

Second-chance Dytes!

SPORT



Warrandyte Cricket Club's hopes of winning a First XI premiership to celebrate their 150th anniversary season are on a knife edge when they meet St Andrews on March 12-13 in the Ringwood District Cricket Association Second Division preliminary final.

A loss will see the end of their season but a win will enable them to take on North Ringwood and avenge their second semi-final defeat.

After finishing the season a game and a half clear on top of the ladder, Warrandyte were clear favorites to win the semi-final and earn automatic entry into the grand final.

But a poor performance with the bat in difficult, wet conditions saw them dismissed for 144 and North Ringwood were able to overtake the total for the loss of only five wickets.

Warrandyte will have three senior teams in action on the weekend with the Second XI's fairytale continuing after defeating St Andrews in the first semi-final while the Third XI will play in the preliminary final after losing the second semi-final to North Croydon.

The Fourth XI booked their grand final berth with a comprehensive win while the Fifth XI have been eliminated, losing the first semi-final, also to

North Croydon. The First XI were in good form coming into the finals, coming off an outright win over premiership hopefuls South Croydon and then easily accounting for Montrose in the final home-and-away game.

Batting first at home against North Ringwood, Tyson Brent and Jason Graf got the team off to a slow but steady start until both Graf and Adam White fell cheaply, leaving the score at 3-47.

A number of rain interruptions made it difficult for the batsmen to get a rhythm in their game and when Brent fell for 30, Warrandyte needed to steady.

But again the rain forced players from the field and when the first day ended, the Dytes were 4-96 with 26 overs to bat and the likelihood of a score close to 200 beckoned.

But as has been the case too often this season, quick wickets fell, leaving Warrandyte at 9-144.

The experienced North Ringwood side had little trouble achieving the total although Matthew Sazenis was able to

stall the run to victory with three wickets.

Despite the unexpected loss, Warrandyte still remain within sight of their premiership goal and boast a strong finals record against St Andrews.

The Seconds' remarkable run towards the premiership continues following a thrilling semi-final win.

After the first five rounds, this team were on the bottom without a win, but they have won every match since the last round before Christmas.

Each match has been an elimination final as a loss at any stage would have seen them drop out of the finals race.

Like the senior team, the Seconds batted through a series of rain delays and were precariously placed at 7-84 at the end of the first day. But a 50-run partnership for the ninth wicket by Adam Beardall and Under-14 player Ayrton Dehmel took them to a creditable 153.

Beardall continued his remarkable performance by taking 5-16 with his leg spin while veteran Robert White opened the bowling with his off spin and took 4-30 off 17 consecutive overs to dismiss St Andrews for 84.

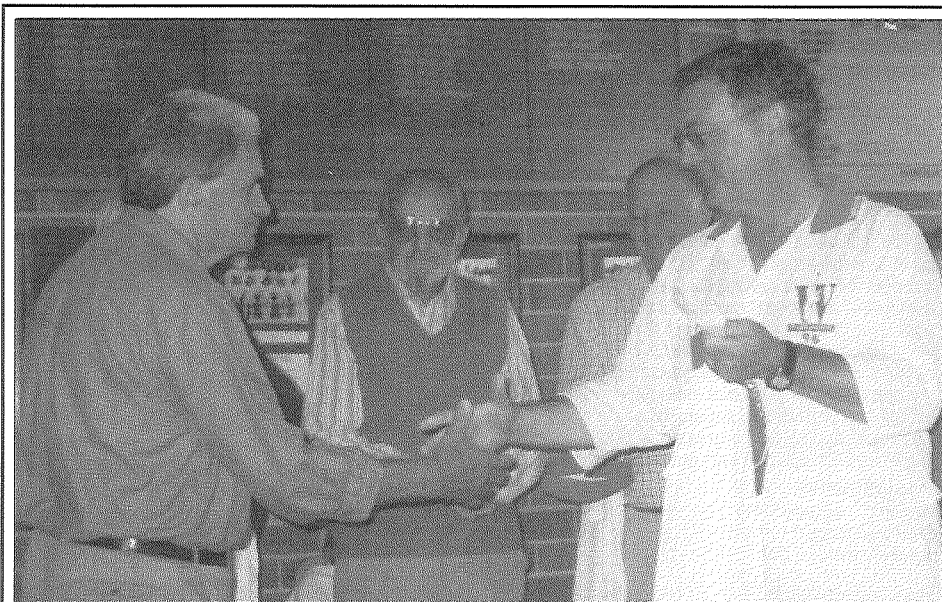
The Third XI, after taking top position on the ladder, could manage only 86 against North Croydon, with Nathan Aly's 30 the stand-out score.

The bowlers fought back, with John Prangley taking three wickets, and North Croydon passed the Warrandyte score for the loss of eight wickets.

The Fourth XI, made up of fathers and sons from the junior teams, also finished on top and went straight into the grand final with a comfortable win over Montrose.

Ken Miller was the best with the ball, taking five wickets, while Under-14 batsman Chris Barry was undefeated on 63 as he led the team to victory.

The Fifth XI were beaten in the last over by North Croydon. Dylan Clements was the best of the Warrandyte batsmen, with 25.



WCC president Robert White (right) presents Colin Chapman with his Warrandyte shirt while Jim Harris and Geoff Day (partly obscured) look on

The magnificent six

Warrandyte Cricket Club's 150th anniversary celebrations were completed last month with a special match against an Invitational XI that included former Victorian state cricketers, AFL footballers and media personalities.

"We won the match but the important thing was seeing so many people attend and take part in what was a truly memorable day," said Warrandyte president Robert White.

Apart from the invitational game, a 20-20 match made up of a mixture of senior and junior players was organised as a curtain-raiser while on the No 2 Warrandyte oval the local Veterans completed the final home-and-away game against Wantirna.

The invitational game was similar to the match played in 1955 when Warrandyte celebrated their centenary with a game against a Melbourne Cricket Club XI.

The highlight of the day was the introduction to the large crowd who gathered for afternoon tea of six of the men who played for Warrandyte in that game 50 years ago.

Two Melbourne players from the centenary game also attended.

They are Colin McDonald, who was to go on and play Test cricket for Australia, and Ian Huntington, who was to later captain the Melbourne District side.

To mark the occasion, the six Warrandyte players — Colin and Doug Chapman, Jim Harris, Geoff Day and Doug and Brian Fry — were presented with cricket club shirts with special numbers.

Each senior player is now credited with a number to indicate the order in which he was selected in the First XI since 1950. The late Allan Chapman has No 1, Jim Harris has No 2 and Colin Chapman No 3.

"It was wonderful to have these men come along and be part of our special day," said White.

"Warrandyte Cricket club have a long and proud tradition and it is important for the players of today to reflect on the efforts and deeds of some of the pioneers."

Our super season

Warrandyte set a new club record with an outstanding finish to the 2004-05 Ringwood District season.

For the first time in more than 20 years the club fielded five senior teams and all finished in the four, with the Firsts, Thirds and Fourths on top.

The club's three junior teams — Under-16, Under-14 and Under-12 — all finished in the top four.

Unfortunately, the Under-16s and Under-14s were knocked out in their respective finals, but the Under 12s will play off for a premiership on March 12-13.

The club have already secured one premiership with the Over 40s Veterans team defeating North Ringwood in the Third Division grand final.

Warrandyte dismissed North Ringwood for 126, with Steve Pascoe taking a miserly 2-8 from his allotted six overs. Opener David Stickle scored a patient 38 to help guide Warrandyte to a thrilling last-over victory.