

# JAMES HIRD

A C A D E M Y

EST 2010



Alwyn Davey Junior, JHA head coach Harmit Singh, Matthew Foley, Josh Misiti, Jayden Davey, Tex Wanganeen, Alex Hird

## Welcome to a bumper edition of the James Hird Academy newsletter.

Welcome to the 24th edition of the James Hird Academy newsletter.

After two disrupted years, it was great to have the academy back up and running, led by head coach Harmit Singh.

The academy had their Flight Squad Camp run over school holidays, while the JHA group trained every Monday through terms one to three.

In exciting news for the Academy, JHA product Tex Wanganeen signed with the Essendon Football Club during the Pre-Season Supplemental Selection Period (SSP), after training with the senior squad over the summer.

Wanganeen made his senior AFL debut as the medical sub in round two against Brisbane and kicked his first goal against Melbourne in round three, with his proud dad, Gavin, watching on in the stands.

Six JHA players trained with the Bombers' senior squad over pre-season, providing them insight and experience in a professional AFL environment.

Enjoy this latest edition of the JHA newsletter with plenty of exciting players progressing through the JHA.

## From the coach



Hi Bomber fans,

The 2022 season has certainly flown, and it's been nice for our players to have a clean run at their footy without the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The JHA program not only helps accelerate player development with the aim to see players drafted on to our AFL list, but it also aims to help educate and develop our players as young leaders within the community.

We focused a lot on the football fundamentals – simple brilliance whilst also including elements of decision – making, game sense & strength and conditioning.

The acceleration group benefited from being able to sit in VFL meetings & better understand our game style - a big thank you to Senior Coach Brent Stanton for his support of our program. Players were also able to do 1:1 vision throughout the season of not only their games, but players throughout the industry from a positional education perspective.

The year started really well, with Tex Wanganeen impressing enough to earn a spot via Supplementary Selection Period (SSP) & would later play 5 AFL matches, an outstanding achievement given the

injuries he had to deal with leading in to his draft year.

We were able to run a "Flight Squad Camp" in Term 2 School Holidays which was a huge success, a big thank you to Michael Hurley and Josh Eyre for assisting.

15 Players from our "Acceleration Group" played NAB u/18 or SANFL u/18 Football, a further 2 players made their VFL Debuts whilst 4 players represented their States at NAB Championship Level (u/16 – u/18). 3 Players have been invited to the AFL Combine.

It is an incredibly exciting period for our James Hird Academy with the number of boys and girls coming through in the Baby Bombers and Flight Squad, providing the club opportunities to create a pipeline of talent and build an even stronger connection with families.

Thank you everyone for your support, and I look forward to a bigger and better 2023.

**Harmit Singh**

James Hird Academy head coach



JHA head coach Harmit Singh with Tex Wanganeen.

# 2022 JHA list

## ACCELERATION GROUP

PLAYER	AGE	PARENT/NGA
Joshua Misi	19	Joe Misi
Nyawi Moore	19	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Alex Hird	19	James Hird
Carlos Egan	18	NGA
Ayui Makieng	18	NGA
Alwyn Davey Jnr	18	Alwyn Davey
Jayden Davey	18	Alwyn Davey
Reuben Rode	18	NGA
Matthew Foley	18	NGA
Luca Alessio	18	Steve Alessio
Will Hamilton	17	Paul Hamilton
Luke Barnard	17	Paul Barnard
Ryan Eyre	17	NGA
Amin Naim	17	NGA
Mahmoud Taha	17	NGA
Jayden Nguyen	16	NGA
Noah Caracella	16	Blake Caracella
Isaac Kako	16	NGA
Alex Alessio	16	Steve Alessio

