

CRACKERS CHRONICLES – 1931 PREMIERSHIP PLAYERS

Welcome back to this week's edition of "**Crackers Chronicles**".

Each week in this column we will trace some of the history of the *Old Scotch Football Club* by recounting the contributions made by our senior premierships players.

This week we focus on our 1931 fifth premierships players ...

1931 A Section Premiers *Old Scotch* 10.11.71 defeated *Elsternwick* 7.13.55 at Elsternwick Park, Elsternwick on 26 September 1931.

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|----------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Backs | Jim Davis | Paddy Welsh | Bert Pitman |
| Half Backs | Neil Law | Alec Sloan (B&F) | Mo Moran |
| Centres | Bill Berry | Gordon Law | Gavin Paterson (C) |
| Half Forwards | Alex Guild | Bob Coutts | Billy Vickers |
| Forwards | Roy Barnett | Bill Pearson | Colin Warne |
| Followers | Hec Ingram | Tom Leach | |
| Rover | Clare Higson | | |

Coach – Jack Petchell

In 1923, Jack Petchell was recruited from *Scotch College*, where he had played in the School 1st XVIII in 1922 & 1923, and played in one season with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club*. He played in our first 1923 A Section premierships team whilst still at school. From 1924 – 1926, he played for *University A (Blues)* on a half forward flank or as a rover, and was a Victorian State Representative player in 1926. Then from 1927 – 1929, Jack was a *South Melbourne Football Club* player, playing 35 games and kicking 36 goals.

In 1931, Jack returned to *Old Scotch* and took over the coaching of our team from Clive Fergie. Jack coached our team for only one season in 1931, winning our fifth A Section premierships defeating *Elsternwick*. Jack died in 1968.

Roy Barnett

In 1930, Roy was recruited from *Scotch College* and played ten seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1930 – 1939. He played in our 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934 A Section premierships teams playing in the number "4" jumper. He was a follower where his high marking and dash were features of his play. He went on to be our club's Best & Fairest in 1938. Roy died in 1980.

Roy is the younger brother of Ben Barnett, the Australian Test wicketkeeper and former OSCFC player (1926 – 1931).

Nelson Northcote Berry (believed to be "Bill" Berry)

In 1931, "Bill" Berry an old boy of *Scotch College* from 1927 joined the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* and played two seasons for our club 1931 & 1932, playing in the number "15" jumper. He played in our 1931 A Section premierships team. Bill died in 1996.

Bob Coutts

In 1929, Bob Coutts was recruited from *Scotch College* and played eleven seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1929 – 1939. He played in our 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934 A Section premierships teams playing in the number "6" jumper. Bob played most of his games at centre half forward, but in 1934 was selected at full back where his high marking and kicking were a feature. He was also a Victorian State Representative in 1932, 1933 & 1937. Bob was a very versatile player able to play back or forward. Bob died in 1987.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Bob at full back in his team.

Jim Davis

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In 1927, Jim Davis was recruited from *Scotch College* and played eight seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1927 – 1934, playing his first season in the number “23” jumper then changing to the number “13” jumper. He played in the back pocket in our 1931, 1932 & 1933 A Section premierships teams. Jim died in 1993.

Alex Guild

In 1929, Alex Guild was recruited from *Scotch College* and played twelve seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1929 – 1940. He played in our 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934 A Section premierships teams playing in the number “19” jumper. Alex was one of the best half forward flanker or wing men in the Association. His clever handling and kicking of the ball was a delight to watch. He was our club’s Best & Fairest in 1933 and club captain in 1939 & 1940. He was also a Victorian State Representative in 1935 & 1938. Alex died in 2002.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Alex on the wing in his team.

Clare “Piggy” Higson

In 1927, Clare Higson was recruited from *Scotch College* and played seven seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1927 – 1933, playing first in the number “21” jumper, then the number “14” jumper and finally in the number “5” jumper. He played in our 1927 & 1931 A Section premierships teams. Clare died in 1974.

Hec Ingram

In 1927, Hec Ingram was recruited from *Scotch College* following in the footsteps of his older brother Bruce “Honey” Ingram. He played eight seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1927 – 1936, playing in the number “30” jumper. He played in our 1931 A Section premierships team. He was also a Victorian State Representative in 1931.

Much later, he became the eighth president of the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* for six years from 1969 – 1974. He enjoyed being our Reserves premierships president in 1969 & 1973, B Section premierships president in 1970, and Club 18 premierships president in 1971.

Hec was awarded Life Membership of our Club in 1976. Before he died, Hec named his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*. Hec died in 1998.

