

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL CLUB  
DRIBBLING BALLS

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In this edition of Dribbling Balls some different people have written reports of matches safely delivered from the jaws of victory into the domain of defeatedness or drawedness. Now that's novel...

V.B.H.B.A. B GRADE WOMEN (Thu. 30/3) - SEMI FINAL

Uni 34 d. State Bank 27

Having coached three semi finals for three one point losses, I must admit I wasn't overly confident of winning this one, especially since the team had more pressing matters to attend to - namely going to the Chocolate Ball. With phrases like "no time outs" ringing around my head I set up positions and sent the team out. What ensued was a close struggle which absorbed everyone so much that we almost forgot the ball. With Julie controlling the point and Janine and Michelle bombing in baskets a win looked likely. Then, disaster. From 8 points up with 5 minutes we were suddenly down by a point with about three minutes to play. Then shock, horror, Uni did the impossible. Instead of snatching defeat from the jaws of victory we actually steadied and went on to win by 7. It'll never catch on! Still, we're in the grand final and who cares how we did it. A good team win, the ball was good too.

V.B.H.B.A. B GRADE WOMEN (Thu. 30/3) - GRAND FINAL

Brighton Y 39 d. Uni 36

The team was quietly confident of winning this, having already beaten them twice in the regular season. But as someone famous once said, "Who gives a stuff what happens in the regular season?" (I think it was Harry Belafonte - Ed.) By half time the spectators were restive, the coach was pulling his hair out and the players were despondent. Why? I hear you ask (well, it's a good lead in). Because we were down 24-6. Things were grim and as Gary likes to say "I'm glad I'm not the comedian in the Uni clubrooms tonight" (the people in the clubrooms are glad too - Ed.) However, with a new defence from the coach and words of play your best, don't give in and think of your pride, the girls went out and virtually blasted those Brighton girls off the court. Julie and Dale shot the lights out & Brighton's 2 star players were well held. Unfortunately in the final analysis we had too much work to do and, in a game of 2 halves, lost by three (halves? - Ed.) A top effort from the team which had played C grade the previous season and which probably suffered from Janine not being able to play and Michelle P having a bad back. Hopefully we'll go one better next time. The team - Cathy Kennis, Heather Watson, Michelle Patterson, Janine Claxton, Julie Randall, Libby Jordan, Dale Clarke - all played well through the season and deserve special mention for making the final.

V.W.B.C. DIV 4 (Wed. 12/4)

Uni 52 d. Werribee 29

Who said Uni teams can't run and gun? Oh, that many people, huh. Well, even if Harry Belafonte said "You can't ignore the masses, man" I'm going to spit in their faces (I run quickly), because the women's seconds are showing the opposition how to do just that (what? - Ed.). With 4 games played and only 1 loss (by a point after losing 5 points for illegal uniform - the refs were both brain dead) it has certainly proved effective (what? - Ed.). In this game Rose shot the lights out in the second half with fourteen, and with Carrie (doesn't live here any more? - Ed.) who'd had a great first half controlling the boards,

the game was never in doubt. Nice control also from Margie and Tracey in what was a good team win. The team can only improve with the return of Emma, but if I hear a word of finals I'll throttle the person who says it. Even if it's me. So there. (Frankly, anyone who quotes Harry Belafonte in their match report is in a lot of trouble already - Ed.)

V.B.A. DIV. 2 (Wed. 12/4)

Sandringham 65 d. Uni 63

Well, I was pretty happy after this game, because in the space of 8 days I'd played three games and lost all three by a combined total of 5 points. It's remarkable what this can do for one's self confidence. Our opposition were second on the ladder, but a pretty ordinary team in my opinion, but not as ordinary as ours apparently. We trailed by 6 at half time and looked like losing comfortably until the last couple of minutes when it was safe to mount a minor comeback. In fact we had possession with 12 seconds left and only 2 points behind (even though the score board said we were 4 behind). Of course we missed the bad shot we took and lost the game. Never mind, we didn't deserve to win.

Simon, J.C. 14, Sleepy 9, Scotty 8, Mal, Jack, Dim 6.

V.B.A. DIV. 2 (Wed. 19/4)

Uni 81 d. Broadmeadows 61

Despite their somewhat lowly position on the ladder, Broadmeadows turned up with a fairly competitive team for this game including 4 guys who were about to play in the team that was going to win Sunday night's CYMS A Grade competition. We managed to stay in front in the first half through the fine offensive work of Jack Dillon who had 13 points and a bunch of rebounds. In the second half we surprised most observers who had been predicting a collapse by steadily pulling away to a comfortable lead, with some fine shooting from Simon netting 12 for the half. Dim and J.C. found some of the touch they'd been missing around the basket with 9 and 8 points each, while Scotty Webber played well for 8 points and has fitted into the firsts really well since joining us a couple of weeks ago. This win makes us 5 and 4 on the season and hanging around the top six.

Simon, J.C. 16, Jack 14, Scotty 13, Dim 12, Mal, Sleepy 5.

V.B.A. DIV. 2 (Wed. 26/4)

Altona 90 d. Uni 61

We played Altona who used to be Yarraville at West Sunshine. I thought you'd all like to know that. In the first half we played quite well, despite failing to capitalize on a number of opportunities in offence. We even trailed 29-28 at one stage before trailing 39-35 at half time. In the second half we were pathetic as they used their height, strength, speed, agility, bench depth, home court advantage, crowd support and desire to win to completely embarrass us, although it must be said that we helped them in a number of instances with some classic mistakes. Simon and Mal (I wish I was 33) were good contributors in offence and Jack worked hard on the boards after he turned up, but otherwise the only highlight was Mal's running left hand hook shot through traffic. This loss should do much to wipe out our previously healthy percentage. We are now 5 and 5 and probably waving to the top six as it disappears into the sunset.

