

**THE SPIRIT OF PIER STREET**  
**VALE -JOHN PERRY 1941- 2023**  
**AN INDOMITABLE LIFE MEMBER**

(Reference: 2023/15)



**DFNC LIFE MEMBER JOHN PERRY 1941-2023**

### **EARLY YEARS**

DFNC Life Member John Perry passed away at Skye Lodge (Frankston) on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 after a long and brave battle against serious illness. The following tribute has been written to place on permanent record the club's deep appreciation to John for his sterling efforts, often when unwell, to assist the club on match days.

John was born at Adelaide in 1941. His parents, Cleveland and Mollie Perry, had another son, Roger (who now lives in Adelaide). John's early years were best described as happy, adventurous and fun-filled days.

He was a spirited student who loved sport, outdoor pursuits and, at times, 'boisterous escapades.' His school years at Cowandilla State School and Woodville High School were marked by his wholehearted involvement in a range of sports such as cricket, baseball, squash and darts. John's other interest was music and he became quite an authority on C&W singers and their songs.

### **A PRINTER & RAAF SERVICE**

When the opportunity to gain an apprenticeship in the printing industry arose, John wasted no time in exchanging his Woodville High School uniform for a printer's apron.

His first job was with the commercial printing firm Kerton Brothers, (Adelaide), beginning a rewarding career and interesting life journey. In those days, the commercial printing trade was specialized and adept workers were highly regarded and eagerly sought.

The skills involved in that era included typesetting, letterpress printing, bookbinding and paper ruling; and the printing trade training school was situated in Kintore Avenue just a 'Malcolm Blight torpedo' from the famous Adelaide Oval.

Younger readers would be amazed at the size and style of printing machines that John was trained to operate compared to the laser printers that are now in use in today's highly computerized industry.

On completion of his printer's apprenticeship, John enlisted in the RAAF. It was a sound decision and one that would see him travel. Following his basic training at the RAAF Base Edinburgh (Salisbury SA), he served at RAAF Base Fairbairn (ACT) and later at the RAAF Base (now called RAAF Williams) at Laverton (Victoria). John also had a short stint of duty with the New Zealand Air Force.

John was a member of the RAAF for some 27 years. During his extensive career, he witnessed significant changes in service life and national defence policies. He valued his active service years (and the men and women with whom he served) rising through the ranks to become a Warrant Officer.

## **A DEEP LOVE OF SPORT**

While his daily duties in the RAAF dominated his life, John found time to pursue his love of team sports. He excelled as a first baseman in baseball, representing the RAAF services team and South Australia at various championships and tournaments.

As history shows, South Australia played a major role in the development of a national baseball competition and won the prestigious Claxton Shield more than a dozen times. Famous South Australian players, during the era of John's 'diamond years', included Ian Chappell, Peter Box, Don Rice, David Hutton and Kevin Greatrex.

In his later years as a member of the Dandenong Baseball Association, John was actively involved in coaching baseball and softball. In the summer months John was a cricket devotee, playing in South Australia and later, when posted to Victoria, becoming an active member of the Lincoln Mill Cricket Club (an affiliate of the Coburg District Cricket Association).

John's other pursuits included horse and greyhound racing and while he never made a fortune, he enjoyed the 'chase and the dash to the winning post.' He also shared rewarding outings with his sons in following the sport of motorbike racing...

*"For many years, John followed Speedway racing (bikes only) and kept meticulous records of meetings throughout Australia and overseas. He updated his records regularly in spreadsheets showing dates, names, starting positions, placings and much more.*

*He enjoyed this as a hobby and attended many meetings, some of which David and Mark accompanied him. They all enjoyed the chance to spend some quality time together."*

**Note:** It is interesting that Dromana FNC can boast three former top notch baseball players in Eddie Moule, Ricki Johnston and John (all three are Life Members of the club ).

## JOHN JOINS DFNC

John loved Australian Rules football. He and his good friend Noel Fisher became involved at Dromana FBC in supporting the Third XVIII some two decades ago.

John took an immediate liking to the club and, in time, accepted the role of interchange steward, serving the club in that capacity until 2021 when his underlying illness prevented him from attending games...

*“John absolutely loved Dromana. He thoroughly enjoyed being interchange steward and watching them play. He looked forward to it every week. He made many friends there and was looked after wonderfully, especially when he wasn’t too well. He was very sad when he was too ill to continue with his job, it had been a large part of his life for so long.”*

## A BRAVE BATTLE AGAINST ILLNESS

John was first diagnosed with Basal Cell Carcinoma in 2012 and for the next decade underwent a battery of tests, major surgery, chemotherapy and recurrent visitations to various specialists and medical practitioners.

