

1920 to 1929

1921 R/Up

1921 Runners Up

Avoca reformed after the First World War and again played in the Avoca & District Association in 1921.

The Office Bearers were,

President: E.T. (Ned) Brown.

Secretary: H.O. (Harry) Rodwell.

The captain was Jas Yates, and the players Robert Lindsay, Frank Jolly, Dick Elliot, Walter Walsh, Bill Harris, George Daly, Bill Whitley, Jack Clune, Charlie McMahon, Roy Kitchell, Percy Summers, Ed Witherden, Terry Kearney, Les Williamson, Norm Whitley, Cyril Kitchell, Dick French, Jack Chapman, Harry Chapman, Dan Larkins, Stan Romey, Harry Rodwell, Charlie Pollinelli, Paddy Ryan, Walter Romey, Vick Humphrey, George Beavis, Jack Beavis, Watty French, Ted Latch, Bob Moreland, Sid Howell, Les Romey, King Joseph, George Harris, Reg Squires, and Bill Gledhill.

On 12 July 1921, Avoca kicked a record score in a match against Moonambel.

Avoca 17.17.119

Moonambel 1.1.7

Avoca's Goals: Bill Harris 6, A Greenwood 5, Morton 4, Yates 1, McMahon 1.

Avoca's Best: Morton, Pollinelli, Greenwood, King Joseph, George Beavis, Bill Harris, Dan Larkins, Jas Yates.

Later in the year Avoca easily won the First semi Final against Redbank.

Avoca 7.12.54

Redbank 1.1.7

Avoca's Goals: Bill Harris 4, Charlie Pollinelli 2, Jas Yates 1.

Avoca's Best: Jas Yates, Paddy Ryan, Charlie Pollinelli, Harry Rodwell, Bill Harris, Dan Larkins, Ted Dunn, George Beavis, Charlie McMahon.

In the Grand Final, Natta Yallock defeated Avoca to win the Premiership Cup which was donated by Mr. Walter Walsh.

Natte Yallock 7.11.53

Avoca 3.6.24

Avoca's Best: Jack Beavis, Wal Romey, George Beavis, Ed Witherden, Paddy Ryan (Ruck), and Charlie Pollinelli (Centre).

1922

1922 Runners Up

The mood was optimistic when "26 gentlemen" gathered for the annual meeting at the Avoca Fire Brigade Hall on Wednesday 22 March 1922.

Mr. E.T. (Ned) Brown was chairman, and explained he had been asked to convene the meeting with the view of forming a club.

Mr. J.G. Williamson moved that a football club be formed.

Mr. R. Moreland second the motion, which was carried.

The main office bearers were then elected.

President: S.J. (Stan) Beven.

Secretary: Ed Witherden.

Treasurer: S.R. (Stan) Nettle

The Secretary was instructed to write to other clubs in the district with the view of forming an association.

Six weeks later the Pyrenees District Football Association was formed, consisting of Avoca Amphitheatre, Elmhurst and Lexton.

Avoca were forced to change their colours from yellow and black to red and black, because they clashed with Lexton.

The Captain was E. (Ted) Chapman, and vice-captain was George Beavis.

Controversy raged on 17 June 1922, when several Avoca players stormed off the ground during a game at Elmhurst, claiming they were upset by the poor performance of the umpire, D Sweeney of Ararat.

The row continued to bubble for several days, with a number of Avoca players threatening they would never play again.

Avoca made it through to the Grand Final, but were defeated by Amphitheatre.

Amphitheatre 7.11.53

Avoca 5.10.40

Best: Paddy Ryan, Dan Larkins, Ed Witherden, King Joseph, Bill Whitley, Watty French, W Thomas, Wal Romey, Jack Beavis, Stan Nettle, Jack Coghlan Snr. Bill Templeton, Greg Boulton.

1923

1923 Premiers

1923 3rd Premiership

Still smarting over the dispute with Elmhurst the previous year, Avoca shocked the Pyrenees Association in 1923 by switching to the Mountain District Association.

The Office Bearers were,

President: Alex Summers.

Secretary: Matt Kitchell.

