

THE WRAP

Round 11

After a two week break for holidays Round 11 was upon us. With some crucial games to be played in the next 4 weeks, a number of teams performed well ensuring they are in good form coming into finals. The U14 Girls came agonisingly close in their quest for a fourth consecutive win, just missing out in the final stages of their match.

Congratulations to Harry Sheezel on winning the SMJFL's MVP and playing his 100th game for Ajax.





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Around the grounds





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Results

U8 Stars

The boys were all very excited to be back after two weeks off. It was obvious the break was well used to rest, hone skills, build team work and even practice some fortnite dance moves (to keep warm where the ball gets stuck in one zone!) The captains Toby and Ryder both made rousing speeches that lifted the team. Coach Adam is off for 2 weeks (secret training camp?) so Darren Lurie stepped up to head coach, ably supported by Dion Appel acting as assistant coach. The boys (and their families) were mesmerized by Darren's new drills and inspirational words and wisdom.

The sun was shining and the late start brought with it one of the biggest crowds and support of the season. The Rovers played hard but the Ajax boys defended well, used the wind and the full-size oval to keep the ball moving. The medic Rob had the biggest workout of the season making numerous trips on to the field.... amazingly all players were injury free by the end and ready for next week. Jamie as runner and coach encouraged the boys throughout the game and orchestrated numerous tactical moves on the field. Well done stars and see you next week.

U9 Stars

The U9 Stars were excited to re-group after a two week break and compare the adventures from the school holidays. Noah was one of our Captains and came with a sharp new buzz-cut and man-bun for the occasion. The anti-thesis of that, Ethan was the other Captain, tapping into Sampson-like strength from his ever-growing hair which we don't think has been cut since the season started. They both combined for a stirring pre-match speech that re-focussed the team for a big match against a very strong Cheltenham side. We lost the toss and ended up kicking into a strong breeze, but showed determination around the ball and great tackling pressure to match it with the opposition. Jax got the scores ticking over for us with a great mark and goal just before the siren to give us some momentum. In the second quarter we used the wind well but lacked a bit on conversions. Jake kicked a nicely angled goal from the flank that helped the cause. The game was tight all day and we needed to push hard in the last quarter. The boys kept the pressure on and showed they hadn't forgotten how to tackle, harass and move the ball forward. We didn't have our usual number of rotations with a number of players away, so the mid-field running was particularly impressive! This resulted in a nice goal from a free-kick to Nadav and a Captain's goal from Ethan late in the game after a tactical move to the forward line. All up, it was a great effort and the song was sung with gusto. The team continues to build and we look forward to getting missing players back this week, and to welcome back Lex after a long break.

U10 Stars

The wind, the fans and dogs all howled for four quarters as the Stars returned from their mid-season break. For some it felt like the Stars were kicking into the wind for four quarters, but there were flashes of brilliance on this gusty and gutsy afternoon. At one count there were at least 36 people in the midfield, but who's counting? Still, despite having the benefit of the wind, the Stars showcased their run and gun style of footy. Ari G was marking everything that came into the defensive third and the half back line was providing plenty of forward momentum with their hard running and handballs. When the Stars decided to kick out of the half back line they had strong targets up forward with Jonty takings overhead marks and sending the ball into attack. A week is a long time in footy and it was good to see the Stars back on the field after an extended break. Go Jackas!



THE WRAP

Results

U11 Rockets

Ajax 3.7 (25) def Caulfield 2.4 (16)

Goals: Lakman 2, Kagan

Best: Cohen, Gunn, Ickowicz, Krasnostein, Lakman, Rothfield

We arrived at the game in the middle of July to a bunch of tanned 10 and 11 year olds. Samuel Ickowicz was celebrating his 50th game and demolished the crepe paper as he burst through his banner. There was a big wind howling toward the Grange Rd end of the ground as our captains Samuel and Bailey Apelbaum incorrectly called “heads” meaning we had to defend hard in the 1st. Hugo and Jethro were everywhere before Jethro got a big knock and had to come off. Kovi came on and immediately got a few kicks before Jonty was asked to replace Jethro as Kovi moved forward to provide another target. Jonty got himself involved and really stood up in the older age group. It was a fantastic display from all our boys who tackled extremely hard, defended the ground brilliantly and worked their butts off. The second quarter saw the wind die down slightly but we reminded the boys to continue to pressure and trust our forwards who would create enough chances to score. As the oranges were devoured we reminded the boys of what they had done in the first quarter while kicking against the wind and we wanted to see the same effort in the third. Keeping the Bears to one goal was a very good effort as the wind had again picked up and it was very difficult to move the ball forward. The game had been played in a very tough manner. We look forward to welcoming back a few boys from holiday and hopefully both Levy and Mehl from injury.

