



Adam is an ambassador for C Coconut Water, and Hooroo travel. You can follow Adam on Twitter @adamcoopy

ADAM ASHLEY-COOPER

FROM TRIES TO TEA, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

This season's Super 15 Rugby competition is done and dusted and Adam Ashley-Cooper is not looking back. One of Australia's hottest rugby union players, with 95 Super Rugby caps under his belt, has secured his place with the Qantas Wallabies for the international season. Popular in the media not only for his talent but also his personal life, Adam's versatility on the field has him playing several key back line positions.

Making his professional debut with the ACT Brumbies eight years ago, Adam joined the Waratahs this season on a two-year contract. He says it's refreshed his game and is a bit

like starting again with a clean slate. 'I've been excited by the potential of experiencing a new city and a new team for a while, so with that excitement it creates new motivation. It's very important to maintain motivation in a competition like this.'

As the Super Rugby Series has continued to expand with more teams joining the competition over the last few years, so too has the length of the playing season. With higher physical and mental demands on professional players, especially on those also playing internationally, there's obviously more pressure to stay focused and motivated from season to season. 'It's important



to find little bits to stay motivated. For me, that's achieving balance outside the game, which is doing what I enjoy away from rugby, whether it's going for a surf or catching up with friends for a coffee,' says Adam.

After such a long stint with the same club, joining a new team and moving to a new city, literally being the new kid on the block must have its drawbacks. 'It's part of the game and it's part of the business. There's a lot of turnover from players year to year and that's just what it is in the modern day game. It's a contractual process so players arrive and players' leave. I just happen to be one of those players who has just arrived,' he says.

Adam admits that rugby isn't about glitz and glam but, rather, is a fulltime seven-day-a-week job. 'You could call it nine to five. Sometimes we arrive on a Monday or a Tuesday at 8am in the morning and we won't leave until 4pm or 5pm in the afternoon.'

At 28, he's well rehearsed and knowledgeable about the importance of health and nutrition. 'My weight training keeps me fairly sharp, as does my diet. Early on in my career they [coaches] get a few nutritionists in to lecture us on the do's and don'ts of food



YOU CAN'T TAKE IT FOR GRANTED AS IT DOESN'T LAST FOREVER, YOU'VE JUST GOT TO ENJOY IT.

intake, so I learned pretty quickly.'

'Because we play a different team each week our training will slightly change as we tailor our strategy for the game plan, which takes into consideration the opposition's weaknesses and strengths. But at the end of the day, you want to focus on



yourself rather than the opposition.' And on match day what's the worst that can happen? 'I think the only fear you have is fear of failing. Letting your teammates down, letting the fans down, and letting yourself down by not executing or not playing well.'

With such an intense first half of the year, playing almost every weekend, a lot of backs are getting injured. Although a lot of preparation goes into preventing injury in a contact sports, Adam says that 'you can't prevent injuries – it's just bad luck. It's part of the game so you've got to accept it. I guess in a way you have to physically prepare for the game and put your body in the best physical condition to get through

80 minutes and that's got a lot to do with rehab, recovery and preparation. In a way, physically if you're in a good space, so is your head.'

Currently Australia has a plethora of talented back three players to choose from, so Wallaby selection can be tough. Having to contend with the skills of Lachie Turner, Drew Mitchell, James O'Conner and Kurtley Beale, Adam confesses that competing with these guys brings out the best in him. 'I'm on 67 caps, so I've run out 67 times in the national jersey which has been great; but I hope to get a few more towards the end of the year,' he says.

The Rugby Championship, formally known as the Tri-Nations Cup, has Argentina join New Zealand, South Africa and Australia in the competition this year. And if all goes well, Adam will be heading to Argentina with the Wallabies for the match on 7 October - 'that'll be exciting,' he adds.

As George Gregan and Phil Waugh dabble in the wine bar scene in Neutral Bay (Sydney), Adam has a taste for tea. In fact, he enjoys drinking tea so much he is teaming up with a Canberra-based business partner to develop a boutique tea range from Sri Lanka called Boutea. They are hoping to have it stocked in cafes and high-end retail outlets but, predominantly, are looking at a strong online presence. As they say, everyone has at least two careers in them per lifetime!

TONI KRASICKI

Toni has 22 years' experience in the fitness industry and has been lugging her backpack to many corners of the world for just as long. She is a freelance writer and can be contacted at tkrasicki@hotmail.com or via www.adventuregirlwrites.com