

# Cardinals Juniors

1948 to 1978

1948



1948

## FIRST JUNIOR COMPETITION

An under 17 team coached by **Keith Solomon** and mustered from the streets of Cringila wins the Illawarra Junior Baseball Premiership at their first attempt. The "Cringila Cardinals" baseball debutants wrapped up the Minor and Major premierships by winning thirteen of the fifteen games played during the season. The side:-

**Max Barrett, Tom Crehan, Reg Denny, John Eason, Peter Hodge, Owen Horneman, Barry Moore, John Pianegonda, Sam Pianegonda, Ken Soloman, Peter Thomas;** outscored their opponents by 266 runs to 92, averaging over 17 runs per game. On the mound **Max** claimed 109 K2's

assisted by **Sam** with 52. The roles were reversed in the batting with **Sam** hitting 6 homers **Max** 3 and **Tom** 2 for the year.

The young team moved up to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in 1949 and won that year, promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> grade in 1950 and won again.

**Max** Became our first junior to play for NSW seniors in 1957. **Sam** coached Cards 1st Grade for over twenty years including nine premierships in a row from 1954.



L-R K.Soloman, J.Eason, J.Pianegonda, P.Thomas, O.Horneman, S.Pianegonda, T.Crehan, R.Denny, B.Moore, P.Hodge, M.Barrett

1954

## JUNIOR BASEBALL RETURNS

Junior Baseball resumed after a six year break with three under 18 teams represented by Cards, Port Kembla and Lindsay & Bruce. The young Cards side dominated the premier-ship winning twelve from thirteen games, including one against a visiting Auburn Saints team.

In the final at Wenham Park Cards beat Lindsay & Bruce 27 to 7. Cards strong batting line-up scored 207 runs to 97 in the season led by **Peter Ennever** hitting safely in twelve games for 29 hits. Peter backed-up in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> grade most days. **Barry**

**Stuart** starred on the mound with 75 K2s and pitched in all thirteen games. **Peter** and **Barry** played for the Cards 1st Grade team for many years. More future senior players were introduced included **Albert Hodge** and **Bernie Ryan**.

1954

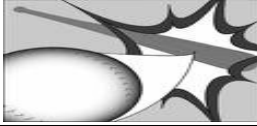


### Junior Titles

1948  
1954  
1955  
1957  
1958  
1961  
1962  
1966  
1968  
1969  
1970  
1971  
1972

1948 - 1978

1961



## SEASON EXPLODES

The junior baseball season got off to a flyer in the first game between Cardinals and Port Kembla. In an action packed game that Cards won 18-6 there were 26 hits including 8 home runs, 7 to the Cards.

The youthful Cardinals dominated the year losing only two games from seventeen. Cards batting again stood them apart with no less than 159 hits in the season. Leading the way for the Cards was **Robbie Kriss** who dominated all year with the bat and on the mound.

**Robbie** hit .638 with 44 safe hits, including 11 homers, and pitched 116 K2's as well! He received strong hitting support from **Eric Gorrell** 23 hits, **David Thompson** 18 and **Lawrence Hoffman** 16.

1966

## YOUNG GUNS

Only three sides contested the Junior Premiership Cards, Dodgers and Port Kembla. Rain cancelled most games and of the nine contested Cards lost three – all to Port.

The sides faced each other seven times including the Final and Grand Final. In the final Port won 5-3 picking up three runs in the last dig. But Cards produced in the GF winning 16-12. In the nine games played Cards scored 126 runs – 14 per game thanks to our batting which averaged 10 hits per game.

1962

## CARDS WIN AGAIN

Cardinals, Dapto, Police Boys and Port Kembla nominated junior sides in 1962. The Cardinals with close to last year's team and looking at successive titles only had trouble with Port Kembla who beat them twice in the season. Cards won their other three games in tight struggles against

Port, only 6 runs up for the year. Winning twelve from fourteen games, we scored 175 runs to 78 against.

With 121 hits the Cards were led again by **David Thompson** 18, **Richard Clarke** 16, **Frank Morosin** 15, **John Morosin** 12, **John Crehan** 11 and **Ken Leighton** 9 hits for the year.

