

CRICKET MATCH REPORTS

(SPX Red, SPX Green & SPX Purple)

**SPX RED under 14 div 2 ,7/131 after 30 overs. Harbord Knights , 7/116 after 30 overs.
SPX Red defeat Harbord Knights by 15 runs.**

Overcast skies and the threat of rain greeted SPX Red U/14 Div 2 for its semi-final match against Harbord Knights on a rare but well-earned visit to our home ground at Oxford Falls. Following several indifferent efforts the boys were ready to raise their game from recent weeks and were sent into bat first by Harbord who won an important toss under gloomy skies.

With morning dew on the pitch the openers looked solid until the fall of the first wicket in the third over for 14 runs providing an air of confidence for the Harbord bowlers. A succession of tight bowling with a swinging ball saw an uncomfortable collapse from the top order to see SPX Red at 5/40 at the end of the 10th over. The recovery commenced with the inform batsmen of the last two matches, Nick Green playing a season defining innings of cover drives and pull shorts to form a match saving partnership with Cormac Molloy which saw the score reach 98 in the 23 over. This saw the enforced retirement of Nick Green on 29 not out. The remaining lower order batsmen then worked to build good partnerships to see the team complete their 30 overs at a very respectable score of 7/131. Other notable contributions from the bat came from Cormac Molloy who scored 15 runs and contributed to a 58 run partnership with Nick Green.

With the threat of rain pending and the voice of the coach reminding them to minimize sundries, the Harbord innings did not start well with Darcy Keenlyside taking a wicket in the first over of the innings. This was the catalyst for a mini collapse which saw the Harbord knights struggling at 3/14 in the seven over and well behind the required run rate. Just as the SPX Red bowlers looked like strolling through the remaining batsmen, light drizzle turned into heavy rain and play stopped for the first of two rain delays. A combination of a wet field, light rain , a slippery ball that resembled bowling with a piece of soap and a solid 5th wicket stand by Harbord Knights, the match quickly turned in Harbord's favour as they reached 5/90 in the 22nd over.

With the rain gone and the sun showing its face for the first time in the day, the SPX bowlers recovered to put the squeeze on the run rate by bowling tight lines , taking wickets and by restricting sundries to the lowest total of the whole season. With 17 runs required from the last over the boys celebrated a great team win where they performed well with bat and ball whilst having the worst of the weather conditions. Notable bowling figures were from Darcy Keenlyside (2/16), James Maloney (2/15) , Declan Carroll and Antony DiMauro (both 1/10) and Andrew Guerrera the best of the day with 3 overs, 2 maidens , 1 wicket for 1 run. Another special mention to Leo Hart for taking close to the catch of the season to turn the game for SPX Red.

With their best performance of the season, and the lowest contribution to sundries the team enter into the Grand Final against Collaroy Plateau full of confidence and ready to give another performance to try and bring home the victory.

With Kind Regards,
Tony DiMauro

SPX GREEN: Semi-Final One day Match 9th March

St. Augustine's batting first 9/148 in 30 overs def St.Pius 9/98 in 30 overs at Lionel Watts.

Winning the toss, we sent St. Augustine's into bat, hoping the heavy dew in the outfield might slow down their more aggressive batsmen, and for a while this seemed to work.

At the half way point of their innings they were 4-48, and we were still very much in the game.

Unfortunately 2 of their NSW academy players stepped it up a notch and with some big hitting they took the score to 124 for that partnership and then their remaining players stretched it to 148 after 30 overs.

Pick of the bowlers today was Gus McConnell with a flurry of late wickets finishing with 4-11 off 6 overs.

Pat Frost 2-12 off 4, Manas 1-16 off 5 and Will Pavely 0-3 off 3 overs bowled accurately and economically, and countered our other more expensive bowlers.

The second half of the game was always going to be a bit of a struggle needing 6 an over against the strongest team in the competition. Realistically we were never in the hunt but the boys gave it their best shot. The best of our batsman was Keelan Mendel with yet another superb knock of 43 not out. The remaining scores were all single digits as we tried in vain to lift the run rate.

Next week we head into a dead rubber against Wakehurst for the minor placings and that will bring a close to the 2018-19 season for SPX green. After that the pitches will be buried under 4 inches of topsoil, the boundary cones will be replaced by line-marking paint, and the thwack of leather upon willow will soon be replaced by the thwack of leather upon leather as the footy season begins.

For the boys, it's been a good season, there were some pretty impressive batting and bowling performances throughout. They'd given their best, represented the school extremely well and there was a real harmony between them. You couldn't ask for more. And if a measure of how the season went was in how many boundary cones you lose for the season.... Then we had a great season. I don't think we lost any!

Big thanks to Hugh McConnell... "gear steward" and coach. He supported the boys week in week out, with words of wisdom and encouragement. And to the parent group as a whole, a very big thank you to everyone who contributed in scoring, umpiring and supporting. A real team effort.

Til next time / next season.

SPX PURPLE

Losing the toss, SPX was sent into bat to begin our semi-final. Unfortunately, our battings innings started off rocky. Losing too many quick wickets early, it left us in a tough position. However, Luke Massa (16) was able to do an excellent job of re-establishing a partnership with David Mooney. The pair was able to see off a number of bowlers and added some handy runs during a tough time. One positive that came from our innings was the fact we were able to bat our full 30 overs after losing six wickets before drinks. We finished our innings with 80 runs on the board.

Our bowling innings couldn't have started off any better with, Blake Hoolahan and James Baldock combining for an excellent run-out. Josh Dixon (1-13) was able to pick up a wicket, caught behind by James Baldock. David Mooney picked up a wicket with a great ball, finishing with 1-18. Today just wasn't our day, Cromer chased down our total after 11.4 overs.

