

# Tom Simmons

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Tom Simmons came to umpiring after an outstanding, if short-lived, VFL career and a number of excellent results as a professional runner.

Simmons by-passed the VFL Second Eighteen and was appointed immediately to the senior list in 1954. In his single season as a VFL umpire he officiated in 16 VCFL and 3 VFL Second Eighteen matches.

Born Thomas Edwin Francis Simmons in Brunswick on 13 April 1929, Tom excelled at athletics at school primarily as a sprinter but also took victories in the long and high jumps.

He originally played football with Northcote Juniors and was recruited to Carlton in 1948 where he won the best first year player and in two seasons played 27 matches and kicked 23 goals

During the 1950 pre-season he badly injured a knee which resulted in two operations. Barely a year later Simmons took on professional foot running as he completed a remarkable recovery, taking out the Terang, Ararat, Maryborough and Port Fairy Gifts as backmarker through the summers of 1950 and '51.

He attempted a return to Carlton but his knee proved unable to take the strain and he did not play again and continued to focus on running.

His occupation as an industrial chemist drew him to New South Wales and he umpired with the NSW umpires for two seasons before finally retiring at the end of 1956.

In recent years Tom had enjoyed the company of the ex-umpires lunches and was also a regular at Carlton games for many years.

Tom Simmons passed away on 10 October 2013.

Details of his football career at the Blueseum –

<http://www.blueseum.org/tiki-index.php?page=Tom+Simmons>



*Photo courtesy of Blueseum*