

## **1971- 50 YEARS AGO**

### **JACK BOOKER**

## **‘JACK BOOKER SETS THE BENCHMARK’**

Reference: 2021/17



**Former Club President, Eric Oakes displays the 1971 Premiership Cup. “I know the price of success: dedication, hard work and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen” Frank Lloyd Wright (1867- 1959).**

### **JACK BOOKER TAKES THE REINS AT PIER STREET**

In football, indeed all sport, the coach plays a fundamental role in the development and success of the team; and, in 1971, the appointment of Jack Booker, as Senior XVIII coach at Dromana was a prudent decision. Under the leadership of Greg James in 1970, the club had laid a solid base upon which to build; and Jack Booker would prove to be the ‘right man at the right time’ to advance Greg’s enthusiastic efforts.

Jack Booker was well known in country and suburban sport; and he had played with Yarraville in the VFA in the mid 1940’s. One of the highlights of Jack’s playing days was being awarded the Todd Medal for the Best & Fairest in the VFA Reserve Grade in 1944. He had also established himself as a leading player in the Mid Gippsland Football League in the 1950’s.

It is recorded that in 1957, Jack kicked 21 goals for Hill End against Morwell Rovers; and he finished that season with a tally of 139 goals. Jack also won the ‘Redmond Trophy’ for the Best and Fairest player in the MGFL Reserves XVIII Grade when he was playing for Boolarra FC in 1961.

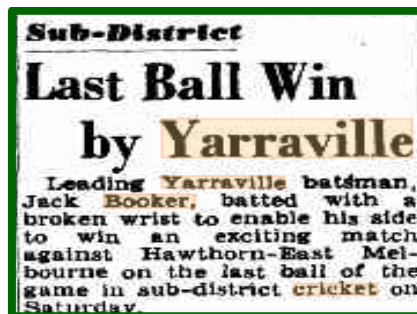
Mid Gippsland FL
23 Alan Mathieson - Yinnar (v Erica) - 1955
22 Keith Peacock - Mirboo North (v Morwell Rovers) - 1957
21 Keith Peacock - Mirboo North (v Erica) - 1956
21 Keith Peacock - Mirboo North (v Morwell Rovers) - 1956
21 Jack Booker - Hill End (v Morwell Rovers) - 1956
20 Alan Norman - Hazelwood (v Erica) - 1955

In 1956, Jack's booted 21 goals for Hill End against Morwell Rovers.

<b>YARRAVILLE V WILLIAMSTOWN</b>	
<b>YARRAVILLE:</b> Backs: Casely, Smith, Ellis.	
Half-backs: <b>Booker</b> , L. Jones, Straeter.	
Centres: White, Garlich, Day. Half-forwards:	
Nichols, Cahill, Rann. Forwards: Thomas,	
Knight, J. Ruddell. Followers: H. Ruddell,	
Hawden. Rover: Lw. Emergencies: Perus-	
sick, Simpson, Turner, Maher.	
<b>WILLIAMSTOWN:</b> Backs: Dellar, Azelson,	
I. McTaggart. Half-backs: Cutting, John-	
son, Vinall. Centre: Le Sure. Fitch, Chis-	
holm. Half-forwards: Cockburn, Hearn,	
Reid. Forwards: Gyass, <b>Todd</b> , Dowling. Fol-	
lowers: Torney, Hogan. Rover: <b>Harley</b> . 19th:	
Fox. Emergencies: Chambers, Tyrrell.	

Jack Booker was chosen on the half back flank for Yarraville (VFA) in Round: 1 in 1945.

Jack was an adept cricketer and was a technically correct, methodical and stylish batsman who could offer strokes to all parts of the ground. Jack made the news when he bravely batted with a broken wrist to aid Yarraville Cricket Club to an exciting win against Hawthorn-East Melbourne in 1951...



Source: 'The Age' December 24<sup>th</sup> 1951 Page: 8.

