

David Bell Cup

Friday 1st September 2023

For the fourth year in a row, the final of the David Bell Cup saw holders Como Secondary College take on Shenton College, held at Perth Hockey Stadium. Both schools progress through their pool matches and crossovers in their first tournament undefeated, and unlike last year, it was Como that finished the Semi-Final day ahead of Shenton, with a 1-0 victory over them.

The first quarter of the Final was a cagey affair, with both teams weary of the other's attacking strike force. Como took the lead in the 13th minute, with a field goal from Oscar Banyard breaking the deadlock. The second quarter followed a similar pattern, but a penalty stroke awarded to Shenton late in the quarter for a clear foot on the line allowed captain Blake Murdoch to step up and slot it home, taking teams to the major break all locked up again at 1-1.

The third quarter was the first of the exciting quarters, with two powerful dragflicks from Blake Murdoch giving Shenton a 3-1 lead after 43 minutes. No doubt Shenton were more the happy to take this lead into three-quarter time, but Como spoiled the party one minute later, with Oscar Banyard scoring another field goal to only give Shenton a one goal advantage at the break.

Como have traditionally been a fourth-quarter team, and this game was no exception. Within a minute of play restarting, they were able to earn a penalty stroke, which Jonah Pilatti converted. Five minutes later, it was Jonte Sadler hitting the backboard, giving Como the lead with nine-minutes remaining. Shenton weren't done there though, with Caillen Canavan's goal making it 4-4 at full time.

Special tournament rules meant that teams would play 9-on-9 golden goal hockey for the first seven minutes of additional time. This was made even harder for Como, as a poor tackle and dissent from Jonah Pilatti meant that they would be a further player down for this time. The extra space this format provided was evident, with overheads galore and end-to-end hockey making for a terrific spectacle. Both sides had their chances, and the deadlock was broken in the 65th minute. A fast-paced counter-attack saw Como's James Shackley receive the ball at the halfway line, and charge forward. He was able to ride a yellow card worthy physical tackle outside the 23m line, with the umpire making a terrific decision to allow advantage to be played, making his way into the circle, and slotting the ball past the goalkeeper to allow Como Secondary College to retain the David Bell Cup with a 5-4 score line.

Goal Scorers: Blake Murdoch x3 (SC), Oscar Banyard x2 (CSC), Jonah Pilatti (CSC), Jonte Sadler (CSC), Caillen Canavan (SC), James Shackley (CSC)

DIBS Medal: Oscar Banyard (Como Secondary College)