



EAST PERTH DISTRICT BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (Inc)

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WSBL Coaches Announcement

Further to our Social Media Announcement we are pleased to announce the appointment of Blake Srdarev as the WSBL Women's Coach with immediate effect. We are pleased with securing Blake into the role for the next 3 years which gives East Perth the stability within the program to grow. Having spent some time with Blake we posed a couple of questions to him.

Couple of career achievements

I started playing as a little tacker at Willetton and from there ended up playing SBL for the Willetton Tigers. This led to the start of my coaching career which has included being a full time Basketball Development Officer, 2 years as WA State Team Head Coach and more than 20 completed seasons coaching WABL / SBL / WSBL with the Willetton Tigers and Mandurah Magic. In this time I have been able to head coach at the U14 Australian Junior Championships, won numerous WABL championships, been named Willetton Tigers WABL coach of the year and had multiple years as head coach of Division One (women and men). I have also had the honour to coach two BWA WABL player of the year and with some very talented people along the way. At an SBL/WSBL perspective I have been fortunate to have coached under four accomplished head coaches from whom I have learnt a lot from.

Why East Perth Eagles

I spent a month coaching the team in the pre-season of 2019 when East Perth's coaches were unavailable, throughout this time I built a connection with the group and watched them progress through the 2019 season. In terms of the club itself it holds a special place for me, my uncle Jeff introduced basketball to my family when I was a youngster. He played for East Perth from 1980 to 1987 so I am well aware of the history of the East Perth Eagles which is a foundation club dating back to 1946.

The other reason East Perth appealed to me was that I have a great relationship with Tanya Fisher. The work she has put into the WSBL and WNBL as a player and coach as well as excelling in her professional career and raising two high achieving and genuine daughters is something that not a lot of people will ever achieve. When Tanya said that she couldn't commit 100% to the role was the point where I put my hand up to take over the program. I went through the process with the club and quickly realised that our vision for the team and the club was aligned.

What challenges are you looking forward to

The main drivers for my coaching are my love of the game, to make others better and provide people with opportunity. I always think back to when I was younger and what drives me is the coaches who invested in me and also the opportunities that I didn't get. I am hell bent on giving the athletes in my care the best possible experience. Of course our athletes have to meet me half way and own their own environment which is why I love working with quality people who are motivated to improve. Not everyone has the talent but everyone can be a great team mate, contribute to a positive culture and make others better. I want to honour the hard work that was put in before me and add to it by increasing the professionalism, strategic thinking and team atmosphere. This role provides me an opportunity to fulfill all of these things which in theory sound like fun but I know from experience that it takes work and having a strong culture is something that you have to fight for each and every day. This journey is what I find most rewarding.

How has the journey been thus far

It's been great, President Tim Symons has kept me in the loop on everything that is happening around the place, he has been very transparent and is readily available for discussion which I value. Both Tim and Carl Filpo have set out a vision for how they want the club to look going forward and this is a big reason why they have my commitment. Willetton, in particular Phil Nixon, Mark Winnett and Stephen Black showed outstanding team work when they allowed me to coach the Eagles earlier in the year and as Tim said he takes pride in 'returning service' by letting me continue to run training sessions at Willetton with our youth SBL players whilst Stephen is away. I love that these



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clubs are leading with their actions with how they treat people and how they are going about delivering the best possible product to the community. After all, we share the same goals.

I have been immersing myself with people at East Perth lately, club members are supportive and players are super excited about the path forward which is critical to me, I want to find those who are serious about achieving and motivated to improve in every way. I want to work with people who understand the holistic reason why SBL is important to the club and the community, this is a big part of us wanting to make those around us better.

What goals do you have for season 2020

My goals for the group are around being hard working, strategic minded, professional and committed to a culture of high performance. I believe that with consistent demonstration of these values a bright future awaits. I am committed to ensure that we enjoy the pursuit of improvement knowing that this will take care of the result. As an individual I will be bullish about setting the standard for our players and our club.

I want our team to be the hardest working, most discipline and most prepared team in the WSBL.

Kind Regards

Tim Symons
Managing Director
EPDBA