Treasurer: George Redpath

Natte Yallock finished Minor Premiers with eight wins, whilst Avoca was second with 6 victories, ahead of Redbank, Barkly, Moonambel and Stuart Mill.

Avoca and Redbank played a draw in the First semi Final, but Avoca won the replay by 18 points.

As Natte Yallock were Minor Premiers they only had to win the match known as the Final to win the premiership.

However, Avoca beat Natte Yallock by 17 points, earning the right to meet them in the Grand Final.

The game played at Moonambel was a heart stopper.

Avoca established a handy lead, but Natte came back strongly.

In what is remembered as one of the classic Grand Finals ever played in the district, Avoca scraped home with a slender one point margin.

Avoca 5.6.36

Natte Yallock 5.5.35

Avoca's Goals: Paddy Ryan 2, Greg Boulton 2, Alan Hill 1.

Avoca Best: "Whole Team"

It was only the third premiership Avoca had won, and the footballers who played in that side certainly earned their place in the Club's history.

The 1923 Premiers:

Captain Jas. Yates, Paddy Ryan, Greg Boulton, Harry Rodwell, Dan Larkins, Watty French, Dick French, Arthur Palmer, Bill Castleman, Bill Whitley, Alf Whitley, Alan Kaye, Wal Romey, Alan Hill, Claud Harbour, George Daly, Bill harries, Terry Kearney.

1924

1924 R/Up



1924 Runners Up

With a Premiership under their belt, it seemed Avoca was prepared to forgive and forget and rejoined the Pyrenees Association in 1924.

The teams consisted of Avoca, Amphitheatre, Lexton and arch rivals Elmhurst.

Walter "Watty" French was promoted to captain, replacing Jas. Yates who became vice-captain.

The players list included Alf Castleman, Jack Chapman, Dick French, Bill Gledhill, Claud Harbour, Bill Harris, Frank Kaye, George Harrison, Alan Hill, Allan Kaye, Terry Kearney, Dan Larkins, R Liston, R Robson, Harry Rodwell, Ken Soutter, Alf Whitley, K Dougal, C Chapman, Jim Bowen, Jas Hamer, Jack Beavis, A Burns, George Beavis, Hec Harrison, Jim Butler, and Jack Cairns.

Former top Richmond footballer, Les Oliver, moved to Avoca from Bendigo as Licensee of the Avoca Hotel. He proved to be a fine acquisition.

Avoca played off in the Grand Final, but were easily beaten by Lexton.

Lexton 8.4.52

Avoca 3.7.25

Dan Larkins was awarded a gold medal as Avoca's most popular player, the equivalent of the Best & Fairest.

1925

1925



The winds of change swept through the club in 1925.

It was decided to field a senior side in the Maryborough and District Association and a second eighteen team remained in the Mountain Creek Association.

However, one month later it was evident there was not enough players to field two teams, and the second eighteen was withdrawn.

Avoca's colours were red and white, with black shorts.

Les Oliver was appointed Coach.

He also had the honour of coaching the Maryborough District Association side.

Other Avoca players selected in the representative side included: Claude Harbour, Allan Kaye, Bill Whitley and Jim Dawson.

Dawson, renowned as a gifted forward, joined Avoca from Elmhurst. The following team was selected to play for Avoca on May 20, 1925.

B:	Claude Harbour	Roy Easterbrook	Cliff White
HB:	Dan Larkins	Arthur Palmer	A.F. (Bill) Lalor
C:	Keith Dougall	Les Oliver	Allan Kaye
HF:	Jim Doyle	Roy Wise	Harold Dawson
F:	Jim Dawson	Paddy Ryan	Frank Kaye
R/R	Bill Whitley	Ken Soutter	Jack Cairns

Mr. Cliff White also played with Avoca in 1925

He was the Principal of the Avoca Secondary School until 1926

In 1991, Cliff was asked to recall some of the footballers he remembered best.

Despite being 92 years of age, Cliff had vivid memories, and uncovered a few "skeletons".

Cliff claimed Les Oliver was a brilliant footballer and a good coach, but never trained himself.