*“John was diagnosed with a Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC) in 2012. He had surgery for it at Peter Mac and plastic surgery on his scalp which resulted in 67 staples in his head...At the same time he was also suffering from Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (CLL). He commenced chemotherapy for the CLL and then, unfortunately, was diagnosed with kidney cancer which necessitated the removal of his kidney. He came through that very well and adapted to a life of change to ensure the protection of his one remaining kidney. He was also diagnosed as having Type 2 Diabetes...”*

## AN INDOMITABLE SPIRIT



Despite those demanding and troubling years of ailing health, John rarely missed the opportunity to assist the club. His unflagging spirit and buoyant attitude were at the forefront, being upbeat, cheerful and a kind friend to all.

John was stoic and continually pushed his personal health worries to one side and 'carried on' as though he was fighting fit.

John always had a story to tell, a point to make or a 'good old fashioned' joke to give his friends a hearty laugh to 'kick start' match day. John was also somewhat of a 'wordsmith' and could raise a smile with puns and witticisms. More than that, he was an expert in discussions about the SANFL history and matters regarding the Adelaide Crows and Port Power.

John was presented with DFNC Life Membership in 2018 (and on that day Russell Heggen also received his award).

In closing, all DFNC members extend their deepest sympathies and condolences to Shirley, Roger, David, Mark and family members. John's diligent service, in times of illness, to assist the club will never be forgotten at Pier Street. As John Tolkien once wrote....

*"It is not the strength of the body that counts, but the strength of spirit."*

## **THANK YOU**

Sincere thanks to Shirley McKnight for her kind assistance in preparing this tribute to John for the DFNC History Page website. The quotations and photographs in the above article were provided by Shirley.



## **A TRIBUTE TO BEN HOLMES**



With Braeden Dennis stepping down after three seasons of coaching the Third XVIII, the club was indeed fortunate in being able to appoint a highly qualified and most experienced coach in Ben Holmes for 2023.

While Ben will never be forgotten for his sterling efforts (including three vital goals) in Dromana's exciting Grand Final victory over Sorrento in 2019, his distinguished career is imposing; and underlines his talent, resilience and, above all, his love of the game.

Ben was born at Kew in 1980; and from an early age displayed an innate ability in sports. His early years at Marlborough P.S., Kingswood S.C. and Whitefriars College were important steps in Ben's football development.

His formative years with Heatherdale Juniors (now known as the Jets) were instrumental in Ben being considered for the Eastern Ranges TAC Cup squad. In his second year of TAC, Ben was selected as the co-captain of the team; and his outstanding performances, in such a fiercely competitive State-wide competition, led winning selection with Melbourne Reserves in 1998 and Richmond Reserves in 1999.

Ben recalls that his first game with Melbourne was a memorable day; and although just 17 years of age he acquitted himself well enough to gain further selection with the Demons. His senior career was 'under way'; and in 2001 Ben starred for Vermont in the 2001 Eastern Districts Grand Final; and, in an unparalleled exhibition on the wing, booted seven goals...

*"Ben Holmes dominated the 2001 Grand Final against East Ringwood kicking seven goals from a wing in a memorable performance. Ben's game is highlighted by his very strong overhead marking, endurance and great judgement."* Source: Vermont FC website

With that scintillating showing, Ben carved a name for himself in the Eastern Football League; and in 2002 was selected to play with Carlton Reserves under the watchful eye of Ross Lyon (St Kilda's club coach in 2023).

Ben is regarded as one of the finest players in the long history of Vermont's FC (formed 1920); and he also made an impact at other suburban clubs such as: Box Hill, East Doncaster, The Basin, Rye and, of course, Dromana FNC.

Looking back on his career Ben lists Brad Cullen (Vermont), Matt Greig (Vermont) Leigh Murphy (Doncaster East), Matt Price (Coldstream FC and DFNC's current coach), Steve Ryan (Rye) and Dromana's 'very own' champion defender Rikki Johnston as some of the 'blue ribbon' players he has met during his two decades of senior football.

