

25 YEARS AGO

A MATCH REPORT FROM 1996.

'DROMANA PREVAILS IN A THRILLER'

Ref: 2021/19

A recently discovered newspaper match report, of a clash between Dromana and Somerville in 1996, has provided the club with a 'wealth of information' about the players of that era.

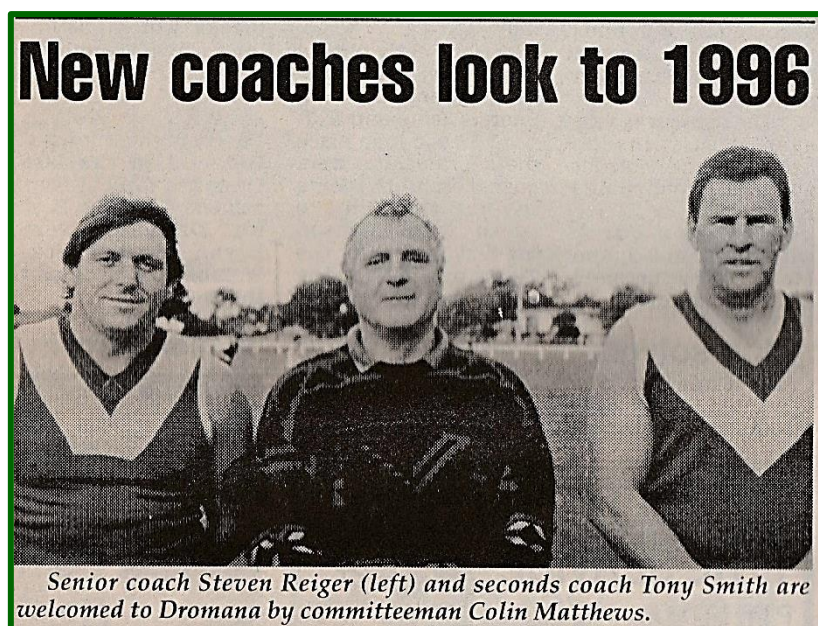
The match review also carried a photograph (see below) and brief details from the Reserves and Thirds matches on that day. The names mentioned in the newspaper match report will be added to the club's archives; and it is hoped that this article will stir memories and stimulate further interest in the history of the DFNC

INTRODUCTION

The following match review was published in 'The Southern Peninsula Local' newspaper in 1996. The editor of the newspaper was Phil Gannon; and he will always be remembered for the way in which he aided the club.

During DFNC 's darkest era, Phil played a significant part in keeping the club from foundering; and, in his own quiet but effective way, supported the club as no other newspaper editor could or would in those days. Not only did Phil often visit the club with his 'trusty' camera but he always gave :

- (i) Plenty of column space for reports and news regarding club activities.
- (ii) Bold headlines for the weekly match reviews.
- (iii) Every opportunity to promote the club throughout the district.



Newly appointed coaches, Steve Reiger and Tony Smith, with DFNC Life Member Colin Matthews at pre-season training in 1996. Source: 'The Local' newspaper March 12th 1996.

THE 1996 LIST

In 1996, the club was coached by Steve Reiger who had crossed from the Doveton Eagles in the Southern FL. Steve had gained a reputation in SFL and he had represented Victoria in a junior carnival in his teenage years. He was a hardened midfielder and had won plaudits for his role in steering Doveton FC to a SFL premiership SFL in 1995. Steve played 109 Senior XVIII games for Doveton Eagles (1985-1995).

The senior list in 1996 included the following: Scott Lansdowne, Peter Martin, Dave Jordan, Paul Blasius, Marc Corn , Tim Hepner, Glen Kendall, Tim Lanyon, Peter Johnstone, Danny Rae, Andrew Rowler, John Lanyon, Jason Hardwick, Mick Compton, Craig Compton, Trevor Rendall, Mark (aka) Mick Rendall, Mick Broadhurst, Bryan Williams, Jason Diwell, Tony Smith, Tim Coyle, Matt Breen, Dick Cornish, Rob Norris, Steve Kerr, Jason Clarke, Dave Giddens Simon Iles, Phil Watson, Gary Fowler, Brendan Trigg, Geoff Bligh, Trevor Ormesher, Noel Ormesher, Gary Ormesher, Dean Harris, Matt Woods, Anthony Matthews, Jason McCartin, Graham Potts, Martin Hodgins, Noel Corley, Darrell Fowler, Marty Fowler, Chris Trigg and John Walker.

