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FRANKSTON CITY FADES AWAY



Frankston president John Barclay

The pivotal line in Neil Young's song, "Out of the Blue," says "it's better to burn out, than to fade away". Victorian club Frankston City unintentionally adopted this philosophy about five years ago and finally burned out last week when it withdrew its membership of the VSF.

Just three and a half years ago Frankston City finished second in State League to Melbourne Croatia. The same clubs clashed in the

1979 Dockerty Cup final, Croatia winning 2-1 after extra time. It was the year Martin Peters and Eamonn Bannon guested for Frank-

ston.

Centenary Park with its plush social rooms was buzzing. The debt which the club accrued a few years earlier from the first of three huge overdrafts was lost amid a vibrant social atmosphere.

The following year, 1980, found Frankston City sadly depleted. Eight of the previous season's first team players had left, some because of the club's inability to meet the terms of their contracts. The player exodus had started. How-

By CRAIG MACKENZIE

ever, Martin Chivers was brought out as a guest player.

Frankston propped itself into a swaggering stance by signing new players. Most lasted just a season before they too left, many owed money by the club. The stigma of being labelled as a club which didn't pay its players finally took its toll this year.

Frankston City would have struggled to field a first team in the Metropolitan First Division this season, the league it dropped into after last year's last placed State League finish.

The VSF received Frankston's official letter of membership withdrawal last Friday. As we went to press, Frankston City still was negotiating a merger with Carrum Cowboys, in the unaffiliated Bayside League.

The club which swept into State League in 1977 and went within an ace of



A toast to success! The Carrum Cowboys celebrate championship triumph in the Victorian Bayside League. From left, standing: Colin Hampton, Jim Ward, Graham Watons, David Kelly, Martin Mitzmaurice, Allan Godwin, Derek Bonner, Gary Watson. Front: David Hunter, Guy Lunney, Chris Bardsley, Ricky Gray, Rick Slobar.

clinching the championship in its third season in top company had just 11 players left last week. They were Bill Buchanan, Andy Golby, Frank Petersen, David Pye, Norrie Campbell, Colin Mitchell, Pat O'Connor, Jason Symons, Gerry Donahue, Robbie Reader and Martin Parkes. Goalkeeper Dave Gilbert was on the transfer list. Frankston had

Norm Maitland, Paul Hyne and Terry Nolan (not the Nolan of Croydon fame) training with it and may have signed all three if it had been able to find a reserve team and maintained its VSF membership. Frankston City burned itself out last week. It didn't die, just condemned itself to obscurity. It decided to fade away.

Eight new