



Pre-Season Match Reports

April 21 2009



The Eagles have made a solid start to 2009 with some very good early form and having good numbers at preseason training has definitely helped our progress during this early part of the season. The club suffered a major blow having lost star backrower, Ben McGee for the first 6 weeks due to a fractured eye socket sustained in the Brumbies 10's tournament. On a more positive note, coaching staff has been pleased with the influx of new talent to the club with as many as 6 Colts already getting a taste of 1st Grade rugby. Another good sign is the return of many former Daramalan students who have not played for a couple of years.

Queanbeyan 7's - 7 March 2009

At the beginning of March we were scheduled to play the Central West representative side in a club trial but unfortunately they pulled out due to lack of numbers. At the last minute we entered 2 teams (Black & Red) into the Queanbeyan 7's tournament. Both teams were selected with an even spread of talent and both managed to make it through to the quarter final stage of the main draw where they were to meet each other. After Gungahlin Black forfeited to Gungahlin Red, the best side was picked and took on Royals in the semi final but were defeated by a rather large Royals outfit. It was a good chance for the players to dust off a few cobwebs in preparation for our upcoming 15-a-side games.

Pool Matches

Gungahlin Black 24 lost to Camden 26

Gungahlin Black 26 defeated Vikings 12

Gungahlin Red 14 lost to Queanbeyan Blue 20

Gungahlin Red 41 defeated Uni-North's 7

Quarter Final Gungahlin Red lost to Gungahlin Black (forfeit)

Semi Final Gungahlin Red 0 lost to Royals White 19

Batemans Bay Knockout – 14 March

The Eagles again travelled over the Clyde in an attempt to defend its 2008 Batemans Bay Knockout title. The club took a 1st and 2nd Grade squad with a sprinkling of Colts for good luck. Our 2nd Grade side won 2 of their 3 games and our 1st Grade side showing excellent early season form, won their first 3 matches which saw them take on a very well-drilled Royals outfit in the final. Unfortunately they went down by a couple of tries. Coaching staff were very pleased by the clubs new recruits Daniel Mannix, Sean Connochie, Will Tafianou and Xavier Duffy. Other strong performers on the day included Brendan O'Neill, Tevita Halaifonua, Derek Leefe, Tyronne Anderson and Jack Cuzner.

On a sour note, Michael (Macca) McMahon suffered another serious concussion and in the best interests of his health, he has retired (again) from playing rugby. Macca is the quintessential Eagles man. He got on with his rugby in a professional manner and was a fantastic player and kicker for so many years. Macca also contributed to the club off the field in a big way and was always a willing participant in any social activities. Macca will continue to have an involvement with the club this year and his contribution on the field will be sorely missed.

Trial v Uni-Norths – 28 March

In preparation for the pre-season TransACT Cup, we had a club trial against Uni-Norths at ADFA. 3rd Grade had a convincing win with impressive performances from Ben Faulks, Marco Menecina, Jason Brian, and our Fijian cousins Eza and Servu. It looks like 3rd Grade will again feature come finals time in September and hopefully get to that elusive GF. Colts had a slow start against Uni-Norths who had been together for ten weeks and it showed. There were some strong individual performances by Sean Connochie, Kai Leonard, Michael Lovell, James Gregory and Sam Needs. 2nd Grade had a tough day at the office going to down to a very well drilled Uni-Norths outfit. 1st Grade rounded out the day with a solid win over an under strength Uni-Norths team who were without their Brumbies Academy players.

TransACT Cup Preseason Competition

The club has played 2 rounds of the preseason competition with some mixed results. The strategy is to use this competition as a series of trial matches in preparation for the season proper. Round 3 sees the 1st Grade side travel to Albury to take on the Melbourne Axemen. This is the first step in a process that could see a team from Melbourne enter the 2010 ACTRU Premier Division competition in 1st Grade and Colts. It nearly happened for this season but unfortunately the proposition fell through at the last moment.

TransACT Cup Results so far

Round 1 v Vikings @ Nicholls

1st Grade	Eagles 19	Vikings 24
2nd Grade	Eagles 12	Vikings 55
Colts	Eagles 7	Vikings 42
3rd Grade	Eagles 22	Vikings 7

Round 2 v Easts @ Griffith

1st Grade	Easts 31	Eagles 54
2nd Grade	Easts 7	Eagles 34
Colts	Easts 0	Eagles 20
3rd Grade	Easts 24	Eagles 25

Upcoming Events

2 May – Round 3 of the TransACT Cup v Melbourne Axemen @ Albury

9 May - Final Series for TransACT Cup, venue TBA

13 May – Gungahlin Eagles Season Launch @ West Belconnen Leagues Club

16 May – Round 1 of the John I Dent Cup v Uni-Norths @ Nicholls

Congratulations to Andrew Barrell, Derek Leefe, Tevita Halaifonua and Aaron Thompson who were picked in the ACT senior squad, and Sean Connochie in the U20 squad to take on NSW Country in Bowral in a few weeks.

The Eagles would like to thank all of the club sponsors that have come on board during these tougher financial times in 2009. Over the last few weeks Ziggys have been supplying teams with fruit on match day which has been greatly received by the boys. We deeply appreciate the support provided and the club encourages all in the Eagles community to support the businesses that are crucial to the club's operations as we continue to rebuild for the future.

MATCH REPORTS

TRIAL - 28 March 2009

THIRD GRADE

Well the footy season got underway on Saturday 28 March 2009, when the Colts, 3rd, 2nd and 1st grades played Uni Norths at ADFA playing fields. It was a fine and fairly warm day for all the boys who took part in the trials and we managed to have a good roll up. A number of old hands returned to the Eagles for another year, but it was pleasing to see a number of new faces who have joined the Eagles for this season.

