

A1 Reserves Grand Final – Tasman Imperial 43 def Saints 39

Coached by Corinne Shillabeer Managed by Cherine Pearson

The A1R final between the two top teams all year was a close encounter with Minor Premiers Tasman Imperials holding off a fast-finishing Saints team.

The warm conditions made the use of the rolling sub rule critical with both teams using to advantage throughout the C court.

Imperials started well with an immediate break of C pass, but as would be the case all match, Saints responded with their own conversion from turnovers.

Goalies Fox and Rawson for Imperials again showed the accuracy that they have been known for all year with only one miss for the first half. This precision gave Saints defenders Phillips and Swalue little opportunity for the rebound, however their defensive work was impressive preventing the ball being delivered easily into Imperials goalies.

A 3-goal lead to Imperials at the long break meant it was still either team's premiership to take.

Imperials with changes again to their wing positions seemed to find some momentum. Peters in WA for Imperials was strong on the pass and feed, with Huppatz in C well matched with Saints Hanrahan.

Imperials opened up an 8-goal lead at 3 quarter time but with Saints throwing the first 3 goals of the last quarter and getting within 2 goals with 5 minutes to go, the crowd were on their feet. Strong rebounding work by Imperials Stringer and Kidman prevented Saints getting the second chance at goal and with Fox shooting consecutive goals, sealed an Imperials premiership by 4.

Best on court was Bronte Phillips from Saints.