

TERRY WHEELER
DFNC LIFE MEMBER
MPNFL & AFLSE CHAMPION
Reference: 2022/23



TERRY WHEELER – LOYAL, TALENTED AND DEDICATED

175 games with DFNC and a shelf full of trophies, Terry Wheeler is one of the most respected team leaders in the long history of DFNC. Terry Wheeler is the quintessential example of a loyal and dedicated champion in community football. Terry, who is a humble and thoughtful footballer, arrived at Dromana with his friend, Liam Hogan, merely 'looking for a game' in 2011. He has become a role model for all youngsters at Pier Street. Terry not only 'stayed and played' but became one of the most influential and stirring leaders in taking DFNC to successive premierships in 2018 and 2019.

INTRODUCTION- PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

After a patient wait during two frustrating seasons (due to COVID-19 restrictions and sidelined with a debilitating shoulder injury), Terry Wheeler played his 175th game for Dromana on Saturday 13th August (Round: 17) against Rosebud and hence qualified for DFNC Life Membership.

Terry Wheeler arrived at DFNC from the Sale FC in 2011; and, in the last decade has developed into one of the best midfielders in MPNFL football. All would concur that he is one of the most influential and effective leaders in the club's long history. In 2018 and 2019, Terry Wheeler was a member of the Senior XVIII leadership group and he played a pivotal role in the club's historic back-to-back flags. This article is to acknowledge Terry's loyalty and his contribution to DFNC.

NOTE: The following tribute to Terry was originally published in the 'Tiger Talk' Newsletter in 2018 and is reprinted below. His games history and other details have been updated for this article. Terry's comments in 2019, in relation to the club's MPNFL First Division flag, have also been included in this article.

A TRIBUTE TO TERRY WHEELER FROM 'TIGER TALK' ISSUE : JUNE 2015



Terry Wheeler has experienced an amazing journey from Sale FC (LVFL) to becoming a Life Member at Pier Street. Terry's arrival at DFNC in 2011 was unheralded and little did the supporters know where his ability, spirit and selfless leadership would take DFNC. .

Dromana supporters enjoy watching Terry Wheeler when he is in full flight and his ball handling, skilled ambipedal kicking (i.e. both feet) and evasive skills often leave Tiger fans shaking their heads in awe.

Terry was born at the Sale Hospital in 1992. As a youngster, he attended St Thomas Primary School and then studied at the Gippsland Grammar in Sale.

He first played football at the age of eight, in the Sale Catholic School competition. Terry won a club Best & Fairest and played in two junior premierships; but the highlight of those early days was his Best on the Ground performance in the Under 14 Grand Final against Traralgon in 2005.



Terry Wheeler on the run and a picture of full concentration. People who appreciate the nuances of football never fail to notice the 'special way' in which Terry plays football. He is distinctive, highly skilled and, in all, an intriguing footballer to watch in action.

Although Terry's father (David) had been a ruckman for Sale City, Terry signed with Sale FC and he played his first senior game for the Magpies against Garfield...

"I was supposed to play in the reserves but received an unexpected late call-up for the senior teamIt was big day in my life and I can still remember the excitement I felt that day at Garfield."

Terry's coach at Sale FC was former Hawthorn utility Adrian Cox. Adrian placed great faith in Terry; and, in turn, gave him confidence to match it against bigger, stronger and more experienced opponents. Terry played approximately 25 games with the Sale Senior XVIII before departing for the Mornington Peninsula.

Terry and his friend Liam Hogan (ex- Sale FC also) arrived at Dromana in 2011. The Hogan family is very well known in and around Sale and Liam's Father, Kevin, played 63 games with South Melbourne (1954-60). In later years, Kevin coached Sale FC and became a foremost sports journalist in Gippsland.



One of MPNFL's finest-ever midfielders.

Note: Sale FC is one of the most successful clubs in the history of VCFL football and has produced approximately 50 VFL/AFL footballers including champions such as: Brownlow Medallist Norm Ware (Footscray), Bill Stephenson (St Kilda), Ian Brewer (Collingwood), Alan Morrow (St Kilda), Hugh James (Richmond) and Scott Pendlebury (Collingwood). Since its formation in 1877, Sale Football Club has a total of won twenty premierships.

John Nix who played 95 games with Richmond (1949-56) and also coached Dromana in 1964 was named in the centre in the Sale 'Team of the Century' Kevin Hogan was named 'Coach of the Decade (1960's)''

Gavin Artico was the Senior XVIII coach and Rikki Johnston was the skipper in the year that Terry and Liam were cleared to DFNC. In his debut senior game, against Red Hill, Terry played on the wing and within a few weeks, he had consolidated his position as a midfielder for the Tigers.

