

St Columbas Soccer Club

2019 End of Season reports

www.stcolumbassoccer.org.au

1969 – 2019

50 years

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019

2019 has been another year full of highlights and occasions to celebrate across the season both for our players' on-field and the general St Columbas past and present members off the field. This year was both the centenary celebration of the Sydney Churches Football association, and also the 50th anniversary of the establishment of St Columbas as a soccer club in the wider Hills area. This meant that there was ongoing commitments elsewhere through the course of the season, but the majority of focus remained on-field, with our current teams – 8 Junior teams, including 4 Academy teams and a new Girls team, and 3 Senior teams - competing in both Sydney CFA and Hills District competitions.

The Girls Under 9-11 team was part of a new Girls competition run by Sydney CFA, with the core of a combined team with Wentworthville Uniting coming from St Columbas. Theirs was the stand out overall performance of the year, going undefeated through the course of the season and decisively winning their Grand Final at Marconi Stadium against Guildford McCredie 3-0.

A number of the St Columbas girls were also selected in the Northern Zone representative team competing for the John Oliver trophy, and comfortably defeated their Southern Zone counterparts across 2 night games held at Phillips Park in July. We look forward to the growth and development of this competition for our girls next year.

In other team results, the under 12 Orange (Academy trained team) made it into the semi-finals this year, and both Senior Raahague Cup Orange teams (Firsts and Reserves) also made it into the semi-finals without going onto greater success. Unfortunately both Senior teams made it to the Major Semi-Final, one game away from a Grand Final appearance, but were knocked out in very tight and competitive finals games.

All 3 Senior teams were entered in the Raahague Cup competition this year, and all 3 teams showed ongoing promise of future success in a very competitive grade of CFA soccer. The Raahague Cup Black team played in the Reserves competition and managed to defeat the minor premiers, Kings Old Boys, twice during round robin play, but due to some other disappointing results and a lack of numbers for specific games eventually finished the season in 5th – 1 point outside semi-final contention. The biggest feature of this team was the ongoing injection of youth from our Under 17 squad, with a number of players showing the ability and willingness to step up and perform within the Mens CFA competition. When also considering the depth and quality of new players attracted to the Orange squad, we remain very positive and expectant of success within the Senior club in the coming years.

This year is marked with some sadness, with long term St Columbas stalwart – Life Member, Manager, Coach, and Management Committee member, Alan Spaul looking to retire from his involvement within the club to take on his full time duties as Sydney's no#1 grandfather! Words are unable to express the true appreciation to Alan for his long service and ongoing commitment to our club and the wider Churches Football Association fraternity, where he has held a number of state and national roles, but we wish him, Marie and family all the best for the future. We remind Alan that he will always be a welcome guest at any St Columbas game, event or celebration in the coming years.



As mentioned previously, 2019 was our 50th anniversary, and we were fortunate to have a club dinner and fitting celebration of such an occasion at Lily's Function Centre during the course of the season. A huge acknowledgement to our chief event organisers, Naomi and Kim, for their leadership in making our anniversary a real success for all involved in the evening. With help from some very well-known identities from past years within the club, there was a real sense of inclusion of all members past and present, that confirmed the sound foundation and genuine intent to enjoy soccer that I believe St Columbas truly represents. I can confirm that even Scott Moeser, our longest serving member of 43 years made a very fleeting appearance on the microphone on the night, much to the disappointment of his Under 17 squad who were hoping for some sort of Martin Luther King "I have a dream..." moment of inspiration for next season.

At this time I want to wish all the best for our players representing NSW City at the coming CFA Nationals in Brisbane at the end of the month, with Michael Glenfield in the Senior Mens team, Josh King and Ethan Sydenham both in the Under 18 Boys team and Liam Sydenham in the Under 14 Boys Team

As always I want to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues across the St Columbas Management Committee for their ongoing engagement across all areas of our club again this year. The core people keep turning up year after year with the same intent and endeavours to do whatever is required to make this club function. The resilience and capability within the Management Committee continues to hold us in good stead each year, and enables the majority of others to concentrate purely on the task of playing the game of soccer. Without their time and effort this would not be possible.

