

1988 - Centennial Match v Surrey Hills FC

Mitcham FC has had a long history and a special association with the Surrey Hills FC. Both Clubs were established in 1888 and met in round two that year at Surrey, alas Mitcham losing 2.11 v 1.3.

Just six years later in 1893 and in the middle of the 1890's depression, times were very tough. At this time there was only three local football Clubs - Mitcham, Surrey Hills and Box Hill, all whom decided to merge and pool resources and players to form the new Nunawading Football Club. Named after the Shire of Nunawading, with the additional reason to provide a strong team to represent the District.

Mitcham players were prominent in this new team with Arthur Edgoose and Harold Pratt as its Captain and Vice-Captain respectively. Harold Pratt, was the father of the great Bob Pratt from Mitcham and South Melbourne FC (VFL) who kicked a record 150 goals in 1934.

However, this marriage was short lived. Mitcham was the first team to 'want out' of the merger after 3 years (1893-1895), most importantly to regain its own identity as the Mitcham FC in 1896. Since then the enduring battles and rivalry against Surrey have always been the standard. Somewhat unkindly the 'Mitchamities' often referred to Surrey Hills FC as the 'Surrey Sucks' such was the banter and esteem they were held with all those at Tigerland. This however, was balanced against the much-unsaid respect and friendships as many a post-match gathering would attest.

It was with genuine sadness that Surrey Hills FC, our old mates, our historic combatant and fellow Centenary Club folded in 1994.

Pictures to follow, Mitcham FC V Surrey Hills FC, Walker Park – R.10: July 1988:



Grandstand view – Pre match team's line up

Weather wise this important match day could not have been played in worse conditions. Sheeting rain, arctic winds and a feeling of snow prevailed. Mitcham had three former Richmond FC players - Barry Williams (Capt / Coach), Bruce Tempany and Greg Strachan. The final scores were Mitcham 13.8 def Surrey Hills 4.5.



Mitcham players lining up on the 'pristine' Walker Park surface



The grandstand was a near full house



VFL 'Centenary Club' plaque.
Presented to MFC President Steve Lundberg
by VFL President Doug Mills.