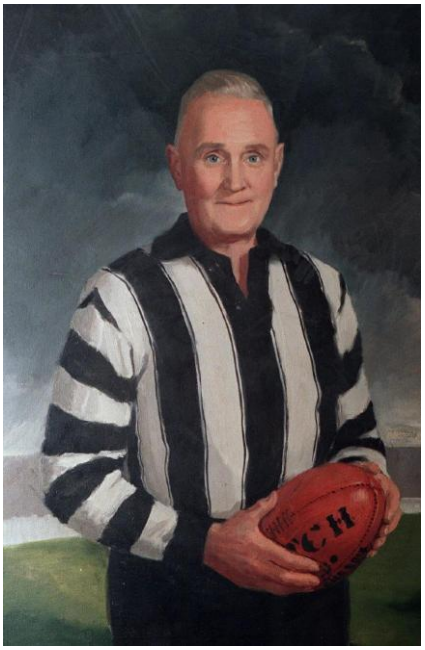
# Biography

## Jock McHale (1882–1953)

### Collingwood Football Club legend · Australian rules football coach



James Francis McHale, better known as Jock McHale, was one of the most influential figures in the history of Australian rules football. His extraordinary career with the Collingwood Football Club spanned decades, first as a player and then as coach. He led Collingwood to eight premierships and became a legend of the game.

**Early life and family**

Jock was born on 12 December 1882 in Botany, Sydney, New South Wales, to Irish-born parents John Francis McHale, a police constable, and Mary Gibbons. When Jock was about five years old, the family moved to Melbourne.



He attended St Brigid's in North Fitzroy, St Paul's in Coburg and Christian Brothers' College in East Melbourne, now known as Parade College. After leaving school at around 15, he began working at McCracken's Brewery, starting a career in the brewing industry that would continue for many years.

McHale began playing for the Coburg Juniors in 1899 and joined Collingwood's senior side in 1903. He initially played at half-back before establishing himself as a centre player.

His playing career was remarkable for its consistency. He played 262 VFL games and set a contemporary record by appearing in 191 consecutive matches between 1906 and 1917. He also played in Collingwood's premiership teams of 1910 and 1917.

In 1913, McHale began his long tenure as Collingwood's coach, initially serving as a playing coach. He remained in charge until 1950, a period of 38 years.

His coaching achievements included:

- Eight VFL premierships: 1917, 1919, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1935 and 1936.
- Four consecutive premierships: 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1930 — a record achievement in VFL/AFL history.
- 714 coaching matches, a record that stood until Mick Malthouse surpassed it in 2015.

- Induction into the Australian Football Hall of Fame in 1996 and elevation to Legend status in 2005.

The AFL's premiership coach award was named the Jock McHale Medal in his honour in 2001, ensuring that his name remains part of the game's greatest annual occasion.

**Marriage, family and working life**

Jock married Violet Mary Angel Godfrey on 28 April 1909 at Brunswick, Victoria. The couple raised their family in Coburg, where Jock remained closely connected to his local community and Collingwood.

Their children included John, who later played for Collingwood in 1941 and 1943–44, and a daughter and another son who died before their father.

Football was not McHale's only occupation. He spent much of his working life in the brewing industry, progressing from McCracken Brewery to a supervisory position at Carlton and United Breweries in Bouverie Street, Melbourne. He retired from the brewing industry in 1947

**Death of Jock McHale**

Jock McHale died at his home in Coburg on 4 October 1953, aged 70 according to the contemporary age calculation used in some accounts, or 71 according to the Australian Dictionary of Biography's birth and death dates.

He died of a heart attack shortly after Collingwood won the 1953 VFL premiership on 26 September. Despite having retired as coach three years earlier, he had remained involved in the club and had played an important part in selecting the premiership side.