

40 YEARS AGO-1982

DROMANA STORMS HOME

(Reference: 2022/13)



'The Home of Football'

INTRODUCTION –LOOKING BACK TO 1982

Over the years, games between Dromana and Pearcedale have often produced dramatic fireworks. However, in 1982 Dromana coached by former Geelong ruckman, Lindsay Edgerton, gave a superlative exhibition of team football and doubled Pearcedale's score in a most decisive victory.

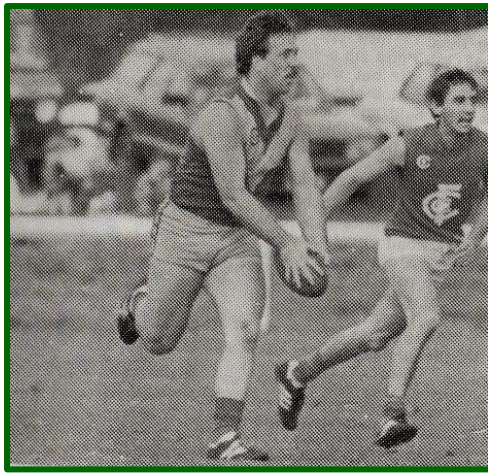
It was a much celebrated win that season and has a special place in the club's archives. This article attempts to give newer members and younger readers some notion of the players who represented the club in that era.

THE 1982 LINE UP

The match was played at Pier Street and Dromana's line-up, that day, looked something like this:

Backs	Tom Jarman	Mick James	Colin Matthews
H'Backs	Grant Hitchener	Mal McCrindle	John McCormick
Centre	Brian Cairns	Ross Bailey	John Whitwam
H' Forwards	Greg Hilton	Peter Crozier	Neil Watson
Forwards	Darren Guest	Gary Ferguson	Glenn Fyson
Rucks	Lindsay Edgerton	Steve Edwards	Ray Fyson

Although starting strong favourites, Dromana struggled early in the contest; and failed to make serious headway against the determined defence of Pearcedale. Dromana's wayward goal kicking didn't help the cause; and the Hoppers' forwards booted six behinds before registering their first major of the match. The Hoppers' frittered away early chances to break the game wide open and, as a consequence, Pearcedale prospered through Dromana's failure to convert in the 50m forward arc.



One of the finest defenders in DFNC history-Mick James (see below).

At half time, the game was in the balance; and Lindsay Edgerton called upon his young team to 'break the shackles' and be adventurous in attack. As is well known in local football circles, Lindsay was a strong orator and his call 'to arms' impacted and rallied the team in the third stanza.



Lindsay Edgerton- Coach of DFNC against Pearcedale.

In a sparkling second half of football, Dromana lifted its work rate across all lines ; and the midfield led by one of the club's greats of that era, Ross Bailey, took charge and the Hoppers attacked time and time again.



John McCormick played on the half back flank and was part of an effective defence.

As generally happens in the second half of football matches, the pace slowed, the game 'opened up' and multiple forward entries into the Dromana forward line put the Pearcedale defence under constant pressure. Things 'clicked' in attack as the Dromana found space to run and share the ball. Steve Edwards, who played 34 games with Dromana (1981-83) and won the club's goal kicking award in 1981(30 goals), gave a faultless display and caused havoc for the Pearcedale defence. Steve kicked five majors that day against the Panthers.

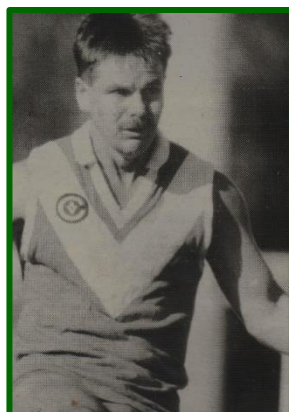
Spearhead Gary Ferguson (5 goals) gave an outstanding display; and he will always be remembered at Pier Street for his long, powerful and accurate kicking.

'Young' Greg Hilton, a creative and innate footballer, was busy across half forward and chipped in with three goals while veteran rover, Ray Fyson, provided constant drive from centre bounces and around the ground stoppages.



The Fyson brothers- Glenn (left) and Ray who played in the match against Pearcedale in 1982. This photograph was taken eleven years earlier following the club's premiership victory in 1971. Ray played 208 games and Glenn 69 games; and both won DFNC Best & Fairest awards during their years at Pier Street. Glenn won the trophy in 1971; and Ray won three awards in 1967, 1970 and 1981. Their Father, Dick, received Life Membership of the club in 1981. Football has always been a family affair at DFNC.

Neil Watson, an inventive, perhaps 'freakish' small forward, booted two goals for the home side. Neil was a difficult player to hold when his 'blood was up' and his acceleration, pace and creativity often flummoxed opposing defenders.



