**Cygnet Football Club – A Brief History of ‘The Port’**

The Lovett Football Club (now known as the Cygnet Football Club) first played in the Huon Football Association in 1906, and has fielded a team continuously since the Association was reformed in 1912. The Club wore the famous black and white striped jumper from those very early days, over 110 years ago.

The Lovett /Cygnet Football Club had immediate success, winning back-to back Premierships in 1912 and 1913, captained by Clarrie Burton. One of the most popular games was played in 1913 at Kermandie, when 300 Lovett players and supporters arrived at Port Huon on the Steam Ship Morgana. Over 400 locals also turned out for the game, which saw Lovett win by 5 points, after a goal was kicked on the final bell.

In the early days, visiting teams from Kermandie and Franklin would row across the river to the Port of Cygnet, and then walk over Silver Hill to the Lovett ground, which was located on Mr. J Harvey’s property. After playing a hard game followed by some liquid refreshments, they would repeat the journey in reverse, often late into the night.

After the successful 1913 season, the Club decided to change its name to the Cygnet Football Club and the team’s home ground was moved to land owned by the Fitzpatrick’s in the centre of the Cygnet Township (now the Cygnet Primary School Oval). The land was purchased for the princely sum of 10 pounds and was worked up and sown with grass in readiness for the 1914 season.

One of the Club’s most notable players in these early years was ‘Rusty’ Rogers. ‘Rusty’ wore no boots or socks and always had a few drinks before a game and was constantly amongst the best players. Several of his team mates thought he might perform even better with no alcohol, so they tried to steer him on the straight and narrow and kept him sober before one particular game. Whether by accident or design, ‘Rusty’ failed to get a kick that day and thereafter was let do as he pleased as long as he played well!

Since 1912, the Lovett/Cygnet FC has won 34 Senior Premierships, an average of one premiership every 3 or so years, and approximately 20 Reserve and Under-age Premierships. The Club’s most successful decade was the 1960’s when they won six premierships, with the 1920’s and 1970’s not far behind, with five premierships won in each of these decades.

In the thirteen year period from 1945 to 1957, following the Second World War, the Cygnet Seniors played in 12 Grand Finals, winning seven Premierships. In 1947 and 1948 the Club were the State Country Champions, beating the premiers in other competitions around the State. During this period the Club changed its style of jumper, firstly to horizontal black and white stripes and then to a black jumper with a white V neck.

In the early 1950’s the Club again moved its ground, this time to the present location.

The Club has won 3 Senior Premierships in successive years on only two occasions, firstly in 1966, 1967 and 1968 under Coach, Lyle Graham. The dominance of the Cygnet Football Club during this period is evidenced by the Club’s Reserves and Under-ages teams also winning premierships in each of these 3 years – a phenomenal achievement.

In the late 1960’s the Club returned to its original jumper design of the black and white vertical stripes, and this strip was worn until 1998 when the Club joined the extended Southern Tasmania Football League and adopted the Port colours of black, white and teal.

The Club also won successive premierships in 2002, 2003 and 2004 under Coach Gary Williamson, but was denied a ‘four-peat’ (four consecutive premierships) in 2005. After leading for much of the Grand Final that year, the Kermandie Football Club came from behind to snatch victory and the Premiership by five points.

Players

The Cygnet Football Club has had many champions play for it over its long history, including a number of multiple Best & Fairest winners. The late Greg ‘Ducky’ Gordon won the award on six occasions, Bradley Watson (has won it 5 times), Robbie Thorp, Marty Brereton and Grant Clark (3 times) and there have been several dual winners.

‘Ducky’ Gordon is the Club’s Game Record Holder, having played 450 games in total (310 Senior, 110 Reserves and 30 Under-age). In addition to his 6 Club B&F Awards, Greg also won six Huon Football Association Best & Fairest Awards – the Senior Award in 1987 & 1990 and Reserves (1992, 1993, 1994 & 1997).

In July 1976, Cygnet’s Greg ‘Welshman’ Howard kicked a HFA record 22 goals against Franklin, breaking the previous record of 18 goals set by Huonville’s Lee Paul only a few weeks earlier. ‘Welshman’s’ record was never bettered in the history of the HFA.

Over the years, a number of Cygnet players have achieved success in the higher Tasmanian Football League, with several winning TFL Club Best & Fairest Awards (Jack O’Rourke, Keith and Paddy Cripps, Leon Synnott, John Bone, Don Holland, Tony Marchant and the current Southern Storm Colts Coach, Matthew Brereton).

Others to excel at the higher level include Rodney Adams, who topped the TFL goal kicking in 1973 with 97 goals and Max Howard, Kerry Doran and Matthew Brereton who each represented Tasmania on multiple occasions.

The Cygnet FC has also produced several goal kicking champions over the years, including Clarrie Burton, Robbie Thorp and Micheal ‘Pud’ Darcy who each kicked over 1,000 goals for the Club during their careers.

Coaches

Since 1945, the Cygnet Football Club has benefited from the services of several multiple Premiership Coaches, including Gary Williamson (4 Premierships - 1994, 2002, 2003 & 2004), Lyle Graham (3 Premierships - 1966, 1967 & 1968), Leon Synnott (2 Premierships – 1955 & 1957) and Jack Rodgers (2 Premierships – 1947 & 1948).

Life Members

The Club has built a proud legacy of members and volunteers contributing considerable time and effort to keeping the club running for the past century. Over the past 70 years, the club has honoured 48 members with Life Membership, including five of our lady members.

Past Players and Officials

The Cygnet FC has an active Past Players & Officials Committee who organise a function each season. This function is generally a sell-out as both distant and local past players and members catch up and reminisce on old times.

There is a long and proud tradition within the Cygnet Football Club stretching back to its formation in 1906, and one which everyone involved with the Club wishes to see continue well into the future.