2019 has clearly been a successful year at our club. There has been some real success in what we have done and what we have achieved without actually necessarily winning a competition or noticeably expanding our club membership numbers. Everyone has been a part of this success.

Unfortunately I must acknowledge that Excelsior 2 was bereft of grass for the majority of the winter, a condition that is not common for what has been a relatively consistent quality of playing surface over the years. We can only hope that Hills Shire Council will address this in some manner through the off season, so that we can return to contemplate what the 2020 season will bring with some grass at our feet!

On behalf of the Management Committee I hope that you have all enjoyed your 2019 winter season, have a great summer, and looking forward to next year.

Matthew Smith

St Columbas President 2019





St Columbas Soccer Club, Castle Hill
Celebrating 50 years of football in season 2019

CLUB'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS





AT A GLANCE - JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT



- ▶ 2019 brought 2 less junior teams to the club – total of 7 in 2019 compared with 9 in 2018, lets do better in 2020
- ▶ The majority of our junior teams provided fantastic assistance in the canteen each week, I truly THANK YOU.
- ▶ The club can provide additional skills training for all players using the services of our Head Coach, George Fernandez
- ▶ Coaching clinics were organized for all club juniors during school holidays, unfortunately not everyone took up these options– I urge all juniors to participate to learn a lot of new soccer skills
- ▶ 2020 will hopefully be an exciting year for the club where George Fernandez aims to have more teams for the 2020 season.
- ▶ Sponsorship dollars still need to be sourced for the club to continue with the development of our young players to improve their skills, to become better footballers as well as enjoy what they are doing every Saturday.
- ▶ Good Luck to everyone for a fantastic 2020 season.
- ▶ Alan Spaul
- ▶ Junior Development



U7 – BLACK TEAM REPORT

Our Under 7 Team this year saw some returning members from last years Under 6 Black Team as well as some first time soccer players. The kids had a great season and it was wonderful to watch them develop skills and form friendships.

We had mixed results this season; wins, losses and a few exciting close games! But a noticeable difference could be seen from taking to the field on our first game to the final weeks of the season, both in an individual skill level and working as a team. Some weeks were a little light on player numbers but the children still tried their hardest. We were even loaned players on one occasion so a fair match could be played. That's what soccer at this level is all about; teaching about how to be good sports and playing a fun game!

We had three sibling combinations on our team this year which was a pretty special experience for the children. Our key striker and highest goal scorer was Levi. A few games where he played goalie, the opposition were shocked when he'd run the ball up the field! First time player Lucas found his position as a fearless defender. William was determined to score a goal in his first season, and he did! Abigail Seif tried hard in her first season and had a few lucky breaks with the ball. Thiago was not afraid to tackle and his willingness to be goalie really helped our team this year. Jin showed skills in the position of goalie and in defence. Min joined his older brother and had an encouraging first year. Abigail Sydenham joined the team part way through the season, and given her size, she gave it a real go. Alana grew in confidence and skill this season, always giving her all in games.

Thank you to all the parents, grandparents, family and friends support for our team this year. We appreciate all the encouragement, cheering, transport to games, cold nights at training and half time oranges! The kids would not have had this opportunity without you all.

A final thank you goes to Pete for giving your time and patience to coach the team. It is very much appreciated and I'm sure seeing the children develop their skills over the season is reward enough. Keep kicking the soccer ball in the backyard in the off season and we hope to see you next year.

Ingrid Sydenham- Under 7 manager



U9 – BLACK TEAM REPORT

Another winter season of soccer has come and gone for the Under 9 Black team. While a number of players did not return from 2018, we were exceptionally fortunate to welcome new players Evan, Arnav, and Lucas to our team. This meant, while not flush with player numbers, we did at least have on paper a squad of players to look to field a team every week.

Coach Matt returned to coaching and part-time referee duties, with very able support from Assistant Pete who was also chief SSG goal set up supervisor at Excelsior. Naomi provided her capable administration and organisational support, even though sibling commitments meant that she was the “invisible” manager most Saturday mornings!

The core of the team returned to enjoy soccer again, with Abi, Jacob, Clara, Josh, Rohan, Samuel and Captain Ian leading the way.

