

CONGRATULATIONS TO DANIEL GEURTS 100 SENIOR XVIII GAMES

Reference: 2023/6



INTRODUCTION

Last season (i.e.2022) Dan Geurts notched up his 100th Senior XVIII game for DFNC. While he kept ‘things quiet’ and never raised the issue of his important career milestone, a handful of supporters were fully aware of Dan’s achievement and his courageous journey to reach that highpoint in his football.

Readers may be surprised to learn that that Dan has missed at least 40 MPNFL games because of injury. It is a ‘huge chunk’ out of his sporting life; and some others may have ‘called time’ with such disappointing setbacks in football. However, Dan is a spirited individual; and he worked virtually non-stop ‘day and night’ to regain his fitness and win selection in the DFNC Senior XVIII. One can only admire his resilience and tenacity to overcome such a series of major hurdles in his quest to don Dromana’s colours.

One of the most impressive aspects of Dan’s time in recovery/ rehabilitation was that, during those long months while out of action , he continued to play a major role in advising/supporting the DFNC coaching staff with his expertise and knowledge (i.e. via his tertiary studies) regarding training drills, endurance and conditioning exercises and match recovery workouts.

Dan’s story at Dromana FC is stirring; and the following highlights are an attempt to place on record the club’s deep appreciation for his leadership and unswerving dedication to take DFNC to the ‘next level.’

HIGHLIGHTS OF DANIEL’S CAREER

- Dan (born 1994) is one of eight children of Michael and Mary Geurts. For the information of readers, the names of the other seven Geurts children are Jack, Sam, Maggie, Billy, Josh, Toby and Ruby.
- Dan was born in Melbourne and grew up on the Mornington Peninsula.
- As a youngster, he attended Our Lady of Fatima Primary School and later Padua College.

- Dan has a strong family ‘football’ background, and his father (Michael) and uncles (Chris and Matt) were adept players. Michael played with Hawthorn Under: 19’s where he won the Hawk’s Best and Fairest award; and in 1985 played in the Reserves Grand Final against Geelong.
- Dan played his first game for Dromana Juniors at the age of seven; and over the next nine seasons, won DJFC’s Best and Fairest trophies in every age-section of the competition.
- He was also nominated for the MPJFL in various representative matches; and was listed in the Dandenong Stingrays Squad for the TAC Cup statewide competition. It was a well-earned and warranted honour.
- Unfortunately, a severe wrist injury, at a crucial stage in the season shattered Dan’s dreams of being drafted by an AFL club. However, he took that setback in his stride and ‘knuckled down’ to local football; and, in a paradoxical way, Dan’s bad luck was Dromana’s good fortune.

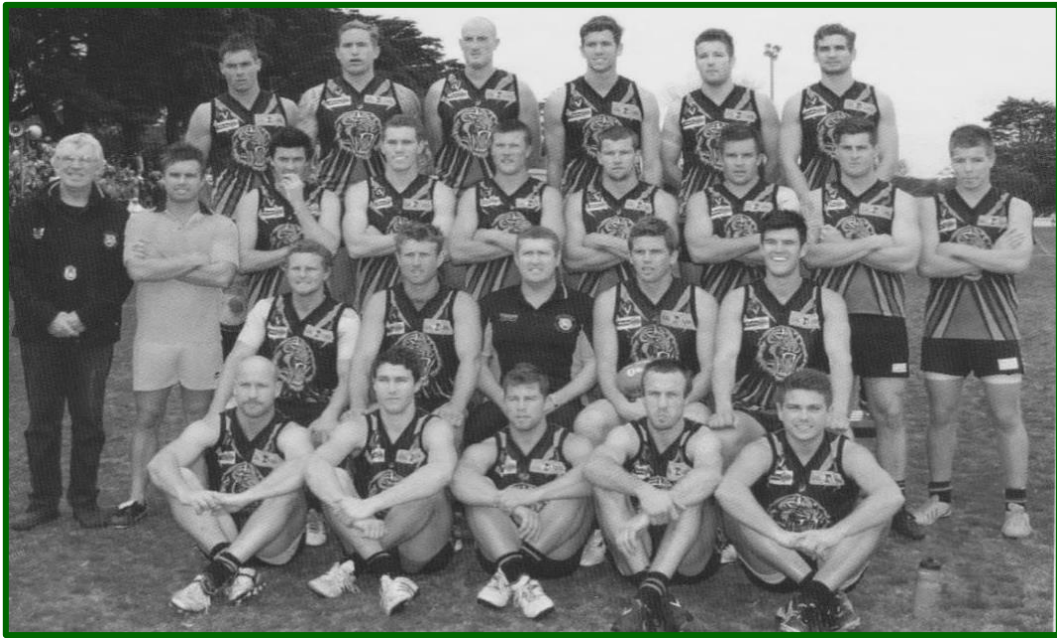


Season Statistics	
2	2012-06-28
Like Sign Up to see what your friends like	
Game Log	
Sat 14/Apr	North Ballarat Rebels 0
Sat 28/Apr	Western Jets 0
Previous Seasons	
2012 TAC Cup	
Dandenong Stingrays	

Part of Daniels’ playing history or game log with the Dandenong Stingrays in 2012.