Greg Hilton kicked three goals in a fine performance.

Dromana dominated the second half and capitalized on Pearcedale's ramshackle defence; and, as the Panther's resistance crumbled, the Hoppers exploited the situation to the full and stormed home in conclusive style. Dromana had ten goal kickers that afternoon. It was a stunning second half revival that produced 12 goals and delivered a memorable victory by 81 points. To defeat Pearcedale is/was always a satisfying occasion for DFC but to have won by 13 goals against a 'formidable old foe', in such a definitive manner, was a stunning accomplishment and a highpoint of the 1982 season.

FINAL SCORES:

DROMANA: 22 .20. (152) defeated PEARCEDALE 10.11. (71)

Major goal kickers for Dromana: Ferguson 5 Edwards 5 Hilton 3 Watson 2 Fyson 2.

Best players for Dromana: Edgerton Bailey Edwards Hilton Jarman McCormick Fyson.

SEASON 1982 ENDS ON A DISAPPOINTING NOTE

Hopes of finals were high throughout 1982; but, unexpectedly, the team faltered in the last two rounds of that season and finished in sixth position on the ladder. However, every cloud has a silver lining and the foundation had been laid for a tilt at the flag in 1983.

It is true that there was every reason for Lindsay Edgerton and his young team to be downcast for not 'going further' that year. However, it was an significant season in the development of the many local young players who would, in time emerge, as stars in Peninsula football.

FOOTNOTES:-

1. Dromana's young rover, Darren Guest won the NFL's Best and Fairest trophy (known as the George Osborne Medal) in 1984.
2. In 1982 Phil Ashton was the Reserves XVIII coach.
3. John McCormick commenced his football career at Heyfield FC in the Latrobe Valley FL; and played his first senior game with Dromana in 1976. John played 76 senior games with DFC. John was also actively involved on the committee as secretary and other duties. John played a significant role in re-establishing our under: 18 team in 1995. John was selected in the 'Team of the Decade' for the period 1976-85. John's son (Tim) played under-age football at Pier Street. His daughter Jenna played with DFC Juniors also.
4. In 1982 Eric Oakes was DFC president and Graham Stelling was the secretary. Articles about Eric can be found on this website

5. It is only last year (2021) that Graham Stelling 'officially retired as Secretary' after four decades of distinguished service in various capacities within the club. Graham's name was honoured with the introduction of the 'Morgan-Stelling Shield' for the Sorrento-Dromana fixture each season. Graham is now the DFNC Registrar.



Eric Oakes. 'Nothing is more noble, nothing is more venerable than loyalty'

6. In 1982, Ray Fyson and Ron Hunter (Senior) were nominated for Life Memberships of DFC. A point of interest is that Ray's father (Dick) was granted Life Membership in 1981; and Ron was the first of five members of the Hunter family to receive DFNC Life Memberships (Ron Junior, Christine, Adam and Michael being the others).



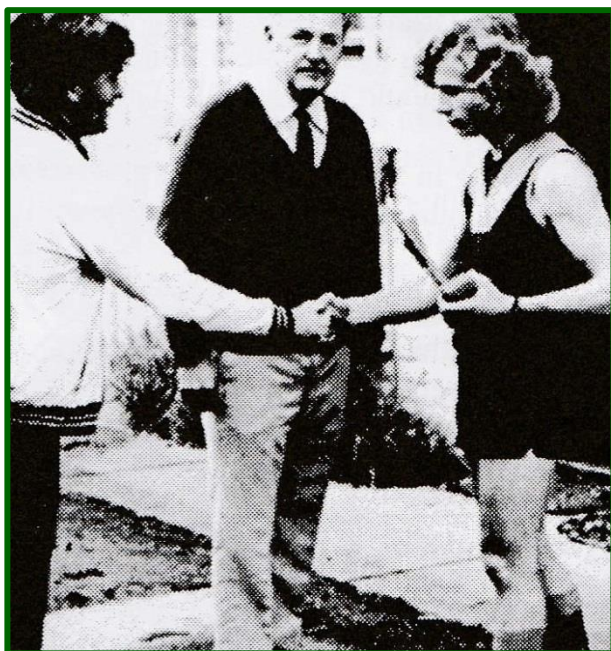
Ron Hunter Senior was awarded Life Membership of DFNC in 1982

7. Gary Ferguson is a long serving member of DFC who was granted Life Membership of the club in 1983. Gary played in excess of 200 games with the Seniors and Reserves and was selected in the 'Team of the Decade' for the period 1976-85. His lengthy involvement as a player, coach and medical officer since 1974 was an indication of his loyal service and involvement in the life of the club. Gary's wife, Rhonda, is also a Life Member and Gary's son, Kane, played with DFC juniors and the Under: 18 team.



