

Bill Allen (Box Hill, Blackburn, & Ringwood)

1906-1915 & 1918-1920

Born in 1889, Bill Allen was rated the fastest bowler in the competition during the pre WWI and immediate post WWII years. As a 6' 2" fast bowler, Allen played an influential role with three clubs: Box Hill, Blackburn and Ringwood.

First playing with Box Hill in 1906-07, Allen took 39 wickets in his first season. He then joined Blackburn in 1908-09 and took 94 wickets over a three year period. In round four of the 1909-10 season, Allen made 101 not out and took 8-16 and 4-7 against Croydon.

Allen then joined Carlton and took 31 wickets in 18 games before returning to Reporter cricket with Ringwood in 1913-14 where he made 417 runs and took 52 wickets winning the Reporter 'A Grade' bowling average.

Allen played the first game of 1914-15 with Ringwood before returning to district cricket with Hawthorn East Melbourne. During this season he was selected for Victoria and played two matches, taking 7 wickets in a match against Tasmania. In all, Allen played 56 games with Hawthorn East Melbourne and took 171 wickets, finishing with an overall district haul of 202 wickets.

Allen returned to Ringwood in 1918-19 and led them to the Grand Final which they lost to Templestowe. The newspaper of the day stated that Allen missing the third day due to practice match duties with VFL side Melbourne was crucial to the outcome. Allen made 408 runs (winning the Reporter 'A Grade' batting average) and took 53 wickets for the season.

Allen played the first few games of the 1919-20 season with Hawthorn East Melbourne before returning to Ringwood in January 1920. His impact was immediate and in tandem with Paddy Gilchrist, they swept all before them to help Ringwood win their third flag in six seasons. Allen made 358 runs and took 57 wickets winning his second 'A Grade' bowling average. In round eleven against Doncaster, Allen took match figures of 11-58, then in round twelve, Allen made 121 not out and took match figures of 10-68 against Canterbury to seal top spot for Ringwood and the Premiership.

Between the three clubs, Allen is recorded with 1997 runs and 319 wickets during his time in the Reporter competition. Allen was also Ringwood's captain when they moved across to the Ringwood District Cricket Association in 1920-21.

Allen was also a footballer of note with Melbourne and played 142 games and kicked 54 goals from 1910 to 1923. Allen also missed the WWI years due to active service, which impacted an excellent sporting career.