

DFNC SUMMARY & UPDATE

SEASON 2022

MPNFL DIVISION: 1 SENIOR XVIII GRADE

Reference: 2023/7



'Back into action' -Billy Geurts the 'number one' ruckman in MPNFL ranks.

INTRODUCTION: 'HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL' IN 2022.

All readers will recall that 2021 was a year of unresolved issues in the MPNFL as all games in the finals series were cancelled; and football, at all levels across all regions, was left in a state of limbo and widespread confusion. 2020 and 2021 will long be remembered as the 'lost years' of football and; unfortunately, there is evidence to suggest that COVID could leave its mark on community sport long after the 'coughing and sneezing' have ended. As shown in the extract below, there are real challenges to be faced and overcome...

"Rochelle Eime, professor of sport participation at Victoria University, said participation across 10 major sports in Victoria was down by approximately 15 per cent compared to pre-pandemic levels. She envisioned winter sports would fare even worse, with cold weather driving away remaining players." Source: 'The Age' July 15th 2022.

'Hope springs eternal' and every league and club across Victoria wished that 2022 would be less troubled and traumatic; and football and netball (indeed all sport) could return to some normalcy.

THE MPNFL 2022 SEASON FIXTURE

AFLSE pressed on at 'full steam' to organize the 2022 season; and, despite COVID infections severely impacting AFL clubs (e.g. West Coast Eagles), the opening round of football in the MPNFL was scheduled for April 9th.

Eighteen rounds of football were proposed; and, if all things went according to plan, the Division One finals were 'pencilled in' to commence on August 27th.

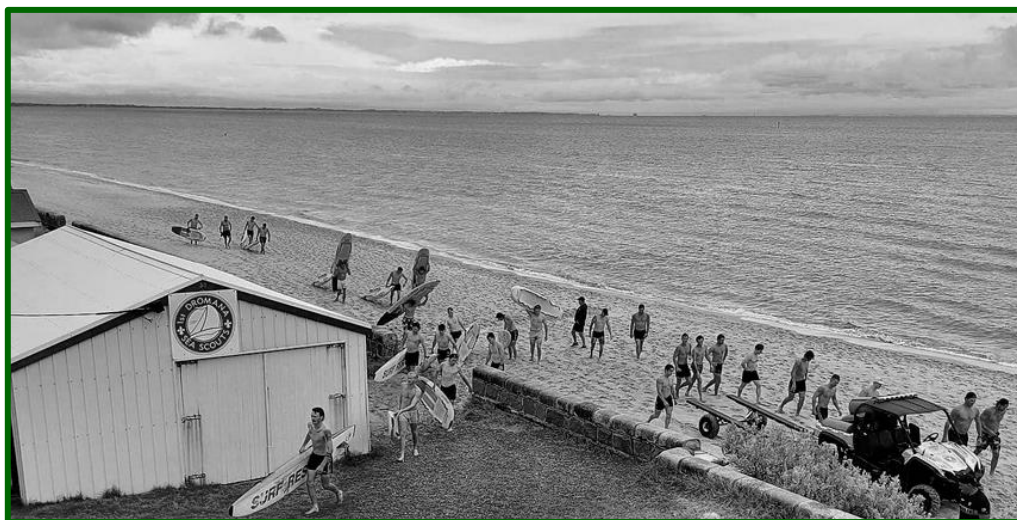
The MPNFL prudently decided that the customary MPNFL promotion/relegation system would not apply in 2022. The background to this practical and sensible judgement was explained in a statement released by AFLSE on September 15th 2021...

“It was determined that automatic promotion and relegation will not be applied this year due to the shortened home and away season and cancellation of the finals series. The application of promotion and relegation has been to promote the Division 2 team that wins the grand final, not the team which finishes first after the home and away season. As a finals series was not able to be completed, it was determined that automatic promotion should not be applied.” Source: AFLSE September 2021.

Consequently, the ten teams affiliated in Division: 1 in 2022 were: Dromana, YCW, Red Hill, Pines, Edi-Asp, Frankston Bombers, Sorrento, Mt Eliza, Rosebud and Bonbeach.

THE 2022 SEASON RESULTS – SENIOR XVIII

There were no changes in the Dromana coaching panel in 2022. Matt Price, Steve Ware and Braeden Dennis were re-appointed to continue on from where they ‘left off’ in 2021. However, Gavin Taylor, former Dromana player, Daniel Gormley and Craig Wallace were appointed as assistant coaches for the new season at Pier Street.



