

Down to fifth in 2012

The year 2012 started with the same stable leadership off-field whilst on-field Peter McKenzie continued on in the important senior coaching position. Paul Francis continued on as Reserves Coach and Paul Wallis took over as Under 18 coach. Lucas Flemming was the only notable recruit and again Alex were pinning their hopes on the improvement of their young players.

Alexandra started the season with a trip to Yea and came away with a win. The Rebels included recruits Sam Creighton and Lucas Flemming whilst Nathan Dundas, Shaun Graham, Scott Heveren, Dylan McPhail and Ben Woolard were promoted from the under 18s. After a slow start Alex got some system going and got on top of the home side. Leading by eight goals at the last change, Alex. relaxed and allowed the Tigers to have a big last quarter but still had enough in reserve to win 17.12 to 13.3 As John Denver sings “some days are diamonds, some days are stones” Michael Bretherton certainly had a diamond with nine goals. Yea had great difficulty matching up with the big forward who marked strongly and kicked accurately Ross McKinnon, Dylan McPhail and Cory Jack also were award winners.

Alexandra’s first home game was as hosts to Seville, the Blues were on a winning streak against Alex. beating them five times last season including eliminating them in the Preliminary Final at Woori Yallock. Seville’s dominance continued as they built up a substantial lead, due to their accuracy spearheaded by lively forward Jones. up till three quarter time. Alex. won the last quarter to make the scoreboard look respectable 9.11 to 14.7. Chris Friswell was at his intimidating best whilst J.Steyger, Jake Elkington, Ross McKinnon, Justin Leary and Bart Wallace (2) also were prominent.

Alexandra were at home again the next week for round three on April 28th this time to Kinglake. The game was evenly contested right up until the last quarter where Alex. then got on top going on to win by 30 points 12.13 to 7.13. Nathan Dundas played a fine game and appears a very good young player. He worked hard around the stoppages and his disposal was to advantage. Jake Steyger rucked strongly and took most of the marks he contested. Scott Heveren continued his impressive start to the season, Jack Elkington, Michael Bretherton (5), Ross McKinnon and Greg Newlands just ahead of many others.

Alexandra’s next trip was to Powelltown where the home side jumped out of the blocks kicking five goals to one at the Mill-end. Given a blast by Captain Sam Kidd, Alex. increased their work rate and gradually got back into the game trailing by ten points at half-time. Alex played their best football so far for the season, in the third quarter and led by 21 at the last change going on to win 14.16 to 11.14. Best: Michael Bretherton again played well against the Demons with six goals Luke Ware, Sam Kidd, Bart Wallace, Nathan Dundas and Jack Elkington also impressed.

Alexandra were next at home to Yarra Glen who had been relegated back to second division after winning the premiership in 2010 and being promoted. Alex took the field with a very young team, nine of the players 19 or younger. Yarra Glen soon got on top of the inexperienced Rebels not helped by serious injuries to Shaun Graham (broken arm) and Daniel Steel (shoulder) Yarra Glen went on to a big win 22.12 to 7.10. Best: Bart Wallace who is really maturing as a player Greg Newlands (3) against his old club, Ben Cooper, Luke Ware, Andrew Moravski, Nick Pearce and Jack Elkington.

Alex travelled to Belgrave on May 19th for round six and as has been the case for the past few seasons found the top sides a bit too good. Alex are forced to play many of the under 18s in either the Seniors or Reserves to not only make up the numbers but make up the best teams after these young players have already played in the early game.

Belgrave went to a big lead at the first change and although Alex fought back in the second quarter they could not hold the home side after half-time Alex 6.4 to 18.16. Bart Wallace (2) continued his great form with another good game and was one of Alex’s few winners. Justin Leary, Cory Jack, Luke Ware, Scott Heveren and Andrew Moravski supported him.

Alexandra were hosts to Yarra Junction on June 2nd for round 7. In a low scoring game Alex trailed by only three points at half-time but failed to kick a goal after that whilst the visitors went on to 8.8.. Alex’s 4.9 was a poor reward for effort and Alex missed Bretherton (unav.) and Steel (inj) up forward. Best were J.Kidd, B.Wallace, S.Creighton, S.Kidd, N.Dundas, B.Cooper. The Reserves finally had a win (a big win) 14.20 to 1.3. Jock Blakeney’s return to the side is a bonus.