Paddy Ryan was a very good full forward, and his son, Paddy Junior, also developed into a champion. Paddy senior was the Avoca policeman and, although his leather belt had the local youth bluffed, Paddy was a bit of a villain himself.

Bill Lalor was the local chemist, Educated at Ballarat Grammar, Bill was a good all-round sportsman. His son, Vivian (Micky), later played with Avoca in 1964 and won the Reserves Best & Fairest in 1968.

Harry Rodwell ran the Avoca Iceworks. He owned his own car and would transport the players to games, often making several trips.

Jim Dawson come from Elmhurst and married Mona Astbury, daughter of Andy Astbury, who served the club as President for six consecutive years.

Jim was a very quick forward and an excellent goal sneak.

Allan Kaye was one of the best wingers ever to play for Avoca. He strung together almost 200 games in succession. Allan was also a great runner and was favourite for the Stawell Gift in 1930. However, he was beaten in a heat by the eventual winner, R.J. Hodge.

Bill Harris was another fine all-round sportsman and one of Avoca's best footballers.

[to 1926](#)

1926 R/Up



1926 – Runners Up

Despite many talented young footballers, Avoca won only two games in 1925, which was disastrous. But disaster is a time proven breeding ground for revolution, and once again the reformers were on the move.

After a certificate was presented to Mr. Phil La Roche for his services as President, the club made sweeping changes amongst the official office bearers.

President: George Redpath

Secretary: Frank Kaye and Bill Harris

Treasurer: A.J. Hartley

It was decided to move back to the Mountain Creek Association, which included Avoca. Barkly, Navarre, Redbank, Stuart Mill and Landsborough.

Walter "Watty" French was appointed Coach, and Avoca's Colours became Red, White and Blue, thanks to the generosity of Miss Park, who sewed a blue stripe on each jumper, free of charge.

Once again Avoca was a force, although they finished the home and away season in third position.

[to 1927](#)

1927 Premiers

1927 – Fourth Premiership

Morale was running high at the start of the 1927 season.

The Office Bearers were:

President : George Reed

Secretary: Alf Castleman

Treasurer: A.J. Hartley

Paddy Ryan was appointed Captain and Coach and [Bill Harris](#) was Vice-Captain.

It was an excellent season for Avoca.

Besides losing only three games for the year, one on protest, the Bulldogs also set two new records.

On June 29, 1927:

Avoca 18.23.(131) (Record High Score); to Landsborough 3.7.25

Avoca Goals: Allan Hill 4, Bill Harris 4, Bill Hill 3, Harry Rodwell 2, George Harrison 1,

Jim Bowen 1, Allan Kaye 1, Jim Kirkley 1, George Reed 1.

The record score stood until August 17, 1927:

Avoca 24.31.(175) to Stuart Mill 1.1.7

Avoca Goals: George Harrison 6, Alan Hill 5, Erroll Howell 3, Bill Hill 3, Jack Jess 3,

Jim Kirkley 2, Bill Harris 2.

Needless to say, Avoca finished on top of the ladder with a massive percentage of 234.8.

Avoca won the second semi final, defeating Navarre by 18 points.

SECOND SEMI FINAL

Avoca 8.8.56 to Navarre 5.8.38

Avoca's Goals: Bill Harris 4, Jack Jess 2, George Harrison 2.

Because Avoca finished on top of the ladder, they were challenged in the Grand Final by Barkly.

GRAND FINAL

Avoca 15.12.102 to Barkly 4.8.32

Sadly, match details were not obtainable, but the players list for 1927 reads:

Paddy Ryan (Captain and Coach), Bill Harris (Vice-Captain), Allan Kaye, Frank Kaye, Bill Hill, George Harrison, Hec Harrison, Ted Swinnerton, Harry Rodwell, Laurie Harbour, Jim Bowen, Frank Yates, Jack Jess, Frank Jolly, Bob Gordon, N Marris, Robert Watts, Watty French, Jack Blair, Wal Romey, Harry Powers, Jim Whitley, Ted Anderson, George Gordon, Jim Daly, Erroll Howell, Arthur Curtis, Norm Whitley, Ken Daly, George Reed, Jim Kirkly, Bill Templeton, Ian Templeton, E Yates.

