

FORMER BLUES PLAYERS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Marie Davies



JAMES PRITCHARD

WING / FULL BACK

2001-03 & 2006-16. 268 APPEARANCES. 2,892 POINTS.

You will not be surprised to know that I am often asked if I know how 'Pritch' and his family are getting on in Australia. So, I think it is time for an update on a true Bedford Blues legend and his family.

James's unbelievable playing stats.

Bedford Blues Career

- 268 appearances
- In 2010-11, he became the only Bedford player to score more than 400 points in a season.
- He is Bedford's highest points scorer ever - 2,892.
- One of only seven players to serve as captain for four seasons.
- Won the Followers Association Player of the Year three times.
- In 2013, he was named Bedford's Sports Personality of the Year.
- The most capped international while a Bedford player.

Canada - International career

- 62 appearances
- Points scored - 607, an all-time Canada record.
- Featured at three Rugby World Cups (2003 Australia, 2007 France & 2011 New Zealand).
- Also played in the Sevens Rugby World Cup (Dubai 2009).



On 15th July 2019, we said farewell to Blues' rugby legend James Pritchard. James announced his retirement from playing after ending his career at Ampthill and his kicking skills undoubtedly contributed to Ampthill's promotion to National One.

James, Jenni, and their lovely children Lucas, Hayden and Hunter, returned to James' homeland of Australia. They enjoyed a holiday stopover in Bali to celebrate James' 40th birthday, before leaving for Sydney to stay with his parents. The plan was to eventually fly to Queensland and settle on the Gold Coast.

Now is the time to catch up with them more than six years later.



TEAM PHOTO. CAPTAIN PRITCH.

By January 2020, they had moved to Brisbane, where they settled into their new house and Jenni had found a teaching position.

We have always kept in touch, but I contacted them at the beginning of December to have a proper update.

We will start with James' working life now. Does it involve rugby? Of course it does!

James writes:

I'm currently working with both the Queensland Rugby Union and the Queensland Reds. With the Reds, I have been coaching in the Academy and the U18s programme for the last few years. I've also been the Head Coach of the Reds U18s during that time. I have also been involved with the GPS Rugby Club in the Hospital Cup competition, working as an assistant coach in their Premier Grade setup. My other job with the Queensland Rugby Union is as Schools Programme Manager, where I look after all the school competitions across Queensland. That keeps me pretty busy all year round!

And Jenni...

I am a sports teacher, and I also still teach aerobics. Both James and I have had the same jobs since we arrived here. We live in Redlands, Brisbane, which is near the sea. It is warm here all year round, which we love.

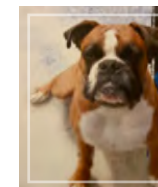
Since we moved here, my parents and a few guys from the Bedford gym have come over to visit. At the moment, we don't have any plans to visit the UK.

And...the three Pritchard children.
How do they enjoy life in Australia?

Lucas will be sixteen in February and enjoys swimming and playing rugby, but he is also really into refereeing. He is enjoying it and already moving up the ranks, so he could be one to watch if he keeps progressing. Hayden is fourteen and doing well. She loves horses and spends most weekends working at

a stable, teaching younger children how to ride and generally looking after the horses. Hunter is eight and keeping us on our toes, as you would expect!

Everyone who supported the Blues when Pritch played will remember his dog Monty, who was also a club legend. Monty was ever-present at the training sessions and was spoiled by everyone. Biscuits and treats were always available.



So I asked the question... 'Have you any pets?' I think I already knew the answer! 'Yes, two dogs called Nova and Iggy!'

We send our best wishes to James, Jenni, and their family, and hope they will continue to enjoy a successful and happy life in Australia.

To finish: James's words when asked in his Testimonial Year what Bedford Blues meant to him: 'The simple answer is family. I have grown not only to like Bedford Blues, but to love every single aspect of this fantastic club that I have had the pleasure of representing for ten years of my professional career.'

