

1930 R/Up

1930 – Runners Up

With their tails up and the club enjoying its most successful era ever, Avoca decided to join the Learmonth and District Association.

The motion was moved by Vice-President, J.J. (Joe) McDonald.

Office Bearers were:

President: Jack Jess. Two weeks after the Annual Meeting, Jack stood down and George Redpatch was appointed.

Secretary: A.T. Morrow – pro tem Keith McDonald.

Treasurer: A.B. Albinson.

The club appointed Len Maloney as Coach, and he was paid a weekly salary of 1 pound, or the equivalent of \$2.00

By comparison, the field umpires were paid 21Pound and 9 shillings, and the bill for footballs was 7 pound and 1 shilling or \$14.10.

1930 was the year that the 19th man was introduced.

The season ended in turmoil with allegations that Avoca's final game of the season against Burumbeet was fixed.

Avoca kicked nine goals in the final quarter, edging Waubra out of fourth position on the ladder by just one percent.

Errol Howell, who kicked seven goals, was the star of the match.

The final ladder was:

Team	Points	Percentage
Beaufort	40	130.0
Lexton	36	99.6
Learmonth	32	123.8
Avoca	28	109.4
Waubra	28	108.4
Burrumbeet	16	52.3

Ironically the first semi final was played at Waubra and, needless to say, Avoca received a cool reception from the crowd.

Undeterred, Avoca beat Lexton by 20 points.

The Grand Final against Beaufort turned out to be a real thriller.

After being held scoreless in the first quarter and trailing by almost six goals, Avoca staged a gutsy comeback, eventually losing by just eight points.

GRAND FINAL

Beaufort 5.5 5.6 8.12 9.13.67

Avoca 0.0 3.8 4.9 8.11.59

Avoca's goals: Norm Gleeson 2, George Harrison 2, Alec Webster 2, Roy Hellings 2.

Avoca's Best: Bill Hill, Len Maloney, Norm Gleeson, John Bowen, George Harrison,

Charlie McCallum, Alan Hill, Bill Whitley, Keith McDonald, Ken Gane, Erroll Howell,

Roy Hellings, Alec Webster.

Avoca Juniors also lowered their colours, losing by just seven points against Lexton, but amongst Avoca's ranks were several footballers who developed into some of the best players seen in the district:

L.G. (Laurie) Barker (Captain), Leon Redpath, Eddie Redpath, Jack Coghlan Junior, Jack Mockett, Len Harbour, Syd Kaye, Syd Field, Ted Field, Norm Field, Mal Myers, Jack Smith, Roy Romey, Keith Powers, Clem Hill, Vic Charlesworth, Frank Blair, Bob Gordon, Charlie Carlyon, Clive Kaye, Tony Jolly, Jack Ryan, Jack Charlesworth, R Gane and Claude Harrison.

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1931

Amphitheatre shocked Avoca prior to the 1931 season when they tried to entice Erroll Howell to join them.

A clearance application was refused and Erroll, whose kin had a long association with Avoca, was appointed coach.

Avoca footballers named amongst the best players during the year included: John Bowen, Harry Powers, George Harrison, Bob Gordon, Clem Hill, Keith McDonald, Erroll Howell, Hec Harrison, Goldy Drummond, Roy Romey, Keith Astbury, Roy Hellings, Bill Harris, Alex Studd, Robert Watts, Jack Coghlan and Ted Field.

Avoca finished fourth on the ladder and were eliminated in the semi final, losing to Learmonth by 29 points.

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1932

Avoca's last year in the Learmonth and District Association was memorable, in that Avoca caused the upset of the season beating Learmonth, who were previously undefeated.

The occasion gave birth to one of Avoca's most celebrated yarns, which involved Gordon "Goldy" Drummond.

Groomed for local stardom, it was "Goldy" who saved the day at Learmonth.

If you believe this story, :Goldy:, who had been playing in the ruck, decided to take the kick out in the closing seconds of play, with Avoca trailing by a point.

"Goldy's" kick caught the notorious wind rising of Lake Learmonth, catapulting the ball from one end of the ground to the other and through the goals for a five point victory.

