

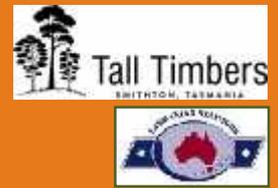
THUNDER NEWS

EDITION NO 1

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TALLTIMBERS THUNDER

LOCATED AT SCHWEPPE'S ARENA
ULVERSTONE



2017 THUNDER AGM & BOARD

Thunder is rapt to have retained the nucleus of their committee for 2017-18, with Executive members Tony Barker, (Chairperson), Michael Gaffney, (Vice Chairperson) and Debra Lynch (Administrator) returning to the club for another season. We also very fortunate to welcome back Kellie Jones, Mandy Archer, Raelene Salter, Trudy Pearce, Scot Postlethwaite, John Beard and Greg Miller (NWBU rep). It is always important to add new blood to bring fresh ideas and keep the "old-timers" on their toes, and we are very pleased to welcome newly appointed Amanda Chilcott, Graham Ratcliffe and Kirsten Archer, all very familiar names in basketball circles. We wish them well in their "debut season". Graham will be taking on the Financial Controller role and we appreciate his commitment, (and bravery) in taking on this always demanding role. We will ensure he receives a lot of support during the teething stages! We say farewell and thank you to Paul Harding and Michelle Summers who did a great job in their respective portfolios, finances and catering.

COACHING PANEL

We are also thrilled to have retained our off-court coaching group for the upcoming season. Sam Armstrong, (Coach), Nick Haywood, (Assistant Coach) and Ryan Carroll, (Physio) will be guiding the team again after doing a stellar job in 2016-17. Three training sessions have already been held with good numbers in attendance and countless hours have been put into the annual minefield that is player recruiting. Not everyone would appreciate the extensive amount of time that the guys put in to the jigsaw puzzle created by players leaving, players hedging their bets about a return and new recruits putting their hands up for a spot in the squad. It never seamlessly falls into place; there are always endless hours spent on team needs and talent identification, the back and forth negotiations with players and the ongoing daily communications with other coaches, agents, lawyers and anyone else that can help the guys get a handle on the best fit for this year's team, around the constraints of the annual recruiting budget. It is a thankless task and the guys don't get enough credit for their workload in the supposedly "quieter" off season. Thunder is very confident that they will again do a great job in putting a competitive and harmonious team together.



ROSTER

Work is almost completed on the arduous task of putting together the 2018 roster and as canvassed last year, it will be a reduced 20 game season this year. There will be one new team, Diamond Valley and every side will play 5 teams both home and away, 5 teams away games only and 5 teams home game only. While details can't be released until SEABL officially release the draw to the media, we will again have a mixture of Friday and Saturday night games and will hit the road for 5 away trips. More detail as it comes to hand. One other major change around next year's roster will be the requirement to livestream all home games, which presents a few challenges for us in terms of technology and the know-how to make this happen. There is still a lot of work to be done and we are unsure whether such an initiative will impact on our home crowds. Sadly, we are one of only four teams in the league that make a profit on home games, so the majority of clubs aren't too fazed by the introduction of this compulsory measure! Watch this space!

MEMBERSHIP

There are lots of details still to work out around 2018 membership packages but I can advise that prices have been set at Adult \$30 and Junior \$20. Everyone taking up these options will again be provided with some excellent branded merchandise and other benefits around Lucky Draws, concessional clinic entry etc. We will again be running a Tall Timbers accommodation prize, with the winner drawn from the first 100 people to sign on for 2018.

2018 TEAM

As mentioned previously, putting a team together and finalising the “import puzzle” can be daunting, especially with the time constraints around contract discussions and the bureaucracy and red tape around visa processing. It was therefore pleasing to be able to secure the services of Jeremiah Ingram for a second season, with the negotiations and accompanying documentation all completed with the minimum of fuss. “J” was a shining light in his first season, putting up excellent numbers and fitting seamlessly into the side. He brought loads of energy and was a real crowd favourite! He also of course took out our MVP award in 2017 and on his return will no doubt be looking to use his MVP accommodation prize at Tall Timbers Resort! Jeremiah will again suit up with Devonport in the coastal roster competition.



One of our new recruits for 2017–18 should be very easy to recognise and will surely turn heads as he mixes in the local community. 22 year old Darcy Malone is an Australian centre ex the Canberra Gunners and he measures 7’ and 244 lbs on the “old scale”. He returned this year from a four-year spell in the United States playing college basketball for Louisiana State University where he played alongside current NBA rookie star and fellow Australian Ben Simmons. His senior year was at Cal State. He is currently playing with the Sydney Kings on a

development contract and will likely arrive in the state in the last week of January. Darcy is a former junior Australian representative, playing in the 2012 Under 17 World Championships and winning a silver medal. More news will be provided on additional recruits after the Christmas break.

