

2015 Sam Kidd appointed coach

The season 2015 initially saw Sam Kidd elected to the Secretaries position to join President Ray Steyger at the official head of the Club. Lee Rowe was again appointed Coach but before the season got under way Lee had received an offer "too good to refuse", to join the coaching panel at VFL club Port Melbourne under Garry Ayers. The result was that Sam Kidd was then appointed coach of the Alexandra Club. After a practice match against old Waranga club Avenel where returning players Scott Heveren and Matt Steiner stood out, Alexandra were drawn to play Thornton –Eildon at Thornton in the first match. Jake Steyger after missing 2014 after a knee operation also returned but the 2014 Bayswater, Ringwood recruits had all left with the exception of Ben Podger- Carroll. The only new recruit was Taylor Horwood a rover. Alexandra had gone for young local players in a plan to build a very competitive team into the near future. The Rebels started a little apprehensively as our spies had reported that our neighbors had recruited well and they had the first goal and a few behinds on the board very quickly. The Rebels soon found that they were able to match it with the home side and the game was relatively close all day with the home side just a bit more accomplished particularly in the small man department. Thornton-Eildon went on to a 20 point win 17.21. 123 to Alexandra 16.7. 93. Best: Chris Mullins, Jack Goonan, Brent McDonald, Conner Heaslip, Jake Steyger and Scott Heveren. Alex. supporters were pleased with the effort and believed that if we can keep this young group together adding a couple more good players we can expect big things from this team.

After the bye Alexandra travelled to Seville to find the ground in good condition although the drizzly rain made ball handling a little difficult. Alex. included Isaac Hedger, Michael Miller and Ben Podger-Carroll to replace Tom Halligan, Brent McDonald and Ryan Carter from the side beaten at Thornton. As usual Alex had trouble handling the tricky Seville ground and Nathan O'Keefe who kicked seven goals. Alex. got further behind as the game progressed but never gave in at any stage in the 7.11 to 14.8 loss. BEST: Ben Woolard, Nathan Dundas and Conner Heaslip set the example with courage and effort followed by Jack Goonan, Stephen Steiner and first gamer Isaac Hedger.

Looking for their first win of the season Alexandra made the relatively short trip to the Tiger lair. The Rebels have had the wood on the Tigers recently, winning the previous ten encounters, with Yea last winning in 2011. Alex. made five changes to the side due to injuries etc but must be disappointed with their game. Apart from a ten minute period in the second quarter where they added three goals they were only able to kick one other goal for the entire game in good conditions. Alex. amid the many ball-ups (there must have been a hundred during the game) were often able to transfer the ball from defence but Yea always seemed to have the extra defender to take the intercept mark. Yea finished off with the last goal of the game to win 7.13 to 4.17. Best: C.Mullins, J.Goonan, T.Horwood, B.Cooper, J.Steyger and B.Woolard.

Finally in round five on May 9th Alexandra were scheduled a home game which was against the unbeaten league leader Emerald in good conditions after morning drizzle. Alex was competitive early and trailed by 13 points at the first change but in the second the Bombers who were much more efficient up forward got well on top. Despite the efforts of the home side Emerald increased the lead as the game progressed to run out easy winners 18.11 to 6.7. Ben Cooper, Ben Woolard, Nathan Dundas,

Chris Mullins and Tyler Horwood were listed as best. The Reserves with an eight goal third quarter had a 40 point win against the previously unbeaten top side.

A second successive home game saw the Rebels host Gembrook-Cockatoo. Alex started well and led narrowly at the first change but the visitors had worked their way to the front by half time leading by eleven points in an even contest. Alex. had plenty of midfield possessions in the third quarter but the visitors were much more structured in attack. Alex could only manage three second half goals in near perfect conditions despite the efforts of Ben Cooper, Stephen Steiner, Nathan Dundas and Scott Heveren. Alex. 7.13 to G.C. 13.14. Reserves player Len Jenkins played his 200th game as the Rebels led by Jock Blakeney's six goals, continued their winning run.

