

IMAGES OF YALLOURN

1939

YALLOURN WIN THE CGFL PREMIERSHIP





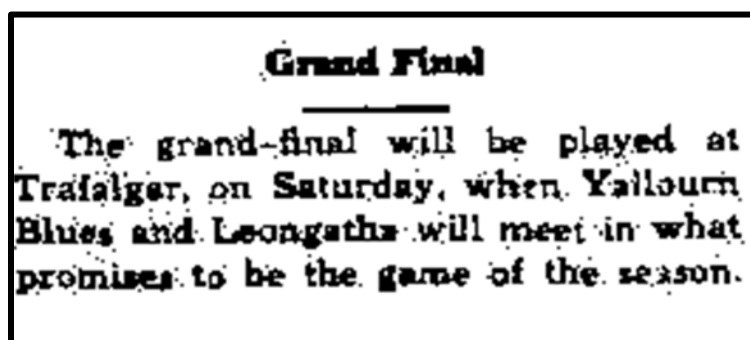
'Source of all photographs': 'The Weekly Times' September 23rd 1939 Page: 39

ACTION FROM THE 1939 GRAND FINAL AT TRAFALGAR

With the AFL Grand Final 'just around the corner', it was thought that the above action photographs, from the 1939 Central Gippsland Grand Final, may be of interest to Virtual Yallourn readers.

These photographs were a chance discovery (i.e. serendipity); and were unearthed in 'The Weekly Times' when researching the career of Yallourn's well-known coach and local personality, Bert Downs. The photos add a little more to the story of local football and the history of the township.

The Grand Final was played on Saturday 16th September 1939 at Trafalgar. A large crowd attended and the gate takings were £126 (pounds- \$11, 250 in today's currency). The field umpire was Jim Cummins and the match was broadcast by radio station 3UL.



The victorious 1939 Yallourn team was skippered by Bert Downs who played with Collingwood in 1933. Bert's brother, Tommy, was a talented rover for Carlton. Tommy 'hit the headlines' following an incident with Richmond's Maurie Hunter in Round: 12 in 1931.

Bert, who was a Fitter and later a Shift Foreman with the SEC, and his family lived across the road from State School 4085 at 30 Parkway. The photo (below) shows Bert proudly wearing his Yallourn jumper.



The Yallourn team, that day in 1939, included the following players:

Bert Downs, Claude Higginson, Jack Piggott, Col Webster, Col Benson, Jack Edwards, Ken Williams, Alan Hemming, George Batson, Stan Attenborough, Stan Comber, Keith Barton, Phil Ashmead, Owen Cosgriff, Len Kiernan 'Snowy' Curran.....

Other family names mentioned in the match reviews during that season were:

****** Lambourne (perhaps Jack), Vary (perhaps Alan), E. Holt, J. Rawlings, Troake (perhaps Tom) and L. Beulke (probably related to Howard).

****Note:** My apologies for any incorrect first names of the Yallourn players; and any assistance that readers may be able to offer in this regard will be greatly appreciated. Thank you (Roger).



The 1939 Yallourn Blues Premiership team.

QUARTER BY QUARTER SCORES

Yallourn: 4.7 5.9 9.11 16.13 (109)

Leongatha: 0.0 3.0 5.8 9.8 (62)

Goal kickers for Yallourn:

Batson 7 Barton 5 Comber 2 Beulke 1 Williams 1

Best players for Yallourn:

Webster Downs Piggott Barton Batson Cosgriff Ashmead Edwards

YALLOURN FOOTBALL CLUB OFFICIALS



The above photograph was also carried in the article in 'The Weekly Times'. It is rare photograph (possibly the only one) of the committee members of the Yallourn Football Club in 1939. This is an invaluable photo as it 'puts a face' to some of the names of the officials who worked so hard to bring success to the club in that 'Golden Era' of YFC.

The names of the officials are listed (as per 'The Weekly Times' article):

Left to right: Messrs. E. Rust, F. Hamilton, A. J. Lazarus, H. O. Bern. W. H. Brewer (Pres.), O. Beulke (Manager), A. Smith, W. Mayes, C. B. Drane (Secretary), H. Benjamin and W. Mussared.