The ‘Beach Boys’- pre-season training at Dromana in 2022.

The Senior leadership group for 2022 was: Billy Quigley (captain), Sam Geurts (vice-captain), Daniel Geurts (vice-captain), Billy Geurts, Terry Wheeler, Jack Slattery and Dan Marchesani.

In the lead up to the season opener, one pundit suggested that DFNC would falter in 2022; and by the season’s end the club would face relegation. It was a fatuous prediction, before the bounce of ball, and was dismissed by the DFNC members as rash.



Billy Quigley was appointed captain of the Senior XVIII in 2022. Billy has all the qualities that a leader requires and the example he sets to other is unquestioned. Billy's leadership of Rosebud Cricket Club, at such a young age, was a pointer to his discipline, ability and standards. Billy brought up his 125th Senior XVIII game with the club in 2022.

OPENING CLASH AGAINST YCW

Following well-attended pre-season training sessions; and a strenuous and most competitive practice match against East Doncaster, everything seemed in order for the Tigers to spring into 2022 with quiet confidence. The club had lost a handful of talented players in Josh Bateman, Ethan Johnston and the Soligo brothers (*Nathan would return later in the season) but had recruited Broden Bird (Mornington), Tom Crimmins (Mornington) and a forward of some repute from Berwick , Jordy Andrews to the club. Jordy has represented the Casey-Cardinia FL in the AFL Worksafe Championships in 2013 and 2014.

Dromana was drawn to play against YCW at the John Coburn Oval (Jubilee Park) in Round: 1 of 2022; and the team as announced, by Matt Price, for the season opener was:

BACKS	J. RISTROM	Z. MUSCHIALI	D. MARCHESANI
H BACKS	J. DINICOLANTONIO	B. TOVEY	D. WAUGH
CENTRES	J.SLATTERY	J. TAYLOR	D. GEURTS
H FORWARDS	R.WILDE	J. HUTCHINSON	B. BIRD
FORWARDS	D. GORMELY	J. ANDREWS	J. SMITH
RUCKS	B. GEURTS	S. GEURTS	B. QUIGLEY
I/C	A.MUSGRAVE A. HARRIS S.CHILDS T. CRIMMINS		

Jordy Andrews, Tom Crimmins, Broden Bird, Joshua Smith and Jesse Dinicolantonio were selected to debut with in Round: 1-2022. Success in the opening rounds can engender group confidence, build unity within the new playing group and create a buzz of excitement in the wider community regarding the coming season. Traditionally Round: 1, in all football leagues, is vitally important in 'setting sights and taking aim' for season ahead.

Sponsorship and membership sales often surge with a positive showing by teams early in the year; and as Ron Barassi once said: *“Winning isn’t everything. It is just a lot better than the alternative.”* Every football club treasurer would heartily agree with Ron on that idea. Victory in Round: 1 often has tangible benefits for clubs (e.g. cash flow).



This photograph was used to generate interest and promote the 2022 MPNFL season. It shows local star Terry Wheeler in action. It was a most appropriate image, in the context of the year, as Terry would play his 175th match with the club and thus be entitled to be awarded Life Membership. Unfortunately, Terry missed eleven matches in 2022 following surgery to his shoulder.

As can be seen from the results below, the Tigers ticked every box against YCW and won in good style by 26 points. The convincing victory over such strong opposition was a promising start to 2022 but, with seventeen hurdles to clear, the race to the finals would not be without a few twists and turns.

ROUND : I	YCW -AWAY : WON BY 26 POINTS
DROMANA:	2.4 5.6 7.9 10.12 (72)
YCW	2.3 3.5 5.6 6.10 (46)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	D.Waugh 2 S. Geurts 2 J. Andrews 2 B. Geurts D. Gormley B. Quigley R. Wilde
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts B. Tovey D. Gormley D. Marchesani B. Quigley T. Crimmins



Billy Geurts kicked six of the Tigers' seven goals at Red Hill. Billy continued to underline his outstanding ability and commitment to the club. He is a star of community football.

