

THE GAWLER & DISTRICT FOOTBALL LEAGUE 1889 - 1987

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In 1887-1889 Gawler had a team in the major Adelaide competition (against teams like Port Adelaide and Norwood). Through 1888 a second Gawler team could not play enough games, which led to the football community in Gawler forming the Gawler Junior Football League for 1889, which then became the Gawler Football league in 1890 with the demise of the Gawler side, and eventually became the Gawler and District Football League up until amalgamating with the Barossa & Light Football Association in 1987.

The main Gawler side played with orange and black colours. When the three new sides, Willaston, Gawler Central and South Gawler were formed for the 1889 inaugural season, the Central side also played in the orange and black colours, while South wore red, white and blue, and Willaston red and blue.

From 1890 South wore blue and white, up to the present day, while eventually Gawler Central changed slightly to yellow and black.

For the inaugural season there were three teams: Willaston won six games and drew one of eight to win the first premiership, followed by South Gawler with two wins and a draw and Gawler Central, one win and two draws.

1889 - Willaston

1890 - Gawler Central

1891 - South Gawler

1892 - Gawler Central

1893 - Gawler Central/South Gawler

[controversial tie]

1894 - South Gawler

1895 - Gawler Central

1896 - Willaston

1897 - Willaston

[Roseworthy Agricultural College admitted - now four teams]

1898 - Gawler Central

1899 - South Gawler

1900 - Gawler Central

[College withdrew, Shamrocks admitted - still four teams]

1901 - South Gawler

1902 - South Gawler

1903 - Willaston

[Shamrocks withdrew - now three teams]

1904 - Gawler Central

[Roseworthy Agricultural College admitted - now four teams]

- 1905 - Gawler Central 10-6 (66) d South Gawler 7-10 (52)
 [South and Central tied at end of season, requiring a playoff]
- 1906 - South Gawler 5-7 (37) d Gawler Central 3-13 (31)
 [North Gawler admitted - now five teams]
- 1907 - South Gawler
 [North Gawler withdrew - now four teams]
- 1908 - College 6-12 (48) d South Gawler 5-6 (30)
 [playoff]
- 1909 - South Gawler 10-11 (71) d College 6-12 (48)
 [Challenge Final]
- 1910 - South Gawler 9-14 (68) d Willaston 3-8 (26)
 [Playoff, Hamley Bridge admitted - now five teams]
- 1911 - South Gawler d Willaston
 [Salisbury admitted, Hamley Bridge withdrew - still five teams]
- 1912 - College 8-2 (50) d South Gawler 6-12 (48)
 [Challenge Final]
- 1913 - College 9-12 (66) d South Gawler 7-8 (50)
 [Challenge Final]
- 1914 - Gawler Central 9-6 (60) d Salisbury 4-7 (31)
 [Challenge Final. South Gawler withdrew - now four teams]
- 1915 - Willaston 9-16 (70) d Gawler Central 8-12 (60)
 [South Gawler admitted - now five teams]
- 1916-1918 - World War I
- 1919 - Gawler Central 12-11 (83) d Willaston 6-12 (48)
 [Challenge Final]

NOTES

A playoff is when two teams tie at the end of the minor round. A challenge final is usually after a top four where if the minor premier loses either the semi-final or final, it has a right of challenge for the premiership.

1911 is interesting, as my initial research points to the season possibly being split into two, with South winning the first half, and then Willaston the second, with South losing to Willaston later in the season keeping Salisbury out, and then South played Willaston for the premiership, although I have yet to find a result for that game.

1914 South pulled out early because of a clearance dispute, and continued playing arranged matches with outside teams.

The same five teams from 1915 - South Gawler, Willaston, Gawler Central, Salisbury and College, were the same five teams which competed in 1919 after World War I.

- 1920 - South Gawler 5-9 (39) d College 3-13 (31)
 1921 - South Gawler 12-17 (89) d Gawler Central 6-3 (39).
 1922 - South Gawler 8-10 (58) d Salisbury 4-4 (28).
 1923 - South Gawler 11-11 (77) d Salisbury 3-5 (23).
 1924 - South Gawler 9-16 (70) d Salisbury 5-8 (38).
 [College withdrew, Lyndoch admitted - still five teams]
 1925 - South Gawler 7-10 (52) d Gawler Central 5-4 (34).
 [Lyndoch withdrew - now four teams]
 1926 - No A Grade

NOTES

An article in The Bunyip, May 7, 1926, stated three abortive meetings had been held by the Gawler Football League, and a decision had been reached that senior football in Gawler would be abandoned for at least the 1926 season. College had already broke away to enter an inter-collegiate competition with city schools, and Salisbury had been dissatisfied over the past few seasons, and had associated with teams of the Prospect district in the promotion of an association. This left three teams, South, Central and Willaston, with not much enthusiasm prevailing with the latter two clubs. There was an attempt to put two teams into the Barossa and Light association, but this was rejected.

