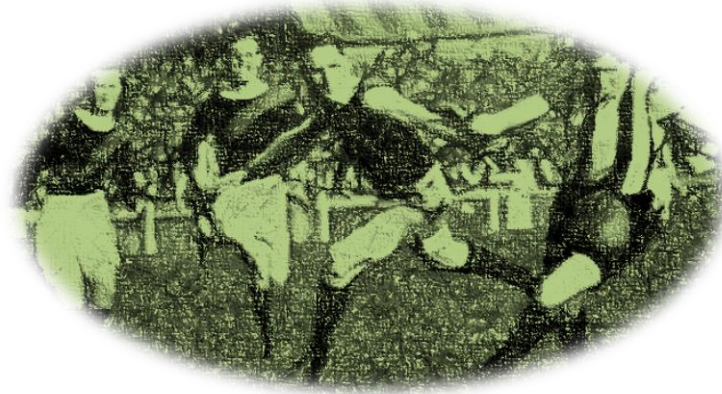


‘FROM THE ARCHIVES’ DROMANA DEFEAT HASTINGS 2011

Reference: FTA: 2022/4



DROMANA DEFEAT HASTINGS - 2011

In 2011 Gavin Artico was the Tigers’ Senior XVIII Coach; and throughout that season there were further encouraging signs that Dromana FC was a club ‘on the rise.’ The match against Hastings was crucial in the ‘scheme of things’ and on that day six team changes were made from the previous round. Paul Minchington, Jed Savage and Jai Williams played in the reserves while a promising local youngster, Dan Geurts, made his debut in MPNFL senior football. Darren Minchington, the youngest of five brothers, was selected on the half forward flank for the Tigers; and the line-up was something like this:-

Backs	Dan Geurts	Luke O’Neill	Tom Wright
H’ Backs	Adam Hunter	Rikki Johnston	Ryan Slocombe
Centres	Terry Wheeler	Liam Hogan	Jared Terry
H’ F’wards	Jay Hutchinson	Steven Gaertner	Darren Minchington
Forwards	Toby Banks	Ryan Hawkins	Brad Allen
Rucks	Seamus Thomson	Beau McMurray	Braeden Dennis
Interchange : Jarryd Hunter Mick Gillis Gareth Vella Shaun Clarke			

The game was an ‘arm wrestle’ from the first bounce; and developed into a dour struggle as both defences dominated proceedings early in the game. The Tigers lead by seven points at quarter time but Hastings looked menacing in attack; and kicked a string of second term goals to the create a degree disquiet in the Tigers’ camp.

At half time, nothing separated the two teams; and after the ‘big break’ the Tigers played with greater intensity and purpose but couldn’t shake the persistent and dogged ‘Blues. ‘Lady Luck’ smiled on the Tigers in the third term as Hastings failed to ‘nail the game’ with abject conversion.

Inaccuracy in front of goal is often a result of defensive pressure (by forcing forwards to go wide to find space) so the Dromana backline can claim some credit. However, as can be seen from the score-line, Hastings booted seven behinds that term and squandered a 'golden opportunity' to set up victory.

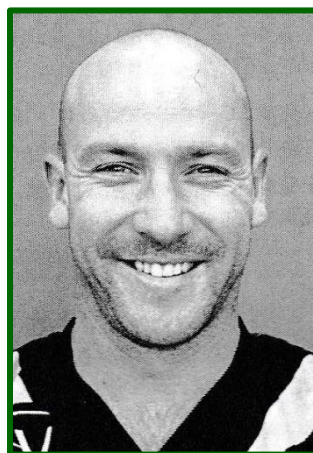
Dromana went to the last break with the narrowest of leads and was able to refresh, regroup and reset for the last stanza. Dromana's superior fitness told in the last quarter, and the Tigers led by key forwards Jay Hutchinson and Ryan Hawkins (5 goals) finished powerfully to secure victory by 25 points.

