

DROMANA STORMS HOME AGAINST PEARCEDALE

1990

(Ref: 2020/14)



APOLOGIES: My apologies for the poor quality of several photographs of former players that were used in this history article. They were taken from time-worn newsprint cuttings. (Roger).

One of the most exciting victories in 1990 (thirty years ago) was a one point win over Pearcedale in Round: 7. It was Greg Hilton's first season (of his three year stint) as DFC's coach following his years at Frankston (VFA) and Rye FC. Although the official team sheet was unavailable for this article, the team line-up that day probably looked something like this:-

Backs	Andrew Rowler	Grant Turnbull	Steve Kerr
H'Backs	Jason Clarke	Mick James	Tony Williams
Centres	John Whitwam	Greg Hilton	Wayne Jacobson
H'Forwards	David Rose	Phil Watson	Gary Fowler
Forwards	Phil Reeves	Glen Huggan	Neil Watson
Rucks	Chris Ashton	Bill Saker	Marty Fowler
I/C	Doug Law	Dale Murphy	Steve Currie



Greg Hilton - Coach of Dromana in 1990

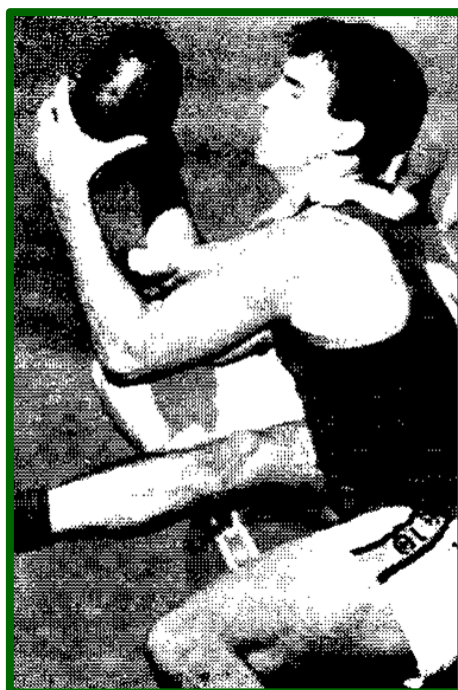
The game was played at Dromana; and, as shown, the quarter-by-quarter analysis indicated that it was 'close affair' up until half time. However, the Panthers, with champion Rick Wells dominating proceedings, 'kicked away' in the third term to set up a commanding lead at three quarter time.



Gary Fowler – Highly skilled and a loyal member of DFNC.

At the huddle, no one, watching that game, could have predicted what would unfold in the last 25 minutes of play. In following the game of football it always seems best to 'expect the unexpected' but Dromana's exhibition, in that last term, stunned supporters and absolutely floored the unsuspecting Panthers.

The final quarter was one of the most memorable revivals in that era of the club's history. In a sudden burst of high energy-football, Dromana played with new-found intensity; and it was an exhilarating display which revealed the potential of that group of players. As quite a few 'old timers' will recall, the 'trick' in those days at Pier Street was how to harness such 'elusive potential.'



Dromana's champion forward of the era- Phil Watson.

The Hoppers' explosive surge rattled the Panthers; and the visitors slowed, stalled and then stopped in their tracks. One of the proven champions of DFC in that period, Phil Watson, was a major factor in the team's resurgence with his strong hands and physical presence in the forward line.

Phil played with Dromana from 1990 until 1996 and was the club's finest forward in that era. Phil later played with Red Hill with great effect.

Along with Phil, a tall and talented youngster named Glenn Huggan led the charge for Dromana with six goals. Glen was an enigmatic player in local football and many onlookers felt that he may have been destined for higher levels of the game. However, it was a bitter disappointment for the club's officials and supporters when he departed company after just 35 senior games.

In a fierce final quarter offensive, Dromana booted five majors while the bewildered Panthers could manage a mere solitary goal. Time was the Hoppers' major worry as the clock ticked down. It was a hectic final term; and, in the enthralling last minutes of the game, the Hoppers 'fought like fury' and snatched the lead to claim an unforgettable win by the smallest possible margin.



Marty Fowler - Another top notch performance against the Panthers.