FOOTNOTES TO THE GAME

1. For those readers not familiar with the history of the Yallourn Football Club, the club was officially formed in 1922; and was affiliated with various Gippsland competitions for the next 55 years (e.g. Central & West Gippsland Football Association, Central Gippsland FL, Central Gippsland War-Time Football League, and the Latrobe Valley Football League). The club won ten premierships in 1925, 1928, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1935, 1936 1939, 1944 and 1948.

2. In 1954, YFC was an enthusiastic/active founding member of the LVFL; and, over the years, proved to be a competitive and valued club throughout the league. YFC played in several LVFL finals series but, sadly, never won a flag after 1948. In 1976, Yallourn played its last game as a 'stand alone' club; and, in 1977, amalgamated with the Yallourn North Football Club to become the YYNFC.

3. The club's 'Golden Era' was in the 1930's; and, football was such a popular sport, that in the late 1930's fielded Senior XVIII teams known as the Imperials

(affiliated with the Mid Gippsland Football League), Yallourn Blues and the Yallourn Golds. The coach and one of the leading lights of Yallourn Golds, in that era, was Tom Knight. Tom was the brother of the Collingwood and St Kilda star, Jack Knight. Tom's sons Bruce and Daryl were also outstanding players for Yallourn and Bruce trained with Collingwood in 1951.

4. Yallourn's star forward in the 1939 Grand Final was George Batson who had played with St Kilda in 1933. George, originally from Warragul, played his first game for St Kilda in Round: 11 against Geelong in 1933. George played four games for St Kilda before returning home to Gippsland.

4. Ken Williams, who played in the 1939 CGFL Grand Final, was recruited to Collingwood the following year. Ken played 12 games for the Magpies. Note; Ken is not related to the other notable players from Yallourn Doug and Mossie Williams

"Ken Williams was a brilliant footballer with Yallourn Blues. Tall, strongly built and a beautiful kick, he was capable of playing at either end of the ground, and most often filled key positions. ...who was the brother of ... famed Geoff Williams, Ken first played senior football as a 16-year-old, having graduated from the Yallourn Imperials. He immediately became a regular, missing only one game in his first five seasons (and that was only because of the death of a family member). When the Yallourn team, which had been playing in the Gippsland League, divided into two teams, he joined the Blues. Source: 'Collingwood Forever'"



5. Another talented Yallourn player, of that era, who should be acknowledged was Bill Green. Bill left Yallourn in 1939 and played his first VFL game for Essendon in Round : 9 1939 at Fitzroy. He played six games with Essendon and it is recorded that Bill then crossed to Williamston FC (VFA) in 1941.

6. Jack Piggott, who played such a sterling game for Yallourn in that game, was a stalwart in local football. Jack had a stellar career with Yallourn FC and was also a star in the 1933 Grand Final victory over Maffra. It would be interesting to know more about the playing history of Jack Piggott as he seems to have been a 'quiet achiever' in Gippsland football. There is a possibility that Jack may have been related to Max who played for South Melbourne (1946-47). Max was a soldier, farmer and intrepid journalist; and he hit the news when he booted seven goals against Carlton in 1947. If any reader can assist with more information about Jack Piggott and his family, please contact Virtual Yallourn. Thank you for your help with this matter.

7. Another Yallourn player with an eminent family name in Victorian sport was Len Kiernan. Christopher Kiernan was regarded as one of the most gifted player's footballers of his generation; and he played with 102 with Fitzroy. He also played 10 cricket matches for Victoria. Yallourn's Len was Kiernan no slouch in local in football and cricket; and, at the Victorian Country Week Championships in 1939, Len made 344 runs (at an average of 38.2) and took 17 wickets.

8. Some readers may not know that Bert Downs was instrumental in encouraging Yallourn's talented player Doug Williams to play with Carlton ...

"Local identity, Bert Downs (the brother of noted Carlton rover Tom Downs) recommended that Doug train at Carlton FC. The Blues wasted no time in signing Doug and he played his first senior game against Footscray in Round: 11 in 1944."

