

SPC and Clarendon Produce a Thriller



Report by Xavier Carey

Score: Ballarat Clarendon College 8. 12 (60) def by St Patrick's College 8. 14 (62)

Goal Kickers: Yestin Eades 2, Leigh Spiteri, Clay Bilney, Ezekiel Frank, Jett Hermann, Connor Byrne, Sam White.

Best Players: Ben Hurley, Ben Lusby, Joel Cowan, Leigh Spiteri, Jake McQueen

For the second year running, the BAS home and away match between cross road rivals St Patrick's College and Ballarat Clarendon College has produced another nail biting contest.



Joel Cowan propels the ball forward despite pressure from his BCC opponent.

This time however the Paddy boys had their noses in front when the final siren sounded.

When the final siren did sound, signs of relief rather than screams of jubilation emanated from the coaches and players of SPC.

They came into the game clear favourites fielding a very strong team for the first game of the BAS competition and with BCC missing a couple of players through injury.

However it was the underdogs who set the tone for the match, controlling the tempo and playing with much higher intensity for the first quarter enabling them to get out to a 13-point lead.

The style of play that St Pat's like to play on their spacious oval was simply just not working on the significantly smaller ground at Clarendon.

Year 10 student Joe Dodd played an important role in marching a comeback for SPC as both teams' tempers were flaring with the umpire giving consecutive downfield free kicks against each side.

The game continued to be an arm wrestle in the third quarter with the first goal not coming until the 18-minute mark as Clarendon went in to the last change with a five-point buffer.

For nearly the entire second half SPC looked the likely team to open up the game but with two consecutive shots on goal hitting the post, luck just wasn't falling their way.

It took a special effort from the leaders of the group such as Ben Simpson, Joel Cowan and Ben Lusby (along with some Yestin Eades magic) to finally break the game open as they kicked out to a 16-point lead with just five minutes remaining. However, College were not done with yet.

Adam Johnson kicked two special goals to get his side within two points of the reigning BAS champions but time was against them. Despite a more than valiant effort from the home team it was St Patrick's College which managed to kick start the season with a nail biting win. BCC will think back and ponder what might have been.

The match was not played without any controversy. Two shots on goal for College in the last five minutes were deemed points by the goal umpire when majority of BCC coaches and players thought they were both goals.

Ben Hurley brought his magnificent early season form into the game playing on Sam Dunstan. Ben was giving away a lot of height but managed to win the majority of contests when he came up against his opponent one-on-one.



Leigh Spiteri's leadership was pivotal in ensuring an SPC win.

Joel Cowan, Ben Lusby and Leigh Spiteri were instrumental in getting their team over the line with the intensity and leadership they brought to their team.

St Patrick's College coach Howard Clark, despite the win, talked about the lack of intensity his team brought to the table.

"At half time it was 11-2 their way at centre stoppages and you're just about never going to win a game if that discrepancy remains like that," Mr Clark said.

However he was proud of his side's leaders lifting the side to a win in the last quarter.

"Joel Cowan was the catalyst in terms of his intensity, and there was a brilliant, but really fair hit by Ben Lusby and people like Benny Simpson and Leigh Spiteri really stood up and showed leadership after being in the program for a long time."