

N.E.W.S 2009

RESULTS: Soccer 1st Victoria 2nd NSW 3rd WA
Hockey 1st NSW 2nd Victoria 3rd Qld
Rugby 1st NSW 2nd WA 3rd Qld

Victoria Best and Fairest: Andrew Brandreth

Overall Best and Fairest: Andrew Brandreth

Players Player Award: Luke David

All Australian: Andrew Brandreth (Captain) Luke David Hans Boers (Coach)

All Stars: Chris Green, Jamie McBryde (Soccer) Jules North-Coombes (Rugby)

It was Sunday the 19th of April when the Victorian Squad set out to become champions of Australia in the National Electric Wheelchair Sports to be held in Narrabeen NSW. The team consisted of Andrew Brandreth, Jamie McBryde, Chris Green, Jules North-Coombes, Michael Deayton and Luke David. Since the A.C.T Team couldn't get enough numbers to participate, each 1st emergency player for each state got to play for the ACT. Cayden Foley was our 1st emergency player but as he was unable to attend the games our second emergency player Michael Murdaca got to represent the ACT.

The trip started early in the morning with the majority of the team stopping at Morrison's Cafe in Holbrook for lunch. We all stayed in Goulburn for the night and went to the RSL for dinner. We woke early the next morning only to discover car problems, which was easily resolved with a very handy hammer bashing. We arrived in Narrabeen at the Sydney Academy of Sports just in time for lunch. Over the day and evening the other teams arrived, with the WA team arriving late into the night. After dinner we had a team meeting to discuss our goals and plays. Most nights we had a curfew of 9.45pm to make sure we were ready for the big days ahead. Early the next morning we had to be speed tested to make sure we weren't over 10km's. After each team was tested, the opening ceremony started. After speeches and the national anthem, the games were officially opened.

The first day began with Soccer. Our first game was against A.C.T which we won comfortably 8-0. We had a few games break then came across QLD, which we were very confident in beating. Everyone played great, remaining unbeaten defeating QLD 2-0. The next game was very important, it was against NSW, who have been very dominant in the last couple of years. We were confident that we could match the skill of NSW, but with a couple of unfortunate goals, we couldn't hold on losing 2-0. After the disappointing loss, we had to win the next two games to make the grand final. Our next opponent was SA who have shown great improvement, we couldn't underestimate them. We came out firing, winning 4-0. Our last game was against WA who were fighting for the last spot in the grand final

just as we were. We all knew what we had to do and were confident we were the better team. We showed NSW we weren't a team to be taken lightly beating WA 3-0 securing a place in the grand final.

The next day was Hockey, our main sport in which we have won the Grand Final for 20 years out of N.E.W.S's 24 year history. After a meeting the night before, we knew our strategies and plays. Our first game was against QLD who we won against in the Grand Final last year, they had 3 new players after losing 2 experienced players due to retirement. We came out guns blazing, smashing QLD 12-1. Our next game was against SA, who again showed great improvement in Hockey. After a tight game in the first few minutes we took control of the game winning 8-3. ACT were next, and with SA upsetting NSW 3-2 we had to get as much as percentage as we could, taking down ACT 16-0. Once again our greatest challenge was against NSW. Over the history of NEWS there has been much rivalry between Victoria and NSW. We went into the game confident of winning, with 30 seconds left to go we were 7-6 up but NSW scored a goal to draw the game 7-7. This meant we had to win our next game against WA to get a place in the Hockey Grand Final. We rose to the challenge winning 9-3 against WA putting us into 2 Grand Finals.

Last day of round robin games was Rugby. Since Victoria has never won the rugby, we wanted to end the drought and we were confident of doing it with a big win over QLD 26-4, one of our best wins over QLD. After the big win we had NSW. After a good start, NSW came out firing in the 2nd half beating us 22-12. The loss dealt a big blow in our chances of making the grand final but we rebounded into form beating SA 36-0. ACT was next to face the storm of Victoria, ending up 30-0 our way. It was once again WA fighting for the last spot for the rugby grand final just like us. Showing great form all day, we were confident in making the final and ending our drought. After a good start, we soon lost concentration from the tiredness of the long day. Sadly, we found it hard to hold on when one of the WA players tipped out of his chair. With only 4 minutes to go, we tried our hardest to regain concentration and get back into the game but it was too late final scores were 24-12.

On Friday it was our rest day. After the disappointing loss in rugby, it was good to take our minds off the loss with some lunch at Palm Beach RSL. After lunch we went for a quick view of Summer Bay from Home & Away. We returned to the Sydney Academy of Sports to get ready for the social match of the All Australian team vs. the All Stars. It is a great honour to be chosen for the teams, Andrew Brandreth and Luke David made the All Australian team, with Andrew being captain and Hans Boers coach. Jamie McBryde and Chris Green made the All Stars soccer team and Jules North-Coombes made the rugby. The Friday night games were very relaxed, one of the highlights was the whole crowd in a huddle around the All Stars underdogs at half time, while the All Australian team were left all on their own.

Grand Final day on Saturday started out with speeches and a minutes silence for the ANZACs. The 3rd and 4th playoff for Soccer was first up, with WA beating QLD. Next was the Grand Final of Soccer against NSW, and the nerves were starting to rush into our bodies. We worked out a strategy to beat NSW but unfortunately in the dying minutes of the first half we conceded a goal. We came back firing in the 2nd half, playing the best I have ever seen. After a good couple of chances the time came to push forward with great work by Jamie which left Luke to take the ball down the court, passing to Jules to

level the scores. The time was running out, but we defended the ball perfectly, making the game go into extra time. After two extra time halves, the game was about to end in a penalty shootout. Great goalkeeping by Andrew and a goal to Michael Deayton gave Victoria their 2nd Soccer Grand Final title. Definitely a memory that will be remembered forever.

The next game was the 3rd and 4th playoff for Hockey with QLD beating SA. Before we knew it we were on the court again to play the Hockey Grand Final against NSW. It wasn't the best start to the game that we were hoping for, falling behind by 3 goals with only 5 minutes to go. With an unexpected change in formation, we soon got back into the game, grabbing back 2 goals to make it 7-6. With a minute to go we quickly got back into position, but the NSW players were too strong and fast, grabbing the ball and taking it into their shooting circle. A great save by Chris gave us hope, but unfortunately it was too late. Final scores were a disappointing 7-6. Immediately after the hockey we had to play the 3rd and 4th playoff for rugby against QLD. We were very confident, since we won convincingly in the round robin competition. Unfortunately, the loss in hockey took away our concentration leading us to make some mistakes, leaving the score 18-16 at the final siren. The final game for the day was NSW against WA, with NSW winning the Rugby Grand Final.

Presentation Night began with a big dinner, followed by speeches and presentations of awards and trophies. Once again Andrew won Victoria's Best & Fairest and the Overall Best and Fairest trophies. In its 2nd year of history the Player's Player Award went to Luke David. NSW was awarded the Roger Melnyk trophy for winning the most games in the round robin competition.

After the awards it was time to relax and party. It was great to chat to the other state players who have become good friends. For now the rivalry was all forgotten. I would like to thank the Victorian Squad for putting in another great performance, Victoria's proud of you. Thanks also to Michael Murdaca who had the difficult job of playing with a team and coach that were all new to him. Michael reports that he found the experience challenging but thoroughly enjoyable. I would also like to thank the support crew, if it wasn't for you, we wouldn't be able to participate. A special mention to Tim for his expert commentating and cheering and to Yoshi our mascot. Lastly, I would like to thank Hans Boer for being the best coach in Australia.

BRING ON N.E.W.S 2010!

From Luke David