Source: 'Virtual Yallourn' August 2013.

Doug Williams went onto play 120 games with Carlton and played in two blues premiership teams in 1945 and 1947. Doug's brother, Mossie, who was an adroit player with YFC, also played at Carlton FC.

9. Claude Higginson was later to coach Yallourn North in 1949. One of Yallourn's finest forwards, Peter Cook, who later played with Melbourne, was glowing in his praise of Claude's coaching...

"Peter believes Claude gave him some very important lessons in the fundamentals of kicking, marking and body work."

Source: Virtual Yallourn October 2013.

REGARDING YALLOURN'S CHAMPION - ALAN HUTTON

In Memory Of Alan Hutton

ALL Gippsland admirers of a good sportsman will be pleased to learn that with the co-operation of the clubs of the Central Gippsland League, the Yallourn club were able to hand over to Mrs A. J Hutton the sum of £62 derived from a special benefit match last year.

This news will bring back memories of Alan James Hutton, tall and rangy, spectacular mark and prodigious kick, a model centre half-back and above all scrupulously fair. Equally effective in the ruck, he was clever, calm and steady in tight corners, often turning certain defeat into victory. Highly respected by all who knew him, his death at the age of 30 was a distinct loss to football

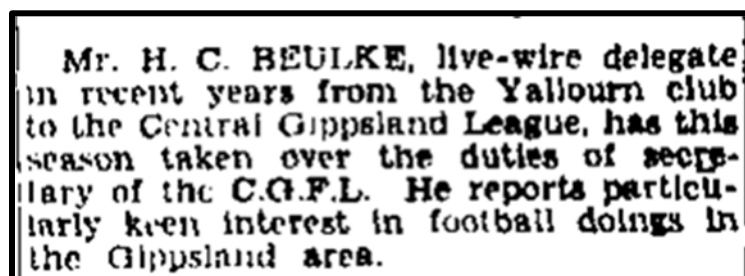


Yallourn's champion footballer, Alan Hutton, who played with Yallourn in 1939, was unable to take the field in that Grand Final as he had suffered serious injuries in a road collision in August. Alan was hospitalized but, during the ensuing weeks, his condition worsened; and he passed away on the 23rd September (i.e. one week after the above game at Trafalgar).

Alan was recognised far and wide as one of the finest footballers in Gippsland; and his death was a dreadful shock to the town and the district. While there was substantial joy generated by the team's Grand Final victory, the demise of Alan was uppermost the minds of all players and members.

HOWARD BEULKE – A DYNAMO OF THAT ERA

It would be remiss not to mention the appointment of Yallourn's dynamic administrator to the role of Secretary of the Central Gippsland Football League in 1939. Howard's dedication and attention to detail was a major factor in the success of the YFC in that era. For any club to have on-field success there needs to be proficient off-field organization. In 1951, Howard was made a Life Member of the CGFL and in later years, Howard served as a District Councillor to the VFL. From its earliest days Yallourn Football Club was blessed with some adept committee members and administrators and stories about the YFC leaders, during the various eras of the club's history, can be found on this website.



TABLES TURNED IN THE 1951 CGFL GRAND FINAL

Twelve years later, Leongatha 'turned the tables' on Yallourn and took out the premiership. The 1951 Grand Final was played at Trafalgar; and the final scores that day were: Leongatha 13.18 (96) defeated Yallourn 13.8 (86).