The story is told in more detail in chapter three, but the match details are:

Avoca 10.9.69 to Learmonth 9.10.64

Avoca's Goals: Harry Crocker 3, Norm Gleeson 3, Bill Harris 2, Bob Pritchard 1, Goldy Drummond 1.

Avoca's Best: Goldy Drummond, and the rest of the team.

The Senior playing list were:

Charlie Polinelli (Captain and Coach), Bob Watts, Bill, Allan and Clem Hill, George Harrison, Bill Whitley, Robert Watts, Roy Romey, Norm and Ted Field, John Coghlan, Alex Studd, Roy Hellings, Paddy Ryan Junior, Eddie and Leon Redpatch, Hec Harrison, Len Harbour, Harry Powers, Keith Astbury, Bill Harris, Paddy Ryan, Jack Gordon, Richard McFarlane, Bill and Arthur Gane, Harry Crocker, Charlie McCallum, F.J. Watson, Norm Gleeson, Alex Stuart, Tim Healy, Con Grant, Bob & J Pritchard, Erroll Howell, Goldy Drummond and G Condon, a former South Melbourne player.

Just prior to Avoca's first semi final match against Burumbeet, the following poem appeared in the Avoca Mail:

Come listen you sports, I'll tell you a tale,
Of a football team famous and fast;
In the annals of history's pace,
Avoca's deed have never been surpassed.

You will meet those who enthuse the name,
Of Grant, Avoca's young rover;
Who works like a brick to get his kick,
And shows that he's just in clover.

The Harrison brothers always were fast,
And show that they always get there;
While Gleeson the forward goes up for the mark,
A veritable king in the air.

There's Bob Watts, the back man, who never yet missed,
Clearing the ball from his goal;
While Whitley the ruckman follows right through,
And gives his opponents a role.

McFarlane and Grant are a couple who work,
The opposition they give a pain;
While Drummond and Crocker when on the ball,
Revel in wind, mud, and rain.

Now Charlie Pollineli, the captain and coach,
Who gives his time and his work;
To cheer up the team as they labour along,
And never his duty he'd shirk.

Now this is the team that beat old Learmonth,
Who never had known defeat;
Until Avoca they happened to find,
Their old Waterloo to meet.

Keep going Avoca, we're sure you will win,
Although Burrumbeet will be hard;
Keep playing the game, live up to your name,
And the Premiership's right on the card.

The verse helped inspire Avoca to a thrilling six point victory over Burrumbeet in the first semi final.

However, Learmonth gained revenge, beating Avoca by 36 points in the preliminary final.

Learmonth then beat Waubra in the grand final, with M McIntyre kicking an amazing 15 goals out of his team's tally of 18.

Avoca's Best & Fairest award was won by Bob Watts, who received a gold medal donated by Mr Jock Lee.

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1933

Avoca joined the Pyrenees and District Association when it reformed in 1933.

The club was honoured when its President, George Redpath, was elected President of the Association.

Sadly, he died two days later at the age of 63.

The town, and the football club, was shattered to lose one of its longest serving members.

Reluctantly, Andy Astbury became President, and continued in that role for six consecutive years, a record shared only by his grandson, John Field, 33 years later.

Bill Lalor then became President of the Pyrenees Association, a role he retained until the competition disbanded in 1939.

The players list included:

Erroll Howell (Captain), Robert McFarlane, Keith McDonald, Tony Jolly, Harry Powers, Keith Astbury, Ken Gane, William Gane, Ted Field, Hec Harrison, Frank Blair, Clem Hill, Alex Studd, Paddy Ryan Junior, Eddie Redpath, Roy Hellings, George Wiltshire, George Bevan, Jim Wardlaw, Laurie Barker, Lindsay Brown, Jack Charlesworth, Arthur Williams, Roy Romey, Alf Robinson, William Studd, Eric Stuart, Vic Charlesworth, Herb Whitley, Bill Redpath, Jack Coghlan and George Harrison.

Two players stood out for Avoca during the season: Paddy Ryan who kicked six goals in one match, and Erroll Howell who won the club's Best & Fairest.

In the first semi final played at Amphitheatre, Avoca gave Elmhurst a 61 points thrashing.

FIRST SEMI FINAL

Avoca 9.23.67 to Elmhurst 1.10.16

Avoca's goals: Paddy Ryan 5, Ken Gane 1, George Bevan 1, Eric Stuart 1, Jack Coghlan 1.

