and all walks of life to get and remain active. It fits in well with our philosophy of prevention is better than cure.

3. What role does the Club play in the Community?

Club sport brings the community together which is not only great for social networks but also overall health. Playing a team sport is great for body, mind and soul!

4. What is your business involved in?

We are an integrated natural healthcare clinic incorporating chiropractic, massage and acupuncture with a close network of health professionals including naturopaths, homeopaths, physiotherapists, quit smoking therapists, podiatrists, psychotherapists and many more to ensure optimal advice and

give your body the best chance to self heal and achieve your goals.

5. Who's your favorite team globally?

Balmian Soccer Club – all teams.... Of course!

6. DO you play?

I played when I was at school but being a professional runner I never really pursued it past here except the odd game of beach soccer!

7. What's your favorite food?

I love all food, that is why I exercise a lot! If I was going out to dinner I would choose a tapas restaurant so I could try lots of different foods!

8. Favorite movie?

Anything with Will Ferrel or Ben Stiller in it tickles my fancy... I love that silly humour like Anchor man, Wedding crashers, Dodgeball and Zoolander!

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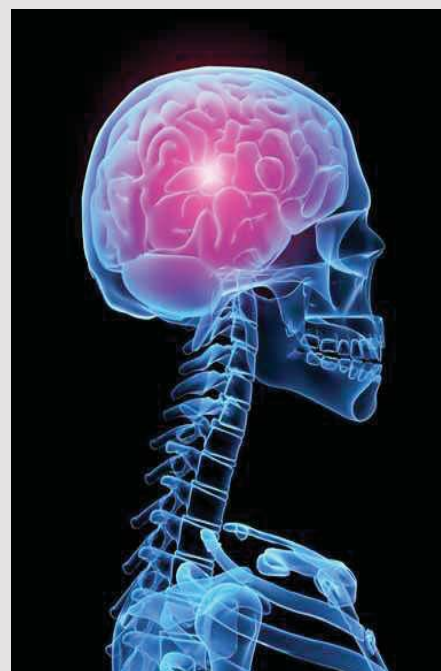
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JTS (Junior Training Squad)

2008 has been another great year for the Junior Training Squad with on average 70 to 80 kids turning up each weekend.

It has been a pleasure to help run this programme again.

The parents have been extremely enthusiastic and always ready to help out when needed.

We will be looking to improve on our training practices in 2009 by utilizing the small sided framework and moving from four sides on two ovals to eight teams on four half ovals. This will allow more time on the ball for all the kids.

We have scheduled a bbq for Sunday the 14th of September and I look forward to seeing all the kids have a sausage on a roll and receive their trophies.

I'd like to thank Fiona (Sammi's Mum) for providing the following feedback to include in this edition of ROAR.

"What a fantastic job Philip, Shane, Joanne, Simon and Michael are doing with the Junior Training Squad. My daughter Sammi started recently and is having an absolute ball. She is so excited she pesters me from when she wakes at 6am and even opted to miss a birthday party last week so she could go to football.

To see 70-80 odd kids and their parents turn up each Sunday morning rain hail or shine is testament to the fact that these guys are doing something right! Teaching the kids from a young age the importance of the warm up and warm down doing the various drills to establish their skills and keeping their patience when they all run around like a swarm of bees in the final game.

All I can say is thanks, thanks for your time and effort, thanks for your patience and most of all thanks for tiring her out so I can have lazy Sunday arvos!"

Fiona (Sammi's Mum)

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The Roar - Hot Shots!



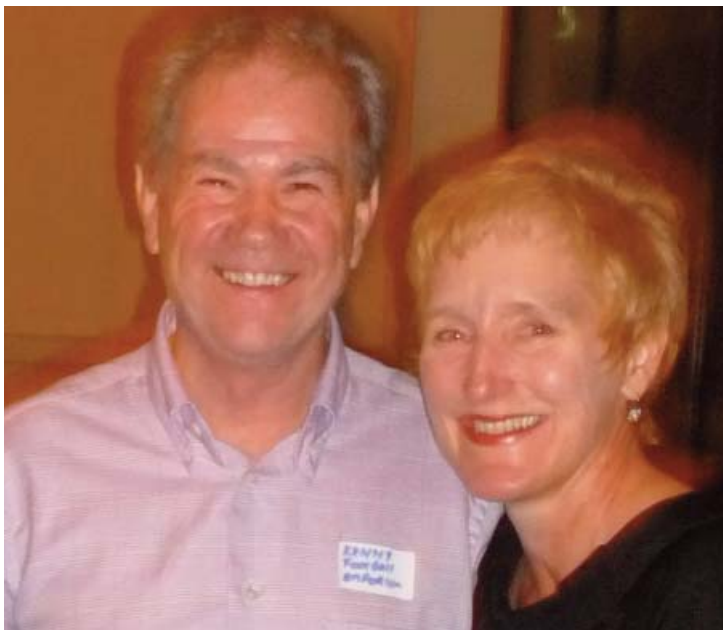
The Roar - Hot Shots!



The Roar - Coaches, Managers & Sponsors Night



The Roar - Coaches, Managers & Sponsors Night



The Roar - U15's boys and girls Australia V Uzbekistan game



PHILOSOPHY CORNER

with Robbie O

"Football is simple, but the hardest thing there is, is to play simple football." - Johann Cruyff - greatest exponent of, and ambassador for, the "total football" philosophy which propelled the Dutch national team to greatness in the 1970's. Signed to Ajax at the age of 10 he made his first team debut in 1964. After a stellar career in Holland he moved to Barcelona in 1973. He made 48 appearances in the orange shirt of the Dutch team, scoring 33 goals. In 1999, Cruyff was voted *European Player of the Century* in an election held by the International Federation of Football History and Statistics, and came second, behind Pele, in their *World Player of the Century* poll.

"When the seagulls follow the trawler, it is because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea." Most gnomic of many philosophical utterances from the french footballing genius Eric Cantona. A legend at Manchester United and star of the french national side he walked away from professional football to pursue a film career. He is player/manager of the French Beach Football Team (World Champions 2005). In Ken Loach's new film "Looking for Eric" Cantona plays himself, appearing as a super natural guide and mentor to a troubled Mancunian postman.

The Club would like to thank the following sponsors for their on going support.

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