ROUND : 2	RED HILL -AWAY: DRAWN
DROMANA: RED HILL	0.3 2.4 6.6 7.7 (49) 2.2 4.3 5.5 7.7 (49)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts 6 D. J. Slattery
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts B. Tovey Z. Muschialli D. Geurts S, Geurts D. Waugh



Billy Quigley in action against the Pines in the first home game of the 2022 season. Billy featured prominently in the first three games; and proved to be an ideal skipper.

ROUND : 3	PINES - HOME : WON BY 63 POINTS
DROMANA PINES	3.1 5.5 12.8 14.10 (94) 1.2 3.5 3.5 4.7 (31)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews 4 J. Slattery 2 B. Bird 2 D. Geurts 2 S. Geurts T.Dennis D. Gormley B. Geurts
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews S. Geurts B. Quigley D. Geurts J. Slattery B. Bird



Jordan Andrews, who was cleared from Berwick to Pier Street in 2022, kicked four majors in an impressive performance against Pines. Jordan's signing with DFNC was a major recruiting coup; and his experience was of benefit to the young Tigers.

ROUND : 4	EDI- ASP HOME : WON BY 29 POINTS
DROMANA EDI-ASP	8.1 9.3 11.9 15.15 (102) 5.2 7.3 10.6 11.7 (73)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B.Quigley 4 D. Gormley 2 B. Geurts 2 R. Wilde R. Simpson J. Andrews S. Childs A. Musgrave J. Hutchinson T.Crimmins
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B.Quigley B. Geurts S. Geurts T. Crimmins J. Taylor J. Andrews

ROUND : 5	FRANKSTON HOME : WON BY 25 POINTS
DROMANA FRANKSTON	3.5 5.11 6.14 13. 18 (94) 5.3 6.4 9.5 10.9 (69)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J. Slattery 2 D. Gormley 2 D. Waugh 2 B. Geurts R.Wilde J. Andrews N. Collier S. Geurts B. Quigley Crimmins
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	S. Geurts D. Gormley T. Crimmins B. Geurts B. Tovey N. Collier



Young Nick Collier, who was listed with the Stingrays in 2022, returned 'home' to play with Dromana against Frankston in Round: 5. Nick performed creditably and was named in the Tigers' best players and kicked an important goal in the context of the game.



In a fighting comeback to overcome a severe knee injury, teenager Zac Stelling, won selection in the Senior XVIII clash against Frankston in Round: 5 at Pier Street. Zac's gritty persistence and self-belief, during a lengthy period of rehabilitation, said much about his spirit and desire to play senior football with Dromana.

ROUND : 6	SORRENTO AWAY: LOST BY 18 POINTS
DROMANA SORRENTO	4.4 7.7 10.10 11.12 (78) 3.8 7.12 10.12 13.18 (96)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts 3 J. Andrews 3 B. Quigley 3 D. Gormley J. Geurts
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews J. Taylor Z. Muschialli D. Geurts S. Geurts T. Crimmins



Refresh-regroup-reset in the huddle at Sorrento in Round: 6

ROUND : 7	MT ELIZA HOME : LOST BY 16 POINTS
DROMANA MT ELIZA	2.0 3.3 6.7 7.10 (52) 4.4 7.9 8.13 9.14 (68)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts T. Dennis, J. Tooth J. Andrews B. Quigley J. Slattery J. Geurts
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Tovey J. Taylor J. Holloway S. Geurts J. Slattery W Geurts

ROUND : 8	ROSEBUD HOME: WON BY 37 POINTS
DROMANA ROSEBUD	2.6 3.10 7.13 11.17 (83) 1.1 4.3 5.9 6.10 (46)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B. Quigley 3 J. Geurts J. Crimmins S. Geurts J. Holloway D. Gormley T. Dennis B. Geurts J. Taylor
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	J. Taylor B. Geurts Z. Muschialli T. Dennis J. Slattery D. Waugh



In the Round : 8 the 'Local Derby'...Dromana overcame Rosebud by 37 points; and in the above photograph Mark Crawshaw is seen proudly holding the Matthews Shield and flanked by Lorraine and Anthony Matthews. Anthony is a Life Member of both clubs which says a lot about his dedicated involvement in MPNFL football over the years.