Poor kicking denied Avoca a chance to win the final.

THE FINAL

Amphitheatre 5.6.36 to Avoca 3.14.32

Avoca's goals: Paddy Ryan 1, Tony Jolly 1, Ken Gane 1.

Avoca finished third after the finals series, whilst Lexton were premiers.

[Got to 1934](#)

1934

Over the years Avoca had seen many outstanding footballers, but [Paddy Ryan junior](#) was very special.

His father, Paddy senior, the local policeman, was also a top player for the club.

To watch a local lad develop and mature into a gifted footballer, gave the locals enormous pleasure.

Whilst 1934 is remembered as the year Avoca cricketer, Hans Ebeling made a name for himself touring England with the Australian Test Cricket team, back home 17 year old Paddy Ryan rewrote the local football records in spectacular fashion.

On 27 June, 1934, Paddy set a new club goalkicking record when he booted nine goals against Elmhurst.

The following week another Avoca champion [Erroll Howell](#), kicked his 200th goal with the club.

But Paddy quickly retrieved the limelight by kicking individual tallies of six, eight and, on 1st August, 1934, 12 goals against Elmhurst.

That record stood for 22 years, until it was equaled by another great full forward, Ian Grant, in 1956.

Effectively, Paddy's record remained intact for 38 years, and was eclipsed in 1972, when Jim Jess, arguably the best footballer ever produced by Avoca, kicked 16 goals in a match.

Despite the individual records, Avoca lost the 1934 second Semi final by six points to Natte Yallock, who continued on to win the premiership.

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1935 Premiers



Morale had never been better as the club prepared for the 1935 season.

The office bearers were:

President: Andy Astbury

Secretary: Eric Stuart

Treasurer: Bill Tope

The Players List read:

Errol Howell (Captain & Coach), Eric Stuart, Clem Hill, Paddy Ryan Jnr, Fred Chapman, Stan Beavis, Harry Crocker, Goldy Drummond, W Dorricott, Roy Romey, Arthur Hosken, R Davies, Phil Jolly, Horace McCallum, Bill Horsfall, A.K. Smith, Eddie Redpath, Tony Jolly, Arthur Gane, R Patten, Vic Charlesworth, B Patten, Ted Field, Jack Gordon, Albert Impey, Bill Hill, Jim Astbury, George Whitley, Jack Joseph, G Wishart, George Harrison, Ken Harrison, and Keith McDonald.

With Paddy Ryan again weaving his special brand of magic in front of goals, Avoca powered through the season.

Avoca's strength was highlighted when seven of its players were selected in the Pyrenees Association side. They Included:

Paddy Ryan – Full Forward

Errol Howell – Centre

Fred Chapman – Full back

Ted Field – Ruck

Clem Hill – Back Pocket

Eric Stuart – Wing

Harry Crocker – Forward Pocket

At the end of the season, Eric Stuart brought honour to himself, and Avoca, by winning the Pyrenees Association Best & Fairest Award.

After finishing the season on top of the ladder, Avoca was seriously tested by Redbank in the second semi final.

SECOND SEMI FINAL

Avoca 4.1 6.5 7.9 9.14.68

Redbank 3.6 6.8 6.8 8.10.58

Avoca Goals: Bill Hill 3, Paddy Ryan 2, Jim Astbury 1, Errol Howell 1, Ern Davies 1, Arthur Hosken 1.

The Grand Final against Natte Yallock was a different story.

Avoca led at every change and stormed home with eight goals in the final quarter to win by 56 points.

GRAND FINAL

Avoca 2.2 5.6 10.8 18.9.117

Natte Yallock 1.1 2.3 4.7 8.13.61

Avoca Goals: Bill Hill 7, Paddy Ryan 6, Arthur Hosken 2, Eric Stuart 1, Arthur Stuart 1, George Harrison 1.

Dooley McDowell kicked six goals for Natte Yallock.

The Premiership Team was:

B:	Ed Redpath	Fred Chapman	Jack Joseph
HB:	Clem Hill	Ern Davies	Tony Jolly
C:	George Harrison	Errol Howell	Alan Smith
HF:	Roy Romey	Phil Jolly	Harry Crocker
F:	Arthur Stuart	Paddy Ryan	Bill Hill



The Avoca Football Club faced its biggest crisis early in 1936, when a new team called the Lamplough Miners Football Club was formed.

