



NEWMAN NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The Newman National Football League commenced in 1972 with three clubs. Originally, the clubs were known as Hill (load and haul, crusher, drill and blast, full time on the hill, shift fitters and shift electricians), Workshops (general workshop, shovel and drill electrical, haulpac workshops, power station, crusher area, drill shop and shovel maintenance) and also Town & Admin (township, administration, contractors and school teachers). Town & Admin defeated Hill to win the inaugural season's premiership.

The competition was arranged in order to give the town's people a game of football, with the hope that it was an even competition. This would be almost essential in a small community, where the dominance of one club could have been detrimental to the spirit of the game and social harmony.

In 1973, the clubs were given new names: Hill became Tigers (blue and gold, then blue and white panels in 1974, before adopting their current black and gold from 1975), Workshops became known as Saints (black, white and red panels), while Town & Admin became Centrals (maroon, before changing to maroon and gold from 1974).

Tigers won their first title in 1975, following a 27-point Grand Final win over Saints. The evenness of the competition in its first decade was attributed to the zoning policy adopted upon the NNFL's formation. Premierships were spread evenly in the 1970s between the three foundation sides, with Centrals and Saints winning three premierships and Tigers winning twice. The Saints' back-to-back triumph of 1973-1974 was special because they won both from third place (bottom) at the end of the home-and-away season.

In 1975, a fourth club, Pioneers, entered the competition. Initially, all new players were directed to the club, but later in 1975, the club's defined player pool was O.H.P. production, mine planning, survey, ore grading, blasting and laboratory. They wore red and blue guernseys, with their first five seasons yielding five wooden-spoons. They only

became competitive with the adoption of an 'open zoning policy' in 1980. Pioneers went on to win five straight premierships between 1980 and 1984, aided by this policy.

Tigers (odd years) and Saints (even years) traded premierships between 1986 and 1991, with neither club able to claim back-to-back successes. Both clubs contested each Grand Final between 1986 and 1991, a streak broken when Centrals defeated Pioneers in 1992. The Lions won three out of four flags between 1992 and 1995, going back-to-back in 1994 and 1995.

The Saints were a force between 1996 and 2008, contesting all 13 Grand Finals and claiming a hat-trick between 1999 and 2001 and two in a row in 2003 and 2004 in a seven-premiership haul during this era. A Tigers' boom period overlapped the Saints run around this time, with the men in black and gold playing off in eight of the 11 Grand Finals between 2005 and 2015, including three on end from 2007 to 2009. Either Saints and/or Tigers have played every Grand Final since 1993.

Saints completed a hat-trick of premierships in 2016, having defeated Centrals, Tigers and then Centrals. The 2014 decider needed to be decided in extra-time after Saints (13.6) and Centrals (12.12) were deadlocked after four quarters. Saints kicked 2.1 to a behind in extra-time to secure their 14th flag with a 12-point win.

The League has a top-three finals series, with a Preliminary Final between second and third, with the winners meeting the minor premiers in the Grand Final.

In 2015, the NNFL reduced the home-and-away season to 12 games, with 16 players on the field playing shortened quarters of 17 minutes to accommodate Saturday night double headers.

From 44 seasons of NNFL football, Saints (32 Grand Finals) and Tigers (28 Grand Finals) have both won 15 premierships, Centrals have won eight flags from 19 appearances, with Pioneers won six flags from nine Grand Finals.

The highest score in a Grand Final came in 1993, when Tigers kicked 25.20 to defeat Saints by 118 points. The lowest tally was 2.2 by Centrals against Saints (16.12) in 2004.

The style of play is akin to what you would see in any league outside of the Kimberley region. Prior to the mid-2000s, there was virtually no FIFO component in the NNFL playing ranks until the construction phase in Newman saw an influx of FIFO workers. The move away from eight-hour shifts towards 12-hour shifts saw the end of the

availability of many travelling workers to the extent that the Reserves competition was disbanded. Nowadays, only 5-10% of players are FIFO workers.

