

# St. Pius X College – Oxley College

ISA Semi - Final: 29/02/2020

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***The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI had a dominant win in their Semi-final on Saturday against Oxley College to progress to the grand final against Central Coast in two weeks' time. Notable mentions go to Josh Overton for 46 not out, and to Nick Ward, Rory O'Connell and Oscar MacDonald who all picked up two wickets.***

One match. 100 overs. 6 hours. The mighty 2<sup>nd</sup> XI are now just one win away from the 2019/20 Division 2 Premiership after claiming an extremely convincing win on Leap Day 2020, leaping into a home grand final against Central Coast Grammar School. Pius were visited by Oxley College on Saturday, and sent them straight back to Bowral after a clinical performance which consolidated their position as favourites for this seasons' title, which will be decided at Oxford Falls not this Saturday, but the Saturday after, on March 14, which coincides with the College Open Day.

Skipper Brad Power was greeted with a batting paradise and an outfield of carpet, dutifully prepared by the amazing groundskeepers at Oxford Falls, but lost the toss, and was consequently made to bowl first. This wasn't entirely a bad result, however, because it meant the best bowling cartel in the competition – made up of Nick Ward (2/21), Rory O'Connell (2/20), Brad Power (1/20) and Oscar MacDonald (2/28) - got an early crack at Oxley College. And whilst wickets were hard to come by, even for the Pius bowling attack, the bowlers did the next best thing and kept the dangerous Oxley batting unit under wraps for the entire innings. 1/38 at first drinks and 1/79 at second drinks, Oxley were never allowed to get going because of the extremely tight bowling and fielding from the well-drilled Pius team. Ben O'Reilly (0/13), Josh Overton (0/20) and Jackson Carrall (0/2) then kept on the pressure in the middle overs, which was a relief for Pius after the last two games, where the middle overs had fallen away from them. A display of hitting power at the end of the Oxley innings meant the wickets finally started to come for Pius, and although they couldn't keep their perfect, ten-wicket record of always bowling teams out, they did manage to take eight of Oxley's wickets, thanks to some precision death bowling from the cartel, coupled with the magnificent keeping of Julien Hyde (2 catches). Oxley were left 8/132 after a full 50 overs, the result of an amazing fielding effort from Pius on one of the best batting tracks in Sydney.

After a superb lunch provided by the amazing Pius parents, openers Jackson Carrall (12) and Joel Austin (30) strolled out to the crease with the goal of sending their team to a grand final. Pressure meant nothing to these two, as they immediately went about chasing down a sub-par Oxley total with some stunning strokeplay that did justice to the picturesque Oxford Falls landscape. Josh Overton (46\*) then came out as number three and took any remaining hope away from Oxley with a faultless innings of high-quality batting. Partnered by Tom Wunsch (22\*) near the end of the innings, the two batted with aplomb, and finished the game comfortably in 40 overs, sealing a dominant win for the men in the blue and gold. Only the top 4 was needed for Pius to finish their run chase, who paced themselves at a winning run rate the whole way through.

A domineering win for the Pius 2<sup>nd</sup> XI on Saturday was the product of a season of long training sessions and brilliant displays of cricket come Saturdays. The squad has been training since

July 2019: afternoons of hard net sessions, determined fielding drills and some very high catches has all built up to the Division 2 grand final. A win would definitely be deserved for the Twos; one of the most talented 2nds teams to ever come through the SPX cricketing system, yet still a well-rounded team who play with each other and for each other.

Hence, the mighty 2<sup>nd</sup> XI now move to the Grand Final, to be played at Oxford Falls against Central Coast Grammar. However, due to the outstanding success of the 1st XI who have also secured a home final, SPX – in collaboration with the ISA – have had to make the unprecedented move of postponing the 2nds final for a week, leaving Oxford Falls for the firsts this Saturday. Exciting times ensue for Pius cricket, which has both their 1sts and 2nds in a grand final in the same season for the first time in documented memory, let alone having both teams hosting grand finals. So, be sure to get down to the ISA Division 2 2019/20 Grand Final on Saturday, 14 March at Oxford Falls, as the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI attempt to finish their extremely successful and dominant season with an ISA premiership on home soil!

**Correspondent:** Nick Ward

**Scorer on the day:** Ms. Carla Austin

**Coach: Mr. Matt Stearn**