

*Full Points Footy's*

# **SA Football Companion**

**by**

**John Devaney**

*Full Points Footy*  
<http://www.fullpointsfooty.net>

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I should also like to acknowledge the help, advice, criticism and support given at various times by Max Sayer, Bernard Whimpress and Chris Lane.

Finally, my frequent quotations from the writings of the late Jeff Pash should be taken as representing a nod of esteem to the man I regard as having been the doyen of South Australian football writers.

# Book Format And Style

Highlighted capital letters are used for club headings, e.g.

**STURT**

Biographical entries have headings in bold capital letters, e.g. **BLIGHT**, **MALCOLM**

Other subject entries are headed in bold lower case lettering, e.g. **Magarey Medal**

Entries are arranged alphabetically. You will find an Index of Entries towards the end of the book, beginning on page 337.

A club's current name - or, in the case of a former club, the name by which it was last known - is shown in highlighted capital letters at the start of its entry, with any previous names listed after it in brackets.

Members of the South Australian Football Hall of Fame are indicated by the abbreviation 'HoF' followed by the year of their induction.

In the main, club names are rendered in full. However, in a number of cases the abbreviation 'WWT Eagles' has been used for the Woodville West Torrens Football Club.

# Introduction

The history of Australian football in South Australia dates back almost a hundred and fifty years at least and has yet to be explored in more than cursory detail. Moreover, much recent work on the subject has been sullied by a misguided preoccupation with the V/AFL as the presumed epicentre of the football universe. Such a view needs challenging, not least because it grossly undervalues the scale of South Australia's impact on and contribution to the history and development of a game that stopped being 'Victorian' much longer ago than any human being alive today can possibly remember.

This book will, in itself, do nothing to alter things, but it is offered in the way of an hors d'oeuvre. I leave the main course to other, more capable and qualified hands.

The majority of the book is written in an objective, third person style, but in a couple of instances ('The Bulldogs Find Their Bark' and "My Football Nirvana') I have seen fit to include myself in the narrative in a bid to explain, at least in a small way, the cause and nature of my passion. Some will doubtless find these passages intrusive and irrelevant; to me, however, they constitute the heart and soul of the book.

**John Devaney**  
**November 2008**

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For my father

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# A

**AAMODT, COLIN:** After a promising colts career, Colin Aamodt made his league debut for North Adelaide in 1938. A hard working and resourceful follower, he gave the club fine service over the course of a war-interrupted 132 game senior career which ended in 1950. Highlights of that career included winning North's best and fairest award in 1940, and sharing first ruck duties with Len Pedler and Darcy Cox in the 1949 grand final victory over West Torrens. Aamodt, who represented South Australia twice, kicking 1 goal, returned to the red and whites as non-playing coach in 1955, but in three seasons in the role he only once, in 1956 for third place, managed to get his side into the finals.

**ABERNETHY, BRUCE (HoF 2007)** was a highly poised and polished performer who enjoyed a fourteen season, 300-plus game league career with four clubs. He began with Port Adelaide in 1979, and played in premiership teams in each of his first three seasons before crossing to North Melbourne in 1982. He spent two seasons with North, followed by three at Collingwood, impressing during this time as a classy attacking wingman or half back flanker who combined great anticipation and pace with considerable skill. In 1987 he returned to Port Adelaide where he promptly won the club's best and fairest award. A year later he added a Jack Oatey Medal after the Magpies overturned Glenelg in the grand final. He also played in Port's 1989, 1990 and 1992 premiership-winning teams. In 1991 he was a member of Adelaide's inaugural AFL squad, playing 11 games for the year to add to his 190 for Port, 43 with North, 58 for Collingwood, and 10 interstate appearances for South Australia.

**ABLEY, JOHN (HoF 2002):** At the end of the 1949 season, a Hawthorn official wrote to Port Adelaide secretary Bob McLean to advise him that a highly promising

young Melbourne District player who had played a handful of reserves games for the Mayblossoms late that season was on his way to Adelaide to live. Trusting his source, McLean proceeded to meet Abley when he arrived with his family at Adelaide station. Discovering that the player was planning to reside in Glenelg's zone, he hastily made arrangements to find him suitable accommodation close to Port Adelaide's home ground of Alberton Oval. Glenelg officials were, understandably, not happy, but there was nothing they could do, and in round seven 1950 John Abley donned the black and white Magpie jumper for the first time in what would develop into a highly momentous 212 game league career.

When the AFL announced its 'Team of the Century' in 1996, the selection which generated the greatest amount of controversy was that of Carlton's Steve Silvagni for the full back position. A preferred choice, as far as the majority of the critics seemed to be concerned, would have been Jack Regan of Collingwood, famously dubbed 'the prince of full backs' during his career. Had the AFL been capable of a genuinely even-handed, holistic appraisal of the game's history, however, it is hard to imagine them looking outside the borders of South Australia when choosing the greatest full back of all time. North Adelaide's Ian McKay, the only full back consistently to keep John Coleman under wraps, and sufficiently versatile to make a telling contribution almost anywhere else on the ground, would be one formidable candidate, but without doubt the man laying the strongest all round claim of all would be Port Adelaide's miserly, dogged, indefatigable triple All Australian John Abley.

It is a touch ironic therefore that Abley only ended up playing full back more or less by accident. After struggling to make an impression during a debut season that yielded just 8 senior appearances, he was

asked to stand in for regular full back Reg Schumann, who had just retired, in an end of year challenge match in Broken Hill. Abley, who had never played the position before, took to it like the proverbial duck to water, and for the remainder of his Port Adelaide career he never played anywhere else.

A key member of Port Adelaide premiership teams in 1954-5-6-7-8-9, Abley was seldom the sort of player to feature prominently in best player lists, and indeed it is at least arguable that this was never really a primary motivating factor in his play. Instead, he was the sort of player whose principal aim was to ensure that his direct opponent did not make the best player lists. It was the same when he played interstate football, which he did on 23 occasions. South Australia's 1956 and 1958 carnival teams were probably the weakest in the state's history, with the inevitable result that John Abley, as full back, had rather a lot to do. Unlike most of his team mates, he rose to the occasion splendidly: in 1956 he was one of just four South Australians to earn All Australian selection, while two years later, after South Australia had put in its worst carnival performance ever, he was the only croweater to get the nod.

In Brisbane in 1961 South Australia performed somewhat better, but despite presumably having less to do John Abley, who was in his final season as a player, was as parsimonious as ever, with his third successive All Australian blazer establishing beyond any reasonable doubt his status as the finest custodian in the land.

For those not fortunate enough to have seen Abley in action, Jeff Pash's concise and incisive précis effortlessly encapsulates his virtues as a player:

*He has the habit of worry that makes for perfect concentration, sure-footedness (never a reckless throw for the ball), and the safest, most relaxed mark in the business.*

That 'habit of worry', inherited so conspicuously by Abley's immediate

successor at full back, Ron Elleway, and yet so lamentably and obviously absent from the outlook of a player like Steve Silvagni, was almost certainly the key to his greatness, as well as being one of the primary factors contributing to Port Adelaide's unequalled period of achievement between 1954 and 1959.

**ABLEY, KEVIN:** Like his older brother John, Glenelg's Kevin Abley tends chiefly to be remembered as a full back, in which position he represented South Australia against Tasmania at the Adelaide Oval in 1963. However, he was quite versatile, and the fact that he amassed a total of 96 goals during the course of his 176 game league career confirms that he was perfectly capable of doing an effective job on the forward lines when required. Lighter than his brother, he was similarly dogged and intense in his approach. He made his league debut in 1954, and remained a first choice senior player for eleven seasons. In 1965 and 1966 he coached Lyndoch in the Barossa Valley before returning to Glenelg as coach of the Seconds, whom he promptly steered to a first ever premiership at that level.

**ACKLAND, SYD** was Norwood's full back during a halcyon era for the club in the 1920s, when he was reliability and assurance personified. His 133 game senior career between 1922 and 1931 saw him help the Redlegs to three premierships, and between 1922 and 1926 in particular he marshalled what was, statistically, by some measure the tightest and meanest backline in the league. Ackland played for South Australia on 7 occasions, including games at the 1927 Melbourne carnival, when he took over as the state's regular full back from the recently retired Frank Golding. His selection as full back in Norwood's official 'Team of the Century' was neither unexpected nor unwarranted.

As a coach, Ackland cut his teeth with Prince Alfred College in 1934 and 1935,

and in 1936 was appointed senior coach of Norwood, steering the side to fifth and third place finishes in his two seasons at the helm.

**A'COURT, FRED** was a stalwart of West Adelaide sides during the club's nightmare decade of the 1950s when four grand finals were contested without success, all against Port Adelaide. He commenced with West in 1949 and over the ensuing eleven seasons played a total of 157 league games and kicked 110 goals. A tough, tireless and talented ruckman, A'Court - popularly known as 'Boof' - represented South Australia 8 times, kicking 10 goals.

**ACRAMAN, JOHN (HoF 2002)** was arguably the single most pivotal figure in the inception of organised football in Adelaide, and may also have played a part in helping ensure that the code of football ultimately favoured was closely based on the Victorian model. An Englishman by birth, Acraman imported five footballs to South Australia and is reputed to have erected the first set of goal posts used in the colony. In April 1860 he met with Henry Harrison, the 'father of the Victorian game', at the Globe Inn in Adelaide, and shortly afterwards the Adelaide Football Club appears to have been established. An avid player during the 1860s, Acraman was still directly involved in the game, as president of Adelaide, when the South Australian Football Association was formed in 1877. He was one of ten vice presidents appointed by the SAFA at its inaugural meeting, and later also spent time as vice president of the North Adelaide Football Club.

**ADAMS, CHARLES** made his debut with Port Adelaide when league football resumed after the Great War in 1919, and immediately caught the eye as a follower of considerable ability and obvious mental fortitude. His eight season senior career saw him play a total of 94 games, including the winning challenge final of 1921 against Norwood. Voted the Magpies' best and fairest player in both 1920

and 1921, he came within an ace of winning the 1921 Magarey Medal when he featured in a three way tie with South Adelaide's Dan Moriarty and 'Wat' Scott of Norwood, only for the umpires, having been convened to adjudicate on the matter, to elect to bestow the award on the South player. (The rules in force at the time allowed for only one winner.) Seventy-seven years later the SANFL bestowed retrospective awards on all players who had originally lost out either in this manner, or on a countback of votes, and so the name of Charles Adams was belatedly included in the oldest official 'hall of fame' in top level football.

**ADAMSON, BRIAN** is undoubtedly best remembered for being at the centre of a huge clearance controversy in 1978, when he wanted to transfer from West Perth to Norwood. The matter was ultimately decided, in Norwood's and the player's favour, by the Supreme Court. Ironically, Adamson spent just two seasons with the Redlegs, playing a mere 20 games. However, one of those games was the winning grand final of 1978 against Sturt, in which he booted 5 goals from centre half forward to be one of the best players afield.

Of rangy build at 190cm and 82kg, and renowned for his spectacular aerial capabilities, Adamson began and ended his league football career at West Perth. He joined the Cardinals from South Perth, made his senior debut in 1975, and was a member that same year of the club's grand final winning team against South Fremantle. After returning from his two season stint in South Australia he resumed at West Perth, but over the final half a dozen years of his career he was badly hampered by injury. In his final season, 1984, he only managed a single senior game, and although he was keen to try again in 1985 his body decided otherwise. All told, he played 125 games for the Falcons, as West Perth had become known in 1980, and booted 252 goals. He was the club's leading goal kicker on a couple of occasions, and played 2 interstate matches for Western Australia.

**ADCOCK, BRENTON (HoF 2002)** was a rugged, dashing and highly reliable defender who played 259 games for Sturt between 1962 and 1974, and also earned something of an Australia-wide reputation on the basis of his many excellent performances for South Australia in interstate matches. An All Australian in 1966, Adcock played a total of 20 state games, including appearances at the carnivals of 1966, 1969 and 1972. He played in the back pocket in no fewer than six Sturt premiership teams, with arguably his finest ever performance coming in the 1967 come from behind grand final win over Port Adelaide, when he was most observers' choice as best afield.

**ADCOCK, CECIL** was a prominent pre-world war one footballer, initially with South Adelaide, and later with West Torrens, where he transferred under the district rule after moving home. Highly consistent, capable and assured, his career highlights included representing South Australia at the inaugural Australasian championships in Melbourne in 1908, and captaining West Torrens in 1912, his final league season.

