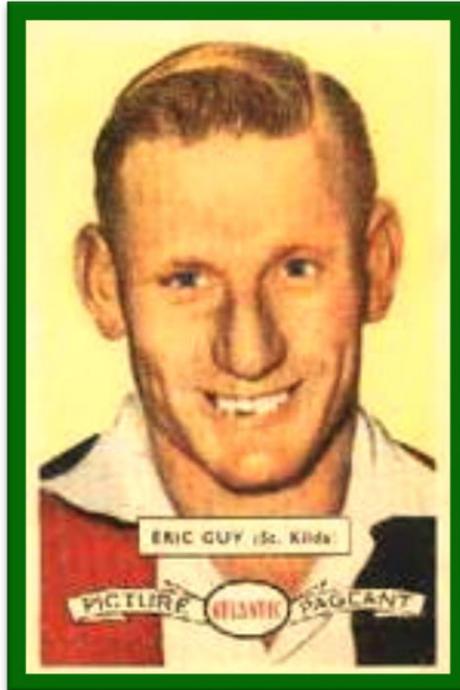


## **ERIC GUY**

### **'THE TANK' FROM PIER STREET**

( Ref 2018/11)



Source: Esso- Atlantic Picture Pageant

### **ERIC GUY 1932- 1991**

**Eric Guy** (born: 1932) played 26 games with Dromana FC. As a teenager, in **Mornington Peninsula** football, Eric forged a handsome reputation with his uncompromising style of play and his mass of eye-catching blonde hair. While quite a deal is known about Eric's football prowess with Dromana Football Club, very few local people are aware of Eric's early years and his involvement with the **1949 Melbourne Cup** winner, **Foxzami...**

*"...Eric was the youngest child born into the Guy family. According to older brother Ivan, Eric had always loved horses and had always owned one. Ivan said he and Eric would ride over to Dandenong market on their pushbikes where a horse could be bought for about 17 shillings and sixpence.... sometimes, Ivan said they would be given away for nothing. By the age of sixteen Eric had a job as a track work rider in Sydney, there he worked with the race horse Foxzami, the following year in 1949 Foxzami won the Melbourne Cup. During the 1950's Eric kept fox, stag and grey hounds for hunting. Often he and others would go into*

*the swamps and farmland out the back of Carrum and hunt foxes..." Source: 'A History of Families of Carrum.'*



Source: Family collection

### **ERIC GUY WITH ONE OF HIS GREYHOUNDS**

As is well-known, Eric played an important role in the club's triumph over **Somerville** in the **1950 'B Grade Grand Final'** before embarking on an impressive career with **Carrum , Oakleigh** (VFA) and later with **St Kilda FC**. Eric's first game in VFA football, in 1952, was highly controversial as it was claimed by the Brunswick FC that Eric was one of two players who had not gained a clearance from Carrum in order to cross to Oakleigh...

***" On Monday night the V.F.A. board of management decided to give the four points to Brunswick, which was trounced in the game, 14-10 to 4-9. The two players concerned ...Eric Guy and winger Bill Botten..." Source: 'The Argus' June 5<sup>th</sup> 1952. Page: 8***

Before crossing to St Kilda in 1957, it is documented that Eric played about 91 games for Devils (as Oakleigh was known); and he was captain of the club in 1956.

Eric played his first game for **St Kilda** against **Geelong** at the **Junction Oval** in **Round: 1 in 1957** in front of 20,000 fans. He was 24 years of age on debut; and in the next six seasons he played a total of **93 VFL games**.

Eric played mainly on the half back flank and quickly became regarded as the Saint's 'tough man.' In later years, he acquired the nickname 'The Tank' because of his hard-hitting and 'straight through' style of football. Eric Guy was vice-captain of St Kilda for some years and represented **Victoria** in interstate matches on three occasions.

The 'Encyclopedia of AFL Footballer's' compiled by Russell Holmesby and Jim Main carries the following entry regarding Eric Guy as...

***"Aptly named 'The Tank', he was a half back with an iron build whom Murray Weideman described as the toughest fair player of his time. He always concentrated on the ball but once he had his eyes fixed on it he moved like a one man blitz..." Page: 337.***

Although Eric carried a fierce reputation throughout his football career; research into the **VFL Independent Tribunal** archives reveal that he was only reported once. According to the available records, Eric was reported in **Round: 17** in **1957** for striking. The match was against **Geelong** at **Kardinia Park**; and Eric was found guilty of the charge and received a penalty of four weeks suspension.