ROUND : 9	BONBEACH AWAY: LOST BY 13 POINTS
DROMANA	1.5 4.8 4.10 7.13 (55)
BONBEACH	1.4 3.4 8.6 10.8 (68)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J.Andrews 4 B. Bird 2 J. Tooth 1
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Tovey S. Guerts J. Andrews B. Quigley Z. Muschialli J. Taylor

PREMIERSHIP LADDER AFTER 9 ROUNDS

After nine rounds of football, Dromana sat on the fourth rung of the Division: 1 Ladder. Dromana's tied result against Red Hill in Round: 2 would, in one way or another, be consequential as the season unfolded. As can be seen, the 'log jam' between third and seventh positions would be sorted in the second half of the season.

One thing was clear from the table below, with nine rounds left in the Home and Away series, percentage and injuries would play an important part in the run to the MPNFL finals. The margins of victory and defeat would be determining factors in deciding which teams would compete in the finals.

TEAM	PLAYED	WON	LOST	DRAWN	POINTS	%
FRANKSTON YCW	9	8	1		32	156.25
MT ELIZA	9	6	3		24	129.45
FRANKSTON	9	6	3		24	115.79
DROMANA	9	5	3	1	22	124.36
SORRENTO	9	5	4		20	112.34
BONBEACH	9	5	4		20	107.91
PINES	9	5	4		20	104.05
RED HILL	9	3	5	1	14	89.98
EDI-ASP	9	1	8		4	62.22
ROSEBUD	9	0	9		0	48.11



Jordy Andrews kicked four goals against Bonbeach and brought his season tally to 16. His experience would prove to be key to the Tigers fortunes in the second half of the season

ROUND : 10	RED HILL WON BY 6 POINTS
DROMANA	1.6 2.7 5.10 6.10 (46)
RED HILL	2.3 5.3 5.4 6.4 (40)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews 2 S. Geurts B. Quigley B. Bird B. Geurts
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts S. Childs R. Davis D. Waugh S. Geurts J. Geurts



Dean Waugh continued to impress supporters with his solid performances throughout 2022. Dean was a model of consistency and, as at Round: 10, had amassed 80 Senior XVIII games and has become a crowd favourite at Pier Street.

ROUND : 11	YCW HOME : LOST BY 51 POINTS
DROMANA	1.4 2.7 3.7 3.10 (28)
YCW	4.3 8.8 10.9 11.13 (79)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J.Andrews 2 J. Smith 1
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	J. Geurts J. Ristrom J. Holloway S. Geurts C. Wallace J. Tooth



DFNC skipper, Billy Quigley in action against YCW in Round: 11. The Tigers struggled after half time and could only manage to add one major. The loss was significant, in the race to the finals, as the club slipped back to 5th position on the MPNFL Ladder. It was a disappointing day for the club as the Reserves and Thirds teams also suffered defeats.

ROUND : 12	PINES AWAY : DRAWN
DROMANA	5.3 7.4 10.6 10.10 (70)
PINES	3.2 5.6 9.8 10.10 (70)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews 4 S. Geurts J. Geurts T.Wheeler J.Slattery B Quigley J. Hutchinson
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts D. Gormley S. Geurts D. Waugh J. Andrews J. Taylor



Jay Hutchinson played his 175 (Senior/ Reserve) game against Pines in Round: 12; and consequently became entitled to be awarded DFNC Player Life Membership. Jay kicked a vital goal in a game which saw the Pines and Dromana tie on 10 goals 10 behinds apiece. It was the Tigers second drawn game in 2022; the other was in Round: 2 at Red Hill.

ROUND : 13	EDI-ASP HOME WON BY 34 POINTS
DROMANA	1.1 1.4 4.8 7.10 (52)
EDI-ASP	0.0 0.2 1.5 2.6 (18)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	N. Higgins 2 B. Tovey D. Marchesani D. Waugh J. Geurts N. Soligo
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	S. Geurts Z. Muschialli B. Geurts J. Holloway D. Waugh J. Geurts