**ADCOCK, JACK** was a fine defender for West Torrens in 107 league games between 1932 and 1939, highlighted by participation in the club's 1933 grand final defeat of Norwood, and a club best and fairest award triumph in 1934.

## ADELAIDE - 19th Century

**Affiliated:** SAFA 1877-81 & 1885-93

**Formed:** 1860; disbanded 1873; reformed 1876; merged with Kensington 1881; disbanded 1882; reformed and merged with North Park 1885; assimilated the original West Adelaide Football Club 1888; assimilated North Adelaide/Hotham 1889

**Colours:** Black, red and white

**Premierships:** 1886 (1 total)

**SAFA Top Goalkickers:** J.Young (14) 1877; R.Stephens (17) 1886 (2 total)

Early football in Adelaide was played under a variety of guises, with conformity not being reached until the establishment of the South Australian Football Association in 1877, when a close approximation to the rules then in vogue in Melbourne was adopted. A major driving force behind the formation of the Association was Nowell Twopenny, captain of the Adelaide Football Club, the oldest in South Australia. With his club having fallen on hard times, Twopenny could see many potential benefits accruing from membership of and involvement in a formal organisation which undertook executive duties in relation to conditions and rules of play, finance and general administrative matters. Twopenny was also strongly opposed to the rugby-influenced Kensington Rules which had recently acquired popularity, although it is interesting to note that at the SAFA's inaugural meeting he "spoke very warmly in favour of running with the ball, urging that it was a *sine qua non* of genuine football, and that, from English experience, he could vouch for there being no disputes when the rule was played". Conversely, "bouncing the ball had led to endless rows here, and left a great deal too much to the umpire".<sup>1</sup>

Ultimately, of course, the bouncing rule was adopted, and Twopenny's objections may have been quelled somewhat by the suggestion, put forward by Charles Kingston, that to do so would facilitate the arrangement of intercolonial matches against teams from Victoria. Certainly, Noel Twopenny was at the forefront of the endeavours which, at the end of both the SAFA's and VFA's inaugural seasons, led

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<sup>1</sup> *South Australian Football: The Past - And The Present* by C.K. Knuckey, page 25.

**SAFA Premiership Ladder - Season 1877**

	Goals					
	P	W	L	D	For	Ag.
South Adelaide	13	10	1	2	23	1
Victoria Club	14	10	1	3	30	5
Adelaide	16	10	3	3	31	13
Port Adelaide	15	9	4	2	23	13
Woodville	16	5	9	2	14	18
South Park	17	5	10	2	16	21
Kensington	15	3	10	2	12	36
Bankers	15	0	15	0	4	31

to the first ever official matches between teams from different colonies.<sup>1</sup> He might therefore, in a sense, lay claim to the title of 'father of the national game', although holding one's breath while waiting for the AFL to acknowledge or endorse this might be somewhat risky.

By the time of the inception of the SAFA, the Adelaide Football Club already had a long, and somewhat chequered, history. Formed in 1860, it initially only played matches internally, typically between groups of players sharing a particular characteristic, achievement or place of residence. On 12 August 1861, for example:

*The adjourned match between the Past and Present Collegians and other members of the Club was continued on the North Parklands on Saturday afternoon. A very cold wind was blowing during the whole of the time, and accompanied by several sharp showers of rain. Undaunted by the threatening aspect of the weather, the spectators, consisting chiefly of ladies and horsemen, assembled in great force, and the ladies, with true courage, kept guard of the prizes they had presented in spite of the cold and pitiless rain. Upwards of 40 players arrived. Play commenced shortly after 2 o'clock, Mr. O'Halloran being captain of the College side, and Mr. Cooper captain of their opponents. With hearty goodwill the players went to work; in about an hour the*

*College party gained a goal. Elated with their success they were rewarded with another goal after about two hours exertion. The ladies distributed the prizes, some of which were very elegant, to the following players: Messrs. T.O'Halloran, G.O'Halloran, N.Knox, T.Illury, Richardson, H.Gouge, Taylor, W.Uren, Morphett, T.Hosier, G.Schlinke, S.Lawrence, H.Giles, Soward, Bonnin, Payne, Jacob, Wooldridge, Addison, N.O'Halloran, Hallett, Chambers, McEllister and Bastin.*

*The 'spills' were more frequent than on other occasions, in consequence of the slippery conditions of the ground, and at the conclusion of the game nearly every player bore traces of having had a fall. No mishap, however, worth mentioning occurred, except that in the course of the afternoon a horse, belonging to one of the spectators, bolted across the playground. Mater Gwynne immediately rode in pursuit, but just as he reached him one of the players ran between the horses causing them to fall and throwing Master Gwynne; however, nobody was hurt.<sup>2</sup>*

The first ever game between Adelaide and a rival club (Modbury) was recorded as taking place in 1862, but no details of the match survive. It is known, however, that the two teams met again the following year, on a strip of land near the Modbury Hotel, when "the game was kept up with the greatest spirit and good feeling, and so equally were the sides matched that not a goal was obtained".<sup>3</sup>

1 Four matches in total, involving four South Australian teams, and two clubs from Victoria, were held at the end of the 1877 season.

2 Knuckey, op cit., page 9.

Most of Adelaide's matches were played according to the club's own set of rules, which initially at least were the most popular of all. However, when during the early 1870s another set of rules, those of the Kensington club, began to gain increased popularity, Adelaide faced something of a crisis, and indeed in 1873 the club felt compelled to disband. Sadly, this volatility was something that would plague the club throughout its short history.

Having reformed in 1876, Adelaide was afforded something of a lifeline the following year by the establishment of the SAFA. On the field at least the club was competitive, not to mention highly regarded for its open, and visually appealing style of play. In the SAFA's inaugural season, Adelaide came third, and was the competition's highest scoring team, albeit that it seems to have played more games than many of its opponents (see premiership ladder above). In subsequent seasons, Adelaide's level of performance declined significantly. In 1880 it finished seventh and last, and the following season, owing to a lack of players, it entered into a merger with Kensington, which had also been struggling. This 'marriage of convenience' lasted just one year, and was not even particularly convenient, as the club came bottom. Adelaide then went into mothballs for three seasons before reforming, promptly merging with Adelaide and Suburban Football Association club North Park, and joining a somewhat atrophied, four team competition in 1885.

Initially, this new incarnation of the Adelaide Football Club seemed to find things every bit as tough as its predecessor, but after succumbing to the 1885 wooden spoon it suddenly sprang to life the following year to claim a highly

popular premiership.<sup>1</sup> Captained by J.D.Stephens, and with other fine players in A.M.Pettinger (vice-captain), ace goalsneak Richard Stephens, F.W.Warren, R.Lewis and W.Reid it re-kindled the club's previous reputation for fast, open, attacking football.

In 1887 this reputation was enhanced when it thrashed the visiting VFA premiers, Carlton, by an unprecedented margin of 9 goals to 3, with Richard Stephens kicking 6 goals as well as hitting the post. The following season, Adelaide was one of four SAFA teams chosen to engage the visiting British rugby union team in a match played according to Australian rules. By the time of the encounter, which took place on Thursday 12 July at the Adelaide Oval, the tourists had already played ten such matches, and were becoming quite proficient. Two days earlier they had scored the finest victory of their tour when they downed the powerful Port Adelaide combination by a goal, and up to half time in this particular match it looked possible that Adelaide might become their second significant victims. At the long break the British side led by a goal, 3.1 to 2.9 (behinds not counting, of course), but in the third quarter the red and blacks got on top, and the final bell saw them comfortably home by 3 goals, 6.13 to 3.5.

Unfortunately, this proved to be just about the last significant triumph of the club's existence. Over the course of the next couple of seasons, sloppy and erratic management led to the dispersal of many of the key members of the team and by the early 1890s the club was little better than a chopping block for more talented opponents. After three successive wooden spoons from 1891-3 the plug was pulled one last time, and the name

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<sup>1</sup> Much of this popularity stemmed from the fact that Adelaide was the first premiership club from outside the perennial 'big three' of Norwood, South Adelaide and Port Adelaide.

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3 *Ibid.*, page 11.

'Adelaide' disappeared from the senior football spectrum for the better part of a century. During its brief and at times shambolic history, however, the original Adelaide Football Club had played a major role in establishing the Australian code as the winter pastime of choice for a large minority of athletic (and some not so athletic) young South Australian males. Even more significantly, under the aegis of its forward-thinking inaugural captain, Noel Twopenny, it had given birth to the notion of intercolonial competition, a notion which would be explored and developed in numerous ways over the course of the ensuing century, before arguably reaching a pinnacle with the expansion of the Victorian Football League into a competition of pseudo-national compass.

#### **Adelaide and Suburban Football**

**Association:** This competition commenced prior to the first world war, and continued until 1978. Participating clubs at various times included Adelaide Lutheran, Albert Druids, Black Forest, Brompton, Colonel Light Gardens, Flinders Park, Goodwood, Grange, Kelvinator, Kilkenny United, Norwood Union, Ovingham United, Prospect, Para-Houghton, St Raphael's, Semaphore Central, South Adelaide Ramblers, South Australian Railways Institute, Torrensville United and Wingfield.

#### **Adelaide Metropolitan Football League:**

Also known for a time as the Metropolitan Football Association, this competition got underway in the early years of the twentieth century and disbanded at the end of the 1967 season. Competing clubs included Albert Druids, Brompton, Burnside, Kelvinator, Mitcham District, Norwood Union, St Raphael's and South Adelaide Ramblers.

**Adelaide Plains Football League:** The APFL currently comprises seven clubs: Balaklava, Hamley Bridge, Hummocks

Watchman, Mallala, United and Virginia. Mallala is the only surviving original member of the League, which was established in 1904. Mallala, which had missed the finals in 2006, claimed the 2007 premiership thanks to successive finals victories over minor premier United. The second semi final was a see-sawing affair, with Mallala triumphant in the end by a single straight kick. A fortnight later in the grand final the teams played out a dour, tightly contested first half with only a point separating them at the main break. Thereafter, however, Mallala assumed almost complete control, adding 10 second half goals to 3 to win by a convincing 41 point margin.

The 2008 season again saw Mallala contest the grand final, but after leading by 13 points at the long break they only managed 1 second half goal, allowing opponents Hummocks Watchman to score a come from behind victory by 7 points. Final scores were Hummocks Watchman 7.10 (52) defeated Mallala 6.9 (45). Mallala had entered the grand final as warm favourites having topped the ladder with a 14-2 record and achieved a comfortable win over Hummocks Watchman in the second semi final.

**Advertiser Cup:** See Other Competitions.

**AGARS, MERV (HoF 2002)** was a useful player for West Adelaide in 106 league games between 1946 and 1952 during which he kicked 92 goals, including a club list topping tally of 22 in 1951. He played in West's 1947 premiership side, and represented South Australia on 8 occasions. However, it is probably fair to observe that he had a more pronounced and lasting effect on the game as a journalist than as a player. Sports editor at 'The Advertiser' for nineteen years he had an astute grasp of the economic realities underpinning the game, and as early as the 1960s was advocating a national competition with South Australian involvement.

# ADELAIDE

**Affiliated:** AFL 1991-present

**Club Address:** P.O. Box 1, West Lakes 5021, South Australia

**Website:** www.afc.com.au

**Email:** crows@afc.com.au

**Home Ground:** AAMI Stadium (traditionally known as Football Park ), West Lakes , Adelaide

**Formed:** 1990

**Colours:** Navy blue, gold and red

**Emblem:** Crows

**AFL Premierships:** 1997, 1998 (2 total) OTHER PREMIERSHIPS – V/AFL Night Series 2003 (1 total); Dr. Wm. C. McClelland Trophy 2005 (1 total)

**Brownlow Medallist:** Mark Ricciuto 2003 (1 total)

**Norm Smith Medallists:** Andrew McLeod 1997 & 1998 (1 Medallist/2 Medals)

**AFL All Australians:** Nigel Smart 1991, 1993 & 1998; Ben Hart 1992, 1993, 1999 & 2002; Chris McDermott 1992; Tony McGuinness 1992 & 1993; Greg Anderson 1993; Andrew McLeod 1998, 2000, 2001, 2006 & 2007; Tony Modra 1993 & 1997; Shaun Rehn 1994 & 1998; Mark Ricciuto 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 & 2005; Darren Jarman 1996; Simon Goodwin 2000, 2001, 2005 & 2006; Ben Rutten 2005; Nathan Bassett 2006; Nathan Bock 2008 (36 total)

**AFL Top Goalkickers:** Tony Modra (129) 1993 & (84) 1997 (2 total)

**Highest Score:** 30.8 (188) vs. Essendon 6.14 (50) at AAMI Stadium in round 10 2006

**Most Games:** 312 by Mark Ricciuto from 1993 to 2007 (correct to the start of the 2008 season)

**Record Home Attendance:** 51,140 at AAMI Stadium in round 5, 26 April 2003: Port Adelaide 12.6 (78); Adelaide 9.12 (66)

**Record Finals Attendance:** 99,045 for 1997 grand final at the MCG: Adelaide 19.11 (125); St Kilda 13.16 (94)

**Overall Success Rate 1991- 2008:** 52.8%

While the history of the Adelaide Crows is all too brief, the background to the club's formation is long and complex. South Australia was the first colony after Victoria to embrace Australian football (or 'Victorian Rules' as it was known initially), and this fact served to emphasise the close relationship which existed between the two colonies right from the outset.<sup>1</sup>

As with many close relationships, however, intense rivalry lay just below the surface, and what better means than

a sporting contest for tapping into and expressing this in a 'civilised', socially acceptable way?

