**‘’The Port’’ Win Local Derby over Lions**

*It was a fantastic day for the Cygnet Football Club last Saturday at Huonville Oval with 3 wins from the four games played, in particular a massive Round 1 victory to the senior team over the highly touted and well-recruited Huonville Lions on their home soil, in beautiful autumn weather in front of a massive Huon crowd.*

The Southern Storm Colts got the day off to a bright start up against a young and determined young Lions team. The Storm under the guidance of new coaches and Kermandie legends, Cam Ashlin and Andrew ‘Pup’ Lovell were keen to see some action after a long pre-season. It was an even and at times scrambly first quarter as both sides, with new players, tried to get their game plan in place. There was nothing between the teams at quarter time.

The second term was similar to the first and in a low scoring affair the Storm managed to hold a slender 3 point half time lead.

After a good talk by the coaches, the Storm had plenty of opportunities in the third, but were not making the most of them on the score-board in the windy weather. Only two points separated both sides with a thrilling finish on the cards.

However, this is where the Storm finally hit their straps and dominating play in the final term over the tiring Lions, kicking 8 goals 4, whilst keeping the young Lions scoreless to score a fantastic 54 point victory; albeit over a gritty Lions side. The Coaches were pleased with the way the side gelled as the game wore on and we welcomed Jonte Fahey, Kane Wouters, Sam Ryan, Harry Tolhurst and a few other new boys into the team – a great team win boys and this side will only get better as they play more games together.

Unfortunately, the story-line was not quite the same for the Reserves team under new co-coaches Jamie Direen and Rhys Jennings. In an all too familiar sight, it was a bit of a ‘dads-army’ side that took the park for the Port, with a number of old faces, and a few new players to the Club with a Rugby back-ground. Conversely, it appeared the Lions off-season recruitment spilled into the two’s as they appeared to dominate from the first bounce and looked fit and skilful.

The Club welcomed new players Josh Mayo, Judd Lovell, Carlos Rudolph and Ashley Hutchinson while ever-green veterans and premiership players Darris Fahey and Ian ‘Sos’ Coulson were but a few helped to put a team on the park. It was great to see Jack O’Neill and Gerard Brereton playing again after both suffered serious ACL injuries at the end of the 2017 season and missed all of 2018 following knee reconstructions.

A five goal to one first term set the scene for the game although the Port were enthusiastic and making the Lions earn their possessions.

By half-time, the Lions had drawn away to hold a commanding 10 goal lead, but the Port were still competitive against the odds, and fitness and skill levels a key difference.

After a blast from the Coaches at the long-break, the side hit the ground hoping to turn the score-board around, but the Lions were having nothing of that, and kicked 5 goals 6 to the Port’s 1 goal 1 to hold a huge lead at the last break. It was really a matter of how much the final margin would be as the Port players legs started to give in and injuries kicked in.

Another 8 goals to the Lions in the final term enabled them to record a massive 138 point win. Congratulations to Josh Mayo, a rugby-league product who kicked his first goal for the club – well done Josh! A real need for some players to get on the track and help the Reserves to keep pressure on the senior players – let’s get committed fellas!

A massive crowd had gathered by the time the senior match commenced. The sun was shining, with a strong breeze blowing to the Northern End of the oval. The Port were missing some key players in Duggan, Palmer, O’Neill, Ashlin and Verrell but this provided opportunity for others to step up.

The Port took to the field debuting their new away strip that looked fantastic. Well done to the Committee for this great initiative. The club welcomed Reece Schuth and Luke Paton who lined up for their first senior games for the Port, while welcoming back Matt Dance (out of retirement) and Braden Livingston back home after a great career at the Kingborough Tigers and the University Rainbows.

So the scene was set for a fantastic match. The Lions came out of the blocks running with the breeze at their backs piling on 5 goals in the first quarter while the Port held up well kicking 3 against the wind through Jennings, Zeitzen and new recruit Luke Paton.

The Lions were a little inaccurate in front of goal in the first quarter kicking 5 behinds which kept the Port in the game. Returnee, and former Cygnet player Timmy Lamprill was proving a handful for the Cygnet defence with 3 early goals.

The Port’s backline started well despite being under immense pressure early. Paddy O’Neill and Jackson Gordon were standing tall and repelling many forward thrusts from the Lions.

Big man and key recruit, Reece Schuth made a dominant start in the ruck giving the on-ball brigade of the Port the better of the centre clearances. The Lions went into the first quarter break with a 16 point lead.

The Port came out firing in the second quarter and with the help of the breeze piled on 6 goals to the Lions 2 within the quarter. Schuth again dominated in the ruck enabling the Port’s on ballers to dominate the centre clearances again.

