

PETER MORLEY – CHAMPION DEFENSIVE MIDFIELDER

Peter Morley was introduced to lacrosse by, guess who, Mal Taylor, in 1969 as a 12 year old, when Mal came to an assembly at Williamstown Technical School looking for kids to play in his “Local” competition, which he ran every Saturday morning (The Williamstown Lacrosse Club’s nursery!!). Peter was new to the school and a few of his mates played so he joined and the rest is history, with Peter playing in his first grand final in that competition.

“Chow” spent one year in the “Locals” before starting junior lacrosse for Williamstown, with former Williamstown champion Richard Tregear his first coach, who put him on the backline because he was left-handed, he bought a new full length stick which became the standard length of stick for the rest of his career.

As a junior he played U14 and U16 from 1970 to 1973, winning 4 premierships in that time.



MAJOR INFLUENCES

Mal Taylor, Richard Tregear, Alec Inglis, Rod Cordell and Mick Orr, all have had influences on Peter developing into a “defensive” midfielder who was capable of scoring and assisting.

“I think I took Mick’s defensive side and Rod’s attacking style/philosophy and became a bit of a hybrid aided by an ability to read the play”!

At club level Peter played one year in the equivalent of Division 1 in 1974 before getting an opportunity to play state league in 1975, and played in the senior team from 1975 until 1994, playing in finals every year, where the Fearons won 13 state league premierships during that period.

Peter retired at the end of 1995 aged 38 after 27 years, playing 352 state league games, winning the club’s best and fairest once, throwing 698 goals, 246 assists, something he is very proud of given he was a “defensive midfield”.

AWARDS

Life member - Williamstown Lacrosse Club (2003)

Throughout my career I have been fortunate to play for Williamstown in arguably one of the most successful and dominant periods the club has seen. I was blessed to play every year in finals no matter the grade and to play every year bar one in a grand final – I have been very fortunate to play lacrosse as a “Fearon” with Williamstown.

My representative career started for Victoria in the juniors in 1973, then U19 as captain in 1975.

I represented Victoria 12 times at senior level from 1977 - 1989, only missing out when I was playing in a world championship, co-captaining Victoria on 2 occasions, making the All-star team in 1977, 1979 and 1981.

I have been fortunate to play in 3 World Championships - 1982, 1986 and 1990.

TOUGHEST OPPONENTS

Toughest and best opponents over my playing career are Ray Duthy, Klay Johnson, Glen Revell, Alan Bower, Keith Daly, Graeme Fox, Bruce Freeman, Peter Cann, Jeff Kennedy, Steve Mounsey, Rod Ansell, Ken Nichols and Warren Hobbs.

In addition to the list above, some of the best I have played with include John “Keka” Butkiewicz, Robert Walton, Bryan Smith, Rod Cordell, Alan Rolley, Ron Twomey, Mick Orr, Geoff Spicer, Gregor Garnsworthy, Ray Tatlow, Denis Newman, Jarrad Klemm, Alan Lewer and Darren Gibson.

They are also some of the best team mates that I had the privilege of playing with.



TESTIMONIALS

ALEC INGLIS (Former club, state and national coach)

I have been fortunate to have seen Peter play all of his open age lacrosse career from 1975, coaching him from 1975 to 1982.

Peter was a very thoughtful, smart, fast, skilful and excellent lacrosse player. He played throughout his career as a defender and defensive midfielder with the capabilities of throwing and assisting goals and with an ability to take the ball from defence to attack.

His career achievements can attest to the above comments as he went on to not only play for Williamstown, but also represented Victoria and Australia to the highest degree. He was a pleasure to coach.

RAY DUTHY (Former Australian player)

I had the pleasure of playing with Peter in the 1982 and 1986 World Series Australian teams and against him from 1977 to 1987 in interstate matches between SA and Victoria.

Peter was the epitome of an incredibly versatile midfielder who was deceptive in defence with an uncanny ability to intercept and create attacking moves, but equally at home in attack where his natural left-hand cuts were impeccably timed to enable him to score. In fact he was in both the man-down and man-up teams in 1982 and 1986 which in itself is quite extraordinary and demonstrates his versatility.

He was also very quick which made him an invaluable asset on the midfield wings where his stick skills came to the fore and created opportunities for the team.

In my time in the game, PM was certainly one of the more difficult defenders I came across, with his instinctive ability to read the play and an innate capacity to read the moves of his opponent. Peter was an invaluable player at club, state and international levels and was a great team man with a wicked sense of humour.

I would definitely rank him as one of Australia's and Victoria's best midfield players in that era.

PETER CANN (Former Australian player)

I was very fortunate to have played against Peter whilst playing for Victoria and the being a team mate in 3 world series, 1982, 1986 and 1990

Peter was one of a kind as a midfielder who could contribute at both ends of the field, as a defensive midfielder his ability to read the play and effectively control key opposition midfielders and attack players and then as a fast reliable player in transition, carrying the ball into attack with great confidence and creativity, once in attack Peter was more than handy cutting and often featured in and around the crease area and score many goals.

Always a team player and a team mate with a vision on how to win, sharing experiences and lessons learnt.

In my time in Australian teams and at world championships, I regarded Peter as one of our best all-round midfielders and has made a solid contribution to the sport of lacrosse in both Victoria and Australian representations. A fantastic team orientated player both on and off the field.

CONCLUSION

There are many midfielders who are great attackers but not so good in defence, and vice versa. Peter Morley had the ability to do great things at both ends, he could defend, intercept and clear, at the other end he could feed or cut and score, and was invaluable in the middle in picking up the ball and attacking.

Having modelled his game on champions like Mick Orr and Rod Cordell, and playing with champions like Keka, Alan Rolley, Ron Twomey and Gus Garnsworthy, I could go on and on, he would have learnt more than the average player and clearly took full advantage of that invaluable education in lacrosse. Well played Chow!