

# St. Pius X College – Central Coast Grammar

ISA Round 6: 30/11/2019

(Away)

*The 2nd XI finish their year undefeated from six matches after defeating Central Coast Grammar by three wickets in a tense match. Notable mentions go to Joel Austin for scoring 25 and Will Pavely for 21.*

The big moments. The moments that matter. The moments that define a team's season. They're the moments where the best teams – and the best players – step up. And to step up is exactly what the St Pius X 2<sup>nd</sup> XI did last Saturday against the second-placed Central Coast Grammar. The scene was set for a tense top-of-the-table clash when SPX travelled up the coast to play CCGS, and that's exactly what played out, a top quality game of cricket which eventuated in Pius consolidating their lead at the top of the table and continuing their now six-match undefeated run.

Both captains were greeted with a cloudy sky and a small ground to base their decision on at the toss. Fortunately, SPX skipper Brad Power won the toss and elected to send in the Central Coast batsmen to face the music of the ever-successful Pius opening bowlers. For the first time this season, however, openers Nick Ward (0/24) and Oscar MacDonald (0/10) went without a wicket in their opening spell, giving CCGS a positive – albeit slow – start to the match. However, first-change bowler Brad Power (2/21) got the breakthrough, and then another straight after, removing the openers in quick succession. Then after drinks, the wickets began to fall much quicker, with Ben O'Reilly (1/18) and Jackson Carrall (2/35) removing the maroon-helmeted middle order with some assistance from run outs thrown by Rory O'Connell and Brad, and cleaned up by the ever-reliable Julian Hyde behind the stumps. Rory (2/19) then proceeded to efficiently clean up the tail, bowling out both the resilient number three batsman as well as the number nine; finishing the Central Coast innings at 128.

Notably, in the six games SPX have played this season they have taken sixty wickets, meaning they have bowled out every team they have come up against – no easy feat. After a solid lunch of steak sandwiches, the Pius openers set out chasing down the CCGS total, with Jackson Carrall (8) and top-scorer Joel Austin (25) again putting on a great opening partnership. Jude Boyle (13), batting three after Josh Overton's promotion to the 1<sup>st</sup> XI, contributed a handy cameo before the well-known tailender Kiefer O'Brien (19) was given an unheard elevation to number four in a tactical move by the coach, Mr. Stearn, to increase the run-rate. Kiefer did just that, hitting four boundaries in his short time at the crease, setting the stage for the next batsman, Ben O'Reilly (15) to edge closer to the target of 129. However, when both Brad Power and Julian Hyde were dismissed cheaply, the game was left in the balance at 7/95 with Pius still needing 33 runs and having only ten overs and three wickets in hand. Enter the heroics of icemen Will Pavely (21\*) and Oscar MacDonald (18\*) - two of the youngest members of the team, being in Year 8 and Year 9 respectively – who turned the tide back into Pius' favour with some of the best stroke-play around, before

finishing the game in elegant style, hitting three sixes between them on their way to victory with five overs to spare.

**“Strength”** would be a fitting way to describe the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI this week, as they kept their nerve and dispatched the very competitive Central Coast Grammar for the second time in three weeks to keep their position at the top of the table secure. For the first time in 2<sup>nd</sup> XI memory they have also reached the Christmas break undefeated, a brilliant achievement which is only fitting for an extremely powerful team which is only improving as the season progresses. Good luck to the four players picked to play in the 1sts Queensland Tour over the break - Jackson Carrall, Rory O’Connell, Josh Overton and Nick Ward – and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

*Correspondent:* Nick Ward

**Scorers on the day:** Ms. Carla Austin & Mr. Nigel Ward

**Coach: Mr. Matt Stearn**

Match Report  
St Pius X Under 16  
St Augustine's Gold  
Nolans 2. 23/30-11-2019

I've said it once, I'll say it again- this group of young men -this team, is on the cusp of real and positive success on the cricket field. Ok, we flick through the past games and see the results and yes, they are still 'Pakistan-esk', but all I can say to this is lies, really bad lies, and statistics- you all know how it goes. I'm fearful of the censor's pen! When this team first came together, the unit although positive and encouraged by our super coach, was well- a bit rough about the edges. There was one game where we gave away more sundries than we actually scored. If the opposition didn't turn up, we would have still been defeated- work that one out! There was more cross bats than a – hang on, censor warning code red!!! But as we supporters and believers all have seen, struggled with to the point of abject frustration, and offered up our positive attitudes on the lads' cricket- put simply, they are getting better. The sundries are plummeting to a respectable level. The fielding is becoming more intense and the batting- I watched several of the lads bat last Saturday. Tom Kennedy in particular struck this on drive that was sheer poetry- a Shakespeare sonnet. 2 months ago- the shot would have been vastly different, with matching outcomes. Yes Nick- I saw your one also- Your bats not that straight though!

