

Match Report Swannanoa vs Ohoka

December 6th 2008

By Peter Roebuck

The start of the game was delayed while a ceremonial concrete plaque was laid at each end of the pitch in memory of fallen comrades, and also as a gesture to acknowledge the fine work of club stalwart Trevor Findlay.

Swannanoa lost the toss and a depleted Ohoka side full of young tear-aways elected to bat with a team of 7 players. They were soon reduced to 67 all out off 16.2 overs, Shane Murdoch knocking the top over with 2-16 off 4 overs, and Nathan Lang, a recent purchase from London justifying his pre-match hype by producing the fine figures off 3-8 off four overs.

The other match highlight was a fine catch by Andy "I'm not a God" Pope who doubled back from gully at a pace similar to Ben Johnson, twisted like Nadia Comaneci, eyes straight into the sun and held the ball in a vice like grip that Linda Lovelace would be proud of. A catch that will be repeated around the hollow halls of the Brook Hotel, Red Lion and Aranui Tavern for weeks.

The older Ryan remains unutilised and still on a hat trick from the first match in October - obviously on a long term rotation policy and being saved for the Fernside-Ashgrove game.

The Swannanoa run chase got off to a cracking start, when a lively opening bowler felled Derek Scott off the first ball. Derek, in a poor attempt to hook a sharp rising delivery, was stuck on the side of the face shattering his jaw. As he was carried from the field in a pool of blood and a batch of broken teeth, concerned team members asked the questions; "who will open the batting?", "who will collect Anne's afternoon tea next week?" (always rates), and "what about the renovations contract on the club pavilion that was to be completed by Christmas"? A more caring, considerate bunch of cricketers could not be found.

It was decided after the game as a mark of respect; Derek's teeth will be placed under the concrete plaque at the end he fell.

A lively opening pair of bowlers saw a record number of Swannanoa players seeking to field for the opposition and then to bat at 8, 9 and 10.

Tim Fulton starved of runs all year, kept his head down and jaw behind the bat to see off the demon fast bowlers. Rosco Aikman showed amazing batting composure while his 7 year old daughter started his truck and appeared ready from the home trip while Dad was still batting. Daughters Ally and Brooke will be an interesting pair on the sideline this season.

Fulton was joined by Ryan, his batting nemesis, and after a couple of firm “NO’s” saw the light at last on how to bat with a hypo jack-in-the-box.

Following the match conclusion, Ohoka sportingly remained behind to join the team in a scene reminiscent from the hotel in Once Were Warriors.

The club wishes Derek Scott a speedy recovering so that the club house repairs can be completed by the 20th December deadline.

The team remains unbeaten and looks forward to the next two matches of complete contrast an aged and wise old Holmwood Colts team, followed by the young bucks with the flashy bats from Fernside-Ashgrove.