

Investment and financial management



Former NRL stars **Robbie Farah (top)** and **Johnathan Thurston** have signed on for **BPC Asset Management**, which is offering clients bespoke investment in assets including renewables.



Investors get more than sporting chance

For former NSW Blues captain and Wests Tigers stalwart Robbie Farah, rugby league success created an unexpected problem: figuring out how to manage the sudden influx of money that comes from a high-profile career in the NRL.

"I've seen it firsthand, where players not only don't have the support to manage their finances, but it's just not something they're thinking about, so early in their lives and careers," Farah says. "You're out of school, straight into a professional career and you live in a world where you're presented with a whole bunch of money, and you think it's going to last forever."

The reality is that a professional athlete's career can be short, with many reaching retirement aged 30 or 35, decades before professionals in most other industries. "It's paramount for sportspeople to integrate financial security into their career development. Asset management allows athletes to obtain financial security and wealth creation into retirement, which mitigates pressures as they enter the next phase of life."

Together with fellow rugby league great Johnathan Thurston, Farah has joined Barclay Pearce Capital (BPC) Asset Management. "You're never taught about asset management, which causes a lack of knowledge regarding finance and wealth creation," Thurston says. "As a professional athlete, your career is short and you spend most of your time focused on perfecting your field, missing potential pathways to financial security and creating wealth for retirement."

BPC has traditionally specialised in providing services to privately owned businesses and small to medium-sized ASX-listed companies, but is set

to diversify with the launch of an asset management offering in February 2023 with a specific focus on professional athletes.

BPC Asset Management will offer services to all kinds of high-net-worth investors, not just professional athletes, board member Kenn MacMillan explains. "We wanted to transform ourselves from just providing transactional advice to investors, to providing a more holistic approach. We will be providing investment advice to sophisticated and wholesale investors."

BPC Asset Management is taking a core/satellite approach to its offering, with the aim of giving clients a combination of core portfolio security and the option to apply an environmental, social and governance (ESG) theme or other approaches to investing. Approximately 80 per cent of investors' funds will be invested in large-cap stocks with robust structures and tried and true investment themes, with the remaining 20 per cent invested in alternative asset classes, according to the client's interests.

"These might be green funds, hydrogen funds or specific investments in wind or solar farms. We want to create something bespoke for our clients, that they're not able to access otherwise," MacMillan says.

"We want to create that niche for ourselves, so that we are at the forefront of those investment themes, and bringing those themes to our clients, in a way that is managed by our professional portfolio managers."

BPC is prioritising bringing managed funds and separately managed accounts to Australian investors in areas they may not otherwise be able



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Kenn MacMillan

to access, such as alternative investments. "We're also investigating developing our own funds, and working with fund managers that invest in the hydrogen space and renewable energies, for example."

To help position itself at the forefront of cutting-edge trends in investment overseas, BPC Asset Management has set up an office in the UK and is laying the groundwork to open in parts of

Asia as well. MacMillan has spent more than 30 years working across a number of international investment banks including Merrill Lynch and UBS, and has seen firsthand the evolution of asset management over that time.

"It's critical to investors, and the performance of their portfolio, to ensure that their money is managed by professionals who can offer diversification across geographies and sectors. We're giving them access to thematics they might not otherwise have access to."

Joining MacMillan on the board are Trent Primmer, BPC's director of trading, and Ben Weber, BPC's chief investment officer, who have 40-plus years' of combined experience in financial services with successful track records.

MacMillan has spent the bulk of 2022 in Europe, where he says ESG-focused investing is more advanced than in Australia.

"It's not to say that there isn't a focus on it, and I can see Australia evolving in the same direction. But in order to list on the London Stock Exchange or be an investment manager here, if ESG isn't part of your mandate – and something that's not just hyperbole, but a policy with follow-through – then you will be measured on it."

Having an office in London has also enabled BPC Asset Management to develop relationships that will ultimately benefit clients back home.

"Part of our work here in London at the moment is developing relationships with fund managers who investors in Australia wouldn't normally otherwise get to access. We'll bring some of those funds to Australia, in Australian dollars, which will help provide a unique service for our investors."

ASSET MANAGEMENT LAUNCH

FEBRUARY 2023

BPC understands you have worked hard to build your nest egg and our Asset Management business is tailored to suit your needs.



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