It very soon emerged, however, that as far as the game of Australian football went, the rivalry between Victoria and South Australia was destined, for the most part, to be a pretty lop-sided affair. It could not, for instance, bear comparison with the great cricketing rivalries which existed (and still exist) between England and Australia , or Victoria and New South Wales . In spirit it was much closer to the legendary biblical conflict between David and Goliath - with a single, obvious and glaring difference: in the gospel according to Australian football it was almost always Goliath who emerged smiling.

<sup>1</sup> The two colonies were in fact established within two years of one another, Victoria in 1834 and South Australia in 1836.

Over the years, this substantial gulf in standards inevitably tended to produce a difference in perspective: interstate (or intercolonial) football, for instance, was viewed in South Australia as an essential barometer of the game's progress, and a player who was picked to represent his state could therefore be said to have reached the very pinnacle of footballing achievement.

In Victoria, the prevailing attitude was very different: interstate matches were viewed somewhat in the nature of a necessary nuisance; necessary insofar as Victoria, in its undisputed position as Australian football's supreme power, had a self-evident duty to promote the game in as many parts of the country as possible; a nuisance in the sense that the playing of interstate fixtures either disrupted the schedule of VFA and later VFL club matches (when the interstate games took place in Melbourne) or deprived the clubs of the services of their most accomplished players (when the venues for these games were interstate).<sup>1</sup> The notion that the results of interstate matches in some way represented a yardstick of the game's progress and status in different parts of the country was laughable. Victorian supremacy was in the nature of a 'given', and the occasional defeats suffered against South Australia or Western Australia in no way undermined this. For one thing, interstate football was obviously accorded much greater respect outside Victoria, and it was therefore only to be expected that players chosen to represent Western Australia or South Australia, not to mention the 'minor states', would often succeed in producing the games of their lives when confronted by the might of the 'Big V'. In such circumstances, the

occasional upset was inevitable, but given the aforementioned mitigating circumstances it was really nothing to make a fuss about.

At club level, intercolonial contact began during the 1870s when clubs like St Kilda and Melbourne visited Adelaide. From the Victorian point of view such visits provided excellent opportunities to 'spread the word', relax, and, during the matches, to experiment by 'bleeding' youngsters or trying players in unaccustomed positions; the actual results of the games tended to be perceived as being of negligible importance, however.

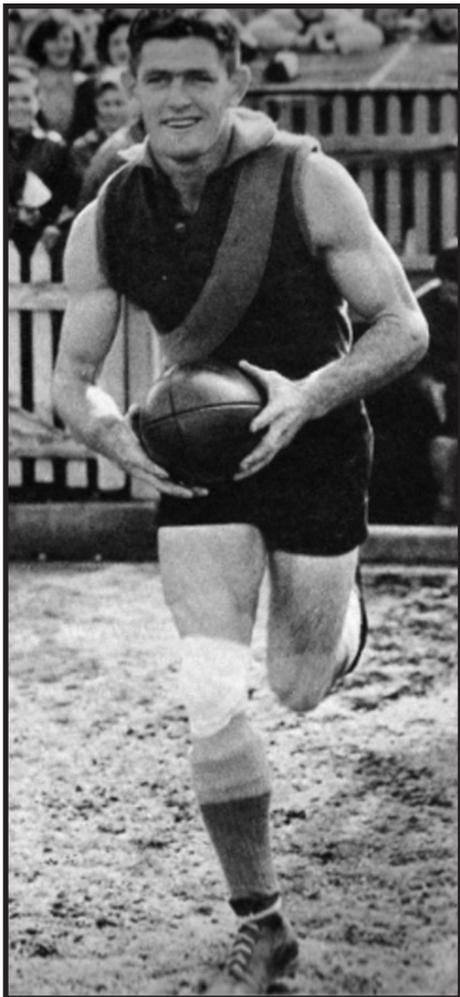
By contrast to this, South Australian clubs would see the games as providing firm and incontestable evidence as to which of the two colonies currently reigned supreme on the football field.

An excellent illustration of this divergence in viewpoint is afforded by the so-called 'Championship of Australia'. From as early as 1888 challenge matches were sporadically held between the premier clubs of South Australia and Victoria with a view to determining Australia's champion team. At any rate, that was the interpretation placed on these contests by most South Australians. Victorians on the other hand, with occasional exceptions, tended to view them as exhibition matches, and no more. After all, had not the de facto champions of Australia already been decided, via the VFA premiership ladder (and later the VFL grand final)?

Not surprisingly, the repeated victories in these affairs by South Australian clubs were greeted somewhat differently on opposite sides of the border. In Adelaide, they were a cause of great rejoicing, with the members of the victorious team feted as conquering heroes. In Melbourne, however, the defeat would be philosophically accepted but then quickly forgotten. After all, the loss of what to all intents and purposes was merely a practice match could hardly be said to have any long term consequences, for Victoria's football supremacy was, as has been noted above, incontrovertible and fixed.

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<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps something of an over simplification. It would probably be more wholly accurate to suggest that representative football has traditionally been an object of scorn among Victorian administrators, journalists and supporters, but among the actual participants - the players - it has usually tended to be viewed more favourably.



*West Torrens and state champion Bob Hank.*

To the objective observer a number of conclusions are possible. First, the Victorians' belief in the essential superiority of their own brand of football was based on fairly strong evidence, and, as the years went by, such evidence became so strong as to be irrefutable; by the 1970s an overwhelmingly large proportion of the finest players in Australia, irrespective of their state or territory of origin, were plying their trade in Melbourne (or just down the road at Sleepy Hollow). The second conclusion to be drawn is that the arrogant manner with which the Victorians took their superiority for granted

had the inevitable side effect of increasing the resentment with which football supporters from other states viewed the VFL; when the VFL began increasingly to attract the cream of the talent from these states, those feelings of resentment could not help but be reinforced.

In some ways, South Australia was something of a poor relation, if that is quite the expression, when it came to providing Victorian clubs with players of demonstrably high quality. Compared to Western Australia and Tasmania, for example, South Australia tended to send significantly fewer of its champions over the border to sample the big time, and those who did make the journey were almost invariably less successful. For every Bernie Smith (Geelong's 1951 Brownlow Medallist from West Adelaide), Western Australia was apparently able to come up with a Farmer, a Cable, a Moss and a Richardson. Even tiny Tasmania yielded Baldock, Stewart, Hudson and Hart within the space of just five or six years in the 1960s and it is doubtful whether South Australian football ever managed to provide the VFL with a quartet of such imposing pedigree.

In fairness, over the years there have been proportionately many more elite South Australians than Western Australians or Tasmanians who have elected to remain at home.<sup>1</sup> The likes of Barrie Robran, Neil Kerley, Lindsay Head, Geof Motley, Bob Hank, Peter Darley, Ken Eustice, Paul Bagshaw, Bob Quinn, Bill Wedding and Ken Farmer might all have been expected to perform creditably in Victorian football, but for one reason or another they preferred to

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<sup>1</sup> The reasons for this are difficult to unravel, but may include both the fact that SANFL clubs have historically been able and/or willing to pay their players more than their WAFL and TFL counterparts, and that the nature of the relationship between SA and Victoria - alluded to earlier - has essentially been one of resentment-fuelled rivalry, a state of affairs which proximity has tended to reinforce.

remain in South Australia. Moreover, South Australian clubs occasionally proved capable of attracting high calibre Victorian recruits,<sup>1</sup> thereby helping ensure that the standard of club football in the state remained tolerably high.

From about the mid 1970s, however, the situation began to change, and the exodus of star South Australians across the border accelerated. This helped contribute to a general decline in the standard of South Australian league football, and a corresponding drop off in spectator interest. (Although clearly there were also other factors at work undermining the game's appeal, such as the emergence of a wider range of alternative attractions.)

In 1972 the average attendance at SANFL minor round matches was 9,390 per game, or 5.4% of the Adelaide population; ten years on the population of Adelaide had increased, but the proportion of that population who watched SANFL football had fallen away sharply, to just 3.8%, at an average of 7,344 per game. Meanwhile VFL attendances over the same period had held steady.

As the 1980s continued, so did the departure of prominent players across the border. Whereas a decade or two earlier the majority of top South Australian players had been content to remain at home, it was

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1 Among the top Victorians to transfer to South Australia whilst still at their peak as players have been: triple Magarey Medallist Len Fitzgerald, who joined Sturt in 1951 after 96 games with Collingwood; Geelong premiership rover Colin Rice who played for Glenelg during the 1960s; Collingwood goalsneak Ian Brewer, who joined Norwood (via Claremont) in the mid 1960s and became one of only two players to top the season's goalkicking list on both sides of the border; South Melbourne defender Bob Kingston who gave Norwood and then Port Adelaide sterling service during the late 1960s and early 1970s; Melbourne and All Australian centre half back Gary Hardeman who played for Sturt between 1978 and 1980 before returning to Melbourne; and St Kilda ruckman Jeff Sarau who moved to West Torrens in 1984 after being stripped of the St Kilda vice captaincy.

becoming increasingly rare for individuals with the ability to represent the state, say, or figure prominently in the voting for the Magarey Medal to resist the lure of the VFL limelight. Of the South Australian team which lost by 30 points to Victoria at the MCG in 1971 only half a dozen went on to participate in the VFL, and of these only rover Ray Huppatz (67 games with Footscray and 19 games with North Melbourne) could be described as having enjoyed more than a fleeting acquaintance. Huppatz's co-rover Mick Nunan and full forward Malcolm Greenslade played just 1 and 2 VFL games respectively for Richmond while stationed in Victoria on National Service, ruck-rover Graham Comes played a mere 5 games for North Melbourne, gargantuan ruckman Dean Farnham managed only 17 games with Footscray, and centremen Russell Ebert spent a single season with North Melbourne late in his illustrious career. By contrast, no fewer than a dozen of the South Australian 21 which trounced Western Australia by 87 points at Subiaco in 1985 went on to play VFL football, with Craig Bradley, John Platten, Greg Anderson, Stephen Kernahan and Andrew Jarman all achieving at least a fair measure of notoriety.

The SANFL's administrators were by no means remiss in attempting to stanch the flow of talent. As early as 1981 a bid was tabled to enter a composite South Australian team in the VFL, but this was rejected.<sup>2</sup> Twelve months later, SANFL General Manager Don Roach remained convinced that South Australian football's long term interests would be best served by involvement in an expanded VFL competition:

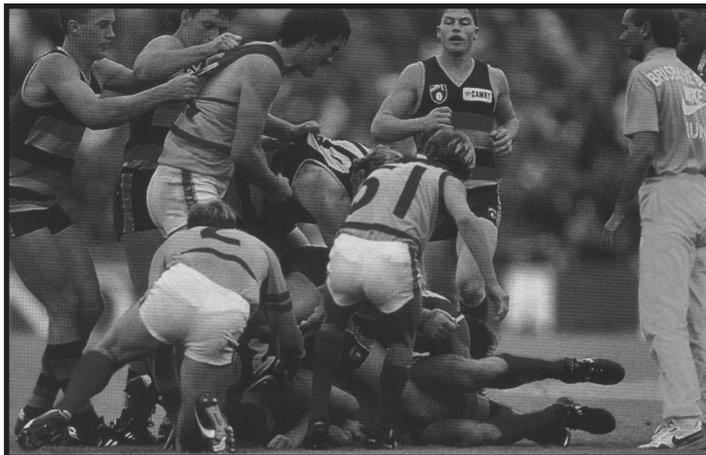
*Success and planning by the VFL in marketing and refining Australian football has led the SANFL to the conclusion that the VFL's plan to expand its competition has considerable merit.*

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2 Indeed, it remains unclear to this day as to whether the VFL ever actually made a formal response.

