

Congratulations to Elodie de Wit (Year 9) who has been selected in the Crows Academies NGA Girls program and played her first match last week. We spoke to Elodie about her experience:

**What inspired you to participate in AFL?**

I love AFL, and I have since I was 5 years old. I love how close a team can get over a season of playing footy together. It is a great feeling when someone gets a goal, and everyone supports them. Another reason I participate in AFL is because I have made so many friends from other schools, sport is the best opportunity to do this.

**Have you enjoyed the Crows academy?**

Yes. I have loved the experience in the Crows Academy. I have loved being able to play with a bunch of girls that are so committed and love AFL. It is a great feeling when everyone is so focused and enjoying what they are doing. At the end of a session, we all feel proud, and we support one another. Even though, it is tough, I look forward to it so much on a Friday afternoon because everyone makes it so fun.

**What is your favourite thing about the academy?**

My favourite thing about the Academy is when we can go on the oval and actually do footy. It is a wonderful sport; I love the intensity and pressure you feel when you step on the footy field. I love doing footy drills because I am getting taught by professional coaches and they give me positive feedback and things I can work on.

**What does the academy consist of?**

We get to training 15 minutes before and kick with a partner. We then have a chat about a topic, each week it is different. It could be sleep, nutrition, social media, or game play. We then do AFL warm up exercises that prevent injuries. The things we do in a training vary from week to week. For example, we might go out on the oval and do 3 sub drills and, then come back inside and do gym work and then if it is really hard session we will go in the pool for recovery.

**What have you learnt from the Crows Academy?**

I have learnt so much from being in the Crows Academy. Of course, I have learnt how to improve my game of footy, but I have also learnt about the importance of nutrition and sleep. Food and sleep are the 2 most important factors to success. You need to fuel your body and give your body lots of rest before a big game.

**Has the academy supplied you with many opportunities in the AFL industry?**

I think being a part of this Academy has allowed me to spend time with and work alongside Adelaide Crows coaches and the players that are the best in my age group. It is a high-level skill competition which has allowed me to improve my skills.

**Would you suggest other girls get involved in Academies such as the one you are participating in?**

You get selected to be involved in most Academies. So, if girls want to be in Academies, then I would suggest practicing a lot and make sure you are committed to the sport. Another thing I have learnt in Academies is, skill is not the most important thing they look for when deciding the Academy. It is about your attitude to learn and your commitment towards the coaches and girls in your team. I think it is a great learning experience for all girls, but first you must get there.

