

## U/17 Boys- A Truly Sensational Sunday

In a scenario remarkably similar to the Senior Women, where OFC was the bottom ranked team heading into the finals, the boys have fought their way through some heavy traffic to claim the Premiership in a remarkable performance.



*A very special moment for OFC- co-captains Bon Sullivan (left) and Tavish Aitken with coach Scott Tonkin*

Scott Tonkin's team had to get past a side they had lost to twice (Upwey) for the right to meet top team Healesville in the Preliminary Final. After disposing of Healesville they then tackled Woori Yallock in the Grand Final.

What an incredible match it turned out to be against a side that's been our ach rival since U/12s !

We are grateful to Tim Scott ( former junior and senior star- in fact he did so well they named a trophy after him) who provided us with a match report-

**Our U17s went into the weekend's Grand Final against Woori Yallock**

in excellent form, and with perfect weather supplied on a good Yarra Junction surface, the stage was set for another epic battle between these two fierce rivals.

We jumped out of the blocks with an early goal to Ned Ford, which was followed by a very classy finish from co-captain Tavish Aitken from the boundary. Both teams settled quickly into the game, blending fierce ground contests with some beautiful ball movement. The Tigers goaled late to hold a 1pt lead at Quarter Time.



*Max Monkhorst in action in the ruck- with Campbell Hutchin waiting to swoop.*

The second term provided much of the same for the first 10 mins, Woori kicked the opening goal to advance to a seven point lead, but the tide really turned midway through the quarter. The OFC boys

really began to take ownership of the midfield battle and we began to get numerous Forward 50 entries. Unfortunately we didn't nail our chances, and although we hit the break with great momentum and a one goal lead, a return of 1.7 for the term was disappointing. There would've been many casting their minds back to last years Grand Final where we just couldn't find the big sticks.



*Hoop Time- Charlie Hooper kicks one of his four goals*

The 3rd Qtr was where we totally stamped our authority on the game, and in particular where our leaders really ramped up the work rate and simply outworked our opposition. Our small forwards. in particular Charlie Hooper and Aden Bates, were lively. Luca Smith and Darcy Blackman competed strongly in the air, Isaac Tonkin continued to cover the ground and gain metres with the ball, co-captain Bon Sullivan set the scene with his strong tackling and just his ability to nail every moment he was involved. Blair Wilson had been excellent across Half Back, but really began to come into his own as he dominated the aerial contests inside Woori's Forward 50, the list goes on. We held a 28pt lead at orange time, and although feeling strong and confident, the boys were bracing for a Woori response.

As it turned out we nailed the first clearance and the first goal inside a minute and suddenly the game was looking ours for the keeping. The boys to their credit really didn't back off until the very end, with another five goals to two quarter to run out the Premiers of 2023.

Finals scores were-

**OFC 12.15.87      Woori Yallock 6.5.41**



*An historic moment for OFC and our community.*

Charlie Hooper's 4 goal performance earned him Best on Ground honours, Aden Bates chipped in with 3 goals, and in all seriousness could've easily kicked 6 or 7, Ned Ford chimed in with 2 majors and singles to Menzie Jans McKirdy, Tavish Aitken and Jarvis Reid. It wouldn't be right to single out best players as the entire group all contributed when it was their turn, that's why they got the result they did.

Congratulations to Coach Scott Tonkin, the entire support staff and parent base, and to all those boys involved, what a brilliant result and what a fantastic experience. With quite a number of boys entering the Senior club in 2024, it's going to continue to be a fantastic platform

**for the Men's program to launch from in the coming years !**



***One of these guys is about to start his third straight Sunday of premiership celebrations ! He handled the pressure brilliantly.***









