



Monash Gryphons Cricket Club



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MGCC affiliated with
MONSU since 1990

President's Report Season 2001-2002

First, I would like to express my appreciation to the committee for their help and support. On behalf of the club, thank you to Angie, Kelly, Lloyd, Matt, Steve and Vanessa. Without the generous commitment of time by these worthy volunteer representatives, this club, like all others, would cease to exist. The club is the people, a truth that is never more evident than in a young club such as ours. The Victorian Cricket Association would agree, with Kelly and Steve awarded gold pins for their service to the club over the last season. The fundraising efforts of all on the committee, especially Angie and Vanessa in organizing the raffle were excellent.

On the subject of people, we had over twenty new players this season, some friends of current players, a few returning players and a significant number of students from the Caulfield Campus of Monash University. Many of the new players came as a result of the recruitment drive at the Caulfield Campus during the orientation week for second semester. The winter indoor training was definitely a big plus as it allowed us to invite new players to training immediately, rather than wait for the season to beginning. In addition, the facilities at Xavier College were first class. Last year's recruits have the ability to perform at a high level in future seasons and there is tremendous potential to attract further players via this recruiting stream.

The change of association from the City of Moorabbin Cricket Association to the Mercantile Cricket Association and Southern District and Churches Cricket League has played a major role in improving our ability to bring new players to the club. This change was only possible with the financial support of MONSU as our major sponsor and affiliate. In particular, I would like to mention the administrative efforts of Frank Interrigi in his role as the development officer for sporting clubs and societies. The change of surface from synthetic grass to genuine turf is the key factor in our improved ability to attract players. To help our transition onto turf we were fortunate enough to switch our training venue to Clayton every second Wednesday for the express purpose of training on well-prepared turf wickets.

This season, there were several new appointments in the coaching staff and captaincy positions. Mike Drew was given the task of coaching the uncoachables. He did the right thing and left them to their own devices, instead concentrating on players who responded positively to technical instruction and gentle persuasion. Mike also attended the Level 1 coaching course run by the Victorian Cricket Association prior to the season's start. How the three teams performed (one played finals and another should have) and the obvious improvement in several players was testament to Mike's teachings and commitment.

Indeed three other members of the club, including the incumbent Women's coach, Craig Robinson, as well as Dave Bennett and Lloyd Heinrich undertook the Victorian Cricket Association coaching course. Their availability at training provided the club with the latest techniques, knowledge and training advice. I would hope that perhaps two more members of the club might be keen to further their cricket by attending this Victorian Cricket Association and Monash Gryphons Cricket Club subsidized course, run over two Sundays. To return to Robbo, his clean-cut good looks, vibrant interpersonal skills and proven coaching prowess has helped the Women's team reach the finals in each of the last three years (indeed they have participated in finals five times in the last six years). This type of success may soon assume Sheedy esk proportions, so let us hope just one premiership in three years of dominance doesn't satisfy him or the team.

New captains this season were Nirosh Weerasinghe (First XI), Lloyd Heinrich (Second XI) and Vanessa Henderson (Women's XI). All these three teams performed admirably, the measure by which captains live and die. Well done to the Men's First XI in the Mercantile Cricket Association A Grade and the Women's XI in the Victorian Women's Cricket Association B Southeast Grade on reaching the semi-finals. One more step next season! Hard luck to the Second XI in narrowly missing the finals in the Mercantile Cricket Association A Reserve Grade, due in no small part to the unexplained and unforgiven absence of two players in the penultimate round of matches. A highly undesirable situation that proved costly to team morale and performance. Steve Pearson captained the Third XI in the Sixth Division of the Southern District and Churches Cricket League under trying conditions, a lack of experienced players on the park being the chief inhibitor. Even so the thirds did have a win and were competitive in several matches late in the season, before forfeiting the final match. Clearly the goal for the new season is to surpass this win tally, forfeit no matches and achieve a measure of respect in the Southern District and Churches Cricket League.

To some individual honours, congratulations to Natalie Abbott on winning the Victorian Women's Cricket Association B Southeast Grade Bowling Aggregate and Average. Honourable mentions to Dave Bennett (second in the Mercantile Cricket Association A Grade Bowling Aggregate and Average) and Don Baulch (third in the Mercantile Cricket Association A Reserve Grade Batting Average). Well done to Krishna Srinivasan and Nirosh Weerasinghe on being the inaugural Gryphons to participate in an inter association match by being selected to represent the Mercantile Cricket Association.

From a team point of view, the Monash Gryphons Cricket Club selection committee is to be congratulated for their willingness to give up time and sanity to make certain that the club was represented by the best available players week in and week out, despite the usual epidemic of unavailability's and injuries to many key players over the season. Our depth appears to be growing, and the debates among the selectors gives clear indication that opportunities are there for all players. There were no automatic selections and each case for a player being promoted was considered at great length and from all angles. Tough gig, well done to Dave, Lloyd, Mike, Nirosh and Steve.

Willowfest was a sensational experience, thanks to the organization of Matt Varcoe, the recruiting efforts of Sally Whamond, the input of Croydon Ranges and St. John's East Malvern Cricket Clubs, and all the players who made the arduous journey to Mildura for an action packed week of cricket and campfire stories. A big thank you to John Leroy for organizing and selling the very classy Gryphons Willowfest shirts. Special thanks to sideshow Travis McNaught. The guys contested the Cup Grade and while they won only one match, they were competitive in another, but unfortunately walloped in the other three (clearly the result of performance retarding drugs and dwindling numbers late in the tournament). The women stood tall to field XI players in each of three games, to win twice and take out the championship. Special thanks to a couple of rookie lasses (and the talent scouts who brought them), who not only provided much-needed troops on the large ovals, but whose performances with the bat exceeded expectations.

Presentation night was a treat; the Racecourse Hotel function room suited us particularly well. Almost all of the award winners were present, with several developing players receiving the fruits of their labours. And a few senior players being rewarded for cunning and guile ☺ The retrospective 100 game medallions were marvelous and we hope to rapidly add to this club within a club. Tracy Windows is surely due to reach this milestone soon. Congratulations to the club champions, Dave Bennett and Karen Taylor. Clearly, these young stars are only just beginning to ascend the peak of their sporting powers.

Finally, to the next season, I would like to welcome the incoming committee, whoever they may be, and to wish them well in their endeavours on behalf of our wonderful club.

Dave Bennett

President MGCC