

RDCA JUNIOR COMPETITION ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

The RDCA junior competition continued to thrive in 2016/2017. The introduction of our first ever girls only competition was a huge success and opened our sport up to a whole new playing audience. We had 4 girls teams this season from Wonga Park, Lilydale, Montrose and Ringwood and we look forward to the competition expanding next summer.

In total, 150 teams junior teams were entered, which was an increase of 2 on the previous summer. The last two seasons had seen our numbers increase by 29 teams so we were not surprised that this levelled out slightly. Montrose won our junior club champion award, which was a fitting reward for all their hard work. It was great to see East Ringwood win the 12/3 competition with their only competitive junior side.

The junior committee has been very stable over the last couple of seasons and this has allowed us to achieve a great deal. We are very lucky to have Mandy Dolman as our Secretary and she does a power of work to ensure that the competition runs smoothly. Mandy is the first point of contact for clubs and her professional and common sense approach, ensures that all clubs are well looked after. She also does an amazing job with the help of St Andrews and Croydon Ranges to run the under 10 round robin nights, which are a massive logistical event to pull together. Mandy is quite simply a brilliant person who volunteers her time to ensure that our kids enjoy their cricket.

Our junior rep program continues to improve and this is largely due to the dedicated efforts of Bill Stafford. Bill is into his 3rd season in this role and his work from the nominations, to trials, through to the selection process ensures that we put eight strong teams on the park. As well as rep cricket, Bill looks after the fixturing, grading, rule changes and just about anything else you can think of. He is also heavily involved in the Melbourne All Abilities Cricket Association. In my time in cricket, I cannot think of a better person that I have met.

Andy Exley was the Vice President of the junior committee and he also took on the roles of umpire allocation and my cricket compliance. On top of this, he helps with the round robins, the rep program and he again umpired the under 16/1 grand final this season. His calm nature and positivity is very valuable to our committee and he is a great mentor to many people.

Our junior committee has people from many RDCA clubs who give their time to invest in our competition. I thank Melanie Causer from Bayswater Park, David Brush from Norwood, Luke Henderson from South Croydon, Sean Meehan from Templeton, Steve Toohey from Warranwood and our major sponsor, Paul Attfield from Saxon Sports for their valuable contributions to the day to day running of the competition.

The clubs accepted the trialling of a reduction in the length of the pitch this season in our under 12/5 and 12/6 grades. Despite some initial scepticism, these changes were well received and we feel will produce better cricketers, who gain greater enjoyment out of the game. We would expect this trial to expand in the coming season at the encouragement of Cricket Australia.

We extended the batters ball count into the under 14 competition this season with all under 14 games being played with a 50 ball count. This rule was also used in the 16/3 competition with great success. We now have a ball count in 11 of our 13 grades and club feedback suggests it has increased player enjoyment levels as well as the skill acquisition of all players. We think the benefits will flow into our senior competition with more lifelong cricketers being created.

The T.20 blast was hosted by Croydon North and this is another offering on the cricket menu. Some clubs cover off the 7 to 9 year olds themselves but the Blast is another option for young players who have outgrown Milo Cricket.

The under 10 round robins were hosted by St Andrews and Croydon Ranges. These clubs make big sacrifices to host these nights and, to be honest, they are a logistical nightmare but the joy and pleasure the young players get out of the night make it totally worthwhile.

As mentioned earlier, the competition increased by two teams and the breakdown is as follows:

Under 10 down from 38 to 35

Under 12 up from 50 to 52

Under 14 down from 38 to 35

Under 16 up from 22 to 24

Girls up from 0 to 4

We will continue to try to attract and retain young players and will require the ongoing support of our clubs. To assist this goal, we will need strong coaching, an atmosphere of inclusion and the understanding that every player in the team has a role to play for that team and in the future of that club.

Thank you to my wife, Maree, and my two sons, Harry and Archie, for their support. I really enjoy helping our young players improve and hopefully they fall in love with the game.

I extend a huge thanks to all clubs for trusting me in this role. I am passionate about providing opportunities for players of all abilities to fall in love with the game. I want to create a vibrant competition where young boys and girls make friends with players on both sides. I am confident that we are on the right track to making cricket more enjoyable and accessible to young players and their families.

**Sean Flynn
President**

This Season of the RDCA Junior Comp was again a great one for developing and growing junior cricket for both boys and girls!

After a few years now of simplifying and updating our procedures and processes, the administration side of the competition ran very smoothly and I would like to thank our wonderful Club Coordinators that responded quickly and professionally, which helps me greatly in my role.

All volunteers who give their time, enthusiasm and passion to help our kids enjoy this sport and all the life skills it offers to them, need to be extremely proud of their efforts!!! Thank you to all volunteers and parents.