A 'B' grade competition was played in 1926, with six clubs, South, Central, Willaston, Rovers, College and Lyndoch. No A grade player was eligible to play in the B grade competition.

There was also junior football, with 'B' or 'C' teams from some of the Senior B grade clubs, plus teams from Methodists, Ramblers, Church of England, and St. George. There was also a game against Sandy Creek.

- 1927 - South Gawler 12-18 (90) d Hamley Bridge 6-9 (45).
 [Hamley Bridge and Rovers admitted, Salisbury withdrew - now five teams]
 1928 - Willaston 9-9 (63) d South Gawler 4-19 (43).
 [Williamstown and College admitted - now seven teams]
 1929 - South Gawler 9-10 (64) d Salisbury 4-10 (34).
 [Williamstown amalgamated with Lyndoch, Hamley Bridge withdrew,
 Salisbury admitted - still seven teams]
 1930 - Willaston 8-21 (69) d South Gawler 5-12 (42).
 [Williamstown/Lyndoch left - now six teams]
 1931 - South Gawler 6-13 (49) d Willaston 5-16 (46).
 [Page System of finals].
 1932 - South Gawler 9-19 (73) d Willaston 7-7 (49).
 1933 - Willaston 11-14 (80) d Rovers 6-9 (45).
 [Salisbury withdrew, Gawler Central dropped to B grade - now four teams].

- 1934 - South Gawler 10-11 (71) d Willaston 9-14 (68).
 [Gawler Central admitted - now five teams].
- 1935 - Willaston 9-18 (72) d Gawler Central 7-13 (55).
 [Salisbury admitted - now six teams].
- 1936 - Gawler Central 8-15 (63) d Willaston 6-12 (48).
- 1937 - Willaston 10-9 (69) d Gawler Central 5-9 (39).
 [Salisbury withdrew - now five teams]
- 1938 - College 14-13 (97) d Gawler Central 11-14 (80).
- 1939 - Willaston 16-13 (109) d College 7-6 (48).
 [Rovers withdrew - now four teams. Teams: Willaston, College, South Gawler and Gawler Central].

NOTES

Williamstown-Lyndoch left Gawler League after 1929 season, Lyndoch joining the Barossa & Light B grade and losing grand final to Greenock, then returning to Gawler B grade in 1931.

In 1930 The Bunyip recorded games for the Lower North competition, with the following teams: Smithfield, Salisbury Rovers, Two Wells, Angle Vale, Virginia, Korunye. In one of the semi-finals Salisbury Rovers d Smithfield, but there is no other records.

In 1936 the outside B grade clubs were too strong for the Gawler B grade teams, so were 'ostracised'. There was regular competition between Gawler High School teams, under the names: Para, Angus, Murray and Barossa.

Unbelievable!

The Gawler Football Association, in its wisdom, decided to exclude Rovers for the 1939 season, as it wanted to try 'District' football, allocating three areas for the now three Gawler clubs. Rovers entered the Lower North Football Association, and won the premiership.

Talk about shooting yourself in the foot. First the association excludes clubs like Lyndoch, Sandy Creek, Smithfield, and Angle Vale from the B grade after 1935, because those clubs were too strong for the Gawler B grade sides. Then as the B grade competition struggled to find numbers for a couple of season with only four teams, there is no B grade, then it kicks Rovers out of A grade, leaving a total of four clubs in one competition in 1939, with war set to possibly kill the sport in the town off for good! In 1935 there were six A grade sides and eight B grade teams, for 14 teams in two grades, contrasted with 1939's poor record.

- 1940 - College 6-10 (46) d Willaston 3-9 (27).
- 1941 - Willaston 16-11 (107) d College 10-4 (64).
 [Rovers admitted, Central withdrew - still four teams]
- 1942-45 - World War II

- 1946 - Willaston 17-15 (117) d College 7-5 (47).
 [Colts and Sandy Creek admitted - now six teams].
- 1947 - Willaston 6-13 (49) d College 1-8 (14).
 [Colts and Rovers withdrew, Virginia and Gawler Central admitted
 - still six teams].
- 1948 - Willaston 11-9 (75) d South Gawler 5-5 (35).
 [Sandy Creek dropped to B grade - now five teams].
- 1949 - College 10-11 (71) d Willaston 7-7 (49).
 [Salisbury admitted - now six teams. Teams: College, Willaston,
 South Gawler, Salisbury, Virginia, Gawler Central].

NOTES

In 1945 a 'Colts' team (made up of local juniors) played some arranged football matches. In 1956 the team expanded its age bracket and included senior players. Colts wore blue and gold colours, and in 1946 (Colts withdrew) when Gawler Central again participated, it initially wore blue and gold before reverting to its traditional black and gold colours.

