Week 2 finals update

Congratulations to the U11 Comets and U13 Jets on achieving premiership glory! Commiserations to the U12 Comets who came so close, but narrowly missed out.

U11 Comets

U13 Jets

This week’s player profile interviews are with U12 Comets stars Dean Alter and Gabe Jotkowitz who played their 50th games in the Grand Final. Read on to hear their thoughts.

Make sure you get out to support the U15 Comets next Sunday as they strive to make history in winning a third consecutive flag.
Read on further for the special U15 pre-game Grand Final review, brilliantly compiled by club guru Harry Jacobs.
Game details: U15 Comets vs St Peters – 28th August 12.55pm at Trevor Barker Oval, Sandringham.

2016 Presentation Night – Wednesday 14th September
at the Performing Arts Centre at Mt Scopus College, Burwood Campus
Be there at 6.45pm for a prompt 7.00pm start

If you would like to share any photos, celebrations or stories in future editions of The Wrap, please email publicity@ajfc.com.au
THE WRAP

MILESTONES
Jude Goldfarb – U11 Comets – 50 games
THE WRAP

MILESTONES

Dean Alter and Gabe Jotkowitz – U12 Comets – 50 games
AROUND THE GROUNDS

U11 Comets
AROUND THE GROUNDS

U11 Comets

U11 Division 3 PREMIERS 2016

U11 Division 3 PREMIERS 2016
AROUND THE GROUNDS

U12 Comets
THE WRAP

AROUND THE GROUNDS

U13 Jets

THE WRAP

AROUND THE GROUNDS

U13 Jets
Dean Alter and Gabe Jotkowitz – U12 Comets
Interview by Rod Nirens

**Dean**

What has been your career highlight?
Playing in a Lightning Premiership victory

Favourite thing or part about playing at Ajax?
The team I play with.

What do you like to do when not playing footy?
I love playing basketball.

Favourite food?
Sushi

Favourite movie?
Hawthorn grand finals (not sure they are movies)

Favourite movie star?
Will Ferrell

Something strange or quirky about you?
I never eat the half time oranges - why do we have them?

**Gabe**

What has been your career highlight?
Participating in 2 tough Grand Finals in Division 1 & achieving my 50th game which was in a Grand Final

Favourite thing or part about playing at Ajax?
How everyone is so close together and just playing footy twice a week with my mates

What do you like to do when not playing footy?
Play any other sport or watch the footy especially Carlton

Favourite food?
Pizza

Favourite movie?
Backyard Ashes

Favourite movie star?
Michael Jordan from Space Jam

Something strange or quirky about you?
I can burp the entire alphabet

Pre-game routine?
Wake up early and have a light breakfast of cereal and toast. Then get dressed and stretch to loosen up.
Week 2 Finals Results & Match Reports

U11 Comets - PREMIERS
Ajax 6.1 (37) def Waverley Park 4.2 (26)
Goals: Feder 2, Faigen, Nirens, Goldfarb, Michelson
Best: Faigen, Michelson, Nirens, Segman, Zielinski

The tone for the week was set on Wednesday night with an extended training which included team bonding over pizzas and inspirational sporting video clips. The message to the team was that if we could produce 4 quarters of tough, team football then there was a great chance that the premiership would be ours, having already beaten our opponents, Waverly Park Hawks twice this season.

Jude Goldfarb could not have picked a better day to celebrate his 50th match and after running through his banner all the team lined up to sing the national anthem. With an army of supporters behind their every move, the Comets started strongly and within 15 minutes had opened up a 19 point lead. The remaining three quarters were an arm wrestle with the Hawks mounting a comeback in the third quarter. The final quarter was extremely tense with Waverly Park continually kicking the ball deep into their forward 50 but on each occasion the Comets defenders stood tall with some inspirational contested marks, tackles and pressure acts. When the final siren sounded it was utter relief, followed by jubilation as all the team, coaches, family and friends swarmed the field to congratulate our little warriors.

The day was capped off when Mia was named player of the match. Mia is a truly remarkable individual who inspires everyone around her, and her ability to rebound the ball out of our back line, time and time again, was instrumental in today’s victory.

