

EAGLES OVER SAINTS AGAIN

Eagles claimed top spot on the ladder with their second win in as many weeks over Saints and Hawks came from the clouds to snatch a draw with Wanderers in Round Seven action of the Sunraysia Baseball League O'Malley's A Grade competition.

Eagles travelled to Chaffey Park to take on Saints with top place on the ladder on the line. Eagles were missing Andrew Law, Tim Press and Matt Jones but welcomed back Trent Perry and promoted Zac Schurr whilst Saints were at full strength.

Saints began with Dean Fairlie on the mound again although he gave up a lead-off hit to Adam Bell Eagles were retired without scoring. Eagles used Matt Austin on the hill he retired Saints in order.

Eagles went down in order in the second dig and Saints then took the early lead as Tony Trinnick's infield hit helped the home side score one run.

Eagles then took the lead in the third innings as safe hits to Ben Harris, Bell and Jed Miller saw the visitors score two runs. Saints went down in order and a close match was on the cards.

Both pitchers and their respective defences took control for the next three innings and Eagles' one run lead was still good after six innings of baseball.

Eagles extended their lead in the top of the seventh dig. Harris, Miller, Ben Heagerty and Schurr all hit safely and four runs crossed the plate to extend Eagles' lead to five. Saints had no answer to the pitching of Austin and remained stalled on one run.

Eagles added another three runs in the eighth dig as Saints replaced Fairlie with Shane Trinnick and the game was as good as over. A consolation run to Saints in the ninth dig was irrelevant as Eagles ran out convincing 9-2 winners.

Hawks and Wanderers also did battle for the second week running. Hawks were missing Tony Probert and Matt Smith but welcomed back Dylan Smith and promoted Kerrin Smith whilst Wanderers welcomed back Troy Kortekaas.

Hawks began with Michael Wade on the mound and although he gave up a lead-off hit to Nick Carroll a double play erased the Wanderers' threat. Hawks were up against Jay Fleming and Dylan Smith hit safely but it was Wanderers turn for a double play to end Hawks innings.

Joe Fleri and Dion Tregeagle hit safely in Wanderers' second dig but a good outfield throw from Ben Arnold threw Fleri out at third to end Wanderers' innings. Hawks' Ben Barker reached base in the third innings courtesy of a Matt Gee error but Hawks couldn't get him around the bases.

Hawks scored the first run of the game and took the lead in the fifth innings as Fleming walked two and another Gee error allowed the first run. Wanderers leveled the score in the seventh dig as they capitalized on a Hawks' error and three walks to pull level.

Dion Tregagle was now on the mound for Wanderers and he kept Hawks stuck on one run through eight innings. Wanderers edged ahead in the eighth dig as Wade walked Carroll, Kortekaas and hit Vern Howard to load the bases. Gee then bunted in the go-ahead run as tension mounted and Clint Williams took over on the hill from Wade.

Jay Fleming and Adam Job batted well in the top of the ninth dig and when Kortekaas hit safely to knock in two runs Wanderers extended their lead to 4-1 with half an innings to go. Tregagle struck out Ben Barker to start the bottom of the ninth but things only intensified from there.

Williams hit safely, Gee errored for a third time and Trent Cross walked to load the bases for Hawks and the match went up a notch. Wade's clutch base hit scored two runs for Hawks and the game was on a knife's edge.

Ben Arnold then bunted home the tying run but when Wade was thrown out at home in a suicide attempt to pinch the winning run the match ended in a drama packed four-all draw.

The Mildura Sports Centre A Grade player of the week is awarded to Eagles' pitcher Matt Austin. He pitched eight innings of one-run 'ball to lead his side to a win over Saints.

In the B Grade competition Wanderers continued their unbeaten run with a 5-2 win over Eagles. Tony Malycha, Tim Plumridge and Brett Bertalli played well for Wanderers with Mark Lang, Chris Cooksley and Jayden Austin playing well for Eagles.

The second match saw Saints slaughter Tigers 22-2. Brad Gowers, Russell Ilsley and Peter Shadwick played well for Saints with Damien Eastwood, Brendan Purgar and Robert Purgar getting Tigers only safe hits.

The Mallee Burger B Grade player of the week is awarded to Wanderers pitcher Tony Malycha. He kept the strong Eagles side to just two runs and picked up three hits for himself in his sides' win over Eagles.

In the C Grade competition Wanderers One defeated Saints in a high scoring 13-10 win over Saints. Andrew Thomas, Robert Whitchurch and Colin Clifford played well for Wanderers with Aaron Jeffries, Rod Pate and Glen Kelly playing well for Saints.

The second match saw Wanderers Two defeat Hawks Two 10-4. Shane Malycha, Darryl Jack and Brett Bertalli played well for Wanderers with Phillip Pain, Jason Gregory and Casey Andersen doing well for Hawks.

The third match resulted in a 16-7 win for Hawks One over Tigers. George Hancock, Dylan Rickard and Paul Holman played well for Hawks with Gavin McDonald, Craig Johns and Matthew Johns doing well for Tigers.

The Mallee Burger C Grade player of the week is awarded to Hawks hitter George Hancock. He was five from five in his sides' win over Tigers.

RESULTS

A GRADE

EAGLES: - 0 0 2 0 0 0 4 3 0—9

SAINTS: - 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 1—2

SAFE HITS: - Eagles—A Bell 4; J Miller 3; Z Schurr and B Harris 2; B Heagerty, T Perry and L Fuda 1.

Saints—T Trinnick 3; D Fairlie 2; B Kerr 1.

WANDERERS: - 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 2—4

HAWKS: - 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 3—4

SAFE HITS: - Wanderers—N Carroll, T Kortekaas, J Fleri, D Tregagle and J Fleming 1.
Hawks—D Smith 2; C Williams, M Wade, T Cross and B Arnold 1.

B GRADE

WANDERERS: - 3 0 0 0 0 2 0—5

EAGLES: - 1 0 0 0 1 0 0—2

SAFE HITS: - Wanderers—T Malycha and T Plumridge 3; B Higginbotham, D Twaddle, B Bertalli and R Whitchurch 1.

Eagles—C Cooksley 4; C Minette, M Lang, J Parmenter and J Austin 1.

SAINTS: - 1 1 2 1 8—22

TIGERS: - 2 0 0 0—2

SAFE HITS: - Saints—B Gowers 3; S Haffenden, R Ilsley (hr), P Shadwick and N Bennett 1.
Tigers—D Eastwood, B Purgar and R Purgar 1.

C GRADE

WANDERERS ONE: - 0 5 3 2 3—13

SAINTS: - 3 2 3 2 0—10

SAFE HITS: - Wanderers—P Gee and R Whitchurch 2; A Thomas, B Begg and G McNally 1.
Saints—G Kelly and A Jeffries 3; A Gourlay and R Pate 2; A McBain and G Gourlay 1.

WANDRERS TWO: - 4 1 1 0 3 1—10

HAWKS TWO: - 0 0 0 1 3 0—4

SAFE HITS: - Wanderers—R Witte, S Malycha, D Jack (inc. 1 home run) and B Bertalli 2; B Lever, K Morrison and K Smith 1.

Hawks—P Pain, J Gregory and J Stephenson 2; C Andersen and D Cross 1.

HAWKS ONE: - 5 0 2 2 3 4—16

TIGERS: - 0 5 1 1 0—7

SAFE HITS: - Hawks—G Hancock 5; P Holman and D Rickard 3; C Barbary and B Darley 2; C Storer, B Neaylon and T Rickard 1.

Tigers—G McDonald and C Johns 2; J Smith, M Thornton and M Johns 1.