

History of the Geelong West Giants

The **Geelong West Giants** was formed in 2017 and brought two of Geelong's oldest clubs together with senior and junior football and netball teams - Geelong West St Peters (the Roosters also known as 'Red West') and the Geelong West Cheetahs (also known as 'Blue West').

We are the only club in the Geelong region that competes in both Division 1 Geelong Football & Netball League (GFNL) and the Division 3 Geelong and District Football & Netball Leagues (GDFL).

Focused on being an integral part of the growing Geelong West community, our club culture is built on mutual respect, a sense of deep history, inclusion and participation.

With over 260 years of collective history, Geelong West Giants has built a strong community over time.

Geelong West Football Club:

Formed in 1878, Geelong West began in the Geelong & District Football Association. The club with their red jumper and white monogram was not to be confused with the [Geelong West Cricket & Football Club](#) who wore a blue and white jumper - giving rise to local nicknames *Red West* and *Blue West* for the two clubs respectively.^[1] The *Roosters* and were a consistently strong club winning 25 premierships by 1945. In 1946 the club joined the [Ballarat Football League](#). Premiership success followed in the BFL, with the club winning four premierships in a row from 1956 to 1959. The Ballarat-based clubs in the BFL grew to dislike Geelong West's presence in their league, as it meant long travelling distances for away games, and weaker crowds for home games; and after 1962, the BFL was keen for Geelong West to leave. At the same time the [Victorian Football Association](#) was looking to expand, so the two agreed for Geelong West to join the VFA second division in 1963.^[4]

The club had to change its jumper as it clashed with the [Preston Bullants](#), so reversed its colours to a white jumper with a red GWFC monogram. In their inaugural season they only missed out on the wooden spoon by percentage but took out the premiership the following year, thus earning promotion to the first division. Geelong West only spent one season at the top league before being demoted again, but reached the next three Grand Finals, losing in 1966 and 1967, then winning in 1968 to be promoted for the second time.

Once again, the club wasn't strong enough to compete in the first division, lasting three seasons before being relegated, but things changed in the 1970s. The club won its third premiership in 1972, completing a [perfect season](#) by winning all twenty games it played to be promoted back to the first division. On this occasion they deserved to be competing amongst the best teams and in 1975, under the coaching of [Bill Goggin](#), Geelong West claimed a surprise first division premiership by defeating [Dandenong](#) in the VFA Grand Final.

By the time the 1980s came around the football club had run up a large financial debt that it struggled to manage. There was a significant reduction in support from the local community, in large part because there was strong growth of the [Geelong Football League](#) throughout the mid-1980s, which pushed player salaries up and attracted local sponsorship away from the club. There became a shortage of quality players willing to travel to Melbourne every second week, particularly at the Under-19s level, which led to the club's onfield position deteriorating through the 1980s. Faced with these problems, the club withdrew from the VFA after the 1988 season.^[5]

During the summer of 1988-89 the club discussed then agreed to a merger with the St Peters Football Club. the merged club was now called Geelong West St Peters Football Club. The St Peters club had a strong junior development that Geelong West didn't have, but Geelong West had a ground with facilities that St Peters lacked.

St Peters Football Club:

St Peters first entered a senior side in 1959 in the Evelyn Hurst Cup. The club was also part of the twelve clubs that broke away and founded the GFL. In 1980 the GFL reduced from 12 club to ten, St Peters were demoted to the GDFL. Time in the GDFL was brief they won the premiership in both years (1980 and 1981) , in fact the club didn't lose a game in those two years, the closest they got was a drawn game in 1980. They were promoted into the GFL in 1982 and stayed until they merged in 1989

Geelong West Sporting Club:

Formed as the **Geelong West Cricket & Football Club** in 1926, while known as **the Cheetahs** early on the locals call them *Blue West*, to distinguish them from the [VFA](#) club *Red West*. After the war, they joined the GDFL in 1946.^[4] The Cheetahs competed in the GDFL Evelyn Hurst competition from 1958 to 1978. It was part of the breakaway movement that created the [Geelong Football League](#) in 1979. Falling standards on the field lead the club to be demoted to the [Geelong DFL](#) in 1986.

The club's traditional home venue was Bakers Oval in Shannon Avenue, Geelong West. In 2008, the club moved to play its fixtures at West Oval in Church Street, but its administrative and social base remained at Bakers Oval.