

TEN YEARS AGO

THE INVINCIBLES

DROMANA RESERVES REMAIN UNDEFEATED IN 2008 (Ref: 2018/25)



‘The Invincibles’ – Undefeated in Season 2008

2008 was a momentous year for Dromana FC as the seniors played in the MPNFL Grand Final; and the Reserves went through the season **undefeated** and carried off the **premiership flag**.

In a memorable and historic season, the Reserves team swept all before it; and overcame a powerful Frankston combine, at Frankston Park, to write its name into the history books of MPNFL football.

THE INVINCIBLES

Some readers may not be aware that the Reserves XVIII team, of 2008, was not the first Dromana team to go through a season undefeated. In **1964**, the Third XVIII, coached by **Bill Martin**, won the flag without incurring a loss. It is an exceptional deed at any level of football; and, at AFL ranks, while some clubs have ‘gone close’, not one team has ever attained the 100% in the ‘wins’ column.

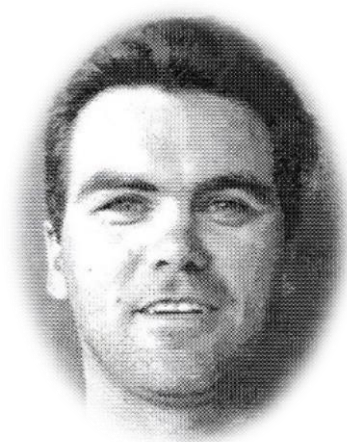
In 1929, **Collingwood** won every game in the Home and Away series season but surprisingly lost the Second Semi-Final (against Richmond). The Magpies

recovered and won their way through to the Grand Final and, as history shows, another VFL pennant.

To win every match in any season, in any grade of football, is a rare accomplishment and exceedingly difficult to achieve; but to the everlasting credit of the players and the coach, the DFNC Reserves achieved the status of 'invincible' in 2008.

BRIAN COLLERY

COACHES THE DFNC RESERVES



Brian Collery- DFNC Reserves Coach in 2008

In 2008, **Brian Collery** was appointed as the **Reserves XVIII Coach**; and with the experience he had gained from a long career in senior football, Brian was able to instil the required discipline and develop a game plan that could maximise the undoubted potential of the group.

Brian, who had been a promising youngster in his teenage years, played with Richmond Third XVIII in 1989, 1990 and 1991 under a distinguished and successful coach of that era, **Doug Searle**. Doug had played 12 games with Collingwood and then 131 games with Fitzroy in the period 1966-76.

Following his stint at Punt Road, Brian Collery developed into a steadfast player with **Rye** (three seasons) and later with the **Donvale Magpies FC** where he played for ten seasons. By the time Brian arrived to play at Dromana FC, from Donvale FC in 2006, he had amassed some 225 senior games and had won a string of awards including Most Consistent, Best Clubman, a Players' Player trophy and, in 2002, **Brian won Donvale's Best and Fairest award**.

Note: Brian played 18 senior games with DFC before stepping down from Senior XVIII football in 2006.

Brian had a quiet but firm style of coaching; and his ability to sum-up a game situation and react accordingly was uncanny. It was obvious to observers that he was a trusted and instinctive leader who enjoyed coaching a great deal.

In 2008, Brian's leadership group consisted of **Daniel Maestrale** (Captain), **Brett Stephens, Stuart Barker, Ryan Pitcher. Gary Boyington** was the Assistant Coach. Gary was a well-known personality in Mornington Peninsula football; and, in 2005, he had coached the Dromana Third XVIII. His sons, **Glen** (54 senior games) and **Shane** (5 senior games) played with DFNC in the period 2004-2007. **Brent Lancaster**, who had served on the DFNC Board of Management in 2003 and 2004, was the **Reserve XVIII Team Manager** in 2008.

UNDEFEATED IN 2008

There is a lot to the background story of the Reserves Premiership in 2008; but in a 'nutshell' it is a football story that revolved around four features: (i) strong leadership, (ii) astute coaching (iii) team unity and (iv) honest endeavour.

Throughout the 2008 season, the Reserves team had a tough and well-oiled defence, which had conceded only 531 points at an average of 33.1 points per game. The stability and unity of the backline was a major factor in the team's success throughout 2008.