Alex were again on the Showgrounds as Kinglake came to visit for the second time for the year. The result was similar to the earlier game with Alex winning 15.13 to 9.8. The first quarter was relatively even but after that Alex. increased the lead each quarter (28 at half time, 34 at three quarter time). Bart Wallace was again Alex’s best with his strong marking and goal-kicking followed by Jack Elkington, Scott Heveren, Sam Kidd, Ross McKinnon, Nick Pearce and Tyson Biffin.

The trip to Seville on June 16th ended as most trips to Seville end; badly. After an even first quarter the home exploited the "potato chip" to its fullest banging on nine second quarter goals to virtually end the contest. The second half was no better as the Blues kicked a further ten goals to five to record a big win 21.14 to 6.12. Best were Lucas Fleming, Ross McKinnon, James Kidd, Cory Jack, Sam Creighton, Luke Ware and Lyndon Purcell.

At the half way mark of the season Alex were in a similar position to the last three seasons, in the five but unable to get close to the top teams.

Round 10 was a home game against Yea who took the lead early. An indirect Alex. were not able to use the breeze effectively in the second quarter and still trailed at the main break. Yea kicked further away in the third qtr. before Alex started to play some more direct football. Alex. still trailing at the last change eventually got to the front and was able to hold that position until the final siren winning 13.11 to 11.12. Lucas Flemming who was now showing his best work and again was Alex's best well supported by Bart Wallace who continues his good season. Greg Newlands, Ben Cooper, Andrew Moravski and Ross McKinnon also did well this game.

Alexandra made its second successive trip to Powelltown where the home side reversed the result of the earlier game. The home side started well and continued to keep the visiting Alex. side at bay. Injuries to Bretherton, Jack and Elkington did not help the cause but the Rebels fought the game out to the end finally going down 13.13. to 16.14. Andrew Moravski got his photo in the "Standard" the next Wednesday as Alex's best. Jason Krijt, Ryley Norris, Bart Wallace and Sam Kidd were the other award winners.

Alex then travelled to Healesville to play Yarra Glen, whose ground had been flooded, for round 12 on July 7th and contained the Thunder to four goals in the first half whilst kicking three themselves. A third quarter burst by the home side gave them a big break at the last change and although Alex outscored the Glen in the last quarter the margin was too big to overhaul. Alex 8.6 to Yarra Glen 12.11. Young Ryley Norris won the "Standard" player of the week from Scott Heveren, Nathan Dundas, Sam and James Kidd, Damien Toomey and Lyndon Purcell.

Back at the Showgrounds after two away games Alexandra were home to undefeated top side Belgrave. The Rebels were led out by Luke Ware on the occasion of his 200th game. Luke has been a fine player over his long career. In conditions perfect for football, until the rain came half way through the last quarter, strangely only two goals (by Belgrave) were scored at the hill end. The Magpies did all their scoring at the town end and Alex. actually outscored the top side in the second and last quarter's also to the town end. Belgrave 18.20 defeated Alex. 6.5. Another veteran Jason Krijt led the best player votes with Sam Kidd, Michael Miller, Luke Ware, Bart Wallace and Paul Wallis also mentioned.

The trip to Yarra Junction on July 21st resulted in another loss where a win would have kept Alex. in finals contention. With many changes to the team (as usual) Alex held a slight lead at quarter time which was soon eradicated by the home side in the second qtr. Alex tried hard in the third term but the Eagles answered every Alex. challenge and finished the game with a bit to spare 13.15 to Alex. 9.5. Ben Cooper continues to play mature strong football whilst still eligible for the U/18s. Nathan Dundas, Damien Toomey, Jake Steyger, Bart Wallace were also under notice.

The shorter trip to Yea for round 15 on July 28th resulted in a much needed win for the Rebels. 10.14 to 5.7. Although Yea had not won previously this season Alex. were wary as they had only lost narrowly to Seville the previous game. Alex. began the game well and the defence was right on top allowing the Tigers only one goal in the first half in a low scoring game. After a heavy shower Yea seemed to handle the slippery ball better and got back into the contest. Alex. regained their composure in the last quarter and went on to double Yea's 5.7 with 10.14. to win comfortably. Jake Steyger was the "Standard" player of the week in front of Damien Toomey, Ben Cooper, Michael Bretherton Cory Jack and Bart Wallace.

