



PANTHER PRESS



Lavington Panthers Football & Netball Club

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30 Years with the OMFL

LAVINGTON



During the six decades prior to its entry to the Ovens and Murray Football League in 1979, Lavington participated in no fewer than half a dozen different competitions, winning a total of four senior premierships. The side was especially strong during the 1930s, contesting the finals most years, and winning a Central Hume Football League premiership in 1938 thanks to a 17.23 (125) to 5.6 (36) grand final annihilation of Bethanga. In both 1934 and 1939, Lavington finished runners-up.

After World War Two Lavington competed for a time in the Chiltern and District Football League, where the closest it got to claiming premiership honours was consecutive losing grand final appearances in 1955-6. In 1958 the Saints as they were known at this time crossed to the Tallangatta and District Football League where they would spend the better part of the next two decades, firmly stamping themselves as one of the competition's leading clubs in the process. The side claimed consecutive senior flags in 1965-6, went top again in 1971, and reached a fourth grand final in 1974, only to lose to Tallangatta. It was around this time that Lavington first applied to join the Ovens and Murray Football League, but despite the application receiving the VCFL's endorsement, the OMFL turned it down. As a result, the OMFL's affiliation with the VCFL was revoked, but this was of scant consolation to Lavington, which had to wait until 1979 before the OMFL finally relented, and allowed the Blues, as they became known at this time (Myrtleford having prior claim on the Saints

monicker), to clamber aboard.

Given that the OMFL represented a considerable elevation in standard, it was not surprising that Lavington took a season or two to acclimatise. However, in 1982 the club eloquently announced its arrival when both seniors and reserves reached their respective grand finals. On this occasion, only the reserves made it over the line, but the senior team would not have long to wait. Indeed, Lavington's seniors would emerge from the 1980s as the decade's most successful side, as the following table reveals:

Grand Finals of the 1980s

Club	Won	Lost
Lavington	2	4
Albury	2	2
Wodonga	2	2
North Albury	2	1
Wangaratta Rovers	1	1
Yarrowonga	1	0

The first of Lavington's two premierships came at the expense of [Albury](#) in 1983, after the Blues pulled away in the last quarter of the grand final to record a convincing 38 point win, 18.18 (126) to 12.16 (88). The second was won against North Albury three years later, when Lavington, having been firmly on top all day, emerged victorious by 59 points, 19.15 (129) to 10.10 (70).

The 1990s got underway in extremely promising fashion when the Blues reached their seventh grand final in nine seasons, but after leading Wodonga by 13 points at three quarter time they failed to register a goal in the final term, whilst allowing the Bulldogs to rattle on 5.7, and win by 20 points. The match attracted headlines for all the wrong reasons after a tempestuous opening term in which a series of ferocious brawls broke out. Footage of some of the incidents even found its way onto overseas TV news programmes.

30 Years with the OMFL (cont)

The Blues contested two further grand finals in the 1990s, against Albury in 1996, and Wodonga Raiders in 1998, but at no stage of either match did they seriously threaten victory. It was a vastly different tale in 2001, however, as Lavington contemptuously brushed aside the grand final challenge of sentimental favourite Myrtleford to record a crushing 60 point win, 21.21 (147) to 13.9 (87).

The club's most recent senior flag, in 2005, was in some respects the most memorable in its history. With the grand final opposition once again provided by Myrtleford, the Panthers, as Lavington were by this time known, appeared to be in control for most of the match, leading at every change by 17, 12 and 7 points. However, the final term saw the Saints mount a rousing fight back, and with just seconds remaining they were hanging on grimly to a 5 point advantage. Then, in what, depending on your affiliation, was either a fairytale ending, or the final chapter in a horror story, Lavington skipper Darryn McKimmie, playing his 200th senior match, snared a major virtually on the siren to secure a 1 point win, and the premiership, for the Panthers.