Dromana was blessed with a group of creative, hardened and skilled midfielders who continually generated opportunities for the forwards. In the majority of 'Home and Away' games throughout that season, the midfield held sway and dictated terms to the opposition.

In 2008, the Dromana Reserves kicked an average a total of 92 points per game. Consequently, the team had finished on top of the **NFL Ladder** with 72 points (i.e. including two byes) and with a whopping percentage of 279%.



THE FIRST HURDLE TO THE GRAND FINAL

The **Second Semi-Final** against **Frankston** gave onlookers some insight into the prospect of Dromana winning the flag. In a superlative display of team-oriented football, Dromana led at every change and eventually ran out

conclusive winners by 52 points. As can be seen, Jesse Albrecht 'led the charge' that day with seven goals.

In summary, the team had controlled the midfield, combined effectively across all lines, followed the game plan to 'the letter and played with flair.

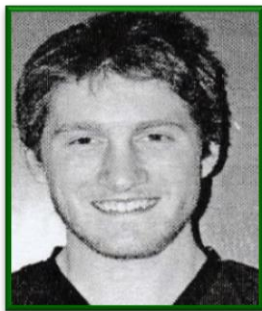
Quarter by quarter scores:

Dromana: 5.4 9.5 14.8 **18.9 (117)**

Frankston: 1.0 5.0 7.2 **10.6 (66).**

Goal kickers for Dromana: Jesse Albrecht 7 Clinton Liardet 2 Billy Peagram 2 Travis Sheean 2 Brett Stephens 1 Dom Pinneri 1 Ryan Pitcher 1 Dan Maestrle 1 and Jarryd Hunter

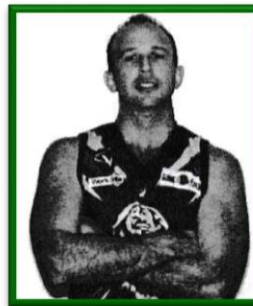
Best players for Dromana: Nick Willmott Jesse Albrecht Dwayne Day Travis Sheean and Jarryd Hunter



Nick Willmott



Dwayne Day



Daniel Maestrle

ROAD TO THE GRAND FINAL

SENIORS

Sorrento

2nd Semi Final Sorrento 15.11.101 d Dromana 6.9.45

Dromana

Qualifying Final Dromana 8.11.59 d Frankston 7.13.55

2nd Semi Final Dromana 6.9.45 lost to Sorrento 15.11.101

Preliminary Final Dromana 17.13.115 d Frankston 11.15.81

RESERVES

Dromana

2nd Semi Final Dromana 18.9.117 d Frankston 10.6.66

Frankston

Qualifying Final Frankston 12.8.80 d Langwarrin 8.11.59

2nd Semi Final Frankston 10.6.66 lost to Dromana 18.9.117

Preliminary Final Frankston 16.13.109 d Langwarrin 14.23.107



Frankston Park Grandstand in 2018.
The original grandstand was destroyed by fire,
in a suspected arson attack, in February 2008.

THE ADMIRABLE SPIRIT OF DAN JENNINGS

That resounding victory against Frankston was the just what the 'doctor had ordered' to prepare for the **2008 Grand Final**. Furthermore, the win ensured Dromana of one 'week's rest' (that has always been regarded as an advantage in any finals series).

The Grand Final was a 'return bout' against **Frankston** as the Bombers had defeated **Langwarrin** by two points in a 'cliff hanger' in the Preliminary Final. The Grand Final line-up was as shown below. The situation, in the hours leading up to the game, was not straight forward; and Brian Collery will never forget **Daniel Jennings** for his selfless attitude for the team that day,

As can be seen, **Jae Williams** was named at centre half-forward in the team. However, Jae's availability to play was thrown into question when his brother, **Kai**, was rushed to the **Royal Melbourne Hospital** on the eve of the game with serious illness. The Williams' family had gathered at the hospital anxiously awaiting news on Kai; and, as the hours ticked by, there was every chance that Jae would be unable to arrive at **Frankston Park** in time to take his place in the selected team on Saturday.




Jae Williams

Dan Jennings , who had been named as the first emergency that day, was on 'stand-by' and was asked, by Brian Collery, to 'don his boots' and to be involved in the warm-up prior to the game. Brian recalled...