A big highlight of this season for me was to see our first girl's competition. With the assistance of Cricket Victoria, the "RDCA Stars Girls Cricket League" was born. Ringwood, Wonga Park, Montrose and Lilydale played a fantastic first season and it was wonderful to see these girls all develop and improve their cricket skills as the season progressed. I also would like to acknowledge the great sportsmanship these girls showed and how to have fun, while still taking the comp seriously. Well done to all the players, parents and club volunteers who made this competition such a success. Next season will bring a bigger and even better competition!!!

The U10 Round Robins were again successful and it's so enjoyable to see the kids loving a different form of the game than that they usually play. This season we tried a different format at our two nights and surveyed clubs on the best format to continue on with in the future. St Andrews and Croydon Ranges are to be thanked and congratulated for hosting these nights, as it's a massive effort from all their members to help make these nights run smoothly.

I would like to congratulate all the 2016/17 Premiersip Winners:

Stars Girls Cricket League Ringwood

U16 (1) North Ringwood

U16 (3) Heathmont Baptist

U14 (2) Warrandyte

U14 (4) St Andrews

U12 (2) St Andrews

U12 (4) Croydon North

U12 (6) St Andrews

U16 (2) Ainslie Park/Croydon North

U14 (1) North Ringwood

U14 (3) South Warrandyte Hawks

U12 (1) Montrose

U12 (3) East Ringwood

U12 (5) Templeton

Congratulations to all individual RDCA award winners and T/20 competition winners:

U12 Montrose

U14 Mooroolbark

U16 North Ringwood

The RDCA junior section is very lucky to have an awesome Committee, which is headed by Sean Flynn as President. Sean is such an asset to our association, his passion and motivation for growing and improving kid's cricket is undeniable! Sean is always approachable and keen to help wherever he can and I personally want to thank him for always being there to support me in my role. Sean is a fantastic guy and is supported by a wonderful understanding family, Maree and their two lovely son's.

Andy Exley is our Vice President who I also thank for his support of both Sean and myself. Andy will always help wherever he can and has done a great job running the Umpire allocations and MyCricket results this season.

Bill Stafford in my opinion is one of the legends of volunteers! For many years he has given so much to our game through his own club and on our Junior committee. Bill runs our Rep Cricket program, the development squads and does all the fixturing across the whole comp. I don't have an assistant Secretary but Bill certainly lightens my work load as he's always there to assist me with anything he can, thanks so much Bill.

David Brush, Melanie Causer, Steve Toohey, Sean Meehan and Luke Henderson make up the rest of the committee and their input and commitment is invaluable. Thank you all very much. I also would like to thank the Senior Committee and Board of Management for their continuing support.

The future for Junior Cricket is exciting at the moment and I feel privileged to have a small part in its growth and development within our association.

Cheers to a great past season and I look forward to the upcoming one!

**Mandy Dolman
Secretary**

VMCU Junior Carnival

This season we had our most successful carnival for a number of years. Our two U/12 teams and two U/14 teams all made finals. Keith Mitchell U/12 and Des Nolan U/14 won their quarter finals, with Des Nolan winning their semi-final, but unfortunately narrowly lost their grand final in a very close game against South East CA. Our two turf teams, Jim Beitzel U/16 and Phil Arnold U/18 were both very competitive with 2 wins each, just missing finals.

In addition to the VMCU carnival, we had a further 19 boys and 13 girls play in state carnivals. Also, 13 boys represented Bayswater and Croydon in the GJ Craig U/15 carnival.

Thank you to all our clubs who continue to support and encourage their players to attend trials and make themselves available to play in the carnival.

Congratulations to our trophy winners:

Team	Best Player	Coaches Award
U/12 Girls – Claudia Fatone	Alexandra Sheedy	Hayley McLaughlin
U/12- Josh Browne	Daniel Meehan	Luke Dowling-Horgan
U/12- Keith Mitchell	Keegan Jones	Lachlan Bates
U/14- Des Nolan	Phoenix Beck	Aidan Maher
U/14 - Russell Allen	Jordan Milne	Liam Storm
U/16 - Keith Mackay	Dylan Smith	Callum Tokell
U/16- Jim Beitzel	Jackson Merrett	George Harries
U/18 - Phil Arnold	Jake Sali	Bradley Stewart

Thank you to our coaches and team managers for all their time and effort they put into the selection process, practice games and throughout the carnival. We are very fortunate in the quality of coaches we have been able to appoint.

Team	Coach	Team Manager
U/12 Girls - Claudia Fatone	Jess Adams	
U/12- Josh Browne	Tim Sugumar	Brendan O’Riley
U/12- Keith Mitchell	Matt Fotia	Nathan McFarlane
U/14- Des Nolan	Dale Ingleton	Greg Campbell
U/14 - Russell Allen	Travis Nightingale	Michael Naughtin
U/16 - Keith Mackay	Josh White	Nick Chourci
U/16- Jim Beitzel	Josh Hudson	Anthony Willis
U/18- Phil Arnold	Mark Thomas/Mitch Thomas	Steve Lester

Thank you to Paul Attfield, major sponsor of the RDCA in making his in-door training facilities available to us whenever required.

**Bill Stafford
Representative Coordinator**