



# PLAYING WITH PRIDE

## PHIL HOLMES

A SEA of colour will reflect upon the grounds of Hamilton’s Melville Oval on June 17 when the Hamilton Kangaroos share the bill with VFL women’s clubs Melbourne University and the Darebin Falcons to host a pride inclusive day with round nine of the Hampden Football League.

The home side will take on South Warrnambool on a day where equality and inclusiveness will be the ultimate message.

Equality and same sex marriage campaigner Charles Beaton started a movement two years ago after his identical twin brother Lachlan shared his ‘coming out’ story to the world.

Both men grew up near Casterton, attended Monivae College and did all the things boys from the country do.

Lachlan was 17 when he discovered he was gay, but it was not until 11 years later that he shared his sexuality with those closest to him.

Living a nightmare through that time, believing he would not be accepted if truthful about being homosexual, but realised it was a path he did not have to take alone.

Campaigning has been non-stop and now it is officially going ahead, Beaton was ecstatic at the response so far.

The day’s fixture will feature all three grades in the football with the women’s match slotting in between the reserves and seniors.

The senior match becomes a twilight game, likely to start about 5pm and finishing with the lights coming into action.

Living in Melbourne, the 35-year-old husband and father has called on the help of other predominant former locals, Western Bulldogs and Melbourne University captain Emma Kearney and popular Uncanny Annie blogger Annie Nolan.

The pair will attend the pride event, with Kearney taking the field for the women’s match and with both growing up in the region, just like Beaton, they were happy to become involved.

“It’s bloody exciting, this has all snowballed very quickly and while at first we didn’t know what direction it was going, we can now see the possibilities are boundless,” Beaton told *The Spectator*.

“We are going to be hosting an all inclusive game of football with the Hamilton Kangaroos and as a curtain raiser, a big handful of some of the best women footballers in the country, will face off for VFL women’s teams Melbourne University and the Darebin Falcons.

“Who would have thought something like this could be achieved in the country, we’ve come a long way and as a man from the area, I couldn’t be more proud.

“First step was accepting the idea and the club welcomed it with open arms. Myself, Annie and Emma have come together to make this happen and they have been so proactive helping where they can in this massive process.”

Ms Nolan, who is the wife of Western Bulldogs premierships star Liam Picken, jumped at the chance to support the idea put forward.

Growing up in the Hamilton area, she had to be involved.

“I was contacted by Charles through my blog and after chatting for a while, it was evident we shared a lot of the same beliefs, so we met for coffee and had a serious talk about where we would go in terms of this

idea,” she said.

“We then teamed up with Emma and we had an idea, three former Hamilton people hoping to bring something special to the place we all grew up.

“To be honest we didn’t know how it would be received, so we had a plan B and plan C, but plan A, which was to host this game at Melville Oval in Hamilton, had to go through.

“The response was just remarkable, they were all in, and that gave us a lot of confidence moving forward.”

A social media mogul, with 35,000 followers on Instagram and 30,000 followers on Facebook, the mother of three has the perfect platform to share the message of equality.

Blown away by the commitment of Beaton on his campaign trail, it has sparked her passion to support this cause.

“All credit must go to Charles as his campaigning for this is just inspiring. He’s a goer and I’m just so happy he asked me to become involved,” Ms Nolan said.

“For me also, while we will shine the light on the LGBTI community predominantly, all inclusive means everyone, especially in the country.

Continued: PAGE 3





04 Mar 2017  
Hamilton Spectator, Hamilton VIC

Author: Phil Holmes • Section: General News • Article type : News Item  
Audience : 4,116 • Page: 1 • Printed Size: 848.00cm<sup>2</sup> • Market: VIC • Country: Australia  
Words: 995 • Item ID: 737602298



[isentia.mediaportal](https://www.isentia.com.au)

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.

Page 2 of 3



FORMER locals Charles Beaton, Emma Kearney and Annie Nolan are the brains behind the 'pride inclusive match' to be played between Hamilton Kangaroos and South Warrnambool at Melville Oval on June 17. In a huge coup, a VFL women's match between Melbourne University and Darebin Falcons will act as the curtain-raiser on the day. Photo: EMMA PHILLIPS.



04 Mar 2017

Hamilton Spectator, Hamilton VIC

Author: Phil Holmes • Section: General News • Article type : News Item

Audience : 4,116 • Page: 1 • Printed Size: 848.00cm<sup>2</sup> • Market: VIC • Country: Australia

Words: 995 • Item ID: 737602298



 isentia.mediaportal

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.

Page 3 of 3

# Playing with pride in the country

From: PAGE 1

“There’s not just one anecdote, it’s not just the attitudes, there’s a number of issues that fall under this banner.

“It’s about gender inclusion, it’s about women’s rights, it’s about the rights of a kid in the country, the lack of resources that are afforded to school leavers from the country too...it’s about

everyone equally getting a fair go, getting opportunities.”

It is full steam ahead for the growing committee with just 14 weeks until the day comes along.

Again, Beaton said it was important the message continued to be relayed through as many channels as possible.

“This momentum that has followed my twin brother Lachie

publicly coming out, after he battled with telling his family and friends he was gay and hiding it for 11 years, it’s truly amazing,” he said.

“We are out there trying to let those that feel isolated and scared to be open about their sexuality, that it is okay, you will be accepted.

“This is so much more prevalent in the country areas and this day we have planned is going to be a big step in the right direction, creating more awareness and understanding for those that feel alone.

“We want to send a strong message and we are going to be doing just that.”