

# New Member Profile

**VGCSA Trade member:** Taylor Willis  
IRRIGATION PRECISION AUSTRALIA PTY LTD



## Staff Structure

Adrian Camba: Company Director/Principal  
Taylor Willis: Senior Technician  
Sally Bourne: Manager – Finance & Operations

## Tell us about your background in the Industry. How did you start out and why did you choose your career path?

I moved to Melbourne from Darwin in 2009 at the age of 18 to pursue a golfing career. After four years of training to become a professional golfer, I had to accept that this wasn't going to eventuate and that I needed to find work and pursue a different career.

As I still maintained a passion for golf, I applied for a job at Riversdale Golf Club and, in 2013, started working there on a casual basis. Shortly thereafter, I was given the opportunity by David Mason to learn Sports Turf Management and so I commenced my apprenticeship. When David moved on to Metropolitan Golf Club, I continued to learn at Riversdale under the expert guidance of Travis Scott. Looking back at this time in my life, I realise how privileged I was to learn from David and Travis, and I have them to thank for helping me to develop the work ethic I have today.



Six months after completing my apprenticeship, I moved to Kew Golf Club and became a Foreman. With a view to one day becoming a Superintendent, I undertook Sports Turf Management classes at Melbourne Polytechnic, achieving my Diploma in 2019. I enjoyed my studies and furthering my knowledge with the hands-on work at Kew.

## How long have you been working at Irrigation Precision?

Still with a thirst for knowledge and wanting to develop my skills in the industry, when an opportunity became available in 2019 to join Irrigation Precision Australia, I began to rethink my career path knowing that I could learn a lot from Adrian with his years of experience. I understand the importance of irrigation to turf managers in that they need to be able to rely on their system, especially during the warmer months, and thought this could be a good opportunity for me. I was successful in my application and so began my training as an Irrigation Technician.

Adrian has taught me a great deal to date but I know that there is and always will be more to learn - but that's something I thrive on. With my background in Sports Turf Management, the great thing is that I'm able to teach Adrian things too and we have formed a great working relationship. I really feel that with my previous work experience and what I am learning now, I am adding value to the industry as a whole - and



giving something back to the industry that has given so much to me.



**Give us an overview of your day to day role at work.**

The question is not easy for me to answer as the work is extremely varied from a day to day basis. For example, we could be installing an irrigation system at a golf course, council sporting field in a community park, school oval, or any area that requires a commercial irrigation system.

It's not uncommon to receive a phone call in the early hours of the morning because we have had an S.O.S. from a golf course Superintendent who has had a blow out or is experiencing an emergent problem with their irrigation system that they need to have rectified ASAP.

I suppose, one of the first things we do when assessing the work to be done is to identify the irrigation manufacturer (i.e. Toro, Rain Bird, Hunter), then what type of system is being used (i.e. Decoder, IC, Satellite Electric/Hydraulic). From there, what are the works to be done; installation, repairs, wire tracking or general problem solving to achieve effective watering. It's a process and something that Adrian has drummed into me from the start. There are steps that must be taken; we don't cut corners in order to get a job done quickly; the steps must be adhered to in order to achieve the desired result. To quote Adrian, "My father always said to me – measure twice, cut once." I have to say that this has been sound advice, not just from a

work situation but also in my personal life. It's the whole 'you need to have a plan' philosophy.

I have been surprised by how diverse and technical working in irrigation is as there are so many different applications and appliances that can be used. Some days I'll be neck deep in mud, doing a rubber ring mainline repair or a solvent weld repair for PVC Pipe and, other days, I could be working with poly; doing mechanical or fusion welding. Some days I might be on one of our Ditch-Witches; open trenching, mole ploughing or root pruning. We also perform general system maintenance, service heads and complete entire system audits. It's always different and always interesting.

Adrian and I constantly need to effectively communicate with each other, especially when wire tracking and/or identifying ground leakage for control systems. This is especially important during identification of underground services (e.g. 240v, gas, fibre optic). I can be at the same location for many days but also find that I can be working during the space of a week in the Mornington Peninsula region, Gippsland, the Yarra Ranges then Eastern Victoria.

Some days are harder than others, however, there is nothing more rewarding than when we've spent long hours restoring effective watering to an irrigation system, especially during the heat of summer - knowing that, if it wasn't for the work we were doing, the golf course Superintendent could have real concerns for the health of the turf.

As previously mentioned, I spent six years working on golf courses and understand how paramount it is to have an irrigation system working to design. I realise the importance of what I am doing in helping sports turf managers achieve this and have confidence in their system.

**Most pleasing/rewarding moment during your career so far?**

I have had many great opportunities during my working career so far. The highlights of my green keeping career are: being selected to work as grounds staff during the 2016 World Cup of Golf; the 2018 Australian Open and 2019 Presidents Cup. Being able to work to such high standards and expectations, alongside some of the industry greats, is something I will always be grateful for.

In irrigation, being able to problem solve and having the system up and running is what I find the most rewarding. It allows me to leave the job with a sense of achievement.

## **OFF THE JOB**

**Age 28**

### **Family**

Recently married and we have two fur babies.

### **Hobbies & Interests**

All things sport - whether I am watching or playing, I enjoy all sports.

I love camping and the outdoors and have recently purchased a barbeque with a meat smoker. I really enjoy learning and understanding which cuts of meat work best and imparting subtle flavours with different aromatic wood chips.

### **Greatest sporting moments**

The Hawthorn 3-peat 2013, 2014 and 2015.  
Seeing the GOAT, Tiger Woods, play live in 2019 at the Presidents Cup.

### **Favourite Golfers**

Tiger Woods- his composure at every shot is enviable.

Miguel Jimenez- he has swagger!

Adrian Camba – for making me look like a better golfer than I am (haha).

