**‘THE PORT’ HANGS ON IN A THRILLER AT HUONVILLE**

On a weekend where we remember our brave service men and women around the country on Anzac Day, the Cygnet versus Huonville local derby is definitely the most keenly looked forward to game in the footy season. It is the first date the guys look for when the new season roster comes out. Last Saturday saw arch-rivals, the ‘Cygnet Community Bank Football Club’ and the Huonville Lions battle it out at Huonville for the annual Community Bank Shield. The Huon Valley Bendigo Community Bank is a generous supporter and sponsor of both clubs.

The Southern Storm boys were keen to follow on from where they left off last week with Coach Matt Brereton urging them to take it up to Huonville right from the first bounce. The Storm did just that in the first quarter but did not capitalise on their scoring opportunities. The Storm led by 8 points at the first break, but if not for several missed opportunities the lead could have been greater. The second quarter was all Huonville’s as they kicked four goals straight to the Storm’s one goal, to take over the lead by seven points at half time. In an exciting and hard fought second half, both sides kicked three goals in each of the final two quarters. With the scores level with only a minute to go, both sides were battling hard to get the ball into their respective forward lines. With only seconds left on the clock, Huonville got a quick centre clearance and managed to kick a goal to run out narrow victors by six points. This is the Storm’s second close result in a row as they won by six points against Brighton the previous week.

Better players were Jackson Gordon, Joe Direen, who was a great target up forward with six goals, Michael McNabb, Brandon Lane, Elijah Reardon (2 goals) and Nathan Duggan.

The signs are really good for the Storm, as they have been highly competitive in all games and have now acquitted themselves extremely well against both Claremont and Huonville, Grand Finalists from last season. With further fitness and improved skills the Southern Storm should be a force to be reckoned with as the season progresses.

The Cygnet Reserves were keen to put the disappointing performance of the past two weeks behind them and play a competitive brand of football against the Lions. The first quarter was fairly even on the scoreboard with Cygnet’s accuracy and Huonville’s inaccuracy keeping the margin to only nine points at the first change, with a good contest expected. Unfortunately from Cygnet’s perspective, there were not too many positives to be said after quarter time, with Huonville getting their running team game going and scoring at will. The Lions kick eleven unanswered goals whilst Port could only manage three behinds in the final three quarters, eventually going down by 80 points.

Better players in a disappointing result were Tommy Slevin, who has had a magnificent start to the season, Coach Shane Clark who as always battled manfully, Chris Brereton who rucked tirelessly all day against several opponents, Paddy Wilcox, Ian Coulson and Reece Polley. Sausage and Sticks were the only two to bother the scorers.

All was set for a great Senior contest in perfect conditions and with a massive crowd in attendance. ‘The Port’ were keen to avenge their defeats of over 20 goals in the past two Huonville clashes and welcomed back five times Best and Fairest winner, Brad Watson for his first game in over 12 months after a horror run of injuries.

The first half was a very even affair with both sides kicking 3 goals in the first quarter and Huonville holding a slender one point lead at quarter time. Cygnet had slightly the better of Huonville in the second term to regain the lead by a margin of 6 points at the long break. With Coach Gav Quirk urging his Port boys for a sustained effort in the second half, it was a huge ‘premiership quarter’ for The Port. With Ben Halton on the ball, Cam Wilcox providing plenty of run off half-back and Matty Dance in and under all day, Cygnet skipped out to a handy 27 point lead with a quarter to play.

In another nail-biting finish, Huonville came home with the proverbial ‘wet sail’ and looked set to snatch the game away from Cygnet. With scores level half way through the quarter, a clutch goal from 50 metres by Brayden Hayes regained the lead for The Port. It was then a frantic battle over the remaining ten minutes with Huonville constantly driving the ball forward but only managing to score two late behinds to reduce the margin to four points, when the final siren blew.

It was a fantastic team performance, and importantly the team is starting to gain that critical self-belief that they can challenge all teams, a trait that has been sadly missing the past few seasons. Better players were Ben Halton, who finished with four goals and again played a significant role whether on the ball or down back, both wingmen Matty Dance and Toby Cowen ran hard and were good all day, Cam Wilcox, Jake Brereton who provided plenty of highlights with his high marking, Matty Cane and Ollie Burke (2 goals). All the six backman held strong whilst other goal kickers were Brayden Hayes, who had a huge game and finished with 3 goals, with singles to Toby Cowen, Jake Brereton, Pud Darcy and Matty Dance.

The only sour note to the day was the early ankle injury to young backman, Josh Doyle. Fortunately ‘Pup’ has sustained a severe sprain, and not a break as initially feared. Hopefully he shouldn’t miss too many games.

This week we take on Dodges Ferry at home, who are fresh off a good win over Sorell, in what promises to be another close and exciting contest. We hope to see another packed ground for three great games. The following Saturday (7th May) football returns to Kermandie when we take on Hobart. This will be followed by the popular iPod Shuffle Night back at the Cygnet Clubrooms after the game. The following week (14th May) will be our first bye.

**NEW CHANGE ROOMS – OFFICIAL OPENING**

This Saturday will see the official opening of the Club’s new change rooms at 1.15pm. Government Minister, Jacquie Petrusma will cut the ceremonial ribbon along with two of our Club identities.

Get along and check out these great new facilities in what promises to be a great day both on and off the field.

**CAMPBELL BROWN TO ATTEND PAST PLAYERS AND SUPPORTERS DAY – SATURDAY 28th MAY**

The Club through the Past Players and Supporters Committee is proud to announce the highly entertaining Campbell Brown as guest speaker for the function. Do not miss Campbell’s many tales and he is sure to have the audience in raptures. Tickets are $60.00 per person plus gate entry with the function commencing at 11.30am. The cost includes a two course meal & free refreshments till the Senior match commences. With only 120 per-sold tickets available for this event, tickets are selling fast and there will be no door sales, so get your ticket now! Tickets are available for purchase at the Cygnet Newsagency or from any of the organising committee. Check out the Club website or Facebook page for further details. Proceeds for the day will go towards floor coverings in our new player change-rooms.

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**Weekly Award Donors**: Phillip & Loretta Wilcox [Wilcox Electrical], Bill Cribbin’s BP Cygnet, Roys Bits of Old Pizza and R & D Meats

**‘’Support the Port in 2016’’**