In such a remarkable career, it is little wonder than Ben has 'swag' of awards and honours:

- 2 x League Best & Fairest MPNFL Medals in 2010 and 2011 while playing with Rye FC.
- Won the MPNFL Most Valuable Player award in 2011.
- 5 x Club Best & Fairest trophies.
- 4 x Runner-up League Best & Fairest awards and on each occasion he ran second to Matt Price (i.e. current DFNC Senior XVIII Coach) in the EFL vote count.
- 6 x Leading club goal kicker ( including 3 seasons at Rye FC in 2010-2013-2014 )



This image of Ben is part of a media interview after the Grand Final in 2019. In a low scoring affair Ben kicked vital three goals for DFNC on that historic day.

In his travels Ben has met some astute coaches; each of whom has added to his knowledge of strategies, tactics and training techniques. They include: Brendan McCartney ( Richmond), Brendan Mason ( Eastern Ranges), Andrew Lampril ( Vermont), Ross Lyon (Carlton ),Paris Harvey ( East Doncaster), David Banfield ( Box Hill ), Steve Ryan ( Rye) and Rikki Johnston.

Ben's first coaching stint was in 2006 as the playing coach at Doncaster East FC; and he later coached at Rye (2012-15) and was a member of the MPFL Inter-league coaching panel (2015-2016-2017).

Ben's time at Dromana has included coaching the Under: 17's (2020-21), MPJFL interleague Under: 17 combine team (2021) and not forgetting his current position with DFNC Under: 19's where he has started 2023 on a 'bright note.' With his sons playing at Pier Street, Ben will have some busy weekends coaching Kobe and his team mates on Saturdays; and then following the fortunes of Kaje, Koah and Khai on Sundays. Of all his dreams, Ben would love to be able to play a game or two with his sons (if the occasion ever arose).



These wonderful photographs of Ben , Jodie and the boys were taken after the 2019 premiership win. The photos underline how football and family seem to go together. Ben and Jodie's sons play football for Dromana at the weekend.



Overall, Ben has played well in excess of 500 junior and senior games of football and has learnt many things along the way. However, he believes the most important thing in football is...

*“To enjoy every moment when playing because your career races by...”*

Ben is right...as *‘time and tide wait for no man’*; and there are so many retired footballers who wished they had their chances again!



**The 2019 MPNFL Division:1 Premiers. Ben can be seen on the left holding the flag.**

In conclusion, the Board of Management would like to sincerely thank Ben, Jodie , Kobe, Kaje , Koah and Kiah for not only choosing Dromana as their family club but also for the time and enthusiastic effort they have given in strengthening DFNC.

The heart of all community clubs lies with families and friends and Ben, Jodie and the Holmes’ boy exemplify that ideal. Thank you Ben for your contribution and dedication to DFNC.



## **DEAN WAUGH**

### **100 SENIOR XVIII GAMES MILESTONE**



## INTRODUCTION

At the time of preparing this article for the DFNC History page, Dean Waugh was within reach of his 100<sup>th</sup> Senior XVIII Game milestone. The following article was written for 'Tiger Talk' in 2020; and is re-published in the hope of giving readers an appreciation of Dean's undeniable talent and his invaluable service to the club since his arrival at Pier Street 2015.

## THE ARTICLE FROM TIGER TALK - JULY 2020

Within a few weeks of his arrival at Pier Street in 2015, Dean Waugh had grabbed the attention of DFNC supporters; and his solid performances in the Under 19 competition, earmarked him as a footballer with a 'bright future'.

Those early predictions were vindicated by his brilliant performance in the MPNFL U19 Grand Final against Rosebud that season. In that game, Dean's kicking and ball skills stood out and he played a significant role in the Tigers' 35-point triumph. On that day, Dromana overwhelmed the 'Buds' in the last term to claim the pennant.

Dromana's best players were: Ethan Johnstone, Billy Quigley, Sam Geurts, Sam Fowler, Dean Waugh and Jake Snehotta. Together with Reece Wilde, Dan Leyden-Kozikas and Daniel Marchesani, these youngsters would form a nucleus which would take the club forward in subsequent years.

**Note:** Dean Waugh capped off a brilliant 2015 season by winning the Most Determined Award. Dean's progress in football illustrates two things:

- The importance of effective coaching and junior development.  
and
- The strong nexus between comradeship and team success.

Along with his friends from that 2105 premiership, Dean has been a prominent player during the club's 'Golden Era.' Dean Waugh was born at Wollongong in 1998; and, when his family moved to the Mornington Peninsula in 2004, he attended the Mt Martha Primary School and later enrolled at Padua College.

He was a youngster who enjoyed 'sports of all sorts' and was highly motivated and accomplished athlete from a young age. Dean came to Australian Rules a little later than most of his friends because he played soccer until the age of twelve. He then crossed to play football with Mt Martha Junior Football Club; and that was the first step in a 'success story' in local football.

