**Lions Claim Local ‘’Derby’’ At Cygnet Oval**

The Cygnet Football Club welcomed long-time rivals the Huonville Lions to Cygnet Oval last Saturday, in what is always a big day for the Club with a massive crowd in attendance. The Port were facing a Huonville side that has been quite active on the recruiting front in the off-season under well respected Coach, Nick Doyle, and supporters of both sides were keen to grab bragging rights early in the season.

**Southern Storm**

The Southern Storm boys were looking at a great start to the 2018 season and looking for 3 straight wins with the young Lions standing in their way. With the young Lions a bit of an unknown, the boy’s and coaches Freddy Webster & Paddy O’Neill knew this was an important game, as the Lions have traditionally been strong at this level. The game started at a pretty furious pace with both sides going hard at the player and ball. The Storm managed just the two goals to nil for the term to hold a 14 point lead at the first break. The second term was a better one and with Luke Ashlin, Will Polley and Brayden Dowling all continuing their great form the Storm led by 29 points at half-time. After the long break, the Storm’s running game really kicked in and with better skills and more forward targets pulled away to record a great 79 point victory – however full credit to the young Lions who battled the match out till the very end.

Best players for the Storm included Luke Ashlin, Will Polley and Brayden Dowling who are all in scintillating form. Captain Josh Coad again led well while Bruk Duggan and Blake Sculthorpe are both showing they are very good young players. Major goal-kickers included Connor Soward with 4, while Jake Munnings and Will Polley both kicked 2 goals in a team effort. Another good test coming up for the Storm this weekend with the young Tigers at the TCA - keep up the great work boys, you are definitely playing well as a team!!

**Reserves**

The Reserves were up and about early as is usually the case when these two sides meet. Usually, these games are fairly even and this one proved no different. The game commenced the same as the Colt’s with both teams making their intentions known. It was a dour struggle early with a few points separating the teams at the first break. The Lions had the better of the second quarter and got away from an inaccurate Port team to lead by 14 points at the long-break. However, the Cygnet team led by Aaron Dance, Brad Sculthorpe, Chris Stockfeld and Elliott Ross hit back to only trail by 13 points with an exciting final term on the cards. The Lions turned the final term into a slog-fest as neither team could run over the other. In a tough and enthralling encounter, the Lions held off the Port to run out 21 point winners in an entertaining game. Except for inaccurate kicking for goal, the Port could have easily taken the points.

Better players for the Port were Aaron Dance, Brad Sculthorpe and Chris Stockfeld, who was busy all day. Elliott Ross, Paddy O’Neill and Sean Burgess all had fine games. Goal-kickers were Phil Dance, Paddy O’Neill, Co-Coach Ollie Burke, veteran Shane Clark and brother Grant – possibly one that got away from the Port but for better conversion!

**Seniors**

Although Coach Ben Cato had thrown the smoke-screen to Nick Doyle at the SFL press conference, the Port had to take the field without stars in Ben Halton, assistant coach Andrew Palmer and the ever consistent Matt Turnbull due to injuries. So, apart from Jackson Gordon, it was pretty much the same outfit that defeated Sorell that was sent out to do battle. In front of a massive crowd that had steadily built all day, the Lions got off to flier and rattled 6 goals onto the score-board in no time to have the Port on the back foot. But for inaccurate kicking by the Lions, the game could have been over by quarter time. The Port managed to weather the storm and managed three goals to close the gap back to a manageable 23 points at the first break. After some calm but stern words from Coach Cato, the Port were revved up at the huddle, but it was the Lions who again dominated the second term, piling on another 5 goals to the Port’s 2, with the Port’s back-line under all sorts of pressure, to hold a commanding and perhaps likely match-winning 41 point lead at the long break.

Coach Cato again called for his players to lift in the second half and asked the more experienced players to spark an assault at the confident Lions.  However, unfortunately, the second half would prove to be no different than the first, with the damage on the score-board already done, and the Lions kept their foot on the Port’s throat to eventually end up very impressive and convincing 35 point victors. Full credit to the young Port team who showed some real character by outscoring the Lions in the final term, and not being fully run over to allow for a massive loss.

Better players included Joe Direen who was tireless and dominant in the ruck all day while young Jackson Gordon, back into the side again, showed his class. Will Ford was great in a back-line that was under constant attack while Pat Verrell again showed his versatility for the Port in a number of roles. Marcus Coulson was active around goal and Cam Wilcox was another who repelled many of the Lions forward thrusts.

Major goal-kickers were Elijah Reardon who continued his great form with 3, while Marcus Coulson kicked 2 goals. Congratulations to young James Zeitzen who kicked his very first senior goal – well done James. All up a frustrating day at the office for the Port, but while offering no excuses against a very polished and well-coached Lions side, we hope the next clash at Huonville can be a closer one with some key players back.

This weekend the Port travels to the TCA to face the Hobart Tigers in what should again be three intriguing games of football. The best part about foot-ball is each week allows for redemption, and the Port faces three must-win matches early in the season. Get along to the TCA on Saturday and support the Port and Storm men.

**Women’s Football**

Round 3 saw the Port up against Lauderdale in the first SFLW Gala day at University Oval last Sunday. The weather turned on a wet windy warm up, but cleared up for the game. The first quarter saw a tight contest, with both teams having a fair bit of the football, but Lauderdale scored the first point. The Port scored the first goal of the game with a nice shot from Chantelle Clark. The Port had another chance through a 50 metre penalty in the goal square on the siren but missed, but still took a 6 point lead into the second quarter.

The second term saw the game tighten up again with Lauderdale getting onto the score-board with a great team goal. The Port fought hard to get another major but could only score a couple of behinds, but still took a 1 point lead into the main break.

Coming out for the third quarter The Port were all smiles and the midfield kept fighting hard, with first season player Serena Hubert getting a fair bit of the ball and seeming to be everywhere again this week. Mattia Duggan, Sammy Kluga and first gamers for the Port in Holly Upston and Sherilyn Atkins-Collins all featured heavily in the middle, with the Captain Michelle Cowen dominating in the ruck. Defending and attacking well, both teams were trying everything, but with a massive effort from Port super-star full back Keren Scotney, Lauderdale only managed to score 1 point in a very low-scoring affair. With scores all tied up going into final quarter with only nine points in total each, the Port came out ready to give it one last huge effort. Both teams again battled hard but Lauderdale nudged away to score an 18 to 9 victory. For most of the Port Women, this is their first season, and to fight so hard and see so much improvement since playing Lauderdale at Sorell pre-season is inspiring.

This Sunday the Port Women to the New Town Bike track Sunday to play the South East Suns at 3pm – get along and support the Port ladies!

Support ‘The Port’ in 2018