Gary Ferguson, as seen in later years, as a member of the medical / training staff at DFNC. Gary served as Head Trainer for many years after retiring as a player

8. Greg Hilton completed pre-season training at Melbourne FC under then-coach Ron Barassi in 1985 but was not listed by the Demons. Greg returned to Dromana and was later cleared to Frankston (VFA). Following an impressive stint with the Dolphins, he returned to coach Rye FC. Greg was appointed coach of DFC in 1990- 92 and also coached Red Hill before 'hanging up' his boots. Greg's brother, Jeff, played AFL football with St Kilda and Melbourne.



Grant Hitchener is regarded as one of the finest and hardest defenders in the history of DFNC. This photograph was taken in 1975 when Grant won the Third XVIII Best & Fairest award. He went onto play 98 Senior games and won the Reserves Best & Fairest in 1993. Grant was selected in the 'Team of the Decade' (1976-1985) and he also coached the Reserves XVIII in 1993 and 1994. Club stalwart Eric Oakes is pictured in the photograph.

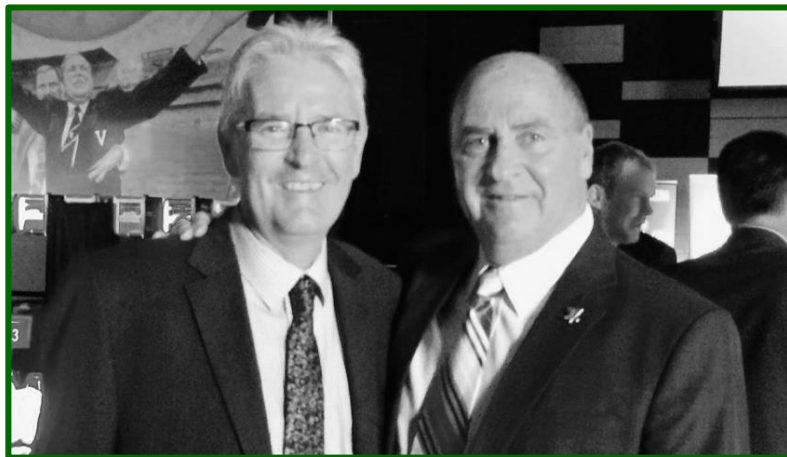
9. Geoff Bligh played his first senior game in 1982. Geoff has been a dedicated servant of DFNC; and in 2002 was awarded Life Membership. Geoff played 90 Senior XVIII games and was selected in the DFNC Team of the Decade (1976-85). Geoff has also served on the Board of Management.

10. Mick James won the club's Best and Fairest award in the 1982 season. Mick went on to play more than 200 games for DFC and was selected in the DFC 'Team of the Era' (1946-2015).



John Whitwam- A dashing wingman with great endurance and 'never-say-die' spirit.

11. Brian Cairns, who began his career with the Dromana Under: 12's, went on to coach Dromana Senior XVIII in 1985. Brian was regarded as 'modern' coach who tried to inculcate a 'play-on and free-running' brand of football. He won the club's Best and Fairest Trophy in 1987. In all he played 165 senior games with DFC and was awarded Life Membership in 1989. Brian was selected on the half forward flank in the DFNC 'Team of the Era' 1945-2015. Brian's brother (David) and son (Tom) also played with the Tigers.



A photograph of former DFNC champion, Brian Cairns with Ted Whitten Junior in September 2015. Brian, who coached DFNC in 1985, played 165 senior XVIII for DFNC; and was selected on the half forward flank in the club's 'Team of the Era' (1946-2015). Younger readers may not be aware that Ted Whitten Junior was a star in his own right. He made his VFL debut at seventeen years of age; and played 144 games and kicked 133 goals for Footscray.

12. John McCormick, Ross Bailey and Glenn Fyson retired from Senior XVIII football at Dromana in 1982. John is a Life Member of DFNC

13. Lindsay Edgerton and Phil Ashton stepped down as coaches at the end of 1982. John Aldridge was appointed as the Senior XVIII coach and Gary Ferguson took over as the Reserves XVIII coach for the following season. Lindsay's grandson, Mitchell Musticone, is playing with the club this season and he is developing confidence each week and displaying promise.

CAN YOU HELP: A PHOTOGRAPH OF DARREN GUEST ?

In 1984, Dromana FC's Darren Guest won the Nepean Football League Senior XVIII Best & Fairest award. It was a notable achievement by the young rover and the club would like to post a photograph of Darren on the website archives. If any reader can assist with this matter please contact the club. Thank you for your help in building DFNC history.

REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Sources: MPNFL archives - DFNC publications-personal notes and files.

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