

2014 Reserves runner - up

The 2014 season began under the same stable leadership off-field and Lee Rowe continued on as senior coach. 300 gamer Cory Jack was appointed coach of the Reserves with Paul Wallis his back –up. The Club had recruited former Ringwood and Bayswater player and Coach Brent Jane. Brent, the grandson of club legend Alan Jane had promised Grandma Pat that he would finish his football wearing the number 9 that Alan and father Rob had worn for Alexandra. As Brent was leaving to live in Norway later in the year, 2014 was to be the year. Brent was the catalyst for the recruitment of a further five former team-mates in a bid to boost player numbers and depth.

The Thornton – Eildon club had reformed and the few former players that had played with Alexandra returned to their original club.

Alex began the season with a trip to Yarra Glen where despite the new look team which also included Scott Hill (from Healesville) Lyndon Purcell returning from The Basin and Jack Tossol in for his first senior game as well as the above six, the home side were well on top at the main break. Jane (5gls) went to CHF and Alex. were more competitive after half time but Yarra Glen were still able to increase the margin as the game progressed winning comfortably 20.17 to Alexandra's 12.12. Sam Kidd, Jane, W.Walker, D.Toomey, T.Cook and J.Murphy were listed as better players but Alex still had some work to do.

Sam Kidd playing his 250th game led the side out for Alexandra's first home match was against Kinglake. The first quarter was close but then Alex. got on top with a 7 goal to 1 second quarter The Rebels with their big forwards Jane (6) and new player Cowlshaw (3) providing the targets then went on to a big win 23.13 to 8.13. New players Russell Coomb, Tim Cook, Scott Hill and Jayden Murphy all impressed as did Damien Toomey (as usual) and Sam Kidd.

Round three was the trip to Yarra Junction where the home side started well with a 7 goals to 1 first quarter to establish a match winning lead. The remainder of the game was fairly even but the damage had been done and the visitors were never a threat. Young Jack Tossol impressed and D.Toomey, W.Walker, B.Cooper and J.Murphy tried hard in the 7.6 to 13.13 loss.

There was plenty of interest around the district as Alex was home to Thornton to tackle the reformed Boners who had had a better than expected start. In great conditions and before a big crowd Thornton Eildon proved too good on the day as they increased their lead at every break. Led by Brad Coller whose kicking set up many of the visitors goals T.E. won the game comfortably 14.12 to 9.12. Ben Cooper as always was amongst the best for the Rebels trying to lift his team. Whilst W.Walker. D.Toomey, N.Dundas and W.Goonan were also good players but Alex. needed to do better.

Round 5 provided a second win for the Rebels as they travelled to Gembrook to play the Brooker's who had been relegated at the end of the 2013 season. In wintry conditions, after an even first half, Alex. gradually got on top of the home side and won comfortably 10.10 to 4.10. B.Jane up forward with five goals was the difference between the teams. S. Kidd in defence, D. Toomey in the ruck along with on-ballers R.Comb, J.Murphy and W.Goonan led the way.

Alex were next at home to the previously unbeaten Seville team who burst out of the blocks and led by nearly six goals as teams changed ends for the first time and it looked like a bleak day for the home side. In their best quarter of football for many years the Rebels remarkably led by 19 points at half time as they had added ten goals to one at the town end. The third quarter was even as Alex increased their lead to 20 points. In a tight last quarter, the premiership favorite outscored the home side but Alex. had enough in reserve to hold on for a great win 16.12 to 14.14 and hopefully set up their season. Ben Cooper looking more like a leader every game, Damien Toomey whose "footy smarts" were vital in the last quarter, R.Comb. B.Jane (5gls) Nathan Dundas and the Goonan boys were best in a good team effort.

Round 7 was the trip over Cottons Pinch to Yea where the home side kept the Rebels under pressure but Alex were just that little bit better and led at every change to record a comfortable win 15.14 to 12.13. The win came at cost Brent Jane suffered a serious knee injury and would miss the rest of the season. S.Kidd, L.Ware, S.Hill, J.Murphy, A.Cowlishaw and W.Walker earned the votes.