It was a fantastic end to another great season and will be cherished by all involved forever.
**Week 2 Finals Results & Match Reports**

**U12 Comets – RUNNERS UP**
St Pauls McKinnon 7.5 (47) def Ajax 6.3 (39)
Goals: Chrapot 3, Spicer 2, H Sheezel
Best: Alter, Chrapot, Light, H Sheezel, Spicer

As we’ve seen throughout the Olympic Games, competition sport can sometimes be cruel to the participants. The Ajax Under 12 Comets have twice played St Pauls McKinnon this year and both times, the games were tightly contested and the result in each instance could have gone the other way. Unfortunately, on both occasions, the results went the wrong way for us.

In the grand final, St Paul’s led by a single point at three quarter time and, despite the play ebbing and flowing both ways, it was they who again scored the only goal of the final term. The boys on both sides played great football to the point of exhaustion and it was no shame to have lost what one of the SMJFL officials described after the game as “a cracker of a game and one of the great grand finals”.

The Comets gained a reputation throughout Division 1 of Under 12 competition for its skills, teamwork and dedication to hard work. It was known as a hard team to beat and in the end was beaten by a better team on the day.

Full credit goes to our 21 players because they never bowed their heads at any time. They kept coming at the opposition and were still working hard as a team to win when the final siren sounded. Congratulations to our 50-game players Dean and Gabe – it’s a pity we couldn’t make your milestone a winning one.

Our players formed a great team and they all deserve to be named and acknowledged. Together with our coaches Dean and Jason they contributed an enormous amount of energy to make 2016 a memorable season:-


See you next year boys!
Week 2 Finals Results & Match Reports

U13 Jets – PREMIERS
Ajax 8.5 (53) def Mordialloc Braeside 1.3 (9)
Goals: Ostilly 3, Spark 2, Mond, Jacob, Lindell
Best: Whole Team

That’s what I am talking about......U13 Jets Premiers 2016!!!!
We were worried that the boys may have played their final last week when we were at our best against Waverley Hawks but thankfully that was not the case. The boys left something special for the Grand Final. The boys could not have been more switched on and committed to the contest and we played together united as a team to achieve the ultimate in our game. PREMIERS!!!!!!!
It really started in the middle with the warrior of the team Ari Barsheshet. Ari dominated in the ruck and gave Jacob Shostak, Loki Zielinski, Brodie Mond, Aden Katz and Jayme Baron first use of the ball and they tore the game apart getting the ball down to our twin towers Benji and Aaron.
Talking about domination Benji Spark and Aaron Ostilly (Norm Smith medallist best on ground as chosen by the umpires) up forward together with Brett Jacobs, Jeremy Goldberg (inspirational tackle), Jayme Dzienciol and our 2 skippers Josh Lindell and Coby Felbel finished the game in the first quarter with incredible forward pressure and taking our opportunities.
Not only was our forwards dominant so were our back half led by Jake Schwartz loose in defence, Marley Israel, Ethan Zohar, Max Binder, Liam Maman, dashing Jonah Berman and Jake Mattatia (great shepherd). Also very busy was Jed Olcha, Dylan Hershan, Timmy Brott, Levy Benzur, Max Mimeran, Liam Wise, Dov Roskier, Oren Tobias, Daniel Maisner, Ariel Yanay and Joel Paluch.

We are extremely proud of the boys as they played like champions both with skill and attitude and look forward to achieving, growing and developing as footballers in the future.

Thanks to everyone for an amazing season.

Leigh and Dylan
THE WRAP

U15 Comets Grand Final Preview
by Harry Jacobs

After a topsy-turvy season, the U15 Comets will on Sunday, 28th of August at 12:55pm at Trevor Barker Oval, Sandringham be aiming for a premiership 3-peat and a chance at making AJAX Junior Football Club history.

After an offseason of recruiting that saw some very talented new players join the club, the team started the season in Division 1 against the super clubs in the SMJFL, and against other teams that had merged to form powerhouse teams of the most talented players in the league. After 4 weeks of tough learning in Division 1, the team was regraded back to Division 2 which proved to be a very even competition where any of the 5 teams could go home a winner in any game – there were no easy games, and to win, the team had to play well on the day.

This season there were no Interleague representatives in the team (all the other Div 2 teams had Interleague players), but there was a mateship, common set of goals, and a belief that a champion team will always triumph over a team of champions. While there has been a high turnover of players this season (7 members of the 2015 winning team are no longer part of the squad), there are 5 new players who have each contributed and added so much to the team in 2016.