Jack was a thoughtful person who set high standards for himself; and his background as a police officer and highly respected sportsman set an example for others to emulate. He was a stern and erudite coach who placed great emphasis on individual and collective discipline....

*"John was very strict with his players and he had a no drink, no pub rule prior to every game. One day he found two of his best players on the local hotel and immediately suspended them from the Saturday game, which meant that he had to play that day... He was a hard taskmaster but always fair in his dealings with his players and managed to get the best out of them..."* Source: DFNC files.

When the local supporters became aware of Jack's reputation and his earlier success in coaching Nirranda FC, in the Purnim FL in the 1950's ( see below); an air of expectation arose regarding the club's hopes in 1971.

# *Miles were worth it!*

**By JIM BLAKE**

**A man who is prepared to travel 10,204 miles in a season to play football deserves to win a premiership.**

Jack Booker, captain and coach of Nirranda, in the Western District, did this in the recent season and his reward was his team's first premiership win in the Purnim and District League since 1928.

Jack, who is a policeman stationed at Yarraville, was offered the coaching job early in the season by a Nirranda committeeman.

He did not accept until his Superintendent said he could get the necessary leave, provided that it fitted in with his days off duty.

Jack made the job fit in, although it meant that he had to travel to Nirranda twice a week, once for training on Tuesdays and again for the match on Saturdays.

A return trip meant 360 miles.

On Tuesdays he would leave Melbourne by train at 8.15 a.m. and return from Allansford (20 miles from Nirranda) at 4.15 p.m., arriving back in Melbourne at 8.50.

For the Saturday games he would go down by car on a Friday night or Saturday morning, and return either on the Saturday

night or Sunday, depending on his time for police duty.

A full back, Jack started his football with Yarraville Seconds and in 1944 won the VFA Seconds best and fairest vote.

He left Yarraville in 1945 and became an

umpire in the Footscray District League, where he was still engaged when he was appointed to the Nirranda job.

In the summer Jack is a useful cricketer. He is a member of the Yarraville Sub-District team.



**JACK BOOKER**

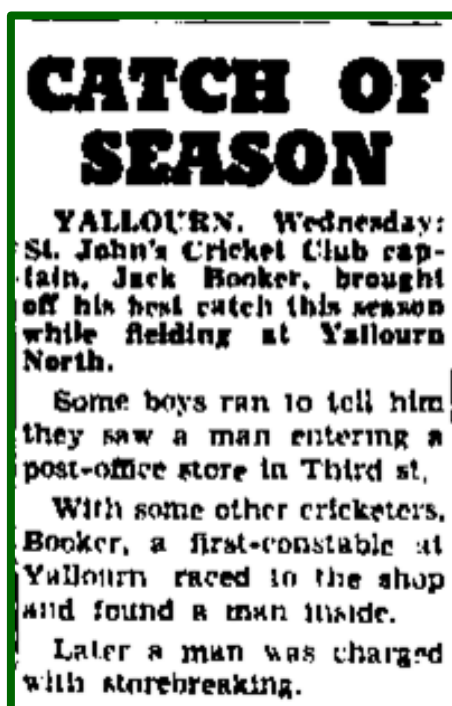




Jack Booker was the captain of the 1956-57 Central Gippsland Country Week team . Jack can be seen in the front row , second from the right.The person in the extreme left of the back row is Bob McGregor, a champion spin bowler, who in later years lived across the road from the Dromana Recreation Reserve. Jack and Bob were firm friends and both had starred with Yarraville Cricket Club in earlier times.



Jack Booker- A star in cricket and football.



Source: 'The Argus' October 20<sup>th</sup> 1955. Page 6.