Alexandra were at home to third placed Seville for round 16 on Aug.4th and needed a win against one of the top three heading toward the finals. The Rebels were led out by James Kidd playing his 200th and David Bourke his 150th games respectively. Alex. started well to the town end in perfect conditions and but for inaccuracy should have had an even bigger lead at the first change having twelve shots to three. The visitors came back in the second term to level the scores at the main break. The third quarter was shared as Alex strived to establish a winning break with the slight breeze that favored the town end. Seville soon over took the two point lead Alex. had taken to the three quarter time huddle with the first three goals of the last qtr. and looked to be heading for a comfortable win. Alex, not to be denied came again with the next three goals to take the lead with minutes to go. From the resultant bounce in the centre, Seville won possession and ran the ball forward kicking accurately to regain the lead and deny the home side victory. Alex 10.17.77 to Seville 12.7.79.

Although disappointed, the Rebels showed the supporters including many past premiership players that they were very competitive but missed opportunities were costly. Best: Sam Kidd was an attacking defender all game whilst Damien Toomey led the last quarter revival. Jake Steyger in his best game for some weeks marked strongly whilst Nathan Dundas and Tyson Biffin provided the dash. Ross McKinnon as usual tried hard and Bart Wallace earned

praise from the “experts” in the crowd for his marking ability. That evening the club held a very successful function to celebrate the 1952, 1962, and 1961 (under 16s) premierships. At last Noel Serong’s book “Up the Rebels” a history of the Alexandra club in the twentieth century was launched. The reviews were good !

The next week’s game at Kinglake took the Rebels back to the eighties with the ground conditions. After a few minutes it was just a slog in the mud. Kinglake had the better of the first half with four goals to two and Alexandra’s finals hopes appeared to be sinking into the mud. Alex. with their defence on top, got back to lead by the narrowest of margins at the last change. Damien Toomey’s effort in the last quarter was instrumental in getting his side over the line and along with Michael Miller, James & Sam Kidd, Cory Jack and Lyndon Purcell, was a very good player in the 5.5 to 4.8 slog.

The last home game on August 18th was as host to Yarra Junction. Both teams were on 28 points and the winner would contest the Elimination Final the next week. The first quarter was defensive with only one goal to each team. The game opened up a bit in the second, as firstly Alex then Yarra Junction held the initiative. Alex led by 3 points at half-time and the third quarter followed the same script but this time it was the visitors who led at the change of ends. The lead changed a couple more times in the last quarter before Alex were able to seal the game late in the quarter to win 10.5 to 8.9. Damien Toomey played a fine game and again excelled when the game was in the balance. Cory Jack just keeps on going and is nearly always in the top six, Michael Bretherton, Jock Blakeney and youngsters Jedd Hamill and Lyndon Purcell also played well.

Alex travelled to Woori Yallock on Sunday Aug. 26th to play Powelltown in the Elimination final and were virtually eliminated by quarter time as the Demons kicked eight goals to one. Alex. seemed stunned by the Demons authoritative football and never recovered, although the remainder of the game was relatively even. Damien Toomey who had had a great finish to the season again tried hard to lift the side. The long kicking Michael Miller who was promoted around round twelve also finished the season well. Sam Kidd as always tried hard. Nathan Dundas, Andrew Marshall, and Jason Krijt also had good games., Although we were not able to beat the top three during the season and probably would not have gone much further, it was a disappointing exit from the finals.

The Alex team that donned the red, white and black that day was Sam Kidd, James Kidd, Cory Jack, Michael Bretherton, Luke Ware, Damien Toomey, Bart Wallace, Greg Newlands, Scott Heveren, Lyndon Purcell, Ross McKinnon, Nathan Dundas, Jason Krijt, Chris Friswell, Michael Miller, Andrew Marshall, Lee Ragg, Andrew Moravski, David Bourke, Jedd Hamill and Michael Heyes.

The Under 18s also made the finals and got through to the Grand Final but unfortunately were no match for Seville on the day.

Qual. Final at Woori Yallock Sunday August 26th

Alex. 2.1 – 4.2 – 6.2 – 7.4.46 lost to Yarra Glen 2.1 – 4.3 – 6.4 – 7.6.48. Goals: D.McPhail, B.McDonald 2. W.Cody, B.Cooper, J.Hamill. Best: B.Cooper, B.Woolard, D.McPhail, P.Wallis, N.Quincee, D.Heaslip.