## BABY BOMBERS (BOYS)

PLAYER	AGE	PARENT/NGA
Jacob Lloyd	10	Matthew Lloyd
Lenny Solomon	10	Dean Solomon
Cruz Davey	9	Alwyn Davey
Connor Stanton	9	Brent Stanton
Harlan Ryder	9	Patrick Ryder
Edward Mercuri	8	Mark Mercuri
Bohdi McPhee	8	Adam McPhee
Aidan Stanton	7	Brent Stanton
Henri Mercuri	6	Mark Mercuri
Mekhi Dempsey	6	Courtenay Dempsey
William Howlett	6	Ben Howlett
Joshua Ramanauskas	5	Adam Ramanauskas
Roman Hocking	2	Heath Hocking
Wolf Watson	2	Jobe Watson

## FLIGHT SQUAD

PLAYER	AGE	PARENT/NGA
Aljah Davey	15	Alwyn Davey
Mara Lovett-Murray	14	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Aidan Ramanauskas	14	Adam Ramanauskas
Logan Daniher	14	Chris Daniher
Taj McPhee	14	Adam McPhee
Koby Bewick	13	Darren Bewick
William Hird	13	James Hird
Max Alessio	13	Steve Alessio
Thomas Caracella	13	Blake Caracella
Taitum Dempsey	12	Courtenay Dempsey
Cove McPhee	12	Adam McPhee
Lucas Ramanauskas	12	Adam Ramanauskas
Rylan Johnson	11	Mark Johnson
Noah Peverill	11	Damien Peverill

## JHA (GIRLS) 0-18 YEARS OLD

PLAYER	AGE	PARENT/NGA
Jaeda Lloyd	16	Matthew Lloyd
Georgia Caracella	15	Blake Caracella
Chenae Dempsey	14	Courtenay Dempsey
Kira Lloyd	13	Matthew Lloyd
Ivy Daniher	12	Chris Daniher
Gemma Bewick	10	Darren Bewick
Chari Johnson	9	Mark Johnson
Scarlett Peverill	9	Damiew Peverill
Matilda Solomon	8	Dean Solomon
Harmony Lovett-Murray	8	Nathan Lovett-Murray
Georgia Barnard	7	Paul Barnard
Mia Peverill	7	Damien Peverill
Charlize Davey	7	Alwyn Davey
Juniper Watson	4	Jobe Watson
Sophie Howlett	4	Ben Howlett
Plum Wanganeen	2	Gavin Wanganeen
Layla Davey	2	Alwyn Davey
Quinn Dempsey	2	Courtenay Dempsey

# Around The Grounds

## Acceleration Group



### Josh Misiti

The son of Bombers great Joe, Misiti spent the early part of the season with the Calder Cannons as a 19-year-old, where his best performance was a 21 possession / 8-mark game v Sandringham in Round 2. Josh would play 4 Senior Games with Aberfeldie with the highlight being a 4-goal haul v EDFL powerhouse Keilor. Josh unfortunately, missed the back half of the season due to injury, however, has committed to his program meticulously & hope he can have a clean run at it in season 2023. A fantastic attitude who was a real leader for the JHA boys who trained with the AFL group over summer.

### Nyawi Moore

The talented Moore played 3 games with the Bendigo Pioneers as an average player averaging 11.5 possessions and almost 3 score involvements. Nyawi has played Senior Football with Woorineen who are playing in a preliminary final this weekend against Kerang in the Central Murray Football League.

### Anthony Munkara

The 191cm Munkara, who hails from the Tiwi Islands, impressed after making the move to Westminster College in South Australia. Anthony took some time to adjust to a new life and team, but as the season went on, he kept showing growth and adjusted to the standard. He showed some flashes of brilliance, highlighted by a nine-goal display against Trinity. Anthony represented the Northern Territory in October and played two senior matches for the Tiwi Bombers, kicking nine goals.

### Carlos Egan

The small forward split his season between Strathmore (EDFL) and the Calder Cannons. Carlos finished the NAB League Season very strongly, highlighted by a standout out 6 goal performance against the Eastern Ranges in the Wildcard Round – NAB League.

### Ayui Makieng

Played 2 NAB League Games with Calder Cannons, spending the majority of the season with Northern Football League Division 1 Club Northcote Park, where he played some excellent football at Centre Half Back – the Round 15 clash v Whittlesea was Makieng's best performance with his intercept marking a feature.

