

Business of Moving



Forever Foundation

The Western Bulldogs Forever Foundation raises funds for various projects. The Whitten Oval redevelopment is one of its projects, the aim being to build a solid and secure future for the club.

The foundation also raises funds for high intensity training equipment for the Elite Learning Centre to keep its players on top of their game.

Over the last two years, the Forever Foundation has raised over \$80,000 to supply equipment for the Elite Learning Centre. So far it has secured: recovery ice baths, GPS tracking devices, dumbbells, a speedball unit, a phoresor machine, a wobble board, fitness mats, medicine balls and accessories, a boxing ring and boxing training suite, an Olympic weight lifting platform, a spinning cycle and weight tree, a camera, DVD recorder and VCR, an indoor rower, a USB movie box, a home health care scale, ankle weights and mini trampolines, and a treatment table.

The Foundation also has a proud record of raising funds for sports development initiatives, most particularly for the youth of the Western suburbs.

For more details, go to www.westernbulldogs.com.au

History

● Whitten Oval was the Bulldogs' home for generations and remains the squad's training base and administrative headquarters.

Formerly known as the Western Oval, the ground was renamed in honour of legendary Bulldogs player and coach Ted Whitten Senior.

The Bulldogs played their last home and away match at the ground in round 21, 1997, when they took on West Coast.



LEFT: Part of the new office furnishings in the administrative building at Whitten Oval. It is hard to believe the entire fitout consists of second-hand workstations. BELOW: Bulldogs new cafe and bar opened recently. It was also fitted out with pre-loved furniture.



Underdogs to wonder Dogs

The \$35million redevelopment of Whitten Oval has been marked in history as one of the Doggies' proudest achievements, along with its 1954 Grand Final win.

The project was staged over three years, and with the completion of the Elite Learning Centre in June 2008, the Western Bulldogs now has one of the best training facilities in the league.

Elite Learning Centre

The centre, four times the size of the previous players' facility, was the first stage of the Whitten Oval redevelopment and marks a special and historic day on the club's calendar.

It houses a 30-metre running track, elite player gym, treatment and rehabilitation rooms. Meeting rooms, internet facilities and conference areas provide administrative support to the football operations.

At the official opening, Bulldogs coach Rodney Eade was quoted on the club's official website as saying the Elite Learning Centre would help bridge the gap between the Dogs and some of their financially better-off opponents.

Eade said the centre was "huge" for the Bulldogs, who have been known as one of "poorer" clubs in a league featuring wealthy clubs such as

Collingwood and Adelaide.

"It sends a big message to the competition and the doubters and I think more the supporters and the people of the west, that we're making a huge step forward and that we aren't the battlers," Eade said.

In addition to the football facilities — which include a lecture theatre — there's the refurbished E.J. Whitten stand; the club's new administrative facilities and boardroom; the John Gent stand which houses educational institutions such as Victoria University; a 105-place not-for-profit childcare centre; and a licensed café and function venue.

The final stage is a \$5.4 million community sports hall, due to open in September. The hall will house four basketball courts and two netball courts and will be used by up to 278 schools and organisations in the region.

Funding was provided by the Federal and State Governments, the AFL, the Western Bulldogs Forever Foundation, Maribyrnong City Council and supporters.

Bulldogs chief operations officer Robert Stubbs described the Whitten Oval redevelopment as "the transformation of a redundant facility to a community hub for the western region".



Bulldogs COO Robert Stubbs in the players' gymnasium.

Saving costs and the environment

As part of the refurbishment, Egans was employed to furnish the new offices, training facility and café.

Mr Stubbs said Egans "was able to understand our vision" and saved the club more than a million dollars by providing 'pre-loved' office furniture and refurbishing some of the club's more valuable assets.

"We gave Egans the architect's specifications sheet for furnishings, which included among many other items, workstations and office chairs.

"Egans was able to provide

about 80 per cent of our requirements for about one-quarter of the cost — about \$450,000 compared to estimates of between \$1.5 million and \$2 million. That's a huge savings to our club and our community, which is important because most of the money came from fundraising.

"Egans understood our requirements and constraints and were able to meet our timelines to minimize any impact on the club.

"As soon as the footy season finished, we were able to assess all the assets, auction off surplus furniture; and refurbish the valuable equipment."

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