

ROOSTER REMINISCES

A look back at a memorable match from each round

Round 2

Season 1900 (Saturday 12 May)



John 'Dinny' Reedman – his move to North's in 1899 help establish North as a powerhouse in 1900

Back in 1900 (yep 116 years ago) the media spotlight and the scrutiny of every football match and players was nowhere as invasive as it is now. However nor were the maintaining of club records and statistics which makes obtaining all the facts and figures from those days a difficult task. Even the players guernseys were not numbered yet! The newspapers of the day formed the only references for anyone not at the footy to find out the results, match details and the players who fought in the battle. So it was not surprising that North's win in Round 2 was not placed in any record books – but it should have.

Background

In the year 1900 Australian Rules was still finding its feet, the South Australian Football League (it changed its name to SANFL in 1907) had only six teams contesting and the association will still adjusting to electorate football. Norwood, South and Port were the big clubs of the competition and North (formerly Medindie) were still working their way in gaining some respectability. North were still classed as a "junior" team and still without a premiership. Both of these statements were to change by the end of the season...

North began the season with more confidence than any other year. Whilst in the past our best players were poached North began recruiting back from the leading clubs. In 1899 **John 'Dinny' Reedman**, a proficient, experienced, and highly note-worthy player during this period after years at South Adelaide, joined the red-and-whites as well as captain **Ernest Jones**, another South legend. As the *Evening Journal* noted:

- "North Adelaide, in Jones and Reedman, have two of the finest exponents of the game in South Australia. Their influence will have a marked effect on the red-and-whites, and now that they have started so well there is every reason to expect them to keep it up."

The Advertiser was aware of this recruiting adjustment:

- "The migration of players of eminence in the senior clubs to the Norths has considerably strengthened their ranks, and the remarkable progress they have made and the excellent stand

they have already affected against two of the older clubs augurs well for a most interesting season.”

Of the “big 3” North had recorded the occasion win over Norwood and Port – but never South. In Round Two, this was to change. But before the game itself, some background should be noted.

The Match

So onto Round Two. A final scoreline of 7.9 to 2.3 does not represent much to reflect upon, but behind the result was a defining victory to saviour for the red-and-whites. After 12 seasons in the association and the constant laughing stock of the competition after many, many demoralising defeats the worm had finally turned. After surprisingly upsetting Port in Round One by a massive 39-points North met South for the 42nd time since their first meeting in 1888 – and still seeking their first win against them.

It was a beautiful day for football as *The Advertiser* highlighted:

- “The day was simply delightful, and a more exhilarating and crisp atmosphere for an exposition of the winter game could not have been desired.”

North were out of the blocks to kick the only three goals in the first term. Debutant **Norm Claxton** was showing great promise playing in defence while “**Joe**” **Coates** was enjoying a great game as one of Norths followers on the ball. *The Express and Telegraph* captured Norths immediate control of the game:

- “From the jump the Norths had their more experienced rivals well in hand, their strong back and excellent forward giving the Souths no end of trouble. In the first quarter the Norths established a lead of three goals.”

North continued to dominate the match without much to show on the scoreboard (note: *in 1900 10 goals was like 20 goals nowadays*). North maintained the gap it created from the strong first term to finally defeat South by 36 points after only three goals were kicked in total for the second half.

North were finally victors against their hoodoo team South and for the first time backed up a “big” scalp with a consecutive big scalp (Port and South). As *The Register* reported about the game:

- “It was almost their (North) crowning ambition, and when they succeeded they could be excused for the jubilation in their camp;”
- “It was marvellous to compare it with any of their previous games, for instead of the sloppy, uncertain, timid play which seem to characterise them their style was bold, dashing and confident from start to finish.”

Individually **Norm Claxton’s** debut game was full of promise:

- “...**Claxton** was a real artist, and his long runs and telling kicks were often the means of forcing the South’s men back” – *The Register*.

