



Veterans victorious in Over 40 Grand Final

By JOSH HUNTLY

WARRANDYTE'S OVER 40s capped off an undefeated season and, after playing off in their third consecutive Grand Final, finally broke through for Premiership glory to claim the Ken Johnston trophy by 33 runs.

GRAND FINAL

Warrandyte 163
def Croydon Ranges 133

M Spence 31 & 5/16, S Dixon 34,
C Callow 23

Facing off against their undefeated rivals in Croydon Ranges, Warrandyte won the toss and decided to bat in the decider with James Weatherley and Jason Graf opening the innings.

Silcock Reserve's slow surface meant every run was treasured and it was this fact that forced an early mix-up, leading to the run-out of Weatherley.

Travis Jackson joined Graf at the crease and looked in good form, with

a couple of boundaries to help put up a 29-run partnership, before Graf found himself caught behind for an anchoring 12, bringing skipper Mick Spence to the crease.

Jackson joined Graf in the pavillion shortly after and Chris Callow helped form an important 32-run partnership, striking strongly through the off-side before departing for 23.

A murmur spread across the healthy Warrandyte crowd as Sean Dixon strolled to the crease and sure enough, one of the more renowned power hitters of the club was off the mark with a boundary.

The four booming sixes he struck in his innings stayed mainly in the direction of cow corner until one effort too many saw him caught on the boundary, but his vital innings top-score of 34 saw the side recover to 5/117 after previously being 4/72.

Spence continued to bat on and

managed to guide his team to 141 before he was dismissed for a well-compiled 31 and resistance from the tail pushed the score to 163 — a defensible total.

It was now up to the bowling unit to bring it home, Dave Malley and Steve Warr opened up the bowling.

Croydon Ranges got off to a quick 41-run start before losing two quick wickets to the bowling of Mick Spence, bringing the Warrandyte crowd to life.

James Weatherley came into the attack and struck in his first over, bowled Weatherley, stumped Theodorou.

A 28-run partnership made for a nervous period of cricket before Damien Closs struck with a sharp caught and bowled, and a run-out courtesy of Weatherley reduced Ranges to 5/90.

Spence's second stint with the ball would spell the end for Croydon



Ranges and ice the Premiership for Warrandyte.

Running through the middle order, he collected three more wickets for a prodigious Grand Final five-wicket haul with his typical left-arm swing bowling.

Ben Sumpter claimed an LBW for

the ninth wicket before Nathan Croft kicked off the Premiership celebrations by knocking over middle stump to complete an undefeated season and take the Division 2 Plate.

For his 31 runs and 5/16, Mick Spence was rightfully named best on ground for his all-round heroics.