



Media Release

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Barlow Named As Senior Coach For 2003 Football Season

Matamata Swifts Association Football Club are pleased to announce that Dwayne Barlow will take charge of the club's senior soccer team for the 2003 season. Barlow takes over from Barrie Randall after Randall chose to stand down following his four-year stint in charge of the team. Matamata will take their place in the Waikato 1st division, competing for the Simmo Trophy, a trophy named after local Soccer icon, Barry Simonsen.

Barlow looks forward to his new role with a sense of cautious optimism. "The team has grown together over the last couple of seasons to the point where we should view ourselves as genuine title contenders," said Barlow, not long after his appointment. "The challenging thing, for me, is to ensure this potential is realised."

Barlow knows he has a big job on his hands. "There are a couple of major things I want to work on with the guys," explains Barlow. "Defensively, we need to tighten up and we also need to improve tactically. My first task, however, will be attracting a few more quality players to the squad. To be truly competitive we need more depth so, over the next few months, I'll attempt to build the squad I need to win games regularly."

This will be no easy task, but Barlow has found some hope from a slightly unusual source. "I'm amazed at the amount of football talent on display every Thursday evening at the Domain. There are five or six guys playing in the club's summer 5-a-side tournament who I'd love to see at pre-season training. I hope at least some of them get a taste for the game over the summer and decide to join us next season."

The progression to senior team coach is a natural one for Barlow. "I've played the game for more than twenty years," says Barlow, "And now that I'm the wrong side of thirty it's time to look at my future in the game. I'll continue to play for as long as the body lets me, but coaching is something I've always seen myself doing. I've got some pretty strong opinions on how the game should be played and it's now time to see if I can put them into practice."

Barlow's footballing philosophy is a simple one. "Well, basically, you've got score more goals than the other team," he jokes. "Seriously, though, I like to do things properly so I'll be looking to field a team that does the basics well, with and without possession of the ball. It's also important to create an environment in which the players feel comfortable. Let's face it, there are plenty of other things they could be doing on a wet Saturday afternoon in the middle of July so it's vital to create a team structure that is sound but also gives the players the room to enjoy themselves. That'll be my aim."

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These are exciting times for soccer in New Zealand and Barlow is pleased to be part of it. "Football is booming at junior level, with over 100,000 kids now playing the game, and at senior level the profile has never been higher. Locally, Matamata AFC is in an extremely sound position, as well. The club has a great spirit, is well run and has the support of several superb sponsors," says Barlow. "About the only thing we could do with are a few more senior players, so if you've ever thought about having a go, now's the time."

Profile: Dwayne Barlow

Dwayne Barlow is a local footballing product, having learnt to play the game as a keen member of Matamata Swifts' junior section. While at Matamata College he spent four years in the school's first XI and was a member of the Trans-Tasman trophy winning side in 1989. Barlow's senior football career has included nearly a decade playing Northern League soccer for two clubs; Te Awamutu and Matamata Swifts. Professionally, Barlow has a marketing background and is currently employed in a marketing support role by Metso Minerals (Matamata).

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