We cannot boast an overwhelmingly successful season in terms of results, with 1 win & 2 draws being achieved across the season playing against a number of challenging and competitive opposition teams.

Once again the most heartening performance within the team, remained the team's willingness to try and compete at every Saturday game, and then look forward to learning at our Tuesday training sessions. Specific players showed a real desire to improve themselves and attempt to develop a better understanding and awareness of how to be the best player they could be on the field for their team.

While this did not equate to an abundance of goals being scored, we did see opportunities open up in the way our team played. Towards the end of the season there was some real highlights with Ian scoring his first goal, and Clara being a constant threat to go forward wide on the right hand side of the park. We are still faced with a relatively steep learning curve to compete on a level footing with some of the teams in our competition, and the need to build some depth and resilience in our team numbers, but I remain positive that we are heading in the right direction to do so in the coming seasons.

We must call out the success of 2 of our players, Clara and Abi, who were selected and represented the Northern Zone Under 9-11 Girls team in the John Oliver trophy competition this year. Clara and Abi both played a big part in the Northern Zone team winning both their games against the Southern Zone this year. Well done to Abi and Clara!

Once again I felt very fortunate to have a highly engaged and encouraging group of parents, grandparents, friends and family to support our children playing soccer. In particular, special mention must go out to Vivek who was our master recruiter at the start of the season, and Pete for his ongoing availability and willingness to step in if Matt was committed elsewhere.

Many thanks for the efforts of everyone this season, hope you all have a safe and happy summer, and looking forward to whatever the 2020 soccer season will bring.

Matt & Naomi



U9 – ORANGE TEAM REPORT

Practically a new squad from previous year, with only 3 players from last years squad.

These boys did extremely well during the season, showing character, improving their individual skills and showing glimpses as a team.

In this group we had a few characters such as Oliver (always smiling), Jack (the red hair torpedo) and Alonso (the quiet achiever). Then the very shy ones such as Jacobo, Peter, Jensen and Carter with Peter, Aroosh and Benji always happy.

This group was well lead by Jair, who the boys responded to really well and improved out of sight.

Overall a great group who had a great season and looking forward to the next one. Well done boys !!!!

Also a huge thank you to Leticia.

Coach - Jair Fernandez

Manager - Leticia Fernandez



U10 – ORANGE TEAM REPORT

Only 4 players were added to this squad from the previous year. I was privileged to coach this group with the help of Pablo.

Great attitude, disciplined and with lots of character. This batch of players are very strong individually, becoming more skillful and as a team they did very well.

Also with great characters such as Phoenix (can't stop talking), .

Paul, Ben, Lucas and Lachlan always smiling. The quiet characters such as Joshua, Will, Brooklyn and Zac. Then we have the explosive ones such as Emiliano and Aiden.

Enjoyable season, which I'll never forget, brilliant guys !!!!

Also a big thank you to Rose.

Coach - George Fernandez and Pablo Carmona

Manager - Rose Halligan



U9-11 – WENTY SAINTS TEAM REPORT

(COMBINED ST COLUMBAS & WENTWORTHVILLE TEAM)

2019 was an historic year for the association as it celebrated its 100 year anniversary. It was also the first time that they have ever had a girl's competition.

What initially started as a four team competition quickly became five after some very successful recruiting saw us start the season with 16 players for our first game.

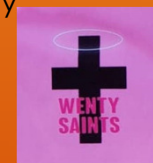
From that point onward we split into two teams, Wenty Saints Pink and Wenty Saints Purple. Despite the girls being a collection of those who played for St Columbas, Wenty and those that had barely played before they became fast friends and were extremely supportive of each other from the very beginning.

The girls really enjoyed training and were always eager to learn new things whether they were a brand new player or had been playing since six years old. On the field, it was a hugely successful season for us. The only way to have topped it would have been if both teams had made it to the grand final! The Purple team was mainly a collection of girls, including two sets of sisters, who were from the same school and most of whom had never played soccer before. The girls came along in leaps and bounds and picked things up extremely quickly. It was amazing to see them grow in skill and confidence as the weeks progressed!

