

ANZAC Tribute to Paddy Gilchrist

ANZAC Spirit. Paddy Gilchrist: Born 1889, Died 1970, Age 81

Historians and researchers believe Paddy Gilchrist's achievements make him one of the best sportspersons of all time, coming out of the Eastern region of Melbourne. Certainly, Paddy was one of the best to represent the Mitcham Football and Cricket Clubs. A Collingwood 1910 Premiership player, Paddy was also an ANZAC and WW1 Veteran.

Bio at Mitcham FC

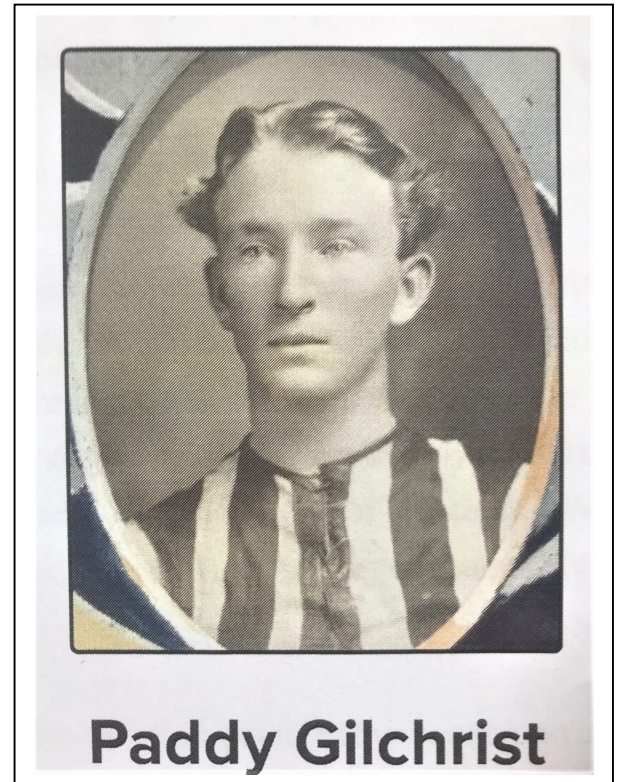
- Played 14 years including 4 Premierships (218 games)
- Started 1907 and finished in 1928
- Captain Coach 5 years and retired aged 39 (still as Captain Coach)

Other Premierships:

Collingwood FC 1910 and Ferntree Gull 1913

Cricket:

Mitcham player who dominated at all levels. Also played for North Melbourne. A bowler who took approximately 1,500 first XI wickets, 10 wickets three times and 5 wickets a staggering 155 times.



Paddy Gilchrist

Mitcham Boy:

Paddy grew up in Mitcham and commenced with MFC in 1907 and by 1910 at age 20, captained the team and starred, attracting Collingwood FC scouts to pounce.

1910 Premiership player - Collingwood FC:

In season 1910 Paddy played and lost in Mitcham's Semi Final to Camberwell in July. Incredibly, he then immediately found himself in the Collingwood FC Senior team and went on to be a Pies Premiership player, over Carlton, in front of 42,790 spectators.

Paddy played 36 games for 37 goals for Collingwood. The Argus newspaper described Paddy as "possessing an excellent footy brain, highly skilled with a great eye for a goal".

Ultimate irony:

Later in 1913 Paddy played for the Ferntree Gully Football Club, lured by their President with employment and cheap accommodation. This proved irresistible to a young man who was about to get married. Not surprisingly with Paddy as their gun recruit, Ferntree Gully won the 1913 Premiership, by 3 points at Morton Park. Ironically, Paddy defeated Mitcham and many of his mates.

Paddy quickly learnt his lesson, and returned home to MFC with great success, as the Club won both the 1914 and 1915 Premierships.



Collingwood FC 1910 Premiership Players, President & Committee.

Paddy is the bottom player, left side.

ANZAC Spirit – WW1 Trenches in France

Presenting as a very fit 26 year old Paddy was the ideal soldier. He served three years overseas, mainly in the dreaded trenches in France.

The Aussies had a saying: “you want to be in the trenches with him”, the highest compliment of the person you wanted to be with when facing grave adversity. The enemy was brutal and it was life or death. Paddy was definitely one such person. A true ANZAC in every respect.

1919 - Home Coming and More Premierships:

Mitcham residents, and especially MFC players, were most excited on Paddy’s return from the War in 1919.

With the train pulling into the Mitcham Railway Station, he was met by a couple of players in Mr. Walker’s car (the only car in town) to take him directly to Walker Park, to play a match which had been held up for his arrival.

Paddy’s family caught up with him post-match. A few matches later Paddy played and won his 3rd MFC Premiership, in 1919.



After WW1, MFC 1919 Premiers. Capt. Coach Paddy is seated in the centre



1921 MFC Premiers. Capt. Coach Paddy is in the centre



1928: Paddy (holding the football) in his last year at Mitcham, aged 39.

MFC Premierships - A Golden Era:

- 1914 Mitcham def. Kew
- 1915 Mitcham def. Blackburn
- WW1 Recess: 1916, 1917, 1918
- 1919 Mitcham def. Canterbury
- 1920 Mitcham Runners-Up (1 point loss to Canterbury)
- 1921 Mitcham def. Burwood (played at Walker Park)

Paddy's Love for Footy and Mitcham:

Paddy continued playing for Mitcham another 7 years, 5 years as Captain Coach. He retired at the end of the 1928 season at the age of 39. A true Mitcham elder statesman. A quality person that epitomizes why he and many after him have ensured Mitcham Football Club had continued success and welfare.

Postscript:

The VFL/AFL all-time great Bob Pratt in 1934 kicked 150 VFL goals for South Melbourne, and later in 1941 kicked 183 goals for Coburg. An AFL Hall of Fame member and Legend. Bob played his first senior game for Mitcham (the year after Paddy retired) in 1929 as a 16 year football prodigy. That year Mitcham lost the Grand Final to Doncaster.



*Returned Soldiers WW1 Memorial Statue, Mitcham Halliday Park.
P. Gilchrist is listed fifth from the top.*