Alex. were at home to Powelltown for their last game of the first round but struggled to play their best football. In a lack luster game the visitors got on top in the last quarter and went on to a rare win at the Showgrounds 12.13 to 9.9. D.Toomey, T.Cook, W.Walker, J.Murphy, B.Cooper and J.Goonan were listed as best in the "Standard". Alexandra. next had the bye and at the half way mark were 4 – 4 needing to improve to make the finals. The Reserves well led by Cory Jack were beaten by the home side ending their winning run of six games.

Yarra Glen came to the Showgrounds and kicked the first five goals at the town end before Alex kicked a couple of goals to look competitive. The visitors continued their dominance through the middle quarters and although Alex. kicked four goals in the last they were comprehensively beaten by the Thunder 22.13 to 9.7. Ben Cooper continued his fine form with S.Hill, J.Murphy, T.Cook, W.Walker and C.Heaslip also amongst the better players.

Alex. then made the trip to Kinglake badly needing a win to stay in finals consideration and achieved the desired result after starting with a six goal first quarter. Alex were able to add a further three goals per quarter to run out comfortable winners 15.20 to 7.10. Ben Cooper, J.Murphy, Chris Mullins (back after injury) D.Toomey C.Heaslip and Luke Ware were better players.

Alexandra was next at home to Yarra Junction in slippery conditions at the Showgrounds. There was little between the two teams but the visitors were able to narrowly win each quarter to give

them a 23 point lead at the last change. Whilst the defence held the Eagles out Alex. went inside 50 often in the last quarter but could not find the way to goal often enough. Alex. had included a new big forward Grant Noonan who kicked four goals but needed other avenues to goal.

Another Alex. loss at home, 10.10 to YJ 12.15 was a further blow to finals aspirations.

Damien Toomey led the better players along with R.Comb C.Mullins, W.Walker, J.Murphy and B.Cooper.

Badly needing a win Alex then had the short away trip to Thornton for the “ local premierships” After an even first quarter in the wet muddy conditions Thornton Eildon set up the win in the second qtr with four unanswered goals and although they were only able to add a further two goals for the game were able to win comfortably 9.9 to 5.7. Alexandra’s inability to score in the conditions was a deciding factor. Tenacious rover Jayden Murphy (2gls) was at his best in the conditions which also suited the consistent Ben Cooper. C.Mullins, D.Toomey, T.Cook and B. McDonald also attracted the votes.

A second successive trip away, this time to Seville where our record is only two wins since we rejoined the YVMDFL. The Seville ground is challenging in good condition and it was far from that for this round 15 game as depicted in Julie Steyger’s picture in the “Standard” the following Wednesday. . The home side scored nine first quarter goals whilst Alex. were goalless at that point. Alex were much better after half time as each side managed five goals each but Alex’s slim finals hopes had all but disappeared in the Seville mud. Best on a day where it was hard to identify let alone pick best players were B. Cooper, J.Murphy, R.Comb, T.Cook, W.Walker and the Goonan brothers.

Alex were next home to Gembrook- Cockatoo and were able to win comfortably against the one of the lower sides as had been the pattern all season. After a grafting first half where the Rebels led by 20 pts, they took control of the game in the second half winning by 83 points 19.13 to 6.8. L.Rowe and G.Noonan with five goals each led the way up forward finishing up the good work up field by J.Murphy, B.Cooper, D.Toomey, C.Mullins T.Cook and B.McDonald.

Needing a win in the penultimate home and away game to have a chance of playing finals, Alex. travelled to Powelltown who were sitting third on the ladder. The ground was wet and heavy and again the Rebels struggled to score, having only a single goal on the scoreboard at the long break. The second half was more even with 6 goals to the home sides 7, but Alex were playing catch-up footy and were well short at the final siren 7.7 to 15.9. L.Rowe (3) and G.Noonan (2) scored the bulk of the goals whilst J.Murphy, B.Cooper, D.Toomey, T.Halligan and R.Comb were the better players.