Other players to catch the eye included:

- “**Jones** and **Reedman** at either end were useful – particularly the latter – and their presence had a wonderful moral effect upon the red and whites, but it was the old members born and trained in the district who carried off the palm. **Coates** in the ruck proved himself to be a fine a follower as any team could desire, while (**William**) **Baker**, who was out on trial, was never far away, and was one of the best men on the ground” – *South Australian Register*.

North’s players continued to gain accolades from the media although the descriptions of their dominance were written differently to how complements are written nowadays):

- “**McNamara** quite lost his immediate opponent, and on the wings **Lemon** put in a great deal of dashing clever play. **Wilmshurst** on the other side was not far behind him. Further forward on the side **Dawkins** earned his place, while **Matthews**, half-forward... was conspicuous for general excellence. **Goss** never seemed to be idle” – *South Australian Register*.

However it was clearly evident the enormous victory was completed through teamwork:

- “North owed their success mainly to their combination. It was a real treat to see the masterly manner in which they handled the ball. In the tightest corner they were never flurried, but either by handball or a long kick passed it to a comrade. Marking was a special feature of their display, and seldom has a finer exhibition been seen than theirs. They were almost perfect in their ground work, never fumbling, but picking up the ball and driving it along in telling fashion. They started at a furious rate, and by keeping cool and passing rapidly, nearly all of them scoring over their immediate opponents, they had the blues entirely disorganised” – *South Australian Register*.

After waiting so long for their first victory against the blue-and-whites North followed up the unexpected victory to defeat South in their next encounter (Round 9) later in the season. South won the third battle (Round 18) before North finished the season with their first ever premiership – ironically against South!

On completion of the season North Adelaide’s report would have adjusted some references:

- ~~North were still classed as a “junior” team~~
- ~~North had not won a premiership~~

Stats Fact

- North win broke the 41-consecutive losses against South (since their first meeting in 1888). The 41 games is by far the longest losing sequence against North by any team. Ironically North have won 187 out of the 276 games against South since (68% winning rate). The longest since then is Centrals 18 consecutive wins from 1997 to 2004.

Round Two Facts *(based from 1896 when behinds were first included in scoring)*

- North’s score of 7.9 (51) is their 3rd Lowest Winning Score;
- South’s 2.3 (15) equals Port’s 2.3 as the Lowest Score Against;
- The match aggregate of 66 points is the 2nd Lowest Match Aggregate;

Match Details:

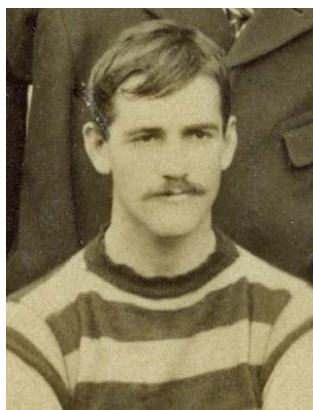
North	3.2	5.3	6.4	7.9	51
South	0.1	1.1	2.2	2.3	15
Ground:	Adelaide Oval			Crowd:	“large”

Best Players: Coates, Baker, Claxton, Mitchell, McNamara

Goalkickers: Coates 2, Matthews 1, Goss 1, McNamara 1, H. Pash 1, Reedman 1

The Team:

William Baker, George Carter, Norman Clark, Norman Claxton, Herbert Clisby, C.W.W. “Joe” Coates, William Dawkins, Steven Goss, Ernest Jones (Capt.), Norman Lemon, James Matthews, Thomas McNamara, Ernest Mitchell, Harold “Araby” Pash, Norman Pash, John Reedman (Vice Capt.), William Shaw, Horace Wilmshurst



Wally "Joe" Coates and James Matthews were integral players in North's first every victory over South Adelaide in this round back in 1900.

Do you have any historical North Adelaide/ Medindie photos or memorabilia? The club is always searching for historical photos of players and the teams from yesteryear (preferably originals rather than ones from the paper). If ANYONE has any that the club could obtain a copy please contact me (David O'Hara) on 0403 012 646 or Barry Dolman on 0431 810 185.

David O'Hara
History Committee