One of the highlights of Eric's career was his fine performance in the 1961 **First -Semi Final** against **Footscray** in front of a then-record crowd ( for a VFL semi-final) of **86,411** fans . The Bulldogs, led by the legendary Ted Whitten, withstood a last quarter challenge to claim victory by nine points. Eric Guy was listed with **Alan Morrow** (ex-Sale), **Frank Hodgkin** ( ex-Myrtleford), **Lance Oswald** ( Wangaratta) and a tall ruckman, from Castlemaine, named **Baden-Powell Annand** (aka 'Bud') as St Kilda's best players in that game .

**Note:** The value of **country recruits** to VFL/AFL football is evident when considering the above list of Saints stars that day.



Source: MPNFL archives

Eric's last game of VFL football was against **Hawthorn** at the Junction Oval in Round: 18 in 1962. On that day, St Kilda, coached by **Allan Jeans**, defeated the Hawks by 35 points.

Eric Guy was the oldest player for the Saints in that game (30 years-7days) while **Kevin Billing**, who was playing his first senior VFL game, was just 17 years of age. In his VFL career of 93 games, Eric had been part of 44 winning teams (i.e. win-loss ratio of 47%).

During his VFL career, Eric polled a total of **26 Brownlow Medal** votes with his best return being seven votes in **1959**.



Original source: Unknown

### **ERIC GUY- HEADING DOWNFIELD AGAINST FOOTSCRAY**

**\*\*Note:** Despite almost one hundred games. Eric failed to kick a goal during entire career with St Kilda which puts him with a few other VFL/ AFL footballers who never bothered the goal umpires (e.g. **Ted Potter-Collingwood**, **Herb Henderson-Footscray**, **Gary Malarkey-Geelong** and **Richmond's** illustrious and popular ruckman **Bill 'Polly Perkins**).

A little known fact is that Eric **coached** St Kilda for six games in two stints (1972 and 1974). He was a winning coach in three of his outings; and one of Eric's most memorable victories, as the Saints coach, was against **Essendon** at the **Moorabbin** Oval in **Round: 15 1974**. On that day, his team crushed the Bombers by 41 points. St Kilda booted seven goals in the last quarter to run out convincing winners; and it was a satisfying moment for Eric as the stand-in-coach for Alan Jeans that day.

One of the most revered VFL football historians, **John Devaney**, wrote the following about the notable career of Eric Guy...

*“ Aged 24, Eric Guy crossed to St Kilda in 1957 unsure as to whether he was likely to succeed. He need not have worried, as he rapidly acquired a reputation as one of the VFL's most redoubtable - and effective - enforcers. Perhaps not surprisingly, he soon found himself nicknamed 'The Tank', a label which stayed with him throughout his six-season, 93-game league career. Vice-captain of the Saints for three of those years, Guy was also a triple interstate representative for the VFL. A ruck-rover for most of his time in the VFA, Eric Guy finished his career with St Kilda as a ruthlessly resolute half back flanker. Wherever*

*he played, he gave value for money, and was a firm favourite with the fans."*



Source: St Kilda FC history archives.

Following his retirement from AFL ranks, he played with **Carrum**. Eric died in **May 1991** aged 58 years.

In **2016**, Eric Guy was named in DFNC's '**Team of the Decade**' (1946-55) on the half- back flank alongside **Alan Hosking** at centre half-back and **Vern Humphrey** who was named on the other flank.

Eric's older brother **Wally Guy** is an iconic figure in the history of DFNC; and has been dubbed by some people as the '**Godfather**' of Dromana FC. There are several stories about Wally's phenomenal contribution on this website. Eric's other brother **Ivan** also played with **Dromana in 1958**.

Eric Guy is the uncle of **Gary Guy** (born: 1952) who played 22 games (8 goals) with Melbourne **FC** in 1975-76. Some of those reading this article may have played against Gary when he returned to the **MPNFL** later in his career.

## **OTHER DROMANA PLAYERS WITH A CONNECTION TO ST KILDA FC.**

Eric Guy is one of at least \*\*seven Dromana Footballers who played football with St Kilda. The others being: **Doug Booth** ( 24 games) , **Jeff Hilton** (6 games), **Adrian Burns** ( 4 games), **Tim Allen** ( 22 games) and **Darren Minchington** ( a current player). **Glenn Kendall** was drafted to St Kilda in 1990 but never played a senior game before being cleared to Sandringham FC in the VFL.

\*\* There may have been other players from Dromana who played with St Kilda between **1896 and 1940** of which DFNC has no records.

## **REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION**

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  - Photographs: Sourced from MPNFL and St Kilda FC archives.
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