Newman has eight junior clubs, with four at Under 11 level, and two clubs in the Under 14 and Under 17 grades.

The annual Newman Vets Legends Game is a highlight of the calendar, with former players and sportsmen descending on the town to play in front of the locals. Sportsmen of the calibre of Wayne Carey, Anthony Koutoufides, Richard Champion and Brad Hogg enjoy putting on a show for the locals.

2017 CLUBS

CENTRALS

Centrals was formed in 1972 as Town & Admin. and wore maroon guernseys in their first two seasons, before adding gold in 1974. The Lions lay claim to being the Newman League's inaugural premiers, defeating Hill under coach 'Billy' Knox. Centrals lost to Saints by 15 points in 1974, but revenge was gained two seasons later with victory over Saints by 17 points. The Grand Final rivalry with Saints continued until the end of the decade with Saints (1978) and Centrals trading victories.

Following a 45-point loss to Pioneers in 1980, Centrals were absent from the 'big day' until 1985 – a 93-point loss to Tigers – before another seven years in the wilderness.

Centrals won three premierships in the 1990s, with one win against each of their NNFL opponents – Pioneers in 1992, Saints in 1994 and Tigers in 1995 – before a 15-year wait for their seventh flag. The wait included six Grand Final defeats (four with margins of 20 points or less) and the lowest Grand Final score in 2004, when the Lions kicked 2.2 in a 94-point loss to Saints.

The drought was broken in 2010 after a five-point win over Tigers, 10.14 to 10.9, before pounding the Saints by 54 points in 2012. The Lions' last Grand Final appearance was a 52-point loss to Saints in 2016.

The club's Fairest & Best award winners have been William 'Billy' Knox (1972 and 1974), Peter Sattell (1975), Wayne Reynolds (1977), Jim Gardiner (1983, 1986 and 1988), Steve Cooper (1994-95), Joel Yates (2004) and Anthony 'Musha' Taylor (2014).

PIONEERS

In 1975, a fourth club, Pioneers, entered the competition having been formed late in 1974. The side's players came from O.H.P. production, mine planning, survey, ore grading, blasting and laboratory, and wore red and blue guernseys. Their first five seasons yielded five wooden-spoons and they only became competitive with the adoption of an 'open zoning policy' in 1980.

Pioneers went on to win five straight premierships between 1980 and 1984, aided by this policy, with large scores kicked in each win. Their first crown in 1980 came after an emphatic 45-point win over Centrals, 21.12 to 14.9. The Demons then won three consecutive Grand Finals against Tigers, including a 22.15 return in a 66-point win in 1982 and then a commanding 24.13 to 14.8 win in 1984.

Since their five-in-a-row, Pioneers have only won one more premiership, back in 2002, when they defeated Saints 9.19 to 7.10. Their last Grand Final appearance was in 2011, when a club with a significant FIFO component came within 20 points of Tigers, who had won four of the previous six flags.

The four players from the Demons to have won the Sir Ian McLennan Medal are Alan Whyborn in 1985, Nathan Lawler in 2001, Justin Williams in 2003 and Terrence Gilla in 2012.

SAINTS

Saints, known as Workshops in 1972, have played in the most NNFL Grand Finals (32 out of a possible 44), with a return of 16 premierships. They finished last in the first three seasons, however with all three clubs playing finals, they managed to amazing feat of back-to-back flags in 1973 (a five-point win over Tigers) and 1974 (by 15 points over Centrals). A third premiership came in 1978 against Centrals.

After a nine-point loss to Centrals in 1979, Saints missed the next six deciders before Tigers (odd years) and Saints (even years) traded premierships between 1985 and 1991, with neither club able to win back-to-back successes. Both clubs contested each Grand Final between 1986 and 1991.