"Dan Jennings, who had been named as an emergency had no hesitation in stepping aside when Jae Williams eventually arrived at the ground in time to take his place in starting line-up. I will never forget Dan's positive attitude towards that difficult situation; and the manner in which he assisted Jae. It was a glowing example of what our team stood for in 2008. Such selfless acts built the essence of that playing group. The other players, who were not selected in the team, such as George Papalas (who was the team runner in that game), Paul McIntosh, Andrew Proud and Stuart Shanks impressed everyone with their support and I have always remembered their unflinching loyalty in that Grand Final."

THE 2008 GRAND FINAL LINE -UP

DROMANA					
		BLACK, GRIT & GOLD			
		COACH		BRIAN COLLERY	
		TEAM MANAGER		BRENT LANCASTER	
16	PASQUILL	Aaron	30	174	85
18	COYLE	Aaron	21	188	85
22	HINES	Scott	23	176	72
23	PEAGRAM	William	25	178	84
27	PITCHER	Ryan	28	180	95
28	GARRY	Adam	27	178	79
29	ZAFFARESE	Paul	23	175	68
30	DAY	Dwayne	22	183	93
31	DONNELLY	Klayton	19	181	67
32	ALBRECHT	Jesse	20	184	76
33	STEPHENS	Brett	31	173	76
34	BARKER	Stuart	29	184	93
36	O'NEILL	Luke	24	204	121
37	WRIGHT	Thomas	21	189	83
38	McVEIGH	Chris	24	174	82
40	SHANKS	Stuart	25	185	80
41	MAESTRALE	Daniel	27	179	82
42	GIBBS	Daniel	27	180	93
47	SHEEAN	Travis	21	174	89
48	McINTOSH	Paul	24	188	101
49	JENNINGS	Daniel	25	174	95
50	PAPALAS	George	25	176	76
51	DOCHERTY	Troy	28	186	88
52	HELLYER	Dale	19	174	72
53	KENT	Ricky	21	169	83
54	PARKINS	Dale	21	184	86
55	HOFERT	Thomas	20	192	92
57	PROWD	Andrew	21	179	69
58	HUNTER	Jarryd	19	184	75
59	WILLMOTT	Nicholas	23	187	87
60	MATTHEWS	Michael	28	178	82
61	WORN	Ryan	19	187	74
62	JARRETT	Clint	21	175	68
66	BANKS	Samuel	19	166	67
67	BURNS	Andrew	18	190	94
68	SWEET	Luke	19	173	76
69	COLLERY	Brian	35	183	94
73	LIADERT	Clinton	23	178	75

The team list as published in the 'MPNFL Record'
–Saturday 6th September 2008.

Backs	Scott Hines	Stuart Barker	Dwayne Day
H. Backs	Nick Willmott	Aaron Coyle	Tom Wright
Centre	Adam Garry	Dale Parkins	Clint Liardet
H. Forw'ds	Dan Maestrale	Jae Williams	Bill Peagram
Forwards	Jesse Albrecht	Ryan Pitcher	Aaron Pasquill
Rucks	Tom Hofert	Jarryd Hunter	Travis Sheean
I/C	Brett Stephens Luke O'Neill Daniel Gibbs Paul Zaffarese		
Emergencies	Dan Jennings George Papalas Stuart Shanks Sam Banks Andrew Prowd Paul McIntosh		

Note: **Dom Pinneri** , who had played well in the Reserves Grade Second Semi-Final win, was selected in the **Senior XVIII** on that day.

THE GAME

The game was a tough, tense and tight tussle from the first bounce; and it was apparent that Frankston had learnt some salient lessons from its loss in the Second Semi-Final.

The Bombers played with greater intensity and purpose; and the warm conditions that day presented very challenges. The second half could best be described as a 'war of attrition' as both teams toiled to gain the 'upper hand.'

The quarter-by-quarter scores tell the tale of a tough encounter; and the last half was a battle of backlines. By the final stanza, the match had become an arm wrestle and survival of the fittest as the thermometer nudged higher...