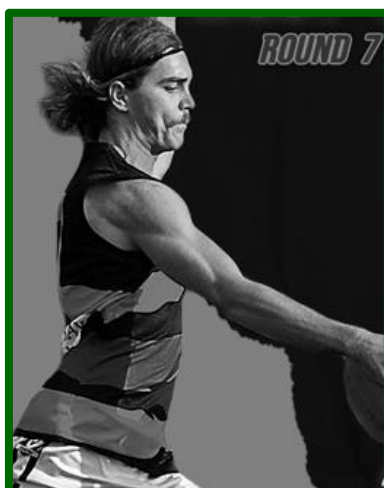
ROUND : 14	FRANKSTON AWAY LOST BY 71 POINTS
DROMANA	3.0 5.2 6.4 7.7 (49)
FRANKSTON	7.6 12.6 14.10 18.12 (120)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	D. Gormley 2 N. Higgins 2 B.Tovey B. Quigley J. Holloway
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	D. Marchesani B. Tovey N. Higgins J. Taylor S. Geurts N. Soligo



Daniel Marchesani is another splendid example of the importance of developing local talent. Since 2011, Daniel has played in excess of 180 Junior and Senior club games for DFNC. He is a quiet and humble achiever in MPNFL football; and his value to the team was exemplified in 2021 when he was awarded the Most Determined Player trophy.

ROUND : 15	SORRENTO HOME WON BY 46 POINTS
DROMANA	3.7 5.7 8.10 10.12(72)
SORRENTO	0.0 3.5 3.6 3.8 (26)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews 3 B. Quigley 2 D. Gormley T. Wheeler S. Geurts J. Hutchinson N. Collier
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	S. Geurts B. Quigley D. Waugh J. Tooth B. Geurts J. Taylor

ROUND : 16	MT ELIZA AWAY WON BY 48 POINTS
DROMANA	1.4 3.5 5.6 15.8 (98)
MT ELIZA	1.1 5.4 5.7 7.8 (50)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B. Tovey 2 B. Quigley 2 J. Andrews 2 N. Soligo 2 J. Taylor 2 J. Geurts 2 B. Geurts D. Gormley T. Wheeler
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Quigley T. Wheeler N. Soligo J. Taylor B. Geurts D. Marchesani



In a scintillating last quarter at the Emil Madsen Reserve in Round: 16, Dromana kicked ten goals in the last term to demolish Mt Eliza by 48 points. Jai Taylor continued his run of good form with another polished midfield performance. Billy Quigley and Billy Geurts dominated proceedings across four quarters; and with some brilliant team work, the Tigers cemented a place in the MPNFL finals. Credit for the upset victory was given to coach Matt Price and the leadership group. In Rounds 15 &16 the tactics and team fitness were significant factors in the team's success. After Round: 16, Dromana sat on the fourth rung of the MPNFL Division: 1 Ladder with 40 points and a percentage of 115.28%

ROUND : 17	ROSEBUD AWAY WON BY 27 POINTS
DROMANA	1.1 3.5 7.7 8.11 (59)
ROSEBUD	2.1 2.3 3.5 4.8 (32)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	T.Wheeler 2 B. Geurts J. Andrews N.Collier B. Quigley N. Hanneman S. Geurts
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	D. Waugh J. Taylor J. Andrews N. Collier B. Tovey T. Wheeler

ROUND : 18	BONBEACH HOME LOST BY 35 POINTS
DROMANA	3.6 5.8 8.10 8.11 (59)
BONBEACH	4.1 8.4 8.5 14. 10 (94)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	B.Quigley 4 J. Andrews 2 B. Geurts J. Geurts
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	B. Geurts S. Geurts N. Shannon B. Quigley D. Marchesani A. Musgrave

DIVISION: 1 SENIOR GRADE LADDER AFTER ROUND: 18

TEAM	PLAYED	WON	LOST	DRAWN	POINTS	%
FRANKSTON YCW	18	16	2	0	64	172.90
BONBEACH	18	13	5	0	52	118.40
MT ELIZA	18	12	6	0	48	121.78
DROMANA	18	10	6	2	44	112.74
FRANKSTON	18	10	8	0	40	120.03
PINES	18	9	8	1	38	96.44
SORRENTO	18	8	10	0	32	103.46
RED HILL	18	7	10	1	30	100.94
ROSEBUD	18	2	16	0	8	52.71
EDI-ASP	18	1	17	0	4	56.88

Since the half-way mark of the season (i.e. at Round: 9) Sorrento had 'hit the wall' and had lost touch with the league leaders and dropped to seventh on the table. On the other hand, Bonbeach had worked its way into second rung on the ladder. Dromana, with two drawn games, finished fourth with 44 points and a percentage of 112.74%; and consequently went on to face Frankston Bombers in the 2022 Elimination Final.