U11 Stars

Ajax 10.7 (67) def Malvern East 2.2 (14)

Goals: Alford 3, Degen 2, Zukerman 2, Micmacher, Moalem, Pitt

Best: Alford, Degen, Housman, Katz, Micmacher, Pitt, Zukerman

After a 2 week break the Stars were focused and excited to get back into football action. We had the players come early for a training session before the game to ‘sharpen’ up their football skills. Today was a monumental day in the history of Ajax with the unique situation of 4 players playing their 50th game. Congratulations to Hayden Katz, Noah Klein, Jay Maribel Whitburn and Ethan Greenberg. They were all great captains and led the team strongly. A wonderful milestone and exciting for all families involved! It is moments like these that bring the team closer together as they show great camaraderie and strength as a team. This is what football is about. With the game beyond doubt our ‘50 gamers’ were put on the ball or up forward in the last quarter. Again, our high level of fitness and skills pushed us through to kick another 3 goals to win by 53 points. Today was the best team performance of the season with all players contributing. From our top line players to some of the lesser known players all playing a team game. You don’t always have to be the best kick, mark or handballer in the team, as the little things like a tackle, bump, nudge, tap on, shepherd, or push forward are all just as important. We now expect this of all our players as we now push towards a final four position.



THE WRAP

Results

U12 Comets

East Brighton 8.4 (52) def Ajax 3.6 (24)

Goals: Glance, Newett, Nussbaum

Best: Fell, Flinkier, Jacobs, Klein, Mohr, Rozenes

After a few weeks of Holidays it was time to lift the intensity and make a charge for the finals. Both coaches had a serious discussion with the boys on Oval 4 well and truly before the game. We reminded the team of what it meant to make finals and to be a good side. We questioned each and every one and explained that winning is not about any individual in the team but rather the boys willingness to do the hard things to support each and the desire to want to get better. The first quarter was great. The boys used the wind well, kicked long to targets, shared the ball and created space to take a solid 3 goal lead into the break. At quarter time we asked the boys to run with ball and use the boundary line on the far side of the ground. The first 7 minutes were extremely positive and with the sun shining it looked like the boys season was back on track. All of sudden we took our foot of the pedal and the Vampires opened up both our midfield and backline and put 5 goals on the board. The boys came out firing and tried everything in the third quarter to force a goal. However there was no flare and despite the balls spending 85% of the time in our forward 50, it became a scenario of 5 points and no majors which just wasn't good enough. In the last quarter we pleaded for the boys to run, run, run for each other. They needed to carry the ball instead of just kicking it and despite the opposition kicking 3 more goals, the boys put their head over the ball, and tried their guts out.

U12 Jets

Ajax 3.2 (20) def South Melbourne 2.3 (15)

Goals: Gross, Reuben, Shostak

Best: Cohen, Farkas, Gelbart, Gottlieb, Gross, Herzsberg, Reuben, Rockman

The Jets continued their winning season today against South Melbourne Districts. Some inside information from the coach in relation to the windy conditions helped the Jets play a very clever game by using the conditions to their best advantage. The boys adapted well to the conditions and responded to instructions beautifully. Joely Herszberg - in his first season for the club – led the way early by winning the hard ball across half back and sending the ball wide making it hard for the opposition to score. Cohen was awesome again with his strong tackling and contested ball wins while Gottlieb's attack on the ball was legendary again. Gelbart showed his improved skills when he marked strongly and delivered lace out to the leading Gross at CHF while Rockman also delivered by foot into the forward line beautifully on a very difficult day for accurate kicking. Reuben showed dash and pace on the attacking wing all day and Werdiger rucked his heart out again all day. But it was Farkas that sparked the Jets just before ¾ time with some long run and bounce, gaining massive yardage into the wind, almost setting up a vital scoring opportunity into the wind. With a 1 point deficit and kicking with the wind in the last quarter, Shostak and Reuben delivered the killer blows, each scoring crucial goals to give the Jets an unattainable lead late in the game. The Jets deserve all of the wins that have come their way this year because of their hard work at training and also at home during the week.



