

St. Joseph's First XVIII has claimed their fourth victory of the season in round six of the ACC competition, defeating De La Salle, 16.3 (99) to 5.2 (32).

Despite missing some big names, including poster boy Guy Hardiman, Joeys' depleted line-up showed strength and character to overcome De La Salle.

The first term started slowly and signs pointed to a long day as De La Salle kicked three early goals. But it was debutant Max Hungerford who lifted the visitors, with three goals of his own for the quarter, to give Joeys a 12-point lead at quarter time.

The second term saw Joeys' midfield get on top of the home side with the likes of David McNeel and Liam Cogan dominating out of the middle. Darby Schilder made his mark on the match with two goals as St. Joseph's took a 25-point lead into the main break.

The defensive unit of the visitors was at their best in the third term, keeping De La Salle to a mere two points for the quarter. Hungerford kicked three more to ensure Joeys took an almost insurmountable lead into the final term.

The fourth quarter, whilst being nearly identical to the third in regards to the flow of the game, contained arguably the play of the day.

Jack Buckley had the ball on the wing and with some fancy footwork, sold candy a few times to almost break the ankles of a De La Salle midfielder. Buckley then managed to hit up Schilder who, with the turning circle of the titanic, wheeled around to kick the Dennis Family Homes goal of the day.

Schilder finished with five whilst Hungerford kicked six on debut. Upon hearing the final score and goal tallies, Guy Hardiman was quoted as saying "I would've kicked 25", highlighting the man's belief in his own abilities.

Patrick Dowling was adjudged best afield for Joeys, as he had the ball on a string all day and even managed to find the goals. Despite not playing in his preferred full-forward role, the left-footer has relished in the midfield for his school's side.

The human highlight reel Buckley also had a day out, looking very comfortable in an outside role as his pace and composure granted him an excess amount of touches. The clearance work and tackling intensity from Skipper McNeel also didn't go unnoticed as he led from the front all day.

It took a team effort to overcome a De La Salle side that boasted some talented players, including their eight-foot tall behemoth in the ruck, who proved a difficult task for the Joeys players to handle.

Coach Chris Lynch was impressed with the team's ability to win with such a depleted side.

"With nine changes, it is always pretty tough and with the preparation that we had, it was quite difficult and probably showed in the first five minutes. But from then on, we just dominated the game." He said.

"We were really proud of our year 11's today, I think they really stood up. They were probably most of our better players, which was fantastic."

Whilst savouring the win, Lynch looks forward to the coming weeks, which include a match against St. Bernard's and then the long awaited finals series.

"There were a few boys who had some really fantastic performances today, which will make selection really difficult next week.

"We are pretty much guaranteed a home semi-final, which will be great for us." Lynch said.

It was a team effort on the day, but the win could not have been achieved without the inspirational efforts of the bus driver. The man put on the white coat when the chips were down and played an important role in the win as goal umpire.

Round 5 – Wednesday 20th May

De La Salle 5 . 3 . 33 def by SJC 16 . 3 . 99

GOALS: Max Hungerford 6, Darby Schilder 5, Raven Marika 2, Patrick Dowling 1, David McNeel 1, Liam Cogan 1

BEST: Patrick Dowling, Darby Schilder, Max Hungerford, Jack Buckley, David McNeel, Aadyn Sleep-Dalton

@ Waverly Oval – De La Salle OCFC