



*J. F. (Jock) McHale*

# James Francis (Jock) McHale

*Collingwood footballer and coach*

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James Francis (Jock) McHale was born in Sydney to Irish-born parents, policeman John Francis McHale and his wife Mary Gibbons. The family moved to Melbourne when Jock was five. At fifteen he left school to work at the McCracken Brewery and worked in the brewery business until his retirement in 1947.

McHale played several seasons for Coburg Football Club before playing for Collingwood from 1903 to 1918. During his fifteen year playing career, he played 260 games and kicked 19 goals. He was also Collingwood's iron man and his club record of 191 consecutive games was a feat bettered by only a handful of players. He contributed to many a Magpie victory with his tenacity and anticipation as a centre-man and in defence. A staunch Irish Catholic, Jock acquired his ironic nickname from a cartoonist's caricature of him in a kilt during the 1920s.

McHale is Collingwood's most famous coach. He served as playing coach from 1913 to 1918 and continued as non-playing coach until 1950, establishing a VFL record. He coached the club to eight Premierships, including a record four in a row, and his teams were runners-up ten times. His contributions to the club continued as he served as a committee man from 1921 to 1938 and as vice-president from 1939 to 1953.

McHale married Violet Godfrey at Brunswick in 1909 and they raised their family in Coburg. He died of a heart attack on 4 October 1953, aged 71 at his home in Coburg, only a week after Collingwood had won its first Premiership in seventeen years. He is buried with his wife Violet, son James and daughter Mary.

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The above information is based on research conducted in 2011-2012 and is presented in good faith by the Friends of Coburg Cemetery. Should family members wish to upgrade existing monuments within this cemetery please email [enquiries@gmct.com.au](mailto:enquiries@gmct.com.au)