Having missed the 1992 Grand Final, Saints were a force between 1996 and 2008. They contested all 13 Grand Finals and claimed a hat-trick between 1999 and 2001 and two in a row in 2003 and 2004 in a seven-premiership haul during this era. Having won the 2006 Grand Final by 12 points against Centrals, there was an eight-year gap until premiership number 14.

The Saints completed a hat-trick of premierships in 2016, having defeated Centrals, Tigers and then Centrals again. The 2014 decider went to extra-time after Saints (13.6) and Centrals (12.12) were deadlocked after four quarters. Saints kicked 2.1 to a behind in extra-time to secure a 12-point win.

The club's recent success can be attributed to having a consistent core of players, as well as gaining some good junior talent as they progress to senior level – players such as Charlie Cameron, Dillan Jones and Sachin Barr.

The club's impressive list of NNFL Fairest & Best medallists includes Ron Willison (1973 and 1976), Phil Noble (1978-79 and 1981), Dave Fulton (1980), Peter Gregory (1982 and 1984), Peter Walker (1989), Ian Wolfenden (1992-93), Neil Clark (1995), Brian Dhu (1997), Jay Jay Abbott (1998 and 2000), Mark Lincoln (2005) Morgan Tucker (2006), Sachin Barr (2015) and Jarrod Mason (2016)

Charlie Cameron played football with the Saints prior to playing with WAFL club Swan Districts, where he was rookie-listed from by the Adelaide Crows in 2013. He made his AFL debut in 2014 and had racked up 73 games by the end of the 2017 season, at seasons end he requested a trade to Brisbane Lions.

TIGERS

Originally known as Hill when they were formed in 1972, the Tigers adopted their current title in 1973. It took until their fourth season to claim a premiership, when they prevailed over Saints by 26 points, 14.14 to 10.12. Two years later they won again against the same opposition.

From 1978 to 1984, Tigers lost four Grand Finals including three against Pioneers by nine goals or more. The losing trot came to an end for Tigers in 1985 when they thrashed Centrals by 93 points, 22.15 to 8.6. This was the start of a run of seven successive Grand Final appearances, with further wins coming in 1987, 1989 and 1991. In the 1993 Grand Final, Tigers kicked the highest Grand Final score – 25.20 – with the 118-point win over Saints also standing as the greatest margin in a Grand Final.

Tigers have won six flags from eight attempts since 2005, including a hat-trick between 2007 and 2009, 2011 and 2013 where they went through undefeated, four of those wins have come against Saints, their fiercest rivals.

Former Melbourne AFL player Nathan Carroll has been a premiership player for the club, as has older brother Trent, who played with the Fremantle Dockers and West Coast Eagles.

The competition Fairest & Best medal winners from the club are John Aram in 1972, Mick Carroll in 1979, Ian Crawford in 1987, Greg Haines in 1990, Rod Studham in 1991, Peter Kay 1994, Brett Austin in 1996, Mark Austin in 1999, Evan Carroll in 2002, 2009 and 2012, Dean Carroll in 2007, Brian McKendry in 2008, Rob Ryan in 2010 and Murray Smith in 2013.

NEWMAN PREMIERS

1972	Centrals	1995	Centrals
1973	Saints	1996	Tigers
1974	Saints	1997	Saints
1975	Tigers	1998	Tigers
1976	Centrals	1999	Saints
1977	Tigers	2000	Saints
1978	Saints	2001	Saints
1979	Centrals	2002	Pioneers
1980	Pioneers	2003	Saints
1981	Pioneers	2004	Saints
1982	Pioneers	2005	Tigers
1983	Pioneers	2006	Saints
1984	Pioneers	2007	Tigers
1985	Tigers	2008	Tigers
1986	Saints	2009	Tigers
1987	Tigers	2010	Centrals
1988	Saints	2011	Tigers
1989	Tigers	2012	Centrals
1990	Saints	2013	Tigers
1991	Tigers	2014	Saints (extra time)
1992	Centrals	2015	Saints
1993	Tigers	2016	Saints
1994	Centrals	2017	Saints