Hec is the brother of former OSCFC player Bruce “Honey” Ingram (1925 – 1928) and the father of former OSCFC player William “Bill” Ingram (1961 – 1968).

Gordon “Snowy” Law

In 1922, Gordon Law was recruited from *Scotch College*, where he had played in the School 1st XVIII in 1920 & 1921, and went on to play fifteen seasons (267 games – a then club record) with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1922 – 1936. He played in all eight of our pre-war A Section premierships teams of 1923, 1924, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934. He was also a Victorian State Representative in 1927 & 1928.

Gordon was our club’s Best & Fairest in the premierships year of 1932, and captained our club for one year in 1935. In 1935, he captained our club to be A Section runners up - *University Blacks* 16.12.108 defeating *Old Scotch* 12.20.92.

He started his career initially in the number “12” jumper, then moved to the number “2” jumper before finishing his career in the number “9” jumper.

Gordon was awarded Life Membership of our Club in 1959, having already played 200 games for our club back in 1930. Gordon died in 1966.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Gordon on the half forward flank of his team.

Gordon is father of former OSCFC player Max Law (1953) and former champion OSCFC & Hawthorn Football Club player Ian Law (1956 – 1960).

Neil Law

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In 1924, Neil Law was recruited from *Scotch College* where he had played in the School 1st XVIII in 1923, and played thirteen seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1924 – 1935. He played in seven pre-war A Section premierships of 1924, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934, playing in the number “7” jumper. He was our club’s Best & Fairest in 1928 & 1930. He was also a Victorian State Representative in 1930.

After retiring from playing, in 1961 he was appointed to the VAFA Independent Tribunal.

Neil was awarded Life Membership of our Club in 1959 and also made a Patron of our Club in 1959. Neil died in 1989.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Neil on the half back flank of his team.

Neil is the father of former OSCFC players Tony Law (1955 – 1956) and Mike Law (1959 & 1961).

Thomas Leach

In 1929, Thomas Leach was recruited from *Scotch College* and played four seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* in 1929 & 1931 – 1933. He played in our 1931 A Section premierships. Thomas died in 1983.

Maurice “Mo” Moran

In 1926, Maurice “Mo” Moran was recruited from *Scotch College*, where he had played in the School 1st XVIII in 1925 & 1925, and played ten seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1926 – 1935, playing initially in the number “9” jumper and later from 1932 in the number “14” jumper. He played in six of our pre-war A Section premierships, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934. Mo died in 1988.

Gavin Paterson

In 1923, Gavin Paterson was recruited from *Scotch College*, where he had played in the School 1st XVIII in 1921 & 1922, and played twelve seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1923 – 1934, playing in the number “20” jumper from 1927 – 1930. He played in all eight of our pre-war A Section premierships of 1923, 1924, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934. He was club captain for five years from 1930 – 1934, captaining four successive A Section premierships in the number “1” jumper:

In 1931, coached by Jack Petchell, Gavin captained our club to a fifth A Section premiership - *Old Scotch* 10.11.71 defeating *Elsternwick* 7.13.55.

In 1932, coached by Lou Bols, Gavin again captained our club to a sixth A Section premiership - *Old Scotch* 13.18.96 defeating *State Savings Bank* 10.8.68.

In 1933, coached by Gus Dobrigh, Gavin captained our club to yet a seventh A Section premiership - *Old Scotch* 15.16.106 defeating *University Blacks* 10.14.74.

In 1934, coached by Vic Belcher, Gavin yet again captained our club to an unprecedented eighth A Section premiership - *Old Scotch* 16.10.106 defeating *University Blacks* 13.11.89.

Unfortunately, serious injury in his last triumph, the 1934 grand final, closed Gavin’s illustrious twelve-year playing career. He is our club’s most successful club captain. Gavin died in 1971.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Gavin on the wing and vice-captain of his team.

William “Bill” Pearson

In 1931, Bill Pearson was recruited from *Scotch College* and played eight seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1931 – 1937, and again after the War in 1946 for only three games, debuting in our Seniors in 1931 at full forward and playing in the number “3” jumper. He was an A Section premierships player in 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934, our club’s Best & Fairest in 1934, 1935 & 1937, and our club’s leading goalkicker from 1931 – 1937, kicking 1,022 goals in just seven seasons:

- 1931 95 goals
- 1932 126 goals
- 1933 168 goals
- 1934 220 goals

Old Scotch Football Club

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- 1935 137 goals
- 1936 126 goals
- 1937 150 goals
1,022 goals

Bill stood 6ft 2 ins tall and weighed 12½ stone – he was an excellent build for a footballer. He was a wonderful mark and a perfect kick, and for a big man was a good ground player. He was a major factor in the club winning four premierships.