Alexandra's next game was a trip to Kinglake where the weather was fine but a cold northerly wind reminded everyone that they were in Kinglake. After a relatively even first quarter the home side got completely on top and although Alex tried hard, could not convert midfield possessions into goals. Alex. did not kick a goal after quarter time whilst Kinglake finished with 19.14. Jake Steyger in his best game after his knee operation tried hard as did Ben Cooper, Will Goonan and Matt Steiner. The Reserves drew with Kinglake in the earlier game

On the Truck Show week-end Alexandra were playing Yarra Junction for the George Steiner Cup. The Junction, like Alex. we're finding wins hard to come by so an even contest was anticipated. Alex. trailed by eight points at the first change due to some discipline errors. The second quarter went along the same vein although Alex had established a three point lead at the main break. The game resumed after half time with both sides making many mistakes perhaps indicative of their ladder positions. The third quarter was again even with three goals each with Alex leading by the narrowest of margins at the last change. The stage was set for an exciting last quarter as Alex was keen for their first win of the season. It was goal for goal to keep the good crowd on their toes. With Alex leading by a point late Yarra Junction were able to add a behind to tie up the scores 11.8 each. The dashing Scott Heveren, Ben Cooper and Matt Steiner were the supporter's choice for best players.

In the last game of the first round Alex. travelled to Powelltown and as usual started well but the home side with two late first qtr. goals led by 17 points at the first break. Alex. got the game back on level terms early in the second with a couple of goals but in a hard tough quarter of football Powelltown went to a six goal lead at the next change. The game was over at three quarter-time as the home side had a nine goal to two third quarter and although Alex fought out the last quarter amid countless ball-ups were soundly beaten 23.14 to 10.4. Again Ben Cooper led the way ably assisted by Tyler Horwood and Chris Mullins.

After their second bye Alexandra was at home to the Yea Tigers who also were very keen for a win. Alex. began to the town end and led a low scoring, tight first quarter. Undisciplined frees and penalties soon changed the lead as Yea profited. Scott Heveren and the Goonans got Alex back into the contest as scores were level at half-time. Again a tightly contested third quarter gave the visitors a three point lead at the last change. Alex. with the chance of their first win of the season had everything to play for but it was Yea who took the initiative with the first two last quarter goals. Alex. struggled to get the ball into a

scoring position and kicked to opponents when going forward. Despite having more scoring shots than Yea the Tigers held on to win their first game at the Showgrounds since 2010, 11.7 to 8.11. Nathan Dundas, Ben Cooper and Scott Heveren led the way in a disappointing result.

On a fine but cool winters day Alex. were at home to local rivals Thornton-Eildon and hoped for a good effort against the second placed 'Boners. This was not to be as the Rebels again hampered by their lack of dangerous forwards kicked one goal per quarter. Thornton with an eight goal third quarter ended any Alex. hopes and although Alex. fought the game out and restricted Thornton to a solitary last quarter goal they were sadly outclassed 4.3 to 17.10. Best were Ben Cooper and the Steiner brothers Matthew and Stephen.

Alexandra has made many trips to Gembrook since 1977 and has taken home the points on only a few occasions. The visit on July 11th was also unsuccessful although Alex. got off to a great start with a goal in the first minute of the game and were only a point in arrears at quarter time. But from there the home side allowed Alex. only another two goals in the wet conditions. Again Alex won many possessions through the mid-field but the G.C. defence were able to intercept wayward kicks into the forward line. Four last quarter G.C. goals resulted in a comfortable 12.16 to 3.5 win. The Reserves winning run of 8 games ended as they were beaten by seven points in their second loss for the season.

Alexandra next travelled to Yarra Junction and played their best football of the season resulting in a six goal plus lead at the first change. Alex. kept up the pressure and the Junction did not kick a goal until 20 minutes into the second quarter but Alex. had increased their lead to 41 points at the half-time break. The home side after a blast from their coach got back into the game in the third term with the first four goals but Alex. steadied with goals from Chris Mullins and Stephen Steiner to hold a four goal lead at the last change. The mood in the three-quarter time huddle was good as the Rebels were determined to win the game. Despite not being able to score in the last quarter Alex. through their attack on the ball and commitment were able to hold on and secure their first win of the season 10.8 to 8.12. Scott Heveren, Ben Cooper and young Jordan Purcell led the way.