*The SANFL wishes to become part of that expanded competition.<sup>1</sup>*

However, despite South Melbourne's sanctioned (some would say enforced) relocation to Sydney, the VFL's enthusiasm for 'the national concept' was somewhat less than full blown. Indeed, even the admission to the league in 1987 of Brisbane and West



*The Crows in action against Brisbane at Football Park during their debut season.*

Coast could just as easily be attributed to economic reasons (the VFL was heavily in debt and required the clubs' \$4 million license fees to assist in its recovery) as to any genuine desire to see the game broadening its appeal and influence beyond the borders of Victoria. However, it rapidly became clear that "the future of Australian football (was) in presenting the top level competition in as many capital cities as the game and its marketing can

support".<sup>2</sup> In this context the inclusion of a team from South Australia - traditionally one of the three major football states - became both crucial and inevitable. The only real uncertainty was over time scale.

Ironically, the admission of a Western Australian club, and the teething problems it faced in coming to terms with the enhanced demands of a national competition, contributed in no small measure to the SANFL administration's uncertainty over their own participation. Complicating the picture was the fact that, in the short term, the standard of football on display in the SANFL actually improved slightly, due in part to an influx of high quality Western Australian players who, having failed to achieve selection in the West Coast Eagles' inaugural squad, were keen to continue their careers in what was, by popular consent, 'the second best competition'. In the 1987 interstate clash between Western Australia and South Australia in Perth the visiting South Australians won with beguiling ease, providing deceptive reassurance "that South Australia's decision not to enter the

1 Cited in *The Football Times 1987 Yearbook*, page 8. Intermittently throughout the 1980s there were also rumours of individual SANFL (and WAFL) clubs lining up bids for admission to the VFL. On 3/4/86, for example, it was reported in 'Inside Football' that "the influential Norwood club" was planning a unilateral defection to the 'big time' after becoming increasingly concerned that its development was being stymied in South Australia. Several weeks later, on 29/5/86, under the front page headline 'Interstate Clubs' VFL Bid' the same publication reported that Claremont was ready to 'jump ship' should negotiations between the VFL and WAFL for the admission to the VFL of a composite Western Australian side break down. Meanwhile, Port Adelaide's General Manager, Ian McKenzie was quoted as saying "We advised the VFL in writing about three years ago that we would be interested in joining such a competition. We've done a fair amount of work on it and if ever we were invited to join, we'd be ready." (In light of future developments, McKenzie's final sentence takes on heightened significance.)

2 Cited in *Camry Crows Official Yearbook 1991*, page 4.

extended VFL competition (was) justified, at least for the time being".<sup>1</sup>

A year later, West Perth director John Clinch claimed that the formation of the West Coast Eagles had 'ruined' Western Australian club football, and he advised the SANFL to refrain from entering a team in the expanded VFL at all costs.

Clinch's advice was very much a case of preaching to the converted. In a bid to maintain playing standards the SANFL in 1988 introduced a Player Retention Scheme, funded by a combination of league gate receipts, TAB Footypunt proceeds, sponsorship, and a lottery. The purpose of the scheme was to provide financial incentives to top players to remain in South Australia. These incentives consisted of scaled payments related to a player's achievements which the player would receive in a lump sum on retirement. Needless to say, any member of the scheme who elected to transfer to an interstate club automatically forfeited his right to receive the payment.

The introduction of the scheme attracted controversy, both in South Australia, where, perhaps predictably, it provoked arguments over the relative merits of those players included and excluded, and, more damagingly, in Victoria, where it was felt that, by playing regular State of Origin matches at Football Park, the VFL was providing the SANFL with a substantial proportion of the funds needed to keep the scheme viable. Certainly the refusal of the AFL<sup>2</sup> to sanction a State of Origin match between South Australia and Victoria in Adelaide in 1990 is difficult to interpret as anything other than an act of retribution for the SANFL's reluctance to participate in the developing national competition; it may also

have reflected the AFL's growing suspicion that the SANFL was using the funds raised via these matches to subsidise its isolationist position.

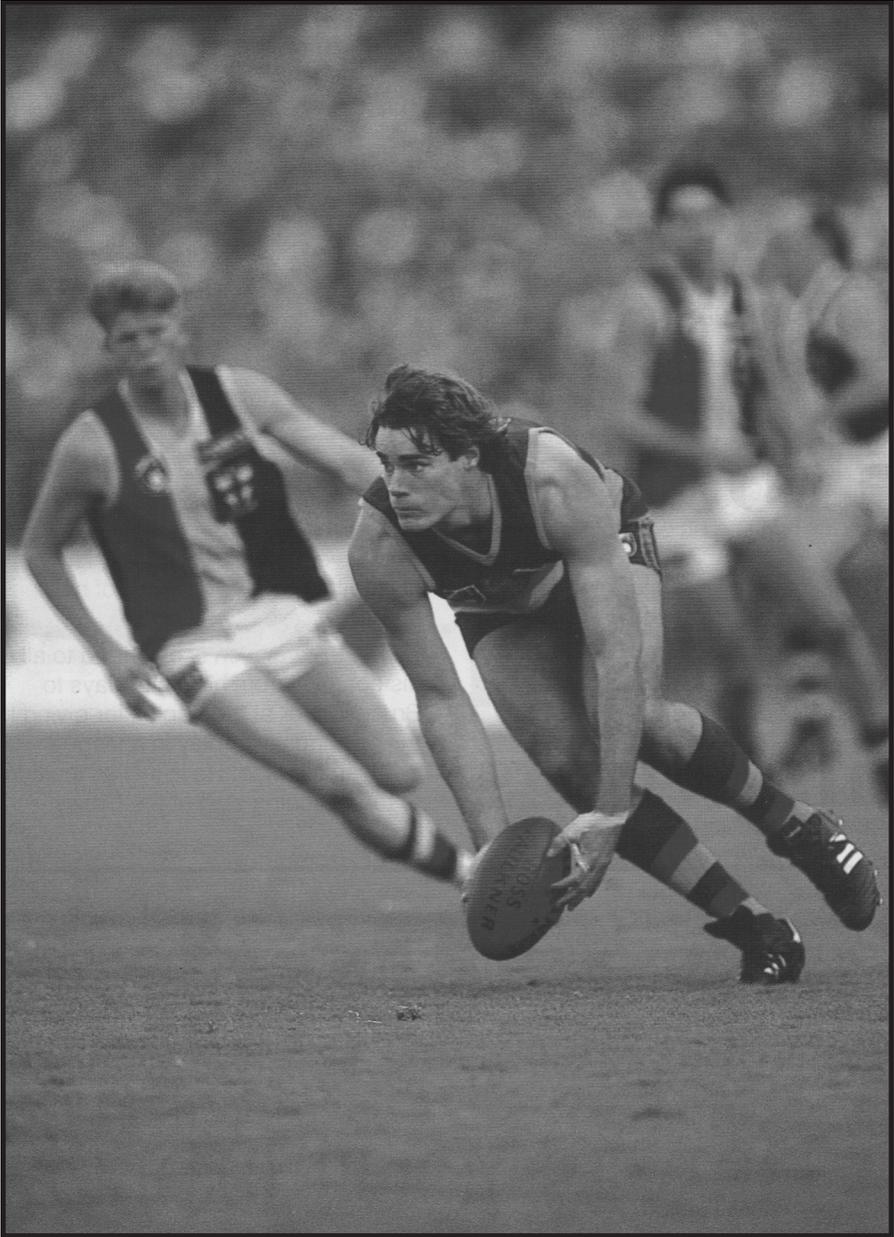
The 1990 SANFL season saw attendances continuing to decline. In July, Western Australia came to Football Park and were considered by some to be unfortunate to lose to the home state by 21 points, providing further evidence that the WAFL competition was recovering from the debilitating early impact of the establishment of the West Coast Eagles. Indeed, most WAFL clubs were now operating profitably, a situation in marked contrast to that prevailing in South Australia where clubs like West Torrens, Woodville, and, most particularly at the time, South Adelaide, hovered near or even just below the breadline.

Despite all this, the SANFL administration remained firm in its refusal to consider entering a team in the AFL. According to league President Max Basheer there were two fundamental obstacles in the way of South Australia's involvement in the national league. The primary concern remained protection of the local competition, but there was also a feeling of resentment over the proposed \$4 million joining levy. "We've been involved with football here for more than 100 years and developed the game and a market in South Australia," maintained Basheer. "Why should we have to pay to be part of the AFL?"

Matters came abruptly to a head on 31 July when perennially successful Port Adelaide, concerned that it was effectively being forced to subsidise several of the other SANFL clubs, made an independent and unilateral application to join the AFL. The move was totally unexpected and precipitated South Australian football into a period of quite unprecedented turmoil, controversy and confusion. Port Adelaide, already far and away the most loathed (as well as the best supported) SANFL club, became Public Enemy Number One in

1 Ashley Hornsey in *The Football Times Yearbook* 1988, page 3

2 The Victorian Football League (VFL) changed its name to the Australian Football League (AFL) in 1990.



*David Pittman gathers up a loose ball during a home encounter with St Kilda.*

South Australia, whilst simultaneously - and paradoxically - earning the respect and admiration of many football aficionados elsewhere. The SANFL was left with little option but to table a counter submission of its own and, once this had

happened, it soon became clear that Port Adelaide's bid was doomed. For a start, the marketing potential of a composite side clearly outstripped that of an established club, however well supported. Equally importantly, the SANFL could guarantee

the availability of Football Park, a ground with few equals anywhere in Australia .

In November 1990 the new Adelaide Football Club, to be known as the Crows, was officially born. Admission to the AFL was earmarked for the following season. In just three short months the SANFL had, albeit without wanting to, come almost full circle in its attitude to the national league. Against this backdrop, the quiet dismantling of the SANFL's Player Retention Scheme went almost unnoticed.

The man chosen to pilot the Crows through what he would later refer to as "the uncharted waters" of their debut season in the AFL was Graham Cornes. His selection was somewhat ironic given his renowned and frequently stated antipathy toward the AFL. Cornes indeed later admitted that he had thought long and hard before applying for the post given that "I've been such an outspoken critic of the AFL and the VFL's attempts to subjugate football in this country and in a sense I felt in one way we were capitulating to them".<sup>1</sup>

Considerable media hype attended the Adelaide Crows' preparations for their inaugural season, providing football in South Australia with much needed impetus. A crowd of over 40,000 turned up to Football Park for a pre-season practice match against Essendon which the Crows won, and when the side reached the semi finals of the Fosters Cup and began the season proper with an 86 point annihilation of flag favourite Hawthorn 'Crow Mania' burgeoned. Thereafter, however, the team's on field fortunes settled into what would, for some time, be a predictable pattern: competitive and winning more often than losing at home, brittle and occasionally dire away. The side won 10 and lost 12 matches in 1991 to finish ninth - a respectable performance

which, on balance, was slightly better than expected. Interest in Australian football in South Australia was arguably at its highest level since the early 1970s and the repercussions of the Crows' arrival permeated most levels of the game. Thanks largely to dividends received from the Adelaide Football Club all SANFL clubs bar one recorded profits in 1991.

On the field the Crows, most of whom were AFL 'rookies', played a typically South Australian brand of football in which handball and high rates of (not necessarily damaging to the opposition) possession featured prominently. If not inordinately successful, it was nevertheless a highly attractive mix and an average of more than 40,000 fans attended each of the team's home matches during the year.

Adelaide showed marginal overall improvement in 1992, winning 11 out of 22 matches, but, perhaps most encouragingly of all, rounding the season off with 5 wins out of the last 6 games. Significantly, however, wins away from home, other than in Sydney and Brisbane, continued to prove elusive.

