

## 2007 Yarra Valley Finals

Alexandra began their second year back in the Yarra Valley with the same Executive leading the club and with Michael Bretherton as coach. At League level Powelltown had been re-admitted to the competition making nine teams. Warburton Millgrove were promoted to First Division whilst Belgrave who had only won the one game in '06 were demoted to Second Div. The season began on April 14<sup>th</sup> and as usual Alex were fixtured to play Thornton Eildon but it was the Rebels turn to host the game... Brenton McKinnon and Matthew O'Conner were the only new players along with five young players up from the Under 18s. Thornton were quick out of the blocks with a seven goal to two first quarter and Alex were playing "catch-up" footy for the rest of the game. Alex had their chances to make a game of it but wasted opportunities allowing the more accurate Thornton Eildon. to retain the Barry (Sprague) Thompson Cup. 16.7 to 9.13. Best: C. Mullins, M.Bretherton, M.O'Conner, C.Myer, C.Jack ,L. Collard. The Reserves won by 164 points with new player Wayne Williamson with 8 and D. Crane 5 goals.

Alexandra's first trip south was to Sth Belgrave where despite their inaccuracy the Rebels were able to win comfortably. Continual, but most welcome rain made conditions difficult on the small Sth Belgrave oval. The defence was on top and the midfield won many centre clearances to enable the forwards to score 12.20 to Sth Belgrave 6.11. Best: K. Davis, R.Carter, T.McKinlay J.Mount C.Jack and new player Marcus Hill from Euroa.

Alex. were next home to Seville who won both contests last year. Scores were level at the first change and Alex gradually got on top in the second qtr. to lead by 11 points at the big break. The last half was all Alex as they slammed on 17 goals to 1 after half time to record a percentage boosting win. 24.18 to 6.8. Best: M. Hill, C.Jack (3), S.Nichol (6 back after missing '06,) L.Collard, N.Oakley, M.Bretherton (4)

Alex then travelled to Belgrave and after remembering where the ground was hidden, wasted most of the first quarter with 1.7. Alex were better in the second and led at half time but the home side dominated the third term to take the lead going into the last quarter. Both sides could only manage two goals in the last allowing the home side to hold their winning margin. Belgrave 13.10 Alex. 11.13. Best: N.Oakley, P.Francis, C.Jack. R.Cavill, J.Kidd, L.Heard (4). The Reserves drew 7.8 to 6.14 with L.Ware, J.Krijt and B. Ward listed in the best players.

With four changes to the team Alexandra were on the road again for round 5 on May 12<sup>th</sup> this time to Yarra Junction. Alex led early in an even contest but trailed by 7 points at half-time The home side extended this lead out to 19 points at the last break before the Rebels stormed home to win a hard physical game of football. 15.16 to 15.8. Best: A.McDonald, M.Bretherton (5) N.Oakley, McKeon (4) S.Kidd, C.Meyer.

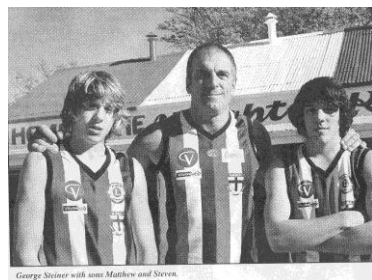
Back on the Showgrounds Alex were led out by Cory Jack playing his 200<sup>th</sup> game for the club and he as usual inspired his team-mates to a handy lead at quarter time. Yarra Glen was more competitive in the second qtr. but the home side was still able to extend the lead. Alex. again surged ahead in the third term, aided by the breeze, to hold a 69 point lead as team's changed ends again. Yarra Glen outscored the Rebels again to the town end in the last quarter but Alex. had plenty in reserve to withstand the charge, winning comfortably 17.10 to 9.8. Best: S.McKeon (4) N.Oakley, R.Cavill (3), J.Kidd, C.Jack (3), P.Francis.

Alexandra next made the trip into the Dandenongs to play Emerald and were surprised by the improving young Bomber team who jumped the visitors and led by just on six goals at the main break. Given a spray by coach Michael Bretherton it was a different Alex side after half time who only allowed Emerald two second half goals whilst peppering the scoring area with 10.21. Best in the 16.29 to 14.11 win were N.Oakley (2), C.Mullins, J.Heyes, R.Cavill (2), K.Davis (2), M.Hill (1), M.Bretherton kicked 5 goals.