Goals in this quarter went to Toby Cowen (2), Joe Direen (2), youngster Noah Clifford and Ben Halton. In a bitter blow, the Port lost Elliott Ross to a hamstring injury within the early part of the second quarter.

However, a big changing point in the game was about to unfold. When Lamprill decided to take on Port big-man Joe Direen in a big marking collision, it was Lamprill who came off second best, and appeared to be heavily concussed to take no further part in the game.

Big Joe was up and about early, putting his body on the line for his team. The Port went into the half time break holding a 10 point lead in a tight and enthralling game.

Coach Cato was very happy at half time with the intense pressure his young Port players impacted on each and every contest. Cato recognised the huge work loads of Joe Direen, Toby Cowen, Reece Schuth, Sam Dean, Paddy O’Neill and Jackson Gordon within the half.

The Lions had the breeze at their backs for the 3rd quarter and it was vital that the Port stuck with them. Not only did this happen, but the Port managed to outscore the Lions, kicking 5 goals to the Lions 4 in a pivotal part of the match.

Schuth continued to dominate the ruck, and Livingston, Cowen and Dean fed off him perfectly, winning the centre clearances.

Young-gun, and new recruit Luke Paton, continued to impress with his speed and attack on the ball – a real find for the Port. Goals in this quarter went to Luke Paton (2), Toby Cowen, Jake Dance and Braden Livingston.

With the Port up by 16 points at the final break, the massive crowd were very quiet as they anxiously watched on in anticipation for a thrilling final term. It saw the players from both teams begin to struggle with fitness as the physical and fast pace of the game took its toll including the warm weather.

The experience of Livingston shone through as he was everywhere getting plenty of the ball and kicking the sealer for the Port and he was pretty happy about it. A fantastic team effort from the Port. A great game – the rivalry of the Huon definitely lives on and supporters of both sides love the local derbies.

In a great team effort the better players were Joe Direen, Toby Cowen, Reece

Schuth, Luke Paton, Braden Livingston and Jackson Gordon.

Goals went to Toby Cowen (3), Luke Paton (3), Braden Livingston (2), Joe Direen (2), James Zeitzen (1), Ben Halton (1), Rhys Jennings (1), Noah Clifford (1), Jake Dance (1).

A very happy post-match coach, Ben Cato, paid special mention to his young-charges and debutants, Schuth who was dominant in his first match in Port colours, Livingston the same in an awesome return, first-gamer and super-impressive Paton who could be the find of the year, Direen, Cowen and Gordon in defence who was rock-like.

This week the Port play their first home match at Cygnet Oval when we host Dodges Ferry in what should be another enticing encounter. A really big crowd is expected to watch this ever-growing list of exciting young and local players ply their trade. Get along and support our proud Club.

**Port Ladies**

The first game of the season saw 6 new players for the very first time in the Port jumpers. These young ladies stepped up to the challenge admirably. This was also the team’s first game under new coach Mark Munnings. The Port women ran out onto the Huonville ground led by Captain Sammy Kluga and Vice captains Ash Munnings and Holly Upston in front of a big crowd after the Senior's game.

The first quarter was an intense even quarter, with quite a few stoppages. Both teams were hard at the ball. Huonville scored their only goal for the game and Port's Jaimie Noye also managed a goal for the Port. The second quarter, although scoreless for both teams was again even and hard fought. Tayla Clifford was excellent in the ruck winning most of the taps. Our on-ballers Ella Brereton, Serena Hubert and Jess O'Neill also played an impressive game, getting more than their fair share of the ball, running and tackling hard.

After the half time break, the girls came out firing and their dominance started to shine through with the ball not making it into Huonville's forward 50 area all quarter. This was due to our strong back line of Grace Lovell, Taylah Dillon, Emily "Demolition" Duggan, Isabel Sharp, Chantelle Coad and Holly Upston. The Port women continued to run and tackle hard, with another 6 points added to the Port's scoreboard to extend their lead to 7 points with a quarter to play .

In the last quarter the Port women hit full throttle as Huonville seemed to run out of legs. This close knit group played a great team. The last quarter saw 2 goals from first time player Abby Watson. Abby has had a great pre-season and this certainly showed on game day. Single goals also to Isabel Sharp and Amy Sharp; two very talented players who have stepped up to play from last season Under 17's. The Port women's lengthy pre-season training was evident as the final siren sounded with the Port running out winners by 32 points. In the change rooms after the game the Port song was sung loud and proud. Congratulations ladies!

Stand out players in a fantastic team game were Abby Watson, Ella Brereton, Tayla Clifford, Serena Hubert, Sammy Kluga and Mady Eaves. Also special thanks goes to Jason Kluga, our team runner and Emily Direen and Shez Atkinson for running the water.

This Saturday the Port Women will host University at the Cygnet Oval in the first game of the day, commencing at 9am.

Support the Port in 2019