Master VFL coach Norm Smith said Bill was the finest exponent of the torpedo punt he ever saw. Teammates said so straight and long was Bill's goalkicking that on set shots they would automatically return to the centre, so sure they were of his accuracy.

During his time with our club, Bill played in 101 wins (kicking 845 goals for an average of 8.36 per game), 33 losses (kicking 164 goals for an average of 4.96 per game) and 2 draws (kicking 13 goals for an average of 6.5 per game). At one stage during 1932 and 1933, Bill played in sixteen successive wins to which he contributed 132 goals at an average of 8.25 per game. From Round 14 to Round 18 in 1934, Bill kicked bags of 15, 30, 10, 11 & 17 goals.

He was also a Victorian State Representative in 1933, 1935, 1936 & 1937. Bill also kicked 57 goals in interstate games with a highest total of 16 against Tasmania.

Later in 1939 & 1940, he coached our club.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Bill at full forward in his team.

Bill was also a Victorian District cricketer with the *St Kilda Cricket Club* (190 matches) and the *Camberwell Cricket Club* (1 match) scoring 4,947 runs at an average of 30.16 and taking 189 wickets at an average of 20.53. He also played 14 matches for *Victoria* scoring 467 runs and taking 26 wickets. Bill died in 1987.

Our annual "Most Valuable Club Person" award is named after Bill.

Albert "Bert" Pitman

In 1931, Albert "Bert" Pitman was recruited from *Scotch College* and played two seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* in 1931 & 1932, playing in the number "32" jumper. He played in our 1931 & 1932 A Section premiership teams. Bert died in 1987.

Alexander "Alec" Sloan

In 1924, Alexander Sloan, known as "Alec", was recruited from *Scotch College*, where he was playing in the School 1st XVIII and was Captain of Football in 1924, and played with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* while still at school, playing in the number "12" jumper. In 1924, while still at *Scotch College*, he was Captain of Football, Captain of Boats, Captain of Athletics and Captain of the School. And, Dux of the School. Later in 1929, he re-joined our club and went on to play seven seasons with our club from 1924 & 1929 – 1934. He played in our 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934 A Section premiership teams in the number "2" jumper. He had no peer as a centre half back. He was our club's Best & Fairest in 1931 and a Victorian State Representative in 1931. Many older supporters nominate Alec as one of our greatest players ever. Alec died in 1974.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Alec at centre half back in his team.

William "Billy" Vickers

In 1923, Billy Vickers, a *University High School* old boy who worked as a clerk for Union Assurance, joined the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* and played six seasons from 1923, 1925 – 1928 & 1931, playing in the number "15" jumper. In 1923 as a promising player, *St Kilda Football Club* approached him, but instead he elected to play with *Old Scotch*. His father was an old Scotch boy. Rheumatic fever prevented him from playing in 1924. He played in our 1923, 1926, 1927 & 1931 A Section premiership teams. He was our club's leading goalkicker in 1926 – the newspaper reported ... "he kicks with both feet and is good in the air". In 1926, he was also a Victorian State Representative playing as first rover against South Australia in Adelaide and kicking four goals to help Victoria to win.

In 1927, he and his friend Jim Shankland decided to try out for the *Essendon Football Club* and Billy was selected, going on to play three games and kick four goals in 1927. However, after playing the

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first three rounds with *Essendon*, he returned to *Old Scotch* and later played in our 1931 A Section premiership team. Billy died in 1976.

In his *Team of the Best Old Scotch Players before the War*, Hec Ingram named Billy as 19th man of his team.

Billy is the father of former OSCFC player Bob Vickers who played 56 games with our club from 1964 – 1966 & 1969. Billy is also the older brother of former OSCFC player Lin Vickers (1926).

Colin Warne

In 1929, Colin Warne was recruited from *Scotch College* and played two seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* in 1929 & 1931. He played in our 1931 A Section premiership team. Colin died in 1980.

Jack “Paddy” Welsh

In 1931, Jack “Paddy” Welsh was recruited from *Scotch College* and played five seasons with the *Old Scotch Collegians Football Club* from 1931 – 1935, playing in the number “17” jumper. He played in our 1931, 1932, 1933 & 1934 A Section premiership teams. A former State Decathlon champion, Paddy played the game very hard but was scrupulously fair. He was always under notice for his high marking and good kicking. Paddy died in 1989.

Next week we will look at our premiership players of 1932 ...

I welcome any feedback to gmccracken@oldscotchfc.com.au