

2003 Still Team Building

Alexandra were still under the stable leadership team led by Ray Steyger and David McLaurin with S. Costly as Treasurer, On the field George Steiner continued as coach.

Alex. had recruited well with the following new players Peter Boyd, Michael Bretherton, Paul Francis, Steven Nichol and David Oakley adding some experience.

After a practice match against Yarra Junction, Alex. were at home to Yea for the opening game of the season and were very competitive against last year's runners-up, particularly in the first half. The Tigers regrouped after the break and aided by Alex's inaccuracy (2.14) ran out comfortable winners. 15.20 to 10.17 Incentive awards were given to Tim Bayard, Michael Bretherton, , Brian Ward, Paul Francis Luke Ware, Chris Mullins and David Oakley.

Alexandra's first trip away for the season was to Dookie where the home side were just a little bit steadier in a tight last quarter and were able to kick late goals to seal the game 12.12 to Alex's 7.11. Best: Neil Oakley, Michael Bretherton and Steve Nichol. Incentive Award winners were Paul Francis, Peter Boyd, Cory Jack, Brad Kidd and Chris Mullins.

After the break for Easter, Alex. was home to Shepp. East on April 26th and had to make five changes to the side. Alex as usual took the game up to their opponents early but seven unanswered Bomber goals in the second quarter virtually sealed the game. Alex. tried hard after half time but their forward efforts did not have the system of the visitors who won easily 4.0 – 11.5 – 17.10 - 24.14. 15.8 to 5.3 – 5.6 – 9.9 - 13.10.88. Awards: Cory Jack, Tim Bayard, Aaron Heard, Chris Mullins, Carl Snow and Brian Ward.

Round 4 was a trip to Violet Town on May 3rd where the Rebels started well with good pressure and strong tackling to lead narrowly at half time. Violet Town kicked away in the third term and although Alex fought back in the last, the home side never looked like losing with 13.18 to Alex. 7.10. Best: Michael Bretherton, Cory Jack and Brad Kidd with other incentive awards going to Tim Bayard, Peter Hoornweg and Jason Krijt.

Alexandra were on the road again for round 5, this time to Benalla where the Rebels enjoyed their first away win for a couple of years. Although again having to make many changes the Rebels were never threatened and won by over 20 goals 24.26 to 5.4. Alex. had plenty of options up forward and converted much better than in recent weeks. Best: Michael Bretherton again was the major vote-getter in the game and was now equal leader in the Neil Beer Award on 11 votes. Young Neil Oakley had settled into senior football well and Adam McDonald was also in good touch. Luke Ware, Jarrod Ackerman, Brad Kidd, and Chris Mullins led the other incentive award winners.

The stage was set for the "Local Premiership" clash with each club coming off recent wins against Benalla All Blacks. The game lived up to expectations as each team gave their all in a fast and exciting match. The visitors got on top early but the Rebels fought back to be in touch at the main break. Alex. led by 8 points at the last change and kicked 6 goals to 5 in the last qtr. to win by 13 points 20.11 to 18.10. in one of the best games between these old rivals for many years. Amongst the Incentive Award winners were Brad Kidd, Michael Gleeson, Cory Jack, Adam McDonald, Chris Mullins and Neil Oakley.

After consecutive wins for the first time since 2000, Alex. were on the road to Mercury Drive where the reigning premier, Rumbalara soon brought the Rebels back to earth. Rumbalara controlled the ball, marking and hand-balling to running players who delivered accurately to leading forwards. The Rebels never gave in but were chasing tails all day as Rumbalara

increased their lead as the game progressed winning 30.18 to only 6.7. Incentive Awards were given to Brad Kidd, Paul Francis, Peter, Hoornweg, Cory Jack Jason Krijt and Neil Oakley. Another trip the following week, this time the much shorter trip to Yea for round 8 saw the same result as the previous week, thumped by one of the better teams. After leading at quarter time it was all Yea as the Tigers took complete control to win going away. 19.9 to 7.13. Incentive Awards recipients were Luke Ware, Brad Kidd, Cory Jack, Michael Bretherton Daniel Wales and Chris Mullins.

Round 9 on the Queen's Birthday Monday saw the Rebels host top side Dookie and put in a much better effort than in the past two games but still miss out on the points. 13.2 to 13.15. Best were Stephen Nichol (3), Neil Oakley, Michael Bretherton, Brad Kidd, Cory Jack (2) and Chris Mullins. George Steiner also kicked 3 goals and Adam McDonald 2.