Elimination matches are 'do-or die' affairs and the game created a deal of attention in local circles. Some observers saw DFNC as the 'dark horse' in the finals race; and, as readers know, finals football usually throws up unexpected outcomes. However, as the results indicate Frankston 'came home' strongly in the final quarter; and with the Bombers' experienced players stepping up when required and better conversion, in the dying stages of a tough and low scoring affair contest, Frankston won by 19 points.

THE FIRST ELIMINATION FINAL-DROMANA LINE UP

BACKS	Z.MUSCHIALLI	A. MUSGRAVE	D.WAUGH
H BACKS	N.SHANNON	J.TOOTH	J.TAYLOR
CENTRE	J.HUTCHINSON	D.GORMLEY	R.WILDE
H FORWARDS	D.GEURTS	J.ANDREWS	N.COLLIER
FORWARDS	N.HIGGINS	B.TOVEY	T.WHEELER
RUCKS	B.GEURTS	S.GEURTS	J.GEURTS
I/C	D.MARCHESANI J.RISTROM J.SLATTERY S.CHILDS		
EMERGENCIES	N.SOLIGO A.HARRIS		

ELIMINATION FINAL	AT ROSEBUD OLYMPIC PARK 20th AUGUST 2022 FRANKSTON WON BY 19 POINTS
DROMANA	1.6 3.8 4.11 6.13 (49)
FRANKSTON	2.2 3.7 4.8 9.14 (68)
GOAL KICKERS FOR DROMANA	J. Andrews 2 S. Geurts 2 N. Collier J. Taylor
BEST PLAYERS FOR DROMANA	S. Geurts B. Geurts J. Andrews D. Marchesani Z. Muschialli D. Guerts

Note: A match report of the Elimination Final between Dromana and Frankston Bombers will be posted in the near future. **(Reference: 2023/8)**

THE RESERVES IN 2022

Steve Ware and his Reserves XVIII could only be admired for the way in which they fought on against massive odds each and every week. As explained previously on this website, the Reserves team at DFNC has been the 'chopping block' for the strong Northern clubs for several years but credit to Steve and his team, for the battle they put up each week in another tough season.

In eighteen fixtures, the Reserves won just one match; and that was against Rosebud in Round: 8. the scores that day were: Dromana 5.10 (40) defeated Rosebud 4.12 (36). It was a most deserved and hard fought victory by the boys.

At the time of writing this article, since 2019 the Reserves XVIII have won just two games. (Season 2019:1 win and %=28.58%; Season 2020(No football : due to COVID-19); 2021(No wins and %=25.10%); and the details of 2022 are outlined in the next paragraph.

Although it was anticipated that the Reserves would experience challenges in MPNFL Division One, it cannot be 'sugar-coated' that 2022 was another bruising, 'uphill slog' ; and every player deserved credit for 'staying the course' Statistically, the team recorded one victory and a total of 435 'points for' while the opposing teams amassed 1398 points. The team's percentage was 31.12%

The return to the line-up of several senior players in Round: 18 (i.e. against Bonbeach) illustrated the importance of experienced players to the side. Reece Wilde, who had not played since Round: 5, kicked three goals and led by example. On that day, the Reserves kicked eight goals and recorded their highest score for the 2022 season.



Tim Stepavicius who played seventeen games in the Reserves in 2022 and featured consistently in match reviews. As at the end of the 2022 season, Tim had played 78 club games and his loyalty and service to DFNC are appreciated by his team mates and coaches. Tim is not far off breaking into senior ranks and he works hard each week in improving his skills and taking his game to the next level.

Throughout 2022, the Reserves were well served by Tim Stepavicius (see above) who played 17 games , Wade Chamberlain (16), Dane Chamberlain (16), Caelum Hacking (15), Simon Anderson (15) Zak Turner (15), Spencer Gubbins (14) Liam Trew(13) , Mitchell Musticone (13), Lachie Sweetnam (13) Matt Chambers (13), Jesse Dinicolantonio (12), Dan Reynolds (12), Jackson Brown (12), Aodhagan Noonan (12), Dylan Munson (12), Zac Stelling (12) Jack Austin (12), Nick Bender (12) Mason Smith (12), Josh Adcock (11) , Dylan O'Kelly (10), Adam Harris (9) , Harry Hince (9), Sam Cashin (8) and club veteran, Tom Carter, played eight games. As at the end of the 2022 season, Tom had played a total of 149 club games for DFNC.

