

The ninth season has been completed and a very successful year was enjoyed. This was on the back of difficulties for many cricketers who participate on both Saturdays and Sundays, caused by increased Sunday games for Saturday cricketers. I have been assured by the RDCA Executive that a similar situation will not occur next season. Only two forfeits occurred from the 87 games played which is very good effort by the co-ordinators of our clubs.

There were no "incidents" during the year, well done to all cricketers who are now aware that it is enjoyment that we are all seeking not aggression.

The 24 sides enjoyed wonderful weather all year except for one 40 degree C day. We will look at this situation at the Annual meeting. We welcomed Lilydale and Ely Park from Blackburn, but lost Croydon North before the year started.

The Inter-association game is the highlight of the year and many new faces played this year. The results in both the over 40's and over 50's were an exciting Tie in the 50's and a good win by 6 runs in the 40's. The games were played at Chirnside who were very good hosts. Captain Wayne Mc Crimmon led the best side we have fielded in the over 40's and Wayne and the players were very dedicated in achieving this result. Bill Swan led the 50's who can also be congratulated. Thanks to Bill Stafford, Jeff Luscombe, Steve Pascoe and Alan Duffus for their efforts as managers and selectors.

We again had great sponsorship support from Daryl Stevens from Max Brown Real Estate Croydon. We encourage all people to use his services when buying, selling or renting.

Veterans Dinner was at the Lilydale International. We had 245 people this year which was again terrific support from our cricketers. Bill Dean with Alan Duffus worked very hard to make the night. Thanks for their efforts.

It is this night a bat raffle, again kindly donated by Callen Sports, that has allowed us to make a profit. We will continue to financially support the core of cricket (our junior cricketers) at every opportunity, and assist the cricketers that represent our Association either Interstate or Overseas.

The competition standard continued to improve with all the best of the districts over 40's participating in our teams.

In Division 3 we saw a surprised Ainslie Park finish on top but lose to a very good team in Lilydale, who were in their first year. Well done Lilydale.

In Division 2, Wantirna South won the Ken Johnston trophy from Chirnside Park. Both these teams played in Grand Finals last year. Wantirna South lost Div. 2 and Chirnside Park playing as Eastfield won Division 3. Only a few runs separated the teams at the end. Well done to both teams on another great year for their clubs.

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Our patrons trophy in Division 1 was won by Croydon Hockeyers who finished on top. I usually downplay the competitive side of our competition in these reports and other circulars, but this year the standard of cricket in Div. 1 was exceptional with most teams making large amounts of runs and generally making it hard for bowlers. With this high standard of cricket being played it was an outstanding effort by Croydon Hockeyers to play their 7th straight Grand Final and win their 5th. They defeated Parkwood, winners of Div. 2 last year who had a team of excellent players. Scores of 210 against 198 was typical of the scores of these two teams during the year. Six of the Parkwood players represented the Association against Ferntree Gully. Hockeyers still has 7 members of their first two Grand Final appearances back in 1990. This record will remain in veterans cricket for a long period as the competition is so tight it would be remarkable if any team could emulate this performance by Hockeyers.

Many clubs are now providing an after match dinner which is very satisfying for players and their families. Hopefully all teams will participate shortly. Our biggest problem with this is the teams with two sides, I would hope this trend of non attendance after the game disappears. The Executive will consider the success or otherwise of the Veterans aims, with clubs that have two sides.

The major success of the year was a fielding of a side in the Wagga NSW Golden Oldies carnival. Led and organised by Alan Duffus, 11 cricketers and four wives had a ball. Their enthusiasm on their return was a joy to listen to. I constantly say at meetings, if it is at all possible, every cricketer should take his reward for playing, coaching or administrating this game over the previous 25/40 years by going on these trips which are experiences of a lifetime.

We will be going to South Africa next March, please go, see Ken Johnston.

Whilst the year went very well, there are now many signs that we will need to look at our structure to ensure that we provide a facility that continues to be attractive to mature age cricketers. We also need to find "new blood", "new ideas" for the committee. This was written in last years report and is becoming more important each year.

In summary, all the committee have been mentioned above, but further thanks are passed on, as their efforts allow us the enjoyment of this competition. We look forward to next year with hope of a further improved competition played in a great spirit.

Brian Gobbi