Alexandra was next at the Showgrounds and buoyed by the win at Yarra Junction were confident of following up with a win against Seville. Alex. as they had done in most matches this season, started well and led by 13 points at quarter-time. Seville with former North Melbourne player Nathan O'Keefe leading the way got on top in the second term and went to the long break with a 17 point lead. Alex won the third quarter and trailed by a manageable 11 points as players changed over for the last time. Also like in most game Alex. struggled to score in the final quarter with only a solitary goal at the hill end whilst Seville was able to finish better with the wind. to win by 20 points 13.9 to 10.7. Matt and Stephen Steiner along with the consistent Ben Cooper were considered by those with voting cards. The 2014 Reserves premier could not find a side and forfeited after walking off halfway through the game at Thornton recently.

Alexandra was next at home to Kinglake in round sixteen and matched it with the third placed team for the first half trailing by three goals at the main break. The third quarter was typical of the Rebels problems all year as after a good first half the scoring dries up and the visitors added six unanswered

goals to have an unbeatable lead at the last change. Again as has been the pattern Alex. fought the game out actually winning the last quarter but allowing the Lakers their first ever win at the Showgrounds.13.6 to 4.8. Ben Cooper and Chris Mullins along with Jordan Purcell who were again amongst the better players.

Without their most consistent players Cooper and Mullins, Alex. travelled to Emerald but were no match for the flag favorites who blew the game away with nine and eleven goals respectively in the first and second quarters. Further in game injuries hamstrung the Rebels who battled the game out against the polished, fast running Bombers.

Alexandra's last game for 2015 was a home game against Powelltown who were on top early in the game setting up a 40 point lead at half-time. Contrary to the normal pattern Alex won the third quarter and trailed by just under five goals at the last change for the year. Powelltown soon snuffed out any thoughts of an Alex. win with early last quarter goals going on to win 16.10 to 9.13. Ben Cooper firmed as the Alan Jane trophy winner with another strong game, Jake Steyger who got better as the season progressed and his confidence returned after his knee operation and the Goonans Jack and Will finished off the season well. Alexandra, disappointed in the season but are confident in recruiting a few new players to add skill and class. The endeavour of the current players cannot questioned but they must improve their skill level particularly up forward to reward the effort up field. The Reserves who finished off with a big win against Powelltown with Shaun Graham kicking nine goals had finished in second place having lost only four games. Coach Cory Jack had again done a fine job leading the side into the finals.

The Reserves had the luxury of playing Yarra Junction at the Showgrounds in the Qualifying Final but in a low scoring low standard game were beaten by three points. 7.9 to 7.12. Veterans Cory Jack and Len Jenkins used all their experience to keep their side in the game and along with Michael Coombs, Brent McDonald, Tom Halligan and Ben Podger-Carroll were the better players.

Given a second chance Alex travelled to the unfamiliar territory of Monbulk where only a couple of the Alex. players had ever played. Gembrook-Cockatoo got away to a quick start with an early goal but Alex. then tightened their defence to take a narrow lead to the break. Alex began to get on top in the second quarter with four goals whilst keeping G.C scoreless to give them a 28 point lead at half-time. Alex. had expected to seal the game in the third quarter but the third quarter was a battle of the defences as each side managed only a goal. Alex held a handy lead at the last change and when Shaun Graham goaled halfway through the quarter Alex. seemed home. G.C. came back with the last two goals but despite kicking only one second half goal Alex. held on to win 6.9 to 4.8. Tom Halligan, Len Jenkins and Daniel Rouget were amongst the best players.

Alex. then had to travel to Woori-Yallock to again play Yarra Junction. Alex. kicked against the wind in the first quarter and although goalless the defence held 'Junction to two goals. Yarra Junction, with two goals against the wind to three Alex. goals probably won the match during this period. Alex. had a good third quarter, holding Yarra Junction to two goals whilst able to kick a goal themselves into the wind. Trailing by three goals at the last change Alex. had most of the play in the last quarter but were not as effective up forward as needed and a 'Junction goal against the wind was enough to enable them to

hold on and defeat Alex. by three points again, 7.10 to 7.7. Best were Cory Jack, Jordan Purcell and Jock Blakeney as the Rebels lamented the one that got away. 'Junction won the Premiership six days later.

