

Cardinals are on a mission

Old Scotch looking to secure first premiership in 41 years

VAFA Football

Nikolas Zakharia

Old Scotch is hunting its first premiership in more than 40 years after holding off University Blacks to win a thrilling Premier B preliminary final at Elsternwick Park on Saturday.

Responding diligently to its one-point loss to Caulfield Grammarians in last week's second semi-final, Old Scotch marched onto the field with one last chance at making the grand final on the line.

The Blacks refused to go down without a fight, narrowing the margin to one point in the final term before the Cardinals took the chocolates with a dramatic five-point victory, 11.10 (76) to 10.11 (71), which also moves them back up to Premier next year.

Old Scotch coach Barry Mitchell said his team's fortitude helped them secure the win.

"I think composure and desperation are probably the two words to describe it," he said. "Uni Blacks came at us hard pretty late. The great thing was we were able to hang on against the wave of their momentum."

"So in terms of a back-to-

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LAST CHANCE PRELIM

It was the last roll of the dice for neighbourhood rivals Old Xaverians and St Kevin's when they did battle in Sunday's Premier prelim final at Elsternwick Park. Was it Xavs or SKOBs that reached the decider? More at: localfooty.com.au

the-wall win, it was fantastic."

James Sansom laid the foundations for the Cardinals victory, by kicking three majors, while Charlie Cormack and Nicholas Jamieson were also important in quelling the Blacks' late comeback.

"I think (Sansom's) part of a pretty good running-type team," Mitchell said. "We've got a pretty good running team so he's an important player 'cause he can hit the scoreboard as well."

Mitchell said a strong contribution from all 22 players increases the Cardinals' chances.

"I talk about guys not

having their best day but still being able to contribute – I think that's how you win big games," he said. "We're not overly concerned with who gets the most possessions or who kicked the most goals – you've really got that team effort to stick it over the line."

After losing to Caulfield Grammarians by the narrowest possible margin, Old Scotch aims to avenge itself in this Saturday's grand final.

A win would give the Cardinals their first premiership since 1978.

"We had a few boys a bit sore by the end of yesterday but we're confident we'll have a good team going into this week as well," Mitchell said. "It was a great win and we're pretty keen to go one more."



Old Scotch celebrates its five-point win. (Left) coach Barry Mitchell (left), Conor O'Beirne and Tom Downie belt out the club song. Pictures: Chris Eastman

Lions limp to the end of season

Soccer

Friday the 13th proved to be a nightmare for the Burwood-based Eastern Lions in their final game of the season, the NPL2 Champions Cup at Jack Edwards Reserve.

As winners of NPL2 East the Lions played the NPL2 West champs, St Albans Saints, with overall bragging rights at stake. But, missing three first team players plus their keeper, the Lions went down 4-2.

Meanwhile, at the Football Victoria's gold medal night on Thursday, Eastern Lions boss Jimmy Williams was named NPL2's coach of the year while Keegan Coulter was goalkeeper of the year.

And Alamein FC bowed out of the NPLV women's finals after going down to FC Bulleen Lions 3-1 in the semi-final at the Veneto Club last Sunday.

Rachael Quigley opened the scoring for Bulleen on 23 minutes and the Lions doubled their advantage when Lia Privitelli scored three minutes before half-time.

Lucy Johnson dragged a goal back for Alamein in the 55th minute but Bulleen's passage to the grand final was confirmed when Privitelli scored the second goal of her brace six minutes from time.

Old Xaverians join the field for half-marathon titles

The Victorian Half-Marathon Championship was held on a fairly flat course along the Yarra Boulevard in Richmond last weekend.

A group of eight formed at the front of the race from the start but, after a few kilometres, it was reduced to four: Liam Adams (Essendon), Ryan Geard (Western Athletics), Dave Ridley (Doncaster) and Matthew Hudson (invitation).

Matthew Johnson (Doncaster) ran on his own in fifth place with the rest of

Cross-Country

Christopher Worsnop

the field further back.

By halfway Johnson had caught the leaders but, at 13km, Geard and Adams broke away.

Over the last few kilometres Geard left Adams behind and went on to win in 64:59. Adams was second in 65:14 while Ridley finished strongly to come in third in 65:20.

Among the women, the early leaders were Fasika Metafriya and Anna Kelly

(invitation). By the 7km mark, Kelly had established a clear lead while Kiah Fry (Frankston) worked her way into third position in the second half of the race.

Kelly kept her lead and won in 74:22 while Fry stormed home to finish second in 75:25 and take the championship gold medal as Kelly was an invitational runner. Metafriya was third in 76:35.

Old Xaverians had two big efforts in the Over 50 age group: Darren Templeton won the M50-54 division in 76:46, which also clinched the

M50-54 trophy for the season, while Bruce Davie (79:53) had his best half-marathon in some years and came in second in the M55-59 division, behind John Meagher of Box Hill.

This saw him wrap up third place on the M55-59 standings for the whole year.

The men's Over-50 team of Darren Templeton, Bruce and Bob Meek came out on top in a tight three-way tussle with APS and Box Hill, who had won every event between them prior to this one.

Sophie Ryan was the best

Old Xaverians woman with 86:57 with Hannah Cossins 88:38, Julie Manning 94:12, Susan Hinckfuss 96:00 and Fleur Shaw-Jones 107:12 also covering the course.

Charlotte Hoskins finished fifth in the under-18 5km with a time 19:40.

Jason Paisley ran 76:47 with Mark Buyck 84:00, Justin Curran 84:06, Simon Holt 84:42, David Martini 87:20, Pierre Guillon 88:38, Tim McNeill 90:59, Bob Meek 91:09, Richard Dickman 108:09 and Christopher Worsnop 116:05 also in action over the 21.1km.



Old Xaverians' Jason Paisley and Darren Templeton