DROMANA FOOTBALL CLUB
Centenary Year 1896 - 1996 100 YEARS

Club men say 1996 could be the

DROMANA TIMBER AND BUILDING SUPPLIES
George and Lorraine Wharton
Best wishes to the Dromana Football Club in its historic Centenary Year
1 Dalkeith Dve (059) 87 3887
Dromana Indust. Estate (059) 81 0943

Cheers LIQUOR GROUP
Congratulations to all concerned at Dromana Football Club
CENTENARY SPECIAL Grants Scotch \$19.95

Watching training are John Williamson, Danny Wood, Carry Ferguson, President Les Rowler, Kerry Kendall and Keith Watson.

Les Rowler, the President of DFC in 1996, with other active members of the club at that time. From the left: John Williamson, Danny Wood, Gary Ferguson, Les, Kerry Kendall and Keith Watson. Keith Watson was DFC President in 1992. Les, Gary and Keith are Life Members of DFNC. The source of this photograph was the 'The Local'; and the extract again highlights the great lengths that the Editor, Phil Gannon, went to in his efforts to support and promote the club. Readers will see the graphic of a grasshopper in the top left hand corner... also notice the advertisement regarding the 'Centenary Special.'

1996: SENIOR XVIII-DROMANA V SOMERVILLE MATCH REPORT

Although there was no line-up listed in the newspaper report of the match, from memory, the team may have looked something like this on that day:

Backs	Danny Rae	Rob Norris	Peter Johnstone
H'Backs	Jason Clarke	Clint Gwin	Andrew Rowler
Centres	Marc Corn	Glen Kendall	John Lanyon
H'Fwds	Matt Breen	Phil Watson	Craig Whelan
Forwards	Jason Hardwick	Dave Giddens	Paul Blasius
Ruck	Peter Martin	Scott Lansdowne	Dave Jordan
Reserves	From: Steve Reiger Dick Cornish Tim Hepner Steve Kerr Simon Iles Tim Lanyon		



THE FIRST QUARTER

Despite the strong wind, Somerville looked dangerous up forward early in the game; and two quick goals made the Hoppers work overtime in the first quarter last Saturday. Jon Lanyon and Clint Gwin were prominent but Dromana's inability to convert was frustrating. Goals to Lanyon, Giddens and Corn (a 50 metre bomb) got the Hoppers into stride.

Time and time again, Jason Clarke showed raw courage and he thoroughly deserves his inclusion in the MPNFL training squad.

Dromana began to run and suddenly the handball looked sharp and decisive; and the Hoppers held a 17 point lead as the second term started.

SECOND QUARTER

Paul Blasius running goal opened the account in the second term and strong play by Corn, Lansdowne and Kendall maintained the pressure on the Eagles defence. Somerville showed plenty of desperation and the game see-sawed between the respective backlines.

Peter Martin's ruck work provided opportunities for the Hoppers' small brigade and a goal to Giddens gave Dromana a three-goal leeway; however, despite Rae's and Norris' efforts, Somerville whittled the lead to one point at half time.

THIRD QUARTER

The third quarter brought instant success as goals to Blasius, Kendall and Whelan gave the Hoppers breathing space but Somerville was desperate in defence and there was no room for complacency. Lanyon, Kendall, Clarke

Watson and Jordan were terrific for the Hoppers in this term but Somerville was dogged and Dromana could not give the Eagles the slip.

THE FINAL QUARTER

Immediate goals to Somerville set up a great battle...! Dromana's work into the wind was disciplined and tough . Lansdowne, Martin, Jordan and Norris gave their all, It was nip and tuck and a point separated the two teams with nine minutes to go. Watson's goal was followed by his quick play to Giddens who converted to give Dromana a seven point lead.

As the clock ticked down, the supporters found voice. It was a cliff-hanger.... Watson and Giddens combined again to seal the game. It was a desperate win and credit to Steve Reiger and his dedicated team. After the game Steve said: "It was a tough game and everyone put their hand up. Injuries made it hard but to everyone's credit, spirit shone through for the club."

Final scores: Dromana 15.19 (109) defeated Somerville 16.6 (102)

Goal Kickers for Dromana: Giddens 6 Kendall 2 Lanyon 2 Blasius 2 Watson Whelan and Corn

Best players: Kendall Clarke Norris Martin Lansdowne and Giddens .

DROMANA RESERVES V SOMERVILLE RESERVES MATCH REPORT

A strong wind down the centre of the ground made for scrappy football early; but both teams were hard at the ball, tackled with fierce desire and neither side could gain ground.

Tony Smith was on top early and Reeves, Trigg, Broadhurst and Ormesher gave good support. Graham Potts was solid in defence; and Gary Fowler was slowly working his way into the game after coming out of retirement to play.

At the main break, Dromana held a 12 point advantage but the wind factor was important in the third term. David Rose goaled for the Hoppers and the rest of the quarter was a torrid struggle. Dromana had determined contributors in F Geoff Bligh, the Fowler boys, Brendan Trigg, Dave Ritchie and John Walker.

