

Wally Boyle (Mitcham, Vermont, East Burwood – BDCA, Blackburn) 1898 to 1931

A local Mitcham boy, Wally Boyle was born in 1887 and first appeared for Mitcham in 1898-99, making 33 in his first match. In a career that ended in 1930-31, Wally made 9410 runs at 40.91 with 17 centuries and 47 half-centuries. With the ball he took 404 wickets.

As a thirteen year old, Wally made his first ton with 102 not out for Mitcham District against the Richmond Ramblers. In 1901-02 Wally made 521 runs and took 21 wickets for Mitcham District, which included scores of 116, 95 not out and 88. Wally then moved across to arch-rivals Old Mitcham in 1902-03 and played in the losing Grand Final to Surrey Hills.

By 1903-04, Wally dominated the competition as a fifteen year old with 839 runs at 93.22 and won the Reporter 'A Grade' batting average. He made his highest score of 213 not out against Doncaster Heights and 155 against Mitcham District along with 98 against Box Hill. Following this season, Wally tried his hand at District cricket with South Melbourne. Over four seasons, Wally played in 27 games and 550 runs before returning to the re-united Mitcham in 1908-09.

Wally was captain of the 1909-10 premiership side that thrashed Canterbury in the Grand Final. He started the season slowly, but in the Grand Final made his second double-ton with 209. Mitcham won a second successive flag with Wally making 632 runs and taking 21 wickets. Wally made 158 against Surrey Hills with other scores of 79 and 78. He continued his run of form in 1911-12 with 453 runs including scores of 125 and 104 in two separate matches against Box Hill.

1912-13 was his third big season in succession with 691 runs with 117 against Croydon and seven half-centuries. But prior to the 1913-14, Mitcham lost Paddy Gilchrist to Ferntree Gully and Dudley Boyle to Vermont and after round one – Mitcham withdrew from the competition. Wally played a couple of non-competition matches for Vermont. Staying with his brother Dudley at Vermont, Wally made 552 runs and took 69 wickets in 1914-15 as Vermont gave him a leading role with the ball. He achieved match-doubles on three occasions with 89 and 5-26 against Warrandyte, 75 and 7-6 against Blackburn, and 54 not out and 6-16 against East Doncaster. He also made 104 not out and took 8-69 in two separate matches against Ferntree Gully.

1915-16 saw Vermont in 'B Grade' and Wally set a competition record of 1005 runs along with 59 wickets. He made 147 against East Doncaster and 128 not out against Wonga Park and in another match against Wonga Park made 80 and took match figures of 11-92 and made other scores of 87 not out and 83 during the home and away season. In the Semi Final, Wally made 166 not out and took 4-41 against Blackburn, but in the Grand Final against East Doncaster he failed with the bat and Vermont lost outright although he took 5-47 in East Doncaster's first innings.

Wally continued with Vermont in 1916-17 and made 609 runs at 46.84 to win a second BHRDCA 'A Grade' batting average, while taking 33 wickets. His highest score for the season was 150 not out against Blackburn while against Warrandyte he made 97 and took 8-9 and 4-12 in the one match. He also made two scores of 54 in the one game against Canterbury. WWI caused Vermont to fold and Wally played the one match with Canterbury in 1917-18. In 1918-19 he spent the season with Blackburn and made 118 against Doncaster.

Mitcham returned to the competition in 1919-20 and Wally made 389 runs followed with 548 runs and 37 wickets in 1920-21. Wally made 127 against Surrey Hills and another score of 84. In 1921-22, Wally made 455 runs with 118 against Balwyn and another 408 run in 1922-23. Mitcham did not field a team from 1923-24 to 1925-25 and Wally moved across to East Burwood who played in the Burwood District association during this time. A glance at newspaper reports suggest that Wally dominated in this completion and would have made a further 1500 runs during his four seasons there as he did not return to Mitcham on their return in 1926-27.

Wally finally returned to Mitcham in 1927-28 and he made 429 runs and took 42 wickets in 'B Grade' with bowling figures of 7-55 against Doncaster Heights and 5-29 against St. Andrews in the Semi Final. Wally made 421 runs in 1928-29. Mitcham won the 'B Grade' flag in 1929-30, but Wally made a pair in the Grand Final against Box Hill. Wally continued in 1930-31, but struggled retiring during the season. Wally died in Prahran at the age of 50 in 1937.