### Jayden Davey

Showed some promising signs training with the AFL Group over the Pre – Season, however, his season was over in Mid-February after tearing his ACL. Jayden has thrown himself at his recovery and been very diligent, now almost 4 months post-surgery we are seeing some really pleasing results.

### Reuben Rode

The classy left footed NGA product played some excellent football with the Calder Cannons predominantly as a Half Back / Midfielder, with his best performance being a 24-possession game against the Northern Knights in Round 12. Reuben was also able to taste senior football action with Northcote Park in the Northern Football League – Division 1.

### Alwyn Davey Jr

9 Games with Xavier College (APS) where he averaged almost 17 possessions and 1 ½ goals per game, AFL National Academy Member who played some excellent football with Vic Metro / Oakleigh Chargers through the midfield and as a high forward. Was rewarded with Senior VFL selection against Werribee kicking a classy goal and showing excellent pressure in the front half.



Alwyn Davey Junior

### Matthew Foley

The Calder Cannons NGA product was named Vice Captain in season 2022 and benefitted from training with the AFL Group over Pre-Season. An incredibly hard working and coachable young player, Matthew averaged 17 touches per game and played some important lockdown roles in the NAB League Finals series. Matthew also played 1st XVIII Football with St.Bernard's College (ACC)

### Luca Alessio

Son of Premiership Player Steve, the 193 developing key defender played some excellent football with the Cannons and also St.Bernard's College (ACC). Luca's aerial power improved throughout the season, incredibly coachable and hard working, Luca was able to nullify some quality forwards throughout the NAB League Season.

### Will Hamilton

After injury curtailed Will's 2021 campaign, will was able to put together a consistent with Golden Square in the Bendigo Football Netball League u/18's, playing 15 matches.

### Luke Barnard

The son of Premiership Bomber Paul, Luke played some excellent football with Essendon Dousta Stars in the EDFL u/18 competition. Luke is a very diligent young man with a bright future ahead of him. Luke was recently invited to train with the Calder Cannons which is great reward for effort.

# Around The Grounds

## Acceleration Group



### Shane Clough

Shane split his time between Calder Cannons / Gisborne in the Bendigo Football Netball League (u/18) competition. A highly skilled player who is very professional, Shane dominated at local level and was able to grow as the season went on at NAB League Level and will hopefully have a big off season in the lead up to his top age year.

### Amin Naim

A medium sized forward, Naim consistently hit the scoreboard at NAB League Level in 2022 as a bottom ager and was rewarded with Vic Metro u/17 selection. Amin worked incredibly hard on his endurance over the summer and is starting to see some really pleasing results.

### Ryan Eyre

The younger brother of current Bomber Josh, Ryan had an injury interrupted season, however, fought back late in the year to get back out on the field. Ryan kicked 5 goals in a match playing for Kilmore at Senior Level before quickly being elevated in to the Calder Cannons team. Sadly, for Eyre, he suffered a season ending ankle injury after taking a cracking mark on the lead. A really big summer ahead for Ryan who has shown a lot of talent.

### Mahmoud Taha

"Moody" had an excellent first season with the Calder Cannons playing as a Half Forward / Mid and was duly rewarded with Vic Metro u/17 selection. Mahmoud has a lot of tricks and his strong performances have led to him being named to play for the AFL Futures Game on Grand Final Day - a game which highlights the best bottom age prospects around the Country.

### Noah Caracella

The son of premiership Bomber Blake, Noah had a strong season with Newtown & Chilwell Football Club winning a premiership and also being involved in the Geelong Falcons NAB League Development Program.

### Isaac Kako

The young gun dominated at u/16 level for Pascoe Vale kicking over 50 goals, coming runner up in the league best and fairest. Isaac was named in the ACC Team of the Year on the back of an outstanding school football year with Parade College and would also represent Vic Metro. Isaac debuted with the Calder Cannons as a 16 year old and played some quality football as a small forward, highlighted by a 4 goal game against a strong Eastern Ranges outfit.