On the Saturday the CGFL 9.8 were again defeated by the Kyabram F.L. 18.8 whilst Neil Oakley played well in the under 17 side that also lost to the KDFL. Zack Heaslip and Beau O'Brien were amongst the best players in the under 14s win with Zack winning an award on the day.

At the half way mark of the season, despite recruiting some good players, Alex had only won the two games and needed to do better to have any chance of playing finals.

Alexandra next travelled to Shepparton East and as had often happened this season kept pace with the better opposition for a half only to be run over in the second half. After leading by a point at half time the Bombers kicked 16 goals to 3 to win easily 22.13 to 9.12. Michael Bretherton, Adam McDonald and Cory Jack got the Neil Beer award votes whilst Paul Francis, Brad Kidd and David Oakley were amongst the Incentive Award winners.

Alex. were next home to Violet Town and were competitive for most of the game but allowed the "Townners" seven goals to one in the third qtr. to set up a match winning lead. Alex. came back in the last qtr, but were still well short on the final siren 12.10 to 16.12. Steve Nichol, Michael Bretherton and George Steiner won the Neil Beer votes along with Paul Francis, Aiden Gale, Cory Jack, Brad Kidd, Chris Mullins and Neil Oakley accepting Incentive Awards.

Round 12 on July 5th was a home game for the Rebels who were hosts to Benalla All Blacks who were having a season to forget. Things did not get any better for the Panthers as Alex. set the pace early. All Blacks tightened up in the middle quarters and made the Rebels work a lot harder for their scores by Alex. again got well on top in the last to have a very big win 26.22 to 1.0. Cory Jack, Aiden Gale and Neil Oakley were given the 321 in the Neil Beer Award whilst Brock Fallon, Brad Kidd, and Chris Mullins were also amongst the Incentive Award recipients.

Alex. next travelled to Thornton to challenge our old rivals. Alex started well with 3 early goals assisted by the wind but the home side made better use of the breeze in the second quarter to lead by a couple of goals at the main break. The rain then made goals hard to come by in the second half. Both sides were desperate but each Alex goal was answered by the home side who were able to protect their lead and win 12.11 to Alex 9.12. Steve Nichol Cory Jack and Neil Oakley received the Neil Beer Award votes whilst incentive awards were also received by Paul Francis, Aiden Gale and Peter Hoornweg.

Alexandra then hosted Rumbalara for round 14 on July 19th at the Showgrounds. The visitors started well before the Rebels took control in the second quarter with eight goals to one.

Rumbalara fought back in the third term but the Rebels again with the scoring end in the last piled on the goals to win easily 23.13 to 14.7. Incentive Award winners included Paul Francis, Aaron Heard, James Kidd, Chris Mullins, David and Neil Oakley.

Alexandra were again at home the following week and the Showgrounds oval was in good

condition considering recent rain. The visitors, the Yea Tigers showed why they are on top of the ladder, keeping the Rebels goalless in the first half. The Rebels put their heads down in the second half and actually outscored the Tigers but the damage had been done, giving Yea an easy win 13.11 to Alex. 5.8. Amongst the Incentive Award winners were Chris Mullins, Brock Fallon, Peter Hoornweg, Cory Jack, Brad Kidd and Luke Ware.

Alexandra travelled to Dookie for the second time for the season and the result was similar, about a five goal loss. Alex did well in the first half but Dookie went ahead in the second half to win 19.12 to Alex 15.7. Incentive awards went to Cory Jack, Paul Francis, Brad Kidd, Chris Mullins, Neil Oakley and Daniel Wales.

Alex were home to Shepp. East for their last home match for 2003 and in a relatively even touse finished 26points behind 10.8 to 14.10. The Bombers were more efficient in front of goal early but Alex. steadied in the second qtr. to keep in touch. The Rebels hit the front in the third term before Shepp. East regained the lead. In the last qtr. Alex. got to with-in a goal but the more experienced Bombers pulled away again and held on to win. Brad Kidd, Brock Fallon, Cory Jack, James Kidd, Luke Ware and Daniel Wales led the incentive awards.

Round 18 was a second trip to Violet Town and Alex. pushed the third placed "Townners" all the way although aided by the home side's inaccuracy . The Rebels were keen to do well for George Steiner, coaching for the last time but Violet Town were just a little steadier at home, winning 11.19 to 10.7. Incentive Awards: Brock Fallon, Paul Francis, Cory Jack, Brad and James Kidd and Ross Taylor.

Alexandra had won only four games for the season but had a percentage of 84.75 which suggested they had improved on 2002, but needed to do better to turn some of the close losses into wins next season. The new players this season Michael Bretherton, Steve Nichol, Paul Francis and Peter Boyd all were good acquisitions along with young players Neil Oakley and Aiden Gale.