The girls finished the regular season in third place ahead of the two OLQP teams and behind Guildford and the Pink team, which was probably a fair reflection of how the girls had done throughout the season. The games against the two OLQP teams were always good battles in which we came out on top on all but one occasion. Both Guildford and the Pink team were mostly filled with girls who had played soccer for many years so the girls were always going to find those games tough but made the opposition work for the result every time we played them. In the semi-final the girls came up against Guildford and gave a great account of themselves but unfortunately came up short on the day.

Despite the result the girls can hold their heads up high as they had a fantastic first season and were smiling throughout it!

The Pink team was made up primarily of girls who played for St Columbas or Wentworthville Uniting and therefore had a great deal of experience to call upon. It was fantastic to see that they used this experience to support and encourage the other girls from the very beginning.



U9-11 – WENTY SAINTS TEAM REPORTCONT'D

From the first game the girls played some fantastic football that was built around team work, passing as well as their individual skill. Apart from a couple of occasions when we let comfortable leads slip, the girls dominated the season from the first whistle to the last, scoring 70 goals and only conceding 7 during the regular season. In the semi-final the girls came up against OLQP Blue and put in a fantastic performance, only to be bettered the following week against Guildford when they ran out 3 nil victors in the grand final.

The win was thoroughly deserved and was an amazing achievement for the girls!

The highlights for the season for us had to be the two occasions that the girls from both teams got to play together, at the six a side and in the Zone Rep games. At the six a side a combined team from the Pink and Purple managed to go the entire day undefeated, winning the competition against Guildford in the final.

The standout game of the year though had to be the Zone Rep games. 12 of the girls were selected to represent the Yellow Zone and put in two outstanding performances, the first in particular where they emerged 4 nil victors over strong opposition. Finishing the season with three trophies was a dream come true for everyone involved! Far more important than the results was the way that all of the girls conducted themselves throughout the course of the season. Not once did they fight or blame each other. They were always supportive, encouraging and played together as a team. They were great listeners and keen to learn, both of which make a coach's job very easy. The girls were a credit to themselves and to their families with the way they conducted themselves and should be extremely proud of the season that they have had. Thank you girls for your dedication and thank you to the parents who were very extremely supportive of us all season.

Michael and Matt.



U12 – ORANGE TEAM REPORT

A mixture of 11 and 12 year olds playing division 1 managed to reach the semis. A very dedicated group well lead by Nicholas, Javi, Liam and TJ. The characters of this group were Atila and Lachlan (very quiet but lethal).

Then well supported by some shy, quiet and yet having a lot of contribution such as Zac, Nico, Tristan, Brendan, Dylan, Emmanuel, Joshua, Adeep and Issac (in some cases I still haven't heard their voices !!!!).

They knitted well and at times played very exciting games. Kept possession well and had character. Some of these boys will move onto reps next year and will not surprise me. Well done boys, was a pleasure coaching you guys.

A big thank you to Bruce through out the whole year, always positive and helpful.

Coach - George Fernandez



U12 – ORANGE TEAM REPORTCONT'D

With half of the team new to our squad it took a couple of rounds to get into the swing of things.

With Javi, Dylan and Adeep holding the centre of the ground and TJ on the left and Emmanuel and Tristan on the right it was evident that we had a solid mid field. Josh Thomas sat right behind the mid field was a quiet assassin, constantly coursing the opposing headaches. Brandon and Nicko held down the right back position were always there to upset the opponents attack. Liam played centre back. Lachlan looked after the left back position and was always there to put an end to the other team's advances. Up front we had our main goal scorers Zack and speedster Nick doing all the damage. I'm always amazed at our keeper, someone so young and small like Atila can throw his body around the way he does.

With 2 wins and 3 losses in the 1st 5 games it took up until round 6 for the boys to start to get into it. On round 6 we were playing against an unbeaten team who we hadn't played against. They were a little more than confident and thought they had won the game before it had started. The only problem for the other team was that no one had told our boys. It was our 1st game without George there to guide the boys but it was obvious in the 1st minute that all the boys were there to prove a point. With Javi running at will and Emmanuel causing his much larger opponent some serious grief, it was a big 5-0 win and it was at this stage other teams started to take us seriously.