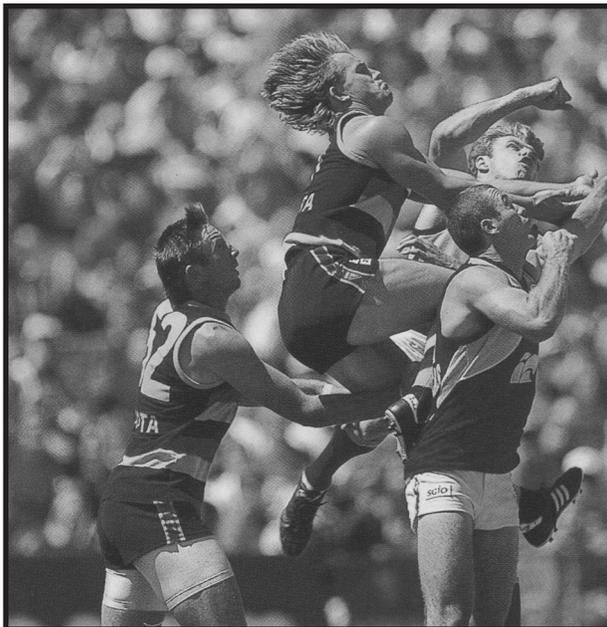
The Crows opened the 1993 season with 3 straight wins including, most promisingly of all, a 28.10 (178) to 12.12 (84) destruction of Richmond at the MCG. However, thereafter the familiar pattern reasserted itself, and Adelaide's only other away wins during the 1993 minor round came at the Gabba and the SCG. Despite this, the Crows' home form was even better than in previous years, with Hawthorn the only visiting side all season to escape from Football Park with the 4 match points. In the final home and away fixture of the year Adelaide needed to defeat Collingwood - something it had never previously managed to do - at Football Park to qualify for the major round and, despite seeming inhibited early by the inevitable tension associated with the occasion, finished strongly to get home by 24 points in front of 48,522 ecstatic fans.

<sup>1</sup> Cited in *The Football Times 1991 Yearbook*, page 4.

The following Sunday saw Adelaide pitted against Hawthorn at the MCG in an elimination final. It was hard to imagine a more difficult assignment. Not only were the Hawks the most successful AFL club of recent times, they also had the not inconsiderable psychological advantage of having defeated the Crows in both meetings during the season. In the sides' previous encounter just a fortnight earlier at Waverley, Hawthorn had kicked a devastating 8.6 to 0.1 in the opening term before going on to win by 27 points 'easing up'. Few scribes imagined that Adelaide could get within 5 goals of the finals hardened Hawks, with many predicting a defeat of embarrassing scale.

A major part of the appeal of top level sport is its unpredictability, however, and the Crows caused a major upset by playing tough, committed football throughout to emerge victorious by 15 points, 16.14 (110) to 13.17 (95). It was a display which remains an undoubted highlight in the club's relatively short history to date, with its main instigators being the running brigade of Mark Bickley, Matthew Liptak, Greg Anderson, Tony McGuinness and Simon Tregenza, together with spidery ruckman Shaun Rehn, whose seemingly tottering frame belied his formidable courage, influence and all round effectiveness.

The vagaries of the AFL's final six system meant that, despite finishing the home and away series in only fifth spot, the Crows, by virtue of third placed North Melbourne's capitulation to sixth placed West Coast, had qualified for a second semi final confrontation with Carlton at Waverley. Once again Adelaide's runners were prominent



*Tony Modra gets airborne against West Coast. Shaun Rehn is the other Crows player in the photo'.*

but this time the luck was with the Blues who recorded a hard fought 18 point victory, despite managing 7 fewer scoring shots.

The first half of the preliminary final against Essendon at the MCG on Saturday 18 September 1993 saw the Crows play some of the best football of their brief existence up to that point to race into a 42 point long break lead, their 12.12 (84) exactly doubling the Bombers' tally of 6.6 (42). A grand final berth in only the club's third season would have been an astonishing achievement but, sadly for the Crows, football matches are won after four quarters of play not two. Throughout the second half Essendon ignited all over the ground to add 13.3 to the Crows' dismal 2.4 and snatch a dramatic and, from Adelaide's point of view, soul destroying 11 point triumph.

The game was watched by 76,380 spectators - up to that point, the biggest ever attendance at a Crows game - and was universally heralded as an all too rare finals classic, but as far as the players and supporters of the Adelaide Football Club were

concerned an uninspired, lack lustre victory by any margin would have been infinitely preferable.

In both 1994 and 1995 the Crows were among the bookmakers' pre-season favourites for the flag, and on each occasion the side's achievement in reaching the grand final of the AFL's pre-season knock-out competition only served to reinforce these expectations. However, when the pressure intensified during the season proper the team wilted.

In 1994 the general feeling was that the Crows failed to do justice to themselves in winning just 9 and drawing 1 of their 22 home and away matches to finish eleventh. Coach Cornes was the major casualty of this decline, making way at season's end for former Fitzroy coach Robert Shaw, a Tasmanian with a reputation for coaxing maximum effort and achievement from teams of limited ability. Sadly, in 1995, particularly after the serious knee injury to Shaun Rehn in round 3 which put the 1994 club champion on the sidelines for the season, a team of limited ability was precisely what the Crows looked - and the Shaw magic was notoriously ineffective in turning things around. One got the impression that, even at their very best, the Crows would fall some way short of matching it with the real heavyweights of the league like Carlton, Geelong, West Coast and Essendon.

Notwithstanding which, Shaw refused to be downhearted after a last round home defeat by Richmond left the Crows in the comparative ignominy of eleventh place once more with just 9 wins for the year:

*"All I can say is that .....we will be a better side, we will recruit better, we'll attack everything better and I know it's easy to say but we can promise better.*

*"We've got a real chance if we've got genuine supporters - and I think we have."*<sup>1</sup>

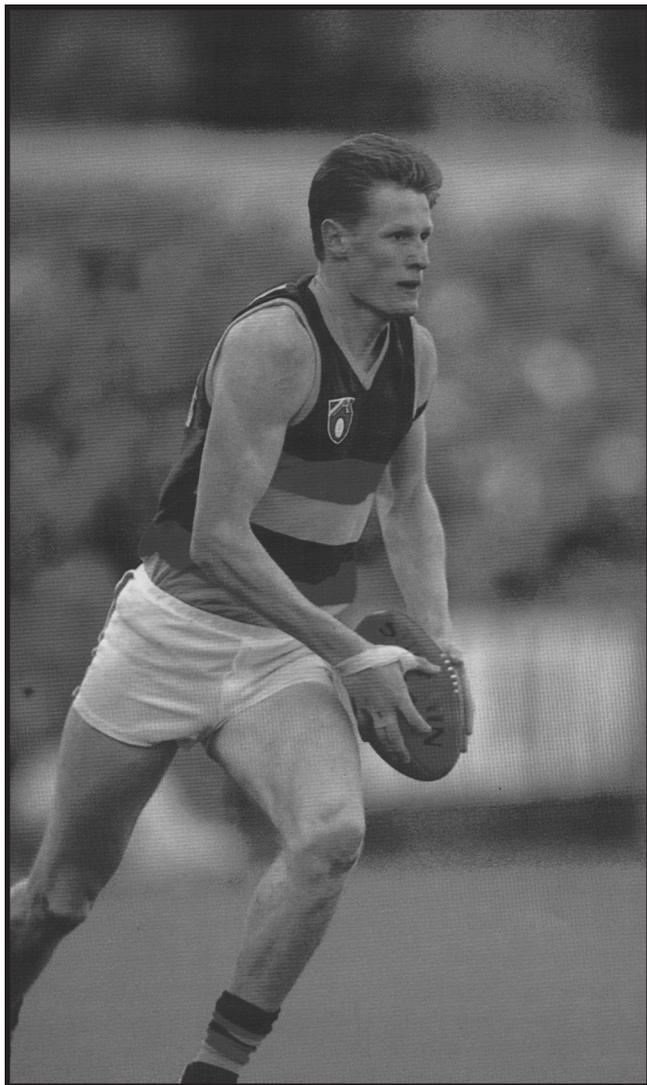
Shaw's optimism proved to be sadly misplaced. In 1996 the Crows endured their worst season up to that point, winning only 8 of 22 home and away matches to finish a depressing twelfth on the ladder. Before the end of the season Shaw had become the most visible casualty of this failure, although many media observers and some supporters believed that the bulk of the blame lay elsewhere, principally with the club's board of management. Nevertheless, there were plenty of smiles when Shaw's replacement, former Woodville and North Melbourne hero and Geelong coach, Malcolm Blight, was announced; surely now, it was argued, the Crows would start to blossom.

Certainly no one then - or now - would question the Adelaide Football Club's potential to develop into a genuine AFL superpower. However, potential never won a premiership. Shaw's declared intention when he arrived in Adelaide was to foster the emergence of a genuine club spirit, something which the Crows' status as the focus for the aspirations and affection of almost an entire state has made extremely difficult. Two years later Malcolm Blight faced the same task, with the public's expectations, if anything, even higher. Blight was one of South Australia's favourite and most successful footballing sons and the media made it difficult not to attribute virtually messianic properties to his return.

The Adelaide Football Club Board, after years of repeated disappointment, were understandably more cautious, citing their sole aim for 1997 as to see the Crows qualifying to contest the finals. Thankfully, after a somewhat shaky start, the achievement of this aim never looked in doubt.

The 1997 AFL home and away season was one of the most even on record, and Adelaide's 12-10 record proved good enough to secure fourth spot, and a home final against West Coast. The Crows negotiated this hurdle with surprising comfort, outscoring their opponents in every quarter en route to a 14.15 (99) to 9.12 (78) triumph.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in 'Football Plus', volume 1 Number 32, 6 September 1995, page 23.



*One of the finest players in the Crows brief history, Ben Hart.*

Geelong in the following week's semi final, again at Football Park, provided much sterner resistance, but in the end home ground advantage arguably proved decisive. Adelaide won by 8 points, 11.10 (76) to 9.14 (68), setting up a preliminary final encounter with the high flying Western Bulldogs at the MCG, an assignment which the Melbourne media, with typical predictability, tended to characterise as 'mission impossible'.

No one told this to Malcolm Blight and his hyper-resilient Crows, however. Trailing 4.11

(35) to 10.6 (66) at the long break, Adelaide's season looked as good as over, but in a stirring second half performance, which in many ways mirrored Essendon's display against the Crows in the preliminary final of four years earlier, the visitors added 8.10 to 3.7 to claw and scrape their way into the grand final by just 2 points.

Grand final opponents St Kilda were 2/5-on favourites going into the match, having topped the ladder after the home and away rounds, and won both their finals encounters comfortably. Adelaide, which would be facing its fourth arduous finals match in as many weeks, was widely presumed to be unlikely to be able to keep pace with the fresher, fitter Saints, who would also have the benefit of the passionate vocal support of a large proportion of the MCG crowd. In addition, the Crows would be without both of their 1997 AFL All Australians, Tony Modra (who also won the Coleman

Medal for kicking most goals during the home and away rounds) and Mark Ricciuto, and their absence was felt to more than counterbalance the Saints' loss of ruckmen Peter Everitt and Lazar Vidovic.

The opening quarter of the grand final was typically intense and fast-paced with both sides squandering numerous goalscoring opportunities. Adelaide enjoyed a 2 point advantage (3.8 to 3.6) at the first change but the second term saw St Kilda beginning to flex their muscles; the first six minutes of

the term saw them add 3 goals and, from the Crows' point of view, there appeared a very real danger of their running away with the match. Adelaide had also lost both Clay Sampson and Rod Jameson with injuries which were adjudged sufficiently serious as to prevent their further participation. As so often in 1997, however, the Crows rose to the challenge.<sup>1</sup> Their tackling intensified, and midfielders like McLeod, Koster, Goodwin and Bickley began to impose themselves on the game. The long break saw the Saints' lead trimmed to just 13 points with the outcome still very much in the balance.

The third quarter of the 1997 AFL grand final was arguably the most important yet played by the Crows, who responded positively to every challenge laid down by their opponents, as well as laying down the gauntlet very firmly themselves, to add 6.1 to 2.2 and go into the lemon time huddle 10 points to the good, and with the momentum firmly in their favour. During the final term Darren Jarman, who had been moved to the goal square shortly before half time and who had booted 1 goal in the third quarter, suddenly exploded to life and added a further 5 goals as Adelaide took control all over the ground. St Kilda kept plugging away but in the end there could be absolutely no doubt as to the Crows' superiority. Andrew McLeod capped off a consistent season with an effervescent performance across half back and later on the ball to be a decisive winner of the Norm Smith Medal. Meanwhile Shaun Rehn, beaten in the ruck early on by Brett Cook, and actually dragged from the ground during the second quarter, was a dominant, imposing figure all over the field after half time, while Shane Ellen (5 goals),

Troy Bond (4 goals), Nigel Smart and Ben Hart were all conspicuous contributors.

