

REBEL POWER

At Dookie

September 24th 1997.

The Alexandra Football Club Won the Goulburn Valley Division 2 Premiership last Saturday defeating last year's premiers and next year's Division 1 contender Mansfield by seven points. The premiership could be the last one decided in division 2 as the league could be disbanded next season. (a draw for 1998 is else ware in this edition with Alexandra, Thornton-Eildon and Yea drawn to play in the Kyabram District F.L.) The Club entered last Saturdays Grand-finals with three teams but unfortunately the under 17s and Reserves were beaten.

The win is a credit to the players and the hard working, dedicated Committee led by President Ray Steyger who overcome a horrendous motor car accident earlier in the season to lead the club to its success.

In one of the truly great grand-finals the Rebels, led by George Steiner played some magnificent football to prove themselves the premier team of 1997.

In a spirited opening both defences were on top as players struggled to settle their nerves. The Demons were first to break the ice with a goal before some great tackling by Schachner and Ward gave the Rebels their first score, a behind. Further behinds to Schachner then Haggis as Alexandra, with the aid of the wind, struggled to find the big sticks. The Rebels first goal came when Green with a slick hand-ball out of the pack found Gunn who passed to Walker for full points. Fierce tackling by Halligan and Miljkovic gave Steiner a chance but only a behind resulted. Green ran through the centre, kicked to the leading Walker who kicked

from outside fifty meters for a long goal. Ward with a big mark over the pack, kicked long to Easton who kicked his first goal as the Rebels started to gain the upper hand. Mansfield, against the run of play, found Sheehan who goaled. The Rebels hit back when Easton with a big kick around his body, kicked a team lifting goal. Kidd to Halligan who had been doing a lot of work in the packs found Steiner for Alexandra's fifth goal. Malcolm, from the back-line stuck the ball under his arm and said "catch me if you can" as he ran though the centre and kicked to Walker, play which deserved better than the resultant behind. Mansfield were making the most of their limited opportunities up forward with accurate goal kicking, kicked the next three goals to steady the team. Alexandra were unlucky to lose Miljkovic with an ankle injury and Ferrier also with a leg injury, both unable to take any further part in the game as the score-board read Alex. 5.7 to M'field 5.0.

Steiner's mark and goal from centre half-forward was just the start to the second quarter that the Rebels needed. Some great work by Green and Gunn kept the ball in the forward line for Walker to kick his third goal. Steiner who was inspirational kicked a magnificent goal before Mansfield replied with their seventh straight goal. Mansfield were doing all the attacking led by O'Brien and Tossol along with Easton who had gone to centre half-back were doing a magnificent job. The Rebels were let off as the Demons hit the post three times in five minutes before Green with a big knock to Ward kicked to Steiner

for a great captain's goal before the players left the field for the half-time break with Alex holding a nine point lead 9.8 to M'field 8.5. Halligan won the ball from the third quarter centre bounce and forwarded to Walker for his fourth goal but a poor option in defence allowed the Demons to reply. Mansfield again goaled to hit the front for the first time since early in the game but a poor turn over allowed Kidd to kick a steady Alex. goal. Ward roving well won the ball in the centre and his long kick from the centre square cleared the pack and rolled through as the Rebels lifted to answer the Demons challenge. Johnson who had played a great game snapped his first goal then Gunn burst through the pack to goal and finish off a great fight back late in the quarter. Alexandra led by sixteen points as the coaches spoke to their players as the score-board read Alex. 14.12 to M'field 12.8. The last quarter started with the Rebels quickly into attack with Schachner running the wing with two bounces and threading through a brilliant goal. Kidd and Easton combined for Haggis to score a behind then when Haggis goaled soon after, the Alex. supporters went wild as they could sense an Alexandra win. Strong work in the mid-field saw Johnson come out with the ball and make no mistake as the Rebels took what seemed like a match winning lead, although Mansfield still looked dangerous through their marking forwards. Steiner who had gone into the ruck in the last quarter had given his side tremendous drive, forwarded to Easton who found Schachner in the goal square for his second

goal. To their credit, the Demons refused to roll over and sensing Alex. thought they had the game won, came back with a barrage of late goals. With the time clock ticking over the thirty five minute mark the Alex. supporters were starting to wonder if the time-keepers had gone to sleep. Finally after what seemed an eternity and the Demons had got the difference back to seven points, the siren sounded giving Alexandra the 1997 premiership 20.13 133 to 19.12.126. . An avalanche of supporters swarmed on to the field to congratulate and embrace their victorious players