

CHELTENHAM

BASEBALL

CLUB

SUMMER SEASON 1989-90

ANNUAL REPORT

COACHES REPORT 1989/90

The overall improvement in our Club in recent years continued with all the senior sides making the finals. Practice attendance varied from 20 to 35 players and there was again strong competition for places in the teams.

Although all teams acquitted themselves well in the finals, only the Reserves went all the way to the flag and everyone associated with the team is to be congratulated as there were many contributors over the full course of the season and the finals series. Much of the credit for our success goes to our pitchers; Greg Brown, Dean Connor, Mark Diamond, Rob Ainscough, Mark Dinnie, John Carlile and Jeff McKee who were moved around between teams to make sure we were always competitive on the mound. Their co-operation was much appreciated.

Our overall situation as a club at the end of the season can best be described as solid. Probably a little behind Geelong and certainly comparable with Upwey in terms of player strength. Newport won the premiership but they are really a one team club who will find it hard going in the future. Depth is essential if we are to achieve and maintain Division 1 status in the V.B.A. and we are now in a position where 2 or 3 strong and experienced players could make all the difference when combined with our young and rapidly improving players.

I have had the privilege to be Club coach for 10 of the past 13 years and in looking back over the seasons I cannot remember when we have been better placed. Our facilities are now better than most clubs, we have stabilised our player numbers and the junior section is producing quality players every year. How well the Club performs in the nineties will depend entirely on our own desire to excel and our dedication to the tasks in hand.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the players, coaches and administrators for their support this season and over the years and particularly those who go back with me to the times at Chelt. Park. Their perseverance and dedication will always be appreciated.

The Club was very fortunate to have Paul Ferguson, Bruce Fitzgerald and Trevor Martin looking after the Reserves, Division 3 and Division 2 Thirds respectively. I believe they managed to the full potential of their teams and thoroughly deserved the success they achieved.

The new competition structure to take effect next season could provide the mechanism for a very rapid transition to Division 1 status and it is essential the Club starts off strongly in the early part of the season. The structure should also remove much of the recruitment pressure presently on our better young players as there will now be ample opportunity to test ourselves against the stronger clubs and players. Without the "Division 1 carrot" I doubt that some of the current clubs will hold their places for long.

Our future is clearly in our own hands and if we stick together we will succeed together.

JOHN FERGUSON

DIVISION 2 FIRSTS

PLAYERS

G. Allen	A. Dinnie	S. Lewis	K. Williams
G. Brown	M. Ducksbury	M. Phillips	G. Wonnacott
A. Connor	L. Hall	A. Porreca	C. Upfill
D. Connor	G. Hicks	C. Reece	
D. Corby	T. Hogben	M. Stewart	
M. Diamond	D. Johnson	D. Smith	

Scorer: Terasse Connor

Manager: John Ferguson

Ass. Mgr: Bert Calvert

The Team finished fourth behind Geelong, Upwey and Newport and our major deficiency was lack of offence. Our best contributors at the plate were:

- * Trevor Hogben who returned this season to lead the club in most offensive categories including 26 hits, 20 R.B.I.'s, and a slugging average of .513.
- * Mark Diamond who inspite of a slow start where he was 1 for 16 finished with 22 hits and team leading batting average of .385.
- * Geoff Wonnacott was another major contributor after he gained a place in the side picking up 17 hits from only 40 at bats for a .425 average. His hussle and aggression played a big part of our improvement after the Christmas break.

Congratulations go to Dean Connor for winning our Club Champion and Golden Glove Awards. Dean was clearly our best player and he shouldered most of the pitching load (102 innings - 109 hits and 61 strike outs) for 7 wins, 4 losses and 1 save and an E.R.A. of 3.4. He made only 1 error on defence as a pitcher or an outfielder and he also picked up 22 hits for an .328 average.

Greg Brown battled an arm problem most of the season but showed a lot of heart to fight back to finish 3:3 and I am sure the competition has not seen the best of Greg's pitching yet.