First Semi Final at Gembrook Sunday Sept 2nd

Alex. 1.3 – 4.6 – 7.6 – 10.8.68 defeated Belgrave 3.0 – 5.2 – 7.6 – 10.7.67. Goals: J.Hamill 3. W.Cody 2. T.Halligan, M.Church, B.Cooper, B.McDonald, N.Quincee. Best: D.Rouget, J.Hamill. M.Coombs, W.Boucher, N.Quincee. B.Woolard

Prelim. Final at Woori Yallock Sunday Sept 9th

Alex 3.3 – 6.4 – 8.8 – 12.9.81 def Yarra Glen 3.2 – 5.3 – 6.5 – 8.5.53. Goals: M.Coombs, J.Hamill 3. B.McDonald, T.Keating 2. T.Halligan, B.Wallis. Best: D.McPhail, B.Cooper, C.Heaslip, B.Woolard, B.Wallis, J.Hamill.

Grand Final at Healesville Sat. Sept 15th

Alex. 1.1 – 3.1 – 3.1 – 5.2.32 lost to Seville 5.2 – 8.2 – 11.8 – 12.10.82. Goals: J.Hamill 4. W.Cody Best: R.Loveday, W.Boucher, B.Cooper, J.Hamill, B.Woolard, D.Rouget, C.Heaslip and J.Tossol.

Presentation Night

At the Senior presentation night Awards and trophies were presented to
Presidents Trophy: Terry Hall. *Trainers Trophy:* Anna Birtchnell, Lisa Elward. *Barry "Sprague" Thompson Best Clubman Award:* Michael Purcell. *Andrew Whitting Volunteer Award:* Michelle Jack. Service Certificates were presented to 200 games. James Kidd, Luke Ware, Rebecca McLeod. 150 games. David Bourke. 100 games Emma Kidd, Michael Mawson.

Arguably the best ever player to play for Alexandra, successful Junior Coach and Senior coach for the past three seasons Peter McKenzie was Awarded Life Membership of the Club

FOOTBALL Seniors / Reserves / Under 18s

Best and Fairest Alan Jane / Stan Mackrell / *Lyn Stillman Memorial Trophies:* Bart Wallace / Jock Blakeney / Ben Cooper. *Runner-up:* Damien Toomey / David Bourke / Daniel Rouget. *Most Consistent:* Luke Ware / Shaun Trice / Ben Woolard / . *Most Determined:* Jason Krijt / Michael Mawson / Wayne Boucher. *Most Improved:* Jake Steyger / Andrew Carpenter / Paul Wallis. *Best 1st Year:* Nathan Dundas / Daniel Roper / Ben Wallis. *Best Utility:* N.A / N.A / Conner Heaslip. *Best in Finals:* N.A / N.A / Ben Cooper. *Coaches Trophy:* Sam Kidd / Jack Savage, Scott Ferrier / Brent McDonald. *Leading Goal-kicker:* M.Bretherton (25) / Alasdair Hutt (13) / Jedd Hamill (29).

NETBALL A / A res. / B / B res.

Best and Fairest : (A) *Casey Munro Memorial Trophy:* Jessica Walker / Teagan Halligan / Sally Krijt / Alison Rouget. *Runner-up:* Lauren Steyger / Grace Westwood / Louise Chapple / Karen Richards. *Most Determined:* Rebecca McLeod / Jo Steel / Megan Creighton / Sarah Purcell. *Most Improved:* Kathryn Veldman / Tara Rogerson / Michelle Flemming / Grace McKenzie. *Coaches Trophy:* Ellie McDonald / Laura Westwood / Cathrine Quincee / Sharon Hedger.



Recipients: A Grade best and fairest 2012 winner Jessica Walker with runners best and fairest 2012 winner Bart Wallace.



Sally Krijt received the Best and Fairest award for Division 2 B Grade at the recent Tara Valley, Manawatu District Football and Netball League presentation evening. Louise Chapple received the Leading Goal Shooter award for Division 2 B Grade, and Jessica Walker was awarded Best and Fairest overall for Division 2 A Grade.



B Grade - Alexandra G. B. best: Ashleigh Halligan, Katherine Quincee, Lucy Wallis, Megan Creighton, Sally Krijt. From: Michelle Fleming, Ann Williams, Louise Chapple, Ashleigh Creighton, shared from photo 2012 Members. Photo courtesy Manawatu Times.



For life: 2012 senior football coach Peter McKenzie (left) was congratulated by club president Ray Steyger after being presented with a life membership for AFNC.

Photo's courtesy Alexandra Standard