There was a break on June 2<sup>nd</sup> for Interleague games at Geelong where Neil Oakley and Nicole Coombs were selected to represent the YVMDFNL.

After the break Alexandra were hosts to Powelltown who Alex. had not played since the grand -final of 1980.

Powelltown have struggled since readmission into the League and were completely outclassed by the home side who amassed their highest score in memory 37.30 to 1.2. Highlight of the game was that George Steiner was able to play alongside 15 year old twin sons Matthew and Stephen. The Steiner "boys" shared 5 goals between them whilst Luke Heard kicked 10 and Marcus Hill 4. Neil Oakley (2) continued his great form and was best on ground. The Reserves and Under 18s kicked 33 and 30 respectively to give Alexandra 100 goals exactly for the day.



George Steiner with sons Matthew and Steven.

At the half-way mark of the season Alex were in third place behind Thornton Eildon and Belgrave whilst the Reserves were on top as were A and B grade Netballers.

After the bye Alex made the short trip over Mt Pleasant out to Thornton and in a close and interesting first half, trailed the home side by a goal at half-time. Thornton Eildon took complete control in the second half to give the big crowd and the club every reason to celebrate their "Team of the half century" Alex. were completely out played after half-time which gave the coaching staff plenty of reasons for concern. Best: L.Collard, M.Hill (2), J.Mount, C.Meyer, P.Francis. Alex. 9.10. T.E. 19.10

Back at the Showgrounds for round 11 against Sth Belgrave gave the Rebels a chance to regroup after the ten goal defeat at Thornton. Alex hit the ground running with a nine goal to three first quarter and had the game virtually won at the teams went to the clubrooms for a break. Sth Belgrave came out more determined after the break but after a relatively even third qtr Alex. again took control to win 24.18 to 6.5. Best: T.McKinlay (2) M.Bretherton (5) R.Cavill, S.Rowan, J.Mount. S.Nichol (2), L.Collard. S.McKeon kicked 4 goals.

Alexandra next travelled to Seville and got away to a good start in what appeared a danger game for Alex. The visiting team led by three goals at the main break and with the defence right on top after half-time went on to a comfortable 13.14 to 6.9 win in the steady rain that fell for most of the game. Best: J.Mount, P.Francis, A.McDonald, R.Cavill, C.Jack, C.Meyer. S.McKeon (4) and L.Heard (3) were the most dangerous forwards. The Reserves also enjoyed a good win this day with G.Steiner kicking 7 goals.

Alexandra was home to Belgrave for round 13 on July 14<sup>th</sup> in an important game as they trailed the second placed Magpies by 2 points on the ladder. The game began at a hectic pace with Alex. taking a narrow lead to the quarter time huddle. The second qtr. was also a great example of country football with Alex being able to maintain the 3 point lead. Belgrave took control around the packs in the third term and led by 21 points at the last change. Alex. slowly but surely worked their way to the front as the last qtr. progressed aided by the efforts of the defenders who repulsed every Belgrave attack. Alex 14.8 def. Belgrave 12.10. Best: P.Francis, N.Oakley (2), J.Heyes, M.Hill (2) A.McDonald G.Steiner was the leading goalkicker with 3

Alex. was at home again the next week this time to Yarra Junction. The ground looked a picture as the fog lifted and the winter sun shone on the big crowd that had assembled. The Eagles took a narrow lead the quarter time huddle but Alex had reversed this by half-time. Alex had slightly the better of both the third and fourth quarters to accumulate 16.13 to 12.15 to win the first of the George Steiner Cups. and take Alex to the top of the ladder.

Best: N.Oakley, R.Cavill, G.Steiner, M.Bretherton (6) M.Hill (3).

Alexandra travelled to Yarra Glen for round 15 on July 28<sup>th</sup> to meet a team full of confidence after beating Thornton Eildon the previous week. Scores were level at quarter time but the Thunder had wasted opportunities. Both sides added four second quarter goals and were still locked together at half-time. Alex. broke the deadlock but only slightly as the led by two points at the last change. The last term was tight, tense football as each side tried to gain the advantage but Alex were able to break even for the qtr. and hold on to win by two points. 12.8 to 11.12. Best: N.Oakley (having a great season) J.Kidd, R.Cavill (3) C.Meyer. C.Jack, G.Steiner (2). M.Hill, a further 3 goals.

