

# **'FROM THE ARCHIVES' DROMANA DEFEAT ARMY 1964**

**Reference: FTA: 2021/3**



## **JOHN NIX'S BRILLIANT DISPLAY ROUND: 1 / 1964**

1964 was a most successful season for the Dromana FC with the Senior XVIII reaching the finals and the Under 18 team winning the premiership. Dromana was affiliated with the Nepean Football League; and two of the other teams, in the league that season, were the Army and the Naval Depot.

In Round: 1 in 1964, Dromana played the Army and won in definitive fashion. Newly appointed DFC coach, John Nix, made a memorable entry into Nepean football that day with a brilliant display of powerful running and unerring accuracy in front of goals. When John Nix arrived at Pier Street, he was in his final year as a player but he made a dramatic impact during in his 'short stay' with the club.

From what can be gleaned from the brief match report, the Army started well but by half-time Dromana had kicked away to a 10 goal lead. The team won in all positions in a systematic and skilled exhibition of 'team-football.' John Nix kicked nine goals against the Army to assist Dromana to a landslide victory in an extremely one-sided affair.

While at DFNC , John Nix was a dynamic player, an inspiring leader and he kicked 55 goals that year. Those who were lucky enough to see John Nix play will never forget his stamina across quarters, fine balance and, of course, a feature of his game was his superb disposal.

## FINAL SCORES:

- Dromana: 25.29 (179) defeated Army: 3.9 (27).

## GOAL KICKERS:

- Nix 9, Fowler 4, Clay 3 and Taylor 2 (Unfortunately, the other goal kickers that day were not listed; and the team's best players were not included in the press report.)

## NOTES ABOUT JOHN NIX – A 'BOY WONDER' FROM TRAFALGAR FC.

John Nix played his first AFL game at the young age of seventeen. John, who had starred in country football, with Trafalgar, was signed by Richmond FC in 1949. He took little time to establish himself in VFL ranks; and he made his debut against Melbourne in Round: 11. Imagine going from the 'scenic bush oval', in the town of Trafalgar, to take the field in front of a crowd of more than 23, 000 fans at the 'home of Australian Rules', the MCG...

*"John Nix, the 17-year-old Trafalgar boy who shaped so well last year, was the outstanding player in Richmond's final work-out on Saturday. Nix came to the club as a wing man, but he has put on weight during the summer and was tried at wing half-forward. He played really well in that position.*

*Source: 'The Argus' April 17<sup>th</sup> 1950 Page: 16*

**RICHMOND** have had difficulty in finding permanent players for the wing half-forwards, but **JOHN NIX, HAVEL ROWE,** and **JERVIS STOKES** have been the most regular players there. Nix is a Trafalgar boy, who played open-age football there when only 14. He came to Richmond last year, and reached the senior side almost at once, when he was still only 17. He is strongly built, and is a beautifully balanced player, with all the attributes—good marking, kicking, and ball disposal. He has a brilliant future. As a physical fitness fanatic, he plays most sports in the summer time, and excels at them all.

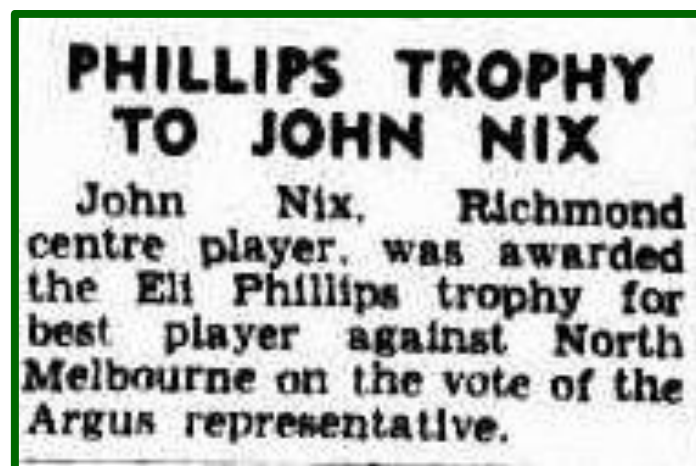
Source: 'The Argus' July 15<sup>th</sup> 1950. Page 10.

