

CGFC Newsletter #4 of 2009

On the eve of our first encounter with Old Geelong for quite a number of years and also the eve of the Annual Blue and White Ball, I can report that selection is not getting any easier. Forced to drop two senior players to the reserves, despite an outstanding team performance in the last round, in fact our best performance to date, was almost embarrassing. Also, in direct contrast to 2008 when our stocks were so low, even club leaders of the ilk of Richard Foote and Andrew Docker are returning via the reserves after some time off with injuries. While we have been generally rewarding players who have performed consistently in the reserves, it has been difficult to find spaces and our reserves are in a position of strength accordingly.

Since the last newsletter, we played superbly against Mazenod and after a very competitive first half, our boys turned up the heat in the third quarter with 8 goals to 3 and a convincing 6 goal win at siren time to put us 1 game and percentage clear of the pack. Chris Axias was outstanding on the ball and the defence teamed perfectly for the majority of the game. Darcy Daly (3), Andrew Slevison (5) and Ben Carboni (3) were our most dangerous forwards. Tom Breen, in his best performance to date and Mark Nelson in the ruck were two key players in this important game. In a terrific reserves game between the top two teams, Mazenod held out our boys by only 1 point with Jordan Stewart, Andy Lawson and Fran McArdle all stating their case for senior selection. A 5 goal loss to the U19's saw them drop out of the top four. The Club 18 also lowered their colours.

Just when you thought there was no stopping the Blue and White machine, we travelled to Oakleigh and got nicely 'toweled' to say the least. Oakleigh out muscled and out played our boys, in both senior and reserves and looked a very polished group, especially on their tight, home turf. Chris May with 3 goals was clearly our best along with Mark Liddell and Darcy Daly - after that we struggled to find a level of competency! How would this poor performance affect us? The U19's also met their match against SKOBS and only the clubbies saved the day with a 30 goal win, a terrific effort.

The much awaited contest against AJAX was preceded by an intense week on the track for the senior squad in particular. Coach Steve Lawrence was testy at training and joined in the drills to add intensity with constant reminders that the performance at Oakleigh was unacceptable. When the Jackers kicked the first 3 goals there was some cause for concern but gradually the Fields got on top and held a handy 5 goal lead at half time. Demanding a full four quarter effort, Steve Lawrence could not have been more pleased as the boys kicked 13 goals to AJAX's 3 in the second half and top spot had been regained with other results going our way. It was truly a "team effort" against AJAX but with special mentions to skipper, "Wij", Slevo (9 goals), Ben Carboni, Tom Sundberg returning from injury and Chris Hammond taking on a challenge in defence. The Reserves also turned it on with a 12 goal win to consolidate in third position; the U19's grab a 3 point win over Haileybury to stay in touch with the top four. Unfortunately the clubbies' winning run was halted by a strong Melburnians team.

With only 2 games remaining (Old Geelong and Beaumaris) to reach the half way mark, we have the opportunity to stay on top but, "playing for one another", our catch cry, must be maintained.

Attendance at home game luncheons has been very strong. A lot of effort to improve the ambiance has been rewarded by the excellent numbers and there is a clear appreciation of interesting guest speakers. Additional support from players' parents has really given us a real "shot in the arm" and more attention to our supporter data base is paying dividends in terms of communication.

We have received some positive response from our plea to past players for assistance on match days but frankly, we need more to ensure that we meet our requirements each week. Scott Williams would welcome any support and board member, Ross Wood is the main organiser of the parent support. The U19's have been successful in securing regular support each Saturday from parents and we are grateful for Ian Hyland's involvement in arranging this.

As a respected member club of the VAFA and given our strong relationship with our School it is important for us to maintain certain standards on and off the field. We have made a concerted effort this season to show even more on field discipline (not really a problem in recent times) and off field behavior. We have asked our supporters to show more respect for umpires and opposition players to accord with our Code of Conduct and this has been achieved. We have reminded our players of their responsibility to our Code of Conduct and that off field misdemeanours can not only harm the image of our club but can affect their membership status. We presently have what we consider is our most promising group of young players in recent times. The group not only has football talent but presents an array of quality people who by their commitment to CGFC and their chosen sport add to the value of the community in general. We remain committed to enhancing and protecting our good reputation.

We will resume tomorrow following the Queen's Birthday break in full knowledge that we are now the target for the remaining nine clubs in our section. Our coaching philosophy is that we must continue to be the "hunters" and not accept being the "hunted". We have the depth at present to maintain pressure on both our senior and reserve squads and providing we avoid an excessive amount of injuries or we do not succumb to Swine Flu, we have every right to be confident of finals' football.

We look forward to your ongoing support (membership forms still available) and to providing you with exciting football

week by week.

Don't forget to follow the match reports each week at www.cgfc.com.au

Kind regards,

Geoff Reilley, on behalf of the CGFC Board and Coaching Staff