Alexandra was at home to Emerald for round 16 on August 4<sup>th</sup> and were led out by Jeremy Heyes, playing his 100<sup>th</sup> game. Alex. were soon into stride, kicking seven goals to two in the first quarter. A further six to two in the second term had the match in their keeping as players took the half-time break. Emerald never stopped trying but Alex were able to coast to a 20.12 to 7.8 win Best: M.Hill 8 goals was unstoppable, C.Mullins, N.Oakley (2), J.Kidd, K.Davis (2), S.Rowan. L.Heard kicked 4 goals.

Alexandra's last H&A game was the trip to Powelltown for round 17 on Aug. 11<sup>th</sup>. where the visitors proved far too good as expected. Despite the heavy ground and rain that fell during the game, Alex were able to score heavily at both ends finishing up with 30.20 to 2.7. N.Oakley (2), Cavill (2), Nichol (5), McDonald were listed as best players with M.Bretherton (5), L.Heard (4), J.Mount (4), M. O'Conner 3, K.Davis (3) amongst the goals. Alexandra had finished on top but expected to lose that position the next week when the club had the bye and Thornton Eildon were expected to beat Yarra Junction at Thornton.

Both Seniors and Reserves finished in second place whilst the Under 18s missed the five. Alex had lost only three games, two of them to Thornton Eildon and the other at Belgrave. Alex.had missed top spot on percentage but weren't really concerned as they had had the bye in round 18 and another week off would have been a disadvantage.

Both A and B grade netball sides had finished on top. Alexandra had won the Club Championship.

In the League Best and Fairest awards Neil Oakley easily won his second consecutive Award whilst Michael Bretherton was third. Steven Hedger won the Reserves after being runner-up last year. Michelle Jack won the B grade Netball goal-shooting trophy

## Final Ladders 2007

	W	L	D	%	Pts		W	L	D	%	Pts		W	L	D	%	Pts
Thorn. E	13	3		189.49	52	Belgrave	14	1	1	316.69	58	Yarra J	14	2		327.78	56
Alex	13	3		180.02	52	Alex	12	3	1	212.57	50	Belgrave	14	2		262.96	56
Belgrave	11	4	1	153.59	46	Yarra J	10	5	1	162.22	42	Emerald	11	5		201.01	44
Yarra G	9	6	1	151.30	38	Thorn E	8	8		110.33	32	Sth Bel.	11	5		142.05	44
Yarra J	9	7		109.63	36	Emerald	7	8	1	101.55	30	Seville	10	6		165.65	40
Emerald	6	10		104.73	24	Sth Bel	7	8	1	97.08	30	Alex.	6	10		100.87	24
Sth Bel	6	10		95.58	24	Yarra G	7	8	1	87.81	30	Yarra G	4	12		73.37	16
Seville	4	12		97.01	16	Seville	4	12		72.14	16	Thorn E	2	14		37.82	08
P'town	0	16		10.57	00	P'town	0	16		14.11	00	P'town	0	16		8.53	00

After much indecision the League decided that both Alex sides had to go to Eastern FL club Kilsyth to play in the Qualifying Final on Sunday Aug.26<sup>th</sup>. The Reserves got the club's day off to a good start with a comfortable win against Yarra Junction. After an even first quarter where the defence stood strong, Alex. through J.Heyes and S.Hedger in the midfield, A.Gaudion (4) H.Scott(3) and B.Heard (3) up forward used the wind to advantage in the second and last quarters. Alex. 2.2 – 8.6 – 9.8 – 16.14.110 to 2.2 – 3.4 – 7.7 – 7.7.49. Best: J.Heyes, S.Hedger, B.Van Lierop, H.Nichol, R.Carter, S.Kidd.

In the Senior game Alex started with the breeze favouring the Mt Dandenong end but were unable to get any system into their play to use the advantage. In what was to be a match winning effort, Belgrave kicked five goals at the Mt Dandenong Road end to lead by 3 goals at quarter time. C.Mullins led a tight defence that was able to hold the Magpies in the second keeping Alex in the game. Alex made much better use of the wind in the third quarter to hit the front but Belgrave kicked a late goal to level the scores at the last change. Belgrave kicked the first goal of the last qtr. but Alex came back with goals to Hill and Jack to keep the crowd on their toes. The defence did a fine job restricting the magpies to a further two goals but Alex could not bridge the gap and were defeated by 11 points.

Best: C.Mullins, R.Cavill, S.Nichol, C.Jack, K.Davis and C.Meyer. M.Hill with 3 was the major goalkicker.

Alex 2.2 – 4.4 – 9.4 – 11.7.73 to Belgrave 5.2 – 7.8 – 8.10 – 11.16.82.