John went on to play 95 games with Richmond (1949-1956) and was a strong and uncompromising midfielder. In 1957, he was cleared to Sale in the Latrobe Valley Football League and coached Sale to premiership flags in 1957 and 1959. John Nix was a legend in the LVFL; and he was named captain of the star-studded Sale team of the century.

In the years prior to arriving at Dromana, he coached Mornington and Koo Wee Rup. (See the extract below). In 1965, John returned to Richmond FC as an assistant coach to Tom Hafey; and would, in time, win wide praise for his role in developing young footballers.



John Nix in action at Richmond.  
Source: 'Kornies' football cards.



Source: 'The Argus' August 11<sup>th</sup> 1952 Page: 10

## THE BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN NIX – 'TIGERLAND ARCHIVE'

Younger readers maybe interested to read the biography of John Nix as published in the 'Tigerland Archives'. The 'Archives provide an informative insight into the VFL-AFL careers of every Richmond footballer since 1885. The all-inclusive RFC records are the dedicated research of two well-known AFL historians Trevor Ruddell and Rhett Bartlett (i.e. Kevin's son)...

*John Nix played in the centre. He was recruited from Trafalgar where he won the Competition Best and Fairest award as a 16 year-old. He kept himself in very good shape and was a well muscled player for his era. He spent eight seasons with Richmond before moving to Sale as a playing coach.*

*John later coached Mornington and Dromana before returning to Richmond as a Recruiting Officer in 1964 and 1965. He then coached the Richmond Reserves between 1966 and early 1969. John achieved the outstanding record of 56 wins and 2 draws from 70 games.*

*Under his guidance the reserves went through the 1966 season undefeated eventually winning the Grand Final thanks to a late goal by a young Royce Hart. They were also runners-up in 1967 and 1968 to North Melbourne and Essendon respectively. In 1967 he was awarded Life Membership of the Richmond Football Club. He resigned as Reserves coach in early 1969; however remained on the selection committee until 1980. A former policeman, he later ran a newsagency in Belgrave and now lives in the southern suburbs. His is the father-in-law of former Richmond player Matthew Wall.*



This is a rare photograph of John Nix following his departure from Dromana to take up a coaching role with Richmond FC. In this photo, John can be seen in the centre of the group of Richmond players listening to Tom Hafey's instructions. Other players depicted the photograph include Billy Brown, Neville Crowe, Royce Hart and Fred Swift.

In 1964, Trevor Clay won the club's Best and Fairest award, Bob Brindley won the Most Consistent Player trophy and Brian McCormick was deemed the Most Determined player. Andrew Emerson won the Best First Year Player award.

As has been mentioned on this website previously, a remarkable aspect of the year was that the Under 18 team, coached by Bill Martin, went through the entire 1964 season undefeated and claimed the flag.

#### **NOTE:**

- Further stories about John Nix and the 1964 season can be found on this website. John is still on the club's mailing list and takes a special interest in the fortunes of DFNC.



- Former South Melbourne star Kevin Hogan (and the father of Liam Hogan who played 54 games with DFNC in 2011-2013) coached Sale FC in 1961, 64 and 65.

## **CLUB HISTORY - CAN YOU HELP?**

The above article was originally written for the club in 2014 and has been redrafted and updated and filed on the Dromana Football Club's website for future reference.

DFNC is working determinedly to 'fill the gaps' in the club's history and photographs, press cuttings, team sheets and other memorabilia are most welcome. There may be readers who have match reports/ cuttings from their years at Pier Street. Please feel welcome to forward to be posted on the website for posterity.

One of the best ways to thank the hundreds of players, officials and volunteers who have built DFNC is to ensure that they are remembered by recording the contribution and endeavours for future generations to read and appreciate. Thank you. Roger for DFNC –February 2021.



## **REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION**

Sources: NLA local newspapers- 'Tigerland Archives'- AFL website- DFNC publications.

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