Best and Fairest voting: **Seniors.** 58. Ben Cooper. 41. Chris Mullins. 36. Scott Heveren. 33. Nathan Dundas. 18. Matt Steiner. 16. Jake Steyger. 13 Tyler Horwood. 12. Will Goonan, Stephen Steiner. 11 Ben Woolard. 7 Jack Goonan, Conner Heaslip. 6. David Bourke, Michael Miller. 4. Chase Paerce. 3. Brent McDonald. 2. Jordan Purcell. 1. Scott Hill, Jack Tossol, Kurt Veldman. **Reserves** 53. Ben Podger-Carroll. 28. Tom. Halligan. 24. Bill Cody. 23. Michael Coombs, Shaun Graham. 18. Cory Jack, Len Jenkins, Jordan Purcell. 12 Jasper Rouget. 9. Jock Blakeney. 7. Paul Francis, Michael Heyes. 5. Chase Pearce, Jes Sherritt. 3. Jaye Rogerson, Daniel Roper. 2 Jason Krijt, Jonathan Noy, Kurt Veldman. 1 Max Church, Jedd Hamill, Brent McDonald, Matt Mitchell, Daniel Rouget, Ben Van Lierop, Luke Ware, Andrew Wood.

YVMDFNL TROPHY PRESENTATION NIGHT October 2nd 2015. Life Membership: Ms Mandie Westwood. Presidents Trophy: Lauren Steyger. Trainers Trophy: Gavan Skerritt. Barry Thompson Best Clubman: Sam Kidd. Andrew Whitling Volunteer: Toni Carter. Netball Volunteer: Jody Collins. 200 games: Len Jenkins. 100 games: Lee Ragg. **FOOTBALL.** Best and Fairest and Runner-up as per above voting. Most Consistent (Seniors / Reserves.) Nathan Dundas / Michael Heyes. Most Determined. David Bourke / Paul Francis. Most Improved. Jake Steyger / Michael Coombs. Best First Year. Tyler Horwood / Matthew Mitchell. Coaches Trophy. Jack Goonan. / Billy Cody. Leading Goalkicker. Chris Mullins / Shaun Graham.

NETBALL. Best and Fairest: (A / B/ / C/ D) Caitlan Haggis / Kathryn Veldman / Sasha Mason / Kelly Cleven. Runner-up: Lauren Steyger / Steph Morton / Ebony Purcell / Jacinta Kelly. Most Consistent: Bethany Cairns / Rebecca McLeod / N/A / Karlie Bridgman. Most Determined: N/A / Kimberlee Shaw / Kristie Warren-Smith / Ally Crouch Most Improved: Olivia Twining / Hana Duldig / Jayde Cairns / Emily King. Coaches trophy: Kim McDonald, Tara Hoornweg / Ebonnie Twining / Katherine Quincee / Tess McDonald.

S.D.J.F.N.A JUNIOR PRESENTATION NIGHT. Sept. 13th 2015. The David Welch Memorial Award was presented to the Jack Family, Cory, Michelle, Ben, Dylan and Noah. **FOOTBALL.** Best and Fairest: (U16/ U14/ U12.) Peter Cairns / Tom Rouget / Henry Meggitt. Runner-up: Harrison Murdoch / Tyson Pedlar/ James Meggitt Most Consistent: Corey Malcolm / Dean Warren / Brodie Humphries. Most Determined: Tom Cordier / Jordan Laurie-Rhodes / Kobe Gogoll. Most Improved: Darcy Rouget / Angus Smith / Bowen McCarthy, Cooper Kidd. Best First Year Player: Ben Thomas / Jacob Simms / Kaleb Soward-Findlay. Best Utility: Mitch Dunsford / Jai Lerch-Mackinnon / Bailey Goschnick. Coaches Trophy: Christian Hibberd / David Ray, Nathan Stewart / Ben Kemp, Lachlan Armstrong.

NETBALL. Best and Fairest: (U16/ U14/ U12.) Caitlan Haggis / Ellie Hedger / Riley Thomas. Runner-up: Chelsea Skerritt / Shona Gesler / Mia Rouget. Most Determined: Melita Laurie-Rhodes / Shannan Cinerari / Ellie Sinclair. Most Improved: Darcy Cann / Matilda Walker / Jorja Gesler. Best First Year Charlotte Harris (U12 only) Coaches: Elley Morison / Phoebe Sheehan, Yolanda Vinycomb / Paige Bingham.