Predictably, almost the entire state of South Australia went into raptures after the match, with the Crows players being accorded a ticker tape welcome home as well as the collective freedom of the city of Adelaide. Mingled with the satisfaction, however, was an ominous - to other clubs - sense of purpose and resolve. As club chairman Bob Hammond put it: "We as a club always believed that no matter what happened today we'd be a better team next year and in the next few years, and I still believe that."

Such optimism seemed misplaced for much of the 1998 season as Adelaide struggled to maintain consistency. Indeed, had they lost to West Coast at Subiaco in their final home and away match of the season, the Crows might conceivably have dipped out of the finals altogether. As it was, a first ever win over the Eagles in the west earned fifth spot and, on the positive side, the likelihood of a second chance should their qualifying final against Melbourne at the MCG be lost. Conversely, however, it guaranteed that, whatever the outcome of their first final, the Crows would spend the entire 1998 major round 'on the road'.

Inconsistency reared its head again when Adelaide duly succumbed to the Demons by 48 points, their comparatively meek performance giving little indication of what was to come over the ensuing three weeks. With all four qualifying finals going to form the Crows survived to fight again, and their 'reward' was, on the face of things, the slightly less onerous task of fronting up to Sydney at the SCG.<sup>2</sup> Conditions were more suited to mud wrestling than football, but the Adelaide players rose to the occasion

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1 Other instances when the side responded magnificently in the face of adversity included the round 19 defeat of Port Adelaide, when the Crows trailed 5.5 (35) to 9.4 (58) at the final change before adding 4.6 to 0.0 in the run home to win by 7 points, and the come-from-behind finals victories over Geelong and the Western Bulldogs.

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2 Justification for this statement stems from the fact that Sydney were in mediocre form whereas Melbourne had been performing superbly in the run up to the finals; moreover, Adelaide had won with substantial comfort at the SCG earlier in the year.

superbly, leading from the start en route to a 14.10 (94) to 10.7 (67) victory.

If the Sydney win had been commendable, the performance against the Western Bulldogs in the following week's preliminary final at the MCG was close to astonishing. Going into the match as underdogs the Crows tore into the opposition from the start and never relented as they racked up an incredible 68 point victory. Andrew McLeod contributed 7 and Matthew Robran 6 of the side's 24 goals, with Rehn, Caven and Goodwin also performing well.

Just as a year earlier the 1998 grand final saw Adelaide pitted against the season's minor premier, which on this occasion was North Melbourne. Again, just as in 1997, the Crows went into the game as outsiders (with odds of 5/2 as opposed to 3/2 for the 'Roos) and trailed at the long break, only to storm home in the second half. There were other similarities: Darren Jarman again had a 'day out' in front of goal, Andrew McLeod again won the Norm Smith Medal, and the opposition's primary playmaker, Wayne Carey - as opposed to St Kilda's Robert Harvey - failed to exert his expected seismic influence on proceedings.

At half time North, having frittered away a number of apparently straight forward goal scoring opportunities, led by 24 points, 6.15 (51) to 4.3 (27). Crows coach Malcolm Blight made a number of telling changes at the start of the third quarter - Ricciuto to the half back line, Johnson to a wing, for instance - but the main change was in the attitude of his charges who lifted all over the ground to outscore their opponents 11.12 to 2.7 over the remainder of the game and win by 35 points.

Centre half back Peter Caven, a one time journeyman performer with Fitzroy and Sydney, provided a candid evaluation of the afternoon's events: "I just can't believe it. I still feel like I've got a game next week. I've got to keep on pinching myself. We were five goals down at half time (sic.) and the boys came back ..... it's unreal."

After a tentative start to its AFL career the Adelaide Football Club was now one of the indisputable heavyweights of the competition. No club had (or indeed has) more members and potential financial resources, and during the second half of the 1990s no club had been better performed - in September at any rate. An exchange between Tim Watson and Leigh Matthews during the last quarter of Channel Seven's television coverage of the grand final summed things up nicely. "The Crows are a super team," opined Watson, to which Matthews responded, with predictable Victorian cynicism, that that was perhaps going a little far; what they were, he suggested, was a super September team. Watson's response was quick and suitably dismissive. "It's the only kind that matters," he trenchantly pointed out.

In Australian football, at whatever level, no truer observation could be made. As the twentieth century neared its end the Adelaide Crows appeared to have metamorphosed into most Victorians' worst nightmare: the 'super team' of Australian football.

Sadly for Adelaide, however, 1999 brought, if not an end, at very least an embarrassing hiatus in the emerging Crows' dynasty. The pre season loss of star ruckman Shaun Rehn started a decline which rapidly accelerated as the season wore on; mid way through the year coach Malcolm Blight decided he had had enough and would not resume in 2000, and thereafter the players' confidence appeared to evaporate completely, as crushing losses to the likes of Sydney, Brisbane and the Kangaroos served to exemplify. At season's end a tally of just 8 wins consigned the Crows to an all time low of thirteenth position on the premiership ladder.

Whilst season 2000, under new coach Gary Ayres, brought marginal improvement - 9 wins and eleventh spot on the ladder - there was really very little for Crows supporters to get excited about. And although the side played some marvellous football in 2001 to qualify for a fourth finals campaign in eleven

seasons it chose the opening week of the finals to put in arguably its worst display of the year in losing heavily to Carlton. The 2002 season saw the Crows manage their best home and away season to date with 15 wins but the finals once again proved a disappointment, an exciting semi final win over Melbourne being rendered redundant a week later by Collingwood in the preliminary final. Nevertheless, those betting against an Adelaide Football Club resurgence over the ensuing few years would have been well advised to remind themselves of the club's enormous financial resources, fanatical support, and highly accomplished, finals-hardened player base which, with a little more consistency, could arguably be said to be the equal of any in the competition.<sup>1</sup>

As if to emphasise these points, the Crows tuned up for the 2003 season in exemplary fashion, winning the AFL's pre-season competition for the first ever time with a 31 point grand final defeat of 2002 finals nemesis Collingwood. Alas, however, this proved to be a false dawn, as the side proved incapable of sustaining this level of performance over the course of a full season. At times brilliant, at other times almost embarrassingly brittle, the overall pattern of the Crows season was re-created in miniature during a finals series which saw them overwhelm West Coast before capitulating with barely a whimper against eventual premier Brisbane.

The 2004 season turned out even worse, with coach Gary Ayres eventually electing to jump ship as soon as it emerged that finals qualification was impossible. His successor, Neil Craig, possessed a reputation for thoroughness and a refusal to accept second best, qualities which came pronouncedly to the fore during a 2005 season which saw

the Crows procure their first ever minor premiership. After that, the finals were a dismal disappointment, with a home loss to St Kilda in a qualifying final effectively derailing the club's premiership aspirations. A convincing win over Port Adelaide in a semi final followed, but the challenge of West Coast at Subiaco in the preliminary final proved a bridge too far, and the Crows ultimately finished fourth.

For much of the 2006 season Adelaide once again appeared to be the team to beat for the premiership, but inconsistency during the run home saw the side drop to second place on the ladder behind West Coast. A solid first up finals performance at home to Fremantle raised hopes, but in the preliminary final against the Eagles the Crows, despite having home advantage, were distinctly second best, losing by a deceptively narrow 10 point margin, 11.9 (75) to 11.19 (85). In 2007 the Crows displayed an at times alarming inconsistency that ultimately saw them stutter into the finals in eighth place. An elimination final in Melbourne against a Hawthorn side that had spent much of the season in the top four was a tough assignment, but Adelaide produced a vibrant and tenacious display that ultimately fell short by just 3 points. However, the fact remained that, after the promise shown in 2005 and 2006, the Crows' overall performances in 2007 could only be regarded as immensely disappointing, and one felt hard pressed not to wonder if the team has 'missed the boat'. At the risk of over-dramatising things, one sensed that season 2008 could well turn out to be make or break for the current Crows set-up, with the ultimate verdict on Neil Craig's tenure as coach arguably hanging in the balance. As it was, Adelaide endured another frustrating season, with occasional good performances being interspersed with at least as many dismal ones. The Crows reached the finals, but there was little conviction about the achievement, an impression which their prompt dismissal from premiership contention by Collingwood only served to ratify.

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<sup>1</sup> Adelaide's inconsistency in 2001 is readily exemplified when you compare performances like its 5 point defeat of Brisbane at the Gabba (the Lions' only home loss for the season) with its abject capitulation to wooden spooner Fremantle at Subiaco in round 22.

**AISH, MICHAEL (HoF 2002):** At his peak, Norwood's Michael Aish was among the finest South Australian footballers of his generation. His slight frame belied his extraordinary courage and a tremendous capacity for hard work, and he topped this off with a sublime range of skills that made him exhilarating to watch in full flight. A popular winner of the Magarey Medal as a twenty year old in 1981, he won Norwood's club champion award on four occasions, and was a member of Redlegs premierships teams in 1982 and 1984. During the course of his 307 game league career between 1979 and 1993 he resisted overtures from at least five different VFL clubs, content to eke out his trade in familiar but by no means less challenging surroundings. Captain of Norwood from 1987 to 1989, Aish also counted captaincy of his state, for which he played on 15 occasions, among his football achievements. A dual All Australian - the only Redlegs player to be so honoured more than once - he was chosen as a ruck-rover in the Redlegs' official 'Team of the Twentieth Century'. He is the son of former Norwood captain Peter Aish.

**AISH, PETER:** Having worked his way through the ranks at Norwood, Peter Aish made his league debut as a nineteen year old in 1953. Elegant and highly accomplished, he played as a follower for most of his first three seasons before being tried as a half forward and then across half back in 1956. He made his South Australian interstate debut as a half back flanker at the 1956 Perth carnival. Always a highly respected figure at the Parade, Aish was installed as club captain in 1960, and perhaps partly as a result, his form blossomed. Now playing mainly as a full back, Aish won Norwood's best and fairest award in 1960, and capped another highly consistent campaign the following year by being his team's best player in a losing grand final against West Adelaide. After captaining the Demons, as they were known at the time, for one further season, Aish retired

with 162 senior SANFL games to his credit. He represented South Australia 5 times. His son Michael was a Norwood champion in the 1980s and '90s.

**ALDENHOVEN, ALLAN:** A tireless and formidable ruckman, North Adelaide's Allan Aldenhoven's league career was restricted to just 55 games over ten seasons because the requirements of his employment often saw him posted to remote country areas of the state. He made his senior debut in 1949, but did not really become a regular in the side until 1951, when he promptly showed his class by winning the club's best and fairest award. A solid performer in a losing grand final side against Port Adelaide that same season, he produced a best afield performance in the following year's premiership decider as the red and whites annihilated Norwood by a then record margin for a grand final of 108 points. Thereafter, however, he made only sporadic league appearances, with his last game - his only one for the season - coming in the 1958 preliminary final loss to Port. Allan Aldenhoven represented South Australia twice. During the country phases of his career he won three Mail Medals in different competitions: with Southern York Peninsula Football League side Yorketown in 1949, with Butler of the Eastern Eyre Football Association in 1956, and with Balaclava (Adelaide Plains Football League) in 1963.

**ALDERSLEY, RALPH** was one of West Torrens' early greats who later turned to umpiring with equal success. He skippered the blue and golds for a time during the early 1900s and was state captain on half a dozen occasions, including some games at the 1908 Melbourne carnival. The highlight of his umpiring career came in 1911 when he took charge of both the final and challenge final involving West Adelaide and Port Adelaide. Aldersley was an inaugural member in 1931 of the five man SANFL Umpires Appointment Board.

**All Australians:** The first official All Australian team was selected after the 1953 interstate championship series (or carnival) in Adelaide. Players were chosen on the basis of their performances during the carnival, as they would be for every subsequent carnival until 1980, with the exception of the 1975 knock-out series. All Australian teams were again selected after the tri-state championships of 1983, 1985, 1986 and 1987. The last official All Australian team was chosen following the 1988 bicentennial state of origin carnival in Adelaide.

A total of 82 places in the fourteen official All Australian teams were occupied by South Australians. Only Victoria, with 114 places, was more heavily represented.

**ALLAN, JAMES** was a runaway winner of the 2007 Magarey Medal, with his tally of 19 votes giving him a 5 vote advantage over five other players. A tough, nuggety on-baller or centreman, he was one of the main factors in North Adelaide's rise to prominence under Andrew Jarman which saw the side get as far as the 2007 grand final, only to lose heavily to Central District.