Week one of this two day match was the epitome of struggle. We started the game by losing the toss- surrounded by a plethora of St Augustine teams and their support base, yet we walked no, stride onto the pitch full of hope and aspiration. The fielding and bowling was tight and impressive. There was only one issue- and a fairly significant one, we weren't getting wickets. St Augustine's were not scoring freely, so there was impasse of sorts. We took our first wicket after 21 overs and the score was 74. It was the sort of innings that could have gone either way- credit to St Augustine's- they batted very intelligently, but they took their chances and paid for it. There were two very tidy stumping's from Liam, and who will ever forget that catch in the deep by Dave Mooney. I had my phone out ringing an undertaker in fear of the head clash with Ben Purcell with the skied ball flying in to add to the carnage, when Dave the magician- donning a black cape, pulling out 2 rabbits, a deck of cards and a pigeon, caught the thing, missed Ben and came up trumps. It was a close thing that could have ended very sadly. But it's these small wins in the field that can turn a fielding teams 'luck' and inspire all to rise even further. This is what I mean about struggle- The St Augustine innings swung their way, then our way with the jury still out on the final session. At the end of the day, their score didn't reflect accurately the standard and hard fought nature of the effort the lads put in.

Regarding the second week of play, which dealt with our innings, SPX were chasing a total of 207 to claim the points. Not an impossible task by any stretch of the imagination. Our lads, mindfully, were in very good place- oodles of positivity and support from each other, the target did seem distant but never unconquerable, a bit like snavelling your big sisters ice cream- achievable, but it's going to be tough to get. We required tough resolute and disciplined batting to obtain these runs. That was where it all turned problematic. Yep, we had plenty of starts, but alas, unable to capitalise.



TK- head still, eyes level – Poetry in motion

The lads fought long and hard as the target slipped further away. We occupied the crease for all but 45 minutes of the innings- something that was improbably 2 months ago. The stroke play of our lads is becoming more refined and correct which is great to see develop. So this isn't the end of the story- there is so much positivity and improvement in the lad' batting. We march on- undaunted in our task. We will put it all together one day, and get that ice cream. Also- Thanks Will.

#### Results

SPX Purple 10-125 def by St Augustine's Gold 6-207

#### Bowling

Nick Lough 10 Overs, 1M, 4-30.

Blake Hoolahan 9 Overs, 0M, 1-37

Luke Massa 6 Overs, 1M, 0-14

David Thirugnanaraj. 6 Overs, 1M, 0-14

#### Batting

Nick Lough 24

David Thirugnanaraj 21

Liam Hunt [Keeper] 2 x stumping's, 1 caught

SPX Yellow - round 8 match report.

Two day Match (50 overs) 23rd & 30th Nov 19

St.Pius batting first 5/161 in 50 overs def by StAugustines 4/165 in 31 overs at Oxford Falls. Sometimes the stars align and sometimes they don't, and for this game unfortunately they didn't.

We lost the toss and were sent into bat for this 2 day game against our saintly brothers... Augustines.

We were keen to bowl because we knew their top batsman and one of the competition's leading run scorers was unavailable on the first day of this two day match.

We made a pretty good start and were 2 for 80 by the 25th over, with the ever reliable Keelan retiring on 45 runs and Tom backing up from his debut game with another solid 41 runs.

Despite the steady start, we just couldn't up the run rate. The fielding team sensing our hesitation, moved in choking us with a good old fashioned ring field.

Despite having plenty of wickets up our sleeve and a fast outfield beckoning, we just couldn't break loose and only managed 29 runs off the last 10 overs to reach 5-161

Mitch and Gus contributing 27 & 17 respectively in the latter stages of the game.

Once again, many runs were left out there somewhere, with untaken singles or failing to return for a second, never putting the fielding team under pressure.

The best outfield on the northern beaches deserves a 200+ score to be competitive in a 50 over game, so 161 would be hard to defend.

The second Saturday saw a well mown but a very wet outfield. Seemingly no drought at Oxford Falls.

Either Oxford falls had an isolated case of heavy dew or St.Augies tampered with the irrigation settings because it was wet.

Within a matter of a few overs, our cricket ball had turned into a ball of wet soap, and the control, bounce and accuracy were gone.

St.Augustine's top player showed up for day 2 and continued his recent fine form. He and his batting partners duly went about their work chasing down our modest total.

Within the first few overs, barring an almighty collapse, we knew the game was taken away from us.

Saint Augustine's cruised to 165 in the 31st over to seal the match and an early finish.

From a bowling perspective it was nice to see Evan, Kaiyan, Cormac and Mitch pick up the 4 wickets offered.

If you could see what a wet soggy slippery mashed up piece of leather that we had to work with, it was no surprise that everyone struggled with their line and length.

In regards to our efforts in the field, a special mention goes to Josh Brown. The ball just seemed to follow him wherever he went. He stopped a number of well timed shots that would have otherwise headed to the boundary line.

Sadly our mid-season slump continues.

We have 2 one day games to try and turn around our fortunes and hopefully finish off the calendar year on a winning note and maybe in the top 4.

Til next time.