

New coach finds inspiration in *The Recruit*

New Wyndhamvale coach Chris Moreland is confident of rebuilding the newly relegated club back into a division one force in the coming years.

Moreland, who has signed on at the Falcons for the next two seasons, has spent the past six seasons playing for Geelong West Giants in the Geelong Football League. Prior to the Giants, he was at Bell Post Hill Football Club, where he was a premiership captain, winning three flags.

He said the challenge of rebuilding Wyndhamvale and taking on a senior coaching position was his main motivation for a move away from the Geelong football scene.

"I think after a while at Geelong West it was time for them to have someone new, and Wyndhamvale felt like a really good fit for me with a fresh start and a heap of kids there. I'm really excited by that," Moreland said. "It wasn't easy to leave, and a few people were upset, but

I've been super lucky to play in the best country league in Victoria and now it's time for some new challenges."

While Wyndhamvale has had a tough few years, with just five wins over the past three seasons, Moreland said the gap back to division one competitiveness wasn't as big as it seemed.

"If we get the right guys around this young list I think we can have a really good year in division two," he said.

"If you look at some of the results this year, they lost to Altona by just 20 points, some other close losses, so I don't think they're that far off.

"We'll learn as the year goes on, and I'm keen to play as many young kids as I can. Whether the rebuild happens in one year, two years or three years, I think once guys get confidence in the game plan and backing in their skills every week we'll get there."

Fans of Foxtel TV show *The Recruit* may

remember Moreland from season one, where he progressed to the final three competitors after months of training with AFL great Michael Voss.

He said the lessons learned from that experience had formed a key part of his coaching style and the message he would be telling his new Falcons players.

"There were a few things I learnt from Vossy, just about maintaining certain things about your game and doing the one per centers," Moreland said. "Everyone wants to learn how to win, but you can't just rock up one day and win, you've got to do the work and do all the one per centers all the way through.

"So there's a bit of knowing why we do these things and what we're trying to get out of it. It's exciting to share that stuff with this group."

Ewen McRae



IN THE DOGHOUSE

■ Interesting start to the season for many of the local cricket clubs. In the subbies, Hoppers Crossing made a very good start, easily chasing down 238 to knock over Taylors Lakes. The star of the day was Cameron Nicol, scoring his maiden first X1 century as the Cats amassed 6 for 296. They head to Melton full of confidence and will need every bit of it. Werribee crashed rather than cruised against Caulfield with a meagre first innings total of 96 and the brittleness extended to the seconds, who were 6 for 20 before falling short in their run chase. Patrick O'Malley starred for Williamstown in an impressive victory over Yarraville while Altona lost to Elsternwick.

■ I could not think of a better match than Adam Contessa and the Sunshine Kangaroos. There is a buzz around Kinder Smith Reserve and rightly so as they have landed a good one. They needed to as Barney Hallinan left big shoes to fill. Adam has great credentials as a coach but more important is what he brings to the club as a successful person. He has plenty of football and cricket flags to boast of but he won't because that is not what he is about. Sunshine went within a kick in 2017 of the ultimate and dropped out of calculations in 2018, but I expect the Kangaroos will bounce back in a big way in 2019.

■ The coaching ranks of the VFL in the west are certainly impressive with the announcement of Daniel Giansiracusa as the new Footscray VFL coach, joining Mark Williams (Werribee), Andy Collins (Williamstown) and Gary Ayres (Port Melbourne). That is a select club where you need a minimum of 200 AFL games to be a part of it. Add numerous premierships as both player and coach, best and fairest awards and other achievements like Norm Smith medals and you have an amazing knowledge and experience base for young players to be developed.

■ All sporting clubs face challenges on and off the field and it is the people who put their heart and soul into it who invariably bear the brunt of the workload. Werribee Centrals is heading into its 50 anniversary year and like all clubs is always looking for new faces – and not so new – to help guide the club into the future. Centrals is holding a come and try session for female players 12 and up next Monday from 6pm at Galvin Park.

Kevin Hillier

Any news, let me know on email kevin@howdypartnersmedia.com.au. Follow me on Twitter @KevinHillier, plus check out the Howdy Partners Media website as well.



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Cat century the clincher

By Ewen McRae

A Cameron Nicol century delivered the win to Hoppers Crossing in the Victorian Sub District Cricket Association south-west first XI season opener against Taylors Lakes at the weekend.

After Taylors Lakes fought back from a slow start last week to set a target of 239, the Cats seemed to have all the answers on day two as the top order wiped out much of the deficit before losing a wicket and batting through the day to finish on 6-296 from their 80 overs.

Nicol opened with gun recruit Jack Rhodes and together the pair frustrated the Lions bowlers with a well-constructed opening stand, taking full toll of anything loose and a lightning outfield.

Rhodes was the first to go, for 39, when Nipun Sumanasinghe trapped him in front, but the 99-run partnership had Hoppers Crossing in the box seat.

Sumanasinghe picked up a second wicket to breathe life into the Lions' day, but when Trent Said joined Nicol at the crease the match began to slip away.

The pair moved to 180 before Said (36) departed, but Manny Singh got Nicol to his century soon afterwards as the visitors closed in on the win.

Nicol was eventually bowled for 103 by debutant Dilshan Kanchana (1-69) with victory in sight, but the Cats reached the target soon after.

Hoppers Crossing batted out the day, with Luke Goegan (40 not out) looking impressive.

Sumanasinghe was the clear standout with the ball for the Lions, finishing with 3-86 off 22 overs, while Vishesh Bansal (2-46) was good in his first game for the club.

Elsewhere, Werribee could not prevent Caulfield getting a win, but was able to improve with the bat on the second day to avoid an outright loss.

After posting just 96 on day one, and with Caulfield already 2-54 at stumps, Werribee knew it needed quick wickets if it was to be any chance of scoring an upset result.

While it was able to snare the early wicket of Johnathon Aikins, Werribee couldn't get another breakthrough until Caulfield was building its lead.

The hosts got their total to 6-202 before declaring, with James Freeman, Michael Kelly and Bradley Apps grabbing two wickets apiece.

In reply, Werribee was 3-44 and a chance of conceding the full points before a crucial 52 from captain Tim O'Brien steered it out of trouble.

Werribee finished on 6-126 at the close of play.



Hoppers Crossing batsman Cameron Nicol on his way to a fluent century in Saturday's win over Taylors Lakes. (Damjan Janevski)