In the Semi Final against Northvale, the team played a scintillating second quarter where they took control of the match, moved the ball from attack to defence with quick ball movement and followed the coach’s instructions to centre the ball unselfishly. The players then withstood a spirited Northvale comeback in the last quarter to run out 11 point winners and book themselves into a third consecutive Grand Final. The following 23 players will now line up on Sunday - here’s the now traditional Grand Final preview of what we will hopefully see on Sunday.

(2016 Comets games, goals in brackets) – Actual starting line-up may differ to that previewed:
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U15 Comets Grand Final Preview - continued

Back line

Benjamin Goldberg (12, 3), Daniel Genis (12, 0), Jonathan Machlin (13, 1)

The fullback line is now a settled combination of hard at it players who will lock down opponents, or provide run out of defence if the opportunities arise. They don’t panic and are always desperate to kill the contest if required. They have proven that they can stand up to big game pressure, and they will need to do it again for the team to succeed on Sunday.

Goldberg won’t give his opponent a sniff. He is a hard nut who knows how to fight and defend his territory, and if given the chance on a big open ground, can run and carry the ball deep into attack. But Benjamin’s number one focus is always defence – that’s his strength and the team knows that if he brings his hard hitting, never give up attitude to the game the defence will be hard to crack open.

Genis has held down the full back post all season and is the most improved player in the team. He is a reliable backman who can take a good pack or intercept mark against quality opposition and has the courage and good judgement to play in front of the bigger key forwards he often finds himself against. If Daniel can keep the opposition’s key forward out of the game, the Comets will be well on the way to victory.

Machlin has settled back into defence this season where he is rock solid. He is strong and tough, and won’t be out positioned by big forwards. When Jonno has the ball, his skills are good, enabling him to switch play with confidence. Jonno is also one of the team’s original swing men who, with his great set of hands, can go forward if required and clunk a few marks and hopefully goals that can swing a game.

Half Back line

Aaron Bryer (14, 0), Corey Schwartz (12, 2), Jason Nirens (13, 4)

The half back line is the springboard to attack for the team and will play a crucial role in the Grand Final with the game being played on the very long Trevor Barker Oval. For team success, the half back line will need to run and carry the ball all game, something all 3 players are always ready to do.

Bryer is aiming for 3 premierships in 3 seasons – ridiculous, but not a coincidence as he is a driving force in the team who demands the best from his team mates at each contest. He is aggressive, he is strong, he is fast and he has a prodigious left foot kick that Stuart Dew would be proud of. On the big ground, Aaron’s kicking penetration and use of the ball will be a key to the game and the Comets fortunes.

Schwartz is the dashing running back of the team. He has the ability to out-mark the opposition key forwards and then use his amazing pace to burst away from a pack, bounce and then deliver the ball further downfield. If Corey can get his run and carry going on the big ground it will be a massive bonus for the team as no opposition key forward can keep up with him.

Nirens has slotted into a half back role this season where his judgement, courage and ability to switch play and hit targets is paramount to an attacking half back line. Jason provides the extra onballer option in the back half and never shirks a contest. In a big pressure game like a Grand Final, Jason’s steadiness, experience, and clean skills will provide the midfielders and forwards with many opportunities to attack and kick a winning score.
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U15 Comets Grand Final Preview - continued

Centre line

Natan Cowan (13, 13), Hudson Levine (13, 6), Max Bloom (11, 1),

The centre line is made up of the two best athletes in the team who are tough and can work up and down the field all day, and the maestro who can control the play from anywhere on the ground. On the big ground they will need to run like there is no tomorrow and their skills will need to be spot on to make the most of the opportunities they get. In any Grand Final, a winning centre line is a key to the match outcome.

Cowan runs, runs, runs and runs. Natan has had a remarkably consistent season and has hit the scoreboard in most games making him a key player in the big one. He’s courageous, a great overhead mark for his size, and the opposition will pay a hefty price if they don’t pay him close attention. In the wide open spaces of TBO, Natan’s gut running will come to the fore, and his ability to distribute the ball to the forwards with his great skills will be decisive.

Levine is playing the football of his life this season. Hudson’s ability to evade a tackle, his balance when he has the ball and his skills to deliver the ball accurately deep into the forward line make him one of the key players in the league, not just the team. In the centre he is a magician who can conjure up opportunities for those all around him, and if left unchecked, he will control and take the game away from the opposition.

