



A1s TAKE OUT DBA PREMIERSHIP! 10-3 win forged on the back of **Blake Cunningham** complete game Error free in the field Big game for **Chelt bats**



Scoop reports: first the clichés – on a perfect day for baseball up at Clow St, the two titans of the Dandenong Baseball Association, Cheltenham and Dingley, went head to head in a ripping finale to the A1 season with the Rustlers emerging victorious after a hard-fought win.

OK, clichés aside – we WON!! In perhaps the best all-round effort by the A1s this season, given the occasion and the opposition, the Rustlers dominated an opponent they greatly respect from start to finish, never really allowing the lads from Dingley a sniff.

Backing up a stunning complete game outing from **Blake Cunningham** with excellent error-free defence and with a commanding 14-4 positive hit count, the Rustlers took out the flag in absolutely convincing fashion. Incredibly, the 2014 flag is the club's 11th A grade premiership in the last 14 seasons and puts us back in the winner's circle after a one-year hiatus.

Starting in pristine, sunny conditions perfect for the benefit of the locals watching on getting some handy tips about how good baseball is played, the two teams both put up 0-spots for the 1st. Another zero for Dingley in their second dig was followed by Chelt's opening salvo of the game, coming off a nice RBI single up the middle to young gun **Sammy Trend Beacom**; 0-1 to the Rustlers.

Another 0-dig for Blake signalled the breakout 3rd innings for Chelt. Another RBI single to **Sam TB** made it 2-0 getting us off to a great start, followed by a bases-loaded RBI walk to **Kane Davidson** getting it to 3-0, then a rip to Centre-left to **Koji Campitelli** brought in two more runs to push it up to a psychologically tough 5-0 gap – the hill was starting to get steep for Dingley. And it got steeper; a scoreless 4th both ways was followed by another 0-spot to Dingley in the 5th and at this stage of the game, Blake was 'perfect' – in pitching terms he hadn't allowed a hit or a baserunner. Chelt's 5th brought in another run making it 6-0 and it was starting to look comfortable.

However, just as you start to think comfortable in baseball, it turns around and reminds you who's in charge as the Dingley bats suddenly broke the inhibiting Cunningham shackles for consecutive safe hits and 2 runs in making it 6-2 – an added Chelt 7th run answered the threat straight away and we then entered the final third of the game with a decent, but not unassailable, lead.

Another Dingley run in the 7th got them their 3rd but that proved to be the sum of the Dingley runs for the afternoon, and as if to underscore the point after another answering Chelt run made it 8-3, **Paul Rutgers** unleashed a monster 2RBI double in front of his adoring fans, making it a now-insurmountable 10-3 lead heading into the 9th.

The equation was now simple; 3 outs and the premiership was Chelt's. Thankfully, Dingley went along with the plot at this stage and offered up no last minute bravery going down in order to Blake in his 9th dig and a complete game masterpiece. No need to bat again - perfect.

PREMIERS!!!

Excellent all round game and, unless the official scorer disagrees, it was an error-free game by the Chelt defence which contributed to the win hugely. A 14-4 hit count Rustlers' way was also decisive – it meant that the ball was consistently going out into the Dingley outfield and we had baserunners pretty much every dig. To cap it off a superlative display off the mound by Blake Cunningham just iced it – to go perfect through 5 just set up the win beautifully.

As mentioned after the game, it was a new look A1 Rustlers outfit this season: a great combination of 'older' established names, and an exciting list of younger guys coming in and holding down their places beautifully. And as we know, very well coached - combine it all together and you've got a pretty decent lineup.

Congratulations to the team and to coach **Dave "Clarko" Clarkson** and assistant **Trevor "TC" Clemens**.

Great win!

Special mentions to **Brandon Stenhouse** who played all season only to be affected by injury at the end - Brando suited up and sat on the bench for the game.

Also mentions to **Max Barrett**, **Mitch Holding** and **Jack Enciondo** away with Australian Schoolboys who all would have been playing yesterday in some capacity. When you think of who was unavailable, it makes it an even more impressive win.

Hits:

Russ Ferguson 2 (double, single)
Sam Trend Beacom 2 (single, single, 2RBI)
Kane 'Insane' Davison 2 (single, single, RBI BB)
Sam Michael 2 (single, single)
Paul Rutgers 2 (double, single, 2RBI)
Matt Blackmore 2 (double, single)
Koji Campitelli 1 (single, 2RBI)
Brett Curnow 1 (single)

Pitching:

Blake Cunningham: 9 innings, 7Ks, 4 hits, 3 runs

Click on pictures to enlarge:

Cheltenham Rustlers 2014 A1 Premiers.



Back: Trevor Clemens (Ass. Coach), Yuta Sekino, Sam Michael, Brandon Stenhouse, Blake Cunningham
 Middle: (sort of squatting) Sam Trend Beacom
 Front: Russell Ferguson, Paul Rutgers, Kane Davidson, Brett Curnow, Koji Campitelli, David Clarkson,
 Very front with a lush beard: Matt Blackmore

Below Premiership Coach Clarkson; right Blake and Kane: below right, Paul Rutgers