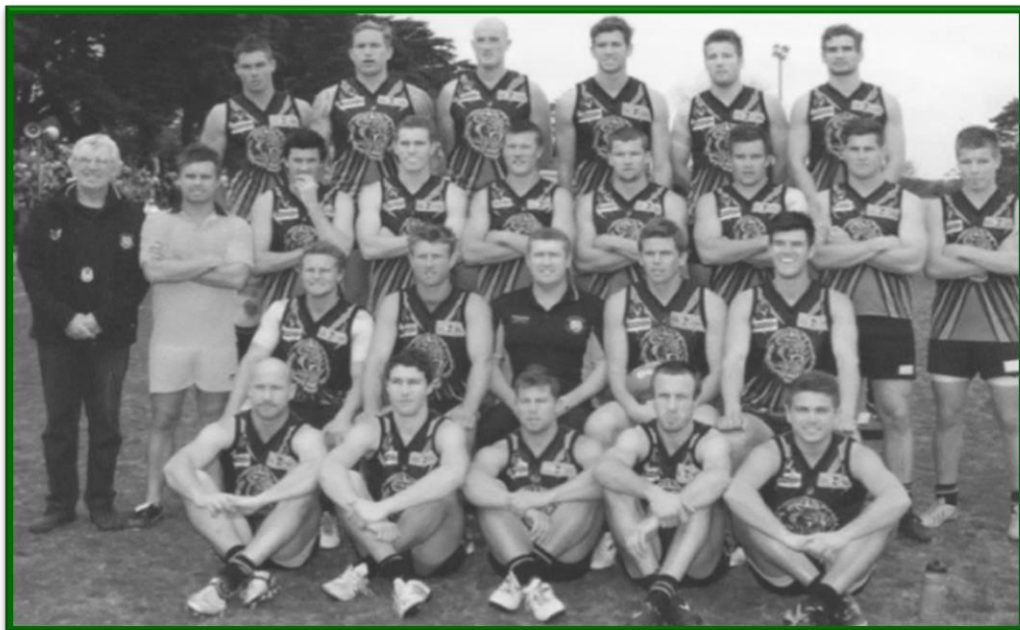
History also shows that, by the end of the season, Terry had established a reputation as one of the best running players in local football.



The famous number 27 in action for DFNC.

Terry Wheeler was a proud member of the Senior XVIII premiership team of 2013. Terry wrote

“What a day... the reserves and the seniors both won flags and the ‘double’ meant so much to all the players and the loyal supporters. I will never forget the final siren and the jubilation of my team mates at that moment.”



2013 DFNC Premiership team

In his time with the club, Terry has won the Most Consistent Player (2012), Best and Fairest (2013).and was Runner-Up in the Best and Fairest in 2014. He also represented the MPNFL on two occasions in AFL Country Victoria- interleague matches *

(Note: Terry’s other major awards since this original article are presented below.)

Terry rates Rikki Johnston and Christian Ongarello as the best footballers he has played with at Dromana; and he ranks Hayden Burgiel (Maffra) and Adrian Cox (Sale) as outstanding talents in Gippsland Football. Terry's favourite AFL player is Fremantle's superstar Nathan Fyfe.



Terry shown in the heat of battle and as a rule never far from the action

Terry graduated from Monash University (Bachelor of Commerce) last year (i.e. 2017) and is currently working as a sales representative for a printing company. Finally, as Senior Captain, Terry will play a big part in the 'rebuild' at Dromana this year (i.e. when the article was written in 2016) and he is looking forward to assisting with the development of the young talent at the club.



LOYALTY & HARD WORK- TERRY'S THOUGHTS ABOUT DFNC.

NOTE: The extract below is part of an article, related to the 2019 premiership victory, which was posted on the DFNC History Page earlier this year. All supporters would agree that Terry Wheeler was an inspiring leader on that day.

Despite injury, Terry set the standard for others to emulate. Following the historic 2019 premiership victory, Terry said....

“For some teams the task would have looked impossible. You could forgive a team for not believing they could overcome the massive challenge that lay ahead in defeating a powerful Sorrento in the final game of the year. But this Dromana team was not like most teams.

The belief in the group, despite losing to the same team by 57 points only two weeks earlier, never altered. The belief we could win was created by a huge amount of physical work and relationship development within the team. As a group, we knew exactly what to do, and if we executed our plan, we would be able to over run Sorrento.

I feel incredibly proud and grateful to be a part of this amazing group, as Rikki Johnston said before we ran out, “we are a bundle of sticks, when joined together, we are unbreakable.”

