

JUNIOR REPORT

Moonee Valley Cricket Club's Junior section maintained its strong contribution to local cricket in the 2008/2009 season.

We fielded 13 teams (14 at the start of the season), and played 154 players across the U10; U12; U14 and U16 age groups. New players were welcomed to what has become the club of choice for families in the local area.

Six of our 10 eligible teams competed in finals this season, with the U14 White team coached by Glenn Perussich taking out the flag in a gripping Grand Final at Maribyrnong Park. Charlie Walker's U16 White team made the semi-final, as did Norm Wright's U12 Black team and U12 White under Paul Hobbs.

Jacinta de Niese won the U12F competition batting award and Peter Chiera in U16 and Peter Wright in U12 were worthy inclusions in representative teams.

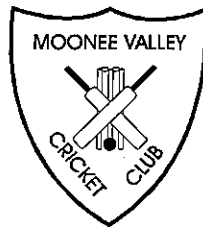
Congratulations go to all of the players, coaches and families involved in finals. But the story neither begins nor ends there as significant development occurred under the guidance of now-experienced junior coaches.

This has built on previous seasons' progress to the point where junior players are now significant contributors to the on-field fortunes of Moonee Valley's senior section. To illustrate this, Robbie Ball and Sam Coventry-Poole were key players in our Senior 2nd XI and 3rd XI finals teams. In addition, the 10th XI made its debut this season as a father-son team thanks to the vision of Charlie Walker and the enthusiasm of Kevin Memery and John Martiniello. And enthusiasm tends to be contagious.

Some restructuring occurred this season with Alan Harry taking on the Junior Treasurer's role, and Head Coaches Charlie Walker in U16; Steve Malone in U14; myself in U12 and Darren Nagle in U10 assuming responsibility for management in their respective age groups. Alan's contribution to the club cannot be underestimated – our finances were in good hands right from the beginning. As well as the additional focus provided by the Head Coaches, we were fortunate to have parents Domenic Chiera and John Brellis guiding our U16s, Glenn Perussich, Alan Harry, Dean Lawson and Steve Radford looking after our U14 teams, Norm Wright and Paul Hobbs in U12s, and Chris Bibby in U10s. Added to this, former junior parents Charlie Walker and Phill King made an outstanding contribution as U16 and U12 coaches and our U10 Gold team benefited from ex-junior player James Clarke's coaching.

We also thank Jenny O'Brien for her contribution to the club's fundraising with her tireless efforts in managing the chocolate drive and Danny Terzini for his continuing longstanding commitment to the club's Junior Section.

We also thank the many parents who assumed responsibilities such as scoring, keeping track of equipment and drilling players on match days and at training sessions. This



level of involvement is crucial to our teams being able to take to the field professionally.

In addition, the Milo In2cricket Program was run on Friday nights this year and while numbers were small, this important lead-in to junior cricket will become a fixture so that the Club has a natural path to our U10 age group. We are indebted to Paul Baks for taking on the responsibility of looking after the co-ordination of this program.

A Year of Transition

Charlie Walker's stewardship of the Junior Section has been outstanding and despite moving into the club presidency for 2008/09, Charlie continued his involvement with junior cricket and his guidance and advice has been invaluable. The 2008/09 season has therefore been one of transition from Charlie's leadership and consolidation. As much as we can feel confident of the Junior Section's growth and development, we would be wise not to feel complacent. As well as continuing what occurred in 08/09 we will need to restore, renew and reinvigorate all areas of our operations. The following recommendations cover where we need to improve:

- Canteen roster for parents and helpers so we can maximise revenue from this source.
- Specialised clinics at training using senior players and coaches as well as parents and professional coaches to enhance junior development.
- Enhance the profile and communication capacity of the junior section by making sure successes and achievements are regularly celebrated on the club website.
- Commence MiloIn2cricket in mid-October to ensure we optimise participant numbers.
- Target particular players as well as providing general information about representative cricket.
- Plan, schedule and promote junior functions from early in the season to maximise involvement and attendance.
- Improve storage facilities and practices in the pavilion for junior equipment.
- Ensure that Working With Children checks are obtained by all junior coaches and those coming in contact with junior players by 1 July this year.
- Increase numbers of coaches who have Level One Coaching qualifications.

In closing, I thank the club for the support and encouragement provided to me at all levels this season.

Kevin Gardiner
Junior Co-ordinator