**ALLEN, RODNEY:** Winner of Woodville's best and fairest award in his debut season of 1965 it would perhaps be fair to suggest that Rodney Allen thereafter failed fully to realise his potential. Nevertheless, he gave the 'Peckers sound service, mainly as a wingman, in precisely 200 league games over eleven consecutive seasons.

**ALLEN, WALLY:** Born in Boulder City on 24 September 1900, Wally Allen learned to play football at Christian Brothers' College, Kalgoorlie. At the age of eleven, he moved with his family to another hotbed of the game, Broken Hill, and four years later he made his senior debut with Norths. After playing in a couple of Broken Hill Football League premiership teams with Norths he headed to Adelaide where, while playing in the SAFA



for Goodwood, he caught the eye of South Adelaide scout 'Lightie' McCarron. A handful of training runs was enough to convince the blue and whites of his talent, and he made his league debut shortly afterwards. Although his SAFL career was to be cruelly cut short by a knee injury, he did enough in just four seasons to earn widespread acclaim and admiration, with 'The SA Footballer' seeing fit to eulogise lyrically about him under the heading

#### AUSTRALIA'S CHAMPION WINGSTER

#### WALLY ALLEN'S ENFORCED RETIREMENT

*True lovers of the grand old winter game readily admire a good clean footballer, and the news that Wally Allen, the champion South Adelaide wingster, has retired, will occasion widespread regret, not only in local football circles, but throughout the Commonwealth. He has given us many dashing games, and perhaps the crowning point of glory was reached when, after having decisively beaten Garden in the interstate match in Melbourne, capable Victorian critics heralded him as the champion of the year. This exalted opinion was supplemented by the experts who witnessed*

the two carnival matches in WA in 1921. Nothing better could be achieved by any sportsman, and Wally Allen will go out of the game with the mantle of high football honours resting upon worthy shoulders. On the field, and off it, he was "all quality".<sup>1</sup>

Allen did, in fact, make an attempted comeback with South two years after announcing his retirement, but it was short-lived. He played a total of 54 league games and kicked 16 goals besides representing South Australia on half a dozen occasions.

Moreover, when during the 1922 season the 'SA Footballer' conducted a poll among its readers to find the player popularly judged to be the best in the SAFL, Wally Allen scored a comprehensive win, beating numerous players whom it would be perhaps be fair to observe have been evaluated somewhat more generously by posterity.

**ALLINGHAM, MAURIE** was a highly capable all round footballer who made his league debut for Port Adelaide in 1920 before becoming a regular choice the following season. Sadly for Allingham, he was an ever present in 1921 right up to the challenge final win over Norwood, which he missed through injury. Playing mainly as a forward early in his career, he topped the Magpies' goal kicking list every season between 1921 and 1924, with 47 goals in 1922 his best tally. Allingham captain-coached the Magpies to second position in 1926, and was club vice-captain in 1925 and for part of the 1927 season. When he retired in 1931 he had amassed a total of 158 senior games, but among those he missed with injury, in addition to the 1921 challenge final, was the successful premiership play-off of 1928. Maurie Allingham represented South Australia 5 times, and kicked 1 goal. He won the Magpies' best and fairest award in his last league season.



*Peter Anderson (North Adelaide, Glenelg, Woodville)*

**ANDERSON, GREG:** Port Adelaide recruited Greg Anderson from St Michaels, and he made his league debut as a seventeen year old in 1983. The following year he was among the Magpies' best players in a 9 point grand final loss to Norwood. Tall, quick, and a sure ball handler, Anderson was a superb kick, especially with his favoured left foot, and his aerial skills were first rate. He played the majority of his football as a wingman, but at 188cm and 92kg he was physically well suited to hold down a key position, which he did to good effect on a number of occasions. The highlight of his initial time with Port came in 1986 when he was a popular winner of the Magarey Medal. He was also chosen as an All Australian after representing South Australia in 1987.

In 1988, after 121 games for the Magpies, he crossed to Essendon, where he quickly established himself as one of the foremost

<sup>1</sup> 'The SA Footballer', 30/6/23, page 33.

wingmen in the VFL. In 1990 he won a number of media awards to which he was warmly favoured to add the Brownlow Medal, but he polled just 13 votes, 5 adrift of the winner, Footscray's Tony Liberatore. He experienced further disappointment in that year's grand final which the Bombers lost resoundingly to Collingwood.

In 1993, after 103 games and 60 goals for Essendon, Anderson returned home to South Australia, and joined Adelaide. After an outstanding first season, however, during which he earned AFL All Australian selection, his form began to deteriorate, and he managed just 59 games (and 19 goals) in four seasons. In both 1995 and 1996 he spent a fair amount of time back at Port Adelaide, and was a member of that club's grand final victories over Central District in both years.

The 2000 season saw Anderson appointed non-playing coach of South Adelaide, but his four season stint at the helm was unsuccessful.

**ANDERSON, PETER** made his league debut with North Adelaide in 1964 while still attending Adelaide Boys' High School. By the end of that season he was being touted as a likely future champion after a series of commanding performances, mainly as a ruckman, but also later in the year as a full forward. Ultimately, it was mainly as a key position player that Anderson would go on to make his reputation, and if he never quite achieved champion status, he proved to be a very handy and consistent player for three clubs. His 107 games for North Adelaide between 1964 and 1971 included a solid performance in the back pocket in the 1971 grand final win over Port Adelaide. In 1972, he crossed to Glenelg, where he played another 83 SANFL games, mainly in the backlines, over the next four seasons. As a defender, Anderson played the game tight, and had a pronounced mean streak, qualities which were very much to the fore in the grand final of 1973 as he helped his new club to a heart-stopping 7 point victory over his old. Anderson finished his league career at Woodville, where he added another 36 senior games for a final career tally

of 231 (including 5 interstate matches for South Australia).

**ANTROBUS, TONY:** There are many footballers who, despite enormous natural ability and all or most of the right mental ingredients, ultimately encounter so many obstacles outside of their control that they fail to realise more than a modicum of their potential. One such footballer, arguably, was Tony Antrobus.

Blessed with tremendous pace, immense skill and a well harnessed aggressive impulse, Antrobus exploded onto the SANFL scene with three appearances for North Adelaide in 1981. 'Exploded' is not an overstatement - in each of those three appearances, Antrobus was rated as best afield by the field umpires, accumulating 9 Magarey Medal votes as a consequence. The following season, however, he was beset by a succession of niggling injuries, and played only intermittently.

In 1983, Antrobus and North Adelaide played some stellar football, with 'the Ant', as he became known, becoming the Roosters' tenth Magarey Medallist. Unfortunately, he was prevented by recurring injuries from building on his success in either of the next two seasons, but in 1986 he enjoyed another excellent year, persuading Essendon, which had secured his signature as long ago as 1982, to invite him over to Windy Hill in time for the 1987 season.

In five seasons in the VFL Antrobus endured a horrendous time, and managed only 28 games - 22 with the Bombers, and half a dozen in 1991 with St Kilda. In addition to the constant niggling injuries which had plagued him almost throughout his senior career, he began to acquire a reputation as something of a larrikin, earning himself six visits to the Tribunal and the unflattering nickname of 'The Angry Ant'. It was the injuries, however, which ultimately brought an untimely finish to Antrobus' career. He returned for one last season with North Adelaide in 1992, but the sparkle was well and truly gone, and he retired at the end of the year.

At his prime, and injury free, Tony Antrobus had the ability to hurt teams with his sure handling, exceptional speed and bite around the goalmouth. No lesser experts than Barrie Robran and Jim Deane (with five Magarey Medals between them) rated the dual-sided Antrobus as the fastest footballer they had seen over the first ten metres.

This was an assessment with which the committee responsible for selecting North Adelaide's official 'Team of the Twentieth Century' obviously concurred, given that they saw fit to include 'the Ant' in the side ahead of such fine players as Terry Von Bertouch, Darel Hart, Geoff Marsh, Darcy Cox, Harold Pash, Josh Francou and Haydn Bunton junior.

**APLIN, KEN (HoF 2002):** Arguably the most famous of all South Australian umpires, Ken Aplin took charge of a total of 291 SANFL matches between 1939 and 1954, including 10 grand finals. He also umpired 14 interstate matches, a total that would have been even higher had not the war forced the cessation of such fixtures between 1942 and 1944. After his retirement from umpiring he spent three seasons as the SANFL's umpiring coach.

**Ardath Cup:** See Other Competitions.

**ARNOLD, PAUL** joined North Adelaide from Risdon and gave the club solid service in 226 senior games between 1980 and 1990. He was at full back in the Roosters' 1987 grand final triumph over Glenelg.

**ASHBY, LEN:** Immensely solid and reliable, Len 'Buck' Ashby was a key player for West Torrens for much of the 1920s and on into the 1930s. His 121 league games for the club included a useful performance in the back pocket in the winning challenge final of 1924 against Sturt. Ashby also played, as a ruckman, in Torrens' second premierships side in

1933, when he was the only survivor from the club's victorious 1924 combination. Club captain and joint coach (with Johnny Karney) in 1928, Ashby spent the 1930 season as non-playing coach, only to oversee a dismal year that yielded just 3 wins from 17 matches, and the club's first wooden spoon of the twentieth century. Len Ashby's 4 interstate appearances for South Australia came at the 1927 Melbourne carnival. In 1934, he was appointed non-playing coach of Port Adelaide, and spent two years at the helm, guiding the team to consecutive second place finishes. His final stint in league football came at South Adelaide, where he spent the period between 1937 and 1945 (excluding the war time competition years of 1942 to '44) as non-playing coach, guiding the team to a flag in 1938, and to losing grand final appearances in 1937 and 1940.

**ASHBY, RON:** After playing his early football as a half forward, Ron Ashby developed into, and is better remembered as, a solid, no nonsense defender. He played 137 league games for West Torrens between 1947 and 1958 and in 1960, captaining the side for part of the 1957 season and the whole of 1958. He was at centre half back when Torrens defeated Port Adelaide by 7 points in the 1953 SANFL grand final. Ashby represented South Australia 8 times, including matches at the 1956 Perth carnival. He spent the 1961 season as captain-coach of Central District, which at that time was still serving an apprenticeship in the SANFL seconds competition prior to its admission as a fully fledged league member in 1964. In 1966 he returned to coach the Eagles, but his two seasons at the helm elicited only fifth and eighth place finishes.

**ASHLEY, JACK:** Popularly known as 'Spud', Jack Ashley was a formidable follower for Port Adelaide in the years

leading up to and just after World War One. Although he was born in Port Adelaide, he actually played his early senior football in Sydney between 1908 and 1911, representing his adopted state at the inaugural Australian interstate championship series in Melbourne. On his return home to South Australia he joined his local club, and quickly made an impression. After just 5 league games he was chosen in the state team for a match against the VFL.

Playing in the unenviable position of ruck shield (or ruck shepherd), he was resolute, forceful and clever. Despite conceding quite a few centimetres to most opponents, he used a combination of strength and great anticipation and awareness not only to keep them out of the contest, but also to win more than his share of the hit-outs himself. There was said to be no better ruckman than Ashley at steering the ball to his rovers.

In 1914, 'Spud' Ashley enjoyed a dream year. He was chosen in the South Australian squad for the Sydney carnival, won the club's best and fairest trophy, and helped the Magpies to the greatest single season enjoyed by any club in league history, during which they won every match played, including the championship of Australia clash with Carlton. To top it off, Ashley became the fourth Port Adelaide player to win the Magarey Medal.

When football resumed in 1919, Ashley was one of several pre-war stalwarts to front up once more. He quickly proved that he had lost none of his prowess or guile by again achieving selection in the state side - a dozen years after making his interstate debut with New South Wales - and by claiming a second club champion award. Presumably satisfied that he had now 'done it all', at the conclusion of the 1919 season he announced his retirement from league football.

**ATKINSON, BRODIE** was an exceptional on-baller who arguably failed to do himself full justice. He commenced with North

Adelaide, whom he joined from Port Pirie club Risdon, in 1990, and the following year, besides winning the reserves Magarey Medal, was one of the senior side's best in a 75 point grand final mauling of West Adelaide. In 1993 he crossed to St Kilda, earned a Norwich Rising Star award in his first match, but managed just one more senior appearance for the season before returning home. In the SANFL he continued to produce good football, initially for North, and later with Sturt, where he won a Magarey Medal along with the club's best and fairest award in 1997. Prior to the 1999 season he was somewhat surprisingly drafted by Adelaide, but once again failed to establish himself, managing just 5 games for the year. He continued with Sturt until 2002, with his 124th and last game for the club coming in that season's grand final win over Central District. The North Adelaide phase of his career saw him play 98 games, and he also played 6 times for South Australia.