The games were played in three 20 minute thirds, and we were able to run players on and off as they tired in the heat, or due to lack of training. I feel sure that all the respective coaches were quite pleased with what they saw so early in the season, and are confident with the quality players they have to work with for the coming season.

Next week we get down to business with the pre-season TransACT Cup, and the Eagles will take on the Tuggeranong Vikings at Nicholls Oval on Saturday 4th April 2009, this will be a good hit out for the Club against good quality teams.

I would like to welcome all those players who have returned to the Eagles for season 2009, and a very warm welcome to all the new boys who have already signed up. I know you will have a great time with the Club and will receive a warm welcome by all associated with the great Eagles Club.

It was also pleasing to see the large number of players at training last Thursday night (26/3/09) so early in the season; one can only hope this continues so that the coaches can prepare each team for the weekend rounds. So keep up the good work boys and let's see if we can attract some of your mates to join the Club, so that we can provide five starting teams for each game.

Grumpy T3

TransACT Club Shield Match Reports

Round 1 Gungahlin vs Tuggeranong 4 April 2009

THIRD GRADE

On Saturday we saw the start of the 2009 Rugby season when the Eagles Club came up against their old rivals Tuggeranong Vikings at home ground Nicholls Oval.

It was good to welcome back for T3, players from last season, and with some new faces we were ready to take on the Vikings, in the first round of the TransACT Pre season comp, played over four 15 minute quarters. From the start of the game it appeared that it was going to be a tough encounter, as both teams went on the attack, but with strong defence neither was able to cross their opponent's line. However with some good go forward by the Eagles pack they gained good ground. New boy Carlton Akari crossed wide out for his first try for the club and with Gresh missing the conversion it was Eagles up 5-0. Again with good defence and attacking play, the Eagles moved the ball around and with good yardage saw centre Andrew Cook cross for the Eagles second try. The conversion unsuccessful and the Eagles T3 went to the first quarter break at 10-0.

With the start of the second quarter the Vikings started to get enough possession for them to make a number of raids on the Eagles line. With good backline play they caught us napping out wide to score and convert, which reduced the Eagles lead to 10-7 at half time.

RESERVE GRADE

Pre game preparations for the TransACT Club Shield match for 2nd's was disrupted by last minute changes to the backline. This was reflected in the first quarter of the match as players settled into the new combination.

Eagles ran towards the Manuka end for the first two quarters with tries to Matt Aquilina and Sam Needs. It soon became clear that we had the wood on Easts in the forwards but could not convert that into the points it deserved. Joey Walsh was unlucky not score after a 40 metre dash down the right wing, executing a nice 'in and away', but only to be deprived by the side line.

However during the last two quarters the dominance of the pack and a more cohesive backline display saw the Eagles score four more tries. Justin Corkran scored a double, Simon Carey and Michael Edwards contributing one each. A conversion each to Luke McGrath and Simon Carey completed the score line of 34-7 to the Eagles.

A strong performance in warm conditions by all players with 3-2-1 going to Sam Needs, Brendon Pye and Simon Carey. Special mention for Joey Walsh and Andrew Cook who backed up from thirds.

Result: EAGLES: 34
EASTS: 7
3 Sam Needs, 2 Brendan Pye, 1 Simon Carey

THIRD GRADE

After a weeks spell it was back to the footy field this week, when the Eagles travelled to Griffith Oval for games against Easts, with the second round of the Trans ACT Club Shield. This proved to be a very even contest between both sides, with Easts opening the scoring with a try, but the Eagles T3 hit back shortly after when they finished off some good play and scored to even the score, and at the end of the first quarter it was 5 all.

The second quarter started much the same as the first, with Easts scoring and converting, and the Eagles T3 again hitting back with a try and conversion, to level the score again at 12 all. Easts again scored and converted to make the score 19-12 to Easts at the half time break.

In the third quarter the Eagles T3 appeared to lift their game and a further two tries and a conversion, took them to a 24-19 lead, however Easts hit back with a further try to again lock the score at 24 all. In the dying minutes of the last quarter the Eagles T3 continued raids on the Easts try line, but were repelled by their strong defence. Once again the Eagles T3 took the ball forward into Easts red zone, however the referee penalised Easts for an infringement, and Jason Brian took the penalty which was successful, and although it was only worth one point in this competition, Eagles T3 ran out a one point winner 25-24.

It was another good hit out for all the players, but at this stage we have just about fielded a different side in both games, and it is hard a present for all coaches in being able to place players in respective grades. It is also pleasing to see the number of new players joining the Club this season, and one from this game was Tim Donnellan who pulled on the boots and turned in a good performance. His towering kick and chase in which he just failed to catch the ball before it bounced, but with good follow-up by Eagles players enabled them to get the ball from the bounce resulting in a try. Also from a good attacking play in the Easts red zone, Tim got the ball and looked like scoring, however the East defence got to him, but he threw a great around the pass to a flying Jason Brian who scored, it was good to watch.

The Eagles T3 will now have another two weeks off before our next game, and then the real competition will start, and I cannot wait to see the Eagles T3 getting down to the real business.

Result: EAGLES: 25
EASTS: 24
Tries: Mark Dawes, Dan Cane, James Kyburz, Jason Brian
Jason Brian 2 Goals and 1 penalty goal
Player Match Points: 3 Tim Donnellan, 2 Damien Hawes, 1.Jason Brian