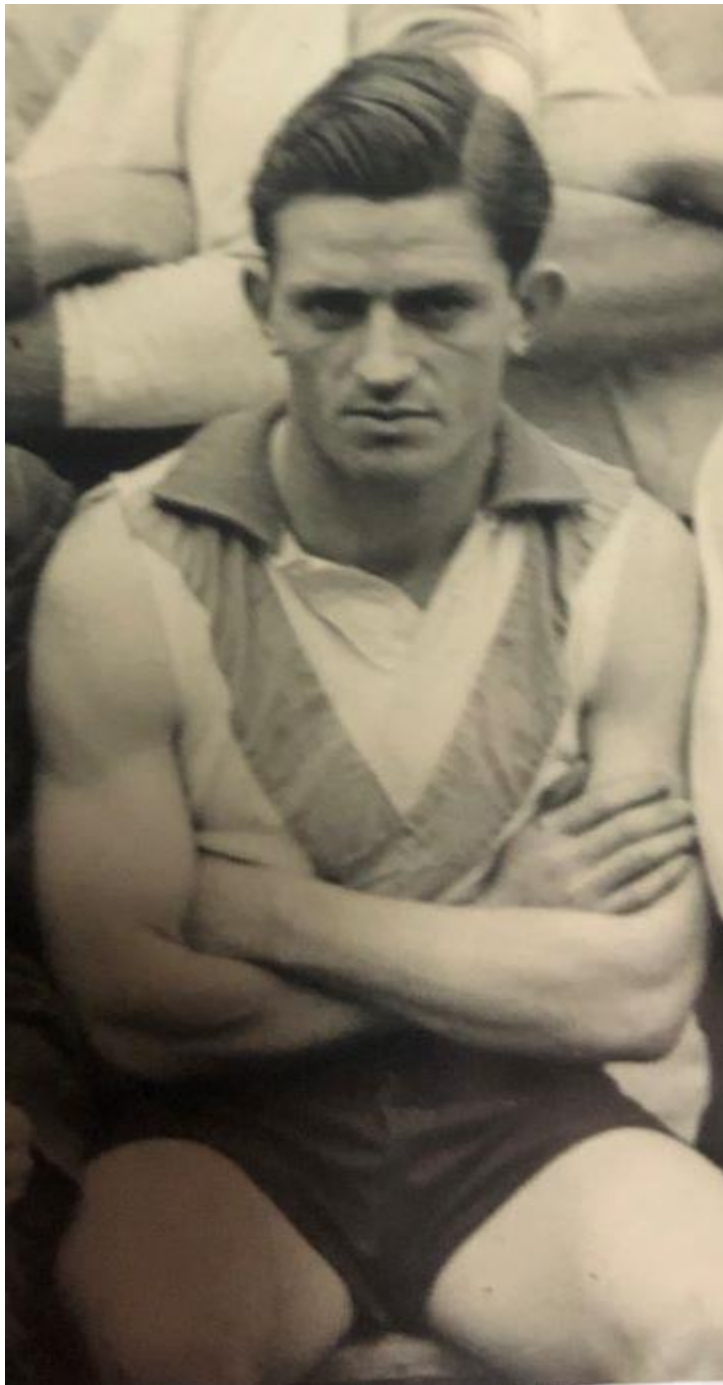


THE OFC STAR WHO PREPARED WITH BEER.

In our continuing series on former OFC champion players this week we look at a star from the early 1950s, who drank beer before the games!!!

His name was Jack Hodgkiss and coincidentally he's been mentioned in recent months by two of our oldest Life Members- John Faull and Paul Jones.

Both approached "Bloodlines" independently with their memories of Jack, who was based at HMAS Cerberus near Hastings.



Faullsy says Jack was mentored by Ralph Jones, the Club President .

Ralph had famously been a Japanese prisoner during the Second World War. He would pay for Jack to travel by taxi from Hastings to the ground each Saturday- which in those days would have been a significant investment by the president !

Waiting for Jack at the gate on arrival would be a bottle of beer !

It's impossible to imagine Kelsey Currie or Nick Keegan preparing for a match with a couple of cans of VB on Saturday mornings.

Anyway Faulsy says Jack Hodgkiss was a revelation once he crossed the white line.

He was built like Gary Ablett senior and was a hard and tough footballer who could drop kick a goal from a forward flank.

He also used stab kicks (short,sharp drop kicks that rose only a metre or two in the air) with such ferocity that forwards had trouble marking the ball.

He was, according to Faulsy, an out and out star .

Paul Jones has similar recollections. He says Jack would "hit the turps" on a Friday night and prior to games on Saturdays his team mates would give him a cold shower. to sober him up. However once on the field hit was "game on".

Paul says Hodgkiss was named in the MDFA "all time best players" side in the mid 1950s. He says he was the best player he saw in the red and white before the great Peter Milic turned it on in the mid 60s (Milic will feature in a future article).

In 1951 Hodgkiss finished eighth in the MDFA Best and Fairest count- he was the leading OFC player. He also stood out during the finals campaign in that year when OFC disposed of Upwsey-Tecoma and South Belgrave before falling to Belgrave in the Grand Final,.

Hodgkiss delighted fans with dashing runs through the centre of the ground.

ANECDOTE- after a spectacular run through the centre he kicked the goal which put OFC in front in the preliminary final against South Belgrave, but then forgot to bounce the ball on another dashing run and the resultant free kick tied up the scores and led to a replay the following week.

So what became of Jack Hodgkiss ? Well no one seems to know, he just drifted away from the Club and out of local lives.

However he was certainly a larger than life character, and footballer, during his time with OFC.