Simon, Mal 16, Dim 9, Scotty 8, J.C. 7.

V.W.B.C. DIV 5 (Wed. 26/4)

Uni 24 drew with Port Colts 24

Are applications still being accepted for the Phil Beart School of

Cultural Appreciation? The Chinese ref at Albert Park was so moved by the spirit of the ANZACS witnessed the day before, he decided to foster the same "give it a go" mentality in all his subsequent attempts at refereeing. The result was a game where the only fouls being called were for in the back, dropping the ball and intentionals. After an even first half where good outside baskets from Michelle and Julie and points from drives by Cathy and Janet kept us in the game, both coaches tried to use the surprise tactic of playing a man to man defence at the start of the second half. The real surprise was that our man to man worked better than theirs did, and through baskets to Cathy, Janet and Kim off some great assists by Libby and Michelle, we went from being 8-10 down to a 20-16 lead. With three minutes to go they made a three point play and the lead was cut to one point. Things looked like being tight, so Kim decided to exit from the game by falling over herself, twisting her ankle and taking one of the opposition down with her. The ref somehow called a foul against the opposition for getting in the way of a player injuring herself and Libby made both the free throws from the resulting one and one. Port Colts scored again off a fast break, but Claire made a difficult long shot in reply. With 10 seconds to go we are up 24-21 and freezing the ball in our front court (I hate sentences that start like this - Ed.) when Janet had the ball fisted from behind and their guard grabs the ball and heads off towards the basket. "Don't foul her" cried Coach Morosoli from the sidelines, so we don't, and she throws up a brick from somewhere closer to the centre line than the three point line that hits the backboard... KLUNK - SWISH through the hoop for a drawn game. (I predicted that - Ed.)

Cathy 7, Janet, Kim 4, Michelle 3, Julie, Libby, Claire 2.

C.Y.M.S. Championship Men (Sun. 30/4)

Uni 89 d. Jetz (2) 58

As someone suggested before the start of this game, it was about time we thrashed this side. And so it was. They scored a couple of early baskets but then Swaaartz went beresk and was unstoppable as the silly Jetz tried to play us man to man, and we just gave John the ball and trotted back to defence. He got 20 points for the half. His capable drop kick Mungus had 12 as we led 39-23 at half time. In the second half the story was the same as we stretched our lead to 20 then 30 and would have won by 40 except we didn't. Swaaartz, Mongrel and Rig again dominated the scoring as we ran out convincing winners in our first game of the new season. It's a great feeling, only twenty-three more weeks before we inexplicably bomb out of the finals.

Swaaartz 34, Mungus 25, Rick 17, J.C. 7, FF24 6.

CLASSIC COMMENTARY : The comments continue as the NBL season gets into full swing. We begin with some from the Westside - North Melbourne season opener and the Eastside v. Westside local derby....

"He takes the shot from off the backboard" - Graham McNaney as Bennie Lewis banks one in

"He's a three quarter chance to get these, he averages 70% from the line" - Graham McNaney on David Graham's foul shots

"That's unfair, he's not supposed to go that far out" - Bill Palmer as Scott Fisher drops a long shot

"Even when coaches win they're unhappy" - Bill Palmer

- "That's pretty much a coast to coast" - Bill Palmer on Fisher
- "Where's the line? Show me that arc!" - Bill Palmer as David Graham steps back to fire up a three pointer
- "This is a danger period for North Melbourne, if you can call leading by 20 points a danger period" - Bill Palmer
- "Coaches always look frazzled" - Bill Palmer as Westside get close
- "Shot inside the key over heavy traffic" - Graham McNaney as Darryl Martin makes a basket
- "Take a look at that - do you like it? It's not yours!" - Bill Palmer describes a Fisher fake
- "I said this would go to the wire, Bill" - Graham McNaney
- "The predictor, Graeme!" - Bill Palmer in reply
- "This game's going faster than my lips can go!" - Bill Palmer
- "Half hearted court press" - Graham McNaney on Westside's defence
- "A leapin' leaner by Brendan Joyce" - Bill Palmer
- "Vacuum cleaner rebound by Bolden" - Bill Palmer
- "There's no doubt about that, he probably is one of the best" - Bill Palmer on Uthoff as a passing centre
- "A little frap doodle there" - Graham McNaney on a Bennie Lewis basket
- "Nice basket, a little loopy flipper" - Bill Palmer on Ben Tower's scoop move
- "He has a hard time setting an illegal screen without getting caught" - Bill Palmer about Dean Uthoff's size
- "Thought about it in his head a little bit" - Bill Palmer as Eddie Crouch changes a decision
- "He's making space materialize out of nowhere - of course, space is nowhere!" - Bill Palmer as Wayne Larkins drives to the hoop

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NBA FINALS : Our very good friends in The Age have printed the following results from the first round of NBA Playoffs : New York d. Philadelphia 3-1, Detroit d. Boston 3-0, Milwaukee leads Atlanta 2-1, Golden State d. Utah 3-0, Phoenix d. Denver 3-0. Stay tuned for more details as the finals progress.

Well, that's all for this edition. I'm sure the committee would like me to remind you all, that unless you have your Denton's warm up top when you play your game you won't be playing your game, as it will be assumed you haven't payed your club subscription. And they really mean it this time. So there....