

St Joseph's First XVIII has made its way to another ACC Grand Final, comfortably defeating St. Bernard's in the Semi Final, 17.11 (109) to 4.6 (30).

Despite the extensive amount of goals kicked by the home side, the highlight of the day came before the match even started. On a stock standard Wednesday afternoon the scoreboard may have read SJC and visitors but not on a day as special as a Semi Final.

For the big game, Coach/Comedian Jono Holt decided he would pump up the boys by writing "Holt = Legend" on the scoreboard. Whilst the rouse was hit and miss with some of the boys, it set a relaxed tone for the day.

The home Semi, which was a goal for the side all year, saw Joeys field a strong side to hopefully build momentum to take into a Grand Final. The honourable Andrew Scaddan took advantage of this and saw the opportunity to take front seat on the Joeys bandwagon. Despite not being with the team through the tough times, long road trips and depleted squads, 'Scadds' inspired the team from the outset of the Semi Final.

The first quarter saw the home side put on a spectacle in front of what seemed like 90,000 fans (about 15 year nines, a handful of year 12's and some devoted parents). Five goals to none in the first 20 minutes saw Joeys 31-points up at the first break and looking comfortable.

The man who seems to dominate the headlines each week, Guy Hardiman, found himself amongst the news again but for all the wrong reasons. Hardiman went down with a knee injury in the first term and did not return for the match. Club doctors say it could be anything from a mosquito bite to an ACL but only time will tell.

The second quarter started reasonably well for the home side but it was evident that St. Bernard's were not going down without a fight. Two goals put life into the visitors and Scadds was beginning to unbuckle his bandwagon seatbelt. But three goals through strong team play and comradery ensured Joeys would take a comfortable lead into the second half.

Much like the week previous, St. Joseph's took control in the second half and six goals to Raven Marika capped off a strong team performance. Marika will look to take that goal sense into the Grand Final against Whitefriars as there may be some notable absentees.

These possible omissions were all as a result of injuries that occurred during Wednesday's match including the knee injury to Hardiman. Partner in crime to Hardiman, Darby Schilder, also was taken from the ground with a James Kelly style injury whilst Nick Connors had a calf complaint that ended his day in the third term.

For the best players, it was the usual suspects of Jack Blood and Patrick 'David Armitage' Kelleher, whilst Liam Cogan had a day out, kicking four quality goals.

A usual performer, Jack "Torpedo" Buckley, had his day marred by an incident in the final term where he tried to do too much in the forward pocket and wound up being caught holding the ball in an embarrassing sequence of events.

"I was breaking my back for the coach because of my love for the game." Buckley said after the match.

Spiro Alesios and Jack Henry were dominant throughout the day whilst the evergreen backline unit held St. Bernard's to a mere four goals.

Coach Chris Lynch was impressed with the team and looks forward to the Grand Final against Whitefriars.

"Our backline has been brilliant all season and were really good again today, our mids were fantastic today, and our forwards competed really hard." He said.

"We need to be confident going into this next game."

Joeys will take on Whitefriars in the ACC Grand Final at Sportscover Arena on Wednesday June 17th.

ACC SENIOR DIVISION 1 SEMI FINAL – Wednesday 3rd June

SJC 17.7 (109) def St Bernard's 4.6 (30)

GOALS: Raven Marika 6, Liam Cogan 4, Darby Schilder 1, Sam Bucovaz 1, Mitch Diamond 1, David McNeel 1, Guy Hardiman 1, Ned Harris 1, Patrick Kelleher 1

BEST: Jack Blood, Raven Marika, Jack Henry, Spiro Alesios, Liam Cogan, Patrick Kelleher

@ Elderslie Reserve Newtown