- Dan played his first senior game in 2012; and immediately caught the eye of all DFNC supporters with his hard running, courage in the last metre of a contest and his ability to hit targets with his powerful kicking.
- One of Dan’s finest moments was when he (and his younger brother Sam) starred in the 2013 MPNFL premiership win (as shown below).





- Dan, Sam and younger brother, Billy, also featured prominently in the victory in the 2018 Grand Final against Red Hill at Frankston Park.



The 2018 premiership team. Dan can be seen in the front row, third from the left hand side (i.e. next to the coach Rikki Johnston). Ben Holmes, the Coach of the Third XVIII in 2023, can be seen on the left of the back row (i.e. next to Brian Lee).

- While Dan missed the 2019 Grand Final due to injury, his younger brother Billy starred that day and won the AFLSE Medallion for the Best Player in the Division : 1 Grand Final.
- In July 2021, more family history unfolded when young Josh was selected to make his MPNFL Senior XVIII debut. (see below)



“In every conceivable manner, the family is a link to our past, and a bridge to our future” ...a quote by Alex Haley. The above photograph was taken in Round: 16 in July 2021 when Joshua made his MPNFL Senior XVIII debut against Mt Eliza with his brothers Sam, Billy and Daniel. Michael Geurts is also seen with his sons. In 2022, young Tommy Geurts played with DFNC Thirds and acquitted himself quite well.



After another battle against injury, Daniel Geurts ‘returned to the fray’ in Round: 18 2022; and is shown above in the Elimination Final against Frankston at Olympic Park.

- In 2022, Dan had to cope with another enforced lay-off (a knee injury in Round: 8) but once again, like a prize fighter, he found a way to ‘get off the canvas.’ In a race against time (and after missing nine weeks) Dan returned with a vengeance (i.e. Round: 18); and the following week was named in the club’s best players in the Elimination Final against Frankston,
- There is no doubt that Dan’s injuries have taken a huge toll; and who knows what lies ahead? It is hoped that Dan will take the field again in 2023 as he has been a central figure in the club’s good fortunes in recent years. At present he will be runner for the 1st XVIII in 2023

SUMMARY OF DAN'S SENIOR XVIII GAMES AT DFNC.

YEAR	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
GAMES	4	18	20	15	13	2	9	0	0	11	10
GOALS	0	4	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

All DFNC members join in congratulating Dan on achieving 100 Senior XVIII games; and thanking him for what he has given so generously to Pier Street. Well done Champ!

THE UNDER: 17 PREMIERSHIP TEAM -1966



BACK ROW: Graham Rowler Paul Hendrix Joe Fruscoviak Royden Webb Keith Allen Malcolm Constable Phillip Marriot Stephen Jolley Glen Osborne Ray Chestnut George Gourlay John Stockdale Howard Constable
FRONT ROW: Robert Work Hans Van Roy Robert Pittock Paul Fraser Brian McCormick (Coach) Ray Bright Ray Fyson Bill Brindley.

NOTES REGARDING THE 1966 PREMIERSHIP TEAM:

Some weeks ago, a photograph of the 1964 under: 17 premiership team was posted on this website; and the image above is also to acknowledge the stirring performances of the Under: 17 team in 1966. The following brief points will give readers:

- (i) An appreciation of what the coach, Brian McCormick, and his young team achieved that season.
- (ii) Some further ideas regarding the importance of the junior development in the history of DFNC. The old saying '*mighty oaks from little acorns grow*' is apt; and those clubs that disregard the need to foster junior teams do so at their own peril.

1. In 1966, Dromana Under: 17's defeated Rosebud in an exciting and closely fought Grand Final. The final scores were: Dromana 5.13 (43) defeated Rosebud 6.5 (41).

2. The coach of the Dromana team that season was Brian McCormick. Brian played 148 games with Dromana from 1963-72; and was a highly skilled and dependable midfielder; and he was selected in the 'Team of the Post War Era' 1945-2015. Brian was a very popular member of the club and he left an indelible mark as a player and coach.