Over the next few weeks all the boys started to rely on each other and the results showed, with 4 wins in a row.

In round 11 we had a tough game against an aggressive opponent and disaster struck. Our right mid ends the game with a break in his ankle and is out for the season. What a loss.

Over the next 4 weeks we had a few wins, a draw and a loss.

With 3 rounds left in the regular season it was all nothing. We were coming 4th and needed to win all 3 games to keep us in 4th position.

Round 16 had us playing against the other team who was also trying to get into the finals. Things just didn't go our way and a few interesting refereeing calls made it a day to forget with a 1-0 loss.

We were now up against it and playing against one of the weaker teams in the comp, we were still hopeful. We must have had over 80% possession, but struggled to find the net. Eventually we scored. The other team made 2 break a ways and on both occasions scored. We came back with a late equalizer with minutes to go and came away with a draw. We thought our season was done for.

Luck was still with us. The other team who was trying to make the finals also had a draw against the team coming last.

With an early Sunday morning makeup game and a large crowd in attendance and help from Josh from the under 10,s it turned out to be great day. We were still in the hunt for the finals, but only just. We needed to win our last game and for the other team in front of us to have a draw or a loss.

Another early start had all the parents exited and looking for the nearest coffee shop.

What a nail bitter, with all the kids digging deep we came away with a 1-0 win and the other team having a draw. Finally we made it into the semis by for and against. With the semi-finals finally upon us, it turned out to be a tough match. The opponent had too many answers for us. Atila had a great game in keeper, showing everyone that size doesn't matter.

Another standout for the game was Lachlan who shut down his man every time he received the ball.

Thank you to all the parents for their constant support and help throughout the year...

Manager - Bruce Sydenham



U14 – ORANGE TEAM REPORT

A team of talented players with a mixture of 13 and 14 year olds playing div.1. Was not an easy season if you look at the results however, we were extremely happy with their attitude to keep digging and improving individually and as a team.

A team that could keep possession for a period of time and tactically very aware during games. Well lead by Michael, Sebastian Ahmed and Jye. Adding the talent of Marlon, Anthony, David, Julian and Elias with the never give up approach of Mateo, Jason, Mahyar and Damian. Ben was injured just about for the entire season. Thank you to those boys that played in goals during the season. I'm presuming that about 5 or 6 will go to reps from this group. Well done guys !!!!

A big thank you to Christian for managing.

Coach - William De Moraes

Manager - Christian Perez



U17 – BLACK TEAM REPORT

2019 was a very enjoyable and rewarding season for the team with great results by all the boys.

We welcomed a couple of new boys to the team this season, with Antony, and Lachlan joining Aiden, Andrew, Callum, Chris, Josh, Marc, Christian, Sam, Ethan, Genisis, Jaged, James, Jake, and James.

After a solid first season in Hills District competition, 2019 saw them put us straight into the 1st division against the toughest competition on offer.

All the clubs in that competition had at least two teams, and some up to four teams in the age group meaning they had graded the very best into their Div 1 teams, with St Columbas having a single team to take on all comers. The boys adapted really well to the level of competition beating one of the eventual grand finalists during the regular season. Unfortunately, we missed the finals, but everyone that played us left the game win, lose or draw, saying how good a team we were and tough opposition.

All the boys contributed to the result each week and to the great season we have had, right from the keeper that great season, to the defence that were so tough to break down. Our midfield adapted to all the various formation changes and worked so hard creating opportunities going forward, and doubling back to help out in defence, and finally to the forward line that scored goals throughout the year. This season Josh was our top scorer.

This year, two of our boys, Ethan, and Josh, will represent the team, and the club in the NSW CFA Nationals in the Under 18 team. We wish them good luck and hope they have a great time.

Thanks to all the boys for a great season and I hope to see you all back next and take it all to the next level.

Finally a big thank you to Peter the team manager, and the parents who without your help getting the nets up and down etc, the season would not have been as enjoyable.

Scott Moeser - Coach – 2019



RAAHAUGHE CUP –ORANGE FIRST & RESERVES

Reports follow



RAAHAUGHE CUP RESERVES – ORANGE TEAM REPORT

As they say in the classic's, "There's always next Year".