Bloom gets the toughest jobs on the most dangerous opposition players and always succeeds because he is strong, courageous and cannot be physically intimidated. When the going gets tough, Max gets going. As the best endurance athlete in the team his ability to run his opponent into the ground and then work off them creating another midfield option is a massive advantage that the Comets have going for them in the big game.

Half forward line

Sam Jacobs (13, 14), Cobi Chrapot (11, 8), Josh Peker (12, 2)

The half forwards need to be creative and work hard to lock the ball into the forward line. This trio can all mark well, can all create mismatches against the opposition and are not afraid of the hard stuff. If they can get on top and bring the other forwards into the game, then the game will be won.

Jacobs has been given a lot more freedom this season and is doing more work further up the ground where his great skills bring others around him into the game. With a few early touches, Sam’s confidence will rise and St Peters will have to turn their attention to shutting him down as he has the ability to quickly turn the game the Comets way. If the magic comes from the team’s most experienced player the game will hopefully be over.

Chrapot has superb judgement and a great set of hands that allows him to read the play and mark almost anything from any position in a pack. Two years ago Cobi was a full forward, and last year he was a revelation off half back – this season he has finally settled in at CHF where his size and strength match up well with the large CHBs in the league. It’s the most important position on the ground and Cobi is definitely up to the challenge.

Peker hits a contest hard! Josh’s role will be to keep the opposition backmen on their toes, make them earn every kick and to protect his other forwards. When given a chance Josh can take a decent grab and hit up players further up field with good skills, but it’s his ability to lock the ball in the forward line or fight for a hard ball that he gets all the plaudits for.
U15 Comets Grand Final Preview - continued

Forward line

Liam Elbaum (13, 2), Noah Micmacher (7, 5), Ethan Siegel (13, 16)
The forward line players are the finishers. Each have a few strings to their bow and when on song they can take a game away from the opposition very quickly. All three have a different skill set that complements each other wonderfully, making it hard for the opposition to match up on, thus creating opportunities to kick a winning score.

Elbaum is another one of the team’s big improvers this season. In one game he had the ball on a string and controlled the forward line like he’d never done before. Liam sets the tone for the team with his tackling, pressure and intensity because if the others see Liam showing no fear, they know they must follow too. If Liam can harass, tackle and chase all day, and maybe snag a goal, the Comets will surely come out on top in this most important of games.

Micmacher has had another injury plagued season but has timed his run perfectly and is looking to be the big X factor come Grand Final day. At full forward Noah is big and strong on the lead with a fantastic pair of hands, and he only needs a few kicks to set up a winning score for the Comets such is his goal kicking efficiency. Noah’s defensive skills are also rock solid and he gives the team flexibility by being able to swing back into the backline if required during the game.

Siegel is a confidence player and his confidence should be sky high after a great last quarter goal in the semi-final against Northvale. Ethan knows what he has to do on Sunday to make the most of his immense talents, and if he is able to work hard, he will have many opportunities to kick or create goals for the team. If the opposition do not respect Ethan’s skills around goal they will pay a very hefty price.

Followers

Richie Robenstone (5, 2), Benji Krongold (11, 6), Cameron Sharp (14, 9),
The on ballers for the Comets set the tone for the rest of the team. If they can get on top of their opponents and win the hard ball the team will be on its way. But the opposition have a talented group of midfielders, so the challenge is there to run hard and create but also not lose track of their opponents when St Peters have the ball.

Robenstone is the gun mid-season recruit who always gives his midfielders first use of the ball. Richie reads the play exceptionally well and knows how to drop back into a hole and help the defence if required or how to push forward and be another marking option to aim at. The team will be looking to Richie to impose himself early on in the game with some strong marks and key intercepts. A winning ruckman is paramount in a Grand Final and Richie has the ability to win the contest on the day.

Krongold does not know how to give up! With that sort of madman attitude running around on the ball all day the team will always be in with a chance. The open spaces of TBO will also help highlight Benji’s great set of all round skills. When resting up forward he can take a hanger or kick a long goal, but ultimately he’s worth his weight in gold to the team for his ability to get the hard ball, break a tackle, evade an oncoming opponent and drive the ball forward with long and direct kicks to his leading forwards.