The last game, at home to Yea was a bit of an anti-climax as even a big win was not going to get the Rebels into fifth place. The first half was an even contest with the visiting Tigers trailing by 2 points at the main break. Alexandra’s 13 goals to 8 after half time got the Rebels home 22.19 to 14.7 probably a truer indication of the teams.

In all it has been a disappointing year for Alexandra following the enthusiasm shown early with the addition of a few new recruits. Alex only won seven of sixteen games with wins only against the teams finishing below them with one exception, a good win against the otherwise unbeaten top side Seville. Alexandra must strive to keep the good young players it has promoted this season and again be active on the recruiting scene to improve in 2015.

The Reserves finished the season in second place with a 12 – 4 win / loss ratio and courtesy of the bye have a week's rest before the Qualifying final. The Reserves are teaming well together under coach Cory and with a good list to pick from should go deep into the finals.

An interested observer amongst the good crowd was former coach Terry Rodgers. Terry a former Essendon player coached the Rebels to the finals in 1965'66 and '67. At the time it was a coup for the club to secure the services of a player direct from the VFL. A spectacular mark and great kick Terry played 58 games and kicked 187 goals and was runner-up to Thornton's Peter Tossol in the Waranga League's best and fairest in 1966. Terry, now retired and living in Maryborough was a teacher at the Alexandra High School, enjoyed catching up with many of his old team-mates in his first visit to the town since 1972.

The Reserves had the advantage of playing at home in the Qual. Final but without the leadership the injured Cory Jack. Whilst it was hard to find good players in a disappointing effort Lee Ragg controlled the ruck all game and marked well. Tom Halligan was a clear winner on his wing and put Alex. into attack often. In defence Luke Ware, Jack Elkington, and Chase Pearce tried to stem the tide and Billy Cody won many possessions Alex. 4.10 lost to Seville 12.13.

The First- semi was at Yarra Junction against Yea who had defeated Powelltown the previous week. Alex started the game well with 5 first quarter goals and went further ahead as the game progressed, clearly a better side than the Tigers on the day, Michael Heyes, Daniel Steel, Tom Halligan, Chase Pearce, Luke Ware and Andrew Wood led the way. Ben Podger – Carroll and Jock Blakeney with 4 were the main goal-kickers.

The Prelim. Final was at Thornton and Alex were to play Yarra Glen who had finished unbeaten on top but were beaten last week by Seville. In a low scoring first half where the defences were well on top Alex took a 16 point lead to the main break. The third quarter was also tight with Alex. still holding their half time advantage at the last change. Two early last quarter goals to Y.G and it was anybody, s game. Alex steadied and with goals to L.Purcell and P.Hoornweg, took back the initiative. Two further goals to C.Pearce and D.Steel gave the Rebels a fine 28 point win 9.12 to 5.8. C.Pearce at CHB was Alex's best player backed up by Z.Vincent, C.Jack, J.Elkington, L.Ragg and D.Steel in a great team effort.

The Alexandra Reserves travelled to Yarra Junction with an unchanged side from that that had played so well at Thornton the week before. Alexandra was appearing in their third Reserves Grand-final since re-entering the YVMDFL in 2006 having won the premiership in 2007 by a goal against Belgrave and 56 points against Yarra Glen in 2008. Current players Peter Hoornweg and Michael Heyes played in both of those successes whilst Len Jenkins and Jason Krijt were part of the 2007 team. Alex. had defeated Seville by 49 point earlier in the year but had lost the return match at Seville by 14pts in the mud. Seville also won comfortably at Alexandra in the Qualifying final. Conditions at Yarra Junction were near perfect, The day was fine and the ground had not been affected by some mid-week rain. Alexandra kicked to the