Lavington enjoyed another creditable season

in 2006, getting as far as the preliminary final, but the side plummeted to 7th (of 10) in 2007 after managing just 6 wins for the year. In 2008 the seniors qualified for the finals in fourth place before overcoming Corowa Rutherglen by 8 points in the qualifying final and losing to Wangaratta in the first semi. The reserves meanwhile ranked third heading into the major round but were ultimately placed fourth after losing their second semi final clash with Albury.

John Devaney,
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From the Coach

Welcome to everyone today for our celebration of 30 years in the Ovens & Murray. It will be nice to catch up with some old faces and share memories of our great club. I look forward to a successful day on the field and a great night to follow.

We also welcome Wangaratta today. We have developed a very healthy rivalry with them over the last few years and look forward to another tight, entertaining contest.

It has been very pleasing to see the progress of our 3rds this year. Part of that has been the senior debut of Angus McDiarmid and Marshal Brown. Both boys acquitted themselves very well and it signals an exciting future for our young players.

We have also had 4 boys representing NSWACT in the U18 national championships. Dylan McNeil, Chaz Sargeant, Liam Johnson and Josh Hamilton helped NSWACT to claim the Division 2 title. Dylan also had the distinction of being named Div 2 player of the carnival. He also earned selection in the All Australian team. A very fine achievement. Well

done to all of the boys, fine ambassadors for our club.

We also welcome Robert Hale to our club this week. He joins us from St Mary's in the NT and we look forward to his senior debut today. Rob has also just completed duties at the U18 championships, this time with the NT team.

Our seconds continue to poke along and a win today would see them shore up a finals berth. They have been well supported by top up players from our 3rds through our injury worries. But the injuries are diminishing and we are not far off a full list.

The seniors are starting to get everyone back on the park. It will be exciting to see what mischief we can achieve in the final 6 games. Training has been up beat and with a disciplined team focus, I have no doubt there will be some very positive results in the coming weeks.

Enjoy the footy, and let's catch up after the game and enjoy each others company.

From the Box

The season to this point has been a bit patchy from a reserve grade point of view. A very good start to the year, followed by some disappointing performances, and then some better efforts again. Despite that we put have put ourselves in a position that gives us a shot at playing finals, if we're good enough.

Some big positives so far have been the number of thirds players who have played in the reserve grade so far this year. A bigger plus has been the way those boys have performed, it's very encouraging for the club's future.

Some of the highlights from the boys so far...

Scotty Mont taking a mark whilst running with the flight and without looking at the ball Marshall Brown kicking a goal out of his backside on his left down at Corowa. Bat Shera kicking a couple of bags early in the season. Curtis Biggs kicking a goal with his eyes closed against North. Matty Lewin handbutting

the ball as it left the boot of some bloke against Raiders.

Some interesting things so far...

Buck Rogers stunning debut against Myrtleford, he didn't play a minute.

Matt Hooper managing to put someone's life in danger against the dogs, first we knew about it was when it was in the paper.

Al Vigar chipping the ball to himself from full-back then handballing to some bloke from Wodonga, only to see him kick another goal!

Me playing footy again, yes I apologise.

Looking forward to the rest of the year,

The Box

Social Events

All **HOME GAME** after match functions are held at LAVINGTON PANTHERS - *Your life-style your club.*

All **AWAY GAME** after match functions are held at the **STAR BAR - Start at the Star Bar.**

Tonight is the Reunion Ball (Blue Tie) at Panthers from 6pm.

Sat 1st Aug against Wodonga is a Sponsors Day with an U12 development Game under lights.

Sat 8th Aug after the Awards at the Star , it is back to the Club for the Players Review night.

Mock 21st - Saturday 1st August @LPSC. Bogan theme. Cost is \$10pp. Starting at 8pm.

Trivia Night - Saturday 22nd August @ LPSC. More details to come.

Keep your eyes posted here for up-coming club functions.

UNIFORMS/MERCHANDISE

See Peter Nugent if you are wishing to order any of the club merchandise.



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