Terry Wheeler September 2019

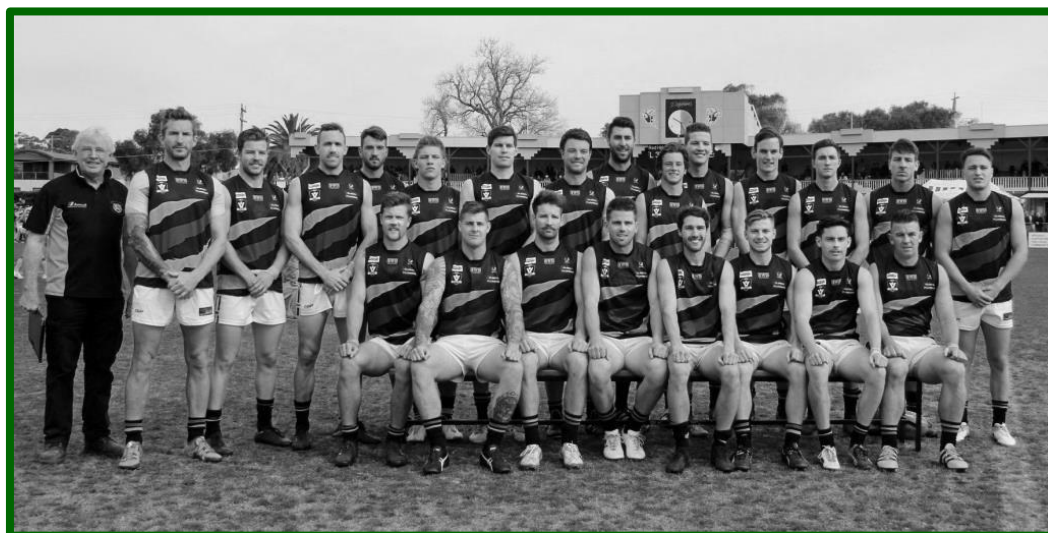


It was a red-letter day when Terry signed on the dotted line to play with DFNC; and the club thanks him for his commitment, and sterling leadership.



Note: 1 It was hoped that Terry would be awarded Player life Membership (175 Senior / Reserve Grade games of DFNC in 2020. However the cancellation of the MPNFL season, due to the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, prevented Terry from achieving that well-deserved honour.

Note:2 For those keen followers of country football, 'The History of the Sale Football Club' can be obtained by contacting SFC at : sfncinc@gmail.com



TERRY WHEELER'S PLAYING HISTORY AT DFNC

YEAR	SENIOR GAMES	GOALS	SENIOR AWARDS & MPNFL HONOURS
2011	14 (& 4 Reserves)	6	-
2012	13	12	DFNC Most Consistent MPNFL Worksafe Team
2013	19	24	DFNC Best Fairest DFNC Premiership Member
2014	19	22	DFNC Runner Up-B& F MPNFL Team of the Year
2015	16	12	DFNC Runner Up-B&F DFNC Team of the Era 1945-2015
2016	14	9	DFNC Runner Up- B&F
2017	18	9	-
2018	21	15	Runner Up-B&F. Captain. DFNC Premiership Member
2019	22	14	DFNC Leadership group, Premiership Member. Club Best & Fairest MPNFL Team of the Year
2020		NO MPNFL FOOTBALL:	COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS.
2021	10	5	Captain and Senior XVIII leadership group.
2022	8	5	Leadership group. DFNC Life Membership. Elimination Final team.

TERRY WHEELER –THE 'POWER OF ONE'

Summarizes Terry's awards and honours at DFNC since 2011. It is easy to understand why supporters rate him at the top of their 'best player' list.

Terry was named on the wing in the 'Team of The Era' (1945-2015); and while that selection tells much about his ability, there is considerably more to Terry's remarkable story at Dromana.

His leadership, influence and loyalty have been strong factors in the club's ascent in MPNFL Division: 1 (something which would have seemed far-fetched some two decades ago). It should also be remembered that Terry represented the MPNFL in the Worksafe Interleague Championships in 2012 and 2014 which further measures his standing in MPNFL football. His consistency of effort and composure in the 'heat of battle' are hallmarks of Terry's fine career at DFNC.



This is a photograph of Terry Wheeler presenting the DFNC jumper to young Zak Turner who made his Senior XVIII debut against Mt Eliza in Round: 16 in 2021.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TERRY

In closing this tribute to Terry, in all he epitomizes the 'Power of One' in sport; and the club is eternally indebted for his decision to don the Tiger jumper in 2011. Congratulations to Terry on his attainment of Life Membership and our gratitude for his loyal service and inspiring leadership.



Leadership by example and honest endeavor. 'Three Amigos' of Pier Street- Dan Geurts , Rikki Johnston and Terry Wheeler- a collective force that set a new benchmark at DFNC.

OTHER DFNC PLAYER LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Terry Wheeler joins the following players as a DFNC Player Life Member: Bert Aust, Henry McLear, Sam McLear, George McLear, Mick James, Colin McLear, Tom Singleton, Rupert Griffith, Garry Fowler, Brad Allen, Jared Terry, Adam Hunter, Dan Gibbs, Daniel Maestrale, Rikki Johnston and Jay Hutchinson.

In 1951, George Osborne was presented with the very first Life Membership of the club; and a complete list of DFNC Life Members can be found at:

<http://www.dromanatigers.com.au/newsite/lm.html>



Life Membership: Terry Wheeler runs through the banner and onto Olympic Park to play his 175th game in the clash against Rosebud in Round: 17 in 2022. Terry's return to the team late in the season, after a debilitating shoulder injury, lifted the spirits and chances of the team going into the MPNFL Finals. Terry was a member of the Tiger's Elimination Final line-up against Frankston. Overall, Terry played eight games and kicked five goals in 2022.

REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Sources: DFNC archives –Tiger Talk- MPNFL website- personal files-Terry Wheeler

Article reference: Life membership- Terry Wheeler (2022/23)

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