top end but were immediately in defence as Seville went forward. Both sides were miss-handling the ball and the kicking was astray. The Alex. defence which had been great over the last two finals allowing their opponents only a total of eight goals, again started well but Seville marked in a pocket and ran around for the first goal. Michael Coombs dashed from defence and instigated some good Alexandra teamwork that resulted in a goal to Ben Podger-Carroll. Seville's ability to break tackles was worrying and resulted in their second goal well into the first quarter. Further Seville behinds kept the Alex defence on their toes and brought opportunities up forward, but unfortunately Alex. were off target and went to the first break trailing 1.2 to 2.4. Seville started the second quarter with a behind then kicked their third goal after a kick-in went terribly wrong. Stephen Steiner was as usual, using his strength at the centre clearances and got the ball to Daniel Steel but a behind was the result. Steel was again involved with Len Jenkins for the next Alexandra attacking move but a behind was again the result. Seville were handling the ball better and looked much more dangerous going forward as they added a fourth goal from the forward pocket. Strong marks to Daniel Roper and Jock Blakeney were in the lead up to Alexandra's second goal as they kept in the game. Alex. moved the ball well from defence and Brent McDonald, freed, had a chance but his accurate shot was touched on the line. Seville added behinds before kicking the last goal of the half to lead 5.7 to Alex. 2.5. Cory Jack urged his players to stick to their structures that would bring the first goal of the second half but a 50m penalty enabled the Blues to extend the lead. The game seemed to be slipping away as Seville kicked the next goal and led by five goals plus. Alexandra were still hard at each contest and a free to Steele looked promising but he lacked his customary accuracy as Alex needed everything to go right. Peter Hoornweg who has kicked a goal in just about every game he has played this year just failed to hold a spectacular mark but goaled from a subsequent free. Alex. added further behinds as one could sense the game changing. Tom Halligan was using his pace and Steiner his strength to put the Rebels into attack with the latter dodging cleverly and goaling on the run. Alex. were now playing better than Seville and got the difference under two goals when Hoornweg roved cleverly to goal late in the quarter. Seville came back with a goal at the other end to end a run of three Alex. goals but Steiner marked strongly and kicked truly after the three quarter time siren to give Alex. a real chance. Coach Cory Jack urged the players to have the belief that they could go on with the job but Seville were first to goal in the last and this was followed with another quickly to wrest back the initiative. It seemed that the break had broken the momentum that Alex. had built and Seville again kicked successive goals to end any chance of an Alexandra win. Seville's run of goals was only broken by a goal to the captain himself who of course kept trying until the final siren giving Seville the win, 14.9.93 to Alex. 7.10.58. Although Alex had been brave, Seville thoroughly deserved their win as the better side on the day. Best: Lee Ragg rucked strongly all game and must have been close to the League award. Cory Jack led by example as he has all season with long time team-mate Len Jenkins playing old fashioned, hard at the ball, football. Stephen Steiner lifted the team with an inspired third quarter and showed that he should be playing at a higher level. Michael Coombs, one of the youngsters in the team that hopefully will go on and play many games in the seniors and Daniel Steel who was the marking target up forward. Although we missed the main prize, Cory Jack is to be congratulated on his ability to guide this group of older and young players and have them playing as a team. As a former player who played many games in the Seconds albeit some years ago I was proud of the effort of the whole team who represented the town as footballers and sportsmen before a big crowd at Yarra Junction last Saturday.

2014 Best and Fairest Votes SENIORS 59 Ben Cooper. 47 Damien Toomey. 37 Jayden Murphy. 24 Russell Comb. 21 William Walker. 14 Tim Cook. 12 Will Goonan, Brent Jane. 8 Sam Kidd, Chris Mullins. 7 Nathan Dundas, Scott Hill. 6. Andrew Cowlshaw, Jack Tossol. 4 Jack Goonan. 2 Cory Jack, Michael Miller, Lee Ragg, Sandor Redzic, Luke Ware. 1 Tom Halligan, Brent McDonald, Andrew Moravski, Grant Noonan, David Bourke.

