

= Tom Hawkins (footballer) =

Thomas Jack Hawkins (born 21 July 1988) is an Australian rules footballer for the Geelong Football Club in the Australian Football League (AFL) . The eldest son of former Geelong champion Jack Hawkins , he was drafted by Geelong under the father @-@ son draft rule and wears the number 26 jumper . He plays as a center half @-@ forward or a full @-@ forward .

= = Early life = =

Hawkins was born in Finley , New South Wales to Jack and Jenny Hawkins . He grew up in the New South Wales region of Finley as the middle child among three other siblings . He attended Finley High School and played for the Finley Football Club before making the move south of the border to begin boarding at Melbourne Grammar School . Hawkins ' footballing ability was recognised early on when he was selected to play 1st XVIII football for the school whilst still in Year 10 , when many of his teammates were completing their final year of schooling at Year 12 . Hawkins kicked four goals on debut for the school and his performances up forward soon received attention from AFL recruiting teams . By the time he had reached his final school year he was rewarded with joint captaincy of the football team alongside Hawthorn draftee Xavier Ellis . He was also selected in the Associated Public Schools (APS) team to play the Associated Grammar School (AGS) selected football team in the traditional annual clash of schools , where he won best on ground honours for his performance .

Having gained permission to join local U / 18 club the Sandringham Dragons for numerous games during the season , Hawkins impressed in his limited appearances within the elite TAC Cup competition , highlighted by a 22 disposal , 9 mark , and 5 goal effort in just his third game . In 2006 , he was awarded an AIS / AFL Academy Scholarship as part of the 9th intake . The scholarship , awarded to outstanding young athletes entering the last year of their junior football development , saw Hawkins participate in several training camps , capped off with representation for Australia in the U / 18 International Rules Series , before completing his summer training with the Geelong Football Club .

In the mid @-@ year of 2006 , Hawkins was selected to play in the 2006 Under 18 's National Championships , lining up at full forward for Vic Metro . A best on ground performance which yielded 12 marks and 6 goals in the opening match against South Australia began a wave of unprecedented hype and attention , with Hawkins drawing comparisons to Brisbane Lion Jonathan Brown and leading Vic Metro coach David Dickson to declare the young forward as " the best footballer I 've seen ... since Chris Judd " . Hawkins was awarded the Larke Medal as the MVP within Division 1 and named as the tournament 's All @-@ Australian full @-@ forward , just falling short of the all @-@ time contested marking record held by Justin Koschitzke .

Hawkins has established a reputation as one of the brightest young key forward prospects in the game , where his man @-@ boy physique and unusual combination of size , strength , and footballing ability have impressed many . Former Carlton coach Dennis Pagan was famously moved to compare him to legendary Swans full @-@ forward Tony Lockett after his debut game .

= = AFL career = =

Hawkins was officially selected by Geelong in the 2006 AFL Draft under the father @-@ son rule . Whilst many pundits lauded him as the best key position prospect within the draft , and felt Hawkins ' junior performances warranted possible selection with the top overall pick , the father @-@ son rules at the time only required the Cats to use a middle @-@ tier 3rd round pick to draft him . The subsequent controversy over what was widely acknowledged as a bargain gain for the Cats led to the AFL amending the father @-@ son ruling for future use .

With a reputation as one of the finest young tall forwards in the land , Hawkins was immediately billed as the successor to the legendary Gary Ablett , whose retirement 10 years earlier had left a gaping hole in the Cats ' forward line . A stress reaction injury to his right leg , however , halted

Hawkins ' pre @-@ season , forcing his much @-@ awaited debut in Geelong colours to take place in the VFL side .

Hawkins made his highly anticipated debut for the Geelong seniors in Round 2 of the 2007 season against Carlton . Opposed to Carlton Captain Lance Whitnall , Hawkins impressed with 3 goals and several strong marks in the Cats ' 78 @-@ point victory , prompting Carlton coach Denis Pagan to label him the next Tony Lockett . Other revered media figures , such as Gerard Healy and David Parkin , were moved enough to describe the debut as the best first @-@ up performance in recent memory . Uncommonly for AFL debutants , he followed up with an even more impressive performance in his second game , kicking 4 first half goals to help set up a victory against Melbourne at the MCG , earning the AFL Rising Star nomination for Round 3 in the process .

Question marks , however , were raised over his fitness and ability to run out entire games , and after 9 games in his debut season , which saw him boot 12 goals , Hawkins saw out the rest of the year with the clubs ' VFL side . There , Hawkins helped the Cats ' reach the VFL Grand Final for the second successive year , booting 3 goals as the Cats defeated the Coburg Tigers to claim their first VFL Premiership since 2002 .

Hawkins participated in the 2009 AFL Grand Final alongside other father / son selections Gary Ablett , Matthew Scarlett and Mark Blake . Hawkins scored 2 goals in the game to help Geelong defeat St Kilda by 12 points and capture the 2009 AFL premiership . (One of those goals was notably controversial , as it was ruled as such after it had bounced off a goal post ; under the rules of Australian football , such a kick should have been ruled a behind .)

Hawkins played in the 2011 AFL Grand Final , finishing the day with 19 disposals , 9 marks and three goals to win his second premiership medallion . Hawkins played a prominent role in Geelong 's victory and was awarded five votes for the Norm Smith Medal , coming third behind Jimmy Bartel (13 votes) and Joel Selwood (9 votes) .

In 2012 , Hawkins had a break out year , kicking 62 goals to finish equal second in the Coleman Medal , and became perhaps Geelong 's most valuable player . Undoubtedly the highlight of his year was a match in Round 19 when he kicked a goal after the siren (one of six for the night) to deliver the Cats a memorable two @-@ point win over their rivals , Hawthorn . The win was Geelong 's ninth straight victory over the Hawks since losing to them in the 2008 AFL Grand Final . His emergence was rewarded with selection in the 2012 All @-@ Australian side , and the 2012 Carji Greeves Medal for being Geelong 's " best and fairest " player over the 2012 season .

In 2013 , a back injury hampered Hawkins ' start to the year , forcing him to miss one match and limiting his usually dominant form in others . However , he still managed to regularly kick goals , accumulating 15 by the end of Round 7 .

= = Statistics = =

Statistics are correct to the end of the 2015 season

= = Personal life = =

As well as his father , Hawkins ' uncles , Michael Hawkins and Robb Hawkins , and his maternal grandfather , Fred Le Deux , all played football for Geelong .

= = = Nickname = = =

Hawkins ' famous nickname ' Tomahawk ' , is a play on his first name and surname , with references to a tomahawk axe or tomahawk missile , and has proven a popular calling card within the league .