

'FROM THE ARCHIVES' DROMANA DEFEAT SORRENTO 2016

Reference: FTA: 2021/6



DROMANA DEFEAT SORRENTO ROUND: 1 -2016

After a dismal year in 2015, the club bounced back in strong style in the opening game of the 2016 season to overthrow the highly fancied Sorrento team by 25 points. As most readers know, many changes had transpired at DFNC during the off-season; and the appointment of former club champion, Rikki Johnston, as coach, had created a substantial degree of 'energizing interest' in the club's prospects around the town.

The club had also acquired several new and experienced recruits:

- Beau Cosson (Ararat).
- Mitch Gill-Furness (Langwarrin).
- A tall and accomplished follower named Rory Gregg from Chelsea.



Beau Cosson: A skilled and versatile recruit from Ararat

Following the departure of a long list of players in 2014-15, the return of proven former players such as Jay Hutchinson, Cade Williams, Beau McMurray and Michael Gillis had ‘lengthened and strengthened’ the 2016 list.

The ‘blockbuster’ was witnessed by a massive crowd. The streets around the ground were jam-packed with parked cars; and the club canteen went into ‘meltdown’- a sure sign of a record gate for that Easter weekend blockbuster.

The team that day was something like this:

Backs	D. Waugh	R. Bleeker	D. Geurts
H’Backs	J. Fowler	R. Johnston	C. Ongarello
Centre	M. Gill-Furness	B. McMurray	T. Wheeler
H’Fwds	R. Wilde	B. Cosson	J. Hutchinson
Fwds	J. Quigley	A. Hunter	E. Johnstone
Rucks	R. Gregg	S. Clarke	S. Geurts
I/C:	M. Gillis	C. Williams	D. Marchesani S. Williamson

As expected, it was a tense and tough tussle from the first bounce and neither side ‘gave an inch.’ The respective forwards fought for space as the defenders, ‘held sway’ and shut down all avenues to goal with close checking and physical contact. It was engrossing football to watch and the spirited crowd was ‘vocally involved’ in every contest.

The Tiger’s much vaunted recruit Beau Cosson was prominent; and his early goals gave an indication of his heralded ability in attack. Dean Waugh and Ethan Johnstone sparkled in their senior debuts while Mick Gillis and Cade Williams were busy in their return matches for the club.



Ethan Johnstone: A mercurial and creative forward

When Dromana hit the front during the second term, some Sorrento supporters suddenly realized that their club’s pre-season marketing and ‘pre-match hype’ may have been a little extravagant. Dromana played with desperation and desire; and at half-time the Tigers commanded a narrow lead.

There were some brilliant individual performances (e.g. skipper Terry Wheeler, Dan Geurts and Shaun Clarke) during the third term; and the ‘young and speedy legs’ of Ethan Johnstone, Reece Wilde, Sam Geurts and Dean Waugh were instrumental in maintaining the home side’s lead at three-quarter time.



The ‘trusty’ left boot of Dean Waugh.

The last quarter was a riveting battle and a credit to both teams. Although debutante Reece Wilde struck a ‘purple patch’ and nailed three majors in short time; the Sharks hit back and the game was still in the balance at the 25 minute mark.



Reece Wilde: Four goals in a superb display.

Michael Gillis once again demonstrated his unselfish and noble spirit with a clever handball to Adam Hunter. Adam gathered the ball, wheeled, steadied and drilled the ‘sealer.’ The celebrations that followed Adam’s goal were something to be remembered as his team mates ran from all parts of the field to congratulate the veteran. It was the ‘straw that broke Sorrento’s back.’



**Mick Gillis – 139 Senior XVIII games (2002-2016).
A popular, selfless and courageous figure in DFNC’s rebuild.**

As the final siren blared, Reece Wilde kicked his fourth major for the term; and the Tigers ran out convincing winners by 25 points. It was a stunning triumph; and Rikki Johnston's post-match address was greeted with sustained acclamation. His young team had suddenly become the 'toast of the town; and it was as though Rikki had waved a magic wand and the bitter disappointments of 2015 had been expunged and the club was well and truly 'back on track.'

It was in all truth, an astounding but unpredicted victory; and, in just six months, the Tigers had gone from 'boiled lollies to chocolates'; and confirmed John McGrath's most famous maxim that 'a champion team will always beat a team of champions.'

**A CHAMPION TEAM
WILL ALWAYS BEAT
A TEAM OF
CHAMPIONS.**

NOTE: Little did the 'new coach' Rikki Johnston (and his young team) realize that the 'best was yet to come.' It is fair to say, that no one in the rooms, that evening in 2016, could have foretold that, within three 'short seasons', the club would claim the MPNFL First Division flag. As the famous Scottish novelist and playwright, James Barrie, wrote in 1904: "Dreams do come true...."

QUARTER BY QUARTER SCORES:

Dromana: 5.1 8.4 11.5 16.6 (102)

Sorrento: 5.2 7.5 9.7 11.11 (77)

Goals for Dromana:

- Wilde 4 Cosson 4 Waugh 3 Clarke 2 Hutchinson Geurts Hunter

Best for Dromana:

- Clarke Cosson Geurts Wilde E. Johnstone

DFNC award winners:

- Ethan Johnstone Reece Wilde Shaun Clarke



Sam Geurts- One the club's all-time champions.



**“If everyone is moving forward together,
then success takes care of itself” : Henry Ford (1863-1947).**

CLUB HISTORY - CAN YOU HELP?

The above article was originally written for the club in 2014; and has been redrafted/updated and posted 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 (e.g. former players) who have match reports/ cuttings from their years at Pier Street. Please feel welcome to forward such and have them posted on the website for posterity.

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



REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Sources: Personal files –MPNFL & DFNC publications.

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