## PREMIERSHIPS DRY UP

In the three years 1963 to 1965 Cards Juniors failed to win a premiership but introduced some future stars of the game.

In 1963 the side could only manage three wins from nine games. However the potential to win was always there as the young side picked up 84 safe hits in the nine.

In 1964, only four wins from sixteen games however, **Glen DeFaveri** hits the first of many homers for the Cards. A

9 year old **Gary Pianegonda** starts in a game for the first time. **Gary** is selected in the NSW Under 16 in 1970, Under 17 in 1971 and NSW Combined High Schools in 1972. And, **Ben D'Antonio** plays his first of many games with the Cards. **Ben** goes on to become only our second junior to represent NSW at senior level in 1978, 80 & 81.

In 1965 the boys could only manage two wins in the nine games played.

Leading the way **Glen DeFaveri** 25, **Rees Fellows** 16, **George Surmacz** 14 and **George Pleski** 13 who combined for 68 hits between them. Glen starred on the mound as well picking up 50K2s. **Kosta Kontopoulos** picks up the game this year.

1966



TM

1968

## MORE TALENT BLOOMS

Cardinals won eight games from ten this year losing only twice, to Bulli both times. Cards finally got the better of Bulli in a tight final at Stuart Park winning 14-13.

Cards team of all-rounders scored 164 runs in the ten games with only 61 against them. The hitters picked up 97 safeties spread right across the team.

Pitching duties were shared; **Ben D'Antonio** 14 K2's and

**Kosta Kontopoulos** 10, being upstaged by younger brother **Theo Kontopoulos** 60 K2's in eight games pitched.

And we introduced more stars of the future to the game in **Parry Anastasiadis**, and **Pop Torresan**.

**Parry, Pop** and **Theo** also represent NSW Combined High Schools in 1972 with **Gary Pianegonda**.

## SCORERS NIGHTMARE

During the late sixties many of our players names began resemble the ethnicity of the local area. Their surnames, although commonplace in the community today, were greeted with smirks, giggles and even derision back then. But who could blame the opposition scorers who had the job of writing them out! Try some of these; **Anastasiadis Azzopardi Cieputcha D'Antonio DeFaveri Jordanides Karpathios Kontopoulos Kubacki Malfitano Mandranis Navrozoglou Pianegonda Sarikiniotis Surmacz Taborakin Tutureski Vassilopolous Vujic**

1970

## UNDER 14'S INTRODUCED

For the first time an Under 14 Baseball competition was played this year. Six sides competed, three from Bulli - White, Maroon & Gold- Dapto, Shellharbour and Cards. The local boys from Cringila, who had known each other since kindergarten picked up the bat for the first time. They performed admirably losing only one game and drawing one out of the sixteen played. The team of 'Naturals' hit 124 safe hits and scored 267 runs for (16 per game) and only 83 against. On the mound **Joe Malachi** pitched like a veteran striking out 88 batters.

Cardinals big hitters in the batters box for were **Ray Morosin** 25, **Joe Malachi** 16 and **Chris Vassilopolous** 13. Also playing their first year of baseball is **Frank Satori**.



1969

## UNDEFEATED PREMIERS

There were five teams in the junior competition this year Bulli Gold, Bulli Maroon, Dapto, Port Kembla and Cards. The Red Birds swept all challengers aside by winning every game easily.

Cards scored 234 runs in only twelve games with 57 against. The talented young side compiled 124 safe hits in the dozen games. Hits were shared **Gary Pianegonda** 16, **John Borg**, **Theo Kontopoulos**, and **Tim Ziogas** all hit 15, **Parry Anastasiadis** 14 and **Ben's** young brother **Dom D'Antonio** 13.

**Parry** was also in charge on the mound pitching 57 K2s and **Theo** chipped in with 46, including 33 in just two games.

Keeping it in the family, youngest brother **Spiro Kontopoulos** starts his career with Cards.

1969



1970



**P R E M I E R S  
D E F E A T E D**

In 1970 still with the foundation of last years undefeated premiers, Cards U/16 side found strong competition from Dodgers this year.

The Cards won the first two clashes but Dodgers claimed the last four and the title, winning 8-3. Although outscoring the opponents 215 to 68 in the season of fifteen games, the major title eluded them.