- 1950 - College 11-12 (78) d Gawler Central 4-9 (33).
 1951 - College 14-16 (100) d Willaston 7-8 (50).
 1952 - South Gawler 10-11 (71) d College 9-12 (66).
 1953 - Gawler Central 9-14 (68) d South Gawler 8-7 (55).
 [Virginia dropped to B grade, Lyndoch admitted - still six teams].
- 1954 - South Gawler 8-15 d College 5-8.
 [Lyndoch drop to B grade, Salisbury North admitted - still six teams].
- 1955 - South Gawler 14-6 (90) d Salisbury North 7-7 (49).
 1956 - Salisbury 7-7 (49) d South Gawler 4-4 (28).
 1957 - Salisbury 11-8 (74) d South Gawler 8-6 (54).
 [Elizabeth admitted - now seven teams].
- 1958 - Elizabeth 5-8 (38) d South Gawler 3-11 (29).
 1959 - College 12-11 (83) d Elizabeth 3-10 (28).
 [Virginia and Two Wells amalgamated and admitted - now eight teams.
 Teams: College, Elizabeth, Salisbury North, South Gawler,
 Two Wells-Virginia, Willaston, Salisbury, Gawler Central].

NOTES

From 1955-58 the Gawler & District Football League had three grades, the top competition being League, with those clubs also participating in B grade, and an A grade with clubs with only one team.

- 1960 - South Gawler 7-11 (53) d Elizabeth 4-11 (35).
 [Gawler Central dropped to B grade, Elizabeth North admitted
 - still eight teams].

- 1961 - Willaston 10-10 (70) d Lyndoch 5-14 (44).
 [South Gawler and College left to join APFL; Salisbury North, Elizabeth, Salisbury, Elizabeth North and TW-Virginia left and with Central District formed the CDFA. Lyndoch, Gawler Central and Roseworthy promoted from B grade - now four teams].
- 1962 - Roseworthy 17-17 (119) d Willaston 8-7 (55).
 [Williamstown joined - now five teams].
- 1963 - South Gawler 10-12 (72) d Gawler Central 9-3 (57).
 [Williamstown withdrew, South Gawler and Wasleys join - now six teams].
- 1964 - Roseworthy 7-15 (57) d Hamley Bridge 5-4 (34).
 [Hamley Bridge and College admitted - now eight teams].
- 1965 - Lyndoch 8-7 (55) d Gawler Central 7-9 (51).
- 1966 - College 16-10 (106) d Lyndoch 9-13 (67).
 [Roseworthy and Wasleys amalgamate to form Rurals - now seven teams].
- 1967 - South Gawler 9-11 (65) d Hamley Bridge 8-10 (58).
- 1968 - Hamley Bridge 11-7 (73) d South Gawler 10-11 (71).
 [Rurals withdraw - now six teams]
- 1969 - South Gawler 14-10 (94) d College 11-6 (72).
 [Teams: South Gawler, College, Willaston, Hamley Bridge, Gawler Central, Lyndoch].
- 1970 - South Gawler 8-15 (63) d College 5-9 (39).
- 1971 - College 16-13 (109) d Willaston 11-9 (75).
- 1972 - Willaston 22-23 (155) d Lyndoch 16-9 (105).
- 1973 - College 11-12 (78) d Willaston 11-11 (77).
- 1974 - South 15-12 (102) d Lyndoch 10-9 (69).
 [Williamstown and Two Wells-Virginia admitted - now eight teams].
- 1975 - Two Wells 17-17 (119) d South Gawler 6-14 (50).
 [Two Wells went it alone after a 15 year amalgamation with Virginia - still eight teams].
- 1976 - Two Wells 18-20 (128) d Willaston 14-3 (87).
- 1977 - Two Wells 12-12 (84) d Gawler Central 8-13 (61).
- 1978 - Willaston 18-16 (124) d Lyndoch 17-8 (110).
- 1979 - South Gawler 21-16 (142) tied Gawler Central 21-16 (142).
 Replay – South Gawler 13-17 (95) d Gawler Central 13-4 (82).
 [Teams: South Gawler, Gawler Central, Two Wells, Willaston, Hamley Bridge, Lyndoch, College, Williamstown].
- 1980 - Willaston 14-14 (98) d South Gawler 12-18 (90).
 [Lyndoch and Williamstown amalgamated to form Barossa District - now seven teams].
- 1981 - Two Wells 15-12 (102) d Gawler Central 14-16 (100).
 [Virginia admitted - now eight teams]
- 1982 - Barossa District 16-21 (117) d Gawler Central 9-10 (64).
- 1983 - Gawler Central 17-15 (117) d Willaston 16-11 (107).
- 1984 - Virginia 14-14 (98) d Two Wells 11-15 (81).

1985 - Willaston 27-17 (179) d Gawler Central 13-10 (88).

[College and Hamley Bridge withdrew - now six teams]

1986 - South Gawler 20-14 (134) d Gawler Central 18-9 (117).

[Final season: South Gawler, Gawler Central, Two Wells,
Willaston, Virginia, Barossa District].

In 1987 the Barossa & Light Football Association and Gawler & District Football League amalgamated to form the Barossa, Light & Gawler Football Association.