### Alex Alessio

The son of premiership Bomber Steve, the 197cm Alessio made huge ground in season 2022 playing for Strathmore at u/16 Level. His form has been rewarded with an invitation in to the Calder Cannons Program.

### Jayden Nguyen

An excellent top age year with Aberfeldie u/16's culminated in a league best and fairest and representation at Calder Cannons u/16's and u/18's level. Jayden played some excellent football on the Wing with Vic Metro with his speed and class a feature.



L-R Jayden Nguyen, Carlos Egan, Reuben Rode, Isaac Kako, Shane Clough, Mahmoud Taha, Amin Naim, Matthew Foley: Calder Cannons NAB League

# Around The Grounds

## Flight Squad

### Alijah Davey

The son of 100-gamer Alwyn, Alijah played some excellent football with Palmerston in the NTFL. Alijah is a very skilful, high football iq player who is currently boarding at Xavier College and has been developing his craft in the strong APS competition.

### Mara Lovett - Murray

The son of 145-game Bomber Nathan Lovett-Murray, Mara has focused on his basketball in 2022, had a significant growth spurt and been part of Melbourne United's Development Academy as well as other representative honours.

### Taitum Dempsey

The son of 133- game Bomber Courtenay, Taitum received the Cairns City Lions Junior AFL u/12 Best and Fairest Award showing great consistency by polling in most rounds. Playing in midfield with some time rebounding off half back, Taitum, an incredibly popular teammate is certainly a player on the rise.

### Koby Bewick

The son of 233 game dual premierships Bomber Darren, Koby had an outstanding season as a bottom age player with Strathmore in the EDFL. Koby represented the league and performed strongly and kicked 25 goals for Strathmore with 9 mentions in the best players. To cap off an outstanding season Koby was at his dynamic best in their grand final win over Aberfeldie kicking 3 of the teams 5 goals.



Koby Bewick, Strathmore JFC.

### Max Alessio

The son of premierships Bomber Steve, Max has missed the season due to injury. Max has focused on his recovery and will return to local football in 2023, the prospect of Alessio to Bewick in the middle of the ground will certainly be an exciting one for Bombers supporters!

### Rylan Johnson

The son of premierships Bomber Mark, Rylan had an excellent season with Essendon Dousta Stars in the EDFL. Rylan's best performance was a BOG display against Moonee Valley. Rylan has also had some outstanding results for his school with his swimming & is an incredibly diligent, hardworking, and respectful young man.

### Logan Daniher

The son of Premiership Bomber Chris, Logan had an outstanding season with MCU Eastlakes in the Wagga District JFL. Logan kicked 17 goals with 5 mentions in the best players.

### Taj McPhee

The son of 142- game Bomber Adam, Taj played 5 matches with Barwon Heads in the strong AFL Barwon FNL, with his best performance being against Lara where he was also able to hit the scoreboard.

### Cove McPhee

The son of Crichton Medal winner Adam, Cove played 15 matches with Barwon Heads in the AFL Barwon FNL competition and played some excellent football.

### Thomas Caracella

The son of former premierships Bomber Blake, Thomas had a strong season with Newtown & Chilwell in the AFL Barwon FNL. Thomas played 12 games with some excellent performances against Colac, Torquay & South Barwon.

### Lucas Ramanuskas

The son of premierships Bomber Adam, Lucas had an excellent season with Strathmore u/12's in the EDFL. Lucas played 13 games with his team unfortunately going down in the Div. 1 Preliminary Final. Lucas' best performance was a 2 goal performance against Maribyrnong Park showing some good signs as a key forward.

### Noah Peverill

The son of 144- game Bomber Damien, Noah played for Moonee Valley u/12's in the EDFL as a bottom age player. Noah showed outstanding commitment in our "Flight Squad Camp" over Term 2 school holidays and has a bright football future ahead.

### William Hird

The son of 253 - game Bomber Champion James, William had a strong season with Prahran JFC culminating in a Grand Final. Unfortunately for William and his team mates they narrowly went down to Caulfield.

