

***2016 2nd Grade Report – Trent (Red) Mills***

This year started out a little different to most with a loss coming it the 2nd round and 4 tight wins in the first 5 games. It was clear that this year we would need to fight for our spot and to the credit of all the guys, we were up to the task putting together a 14 and 3 season and taking out the minor premiership with some timely and hard fought wins late in the season.

This year was an extremely challenging year to manage having guys injured and away on a weekly basis. But that said, having as strong a club as we have means there is always guys knocking on the door to be a part of the team and I thank everyone who back up this year and made sure we were in a strong position to win a game. This year we got a real chance to blood some younger guys who are going to be a real asset to our club in years to come. This year we had **Lachlan Forder** and **Jordan Kelly** both get there first taste of B grade as well as being able to give **Jake Green**, **Dan Conway** and **Angus Wallace** there chance to be in the regaler starting line-up which they got through a lot of hard work.

**Pete Locke** was again the lead from the front guy we needed coming through in some clutch situations and standing up when needed on the mound.

With an unfortunate niggling injury we were blest to have **Mark Zhang** in the line-up more often than we have hoped, Mark showed why he is such a great player finishing with an avg of .500 and getting 2 hits in the grand final including an RBI Double. We wish Mark a speedy recovery and hope to see him back throwing at full strength next season.

It was a shame not to have full use of **John Noonan** this year but when he was available his impact was felt with a .500 OBP. Late in the season when over stocked with numbers it was my sad duty to tell Johnno that he would be starting with the 3rd grade and to his credit he took it in stride showing what a great club guy he is and still hanging around to come into the game when needed. Johnno came into the grade final to pinch hit and came up with a big hit that kept us in the game at a time it was starting to slip away. We thank him for all his efforts this year.

**Brad Robson**, what else needs to be said. Best leadoff in the league, without Brad we would simply not be the same team we are and he is a huge part of the winning culture we have in the team. We look forward to Brad setting the table for years to come.

**Angus Wallace** come out again this year after winning the Club Most Improved last year and picked up right where he left off posting a great set of numbers after continuing to work on his game in the winter, Angus also got his chance in 1st grade on a couple of occasions and proved to be a valuable part of the club in those points as well. Angus is continues to get better and better and I look forward to seeing the results of another tough winter.

After a little absence **Ben Hood** popped up starting the season in 3rd grade and ending it in 1st grade. Ben improved all season and showed his old man he’s not the only Hood who is handy with the bat. Ben showed he’s value in the outfield and on the base paths with speed to burn. Seeing what Ben can do next season with a full season under his belt will be great.

**Jordan Kelly,** I could not be more impressed with Jordan this year and I could only wish I was as good a hitter at his age as he is. Jordan had an exceptional year showing an ability and maturity beyond his years. I cannot wait to see the player Jorden is next season……… **Watch this space!!!!!**

**Cam Bearman** was welcomed back this year and fitted right in with Robbo at the top of the line-up and adding to the huge speed we already had making some teams look silly along the way.

This year gave us a great chance to give **Jake Green** some well-earned starts on the mound, Jake has continued to get stronger and more mature on the mound developing his pitches. As any player will tell you, you only get better/smarter with age and this couldn’t be more true. Jake is twice the player he was last season and you can see every week his pitch sequence changing and him working very hard to be the player he wants to be. We can’t wait to see Jake again next year.

**Craig Jones** still continues to be a bench mark hitter in the league, leading the team once again in RBI’s. Much like Robbo, Jonesy is a huge part of the culture we have. Jonesy had another great year.

You know it’s a tough year to get a spot when **Lee Mills** is making cameo appearances in the 2’s. Lee struggled in the 2’s and found out why it is often called the premier grade only getting 7 hits from 13 at bats….. We look forward to lees arm returning to full strength and moving back to 1st grade so we can put in a better hitter. ;)

**Tom Conway** busted onto the scene with a bang finishing the season with some great numbers and 2nd in RBI’s, great season Tom!

**Will Russell** is another guy who we were unlucky not to have for the full season being away and getting that injury that all fast men get………… the Hamstring. Will started on the bench in the grand final, coming into the game with a huge double and closing the game on the mound. Will also pitched a few games in 1st grade this year and pitch very well. We can only hope we have Will all season next year.

**Connor McGeechan, Dan Conway and Lachlan Forder** were always there for us this year and although we didn’t always get them into the game, they were always ready and waiting. Next year these guys will be pushing the case for starting spots and we can’t wait to see them competing with us all season.

I would like to Thank **Helen and Bec Robson** for scoring for us this season, it’s a big ask and commitment for the season and we couldn’t do it without you.

To **Bill** I thank you once againfor the effort that you put in every week we would not be able to have the club we have without you and your commitment. Each week you take over the managing when it’s time for 1’s grade to warm up and I thank you for giving me the time to do and run things the way we do.

This season had some ups and downs, we didn’t quite come away with it all in the end but taking the minor premiership is a huge achievement and I’m very proud of the squad for getting us there.

We have a great Club that still continues to grow with more team this year than ever before,

I hope everyone is as proud as I am to be from Ainslie!!!

Go Bears!!!