Thunder is also thrilled to advise that former player Lachie Barker will be returning to the team this season after a stint in Sydney, where he has been following a similar development path to Darcy as well as playing in the local State League. Lachie was really hitting his straps with Thunder when he left the team in 2016 to seek interstate opportunities and we have no doubt he will have a significant impact on his return. While imports from overseas and interstate are obviously important, our contingent of locals is just as crucial in terms of putting a competitive combination together and we are rapt to also have the majority of our squad back in training and looking forward to our April kick-off. Ben Richmond, Joe Chilcott, Tre Armstrong, Brady Armstrong, Ben Woolley, Nick Bingham, Matt Beurmann and Kobe Jackson have all been scrimmaging throughout December and should have a good fitness base leading in to the start of official training in January.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

A number of Thunder players will not be returning in 2018. Chudier Pal has signed with the Mandurah Magic in the Western Australian SBL State League, where he was recruited from in the first place. Daniel Sepokas is also “going back in time”, returning to his previous SEABL team, Albury Wodonga and point guard Ahmad Starks has signed with The Kitchener–Waterloo Titans Basketball Club in the National Basketball League of Canada, Canada's only professional league. Brad Simpson after many loyal and productive years as a Thunder player and Captain will be having a break from the SEABL workload and playing domestic competition only this season with Burnie. We thank him for his invaluable contribution to our club, both on and off the floor. He was a committed and hard-working team member and despite battling many injuries over the journey, he was always an extremely positive influence around the club. We wish him well and hope to see him back in the Thunder strip in the future!

SPONSORSHIP

At our AGM in November, a special thank-you was recorded to Tall Timbers and Tasmanian Seafoods for their continued support of the club, allowing the Club to maintain continuity of branding, and more importantly, our excellent relationships with Allen Hansen and John Dabner. Tall Timbers will remain the team's naming rights sponsor in the 2018 season, in what is a great boost for the organisation. Thunder was also thrilled to confirm that a number of important 2017 sponsors have already re-committed again for 2018, with James Boag, Olivers Bakery Café and Health Care Insurance Limited again part of the all-important off-court team.

Thunder is also extremely pleased to announce details of a new three-year sponsorship agreement with Valhalla Ice Cream. Valhalla is a 100% Tasmanian owned and operated business who have been manufacturing ice cream for the past 28 years. From what started out as a small family run business to service its own site at Salamanca Market, Valhalla has grown over the years to now supply over 300 retailers in Tasmania and Victoria. With a range of options available in ready to eat 120ml cups and choc tops, 500ml and 1L take home packs or 5L catering tubs, they provide an option for everyone. *“Valhalla Ice Cream is very proud to be sponsoring a great Tasmanian sporting team for the next three years and look forward to seeing Thunder perform well in the upcoming SEABL season.”* said General Manager Luke Atkin.



We will be making further sponsorship announcements early in the New Year and hope to retain most of our all-important “crew” from this past season.

SPONSORSHIP COORDINATOR

On a related note, Thunder is pleased to announce a new club sponsorship coordinator for this season. The Board has secured the services of Michael Rowlands, who is himself a 100+ games SEABL player. Michael is very experienced in the marketing and sponsorship area and has a very successful relationship with a number of sporting clubs and organisations, most recently the Burnie Athletics Club. He has begun liaising with all our 2017 sponsors to ascertain their willingness to once again provide the essential off-court support we need as well as ensuring that all of their expectations were met during the year. In conjunction with these approaches, all sponsors will be provided with a questionnaire seeking input and feedback on a range of issues, including areas where we can improve. One key area where we will be canvassing opinion is in relation to our best option for our home game stadium. As an organisation, we are obliged to perform due diligence in this area and are looking at costings with coastal Councils, to see whether better options exist around a sharing of venues for 2018 home games. All views will be taken into account and we are very mindful that there are advantages and disadvantages with any changes to the status quo. Any decision will not be taken lightly. Michael will also be taking a much broader look at the whole "game night experience" and already has floated a few ideas that we are sure will find favour with both sponsors and our general fan base. We are very keen to provide an excellent night of family focussed entertainment. More on that closer to the start of the season. Good news also for sponsor box holders as the design of our boxes will change this year and utilise the two front rows of seating rather than just the front row. The new format will provide more room and comfort for our sponsors and their guests. Again, more detail as the season proper draws closer



HISTORY