Uncharacteristic play in the final at Wenham Park, produced only 6 hits, after averaging over 10 hits per game all year. And to top it off in the field they made a whopping 14 errors!

**P R E M I E R S  
1 9 7 2**

Cardinals 1st Grade Premiers contained no less than seven ex-junior players this year. *Circled from L to R are;*  
**Glen DeFaveri,**  
**Giuseppe (Pop) Torresan**  
**Theo Kontopoulos**  
**Gary Pianegonda**  
**Ben D'Antonio**  
**Kosta Kontopoulos**  
**Parry Anastasiadis.**  
 Also L-R Graham Edgar, Bob Lawrie, Gordon Fleming.

Pop won both batting and fielding averages that year!

1971

**Y O U N G S T E R S D O I T  
A G A I N**

Cards U/14 team picked up where they left last season and demolished the opposition this year. With virtually the same side as last year the Cards were undefeated in all eleven games played this season.

They scored a huge 198 runs and only conceded 55. The Cards hitters slammed 15 homers this season with **Ray Morosin** (6) and **Joe Malachi** (5). The boys bet cans of Coke on homers hit. **Ray** hit .642, **Chris Vassilopolous** .571 and **Joe** .514 for the season. **Joe** once again dominated the mound with 67 K2s.

After two years in the under 14's and two titles, losing only one and drawing one, the young team moves up to a new challenge in the 16's next year.

1971

**1 6 ' S W I N  
H O M E R D E R B Y**

The 16's record was almost as good as the 14's; they drew one game with Dodgers (11 all) and won the remaining nine, with two forfeits. They scored 218 runs with 55 against but they topped the younger Cards in the home run derby, hitting 20 in ten games.

The homer hitters included **Kosta Ziogas** (5) **Spiro Kontopoulos** (4) **Dom D'Antonio** (4) and **Alan Hodge** (3). The majority of the team contributed in the batters box with Cards hitting 130 safeties in the ten games. Most of the boys move up into grade next year and assist Cards in winning both 1st and 2nd grades.





1972



PLAYERS IN DECLINE

Baseball seems to be on the outer with no “pee wee” comp this year and only enough players to form 4 teams in U/16, Cards, Bulli, Dapto and Buttercup Braves (nee Shellharbour). Cardinals boys were undefeated again winning eight of the nine played and drawing one . The Cards managed 121 runs with 35 against from 87 hits. **Joe Malachi** 45 and **Spiro Kontopoulos** 13 K2s, gave strong defence.

In the final the Cardinal boys held on to win 6-5, after leading 5-1 in two innings.

SORRY MUM, I'VE ALREADY SOLD EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS TO WIN TV!

PERSPECTIVE

*The Cardinals Club is an institution in Illawarra Baseball, having originated from a bunch of boys, well groomed over the years into the best all round club in the area.*

*The loyalty of its junior ranks and the club tradition of fostering its juniors have produced records unequalled in the area. Our current junior players should feel very proud to be a vital part of this tradition. No other Illawarra Club was born of a junior team and no other had participated in every junior competition until 1973.*

*As you all play the game and aspire to greater heights, you should feel proud to have upheld the Cardinals tradition and assured the club of its continued existence into the future.*

*Sam Pianegonda. Life Member*

SCORERS PLEASE

Without our scorers over the years, many of the tales from past games would be either fading memories or slightly exaggerated boasts. Thanks; Ivy Soloman, Hazel Denny (Ennever), Shirley Denny (Pianegonda), Sandra Quealy, Gayle DeFaveri and Debbie Fleming (D'Antonio). Watch out boys!



UPDATE 2008

The junior competition is played in summer on Sundays at Fred Finch Park.

Cardinals have **nine** Junior teams this year;

- Teeball Tadpole U/8 (Gold & Maroon)**
- Teeball Frog U/8**
- Rookie Zooka U/10 (Gold & Maroon)**
- Little League U/12 (Gold & Maroon)**
- Under 14**
- Under 16**

All details of draws and dates can be found on the internet site

[www.illawarrarajunior.baseball.com.au](http://www.illawarrarajunior.baseball.com.au)

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