Dean progressed steadily through junior ranks; and in 2015 made a decision to sign with Dromana FC. He played 20 games with the Under 19's and topped up in the Reserves on five occasions 2015 was a year that Dean will always remember...

*"It was great fun! My first year at the club so it was a great year to win a flag making heaps of new mates."*





**This action photograph of Dean Waugh appeared in 'The Sun' in 2016. The match was at Somerville; and the other Dromana player is Beau Cosson who was recruited to Dromana from Ararat (Wimmera FL) in 2016. Beau played 73 Senior XVIII games with DFNC.**

Following strong pre-season training performances, Dean won promotion to the Senior XVIII in 2016; and he made his senior debut against Sorrento in Round 1. It was also Rikki Johnston's first match as DFNC coach. Rikki 'chalked up' a resounding victory in his first outing as leader; and 'young Dean' made quite a splash as he booted three goals.



**Dean Waugh and his DFNC team mates. From the left: Jay Hutchinson, Shaun Clarke, Andrew Howison and Dean. Of the above quartet, Dean Waugh is the only one still playing for DFNC. Shaun and Jay also played 100 Senior XVIII games for the club.**

History shows, that in a scintillating last term, the Tigers kicked five goals to win by 25 points...Dean has never forgotten that victory at Pier Street...

*"My first senior game was against Sorrento at home...and we luckily beat Sorrento at home which made it a day to remember!"*

Since that day, Dean has been a regular and key member of the Senior XVIII and at the end of the 2019 season he had played 58 Senior XVIII games including the back to back premiership flags in 2018 and 2019. Who could ever forget Dean's 'worm-burner' pass to Rikki Johnston in that thrilling and tense last quarter of the 2018 Grand Final against Red Hill?

*“As the clock ticked down, anything was likely to happen...and it did! At the sixteen-minute mark of the quarter, young Dean Waugh won a crucial possession; and with his trusty left boot, pumped the ball forward to the safe hands of Rikki Johnston who had drifted down from half back and had found space in the forward 50m arc..” Source: DFNC website.*

Rikki’s set kick conversion has become part of local folklore and that long goal will live forever in the minds of Dromana supporters.

In 2019, Dean was hampered by a nagging injury and he had to battle his way back into form and the senior line-up for the final series. However, he played his role to perfection in that historic victory against Sorrento and his fine skills and cool head in a crisis came to the fore.

Looking back, while Dean agrees that his finest moments in sport have been those three victories in Grand Finals, he also acknowledges that his best memories centre about the comradeship and camaraderie with friends.

However, while Dean has a lot of fun playing at Dromana, he knows that the success of the playing group is a direct result of hard work and self- sacrifice. He is very proud of what he and his team mates have attained and he respects the standards that have been set at DFNC by the ‘veterans’ ( such as Dan Geurts, Beau McMurray, Beau Cosson, Rikki Johnston, Terry Wheeler, Zac Muschialli and Andrew Howison) and the young and emerging leaders Billy Quigley and Sam Geurts.

In closing, it is easy to forget that Dean is just twenty-one years of age as he seems to have been ‘part of the furniture’ at Pier Street for such a long time. Time is on his side and his ‘best is yet to come’ in football. All supporters wish him well for the future and congratulate him for his outstanding service since his arrival in 2015. *Source: Originally published in ‘Tiger Talk’ in 2020.*

## **DEAN WAUGH’S SENIOR XVIII GRADE HISTORY AT DFNC**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>GAMES</b>	<b>GOALS</b>	<b>HOMOURS &amp; AWARDS</b>
<b>2023</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>AS AT JUNE 2023.</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>2021</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>SENIOR XVII MOST CONSISTENT</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>COVID 19</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>NO MPNFL FOOTBALL</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>SENIOR PREMIERSHIP PLAYER</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>SENIOR PREMIERSHIP PLAYER</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	
<b>2016</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	
<b>2015</b>	<b>•</b>	<b>•</b>	<b>20 THIRD XVIII GAMES &amp; 5 RESERVES XVIII GAMES. THIRD XVIII PREMIERSHIP PLAYER</b>

## REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Sources: MPNFL records- DFNC files-Ben Holmes-Shirley McKnight-John Kelly (DFNC Life Member)-Dean Waugh-'Tiger Talk' July 2020-Vermont FC website-'The Herald Sun'-South Australian Baseball website-Rye FNC website.

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