

MATCH REPORT



Bald Eagles vs Redbacks

Game 1 – DATE 27.6.2025

Charles McLaughlin reserve, out West.

Friday night lights for our debut game, does it get any better? After all our intraclub practice games we travelled west in anticipation of a great match. The crowd was excited, there was a buzz in the changing rooms and a strong smell of deep heat. Despite the cold evening the football action was about to get hot. Could we match our victorious U15 side who played before us?

Clearly our youthful exuberance was intimidating the more experienced redbacks. The first 5 minutes was an arm wrestle with both teams moving the ball well before the lactic acid kicked in (for some). The mighty Eagles composed themselves fastest and we started to apply goal pressure. Adam made Bald Eagles master's history by kicking our first ever goal from distance. The redbacks were soon on the scoresheet and would have added six extras but for an outstanding goal line mark taken by Pete Robson, who kept his balance to prevent a point too. Will was busy up front. The President shouted at him to run to the ball, but he held back correctly anticipating the ball breaking to him and when it did he made no mistake. I think Steve Wall kicked another, the first of three for him in the match. 22-7 at the break.

The second period got slightly easier as it went on, but our kicking only produced one goal and five behinds. Our ten against ten sessions on the full Rofe Park oval gave us a definite fitness advantage. Our defence and mids were faster, harder and kicked longer, and we were taking some terrific marks too. Byrnsey, Brenden and Pete were still solid in defence and restricted the redbacks to a set shot goal. Their chap Den had a good boot on him and could score from distance with hardly any run up. Glenn was also hunting Redbacks to protect our back line. Jaime was busy, and perhaps unfortunate to get marched by the excellent young umpires. The Don, Chris, and Collin also helped keep the Redbacks to that single goal and help us launch attacks. Add Neil to that, he was so efficient garnered a slight sledging injury! 33-13 at half time.

By the third quarter there was only one team in it. Adam dropped to full back to relieve some pressure on the Redback midfield, but Evan was stepping up with a dominant performance with elite skills on display. He probably scored the goal of the season back at Rofe in practice and carried that form into this game kicking three from name your distance! Chris showed he is natural wingman, with some great two way running and skill execution. Eamonn moved further forward and showed poise and skill at both ends, proving he can be a CHB or a CHF. He was unlucky not to score, shaving the inside of the post with his first effort, but made up for it with two goals later on. Marc was excelling in the ruck, dominating the tap work and controlling the middle of the ground. He put in a huge shift, as did Steve Wall who found his taste for goal kicking with a vintage display of beautiful left foot ball striking.

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It was more of the same in the final stanza. Our goal kicking was amazing as we notched maximums from over 40 meters out. Special note to Benny for playing with a pinged calf. His kicking was terrific, scoring three maximums including one where Bart's, rising like a salmon, couldn't get high enough but Ben gathered and scored. Clare nearly capped an excellent display with a goal when she grabbed a difficult catch, but it wasn't paid, denying her a set shot. Hurricane Ali Bones was careering into contacts with no thought for personal safety and was brave for playing on after a blow to the head. We might need to work on our ball punching skills with another fisting injury, rest it up Raiff!

It seems like the Redbacks didn't know what was going to hit them. Will word get around that there are new Baldy kids on the block? They won't know we have more improvement to come with some more of our star Eagles being ready to leave the nest!

Well done to all the first timers for breaking their duck and winning on debut. Footy was the real winner this evening, but the Eagles took the chocolates 114-28. We shared an enjoyable beer or two with the Redbacks afterwards, before heading home to recover.

Coaches' comments: My key coaching messages on the back of the board were:

1. Lead to the ball.
2. Crumbs
3. Mark your player
4. Kick more goals than they do.

I think we surprised the opposition with our younger average age and our greater average capability.

Award winners: Byrnsey took out the player of the match for an outstanding all-round performance and two goals (very nearly three). Ali took the Callum Mills bravery award for courage beyond the call of duty. Ali puts her head where others are afraid to tread and carried on bravely after that head knock. Adam won the bi-club award, as in an award presented by the Redbacks to reward their best and fairest Bald Eagle.

For some fun reading be sure to check out the feather duster review from the game.

Onwards and upwards to our next game.

Get excited because if you like the Masters Footy now, you'll learn to love it later.



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