Goals were extremely hard to come by during the season; and in seven games the team failed to register three goals (i.e. less than one per quarter). During the season, Jesse Dinicolantonio kicked seven majors, Simon Henderson (6 goals), Jackson Brown (6) while Nick Bender and Jack Austin kicked 4 goals apiece. Players who were regularly cited among the team's better players in match reviews throughout the season included:

Wade Chamberlain, Zac Stelling, Tim Stepavicius, Zak Turner, Liam Trew, Jesse Dinicolantonio, Matt Chambers and Simon Anderson.



Young Mitchell Musticone in action against the Red Hill Reserves in Round: 10. Mitchell, who is originally from Mt Martha JFC, played 13 games for DFNC in 2022 and showed 'true grit' in every game. He is a fine club man who has won admiration for his willingness to help the club whenever needed. Mitchell is the Grandson of former football coach and local identity, Lindsay Edgerton.



This great action shot is from the Reserves XVIII match against Sorrento in Round: 6. Joshua Smith (13), Ned Hannemann (49) and Aodhagan Noonan (50) are in mid-flight while Matt Chambers waits for 'crumbs.' Sorrento prevailed by 20 points that day.

THE THIRDS IN 2022

Unfortunately, much of the fine work completed by the Third XVIII in 2022 went unnoticed because often the bounce of the ball (at 10.00am) was witnessed by a trifling number of Dromana supporters. It has always been an enigma at Pier Street as to why the Third XVIII performs before such minuscule crowds. It is hard to comprehend because the future of the club heavily depends upon this age-group of boys.



Braeden Dennis coached the Third XVIII in 2022. Not only is Braeden a former club former champion midfielder but he has been a dedicated and knowledgeable coach of the Under-19's. One of the strengths of any football club is when former players, such as Braeden, return and take on the responsibility of developing young players. Braeden was a popular coach; and he has been a major force in building the club's playing stocks in recent years. In 2023, Ben Holmes (also a former DFNC player) will be in charge of the Thirds.

Braeden Dennis and his enthusiastic team deserve credit for another fine job in 2022 as on many occasions, boys would be called upon to take a place in the Reserve or Senior team. The Thirds were rarely at full strength but always played honestly and determinedly for the club. In a difficult season (COVID - 19 , varying local factors etc.), the Thirds played only 16 games 'Home and Away' games as there were two byes. Sorrento FC was unable to field a team in this competition which again underlined the quandary facing under-age sport.

The DFNC Thirds finished fifth on the Ladder with 44 points and a percentage of 85.70%. Third XVIII Players who represented the club in ten or more games during 2022 Included: Callum Tierney (17 games), Phoenix Brown (17), Tom MacDonald (16), Max Chamberlain (16), Noah Guneratne (16) , Kurtis Cameron (16) Mackenzie Henderson (16), Lachlan Aquilina (16) Jake Wilson (15), Noah Southwell (15), Brodie Sweetnam (15), Corey Meyer-Beare (15), Kobe Holmes (14) Sam McGenniskin (14), Connor Wallace(14), Joshua Smith (14), Riley Davis (13), Brian Rattanathiwat (13) , Tate Dennis (12), Harry Cook (11) and Jamie Clemie played ten games in 2022 .

A handful of players including Tate Dennis, Lachlan Aquilina, Brodie Sweetnam, Joshua Smith and Riley Davis played Senior XVIII football in 2022.

The team's leading goal kickers in 2022 were:

Joshua Smith kicked 26 goals, Mackenzie Henderson (16), Tate Dennis (14), Tim MacDonald (8), Corey Beare-Meyer(6), Coen Raymond (5) and Lachlan Aquilina (4)



'All for one and one for all.' The young Tigers listen as Braeden delivers his message during the Elimination Final in 2022. The club was very proud of the boys that day.