Reserves Best & Fairest		
Jo Redmond Award		
1955	John Bennett	Yinnar
1956	J.Kiss	Mirboo North
1957	K.Fowkes	Mirboo North
1958	Jim Went	Hill End
1959	Robert O'Hara	Yinnar
1960	E. O'Hara	Yinnar
1961	Jack Booker	Boolarra
1962	Doc Pennington	Boolarra

In 1961 Jack Booker (Boolarra FC ) won the Redmond Award in the MGFL

## THE DROMANA PLAYING LIST IN 1971.

The following is a list of Dromana players who played at least one Senior XVIII grade game in 1971...

Robert Atkins, Neil Bamford, Bill Brindley, Paul Cooper, John Elliott , Doug Ferguson, Glen & Ray Fyson, Vin Good , David & Graham Gourlay, Geg James S. James , E. Jones, Rod Kerr, Rob Major, Phillip Maxwell , Colin Matthews, Brian McCormick, Bob Moorehead, Ken Myers, Rob Rose, Allan Sullivan, Roger Thorpe, Vic Tucker , Dave Williams and Robert Work.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1971 SEASON.

- Jack Booker played an important role in local cricket in 1971 as he was coach of the Dromana Cricket Club XI which won the premiership. A good start for the New Year for Jack and the township.
- The opening round of the football season bought a bag of mixed and somewhat disappointing results. The Senior XVIII lost to Rye by ten points, the Reserves were defeated , the thirds were over-run by 13 goals but the Fourths 'saved the day' and claimed victory by 60 points.
- Dromana (12. 23. 95) chalked up its first win with a convincing performance against YCW (10.15.75).
- After the completion of Round: 4, Dromana sat on the seventh rung of the NFL Ladder.
- On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May Greg James had a tally of 21 goals; and Dromana (21.17. 143) put other clubs on notice with a definitive victory over the tough Pines outfit which could only manage 8. 14. 62.

- Senior Constable Jack Booker made the news when he apprehended a threatening and armed felon. Meanwhile, back at the football oval, Dromana caused an unexpected upset by demolishing Red Hill by six goals. Ray Fyson kicked three goals; and the best players were listed as Thorpe, Myers, Gourlay, Rose, Work and Good.
- Greg James booted ten goals in a superlative exhibition at full forward against Somerville. Ray Fyson kicked four goals and Dromana was well served by Thorpe, Work, Williams, Ferguson, Cooper and Matthews. With that win, Dromana held second position on the NFL ladder while Pearcedale, Rye and Crib Point were 'in the mix' also.
- In June, Daryl Grogan sustained a broken leg in the Reserves XVIII match against Bonbeach.
- Dromana thrashed Karingal by 16 goals. Greg James kicked six goals; and Col Matthews (4 goals), David Williams were prominent players.
- Dromana slipped back to third on the table after Pearcedale produced some scintillating football in the second half of the game to overcome Dromana by 16 points, Glen Fyson ( 3 goals), Work and Cooper were the best that day for DFC.
- In July, Dromana eclipsed the Navy in a one-sided affair. Dromana 36.24. 240 defeated the Navy 5.8.39. Greg James booted 10 goals, Ray (7 goals ) and John Elliott and Allan Sullivan ( 4 each) starred.
- John Elliott kicked 4 goals in another sound performance against Crib Point. At that stage of the season, the club had won ten games and had built an imposing percentage of 170.1%
- In the 'Match of the Day' on July 17<sup>th</sup>, Dromana 14.12. 96 defeated Rye 11.12. 78. Best players for Dromana were: Work, Sullivan, Matthews, McCormick and Glen Fyson (3 goals).
- By late July the banner headline read: ***'Dromana gave 'buds a football lesson'...*** Dromana 19.20 (134) defeated Rosebud 7.16 (58). John Elliott kicked 8 goals that day while Greg James and Ray Fyson chipped in with 4 goals. Bill Brindley won plaudits for another strong exhibition.
- The return match against YCW was played in atrocious conditions but DFC fell over the line in a tough tussle by 8 points. It was Dromana's 13<sup>th</sup> victory that season.
- Jack Booker's impact on the team was obvious as his boys whipped Langwarrin by 15 goals. Dromana was relentless in its run to the finals and looked unstoppable. Ray Fyson kicked five goals that day while John Elliott again proved a handy forward with three majors. The best players were listed as: McCormick, Williams, Fyson, Kerr and Thorpe.
- Things came together in the last week and Dromana grabbed top spot on the ladder with a seven goal victory against Pines FC
- The Final Four in the NFL in 1972 was:
  - **Dromana : 60 points**
  - **Pearcedale : 58 points**
  - **Rye : 56 points**
  - **Crib Point : 50 points**

