



## Eltham Wildcats Basketball Club

### Coaching at Eltham ~ And its support

Coaching is obviously an important element in player's enjoyment of and progress in the game, and parents' peace of mind. We are delighted that we have the contribution both in Championship & Saturday juniors of a variety of outstanding coaches.

Some of these come with experience themselves at the top level of basketball, such as Chris Dimattina, Peter Wain & Paul Maley, while others have graduated as coaches through our own ranks & have now reached high levels, such as Ben Cukier, with Other young veterans who have achieved a lot such as Glenn Piper. Then there is the category of dedicated adult coaches who contribute year after year, people such as Geoff Constable, Paul Leonard, Lorraine Harris, Jill Bassett, Ron Spencer, Alan Page, Kevin Andrews Greg Davis and many more We have a new group of emerging, young promising coaches, and also some very informed and dedicated parents who have contributed in recent years.

It is doubtful if any other association can boast a rich resource of coaching, but that sometimes leads to dissatisfaction from parents who feel the supply of mature, competent, experienced coaches should cover every team. That is neither possible, nor healthy, as we need to develop new coaches all the time.

Coaches must vary in age, experience, maturity, and degree of dedication, like teachers, doctors, bus drivers and car mechanics. Coaches must do part of their learning by experience as coaches. Further some coaches, both adults and young people will find it is not their "cup of tea".

Further, not all players thrive under the same style of coaching. Some need prefer a coach who is unbending and strict, but fair, while others prefer a coach with an open mind and a disposition to fun. Some players value structure more than freedom, some prefer a coach who is "positive only".

Where it is feasible we do seek to match coaches with players with similar views about Saturday basketball.

Despite the best endeavours of organisers, we are often short of coaches at the start of a season, particularly in the older age groups. We need more parents to give it a go.

New coaches receive notes and attend an orientation meeting, which deals with matter such as team discipline, grading games, avoiding walkovers, running a balanced training and the help the club can give.

Our continuing support includes:

- Coaches' advisor available to attend games, training and provide consultation. Gai Smith has spent many hours on this task for Saturday teams. Gai provides a weekly report showing pro-active consultation with coaches and many visits to training and games.
- An excellent coaches library supplemented on an ongoing basis by Rod Freame.
- Lots of role models who are prepared to chat and share experience.
- A tradition of young coaches moving through the ranks and establishing a "coaching career".
- Coaches courses are paid for by the club and coaches are encouraged to attend BV seminars.



There are incentives and rewards or loyalty, improvement and achievement. We have multiple coach awards, some expenses reimbursement.

A number of game observers as well as Gai Smith evaluate team development. There are frequent coaches bulletins which provide news and discuss issues of relevance to coaches.

At Championship level and for senior Saturday coaches we provide seminars with presentations by distinguished visitors and our own experienced coaches, as well as various functions including an annual Championship Coaches Dinner.

Matching coaches and players is a difficult enterprise. It is helpful if parents and players give us feedback about the style of coaching they prefer from Under 14 upwards. We seek to educate parents about providing coaches with praise and encouragement, practical assistance and conformity to training and game requirements by items in "Prowl".

In the last few years, with the eager promotion of Lisa Mac as Participation Administrator, and Jill Bassett as an enthusiastic volunteer, we have supplemented coaching with a lot of opportunities for extra skill development through specialised squads and camps and the up-skilling conducted by Glenn Piper, Damon Lowrey and Shannon Bodley.

We have more to learn about helping coaches but we do address the issue in a much more direct and varied manner than it is done in most associations.

Thanks for the work in developing coaches last year to Gai Smith, Andre Sammut, Ben Cukier, Glenda Freame, Rod Freame, Warren McLeod and various seminar presenters.

David Hickman  
(Coaches' Advisor)