



# **DOUBLE TON FOR BLUNNERS**

## **(MARK BLUNDELL)**

**Written by on Ian Scholefield 8 December 2019**

BDCC President Mark Blundell achieved the Club milestone of 200 games on Sunday 8 December 2019. Congratulations Mark, hope the scoreboard will keep clicking over.

You may well ask – How does a Taswegian from Launceston manage to get to BDCC? Like all from the Apple Isle, footy in the winter and cricket in the summer dominate all other activities. Mark studied at the public school Prospect High where resources were limited. This didn't stop the school team being undefeated in schools' cricket. In a strong team featuring future Tasmanian first class player Scott Kremerskothen and five others who attained premier Tasmanian status, Mark was happy to sit back and play his role at number 10 in the batting and roll over a few slows to rest the quicks.

To get a taste of club cricket and superior facilities he joined the private Old Boys Club, Old Scotch CC (Scotch Oakburn College in Launceston) where he played from the age of 15 to 19 years of age. He was involved in a third-grade premiership in 1997/1998 and played regularly in front of the David Boon stand at the NTCA ground. However Aussie Rules was his primary sport and he played at South Launceston FC as a utility, where he climbed from captaining the Under 18's to the senior ranks in the State League.

Realising that he needed a paying job, Mark took up an AFL Sportsready traineeship with AFL Tasmania. After three years there he moved to Melbourne to study at the Burwood Campus of Deakin University. The course of Sports Coaching and Development was headed by AFL legend David Parkin. A requirement was to gain experience through coaching placements. It was timely for us as Tim Clubb had submitted a request for assistance in running BDCC's Milo coaching clinic at Ashburton Primary School. This suited Mark as it gave him another sport, other than Aussie Rules, and he commenced in the 2001/2002 season.

Tim Clubb advised ...” *Jonno Weinstock, who played at Camberwell Magpies CC, had stepped down and Mark was the perfect replacement. He adapted easily through his engaging personality, understanding of routines for children and knowing how to adapt them to suit the kid’s ability. His principles of having fun, maintaining interest and creditability, whilst being relatable to parents, were vital.”*

After graduating from his University course Mark was snapped up by Richmond FC in a full-time position in their Marketing and Membership Department. His role embraced coaching in the Tigers Academy “Tigers Zone”, junior membership and club promotion in schools. He progressed to working for the Australian Sports Commission in late 2006 with the challenge of creating a pathway for students into sporting clubs in the Frankston region. In 2012 he made his most recent change in his career direction when he moved into teaching at Silverton Primary School (Noble Park) and this year he has specialized in teaching Physical Education.

The cricket environment refreshed his zest for the game and he contacted Fourth Eleven Captain Darren Veitch to look to play. Veitchy said his team was full but the Fifts welcomed him. He managed the last five games and in the 2002/2003 season annual report Fifts skipper David Winterton summed his performances as follows:

*“Late in the season ..... M Blundell joined and with a couple of games behind him and a decent pre-season, he will get better next year.”*

Certainly in his 5 games for the season, 39 runs @ 7.80 and 2 wickets @ 73.00 were under-whelming. However, it was the stepping stone of a great clubman and very important player. From this time the only games he missed were old injuries related to his footy career, primarily to his ankle.

Blunners has proven to be thorn in many opponent’s side with his dazzling left arm spinners, reliable mid-order runs and a safe pair of hands. When you look at his runs season by season, his best tallies have come in the last decade. The 2011/2012 season for the thirds was his best with 345 runs @ 31.36, but he has also reached creditable tallies in 2015/16 (323 runs @ 23.07) and 2016/2017 (294 runs @ 36.8).

His most remarkable seasons were the back-to-back ones of 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 when he totaled 620 runs and 54 wickets. In 2015/2016 he cleaned up throughout BHRDCA by claiming their bowling trophy. Knowing that the club was at its lowest ebb, he stood up and wore the captaincy arm-band. Not only were his personal performances career-best but he led us to a premiership and achieved the honour of receiving the President's Trophy (Best off-field) in the later of these seasons.

A couple of bowling figures stand out. In February 2010 he bamboozled Deakin CC to capture 7/8 and twelve months later a brilliant 7/39 shattered Koonung Heights CC. He has won 3 batting, 4 bowling and 2 fielding trophies across his career.

### **Career Record**

Games 200, Runs (7 fifties) Av 17.9, Best 64, Wickets 289 (8 bags of 5 wickets) Av 18.4 Best 7/8 and 85 catches.

Mark excelled for many seasons as a key figure in the Club's Milo Clinic and as Junior Coordinator. This season he has re-established the Junior Clinic, now under sponsorship of Woolworths, with the aim of getting our historically strong junior section off the ground again. After a few years of experience on the Committee and as a Captain, the most critical role that he could take on was the Presidency this season. His energy and enthusiasm points to bigger and better things for the club.