RESERVES 46 Cory Jack. 21 Chase Pearce. 18 Brad Kidd. 17 Len Jenkins. 16 Tom Halligan, Lee Ragg. 12 Luke Heard. 11 Daniel Roper, Stephen Steiner. 10 Billy Cody, Lyndon Purcell. 9 Travis Carter, Andrew Wood. 8 Jock Blakeney, Michael Heyes. 7 Brendan Adams, Luke Ware. 6 Nathan Dundas. 5 Brodie Arnett, Jack Goonan, Shane Hill, Peter Hoornweg, Jack Tossol. 3 Zack Vincent, Paul Wallis, Brendan Witnish. 2 Isaac Hedger, Alasdair Hutt, Brent McDonald, Daniel Steel, 1 Jamie Burchall, Michael Coombs, Jason Krijt, Michael Miller.

TROPHY PRESENTATION NIGHT Seniors

Football	1 st XV111	2 nd XV111		
Best & Fairest	B.Cooper (59)	C.Jack (46)	Life Member	G.Brooks
Runner-up	D.Toomey (47)	C.Pearce (21)	Andrew Whitling	D. Jackson
Most Consistent	J.Murphy (37)	T.Carter	Best Clubman	G.Anderson
Most Determined	T.Cook	D.Roper	Presidents Trophy	M.Miller
Most Improved	W.Walker	Z.Vincent		
Best 1 st Year	J.Goonan	T.Halligan	250 games	S.Kidd. P.Brooks
Coaches Trophy	J.Tossol	L.Jenkins	100 games	J.Blakeney
Goalkicker	B.Jane (28)	J.Blakeney * (46)		
Netball	A.Grade	A.Reserve	B Grade	
Best & Fairest	E.Kidd ()	S.Morton (30)	M.Flemming (35)	
Runner-up	L.Steyger	J.Lucas (22)	H.Fogarty- Nippard	
Most Consistent	S.Krijt	B.Wheelhouse	M.Stevens / K.Mullins	
Most Determined		K.McDonald	A.Burr	
Most Improved	K.Welch	E.Twining	K.Cleven	
Coaches Trophy	A.Creighton	T.Carter		
Volunteer Award	R.Welch			

TROPHY PRESENTATION NIGHT Juniors

	Under16	Under 14	Under 12
Best and Fairest	Jordan Purcell	Peter Cairns	
Runner-up	Harrison Murdoch	Hayden Gilmore	
Most Consistent	Andrew Carter	Josh Humphries	
Most Determined	Hamish Perry	Lachlan Ingram Smith	
Most Improved	Corey Malcolm	Tyson Pedlar	
Best 1 st year	Jack Wetzel	Nathan Stewart	
Best Utility	Nathan Keath	Braydon Burchall	
Coaches Trophy	Leam Draper	Jack Keath, James Cox	

NETBALL	Under16	Under 14	Under 12
Best and Fairest	Lily Cox	Himali Collins	
Runner- up	Melita Laurie - Rhodes	Ellie Hedger	
Most Improved	Darcy Cann	Jamaya Hoornweg	
	Elley Morrison		
Most determined	Chelsea Skerritt	Alexia Andreau	
Coaches Trophy		Shannon Cinerari	
		Sienna Wakefield-Dick	

Finals Football

Under 14 Grand Final St Mary's 13.7 def. Alexandra 1.0.

Prelim Final Alex. 6.6 def Euroa 2.2

Second Semi St Mary's 15.4 def Alex 1.3

Finals Netball

Under 16 Grand Final St Mays's 41 def. Alexandra 32.

Prelim Final Alex. 51 def Seymour 59

Second Semi St Mary's 21 def Alex26

Under 12 Grand Final St Mary's 34 def Alexandra 7

Prelim Final Alex.38 def. Seymour 15

Second Semi St Mary's 38 def Alex 10