

President

If a successful cricket club is measured by premierships alone, then our club has had yet another sensational season. Our First Eleven has continued to dominate the Luscombe Shield competition and has completed its quest to win back to back premierships in fine style, by also completing the season undefeated. It was an exciting time for the club and I confirm my congratulations to Greg Peters and his team for their continued efforts, dedication and commitment. This is the team's third premiership in the past four years. These senior players in the club set the perfect example for us all in the way that they train, the way that they prepare for their cricket and their loyalty to each other and their team. The challenge of coming up again for another campaign in the forthcoming season will be one which will each of these players will take pride in accepting.

Our club's only other finals contender was our Fifth Eleven. These guys were able to win enough games throughout the season despite the difficulties of having an unknown number of players on match days and of playing home games away from Ormond Park. Jeff Nicol and his team will be especially proud of their efforts and it is noted that the team presented itself extremely well in the final, making a big score but eventually losing in an exciting and close finish. Well done boys. Some doubt still exists over the future of the Fifth Eleven as a promise by the City of Essendon and the EBKCA to allocate the south west pitch for our Fiftths has, for the second year in succession, been unfulfilled.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank each of the other captains. Shane Williams had an excellent season in the Second Eleven, with his team just failing in the final game of the season to clinch a place in the finals. It is only Shane's second year as a captain and took over the role in the Twos after a successful debut in the Thirds last season. Well done and thank you Shane. To Danny Fitzpatrick, I also offer a huge thankyou for your year. The thirds struggled to keep pace with the top teams in their grade for much of the season but they continued to show great spirit throughout the season and big things are predicted for this eleven in the coming year.

On a sadder note, the club reluctantly bids farewell to our Fourth Eleven captain, Doug McLaggan who has moved to Darwin for business reasons. I will miss Doug as a close friend of mine, and the club will sorely miss him as a clubman. I will always be indebted to Doug for his loyalty to me, for his reliability at training and for all his outstanding contribution to the club in building the new pitch and in providing expertise and labor in a host of other general clubroom improvements. Good luck to Doug, Leonie and family.

Of major concern to me and to the committee over recent seasons, has been our practice facilities. Our unusable practice nets have been an ongoing concern for many years originating from an Essendon City Council blunder in positioning of the nets. It is the committee's intention to build two, maybe three nets, in the area just down from the clubrooms with the wickets to run at the same angle to our existing new pitch. Peter Gardiner has drafted a plan for this facility and has offered to oversee this project and to lead our club in negotiations with the Essendon City Council. Peter, as many of us know, has a very good knowledge of how councils operate and is hopeful of gaining financial assistance from council to erect these practice nets. On behalf of the whole club, I thank Peter for his efforts.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my committee and record my appreciation of their efforts in making the club what it is. To my Vice President, Darren Nagle. Good on you, you big Boofhead!! It is a bonus for the club that Spud is not only a tireless committeeman for the club but he is also a model of endeavour at training and in a game. John Talone is an efficient and reliable club secretary throughout the working day, and a raging, dangerous party animal at night. You are a sick man, John Talone.

In the bar, Michael Harvey has found his new vocation and his efforts have been noted and appreciated by all that I have spoken to. Warwick Nolan continues to be an outstanding contributor to our club and I thank him for his many hours spent in the service of our club. Many thanks go to Greg Meyers for his superb dedication to the pavilion manager's task. No one has ever done a better job in this role. Greg also donates a considerable amount of cleaning materials to the club. Thank you Greg. To Peter Gardiner I pass on my thanks to you. I have always valued your opinion and envied your insight and your contribution to my successful Presidency is not minute. I thankyou for your efforts and support in a variety of roles throughout the season. To Warwick Knill I say thank you and well done. The portfolio of Social Secretary can be a distressing one but Jacko brought a new vision to the role and his contribution to our club's success has not gone unnoticed. And last, but by no means least, I wish to thank Robyn Storey for her dedication and support in my time as President. As expected, the canteen is run superbly. In addition, the counter meals on Thursday nights after training were just fantastic and a great money spinner for our club. As we all know, the Moonee Valley CC afternoon tea on a Saturday is second to none. Well done Robyn!

I thank you all for your support during the season and hope to see you all at the Annual General Meeting.

Ray Storey