The Tigers' collective match fitness was the key that day; and it was rarely questioned in 2011. It was positive sign that the team seldom 'fell away' or stopped running in the last quarter of any game. Those readers who have played football will appreciate the hackneyed cliché that *'football is a marathon not a sprint.'*

The Tigers kicked five goals in the last term and kept Hastings to a solitary major. Steve Gaertner booted four valuable goals that day. Steve (who had been 'taken' by St Kilda, at number: 58 on the ALF Rookie Draft from the Dandenong Stingrays in 2008) won the DFNC goal kicking award with 44 goals in 2011. For such a tall player (199cm), Steve had blistering pace; and will always be remembered for his 12 goals against Pearcedale in Round: 17 at Pearcedale in 2014.

A stand-out player in the victory was Liam Hogan (ex-Sale). Liam, a talented midfielder and a sibling of an eminent 'sporting family' of Gippsland, had signed on with Dromana in 2011 and went onto play 43 games. Liam's three seasons of service with DFNC was instrumental in lifting the club to the top echelon; and his influence in the 2013 premiership win was significant.

Liam was Runner-up, to Rikki Johnston, in DFNC's Best and Fairest award in 2013. He was an ideal role model for all youngsters to emulate and he was admired at DFNC for his friendly manner, humility and sporting spirit.



Liam Hogan from Sale was one of the most accomplished recruits to sign on with DFNC in that era. Liam, who is one of five brothers who played with Sale, garnered a fine reputation in LVFL circles before crossing to play football in West Australia.

Following the match, defender young Tom Wright received warm praise, from Gavin Artico, for the brilliant manner in which Tom had blanketed Hasting's star forward Grant Masterson that day.

Tom made his MPNFL debut in 2008 and developed into a resolute defender for DFNC. Tom played 73 Senior XVIII games and was named in the DFNC 'Team of the Decade' (2005-2015). Probably, the highlight of Tom's career at Pier Street was when named as the 'Best Player in the 2009 Final Series.'

MATCH DETAILS

Dromana: 4.1 6.7 9.9 14.12. (96)

Hastings: 3.0 7.1 9.8 10.11. (71)

Goals: Hawkins 5, Gaertner 4, Hutchinson 2, J. Hunter, Gillis, Clarke.

Best Players: Hawkins, Hogan, Hutchinson, Terry, Minchington, Dennis.

Awards: Ryan Hawkins, Jay Hutchinson, Brad Allen, Jared Terry Gareth Vella.

In summary, it was an important win over Hastings in the context of the development of the team. The last quarter said a lot about the maturity of the team; and all supporters were confident that the club was heading in the right direction. It's no secret that to win a flag, football teams need:- list depth, a stable back six, versatility, leadership and fitness (including a minimal number injuries across an entire season),

By the end of 2011, Gavin Artico believed he had the correct balance and a combination to 'break the drought' at Pier Street...However, Gavin and the loyal band of supporters would have to wait a little longer as time would show that.. "Patience is the ability to count down before you blast off..."

A BRIEF NOTE- JAY HUTCHINSON – 'A HOME GROWN' STAR



Jay Hutchinson is somewhat of a local hero; and is one of the real success stories at Pier Street. Jay graduated from the DJFC and will always be remembered, by Dromana supporters, for his crucial goals in two (2018 and 2019) premiership victories. This is a reminder of Jay's brilliant conversion in the 2019 Grand Final match review...

“Dromana supporters could not have asked for a better opening to the second term as, within second of the bounce, Jay Hutchinson gathered a handball from Daniel Marchesani and drilled a 40 metre goal from the boundary. It was a brilliant angle conversion by Jay; and that rapid-fire goal stung the Sharks and lifted the Tigers to the next level.”

At the time of writing Jay, has played 119 senior games and has worked hard to overcome his debilitating injuries in recent seasons. Jay is a prime example of the importance of junior development in building a community football club.

CLUB HISTORY - CAN YOU HELP?

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 such to be posted on the website for posterity. The club would also appreciate any photographs of teams, players and officials from the 1950’s-1970.

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 –March 2022.



REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Sources: NLA & local newspapers (Rosebud Library)- Personal records.

Article reference: 2011 Dromana v Hastings (Ref: FTA 2022/4)

Researched and written for DFNC by: Roger Spaul-March 2022.

DFNC website administrator: Graham Stelling. DFNC Secretary-Board Member.

Email contacts: historian@dromanatigers.com.au. or admin@dromanatigers.com.au