

SENIORS

The long awaited clash between Alexandra and Thornton- Eildon in a grand final drew a large crowd to Woori Yallock. The conditions were tricky with the wind still strong and swirling as the game got under way. Alexandra had included the long kicking Adam Oakley back after a hamstring injury and the strong marking Steve McKeon for Paul Francis and Jeremy Heyes. The game began with both sides testing each other out and although Alexandra kicked to the wind assisted end neither side were able to penetrate each others defence early. Alexandra were slow to move the ball forward, perhaps not wishing to make a mistake but finally Hall (T E) engaged the scoreboard operator with a long goal. Alexandra replied as young Brayden Norris goaled from a free but Thornton – Eildon kicked their second goal. Kane Davis marked strongly in defence for the Rebels before Adam Oakley back and winning the ball well, had three shots from well out, for two goals and a poster. When Norris who was receiving plenty of attention kicked his second from a free, Alexandra had doubled their rivals score, but was it enough? given the wind advantage to the scoring end. Thornton – Eildon were first to goal via Hall in the second quarter but Alexandra replied as Steve McKeon and A Oakley combined to get the ball to Michael Bretherton for a goal. Thornton - Eildon added points before goals at the 15 and 16 minute marks of the quarter put the Alexandra defence under extreme pressure. A further goal gave the Boners the lead and another certainly gave the Rebels bench something to think about. Marcus Hill as usual, strong in the air cleverly put the ball out in front of the dashing Sam Kidd who made no mistake from the goal square to steady the Rebels as they searched for ways to stem the tide. Thornton – Eildon again goaled close to half time to give them six for the quarter and a ten point lead. Bretherton again marked strongly but was off target on the siren as his side trailed by nine points as players headed for the change rooms. However before they reached the boundary fence a melee erupted between players which thankfully was soon controlled by Umpires Advisor Peter Cameron and his men in orange.

Thornton- Eildon were first to goal at the 8 minute mark of the all important third quarter to stretch the lead before Scott Rowan marked strongly in the goal square. Norris again kicked truly and Rowan gave Alexandra back the lead minutes later with another good goal. Alexandra were lifting and could sense a slight drop off in the oppositions intensity. The defence led by the mean Kidd Brothers, and Colin Geddes denied Thornton – Eildon the ball whilst at the stoppages Tom McKinlay and Rik Maatman were now jumping over the opposition ruckmen giving Dom Conheady and the Oakley's first use of the ball. Hill always dangerous, again marked strongly and goaled, followed by a great snap as N. Oakley goaled running across the face of goal. Alexandra led by 15 points at the last change of ends but was it enough?

Alexandra were able to get the ball forward into the wind and the forwards worked hard to keep it there early in the quarter Thornton – Eildon went forward on a few occasions but with an extra player in their defence struggled to find a marking option. The Alexandra defenders easily won control of the ball and used Tony O'Shea alone on the Clubrooms side of the ground as a get out plan. Alexandra added their thirteenth goal as Norris passed to Hill whose kick floated in cleverly. Time was ticking by and Alexandra led by 21 points at the nineteen minute mark. Both sides added points as players from both sides tired in the warm spring conditions. Alexandra used their interchange cleverly and often, in a bid to keep their edge in fitness prevalent, during the energy taxing last quarter. Thornton Eildon kicked

the last goal of the season but time and the strong Alexandra defence held firm as the loyal supporters waited for the siren to signal a great win to Michael Bretherton and his players.

Best: Every player played his part in this great win including Marcus Hill who won the league medal, Sam Kidd, strong in the air and on the ground, Chris Mullins who was hard at the ball all day, Tom McKinlay, Michael Bretherton, James Kidd, Tony O'Shea etc.