

CRICKET

No secret to success

OPENING BATSMAN MATTHEW DEAN HOPING WERRIBEE CAN GO ONE BETTER

Luke D'Anello

OPENING batsman Matthew Dean insists there is no secret recipe to Werribee's barnstorming run in Sub-District Cricket.

The hot Tigers have won 10 games from as many starts and are a raging flag favourite after losing last season's grand final against Melton.

But Werribee is yet to tackle its two biggest rivals for the title – Oakleigh and Bayswater.

"Ten from 10 is obviously a good position to be in, but we know we've still got Williamstown, Oakleigh and Bayswater, who are very, very good teams, so we're definitely not getting ahead of ourselves, that's for sure," Dean said.

"We understand the closer you get to finals, the more things can change."

Last summer Werribee's batsmen hammered opposition attacks, but this season its bowlers have taken centre stage, with Heath Pritchard, Jonathan Burton and Matthew Thomson all starring.

The batting has still been solid, with Dean the second most prolific batsman in the East-West group after 10 rounds with 426 runs, while his brother and skipper Shaun has logged 271 runs.

"Last year, we were predominantly a batting side and made a lot of runs and that got us over the line," Dean said.

"This year, our bowlers have pretty much won all the games for us. They've either bowled out sides for a low score or we have been able to defend whatever we've had on the board. Most of the credit has to go to the bowlers."

The Tigers were the surprise packet of last season, jumping from 10th spot in 2011-12 to second position.

But expectations have



Matthew Dean is enjoying another strong season for Werribee in Sub-District Cricket.

Picture: ARJ GIESE

also jumped, with the Dean brothers hoping to follow the path of their father, Jeff, who played in four premier-ships at Werribee and is now a member of the club's three-man coaching panel.

"It was the first time that most of the guys had probably played in a grand final," 24-year-old Dean said of last season's defeat. "I know Werribee hadn't played finals for 12 years, so we were

pretty happy to make it, but very disappointed in the way we played and the way we weren't able to achieve the ultimate goal.

"This year, obviously we don't want to accept anything less than making the grand final and then hopefully we can win it. That's the goal, but we know they don't come around that easy. The first aim is to finish on top, so we get the

home final, and we will see who we come up against then."

Dean returned to the Tigers last season after a six-year stint with Premier Cricket outfit Geelong.

Hip issues forced him to draw the curtain on his Premier career, but he has been a consistent performer for Werribee and recorded 489 runs in 2012-13. This season, he has inked one ton

and three half centuries at the top of the order.

"I wouldn't say I had an outstanding start. I always have felt like I've been hitting the ball pretty well, but I happened to put a few scores together through the middle part of the year," Dean said.

"Hopefully, with a few games to go, I can score a few more runs. I usually keep it pretty simple and stay relaxed at the crease."

TURF CRICKET

Hot Warriors just want to keep on winning

Luke D'Anello

POINT Cook is flying on top of the Turf Cricket West B1 ladder, but captain-coach Travis Bean is acutely aware the contenders are circling.

The Warriors are less than five points clear of Sunshine Heights, while Sunshine United, Seabrook and Newport-Digman are jostling for the last two positions in the finals.

On Saturday, Point Cook progressed to 5-103 at stumps against

Barkly St Uniting on a heat-affected day.

"It's pretty close at the top. We've got to keep winning to see if we can get a home semi-final," Bean said.

"Our aim was to make the finals again this year.

"We really wanted to win enough games before Christmas to put ourselves in a good position. Things have continued to work out, which is good."

Point Cook was eliminated in the semi finals last summer, losing to St Andrews, but its ace in the

pack this season is Troy Semmens. The experienced paceman has been a one-man wrecking ball, claiming 41 wickets from eight matches at 6.8 apiece.

Semmens has collected four five-wicket hauls and has been a model of consistency. Such has been his accuracy, Bean has had the luxury of placing nine men on the off-side at stages during his spells.

"He's been on fire this year," Bean said of the Warriors' premier bowler.

"He's just so reliable and

he's having a fantastic year. He's been the backbone of our attack and he just keeps going for us.

"He's got the ability to move the ball away from the right-hander, but he's accuracy has been phenomenal."

Bryan Munce has 21 wickets to his name, while Daryl Groves has been the leading batsman, hitting 354 runs at 39.3.

In other matches on Saturday, Hoppers Crossing (1-28) is locked in a tight battle against Old Mentonians (177) in Senior Division.



Point Cook's Daryl Groves has been in top form this season.

SUB-DISTRICT CRICKET

Second ton for O'Brien

A TIM O'Brien-inspired Werribee put itself in a strong position against Williamstown at Chirnside Park in Sub-District Cricket on Saturday.

The Tigers, who are flying on top of the ladder and unbeaten after 10 rounds, won the toss and batted.

But David Wolfe (31), Matthew Dean (0) and Shaun Dean (16) departed quickly as Werribee slipped to 3-59.

O'Brien (106 not out) and Michael Freeman (40) steadied the innings, producing a 66-run stand.

O'Brien was then well-supported by the lower order as the Tigers finished at 9-238.

It was O'Brien's second century of the summer after he notched 122 against Altona in Round 2.

Mathew Inness was the Seagulls' best with the ball, returning 2-49 and claiming the key scalps of the Dean brothers.

In other matches, Altona made 217 against Yarraville at Frank Kirk Oval, highlighted by a brilliant 111 from the in-form Aaron Maynard.

Elsewhere, Sunshine recorded 137 against Melton at Dempster Park. Troy Stone topscored with 30.

ATHLETICS

Medals flow

WESTERN Athletics' members showcased their talent at the Victorian Country Championships last month.

The Werribee club collected 16 medals – six gold, six silver and four bronze – from the event at Llanberris Reserve in Ballarat.

Two masters athletes competed, continuing their success from the recent Oceania Masters Championships in Bendigo. Stan Peska (men's 50-plus) won two gold in the shot put and javelin and claimed silver in the discus, while Dale Masini (women's 40-plus) claimed silver in the pole vault.

Dale Masini (under-14) collected silver in the high jump and 200m hurdles and bronze in the pole vault.

Christiaan Weitsz (U16) took gold in the 2000m steeplechase, while Nicholas Masini (U16) was second in the pole vault and third in the javelin and high jump.

Julia Bourke (U18) won gold in the shot put, while Teagan Newman (U18) was first in the discus and second in the hammer throw.

Travis Knox (U18) was third in the 2000m steeplechase, while Rochelle Kennedy claimed the gold in the 800m. Demi Utber, Robert Weitsz and Connor Macauley also competed.

Western Athletics' junior athletes compete in the Victorian Junior Championships, which start on Friday.