THE WRAP

Results

U13 Comets

East Brighton 10.9 (69) def Ajax 4.0 (24)

Goals: Nathan, Nirens, Pike, Sigeoker

Best: Nathan, Nirens, Pike, Rockman, Smithson

The players can be forgiven for starting the game a bit off pace, having drawn the early game away to strong opponents straight after the winter break. It was not until after half time that we hit our straps, only then beginning to win the ball out of the middle and at one stage piling on 3 unanswered goals. It was Pike who did much of the heavy lifting, with great assistance from Nathan and Nirens. Smithson did his usual brilliant stuff in defence with a lot of very able help from his teammates down back. But the standout today was Rockman, who was given the job of shutting down the opposition's chief playmaker at quarter time, which he did to great effect. With that game out of the way and the cobwebs hopefully cleared, it is back to training for the Comets this week and a renewed focus on being at our best from the very start of next week's game.

U13 Jets

Ajax 11.10 (76) def St Kilda 9.4 (58)

Goals: Cohen 2, Goldfarb 2, Jacobs 2, Miltz 2, Schenk 2, Worth

Best: Adler, Cohen, Goldfarb, Harrison, Jacobs

The boys had a solid win today without playing at their best. After starting very well, by half time the boys had a commanding 41 point win and a percentage booster seemed on the cards. Unfortunately we didn't go on with it after half time and at three quarter time after a 5 goal to 1 third quarter by the opposition the margin had been reduced to 17 points. A scrappy last quarter saw the Jets run out 18 point winners. We are looking forward to a solid training session this week and refocusing on our signature brand of tough uncompromising footy. Even though we didn't play our best we will gladly take the win and consolidate our position in the top 4.

U14 Girls

Caulfield 3.1 (19) def Ajax 2.5 (17)

Goals: Cohen, Klooger

Best: Y Alford, Amira, Jacobs, Klooger, Werdiger

Despite being down on numbers due to school holidays, the girls fought hard all day and led at the 1st and 3rd breaks, and looked strong going into the final quarter. It was only a last minute burst from the opposition and a goal on the siren that stole what would have been the Jackettes fourth win in a row. The team narrowly clings on to their place in the top 4, and must find a way to win next week against another of the top four sides. Go Jackettes!!



THE WRAP

Results

U14 Comets

Ajax 11.13 (79) def Bentleigh 2.3 (15)

Goals: H Sheezel 3, Light 2, Siegel 2, Star 2, Rothfield, Wasbutzki

Best: Alter, Light, Schauder, Star, H Sheezel

With some well rested and well-tanned boys returning from their annual mid-season pilgrimages to anywhere north of the equator, the U14 Comets picked up where they left off, chalking up a clinical victory in their first hit-out back from the break. Celebrating Harry Sheezel's 100th game, the boys were determined to make it a day to remember for the club champion, delivering a comfortable 10-goal win despite difficult conditions for scoring in a strong and swirly breeze. Clearly relishing being back on the park, the whole team looked "on" from the first bounce, neutralizing Bentleigh's substantial advantage kicking with the wind, winning the first quarter 9 points to 2. Logan Siegal looked dangerous as ever up forward with two early goals whilst Harry S did what Harry S does scoring two goals from long range in the second quarter to open up a comfortable 6-goal lead at the half. Kicking with the breeze in the third quarter Bentleigh started to make inroads into the deficit reducing the margin to just 20 points at one stage. But as it says in the Ajax team management handbook, "beware false idols", as the Comets showed just how to make real use of a 5 goal breeze kicking, well, 5 unanswered five goals in the final term including a towering contested mark and goal to Asher Star in the final 5 seconds of play. Some more footage for their highlight reels was also generated by Wasbutski, Rothfield and Light who all scored quality goals in general play. A big thank you to Nicholas Pike who came straight from his U13's match to join the fray at quarter time providing valuable assistance out of the middle and in the forward half. With finals football still in contention, the Comets know they need to continue to make every post a winner to be there in September. Finally, congratulations and mazel tov to Harry Sheezel on 100 games of pure class and leadership.