The next Saturday saw firstly the Reserves play Belgrave at Warburton where they were well beaten 2.0 – 4.3 – 5.6 – 5.9.39 to 4.2 – 5.3 – 9.10 – 11.14.80. Best S.Embling S.Hedger, S.Kidd, B.Leary, M.Gibson.

The Senior side added Jeremy Heyes for the injured Adam McDonald for the First Semi at Healesville. Alex. began much better this week with 5 first quarter goals and went to an early lead. The second qtr. was shared as both sides converted opportunities though Alex. held a handy 16 point lead as sides went to half-time. Alex. broke away early in the third qtr but the Eagles then kicked five unanswered goals to reduce the lead to only 9 points at the last change. The break was opportune as Alex. regrouped and again kicked early goals to steady the ship. This time there was relaxing as the Rebels sensed victory and went on to win by 25 points. 5.2 – 10.2 – 13.8 – 19.9.123 to Y.J. 2.1 – 7.4 – 12.5 – 13.10.88. Best: M.Hill (5), C.Mullins (1), K.Davis (2), S.Nichol (1), J.Mount (3), C.Jack.

Alexandra Seniors and Reserves again went to Kilsyth to play the same opponents as a fortnight ago Belgrave and Yarra Junction. The selectors picked the same 21 that took the field last week at Healesville. M.Bretherton, R.Cavill, L.Collard, K.Davis, P.Francis, L.Heard, J.Heyes, M.Hill, C.Jack, J.Kidd, T.McKinlay, C.Meyer, J.Mount, C.Mullins, S.Nichol, M.O'Conner, A.O'Shea, N.Oakley, S.Rowan, G.Steiner, L.Ware.

Alex. again this week kicked with the aid of the northerly breeze and after an early goal managed only three more for the quarter and the Magpies also kicked four goals to lead at the first change. Strong defence by P.Francis held Belgrave out early in the second but a couple of defensive errors allowed Belgrave to establish a handy lead compounded by another goal on the half-time siren. Bretherton stressed the need for a big effort in the third qtr. and the Rebels produced their best for the game playing with system and commitment. Alex kicked six goals whilst the defence tightened up not allowing Belgrave a goal for the quarter giving the Rebels a 13 point lead at the final change. Alex. got the first goal of the last quarter but Belgrave were quick to answer. Further Belgrave goals at the 8 and 11 minute marks leveled the scores. Bretherton got the lead back for his side but a couple of costly frees enabled the Magpies to convert and finish up 13 pint winners. 4.6 – 8.13 – 8.16 – 15.20.110 To Alex. 4.3 – 5.8 – 11.11 – 14.13.97 Best: C.Mullins, R.Cavill (1), K.Davis (1), C.Jack, G.Steiner (4) L.Heard kicked 3goals. It was a disappointing end for the Rebels who so wanted to win and there-for go to Healesville and challenge long time rivals Thornton Eildon in the grand final.

Earlier in the day the Reserves after trailing at quarter time having kicked against the breeze ran right over the top of Yarra Junction only allowing them one more goal for the game. Alex. 2.4 – 7.6 – 10.10 – 15.14.104 defeated Y.J. 4.3 – 4.4 – 5.7 – 5.7.37. Best: S.Kidd (1), B.Leary, L.Jenkins S.Hedger, A.McDonald (1), D.Hill (2), Gaudion (4).

The following players represented Alexandra in the Reserves Grand Final at Healesville on Sept 16<sup>th</sup>.

P.Brooks, J.Cowell, D.Crane, T.Dunell, S.Embling, A.Gaudion, M.Gibson, B.Heard, S.Hedger, M.Heyes, D.Hill, P.Hoornweg, K.Jenkins, L.Jenkins, J.Krijt, B.Leary, H.Nichol, A.O'Shea, H.Scott, G.Steiner, B.Van Lierop, P.Wandmaker.

In an exciting finish to the 2007 season the Reserves held on for a great victory and recorded their first Reserve grade premiership win since 1980. In near perfect conditions, Steven Hedger led his side to a six point win to emulate what his father Kevin had done 27 years earlier, also at Healesville albeit a different venue.