3. Players, in the above photograph, who went on to play Senior XVIII football with Dromana included: Royden Webb (24 games), Malcolm Constable (3 games), Phillip Marriot (72 games), Stephen Jolley (93 games), Glenn Osborne (19 games), George (aka Graeme) Gourlay (60 games), Robert Work (78 games), Ray Bright (107 games), Ray Fyson (208 games) and Bill Brindley played 157 games with Dromana Senior XVIII. Bill Brindley (157 games) had an older brother named Ray who played 136 games with Dromana. Ray was an exceptional back man for the club and won the Best and Fairest award in 1961 and also 1962.

5. Glenn Osborne is the son of former DFNC champion Norm Osborne. Norm played 181 games for DFNC in the period 1940-1958 and also coached the club in 1953 and again in 1956. According to one very reliable source, Glen was also a fine tennis player. George Gourlay, Phillip Marriot, Stephen Jolley, Robert Work, Ray Fyson and Bill Brindley (and his brother Ray) were chosen in the club's 'Team of the Decade' (1966-75).

7. Articles about the Fyson brothers and Stephen Jolley can be found on the website. As has been mentioned previously, Stephen played with Hawthorn in 1970' and was an outstanding forward and ruckman in local football. 'Thank you' to Pam Rowler for sending the photograph to the club; and your contribution is greatly appreciated Pam.

HEARTY PRAISE FOR JAKE SOLIGO



DFNC members would have been very pleased with the recent plaudits that Jake Soligo (shown above) has received from various commentators and media outlets. Jake has taken his football to a new level after being drafted from the Dromana/ Eastern Ranges by the Adelaide Crows. Jake was nominated by the Crows at number 36 in the 2021 AFL National Draft.

Jake made his AFL debut in Round: 1 in 2022 against Fremantle at the Adelaide Oval; and last season played 16 games (6 goals) and averaged an impressive 14.63 disposals per game. He capped off a most rewarding first season by finishing 10th in the Malcolm Blight Medal with 61 votes. (The Crows' experienced defender Rory Laird won the medal with 118 votes).

Thank you to Gary Ferguson for forwarding this link for members to hear and read about Jake's imposing performances at AFL level.

<https://www.sen.com.au/news/2023/03/16/hes-been-an-amazing-find-crows-coach-bullish-on-young-midfielder/>

Another local footballer, Will Hamill, who was selected by the Crows in the 2018 National Draft, played 13 games in 2022; and overall has amassed 38 games Senior AFL games.

DFNC SOCIAL COMMITTEE- 1954

This is a wonderful photograph (below) of the 'True Believers of Pier Street' was published in 'The Weekly Times' nearly seven decades ago. In 1954, the Social Committee raised £ 280 (pounds) which is equivalent to approx. \$ 10,000 today.



The 'Famous Five' of that season would have worked conscientiously to ensure that the members, families and friends joined in the fun and enjoyed life at the club. The Osborne and Coucaud families are often mentioned in club affairs in that era; and such willing figures highlight the contribution of families in the history of the Dromana. Social Committees, in all sporting clubs, not only raise money to assist in the day to day operations and essential expenditure (e.g. guernseys, power bills, kiosk appliances, medical equipment, night lighting

infrastructure etc.) but often create the camaraderie that fosters team success, sponsors and local support.

The events and activities that social committees coordinate/ arrange in modernity have changed considerably since those early days at Pier Street but the aims remain basically the same:

- (i) To build links to the community.
- (ii) Support the players and coaches in their quest to win games.
- (iii) Nurture harmony and friendship with in the club.
- (iv) Raise finances to secure the club.

While club members enjoy the organized functions and gatherings, the volunteers of social committees work very hard (and often long hours) behind the scenes. When the 'party' is over, the social committee commence the countless chores of clearing, washing and sweeping etc.

On field success often depends on what occurs off the field; and without willing and responsible volunteers football clubs usually struggle to be competitive and maintain the support of the local community.

“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart.” Elizabeth Andrew.

Elizabeth Andrew 'hit the nail on the head' with her astute observation about the importance of volunteers in community life. It is so true; and at Dromana FC, where dependable volunteers have been the backbone of the organizational structure for decades, eternal credit is due to those who have given so freely in strengthening and maintaining the club.



REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Sources: National Library of Australia - 'The Weekly Times' - DFNC records-personal files- Gary Ferguson- Pam Rowler- MPNFL archives.

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