THE 2022 UNDER: 19 ELIMINATION FINAL

As mentioned above, the Thirds fought their way through to the MPNFL finals and met Frankston in the Elimination Final at Rosebud on the 28th August at Olympic Park at Rosebud. The team as selected was:

BACKS	H. COOK	C. WALLACE	K. CAMERON
H BACKS	S. MCGENNISKIN	L. AQUILINA	R. DAVIS
CENTRES	M. HENDERSON	C. TIERNEY	J. CLEMIE
H FORWARDS	J. WILSON	T. DENNIS	C. MEYER-BEARE
FORWARDS	C. RAYMOND	J. SMITH	N. GUNERATNE
RUCKS	B. SWEETNAM	T. MACDONALD	P. BROWN
I/C	M. CHAMBERLAIN K. HOLMES B. RATTANATHIWAT A. XUEREB		

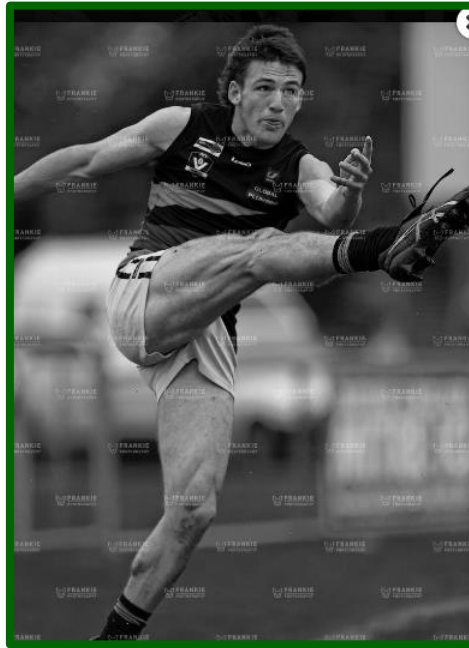


An action scene from the 2022 Elimination Final at Olympic Park

In a close and hard fought contest, Frankston clung on desperately in the closing minutes of the match to claim victory by 5 points. The final score was: Frankston 6.8 (44) defeated Dromana 6.3 (39)

Dromana's goal kickers: Tate Dennis 2, Mackenzie Henderson 1, Josh Smith Corey Beare-Meyer and Coen Raymond.

Dromana's best players: Callum Tierney, Kurtis Cameron, Connor Wallace, Riley Davis, Tate Dennis and Brodie Sweetnam.



One of the emerging stars at DFNC is young Riley Davis. Riley was captain of the Third XVIII in 2022. Riley played 13 Under: 19's games and was also selected to represent the Senior team on seven occasions. Riley is an adept footballer and has a very bright future.

THE NEXT DECADE

The above photograph of Riley Davis is appropriate when considering the prospects of DFNC in future years. The past decade (2013-2022) has been a successful era with many honours and achievements for the football and netball teams (including the historic First Division premiership in 2019). However, such success didn't just materialize but was the result of sound governance, responsible leadership, targeted recruiting and dedicated junior development (as typified in the photo of by Riley Davis).

At this point in time, DFNC can be regarded as a contemporary and successful community sporting club which garners the support of local families and businesses. What will unfold in the next decade at Pier Street is anyone's guess? However, one thing is certain...if the club is to prosper then younger volunteers must step forward and shoulder the extensive list of duties to ensure the club is run capably and efficiently.

The crowds that attend home ground fixtures at Dromana have grown steadily over the past few years but, unfortunately, the number of volunteers that assist the club throughout the season has waned.

A recent media report in August 2022 stated...

“The 2021 census data recorded a 19 per cent drop in volunteering since the last snapshot in 2016. The depletion of the volunteer brigade is affecting sports clubs, emergency services and long-established organisations like Rotary and Lions that help run events and raise funds for local charities.”

A SALUTARY TALE IN BUSH FOOTBALL

Like many community clubs, Dromana FNC has been impacted by the decline in volunteers; and the following article, which was published on the ABC website in August 2022 tells of the ‘death’ of the Quambatook Football Club (formed in 1910). It is a grim tale that is being repeated around Australia. Local clubs are sustained by families, friends and volunteers; and it is hoped that the e-link below will alert people to the fragility of country/ suburban football teams in modern times.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-08-19/death-of-a-country-footy-and-netball-club-in-quambatook-/101335158>

DFNC’s future should never be taken for granted; and local members must be ever vigilant to ensure that the club survives the formidable challenges of the next decade and prospers as a pivotal organization in community life.



REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Sources: DFNC Records- MPNFL /AFLSE results- DFNC History Page - MPNFL website- personal files & running sheets -The Age'

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