Those clubs finishing outside the four were: Rosebud ( 46 points), YCW ( 42), Langwarrin ( 40 ), Bonbeach ( 32), Somerville ( 28), Red Hill ( 16 ) and Navy Depot ( 8 points).

- The DFC Reserves finished third (50 points), the Thirds were 12<sup>th</sup> on the table (8 points) and the Fourths won eight games for the season to sit eighth on the ladder.
- In the NFL goal kicking award, Greg James finished second with 68 goals.
- Pat Brewer came Runner-up in the Fourth XVIII competition with 26 votes.



Dromana's star forward, Greg James kicked 68 goals in 1971 but missed the NFL Grand Final because of injury.

## THE 1971 NEPEAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE FINAL SERIES



**First Semi-final: Rye defeated Crib Point**

**Second Semi Final:**

**Dromana: 5.3 10.10 14.11 21. 17 (143)**

**Pearcedale: 6.5. 9.9 15.13 17.15 (117)**

**Goals for Dromana:** Sullivan 4 McCormick 3 G. Fyson 3 Myers 2 R. Fyson 2 Williams 2 Cooper 2 Major 2 and Marriott 1

**Best Players for Dromana:** Sullivan Williams Fyson McCormick James Major

**Preliminary Final**

Rye defeated Pearcedale

# THE 1971 GRAND FINAL: DROMANA V RYE AT SOMERVILLE



## THE DFC LINE-UP

<b>BACKS</b>	G. Gourlay	R. Rose	W. Brindley
<b>H' BACKS</b>	V. Good	D. Ferguson	R. Kerr
<b>CENTRE</b>	D. Williams	B. McCormick	R. Work
<b>H'FORWARDS</b>	P. Marriott	C. Matthews	K. Myers
<b>FORWARDS</b>	G. Fyson	A. Sullivan	V. Tucker
<b>RUCKS</b>	P. Cooper	R. Thorpe	R. Fyson
<b>RESERVES</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> N. Bamford		20 <sup>th</sup> R. Major

**DROMANA FOOTBALL CLUB**  
**1971 PREMIERSHIP TEAM**  
Dromana v Rye  
PLAYED AT: SOMERVILLE      SATURDAY 11-9-1971

R. Rose (7)

G. Gourlay (19)      W. Brindley (10)

H' Backs

D. Ferguson (11)

V. Good (17)      Half Backs      R. Kerr (20)

B. McCormick (3)

Centres

D. Williams (8)      R. Work (4)

Half Forwards

C. Matthews (9)\*

P. Marriott (18)      Forwards      K. Myers (2)\*

Acting Capt

1st Row      G. Fyson (13)      V. Tucker (9)

2nd Row      P. Cooper (12)      A. Sullivan (16)

3rd Row      R. Thorp (14)

4th Row      R. Fyson (6)

5th Row      Bamford (18)      Major (21)

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	Final
Dromana	2-2	7-4	9-6	12-12
Rye	0-2	1-8	7-9	10-15

GOAL KICKERS: Matthews 5, Sullivan 2, R. Fyson 2, McCormick 1, G. Fyson 1, Good 1.