The Wiz's (Marty Fowler) goal from an impossible angle brought the stands alive. The Hoppers coach, Tony Smith, was a tireless ruckman and his play lifted his team. Mark Rendell's' third goal gave the Hoppers a break and the boys turned it on and ran out winners by four goals.

Final scores: Dromana 13.12 (90) defeated Somerville 10. 8 (68).

Goalkickers for Dromana: Rendall 3 Rose 2 Ritchie 2 Broadhurst 2 Coyle G. Fowler, D. Fowler and M. Fowler

Best players for Dromana: Trigg Fowler Rose and Woods

DROMANA UNDER:18's V SOMERVILLE UNDER:18's MATCH REPORT

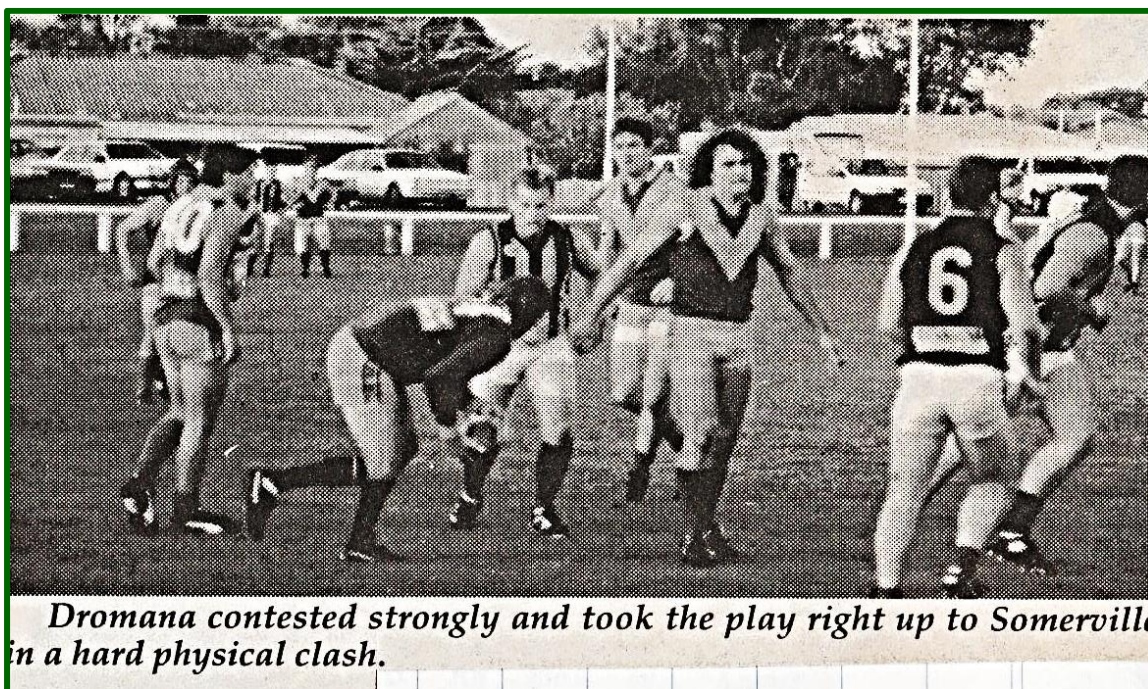
Although the Thirds suffered another defeat, the team kicked its highest score for over 20 matches; and it was a sign of increasing confidence and skill. Somerville jumped Dromana and six goals in the first quarter, with the wind, gave the local boys a shock.

Casey Landrigan, Sam Edmund, Kevin Burns and Jai Spence led a brave fightback; and three goals, in the second term. put the Hoppers back in the game. Matt Monk's goal was a beauty. The backline defended stoutly in the third term and Landrigan's goal from a good passage of play by Adrian Lombardo and Burns was a highlight. Inaccuracy cost the Hoppers in the last term; and it took Dan Nicolle to show the way with a major. Overall, it was an improved display by the young boys.

Final scores: Somerville 14.13. 97 defeated Dromana 5.6.36

Goal kickers for Dromana: Nicholl 2 Monk Landrigan Leah

Best players for Dromana: Landrigan Edmund Nicolle Curry Burns Griffiths .



The photograph which accompanied the above newspaper report shows Glenn Kendall, Matt Breen (number 40) and Phil Watson. Younger readers will be interested to see the jumpers worn by the club in that era. (i.e. a gold vee on a green background). The club was known as the Grasshoppers or 'Hoppers in those days.

FOOTNOTES

1. In 1996, Jason Clarke won the club's Best and Fairest; Jason's son, Shaun, shared the award with Christian Ongarello in 2017.
2. Jason and Shaun are the only father-son combination to have won the award in the club's long history.