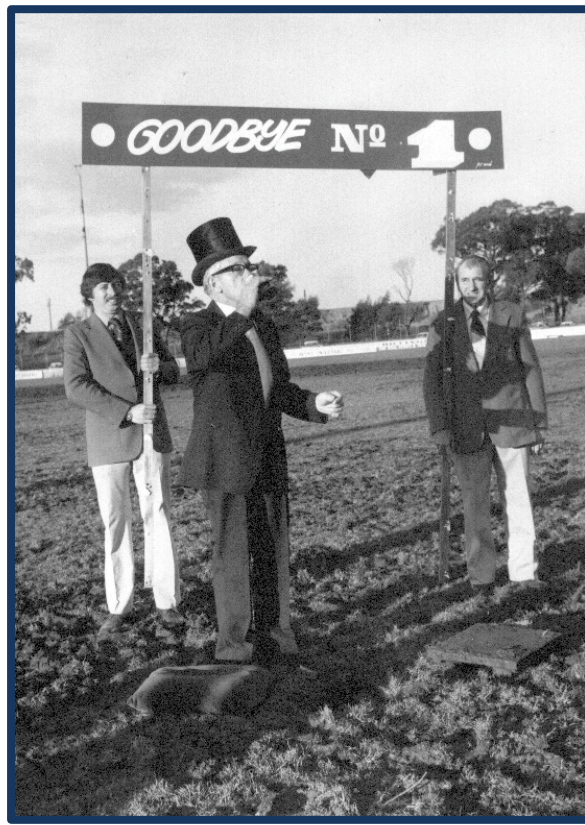
FURTHER READING ABOUT THE YFC IN THAT ERA

Further reading about the personalities and events of Yallourn Football Club can be found at:

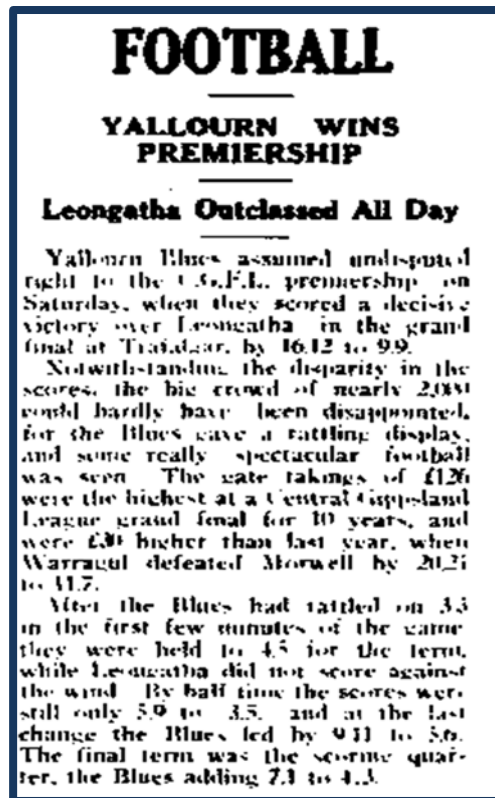
1. The tragic passing of Alan Hutton:
<http://www.virtualyallourn.com/node/31682>
2. The Knight Family of YFC:
<http://www.virtualyallourn.com/stories/yallourn-football-club-yfc-bruce-knight-vin-sabbatucci-morris-mossie-williams-arthur>

3. The story of Doug and Mossie Williams:
<http://www.virtualyallourn.com/stories/yallourn-football-club-yfc-1945-65-doug-and-morris-mossie-williams>
4. A story about WH 'Dad' Brewer can be found on:
<http://www.virtualyallourn.com/people/individuals/w-h-brewer>
5. An absorbing article by Collingwood FC Historian , Michael Roberts, about Bert Downs can be found on the 'Collingwood Forever' website at;
<https://forever.collingwoodfc.com.au/players/albert-downs/>
6. A story about Ken Williams can also be found at:
<https://forever.collingwoodfc.com.au/players/ken-williams/>

1977- THE FINAL CURTAIN ON THE 'FIELD OF DREAMS'



Col Webster (with top hat) and Col Benson (right), who both played in the 1939 premierships team, call 'time' on the famous Yallourn Oval in 1977. On that day, Yallourn 22.10.142 defeated Maffra 9.11. 65; however, despite the definitive victory, it was a sad day in the hearts of countless families of the township.



Source: 'Great Southern Advocate' September 21st 1939. Page: 2

THE END

This article was prepared by Roger Spaul and Julie George for the Virtual Yallourn website in October 2020. Julie would welcome any further information about the above personalities and other photographs and cuttings about the Yallourn Football Club. Thank you.