# Koby Bewick

## Flight Squad



Koby Bewick

**Age:** 13

**Nickname:** 'Bewy'

**Current Team:** Strathmore

**Position:** Midfield/Forward

**Hobbies:** Playing basketball, hanging out with mates

**Favourite AFL Player:** Darcy Parish

**Favourite musician:** Ariana Grande

**Favourite TV show:** Bounce

**How have you found your time so far with the Academy?**

It's been really fun to meet the new boys and play footy, we all just love it.

**During your time at the JHA so far, what are some highlights or standout moments?**

Always knowing at the start of every session how everyone went in their games on the weekend, I love listening to that kind of chat.

**What are some of the key learnings you've experienced from your time in the Academy?**

I've learnt how to mark against taller opponents, but I've also improved my goalkicking, ground balls, and all the little skills that you need.

**Is there anything away from football that the JHA has taught you?**

How to be nicer and show respect to other people.

**Were there any players that you idolised growing up or based your game around?**

I really like the way Nick Daicos plays, he's come in and already impacted in his first year.



Bewick Family including Darren and Koby Bewick

# Carlos Egan

## Acceleration Group



Carlos Egan

**Age:** 18

**Nickname:** 'Pablo'

**Current Team:** Strathmore

**Position:** Midfield/Forward

**Hobbies:** PlayStation

**Favourite AFL Player:** Don't have one

**Favourite musician:** J. Cole

**Favourite TV show:** Friends

**How have you found your time so far with the Academy?**

It's been good. I've been involved for a while now, so I'm really enjoying it. We've had a few new boys added to the group since I started, which has been great.

**During your time at the JHA so far, what are some highlights or standout moments?**

Definitely getting to meet all the new guys and seeing them come through the Academy, they've been great.

**What are some of the key learnings you've experienced from your time in the Academy?**

I'd say the nutrition side of footy – it's been a big part of it.

**Is there anything away from football that the JHA has taught you?**

Just to be humble.

**Were there any players that you idolised growing up or based your game around?**

Growing up, I idolised Matthew Lloyd and Michael Hurley. As I've gotten older, I've tried to base my game off small forwards, so maybe someone like Charlie Cameron at the moment.



Carlos Egan, Calder Cannons



# Luca Alessio

## Acceleration Group



Luca Alessio

**Age:** 17

**Nickname:** Ses, Aless, and Sessel.

**Current Team:** Strathmore

**Position:** Half Forward/Full Forward

**Hobbies:** Playing basketball and also a bit of cooking at home

**Favourite AFL Player:** Harris Andrews & Jordan Ridley

**Favourite musician:** Bruno Mars

**Favourite TV show:** Man in the Arena

### How have you found your time so far with the Academy?

It's been really good. I think my development has improved quite a bit, having the opportunity to do some training with the VFL team and getting in their meetings has been very beneficial for me so I've enjoyed it.

### During your time at the JHA so far, what are some highlights or standout moments?

The soccer matches we've played down here have been pretty good, very intense! But I also think coming down on Monday nights and spending time in the proper facilities recovering with the boys has helped me get along pretty well this season.

### What are some of the key learnings you've experienced from your time in the Academy?

Mostly what it's like to be in a VFL environment; I've learned how those players go about their Monday night sessions after a game, how their meetings are conducted and how to recover on a professional level.

### Is there anything away from football that the JHA has taught you?

How to have fun in a professional environment when you're under a bit of pressure - they've taught me you can enjoy it and still work hard at the same time.

### Were there any players that you idolised growing up or based your game around?

I idolised Dad (Steven Alessio), I have to say that otherwise I'd be in trouble. Other than him, I used to be a big fan of Matty Scarlett in the backline as well. Right now, it'd probably be Harry McKay or Charlie Curnow.

### How has it been having your Dad as such a big part of the club?

Dad having such a big name and being around here has given me a head-start and a better education around what it takes to be at this level... he's definitely helped me along my journey so far.



# Get Social

## Want to stay up to the date with the James Hird Academy?

Make sure to follow the JHA on Facebook and Instagram for all the latest news, behind the scenes pictures and more.

Hashtag **#JamesHirdAcademy** to feature on our page!



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