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**SPORT**

Tiwi Bombers name Worden as new coach

GREY MORRIS

NORTHERN Territory football journeyman Wayne Worden will coach NTFL club Tiwi Bombers this season.

Worden (pictured) was announced as head coach yesterday, replacing the outgoing Willie Kolari who resigned earlier this month.

A former assistant coach at the Bombers, Wararath, where he played in two premiership sides — and Nightcliff, Worden, 47, will take his first training session next week.

“I feel really humble and appreciate the opportunity the Tiwi Bombers have given me,” Worden told the NT News last night. “It’s a huge challenge coaching the Tiwis but it’s one I’m looking forward to and hopefully I can get the Bombers back on top where they should be.

They’ve got a big advantage over the rest of the competition already in that they are brothers and related already, if I can get them to play like they’ll be back to on top straight away.”

Worden said everything he had done in football had led him to this point.

“Especially on the coaching side of it where the only thing missing was I hadn’t had the chance to coach Premier League and now all that has changed,” he said.

A painter and decorator by trade, Worden has management staff in place that will free him up to make regular visits to the Tiwis Islands to coach the entire playing squad.

Worden’s search for a senior coaching role took 15 years, with his assistant roles mixed in with a successful stint at Division I club PINT.

Lucky to be alive, let alone walking after breaking his neck when he fell from a roof two years ago, Worden has close connections with several Tiwi players.

One of them is Ross Tun-gatalem, who has been linked with a move to rival club Nightcliff.

“I’ve spoken to Shane Tipumantamirri, Aussie Wonae-amirri and Simon Munkara and Aussie and Simon say Ross won’t go anywhere now I’m coaching,” Worden said.

“I used to have 10 of them staying at my house in the Wararath days and they regularly ate me out of house and home, but they were and still are great mates.”

Magpies to lose Davey, Jetta

**MARC McCOUGHAN**

BANNED former Essendon pair Leroy Jetta and Aedyn Davey will almost certainly not play for the Palmerston Magpies next NTFL season because of a tweak in AFLNT’s by-laws.

The news rubs further salt into the Magpie duo’s wounds, with almost all the other suspended Bombers returning in a training capacity this week ahead of their bans ending on November 13.

The Jetta and Davey suspensions do not expire until February 15 next year.

That is three days before Palmerston’s last round clash with Nightcliff, meaning they are unable to reach the minimum finals requirements of five games.

Davey, 32, and Perth-based Jetta, 28, served only 44 days of the original 130-day ban given to the 34 Essendon players found guilty of using the banned substance Thyromos beta-4 in the 2012 AFL season.

The difference is they chose to play for the Magpies in the 2014 NTFL campaign, leaving them with extra time to serve.

Palmerston officials have privately discussed a potential application for finals dispensation for the ex-AFL stars.

But AFLNT football operations manager Joel Bowden said a change in the AFLNT by-laws left little room for any dispensation request.

“Considering we’ve taken the discretion this year out of the by-laws, including the provisions within the qualification, I think it will be very difficult for them to mount an argument that dispensation should be granted,” Bowden said.

“Even though we had by-laws, they were still grey … the by-laws didn’t really have much effect because you could always show discretion.”

The Magpies made an unsuccessful bid for “special consideration” last season, when Davey and Jetta were suspended and Mathew Stokes joined AFL ranks in quick succession.

Palmerston coach Tavis Perry said he was in “constant dialogue” with both players.

Katherine’s NTFL push in full swing

**GREY MORRIS**

KATHERINE’S entry into the NTFL will get a big boost if they can beat a star-studded East Kimberley side in tomorrow night’s representative game at the town’s Ntimlik Oval.

The Big Rivers Football League, embracing a 1000km circle around Katherine, will tackle the Western Australians in a twilight game.

Coach Karl Gundersen has picked an elite side, including league best-and-fairest Daniel Turner, Marcus Hamilton and the Kossack brothers, Kayle and Patrick, from premiers Eastside.

Other big names include Lajamanu’s own lightning bolt Liam Patrick, Kalano’s Jake Farrell, Caleb Clyden, Gabriel Henry and Sean Brown, Camels pair Brodie Carroll and Jess Budicker and Beswick’s Jesse and Josh Blitner. “This is a great opportunity for Katherine football to put its hands up and tell the NTFL it’s time to take notice of the playing talent down here,” Gundersen (pictured) said.

“It’s been a long time — five years at least — since a rep side ran out for the Katherine league and I can tell you, the players are desperately keen to make a big impression this time. Kayle Kossack is our captain and, at 22 years of age, I can’t think of a better player to lead the BRFL in a game of this importance.

“He leads by example and has an appetite for goal, like Liam Patrick. Marcus Hamilton and the Blitner boys. “This really is a talented side from the Katherine region and we want a big crowd at Ntimlik to encourage the players.”

Gundersen has been an assistant coach at Territory Thunder in a senior and under-18 role and coached NTFL club Tiwi Bombers to a grand final and preliminary final in his two seasons in charge.

But tomorrow night’s clash is his first full-scale representative match in charge.

“It’s been a while coming, I suppose,” Gundersen said.

“But this side excites me with the amount of talent we’ve got and the fact a lot of the players will be around for the next 10 years. “The average age is 21, all of them have grown up in Katherine and all of them will wear the white jumper with the Hawk emblem with a hell of a lot of pride, especially knowing what is at stake here.”

Gundersen has done some homework on the East Kimberley side and expects former Wararath goalkicker and the star of the Fox Sports show The Recruiter, Waylon Manson, to line up in front of goals.

Jai Farrer, a brother of Southern Districts goalkicker Will, is another player Gundersen has heard big raps on.

“They’ve got a side who can cause us a lot of problems, especially with players who can light up Ntimlik Oval very quickly,” Gundersen said.

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