The Reserves never actually won a game for the season so the depth of talented players was cause for concern. One discerning statistic was that no Reserve player polled more than two Umpire votes in the League B&F. The Club was to be represented in the finals by the Fourths who again finished on top and the Thirds who finished fourth.

The Thirds travelled to Shepparton East and easily accounted for Dookie in the Elimination Final 10.12 to 0.1. in wet and windy conditions. In the First Semi at Rumbalara, Yea eliminated Alex 10.10 to 7.6 in a good game of Under 17 football.

The Under 14s won the Second Semi against Yea at Thornton 7.6 to 2.4 to go straight the Grand Final.

The Under 14s started the day off in the Grand Final held at the Showgrounds and proved far too good for Dookie United 14.12 to 1.0. Goals: Z.Heaslip 5. K.Norris, M.Orchard 2. A.Daly, B.O'Brien, S.Keddell and J.McCarthy Best: Although best players were not singled out in a team effort, Aaron Daly won the Matthew (Dixie) Dwyer medal on the umpires vote. The Peter Norris coached under 14's had won back to back premierships. Other premierships won that day were Thirds: Thornton E. 6.15 to Shepp. East 5.8. Reserves: Shepp.East 11.16 to Dookie U 5.5. and Seniors: Yea 27.20 easily accounted for Violet Town 9.9. to win their first premiership for 19 years after three successive losses. In the A grade Netball Grand Final Rumbalara 49 narrowly defeated Alex. 43. This was the first Alex. Netball side to make a Grand Final since entering the Tungamah League.

The Grand final attracted over 3000 supporters with a gate of \$15,544 easily the biggest in the short CGFNL history.

League Best and Fairest Awards were also presented to Seniors: Matthew Sharp (VT) who won with 16 votes from Thornton's Leon Cossar 15. Matthew also won the League's goalkicking award with 60 goals. Reserves: Anthony Delehay (VT) Under 17s: James Herridge (Thornton E) and Under 14s Zack Heaslip (left) (Alex.).



Zack Heaslip (Alexandra)
Fours (Richie Mann Medal)

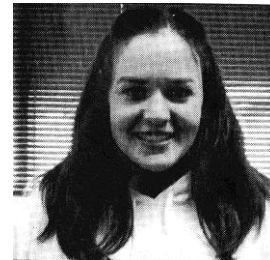


The Neil Beer Award was won by Anthony Evans (BAB) Alexandra's Cory Jack 25. Michael Bretherton 24 and Steve Nichol 19 also voted very well. Alexandra's Neil Oakley (also pictured) won the "Rookie of the Year" award.

At the Alexandra Club's Presentation functions on Sept 19th and 20th awards were presented to the following FOOTBALL. Seniors / Reserves / Under 17s / Under 14s.

B & F: Steve Nichol / Ross Taylor / Lachlan Collard / Zack Heaslip. *R / up:* Michael Bretherton / Joel Norman / Ryan Carter / Kane Davis. *Most Consistent:* Cory Jack / Darryn Embling / Tom McKinlay / Robert Andrews. *Most Determined:* Chris Mullins / James Waugh / Danny McKernan / Chris Wallis. *Most Improved:* Luke Ware / Steve Cody / Peter Wandmaker / Jake McCarthy. *Best Utility:* Tin Bayard / Paul Brooks / Will Hughes / Steven Parker. *Best 1st Year:* Neil Oakley / Michael Gleeson / Brendan Leary / Justin Leary. *Coaches Trophy:* Brad Kidd / Jason Williams / Brendan Juergens / Beau O'Brien, Kyall Norris. *Leading Goalkicker:* Steve Nichol (35) / Hayden Savage (10) / Chris Meyer (26) / Zack Heaslip (40)

NETBALL A, B, Bres. D. *B&F:* Adele Collard / Michelle Jack, Kali Hall / * Phoebe Mortensen (pictured) / Ashleigh Coombs. *R/up:* Sally Berg / Heather Shaw / Lauren Fletcher / Jessica Shaw. *Most Improved:* Lisa Cavill / Abbey Tranter / Sandi Leask / Samantha Westwood. *Coaches Trophy:* Claire McGennissen / Melissa Crane / Melissa Stevens / Belinda Shaw. *Most Determined* (D only) Melissa Warren-Smith. *Also won the CGFNL B Reserve, Best and Fairest.



Also presented were the President's Trophy won by Kevin Hedger. Trainers Trophy: David McLaurin. The Best Clubman Trophy is now known as the Barry (Sprague) Thompson Clubman Award won by David McLaurin.