

THEODORE-SMITH

DARREN

COACH / VOLUNTEER



How did you get involved with cricket and what are some of your earliest cricketing memories? My involvement with cricket has been purely related to my son Saxon. I never played myself. He fell in love with it at 8yrs old when he was forced to play against older kids in Alice Springs to get a game. He just seemed to have some ability. Little did I know I was now sacrificing my weekends for the rest of my life.

How long have you been involved at Nightcliff Cricket Club and can you tell us what has been the biggest improvements you've seen over your time with the club? We've been with Nightcliff since we moved here 5 years ago. As far as improvements, obviously the facility upgrades like the new nets and lights mean we have one of the best places to train in Darwin.

Tell us your cricketing journey. Where has cricket taken you and what has been some of your highlights as a player/coach /manager/volunteer? My cricket journey has been pretty unexpected and, fingers crossed, continuing for some time yet. I started helping out with scoring when Brad Hatton volunteered me for the role when he coached Saxon in the U13s. Following that I was asked to help coach the U15s with Mark Clemmons in what became an unexpectedly successful season when the team that was supposed to be lucky to be competitive finished runners up in the GF. Last season I helped with the U18s and was lucky enough to be given the role of coaching the U15 Northern Tide squad for the First Sunday Strike league. Our boys lost early on and the talk was that they didn't have what it took to compete against the other teams. When we won the comp it was certainly more than rewarding.

We have had some memorable players at Nightcliff over the years, who are some of yours and why? As far as memorable players for NCC, I don't have the history to comment. I will say I am meeting great people there and more often than not finding out about their own cricket stories. I really hope that we find a few future stars through the junior club.

How long have you been coaching/playing/managing/scoring/ committee member and why did you get involved? I have been involved since Saxon first started. I did it because I love my son more than life itself and wanted to know more about this cricket thing he's taken such a shine to. As far as coaching, prior to coming to Darwin, I coached both kids and adults in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in Alice Springs. It wasn't hard to cross over into a cricket coaching role. There are plenty of people at the club to turn to for technical advise. I was offered a coaching scholarship through the NTIS last year which was fantastic and terribly educational. I highly recommend it to anybody, no matter your cricket skill level / history, that is given the opportunity and wants to improve on their own coaching abilities. Had I not gotten sick I would have continued again this year, but, could not commit until I complete my current cancer treatment. Scoring was what led to my coaching journey. To be honest, you don't miss a single bit of the action when scoring. It's a great way to watch the game. Last year I volunteered to a committee position. I learnt many things about what it takes to actually run a club. It takes more work behind the scenes than people realise and I take my hat off to those that have been involved for long periods, giving up their time and energy.

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What is your coaching philosophy or approach to achieving results for the team? My coaching philosophy is simple. To me sport teaches young people commitment, hard work, discipline and dedication. Those values they need to push through when life becomes less than easy. Winning and losing in a sporting environment, that they want to be a part of, will give them a mental fortitude they can carry with them all through life's quite often bumpy road.

Do you have any advice for prospective coaches/managers/volunteers?

My advice for anybody wanting to get involved is don't be a player's last coach. They are all different and all respond differently. I measure success with some players by how they physically improve. Maybe a kid couldn't do a push up at the start of a season now he can do ten. Some I measure mentally. I couldn't get boo from a child to begin with then by the end of the season they are comfortable enough to cheer with the others or offer up an opinion. Some are gifted athletes who've played for a while. So success to me is possibly adding a new skill or increasing their fitness. It's not easy and you can't do it for everybody. I know that my way isn't perfect and that some people will disagree with how I go about it. As long as you are prepared to listen you'll get the most out of players, coaches and parents.

If there is one thing you've learnt as a player or a coach/ manager that you want to share with our junior players and parents, what would that be? One thing I would share. Life is better with sport. Get involved!