Fourteen players, who worked at the Lamplough mine, applied for clearances from Avoca to the new club.

The row, threatened to ruin the club.

However, the miners club disbanded near the end of the season. Whilst some players returned to Avoca, others refused to play football again.

Fortunately, their interest in the club was rejuvenated when their sons started playing for Avoca.

Naturally, the exit of several top players affected Avoca's performance but they regained ground quickly when the Miners club folded.

Avoca's continued strength was confirmed when eight players were selected in the strong Pyrenees Association's representative side, which won the Beaurepaire Shield.

Errol Howell (Captain & Coach), Paddy Ryan, Fred Chapman, George Harrison, Arthur Stuart, Eric Stuart, Clem Hill and Claude Cunningham.

Once again Paddy Ryan was performing miracles in the goal square and, in the semi final against Lexton, Paddy booted 10 of the team's 14 goals.

Avoca won the final against Natta Yallock by seven points and earned the right to challenge minor premiers, Redbank, in the Grand Final.

GRAND FINAL

Redbank 1.2 8.8 10.11 17.12.114

Avoca 5.1 5.3 10.7 13.10.88

Avoca Goals: Charlie Hutchison 3, Arthur Stuart 2, George Bevan 2, Paddy Ryan 2, Errol Howell 1, Claude Cunningham 1, Eric Stuart 1, Clem Hill 1.

Once again Paddy Ryan was Avoca's top goalkicker with 37 goals and also tied with Claude Cunningham in the Best & Fairest.

Meanwhile Eric Stuart won the Association's Best & Fairest player for the second consecutive year, thus cementing his name in local football history.

[Go to 1937](#)

Avoca recruited well over the Summer and were primed with confidence even before the season commenced;

A place in the finals was a formality.

The Office Bearers were:

President: Andy Astbury

Secretary: Alby Williamson

Treasurer: Bill Tope

Tim Healy was appointed Captain and Coach and Fred Chapman was Vice-Captain. Fred, who ran the local drapery store with his brother, Howard, had developed into the best full back in the competition.

The players list was: George Bevan, Paddy Ryan Jnr, Ken Gane, Charlie Hutchison, Lance McDonald, W Dorricott, Tom French, Syd Williamson, Jim Pryse, Clem Hill, Eddie Redpath, Lindsay Brown, George Whitley, D Fuller, Gerry Matters, Jim Astbury, Jim Carey, Biill Resuggan, Eric Stuart, Ern Davies, Roy Hellings, Cyril McCubbery, Stan Beavis, Keith Astbury, Errol Howell, Tony Jolly, E Howie, Ted Field, and Isles Roda.

A record was set when nine players were selected in the Pyrenees Association team, with Errol Howell as Captain.

Avoca's representatives are underlined.

B:	<u>Clem Hill</u>	<u>Fred Chapman</u>	Neil Ross
HB:	<u>George Bevan</u>	<u>Ern Davies</u>	<u>Ted Field</u>
C:	Len Morvell	<u>Errol Howell</u>	George Jackson

HF: Bill Roxburgh Paddy Ryan Phil Jolly
F: Ken Morvell D Fuller Ken Gane
R/R: Reg Roxburgh Graham Laidlaw I Sandlant

Avoca was beaten twice during the season, against Amphitheatre, and Natte Yallock, but were still minor premiers.

It was therefore a shock when Lexton upset Avoca in the second semi final, winning by eight points.

Brought back to earth with a thud, Avoca then demolished Natte Yallock in the final. Natte were held goalless until the final quarter.

THE FINAL

Avoca 11.12.78 to Natte Yallock 5.15.45

Avoca Goals: Paddy Ryan 5, Errol Howell 3, Lance McDonald 2, Gerry Matters 1.

The Grand Final against Lexton was the ultimate showdown.

After trailing for the first half, Avoca edged ahead in the last half, running out winners by 10 points.