A year of what could have been, but in the end nothing to show in terms of silverware. Saints had a dominating year finishing 2nd just behind Kings. On top of that, we had the best defence in the comp in terms of goals against, and also scored plenty.

With the regular season complete we learnt fairly quickly, finals are a different game. Whilst we didn't finish the season ideally with a late loss and scrappy win in the last round, we certainly were the team to beat. A couple of injuries late which weren't ideal, but still enough there to take the premiership this year.

A tough 1st semi only to be denied in extra time meant we would need to back up in the finals. Our finals v St Matthews should have been over by 1/2 time. A 1/2 which we completely dominated and had plenty of very good chances to score, only to see them go wide, go over or be saved. In finals you have to make the most of all these. We didn't. 0-0 at the break. St Matts got 1 chance in the 2nd half and scored. To our credit we fought back and with 10 to go finally got a deserved equaliser. With a minute to go, the post saved St Matts. Extra time saw no real chances and it went to a penalty shoot-out. Only a great save the difference in the end to see St Matts through. They would then go on and win the comp.

Highlights for the year is the influx of many new (young players) which is laying a wonderful foundation for the future of our club. We are getting very close now to premiership victories in both grades and I have every confidence that 2020 can be that year.

Well done to all players and special congrats to MVP Simon Wynn Jones and Players Player Sam Poole who both had an outstanding year. As squad we have great spirit (Del Rio another great weekend away) and this will ensure that we have plenty of big years ahead for the club.

See you all at preseason.

GP



RAAHAUGHE CUP FIRSTS – ORANGE TEAM REPORT

"The Saint's season started well and truly last year with Pullen Bros & Sons scouting firm putting on a masterclass of talent recruiting that would embarrass A League bosses around the country. The heart and soul of St Columbus brought in a new core to the Firsts team with 4 new starters and several key bench players. Wise heads say offseason success can only be measured with post season hindsight so the lads took to the field to prove they were as good as advertised.

A bonanza is defined as "a large amount of something desirable". If goals are the main desire in football then this past season was a genuine bonanza. The Saints carved up opposition defences and paced the league with 67 goals in 17 games. A first game victory of 5-1 against a Castle Hill Baptist team who throttled us in a pre season friendly set the tone that the tide had well and truly turned at St Columbus. Boy oh boy did the goals flood in. The Saint' Orange Tide scored 4 goals or more in 8 games with a high of 13 against Guildford McCredie. Added to the potent front six was an astute and cohesive back line and goalie that finished the season with the third fewest goals conceded. If not for a miserable afternoon with gale force winds on a field where the sun sets over the goals and makes seeing the ball impossible, the Saints defence would've finished second. A goal difference of 40 in 17 games is quite the achievement.

The season wasn't all celebration though. The Saints felt some early season pains as they developed a feel for playing each other. Leaving a crucial 2 points on the field against Wentworthville. That was to be expected with the spine of the team playing together for the first time. Kings, who are the resident bar setters in the competition, comfortably beat the Saints 3-1 in round 4. There were moments in that game where the Saints showed they could hang with the best in the league. Challenge accepted.

With early season dropped points it became nearly impossible for the Saints to qualify 1st or 2nd for the finals as the league quickly developed into a 3 horse race. The established teams hadn't stumbled out of the gates and were quite a ways ahead when the last month of the season rolled around. Notwithstanding Pullen Bros & Sons outstanding midseason signing the Saints couldn't quite catch up to St Matthews or Kings. Ultimately finishing 1 win out of second place.

There aren't too many occasions in life bigger than a Saints matchday, unfortunately this season the team struggled through ill-timed bouts of work, weddings and glorious powdery slopes. The fullest version of the Saints Firsts only managed one game on the field with each other. With the Saints finals campaign marred by unavailability the squad battled hard. With the early season draw in mind a Saints team missing key players thumped Wentworthville 5-0 in the opening finals game. Inopportunely the Saints played Kings Old Boys at less than full strength. It was a strange game. Nerves made the game a tense affair with neither team or the referee having a strong showing. The game ended 1-0 to Kings after they scored a brilliant free kick from a less than brilliant award of that free kick.

