



PAFL Round 1 - Match Report

Saturday, May 21, 2005

Report By : Two Demons

Edited by : C. Gull

Let the Games Begin...

The day we have all been waiting for finally arrived last Saturday. Conditions were perfect for the 2005 season opener. Sweltering temperatures in Manila during the week subsided and a zephyr drifted across the polo ground. The ground was in perfect shape. A great turn up saw numbers for 9-a side, with Bluey Lawrence pulling on his prosthetic limb to umpire. Paul Griffiths, who had been hiding in the off season beside Hussein in the Iraq rat hole, but wasn't detained, was kind enough to donate the Sherrin match ball. Thanks also to Andrew Cope for donating 2 Sherrins for use in coming weeks.

How They Lined Up...

Eurekas:

Andrew Cope, Ben Casey, Justin Puiu, Derek Ackary, Manoli Loukas, Mark Gilroy, Brett Marshall, Paul Byrne, Richard Spence

Dingoes:

Aaron Holbrook, Paul Griffiths, Richie Amurao, Peter Stone, Paul Cleeman, Peter Tsiros, James Young, Philip Davis, Robert Powell

The 1st Quarter...

At the first bounce it was all Eurekas, "Jacko" Puiu got higher than Maradona (after he retired) and tapped the ball to Andrew Cope who scampered like an Uzbeki democrat away with the loose ball. A pin-point pass hit Marshall on the chest inside 35, virtually winding him. As a result, the kick set the tone for the Eureka's day - he missed everything. The kick out saw Paul "my back is very sore so I will only play if you are desperately short of players" Griffiths and Byrne playing keepings off in the centre of the ground before "Seagull" Ackary swooped on a loose ball like a discarded French Fry, ambled to inside the 35 dead in front, before missing the sticks by a margin larger than the U.S deficit. The kick in again resulted in a tussle in the centre, before Ackary grabbed the loose ball bounced twice before converting for the first major of the game. From the restart, the Dingoes lifted. Griffiths, who had earlier claimed a back injury arising from lifting small children, was running like a young colt, and his agility resulted in the Dingoes first major. Paul "The Tortoise" Cleeman was everywhere, and that was before he moved! But seriously, he seemed like a loose man (tight shirt) in defence, running (I use the term loosely) off the back flank to help set up Griffo's second major of the quarter, as the white line fever obviously started to kick in. The Eurekas bounced back as young Ben Casey selflessly threw himself in with reckless abandon in a great display of desperation, but it was Manoli who ended up bringing the margin back for the Eurekas as he marked and kicked truly. Both defences worked hard through the quarter and at the first break, the scores were dead level.

The 2nd Quarter...

The second quarter opened with Jacko Puiu continuing his domination of the ruck, but it was as one-sided as a Zimbabwean election out of the centre, and the Dingoes were taking advantage of their opportunities with the help of Peter "the malaca" Tsiros and Aussie Phil. Eureka's new boys Spence and Mark "I'm a Catholic Jew from Connecticut" Gilroy showed speed and flexibility in helping to frustrate Dingo forwards but once again it was the agility of Paul "...and I will only play in the forward pocket" Griffiths with a great snap, and a strong grab by Holbrook, both resulting in goals, which saw the Dingoes surge ahead. The Eureka's paid dearly for inaccuracy in front of goal to return 4 behinds for the quarter.

The 3rd Quarter...

The third quarter saw a resurgent Eureka's reflecting the half-time haranguing from Captain Jacko. The tussle between Griffiths and Byrne continued, but it was once again smooth hands out of defence for the Eureka's delivering to the elusive Ackary who marked strongly and kicked truly. Minutes later Byrne ended a run through the centre with a spear pass to Marshall who kicked the Eureka's' second major of the quarter. The Dingoes lifted and showed the stronger legs as Powell, Torty and Amurao continued to drive off the backline, with the highlight of the quarter being Aussie Phil's sprint down the centre of the ground as he exuded his new found confidence in knowing that he only needs to touch the ball down and not bounce it. He used this newly learnt skill to its maximum advantage as he covered nearly half the ground and kicked a beautiful pass to the leading Dingoes forward in Griffo. This resulted in a behind but the Dingoes were rewarded for their efforts when James "I now know how to handball" Young managed to stop talking for twenty seconds and converted on the run. At the final break, the Dingoes held a slender 3 point lead.

The 4th Quarter...

It was as tense as a meeting with the North Koreans, so it was appropriate that Griffiths decided upon a one-man offensive flood (heretofore to be known as the Kim Jong II). He was given plenty of action as the Eureka's piled on the pressure. Manoli marked superbly, under his mullet (must be from Morwell) in front of goal and kicked truly to inspire the Eureka's. But 2004 Carman Murrighy medallist Griffiths wasn't finished as he sliced through the centre like the new Pope on steroids and bombed the ball to the goal square. A subsequent skirmish led to the "French Open" incident. Jacko, desperate to see his Eureka's over the line, plunged like Johnny Weismuller after Esther Williams, only to find that Peter "Bato" Stone was lying crocodile-like in the murky waters below. The impact, if it had occurred in the Indian Ocean, would have created a bigger tsunami than on Boxing Day. Bluey blew the blue whistle to stop a potential blue. Our Jacko, exhibiting similarities to his namesake in the U.S., protested his innocence ("I was going for the balls – I mean I didn't touch him. They're not my videos"). Having seen this particular technique employed at Roland Garros, Bluey examined the side of Stoney's head to confirm that there was indeed an indentation. The free kick was awarded. Once Stoney worked out which way was west, his instincts were true and so was the kick. The Eureka's fought back desperately but their kicking let them down. With time running short they again surged into the forward line, but the siren sounded presenting the Dingoes with a win by the narrowest of margins.

In Conclusion...

A fabulous turn out for the first game of the season, and great to see some new faces among the teams. Pre-season training, for those who had attended, had clearly sharpened the skills, but fitness remains a yet to be achieved target for some! End of month barbeque this Saturday so spread the word! More details to follow later in the week.

The Final Scores...

Dingoes: 2.2, 4.3, 5.4, 6.5 (41)

Eurekas: 2.2, 2.6, 4.7, 5.10 (40)

Goal kickers...

Dingoes: Griffiths 3; Young, Stone, Holbrook 1

Vics: Manoli, Ackary 2; Marshall 1

The PAFL Premiership Table...

Winning margin	Drawn 1 pt.	(1-17) 2 pts.	(18-35) 3 pts.	(36-53) 4 pts	(54+) 6 pts.	Premiership Points
Dingoes :	0	1	0	0	0	2
Vics :	0	0	0	0	0	0

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