

New Gawler Rangers head coach Dylan Child with club Life Member Barry O'Brien after confirmation the club had secured Division One status for next season.
PHOTO: Rob Laidlaw



POWER RANGERS

Gawler gains Division 1 status

INSET: Dylan Child in his playing days with the former Adelaide Bite baseball club.

PHOTO: Supplied

ROBERT LAIDLAW

IN a coup for Gawler sports, Gawler Rangers Baseball Club has been promoted to the top level of Baseball SA's competition for the 2023-24 season.

The accomplishment has been heralded a success off the back of the redevelopment of Karbeethan Reserve, which includes the upgrade of facilities to accommodate a Division One baseball team.

And in further exciting news for the club, Dylan Child has accepted the challenge of leading the Rangers into their historic inaugural top flight baseball campaign.

Child has played professional baseball in America in the Pittsburgh Pirates organisation, suited up for

Adelaide in the Australian Baseball League, while also amassing almost 500 Division One games with Woodville and Goodwood.

"My aim is to create the best possible opportunity for baseball to grow in the northern suburbs," the new Rangers coach said.

"I grew up in the north, and my mum and dad have been heavily involved with baseball and softball in the area, so it means so much to me to give something back here.

"It's about supporting up and coming baseballers, especially the juniors coming through the club – to give them the best opportunity."

Child brings a wealth of knowledge to the club, with his strategic understanding of the game

and the type of structures he can put in place, giving the Rangers every opportunity to succeed at the highest level.

Another important aspect of the appointment of Child to the role is for his vision in regards to the off-field culture, with a focus on family and the encouragement to grow the sport of baseball in the region.

"We are looking at creating an atmosphere for my kids, my friend's kids and all baseball families in the north to be part of something exciting," he said.

"I want to help create a promising future for them to continue in the game and pass on their love of baseball to future generations."

When the club started in 2007,

it realised a long-term dream for club Life Member Barry O'Brien, who had been looking to establish a baseball club in Gawler for more than 20 years.

O'Brien had coached Division One baseball at Central Districts and Adelaide, as well as promoting the sport through his work as a photographer at *The Advertiser*.

Initially when the club started, O'Brien was hoping to achieve Division One baseball in Gawler within a decade but it has taken a little longer.

"I always had hoped to see Gawler with a Division One team from the start," he said.

"Only one team had been promoted to Division One baseball

over the past 40 years, and even that was more than 30 years ago.

"It's been a lot of hard work by many dedicated people at the club, so to finally gain promotion to the top level is very satisfying.

"We have a wonderful coach, who I believe will lead us to greater glory within a few short years.

"The club is well placed to be a great central area, to accommodate the Barossa, the Riverland, Port Pirie and the Adelaide Plains – a huge base to draw from."

And the timing could not be better for O'Brien.

He has two grandsons, Wyatt and Link Ryan, who both could be starters in the inaugural Division One baseball team.

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