GRAND FINAL

Avoca 1.1 4.3 7.6 11.9.75

Lexton 2.2 5.6 6.9 9.11.65

Avoca Goals: Paddy Ryan 6, Gerry Matters 2, Clem Hill 1, Ken Gane 1, Lance McDonald 1.

The players named in the Grand Final and their ages:

Tim Healy 35, Errol Howell 29, Eddie Redpath 27, Ken Gane 27, E Howie 27, Clem Hill 25, Tony Jolly 24, Fred Chapman 23, Ted Field 23, Jim Pryse 23, Gerry Matters 22, Eric Stuart 21, George Bevan 21,

Paddy Ryan Jnr, 20, Jim Astbury 20, Bill Resuggan 19, Charlie Hutchison 19, George Whitley 18, Lance McDonald 18, Tom French 17, Jim Carey 17.

Apparently winning premierships was a costly business even in 1937.

After starting the year with 40 pounds or \$80.00, the club's bank account was 10 pounds or \$20.00 in debt by the end of the season.

Once again Paddy Ryan was the leading goalkicker with 49 goals.

[Go to 1938](#)

1938 R/Up

War clouds were looming over Europe in 1938, but football helped to bond the Australian community together and, for some time, helped our people forget the grim hungry years of the depression.

However, by the end of the season it was a vastly different story.

All football teams were becoming seriously depleted as young men joined the armed services.

Avoca was struggling to field a team as the finals approached.

The semi final against Amphitheatre was a nail biting affair, with Avoca scraping home by a solitary point.

Natte Yallock had also been affected by the threat of war and were no match for Avoca, losing the final by 49 points.

Paddy Ryan was virtually a team on his own, kicking 10 of Avoca's 16 goals.

A second quarter lapse was costly for Avoca in the Grand Final. Lexton took the premiership with a 20 point victory.

GRAND FINAL

Lexton 1.2 6.12 8.17 10.19.79

Avoca 2.6 3.7 6.8 8.11.59

Avoca Goals: Paddy Ryan 3, S Williamson 3, Lance McDonald 1, Fred Chapman 1.

The Players List:

Tim Healy (Captain), Clem Hill, Tony Jolly, Tom French, Eddie Redpath, Jim Carey, George Whitley, Roy Hellings, Jim Astbury, A Nicholson, Arthur Stuart, Syd Williamson, Norm Beavis, Fred Chapman, Isles Rhoda, Les Beavis, Les Pora, Bob Gordon, Jim Pryse, Bert Cargall, Bill Cudmore, Lance McDonald, Jim Whitley, K Payne, Paddy Ryan Jnr, T Thethowie, J Brach, Watty French, J.K.

Bapty, Arthur Ford, Bernard Cudmore, Ian Harbour, and George Harrison.

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1939

The conflict overseas forced the Pyrenees District Association to be disbanded in 1939 and Avoca joined the Maryborough Association.

The Office Bearers were:

President: Arthur Stuart

Secretary: Les Rae

Treasurer: Jim Astbury

Tim Healy, who was aged 37 and had given Avoca 25 years of service was again appointed Captain and Coach, Fred Chapman was Vice-Captain.

The Players list was:

Tony Jolly, Jim Astbury, Bill Resuggan, Tom French, Arthur Beissert, Eric Clough, Chas Hutchison, Bert Cargill, Syd Williamson, Eddie Redpath, Clem Hill, Jim Whitley, Jim Carey, Roy Romey, Roy Hellings, Errol Howell, Norm Beavis, Les Beavis, D Govett, Don Fraser, Bill Jess, Bill Cudmore, Jim French, Iles Rhoda, Paddy Ryan, Ron Humphrey, Con Grant, Laurie Cudmore, Les Farnsworth, Ian Templeton, Walter Jolly, Duncan Fraser, and Jack Whitley.

It was a lean year for Avoca.

Paddy Ryan was Avoca's only representative in the Maryborough & District Association team.

Former Avoca player, Norm Field, was selected from Natte Yallock. Norm also had the great honour of winning the Association Best & Fairest Player Award, one vote ahead of Avoca's Tom French.

Dooley McDowell topped the Association's goal kicking with 46 goals, followed by Avoca's Paddy Ryan with 23 goals.

Individual awards aside it was a dismal year for Avoca and Natte, who finished 6th and 5th respectively on the ladder.

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