Sharp has been a fantastic recruit this season who has added skill, pace and the ability to hit up players further afield to the team’s play book. Cam is unique at this level in that he roves a stoppage or a pack at full pace. Then if he gets the ball as is often the case, he is away into open space and with his great skills he can pick out a team mate deep in the forward line or kick the goals himself.
U15 Comets Grand Final Preview - continued

Interchange
Liam Eliau (11, 0), Jackson Kalb (11, 3), Connor Kotzman (8, 2),
Jesse Nissen (12, 1), Finn Vidor (12, 3),

The 5 interchange players provide balance and coverage for the whole team and can all play in a variety of positions. All 5 will have roles in the big game but need to be able to adapt as the game unfolds. Many games have been won by a player making the most of his big chance – these 5 know they need to be ready to take that chance when the moment comes.

Eliau is one of the team’s run with players, but he also now has the confidence to back himself and run and carry from deep in defence if the opportunity arises. Liam is the quickest player in the team and also one of the strongest. Anybody he plays on will know about it and will be rushing to dispose of the ball before Liam tackles them with it. Liam was a game breaker in the Grand Final two years ago and the team is looking for the same manic, hard tackling player to set the tone once more.

Kalb is returning to the scene of his greatest triumph and looking to do it all over again. The ground is just as Jackson likes it – wide open with lots of space to run, bounce, evade and show his exquisite skills. Jacko is one of the team’s game changers who has hit form at the right time of year and will be looking to make a difference whether on a wing, up forward or during a stint on the ball.

Kotzman has returned to the club after a season off as a much better player than the one that left. Connor has settled into the Comets nicely and has shown in the past few games that he is more than capable of taking a big mark and slotting a goal through the big sticks. His role in the big game is to support the ruckmen and key forwards and when given the chance to seize the moment and make a difference – the team knows he can.

Nissen’s story is one of improvement and perseverance over 3 seasons and finally he gets his chance in a Grand Final. Jesse was thrown to the wolves early in the season, but battled his heart out against the bigger, more experienced ruckman in Division 1. Now his role is to provide another key target in the forward line and to hit the contest hard, ensuring that if he can’t mark it, the smaller players have a chance to mop up the spoils. On the big ground, with his pace and endurance, Jesse could be a big mismatch for St Peters and the wildcard in the pack.

Vidor is another new recruit in 2016 and has brought flexibility to the team. Finn has played on almost every line this season filling gaps as required due to team injuries. He has the determination to defend, the size and capability to take a goal square mark, and the calmness to slot a goal if given the chance. Many swingmen have been the difference is Grand Finals – Finn has the confidence to know he can make a difference anywhere that the coaches ask.
U15 Comets Grand Final Preview - continued

**Coaches**

Anthony Elbaum, Adam Slade-Jacobson

The Comets have been privileged to have two dedicated, fantastic and respected coaches this season. **Slug**, an experienced coach at the senior club, was brought into the group to help bridge the gap between junior and senior football, as the club believes that many players in this team have the talent and desire to progress to the seniors. Slug has ensured that the boys remained focused, set themselves challenges and are professional in everything they do with their football. His calmness at half time in the Semi Final win while the opposition coach could be heard ranting and raving was inspirational.

**Ant** in his fourth season of coaching lives and breathes this team. He is meticulous in his preparation for match day, and he leaves no stone unturned to ensure the team is the best prepared in the SMJFL. He analyses the opposition to try and crack their weaknesses and makes sure there are no surprises for the players on game day. The players have the confidence to be able to approach Ant with ideas, or thoughts on the game and he is always welcoming of the discussions and ideas, and quick to adapt a game plan if required.

No AJAX Junior team has ever 3-peated in its 44 year history but this team is different in so many ways to the two that succeeded in previous years. Every player has their own goals and motivation, but they pale into insignificance when compared to the team’s goal to prevail on Sunday. St Peters, who now could be considered a traditional rival for this team after many great battles over the last 3 years, is a strong team that will be confident, but anything can happen on Grand Final day, and if the team plays its best team football and never gives up trying, then nothing can stop the 3-peat dream from becoming a reality for the team and all involved.

The scene is set for an epic tussle...........

Good luck on Sunday – GO COMETS – GO JACKAS!!!!