3. Tony Smith, who coached the Reserves that season, won the League Best and Fairest award that season. Tony was a brilliant footballer in his 'younger days' and proved to be a fine coach and leader at Dromana as Reserves Coach.
4. The Senior XVIII in 1996 was virtually a 'Foreign Legion' with many players coming from 'far and wide' to sign with Dromana. The 'imported' players were (their original clubs are shown in brackets):- Peter Martin (Red Hill), Paul Blasius (Springvale), Tim Hepner (Rosebud), Peter Johnstone (Rosebud), Danny Rae (Red Hill), Jason Hardwick (Rosebud) , Matt Breen (Rosebud), Dick Cornish (Rye), Rob Norris (Berwick), Dave Giddens (Doveton), Tony Smith (Rosebud), Simon Iles (Nar Nar Goon), Clint Gwin (Lyndale) and Steve Reiger (Doveton).
5. Scott Lansdown, who had arrived at DFNC in 1995, was recruited from Carrum FC. Scott won the club's Best and Fairest award in 1995; and was considered, by many observers, as one of the most skilled hand ball exponents ever seen in local football. He was a brilliant footballer and well ahead of his times in the use of creative handball.
6. Dave Jordan, Glen Kendall, Andrew Rowler, Steve Kerr, Phil Watson Marc Corn, John Walker, Jason Clarke, Matt Breen, Tim Hepner, Scott Lansdown, Trevor Rendell, Gary Fowler and Marty Fowler were named in the club's 'Teams of the Decade / Era' (1946-2015).
7. Four of the group who played in 1996 are Life Members of DFNC: Geoff Bligh, Marty Fowler, Gary Fowler and Anthony Matthews.
8. The following players, from the 1996 season, went on to play more than 100 Senior XVIII Grade games: Glenn Kendall, David Jordan, Andrew Rowler and Phil Watson.
9. Of the players who took the field to represent DFNC on that day, the following won Senior XVIII Best and Fairest awards at Dromana: Glenn Kendall (1985-86-88-89), Dave Jordan (1994-99-2000), Tim Hepner (1997), Jason Clarke (1991-96), Andrew Rowler (1998) and Scott Lansdowne (1995).
10. At least six of the boys, who played for the Third XVIII that day, went on to play Senior Grade MPNFL football: Casey Landrigan, Dan Nicolle, Jarret Leah, Kevin Burns, Jai Spence (Sorrento) and Sam Edmund (Sorrento). Sam Edmund, who played such a sterling game that day, is now a well-known figure in AFL media circles; and is often heard on the radio or seen on various TV football programs as an expert commentator,.
11. Other boys who played with the Under : 18's in 1996 included : Marty Dellagarta, Luke Gallimore, Stuart Ford, Wayne Liardet, Rod Bryant, James Kelly, Darren Curry, Damien Christmas, Matt Monk, Lyndon Saunders, Adrian Lombardo, Luke Griffiths, Rohan Hansford, Luke Templer and Paulo Tan.

12. Les Rowler was the President of the DFNC in 1996; and it was a year of intense activity in planning and organizing a series of events and activities to commemorate the club's Centenary Year. Les and the Centenary Committee (Col Matthews, Graham Stelling, John McCormick, Harry Boerkamp and Eric Oakes) worked assiduously throughout the year to make 1996 a year to remember. It was a genuine letdown for Les and Eric (and the hard working Centenary Year committee) that a year of celebration and festivity concluded on such a dismal note. While 1996 started well for the club, it 'morphed' into a dismal season; and many 'outsiders' were genuinely baffled as to why such an experienced and talented playing group imploded and missed finals action that year.
13. There have been various theories put forward to explain the failure(s) in 1996 but, in football, there are no simple, singular or short answers to such calamities. When football clubs nose-dive, as Dromana did that season, there are long-lasting consequences; and worse was to come in 1997. The following season saw an 'exodus' of players from the club, a severe leadership crisis and a general enervating malaise as the club plummeted to the 'rock bottom' on the NFL Ladder. Unfortunately, the next six seasons were spent in trying to find a way out of 'the mire.'
14. Season 1997 tested the commitment and allegiance of DFNC followers; and the most disappointing aspect, of that year, was the flight of supporters as the club went into a devastating tailspin. The history of Pier Street shows that it took years to re-build the teams, membership, sponsorships and the supporter base. However, the bitter lessons of those lean years at Pier Street, were spurs for the future; and in 2013 the football maxim: *"Tough times don't last but tough clubs do"* ... was proven to be true.

DFNC HISTORY PAGE WEBSITE--'PRESERVING OUR PAST'

A list of other articles related to the club's history can be found at:

<http://www.dromanatigers.com.au/newsite/history.html>

REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Sources: 'The Local' newspaper-DFNC Records- Personal files.

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