## 1971 GRAND FINAL DETAILS

Dromana 2.2 7.4 9.6 12.12 (84)

Rye 0.2 1.3 7.7 10.11 (71)

- **Goal kickers for Dromana:**  
Matthews 5 Sullivan 2 R. Fyson 2 McCormick 1 G. Fyson 1 Good 1  
Note: The 'Southern Peninsula Gazette' match report attributed Vic Tucker with 2 goals.
- **Best players for Dromana:**  
McCormick Williams Good Fyson





The 1971 Premiership team. Jack Booker is kneeling on the left in the front row. Next to Jack is the club's champion spearhead, Greg James, who could not play because of injury. Eric Oakes and George Osborne are in the second row (wearing ties and jackets).



Jack Booker and friends with the 1971 pennant.



Colin Matthews who played at centre half forward in the 1971 Grand Final.

## 1971 DFNC AWARD WINNERS

The major award winners in the club in 1971 were:

## SENIORS XVIII

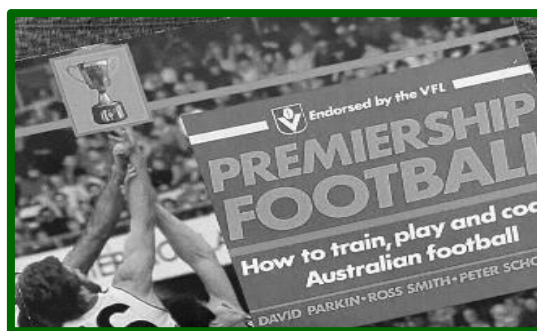
- Best & Fairest : Glen Fyson
- Most Consistent : Ray Fyson
- Most Determined : Robert work
- Most Improved: George Gourlay
- Most Serviceable: Dave Williams
- Leading Goal kicker : Greg James
- Best Players in the Finals: Brian McCormick, Dave Williams and Allan Sullivan.

## RESERVES GRADE

- Best & Fairest: Andrew Emerson
- Most Consistent; Ron Choate
- Most Determined : Albert Niora
- Best First year Player: Ian Moorehead
- Most serviceable Brian Griffith
- Leading Goal kicker : Robert Major

In 1971, Ross Bailey won the Best & fairest trophy in the Thirds; and Pat Brewer was awarded the Fourth XVIII Best & Fairest trophy.

## JACK BOOKER – A MAN ON A MISSION



In his book entitled 'Premiership Football' (1984), David Parkin wrote...

*“Successful coaching is based upon on how a coach leads and interacts with his players. How he teaches and communicates is just as important as what he teaches and communicates, and how he organizes and conducts practice sessions is as important as what or how much is covered at practice .” Chapter: 8 Page: 153*

Over the years, there have been various comments about Jack Booker's stint(s) as a coach; and, bearing in mind David Parkin's thoughts on successful coaches, Dromana Football Club should be eternally thankful that Jack Booker arrived at Pier Street in 1971.

Jack was a 'man on a mission' in 1971. He was earnest, forthright, organized, knowledgeable and, above all, single-minded in taking his team to the 'top of the table.'

Jack set new standards for all listed players; and the 1971 pennant again exemplified the 'power of one' in lifting the sights of others. Jack realized what DFC needed to do attain success; and those uninformed onlookers, who decried Jack's judgement, in defining new benchmarks at Dromana, were much chastened when the premiership flag was hoisted at Pier Street...

*"Self-discipline is without a doubt one of the most important traits that is 100% essential to accomplish your goals. You need to have self-discipline in order to become the best that you can be..."*

Jack Booker deserves eternal credit for 'delivering a flag' in his first season as coach. He coached again in 1972 and in 1975 but those stories can wait for another time. 1971 was a big enough chapter in the story of the club; and it is probably best to allow readers to reflect upon that spectacular victory.



1971- Jack Booker (circled) and other well-known DFNC personalities of that era. Eric Oakes can be seen holding the premiership cup. Included in the group are:-Bill Work, George Osborne, Greg James, John Hellessey and Athol Marriott.

## REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Sources: DFNC Records –Tiger Talk- DFNC Handbook-Personal files- NLA and local newspapers.

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