"From our very first practice match in 2008 in the blazing summer heat, there was something special about the way that our group trained, combined and enjoyed each other's company. As the season unfolded, their bonds were unbreakable; and their honest and disciplined efforts in the Home and Away series prepared them for the cut and thrust of the finals that year.

Frankston had the luxury of several skilled senior players dropping back to play in that Grand Final; and it was a much different situation to the Second Semi-Final. We were seriously challenged in the second quarter and at half-time the game was in the balance. Every player fully realized situation and Scott Hines, Clinton Liardet, Aaron Coyle, Adam Garry and Ryan Pitcher 'stood tall' in that second half.

At three quarter time, we held a narrow lead of just eight points and the last term it was virtually a 'toe to toe title fight' in the

heat of the day. Close games are only won when everyone contributes and, in the end, it was our teamwork, collective will and cast-iron discipline that carried us to victory that day.

It was one of the greatest moments of my life and I know it meant the world to the players. It still does!" Source: Brian Collery July 2018.

Quarter by quarter scores:

Dromana : 3.3 5. 4. 9.5. 10.7 (67)

Frankston 2.1. 5.2 8.3 8.6.54

Goal kickers for Dromana: Jesse Albrecht 3 Jae Williams 2

Jarryd Hunter 1 Bill Peagram 1 and Travis Sheean 1

Best players for Dromana: Clinton Liardet Brett Stephens

Aaron Coyle Dale Parkins Ryan Pitcher and Adam Garry



Clinton Liardet



Aaron Coyle



Travis Sheean

Adam Garry won the **VCFL Medallion** for his sterling efforts across four gruelling quarters. Adam's win was even more meritorious when considering that he had sustained a dreadful broken leg some seasons earlier in a match against **Carrum Downs**.



Adam Garry

The victory meant a great deal to the players, officials and the faithful band of supporters and the celebrations and merriment went 'long into the 'wee hours of the morning.' It had been a 'long time between drinks' and the club had weathered testing times seasons since the last flag in 1971. Dromana Football Club had thrown 'a monkey of its back' and had proven, to many cynics, that the club was competitive and on a solid pathway to future success.



Billy Peagram



Aaron Pasquill

THE 'ICING ON THE CAKE'

JARRYD HUNTER & JESSE ALBRECHT

It was an unforgettable season for the DFNC Reserves as **Jarryd Hunter** won the **Howard Armstrong Medal** for the Best and Fairest player in the Reserves Grade in 2008.



Jarryd Hunter



Jesse Albrecht

Jesse Albrecht won the **Nepean Football League Reserves Grade** goal-kicking award with a total of 48 goals. That tally does not include his ten goals in the final series that year. Of his 58 goals in 2008, Jesse's three in the **Grand Final** were vital in etching the team's name into MPNFL history.

The Reserves VXIII Club awards in 2008 were as follows:

Best & Fairest	Jarryd Hunter
Runner-Up-B& F	Travis Sheean
Most Consistent	Jesse Albrecht
Most Determined	Tom Hofert
Coach's Award	Dale Parkins
Goal-kicking	Jesse Albrecht
Encouragement Award	Daniel Jennings
Best Team Man	Brett Stephens
Players' Player	Tom Wright
Most Improved	Paul McIntosh
Best Finals Player	Ryan Pitcher

LAST WORDS ON THE 2008 PREMIERSHIP



The Reserves team at the 2008 Presentation Night .

Looking back on that victory, Brian Collery still admires the cohesive spirit of that group and, of course, the fighting qualities of every member of the team...

"The boys were very proud of themselves that day; and rightly so; because they had achieved something special in any level of football. Not only had they won every game that season but they had plainly demonstrated that teamwork is the heart of

all achievements in life and sport. It is ten years since we won that flag and our friendship and mutual respect have never wavered. That's football. " Source: Brian Collery July 2019.



Ten years later- still together – 21st July 2018.
The 2008 Premiership Team Reunion.

REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Sources: DFNC archives –MPNFL Record - Personal files & DFNC publications-Tiger Talk Files (Vicki Holt)- Interview with Brian Collery.

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Researched and written for DFNC by: Roger Spaul –August -2018.

DFNC website administrator: Graham Stelling. DFNC Secretary-Board Member.

Email contacts: historian@dromanatigers.com.au. or admin@dromanatigers.com.au