Three new players, Tony Dinnie, Mark Phillips and Darren Smith had established themselves in the firsts by the end of the season and they should improve rapidly with this experience under their belts.

Andy Connor caught every innings of every game and Laurie Hall led the Club in runs scored (20) and steals (10). The Club continued to demonstrate its remarkable ability to fight back from difficult positions late in games and our application at those times was first class and something that is needed throughout the whole game.

Our team was as fit as any in the competition and this was again due to the conditioning programme run by Bert Calvert and the

dedication of the individual players. Bert's efforts and drive on the training track have been a major factor in our consistent improvement.

In closing I would like to formally record my thanks to a couple of evergreens - Laurie Hall and Kevin Williams for their high level of effort and invaluable advice in the 250 plus games they played with and for me as their manager and I would recommend their attitude and application as a role model for any aspiring first nine player.

Our special thanks also go to Terasa Connor for her top class work as our statistician and scorer.

JOHN FERGUSON
Club Coach

DIVISION TWO RESERVES REPORT 1989/90

At the beginning of the season the Reserves looked a good team on paper, but with a poor opening game against Geelong it became obvious that potential would not be enough. One big problem was the rookie coach and the lack of rapport with his charges.

As the season progressed it became clear that there were only three good teams but with Reserves you never know because players are exchanged with the Firsts. We were no exception. About half way through we lost a few players for the rest of the season. Their replacements from the Firsts however contributed a great deal to our success.

Toward the end of the season a close unit was forming and by the finals a purpose had developed within the team's approach, it was then that the potential turned into winning ability.

Various outstanding individual performances during the season did assist in keeping us near the top of the ladder but it was the steady, better than average pitching and catching performances that got us there at the end. Batting was average and base running was generally poor.

The finals were slightly different although our pitching throughout the three games was excellent. Each player lifted their level of performance and as their effort increased so did their confidence. With hindsight, the greatest improvement which made the difference between winning and losing was our catching. The first semi-final and the preliminary final were the tough games. The grand final became a formality but only because our guys knew in the end what had to be done and did it.

This team is a credit to the club and all the coaches over past years. Most of the players should make the firsts in 1990/91. They have proven their readiness to take the Club on to bigger and better things.

Finally, I wish to thank all the non-playing supporters for their contributions throughout the season.

PAUL FERGUSON
Manager

DIVISION THREE

The Thirds had an excellent season finishing a creditable third in the competition. The performance over the year, competing against many clubs' first nines, showed consistency and application.

A most pleasing aspect of the season was the improvement shown by players from the previous year and the development during the season. This improvement can be measured by our performances against Port Melbourne (the undefeated premiers) during the year. We played four times losing by 22 runs (their normal winning margin) on the first occasion. By comparison we only lost to them by 1 run in the semi-finals at the end of the season.

Much of the improvement was due to two factors. Firstly the pitching staff performed admirably, especially toward the business end of the season, and secondly, improvement by the players who lifted their batting averages from around 200 to 300.

In closing I would like to thank the players, John McHarry (scorer), supporters, coaches and the committee for their support during the season.

BRUCE FITZGERALD
Manager

DIVISION TWO THIRDS

The Division 2 Thirds finished the year in fourth position following a determined season against some gritty opposition. Only Geelong were victorious over us twice in the season and we split the home and away fixture with the eventual premiers Bonbeach.

While it could not be claimed that any consistency was apparent, or developed over the year, wins, and close losses against Upwey Ferntree Gully, Fitzroy, Croydon, Blackburn and Bonbeach were a credit to team and individual performances.

The team finished the season in a more cohesive fashion than it began. However, we clearly found in the finals appearance against Upwey, practice is needed and work on the games skills to produce a performance which is dependable.

The team would like to thank the scorer, Val Bailey, umpire Graeme Ainscough and the selection committee for their support during the season.

TREVOR MARTIN
Manager