C/C Steven and 250 games Jason

Belgrave started well with the first two goals but A.Gaudion, finishing well gave Alex. at one point lead at the first change. Four goals to two in the second quarter gave the Rebels a handy 12point lead at half-time. Belgrave quickly wiped off the deficit early in the third qtr. then went about showing why they were the top side all year, holding Alex to points whilst extending the lead. Alex. had a slight breeze in the last qtr. but had the job in front of them as the trailed by two goals in a low scoring game. The experience of Len Jenkins (right) who inspired his team-mates with his attack on the ball and George Steiner, who just knew what to do was invaluable. Alex leveled the scores at the 17 minute mark and the last eight minutes was a battle of defences broken only by what was to be the match winning goal to Steiner. After four hard finals Alex finished on strongly with the defence impregnable, until the sweet sound of the siren ironically pressed by Alex. time-keeper, Kevin Hedger. Alex. 2.5 – 6.7 – 6.9 – 9.10.64 to Belgrave. 2.4 – 4.7 – 8.9 – 8.10.58. Best: Len Jenkins (above), won the medal for BoG whilst Dan Crane, Jason Krijt (250<sup>th</sup> game), Adam Gaudion (5) Brendan Leary, George Steiner (3) Tony O'Shea, Peter Wandmaker.



Thornton Eildon won the Senior Premiership, easily defeating Belgrave 22 11 to 6.9. Yarra Junction won the Under 18s title. Unfortunately both Alexandra Netball sides lost, A 21 to Emerald 32 and B 23 to Yarra junction 28.

At the Senior Presentation Night on Sat Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> at the Mt Pleasant Hotel Trophies and awards were presented to. Presidents Trophy: Steve Wandmaker. Trainers Trophy: Roger Welch. Barry (Sprague) Thompson Best Clubman Trophy: Dean Murdoch. Life Membership was bestowed on Netballer Michelle Jack

**Football:** Seniors / Reserves / Under 18s.

*Best and Fairest:* Neil Oakley / Steven Hedger / Zack Heaslip. *Runner-up:* Marcus Hill / Harley Scott / Justin Leary. *Most Consistent:* Ross Cavill / Michael Heyes / Callum Tranter. *Most Determined:* Cory Jack / Peter Wandmaker / Aaron Daly. *Most Improved:* Lachlan Collard / Michael Gibson / Nick Malcolm. *Best 1st Year:* Chris Meyer / N/A / Adam Straw. *Best Utility:* N/A / Daniel Crane / N/A. *Leading Goalkicker:* Luke Heard (47) / Brian Heard (42) / Chris McKay (44) *Coaches Trophy:* Kane Davis / Michael Mawson / Stephen Parker.

**Netball:** A grade / B grade

*Best and Fairest:* Emma Thomas / Michelle Jack. *Runner-up:* Ashleigh Coombs / Brooke Davis *Most Improved:* Clair McDonald / Eddie Ingrouille. *Coaches Trophy:* Nichole Coombs / Lisa Cavill.

At the junior Presentation the next day Trophies were presented to.

**Football** Under 15 / Under 13 / Under 11.

*Best and Fairest:* Brayden Norris / Ben Cooper / Jack Goonan. *Runner-up:* Stephen Steiner / Jamie Burchall / Will Goonan. *Most Consistent:* Matthew Steiner / Ben Woollard / Stan Gaudion. *Most Determined:* Riley Savage / Conner Heaslip / Tom Halligan. *Most Improved:* Jake Steyger / Jack Tossol / Tom Nye *Best 1<sup>st</sup> Year:* Nathan Dundas / Charles Hobbs / Josh Hoskin. *Coaches Trophy:* Ryan Loveday / Jesse Newton / Ben Wallis. *Leading Goalkicker:* Brayden Norris (40) / Ryley Norris(15) / Jedd Hamill (24)

In the Under 11 Grand Final: Euroa 6.4 to Alex. 3.3. and Under 15 Euroa 17.10 to Alex 5.10.

**Netball:** Under 15 / Under 13 / Under 11.

*Best and Fairest:* Jess Kupke / Lauren Steyger / Kimberly Shaw. *Runner-up:* Brooke Davis / Teagan Halligan / Kate Meggitt. *Most Determined:* Tess McDonald / Grace Westwood / Jayde Cairns *Most Improved:* Brydie Bonsema / Kathryn Veldman / Maddison Riley. *Coaches Trophy:* Ruby Foletta / Kirby Davis / Sasha Mason. *Appreciation Awards:* Kylie Cairns, Heather Shaw.

In the Under 11 Grand Final: St Marys 15 d Alex. 13. Under 13. Alex. 25 d St Marys 18 Under 15 St Marys 20 d Alex. 16.