

Scott Laird The Big Interview For Exeter & Cardiff City Programme

Liam Drury spoke with player-assistant manager Scott Laird about how pre-season has changed over the course of his playing career.

Hi Scott. Pre-season again. Are you looking forward to it?

Yeah, it's lovely. I don't think anybody looks forward to pre-season but they also do look forward to it, if that makes sense. Everyone is nervous, fearful of what's happening, what running you're going to be doing, but you have to put in the hard yards to start with as there's always going to be a football involved with me and the gaffer. It's going to be a slog, but you have to be fit at whatever level of football you play. Football's a hard game, it's amazing to watch and play but the total aspect is being fit. If you ask any football player when you break it down, that feeling of being knackered after the first couple pre-season sessions is a wonderful feeling in a weird way. Calves screaming, quads screaming because you know you've worked hard.

In the last 17 years, how has pre-season changed?

It hasn't really changed, details have. When I first started at 16 years old, 17 years ago, there were no pods, no GPS to track you, it was more or less just pounding the roads, getting in the forests at Plymouth, running round. It's more technical now, the runs have changed, it's not run until you drop, it's how you run now, distances, speeds, scientifically it's all changed in that regard. I've been lucky to go through that transition from the end of the old school era if you want to call it that and into the new scientific era. I think each to their own, there's no right or wrong, it's how you feel comfortable and as long as we're fighting fit, ready to run on 14th August, that's the main thing.

How important is pre-season now in getting ready for 14th August?

It's been a horrible two years, we've not completed a season. That first season, we started slow, ended really well. Last season, we played six league games so you can't judge a season off that. Yes we started slow, but it was six league games so it's hard to judge. Everybody's going to be doing the same this year. Be as fit as you can. This is the most honest league I've played in through my career, people run for 95-96 minutes and there's some technically gifted footballers at this level who haven't progressed up the leagues for a number of reasons. It's a tough league and what we've found is that you have to be fit. You've got to be fit for 100 minutes at this level.