[to 1928](#)

1928 Premiers

1928 – Fifth Premiership

With almost the same team and an air of confidence and authority about the town, it seemed a formality that Avoca would win back-to-back premierships.

But the team soon discovered that their opponents had other ideas.

There was plenty of stability off the field amongst the office bearers.

President: Charlie Boyton.

Secretaries: Alf Castleman and Hec Harrison.

Treasurer: B.C. (Barny) Woods.

Bill Harris started the season as Captain and Coach, but work commitments forced him to relinquish the job to Paddy Ryan.

Avoca came back to earth with a thud, losing their first two games of the new season to Navarre by eight points and Landsborough by two points.

Fortunately, Avoca took stock and reversed the result against Navarre on June 13 1928.

Avoca 6.12.48 to Navarre 7.7.43

Avoca's Goals: Bill Hill 3, Alf Goonan 2, Erroll Howell 1.

Avoca's Best: Alf Goonan, Erroll Howell, Jim Bowen, Frank Kaye, "Goldy" Drummond, and Charlie McCallum.

With a reputation as a gun forward, Alf Goonan, who had played with North Melbourne, was a real find for Avoca, and was soon rewriting the record books.

Playing against Landsborough on June 27, 1928, he set a new club record with seven goals and repeated the effort against Barkly to win the second semi final.

Those who saw him play claim Alf Goonan was the best footballer they had ever seen, but he also had a reputation as a villain.

During the season he also bagged tallies of five and six goals.

In the match known as "the final", Goonan only kicked two goals and the game was drawn with Redbank.

Curiously, Goonan was held goalless in the replay, which Avoca lost by five points.

Speculation was rife that the game was fixed. Prior to the match, wealthy Redbank supporter, Alf Burge, was spotted chatting to Goonan.

Because Avoca finished on top of the ladder. Redbank had the right to challenge them in the Grand Final.

This time Goonan was simply sensational. In a best on the ground performance he booted three goals, giving Avoca victory and the premiership by 15 points.

GRAND FINAL

Avoca 9.8.62 to Redbank 6.11.47

Avoca's Goals: Alec Webster 4, Alf Goonan 3, Erroll Howell 2.

Avoca's Best: Alf Goonan, "Goldy" Drummomd, Erroll Howell, Hec Harrison, Frank Kaye, Jim Bowen and Alec Webster.

It was only the second time Avoca had won consecutive premierships and the players list for the year was:

Paddy Ryan (Captain), Bill Harris, "Watty" French, Hec Harrison, George Harrison, Allan Kaye, Frank Kaye, Jim Bowen, Erroll Howell, Ian Templeton, Bob Watts, Alex Jardine, Charlie McCallum, Carl Rhode, Bill Hill, Jack Coghlan, Bob Gordon, Laurie Harbour, Harry Rodwell, Alan Hill, George Reed, Goldy Drummond, Jack Wardlaw, Harry Powers, Alf Goonan, Alex Webster, Ken Gane and Bill Whitley.

Avoca also fielded a junior side in 1928.

Many of the names on the players list have relatives associated with the club today:

Bob Gordon (Captain), Jack Coghlan, Edward Courtney, George Reed, Roy Hellings, Tony Jolly, Laurie Lindsay, Caesar Chapman, H Castleman, Eddie Redpath, Jack Blair, George Latch, Keith McDonald, Ken Gane, George Gordon, Jack Ryan, Syd Kaye, Keith Astbury, Leon Redpatch, Herb Morris, Syd Field, H Bartlett, S Wolfe, Clem Hill, Frank Blair, Alf Redpath, Arthur Kaye.

[to 1929](#)

1929 Premiers

1929 – Sixth Premiership

Remarkably, Avoca won their third consecutive premiership in 1929, giving supporters reason for elation.

Sadly, there are no club records regarding player lists or match details.

The Office bearers were:

President: Cr A.F. Paten

Secretaries: Alf Healy and A.J. Morrow

Treasurer: A.J. Morrow.

1929 was the club's last year in the Mountain Creek Association.

[go to 1930](#)