In such a stirring revival it was hard to pick the 'best six' because everyone had contributed to the victory. Marty Fowler (Sam's Father) played a sterling game as rover. Chris Ashton, was tireless and dogged against the Panthers tall brigade that day. Grant Turnbull was a valiant defender for Dromana for many seasons and in that game he stood tall against talented opposition.

During his career at DFNC (1988-1993), Grant rarely 'lowered his colours' to any opposing forward and his calm disposition 'under fire' was extraordinary. It came as no surprise when Grant was selected in the Team of the Decade (1986-1995).

Details of the game:

Dromana: 2.5 4.5 5.12 10.15 (75)

Pearcedale: 1.4 4.6 9.10. 10.14 (74)

Goals for Dromana: Huggan 6 Rose 2 Jacobson 1 P. Watson 1

Best for Dromana: Hilton, M. Fowler G. Fowler James and P. Watson



The votes, as published in the 'MPNFL Record', were awarded to:

3. Grant Turnbull (Dromana)
2. Rick Wells (Pearcedale)
1. Chris Ashton (Dromana).

FOOTNOTES TO THE 1990 SEASON

1. Despite that fighting victory, Dromana languished at the bottom of the MPNFL Division: 2 Ladder; and, in short, 1990 was a season of 'mixed fortunes.' There is no argument that the 1990 list included a substantial group of talented footballers but the following axiom seems to explain Dromana's enigmatic performances during that era....

"Talent alone won't make you a success. Neither will being in the right place at the right time, unless you are ready."

2. Stability 'on and off' the field is a major pre-requisite for success; and some readers will be surprised to discover that in the decade 1980-1990, DFNC had ten Senior XVIII coaches : Dick Ivey, Lindsay Edgerton, John Aldridge, Barry Evans, Brian Cairns Brian Cronin/Paul Cooper, Gary Evans, John Joyce and Greg Hilton.
3. Greg Hilton played 146 games for Dromana FC and won the Best and Fairest award for the club that season. Greg was a creative footballer who usually played across the midfield. He trained briefly with Melbourne FC and in later years had a notable VFA career at Frankston Dolphins. Greg was selected in the DFNC 'Team of the Era 1946-2015' on the half-forward flank.
4. Mick James is one of a handful of DFNC footballers to play 200 Senior games with DFNC. He made his senior debut in 1979 and was a star defender and useful forward (when required) for the next 13 seasons. He won the club's Best & Fairest award in 1982 and was chosen at centre half back in the club's all-time best team.

5. Jason Clarke and his son, Shaun, have achieved a 'rare double' at Dromana FC. Both have won the club's Best & Fairest award. Jason won two trophies (1991) and (1992) while Shaun tied in the count with Christian Ongarello in 2017.
6. It is interesting to note that Steve Kerr, (pictured right) Marty Fowler, Tony Williams are the sons of former Dromana footballers. Steve Kerr played 93 senior games and was best known as a midfielder who could be used in defence as required. Tony Williams, named at half-back in the above line-up, is the Father of Jai, Kai, Cade and Tye. Tony played 105 senior games while his Father (Dave) 'racked up' 115 senior matches in the period 1967-81.



7. Andrew Rowler (pictured) played 124 Senior XVIII games for DFNC in a career that stretched from 1985 until 2000. Andrew won the club's Best and Fairest award in 1998 and he was selected in the 'Team of the Decade 1996-2005.' A story about Andrew Rowler, can be found elsewhere on this website. In 1990, Andrew's Father (Les) was President while Pam White was Secretary and Bill Wakefield was elected to the position of Honourary Treasurer. Les and Pam Rowler are Life Members of DFNC.



8. In 1990, Barry Smith coached the Reserves. Barry, who had played a number of games at VFL level, came out of retirement to take the field with Reserves and acquitted himself brilliantly. Barry's 'courage in the contest' was a perfect example for his younger players to emulate. Barry's performances in 1990, gave an indication of his prowess in earlier days.
9. In 1990, Betty Plunkett and Reg Beavis were awarded Life Memberships; and articles about these two club stalwarts can be read on this website. A comprehensive story regarding Phil Watson can also be found on this website.

REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Sources: MPFL records -Personal files (newspaper cuttings)

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