

Clarko's 2012 Winter Grand Final Wrap

Great reading this, check it out; Club Coach **Dave Clarkson's** 2012 DBA Grand Final match wrap, exclusive to Cheltenham BC website:

By **David Clarkson**



A big night last night with family and friends. Finish cleaning up and hit the sack around 12.30 am.

Wake up at 6.00 am to the birds singing and a quick look outside has a smile on my face. Blue skies and no Northerly wind blowing, not like the last 2 games against Dingley at Dingley.

Up and at them at 6.30 am to make sure I have enough line up sheets in my folder and then write out the team list. Tough decision to be made, Ben Leslie in, Matt Carlile to start on bench. How do I approach Matt when I see him?

Paper arrives at 8.00 am, so a quick trot out to the driveway in boxers; who cares what the neighbours think? Then back inside to peruse the papers to see who the mighty Swans will be playing in the Preliminary Final.

Do the right thing by Wifey and wash her car as well as mine, just to relieve the little butterflies in the tummy.

All is looking good as I check my watch and think about having shower and then heading down to Dingley to check out the A4's. Unfortunately, a mate turns up with his daughter who is having a day long play with my daughter and proceeds to talk for 45 minutes. Now I am starting to panic!!!! He finally leaves as I rush inside, shower, change and make my way down Springvale Rd.

Thinking on the way down Springy Rd there will be a lot of cars in the car park, better go straight to the netball centre and park for the day. Fantastic, plenty of car spots available. Get my bag and the balls out of the truck and head to the baseball fields. Mind you, I have never been this way before and by the time I had made my way thru the scrub and found the A4's playing on the outer ground I thought I had turned into Bear Grylls. Definitely not drinking my own urine!!!!

Dumped my bag and baseballs behind the 3rd base dugout on the main field and went to watch Stenny and his boys tussle with the Angels of Dandenong. Unfortunately, the Angels had a 7 to nothing head start. Looking towards the Angels pitcher and noticing Earl Byrne throwing I thought, 'good luck Stenny'.

From there I departed to watch the A2's and their battle with Dingley. Well, when I arrived they were 3-0 down. Now I'm thinking, it's going to be a tough day at the office. I have to find Matt Carlile and let him know his news. I walk up to him and grab him on the shoulder, "Matt, I need to have a chat". He says "I know". I am somewhat relieved, but do indeed feel sorry for him.

Now things have turned around and one hit after another the A2's had come from being down 3-0 to winning 4-3. A big smile had come across my face as I recalled me filling in for these guys in the second game of the season and being bashed up by Berwick. How far this team had come. Unfortunately, these boys succumbed to lose to Dingley in 33 innings, (well, that's how long it seemed), but I don't think anyone of those 14, 15, 16 year olds will ever forget this game. What a truly remarkable effort from this team.

Sitting beside the 3rd base dugout while this game was going and going and going, I was thinking to myself, how are my boys going to respond to this? I turn around to try and find my team and there they are warming up between the innings in the A2's game. Another smile comes on my face as I feel the boys have come to play.

Game time is now 2.45 pm and a quick look across and see that Grant Irving is warming up instead of Mathew Prior. What's going on here? Managers meeting, National Anthem, lets go get 'em boys.

Walk out to the coaches box and then crash! On the second pitch of the game we have Ben Leslie sitting on second. A walk to Ferg and the a hit pitch ball to JJ, I'm feeling good. Blackers hits a rope towards the 2nd baseman, its over his head and we are on the board. We should have capitalised more but I am happy we are on the board.

To the bottom of the 1st and I am riding every one of Yoshi's pitches. He does a great job and they are retired without a score.

Top of the 2nd and we conjure up another 2 runs to lead 4-0.

Bot 2nd, Yoshi is on song and we still lead 4-0.

A screaming Home Run by Brett Curnow makes it 5-0.

Things are looking good.

Bottom 4th, Pinkstar hits a bomb to make it 5-1, but the ground announcer keeps telling everyone it is 4-1. "Hey Blake, can you check the score for me as I have it 5-1 and the announcer has it 4-1". Blake goes and checks, "Clarko, he's wrong, its 5-1"

Yoshi continues to dominate the bat and after a massive effort is relieved by Blake who continued to dominate the Dingley bats.

On to the bottom of the 9th and their first hitter smacks the ball only to be caught by a horizontal shortstop in Brett Curnow. Apparently it was a very great catch - Manager missed it as he was tending to his line up sheet.

Finally we get out 27 for the game, which means that Cheltenham win.

A lot of shaking hands and a cold beer and the nerves had finally disappeared.



Back: Dave Clarkson, Matt Blackmore, Brendan Horne, Kane Davidson, Adam Blackley, Anthony Reinke, Blake Cunningham, Brett Curnow, Trevor Clemens

Front: Matt Carlile, Ben Leslie, Russell Ferguson, JJ O'Connor, Paul Rutgers, Yoshi Campitelli