The Saints have hope though. With 95% of their line-up in place they throttled the eventual champions St Matthews 3-1 in thrilling night game. There is a bright future ahead! Here's to next season and hopefully a more consistent turn out.

Writer's shout out: Craig Pullen turned in a miraculous season. The unassuming goal keeper makes the difficult look run of the mill. In big moments and big games Craig pulled off timely and wonderful saves- often whilst playing through injury. He is the bail you want when the ship is sinking. His humble prowess belies the ridiculous ease in which he pulls of the astonishing.

Oh and one last thing, "Up the Saints "

Tim Robertson (Captain)



RAAHAUGHE CUP RESERVES – BLACK TEAM REPORT

The 2019 season had a mixture of the young and the middle aged playing.

Our 1st game of the season had us coming up against our other St Columba's team.

I think it had the older members in the team remembering their age. No matter what we did it didn't come together. It was not the start we were looking for but there were a few positive's with big James scoring a couple of cracking goals.

In round 2 we had a bye

Round 3 had us re grouping and playing the silver spoons from kings Blue. It was a game we had control of and although the score ended in a 2 – 0 win we were never really troubled. It was a fiery encounter and the game ended with 1 red card to us and 2 red cards to the opposing team.

At least we had a win and the confidence was on the increase.

Jair joined our team in Round 4 and it became obvious he was a cut above average, especially in goals. Playing against the eventual comp winners it was a tough game. The game finished in a 1-1 draw but we had our chances. It was a quality game and had us starting to believe in ourselves.

With the younger members of our team playing at the same time and Scott being the coach of their team had us struggling for numbers and having to forfeit round 5.

Round 6 had us travelling to South Granville and up against our old rivals Gullford. With most of the team arriving at the ground 1min before the game was due to start it was only 3min later we had our 1st goal. Jacob scored a nice volley off a corner. It was Corey's 1st game with us and it turned out to be a game to remember. Corey and Hayden both scoring a hat-trick. It always makes it easier when you have big Dan controlling the middle and people like Matt Simms running off him.

Round 7 had us playing against another tough opponent in Kings White. What a tough game and what a great performance. Jair played a game that was the best keeping I have ever seen. With a brace of young kids playing we never stopped giving it to them. With 10 min to go and with the scores 1-1 a real hearty performance from Josh King saw Matt put it in the back of the net. 2-1 What a win.

Over the next 8 rounds and with big James over sees, Jair getting a contract to play in a NPL2 team and Matt Smith suffering broken ribs from a stray knee... we had a few ups and downs.

With 2 rounds left in the season and just sitting out of the top 4 we had a game down at Wentworthville. It was a game we were not looking forward to with the young boys only due to finish their game 15min before our game was due to start and being 30min away from the ground we were playing at. We only had 6 players ready to start the game so the game had to start late. With only 1min left before we had to forfeit the game the young boys turned up. Phew, that was close. In the 1st round they had beaten us pretty convincingly and we knew we had our work cut out. The boys really put in that day with Ben Z, Ethan, Scott and Simon working their backsides off in the backs Matt, Hayden, Sam and Jacob working hard in the middle. The day belonged to Josh King, showing a ton of skill and putting away 4 goals. On another high Jagad scored his 1st goal for the season.

With 1 round to go we needed to win and for 4th place to loose. It didn't start well with Ethan turning up sick and being forced into goals. Big Dan and James were also out with injury and Hayden away.

Playing the team coming 1st it was never going to be easy. We really turned up for the last game of the season. Matt Smith came back from his broken ribs to have a great day and 3 boys from Castle Hill Baptist turned up to help out. The difference in the day came down to the determination of Josh who scored all 3 goals and the 7th in the last 2 games to finish the season on a high. Unfortunately the team coming 4th one their game and finished 1 point ahead and keeping us out of the finals.

One of the biggest positives for the year was all the younger players backing up and helping out when they could. Thanks to Scott for not only his 43rd consecutive year playing but for also organizing the young boys who helped out every week. Great effort everyone .

Bruce Sydenham