THE WRAP

Results

U14 Jets

Port/South Melbourne 10.13 (73) def Ajax 0.2 (2)

Best: Edwards, Fell, Gaddie, Sable, Sunshine

As the school holidays drew to a close we came together for our first game in 2 weeks playing the top of the table South/Port. We also welcomed back Wally, who had not played or trained since late April due to a broken wrist. It was also great to have Gabe back after missing a few. We had two key areas to focus on: 1. Accountable football 2. Effort. Being a windy day the conditions were always going to be tricky. We lost the toss and were kicking into the wind. The first 10mins we played and battled and tackled fantastically. We struggled to move the ball forward, however our accountability and effort meant that the opposition had only very limited opportunities. Judah, who played a great 4 qtrs, came out hard, tackled and ran and found the footy himself. Unfortunately the team pressure dropped away for the last bit of the quarter and for all of the second quarter. So rather than capitalising on holding them to 3 goals in the first (a win for us) we thought the wind would do it for us. Our pressure dropped away and they were able to score running the ball forward. After half time we came out and really gave it a crack. The pressure was high, the tackling was there and we were able to restrict them to 1 goal. We also had our best piece of play for the match, bringing the ball from full back up into the middle have 5 passes in a row into the wind and then an attempted switch. The last with the wind we created a number of good scoring opportunities however just could not get that last kick away. It was a frustrating day against a very good team. Judah was magnificent all day off his wing effort and accountability!!! Tatzi gave grunt through the middle and pulled off a number of 1,2s with various team mates. The backline really fought hard Raph and Reuben, Lachie, Behm, Callum and Jack. There were also a few in the middle who struggled in the first half however got themselves going in the second half which is a credit to them and really meant we fought the match out to the end.

U15 Comets

East Malvern 13.16 (94) def Ajax 6.7 (43)

Goals: Spark 3, Efron, Jacobs, Kavallero

Best: Berman, Peker, Rajch, Rosenbaum, Spark

U15 Jets

East Malvern 9.4 (58) def Ajax 7.5 (47)

Goals: Mond 2, Atzmon, Felbel, Katz, Kol, Rostkier

Best: Braby, Goldberg, Kol, Katz, Reitberger



THE WRAP

Results

U16 Comets

Mordialloc Braeside 25.21 (171) def Ajax 3.3 (21)

Goals: Schauder 2, Weeden

Best: Grodski, Micmacher, Schauder, Weeden, Zuker

A tough day in the office. Playing at Mordialloc's home ground in very windy conditions was always going to be a big challenge. Unfortunately, we lost the toss so played into a gale in the first quarter. The instructions were to try to retain possession for as much as possible when playing into the wind but it proved difficult against a very skilled opponent who played the tricky conditions well. Although well beaten, AJAX produced tenacity and good pressure at times and our goals were all a result of excellent teamwork. Looking ahead, next week's game against South Melbourne is one we're looking forward to as a very winnable opportunity and we'll approach the game, as always, with a strong and positive attitude.

U17 Comets

Ajax 13.7 (85) def. Mordialloc Braeside 8.8 (56)

Goals: Lincoln 3, Zielinski 3, Hendel 2, Michelson 2, Elbaum, Guttmann, Ossip

Best: Bryer, Jacobs, Lincoln, Michelson, Smart

The boys came back strong and determined after the 2 week break. Kicking into a 7 goal breeze, AJAX managed to take a 4 goal to 1 lead into the quarter time break, thanks to some magnificent work from Matt Lincoln, who kicked what could very well have been goal of the year in another dominant display. Lior Smart used his sublime skills to perfection and Matt Hendel was dynamic in attack, coming off an ankle injury. Mordi-Brae fought back in the second half, but AJAX was able to withstand the onslaught, thanks to solid work in the back line led by Aaron Bryer, Sam Jacobs and Noah Micmacher. Playing in his 150th game, Ryley Michelson was poised and polished kicking two goals and delivering the ball with accuracy. Liam Elbaum was well and truly "in the house", capping off a strong 4 quarters with a beautiful running goal. AJAX never gave in. Natan Cowan was back to his best and Hudson Levine used his outstanding ball sense to advantage. The boys will need to keep their focus as they prepare for a big game against league leaders Highett Cheltenham next Sunday.



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