

In 1902 records show results of seven matches – six senior matches against clubs accessible by paddle steamer, Dromana thrice, Rye, Fort Franklin (Portsea camp) and Portsea Barracks once each, and the school boys played Dromana once.

It seems that nothing changes in local politics. A report from 6 June 1903 noted “the quiet of winter was very much disturbed during the week by a material difference of opinion between the trustees of the Sorrento Water Reserve and the Football Club. It appears that a member of the Football Club informed the police that some prohibited weeds under the Thistle Act 1891 were growing on the reserve, with the result that the Trustees were ordered to have them eradicated. When served with the notice by the constable the trust chairman went around the town roaring like a lion, declaring that he would make the members of the football club go down on their knees and tear up the weeds with their teeth.

It is recorded that on 5 August 1905 that “The residents here thought the local footballers very plucky in starting out for Hastings on Saturday in the pouring rain. Some doubt was expressed if they would ever reach there, and great credit is due to Mr. Farnsworth’s turnout for taking them there in under four hours.



1924 - During World War One a family moved into Sorrento from Gippsland and their descendants remain today. Harry Redman (1898-1996) and younger brother Keith (1901-76) arrived as teenagers with their family and began a lifetime as builders with the Sorrento State School 1090 a notable work and Redman’s timber & hardware store a longstanding landmark. Harry agitated for a wintertime activity for local young men around the same time the Southern Peninsula Cricket Association formed in 1922-23 adding impetus to forming a competitive football team.

Harry Redman recommended the club adopt the red & white colours of Trafalgar who in turn copied South Melbourne FC after stalwart & later life member George Munro ended his VFL stint there. Harry played 80 matches between 1924-30, coaching from 1924-1926 before handing over to ex-Melbourne ruckman Les Oram. His lace up jumper can be seen behind glass inside the pavilion.

In 1924 Sorrento officially joined the **Peninsula Football League** then in 1934 merged into the **Mornington Peninsula Football League**, which expanded in 1986 to the Mornington Peninsula Nepean Football League adding the **West Gippsland League**.

In over 112 years of formal competition (not including informal competition from 1890) Sorrento has hoisted 14 senior premiership flags up the flagpole, just behind top placed Frankston (17) and second-placed Hastings (16) across all divisions.

### Netball

The newly formed netball division of the Club (2012) s gaining strength each year giving the local girls a completion to play in after they finish their junior age group . We have so far won one under 17’s premiership but look forward to many more in all divisions.

## Great eras

In 18 seasons from 1952 to 1969 Sorrento played in 13 finals series, winning premierships in 1953, 1964 and 1969. Over that span, 19 VFL players were involved: Dale Anderson (Melb), James Baird (Carlton), Harry Caspar (Carlton), Kevin Clarke (West Perth, Melbourne, Carlton), Jack Collins (Fitzroy, Essendon), Mike Fitchett\* (Hawthorn), Fred Hepner \*(Sth Melb), Geoff Howells (Hawthorn), Richard Kennedy (Melb, Fitzroy), Albert Morrison (Footscray), Robert Norman (Collingwood, Geelong), Alan Olle (St.Kilda), Peter O'Sullivan (Essendon, Nth.Melb), Doug Reynolds (Footscray, Richmond), Fred Stafford (Carlton), Major-General Alan Stretton (St.Kilda), who co-ordinated the relief effort in Darwin after Cyclone Tracy in 1974, and Jim Thoms (Footscray, West Torrens), Ron Wilson\* (Melb, St.Kilda), Ron Wright (Fitzroy) .

In the 38 seasons from 1970 to 2007 Sorrento won just 3 premierships in 1979-80 and 2004. The back-to-backs, the club's first, were accredited to the coach's genius communication skills. Nonetheless, the club struggled during the 23 years between premierships nearly folding in the nineties. In this era, only 6 VFL/AFL players were involved: Frank Dimattina (Richmond, Nth. Melb), Merv Harbinson (Essendon), (Richard Ivey (Nth Melb), Dennis LeGassick\*\* (Collingwood), Shane McCarthy\*\* (3 games @ Geelong in 1970-71), Grant Oppy (1 game @ Richmond in 1970), Ivan Rasmussen (Footscray)

A second and bigger era began in 2007 when Troy Schwarze arrived from St. Kilda where he'd been delisted after 71 senior games in a 6-season career. Troy orchestrated seven consecutive grand final appearances, equalling Hastings record, netting 5 premierships, 3 of them consecutive. The 2015 finals series began after Sorrento charged into second place in the last round. By advancing to a preliminary final on 12<sup>th</sup> Sep. after a finals loss then victory, with every chance of beating Somerville, despite two season's defeats, the door is open to reach a record 8<sup>th</sup> straight grand final, on this occasion, against top-placed Rosebud.



1953 Premiership c/c  
Alan Olle

Since founding Sorrento has appointed 53 coaches. In 1982 aged 58 Alan Olle became the club's oldest and first non-playing coach. Two decades had passed since his 1961 retirement as playing coach of 8 seasons, over two terms. His career ended after 213 senior games: 162 over 10 seasons with Sorrento and 51 at St. Kilda over 6 seasons at the princely sum of £3 per match under the draconian Coulter Law which promoted his early departure.

Overall Alan coached Sorrento a record 9 times peaking in his second season with the club's 4<sup>th</sup> flag, an endearing achievement, nevertheless one he never repeated. A rover-forward, Alan led from the front, winning a club best and fairest and the goal kicking twice. Alan's appointment began a glacial trend, with another 4 non-playing coaches since. Of the 14 senior premierships, only 3 can be attributed to playing coaches without prior VFL-AFL careers

## Defining moments

The club was struggling for numbers when former Hawthorn great Don Scott agreed to coach the under-18s in 1997-98. In 2001 Brent Kenyon and Jai Spence, who played under Scott, became co-coaches and took the under-18s to a flag. Senior success followed in 2004.

The juniors coming through to the senior club have formed the backbone of the senior team ever since. We have the very enviable record of having not less than 16 players in each of our last 6 premierships who have come up from the junior club.



**ERA 2008-2015**

PLAYER	SORRENTO			VFL-AFL-OTHER			
	From	To	Games	CLUB	From	To	Games
SCHWARZE, Ben**				Nth Melb			
SCHWARZE, Troy***	2007	2015		St Kilda	2000	2006	71

\* played in one Sorrento premiership

\*\* played in two or more Sorrento premierships

\*\*\* Played and coached in two or more premierships

^captain & coach

^^ captain and coach premiership