

Dytes take the drop

For the first time in more than 20 years, Warrandyte will not compete in the premier division of the Ringwood District Cricket Association next season.

Warrandyte Cricket Club have voluntarily relegated themselves from the prestigious Chandler Shield competition to the lower Wilkins Shield.

The committee was forced to take this action because of a shortage of senior players.

Under RDCA rules, clubs playing in the Chandler Shield must have four senior teams to play in the four grades of the competition.

"Unfortunately, we could not guarantee the RDCA that we could achieve this," said WCC president Robert White.

"It is a great shame. We have a proud record of being one of only three teams never to be relegated from the Chandler Shield, but a decision had to be made.

"Last year our fourth eleven were forced to forfeit a number of matches and in some games we had fewer than 11 players in the thirds and fourths.

"The RDCA wasn't prepared to let this happen again and we could not see our way clear

to be sure we would have the numbers."

White said committee members had contacted as many club members as possible but could not get a firm commitment to ensure there would be a suitable pool of players.

"It is very disappointing but perhaps it is a sign of the times," he said. "There are so many options for young people, especially in the summer.

"We are also aware that many people are now working at the weekends and it makes it difficult for them to make a commitment over two weeks."

White said he was hopeful the change would be to the long-term benefit of the club.

"In Wilkins Shield we will play 14 games compared with 11 in Chandler Shield," he said.

"There will be seven one-day and seven two-day games in a home-and-away system among the eight clubs. This will provide more cricket and more one-day options for our players"

He said the quality of cricket in Wilkins Shield was strong, with such powerful clubs as North Ringwood and Norwood being unable to return to the top division.

Wonga Park, who finished bottom last year in Chandler Shield and would have been relegated, will now remain in the top grade.

Cricket training moves outdoors

Warrandyte cricket will return to the recreation ground for training on Thursday, September 13. It will be the first outdoor training session following five weeks of indoor practice.

Retirements and the unavailability of many players have provided plenty of opportunities for young cricketers to show their talents in senior ranks.

Club president Robert White said last year's captain-coach Russell Jenzen had joined East Ringwood and while his ability with both bat and ball would be missed, his absence provided chances for such players as Campbell Holland and Matthew Sazenin to step up.

"The opportunities are there. It is up to the young players to take them," he said.

White said the club would be



Russell Jenzen

looking to their junior ranks to ensure their future.

"Junior training from Under-12s to Under-16s has been ex-

citing and enthusiastic, with indoor seasons for five weeks," he said. "There are a number of talented youngsters moving from Under-14s to Under-16s and they will be encouraged to have a go in senior teams.

"The future of Warrandyte Cricket Club really relies on the juniors. We have to encourage them to become involved and let them see there is a playing path within the club."

The juniors held a successful registration day on Sunday, September 2. Any junior cricketers interested in joining the club should contact junior coordinator Trevor Taylor on 0412 224329.

Senior registration night will be on Thursday, October 4, after training.