**Attendances:** The highest attendance for a football match in South Australia was 66,897 for the 1976 SANFL grand final between Sturt and Port Adelaide at Football Park. The same two teams attracted the only other 60,000-plus crowd in SANFL history to the 1965 grand final at Adelaide Oval. The attendance that day was 62,543. Up to and including the 2008 season crowds in excess of 50,000 but less than 60,000 had occurred on 36 occasions comprising 29 SANFL grand finals, 2 AFL finals matches, 2 AFL home and away matches, the 1984 interstate clash between South Australia and Victoria, and the final Saturdays of both the 1953 and 1969 Adelaide carnivals. Adelaide Oval was the venue for 15 of the grand finals plus the two interstate occasions, with the remaining 19 matches taking place at Football Park.

The record AFL attendance in Adelaide was 51,450 for the round five match between Adelaide and Port Adelaide in 2003.

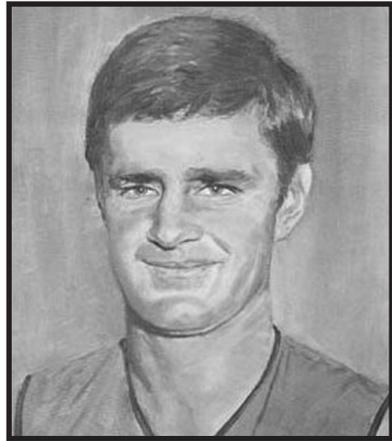


# B

**BACKMAN, LINDSAY:** A player of great versatility, commitment and skill, Lindsay Backman became South Adelaide's first 200 game footballer in 1972 after a career that spanned the club's glory days under Neil Kerley and the onset of the subsequent sad demise from which it has so far failed fully to recover. After an outstanding junior career which culminated in his winning the 1960 McCallum Medal for best and fairest in the SANFL's Colts competition, Backman made his league debut in 1961. Belying his name, Backman was a forward early in his career, and later alternated between the forward lines and the centre, in which latter position he was among the best players afield as the Panthers overcame both the odds and Port Adelaide in the 1964 grand final.

During the interval between the 1969 and 1970 football seasons Backman bulked up some 6kg to about 86kg which prompted coach Jimmy Deane to use him as a run-on ruckman. It was a move which succeeded spectacularly as Backman, who also assumed South's captaincy, enjoyed easily his best season in football, representing South Australia for the first (and only) time, winning the Knuckey Cup as the club's best and fairest player, and earning outright favouritism for the Magarey Medal on the strength of his virtual clean sweep of the season's major media awards. In the event, North Adelaide's Barrie Robran won the Magarey Medal, with Backman 11 votes adrift in sixth place, but in the opinion of the majority of impartial observers it was Backman who had undeniably been the season's outstanding performer.

Well balanced, safe overhead, sure at ground level, extremely pacy, and a superb



*Paul Bagshaw (Sturt)*

kick, especially with his favoured left foot, Backman finally retired from league football with 203 games to his credit. He won South Adelaide's goal kicking award on five occasions and the Knuckey Cup once, and is a member of the club's official 'Greatest Team'.

**BACKWELL, BRETT** overcame the handicap of losing a finger to become Glenelg's first Magarey Medallist for twenty-four years. The ex-Carlton Queenslander had a troublesome finger amputated prior to a 2006 season in which he scored a runaway Medal win, polling 26 votes, 9 more than his nearest rival. Originally from Northern Eagles, Backwell played 18 AFL games for Carlton between 1999 and 2001. He spent the 2002 season at West Adelaide before crossing to the Bay Oval where he has since established himself as one of the pacy and classiest players in the SANFL.

**BAGSHAW, PAUL (HoF 2002)**, who was the son of a former Sturt player in Hartley Bagshaw, was one of the most skilful players ever to appear in South Australian league football. During a seventeen season career which began in 1964 Bagshaw played a total

*OPPOSITE PAGE: Former Centrals skipper Roger Girdham applies a typically firm tackle.*

of 374 games (360 club and 14 state), kicked 258 goals, and was voted Sturt's best and fairest player on five occasions. He took part in each of the Double Blues' seven 'Oatey era' premierships. Although the majority of his football was played as a ruck-rover, Bagshaw was just as effective as a key position player or centreman, and indeed while playing mainly as a full forward he topped the club's goal kicking list with 74 goals in 1978. One of the game's last truly great exponents of the drop kick, he was also a master of handball, a superb mark, and had that rare champion's ability of always seeming unflustered, even when under the most intense pressure. A knack for achieving the seemingly impossible in tight or intimidating situations gave rise to the nickname 'Mr. Magic', and when you consider that the Sturt teams in which Bagshaw appeared were undoubtedly some of the most unequivocally magical in the history of the SANFL that is high praise indeed.

**BAHR, ALBY (HoF 2002):** One of the foremost identities in the illustrious history of the Norwood Football Club, Alby Bahr was also a leading figure in the game in South Australia for over a decade. Between 1902 and 1912 he played a total of 133 association and league games for the Redlegs, which included the winning grand finals of 1904 and 1907, both against Port Adelaide. Captain of the 1907 premiership side, Bahr lined up on grand final day at centre half back, but he also played as a forward and follower at various times during his career. When the first ever Australasian championships were conducted in Melbourne in 1908, Bahr was chosen as South Australia's captain. He also captained his club for four seasons, including the premiership year of 1907. Voted Norwood's best and fairest player no fewer than five times, Alby Bahr was also the club's first ever playing coach, a role he undertook in 1911 and 1912, having captained the side between 1907 and 1910. He was a South Australian interstate representative on 8 occasions. The significance of his impact as a player was acknowledged with his selection in

a back pocket in the Redlegs' official 'Team of the Century'.

**BALME, CRAIG** may not have been in the top echelon as a footballer, or indeed anywhere near it, but his service to Norwood was both whole-hearted and noteworthy. Like his older brother Neil he commenced with Subiaco, but unlike Neil he had not tasted senior football before heading east to join Richmond in 1983. Craig Balme's senior VFL career comprised just 3 games, and at the end of the 1983 season he was considered surplus to requirements, so headed to Adelaide where he was persuaded to throw in his lot with Norwood, the club which older brother Neil had been coaching since 1980. In a dream start to his Redlegs career Craig Balme lined up at full back as the 'Legs capped a remarkable 'rags to riches' finals campaign by overturning arch rivals Port Adelaide in the 1984 grand final. It was, in many respects, the highlight of Balme's career, for although he remained at the Parade until 1995, amassing 254 senior games in the process, he never again experienced premiership success.

**BALME, NEIL** was an effective and highly influential coach with Norwood, where he spent a total of eleven seasons, overseeing premierships in 1982 and 1984. Quite remarkably, the Redlegs never once failed to contest the finals while Balme was at the helm, but in 1991, the season after his departure, they plummeted to seventh.

Balme's appointment as Redlegs coach in 1980 was somewhat contentious as far as many of the club's fans were concerned because, during his time as a player, Balme had acquired a reputation for feistiness. However, as a coach he proved himself both wily and inspirational, with this latter trait in particular coming to the fore during the 1984 major round, when his supremely motivated charges became the first combination in SANFL history to claim a flag from fifth position.

In 1991 Balme took up the coaching reins at the newly merged Woodville-West Torrens

Football Club and his two season stint, which produced fourth and third place finishes, can in hindsight be regarded as having laid the foundations for the 1993 premiership. After leaving South Australia Balme coached in the AFL with Melbourne.

**BAMPTON, PETER** was a superb all round player who achieved virtually everything the game had to offer during the course of a 137 game league career with Port Adelaide between 1919 and 1928. In 1921, when Port overcame Norwood 4.8 (32) to 3.6 (24) in the challenge final, Bampton played a sterling game at centre half back. Four years later he lost the Magarey Medal to Norwood's Alick Lill only after the league umpires had been called upon to adjudicate between the pair, a state of affairs the SANFL later rectified by awarding all players who had finished as runners-up in such circumstances retrospective Medals. Bampton, who served as Port Adelaide's skipper in 1927, perhaps surprisingly never won the club's best and fairest award. His 10 interstate appearances for South Australia included matches at the 1927 Melbourne carnival.

## BANKERS

**Affiliated:** SAFA 1877

**Formed:** 1877

**Premierships:** Nil

Formed early in April 1877, the Bankers Football Club was one of the founder members a few weeks later of the SAFA. Unfortunately, the club was significantly lacking in playing talent, and proved to be considerably weaker than all of the other teams. It lost all 15 of the matches it contested in 1877, and managed to score just 4 goals while conceding 31. It would probably be fair to suggest that the club was not treated particularly seriously, either by the other clubs in the association, or by the public at large. At the end of the 1877 season 'Marlborough', writing in 'The Advertiser', strongly implied that the Bankers club was something of an

embarrassment, and expressed the hope "that no efforts will be made to establish it next season". The writer got his wish, as Bankers duly disbanded.

**BARBARY, BARRIE (HoF 2002):** Combining solidity of build with enormous pace and superb ball handling ability, Barrie Barbary was an immensely damaging player for North Adelaide (149 games from 1957 to 1964) and Woodville (66 games from 1967 to 1970). In between, he spent a couple of seasons as captain-coach of Kybybolite in the Kowrie-Naracoorte Football League.

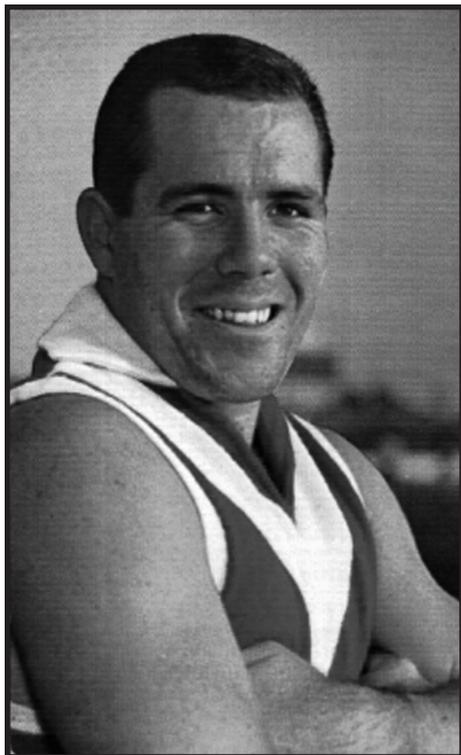
Barbary was one of those players who impress right from the start. He was chosen to represent South Australia in his debut season - the first of 19 state appearances - and some of his very finest performances came in the interstate arena.

The 1960 season saw Barbary at the forefront of a long overdue assault on the flag by North Adelaide. After displaying consistent brilliance all year, he earned the Magarey Medal, and on grand final day he was one of the best players on view as North held off a stern challenge from Norwood to snatch the premiership by 5 points. In the wake of this stellar season, Jeff Pash offered a pleasingly cogent evaluation of the Barbary style:

*As a footballer, he must please the most severe critic; his play is based on the solid, boring rush forward, complete technical mastery of his craft, and a serene, Bunton-like concentration. Strength plus dexterity makes for the brilliant effects.*

If the 1960 season represented the pinnacle of his achievements as a footballer, 1963 was close behind. That was the year that Barrie Barbary put in a best on ground performance as South Australia overcame the VFL on the MCG for the first time since 1926. In choosing Barbary as 'Footballer of the Week', 'Advertiser' journalist Gordon Schwartz wrote:

*At the MCG on Saturday his speed, tenacity and sure ball-handling were dominating factors in*



Barrie Barbary  
(North Adelaide & Woodville)

*SA's seven point win over Victoria. As SA's best player, chosen by the Victorian selectors, Barbary won the trophy given by a leading oil company ..... A steadfast refusal to admit defeat and the ability to gain possession against overwhelming odds are two of Barbary's greatest attributes. Barbary knows his capabilities, exploits his skill to the full and lifts the morale of his team mates with his courageous and dashing approach.*

Following his two year stint in country football, Barbary returned to the SANFL with Woodville in 1967. Although a fair amount of the old pace had gone, he provided the 'Peckers with some much needed experience under the determined and resourceful coaching of Noel Teasdale.

In 1971, Barbary captain-coached Woodville's seconds side, before taking over from Teasdale as non-playing coach of the seniors the following year. His two seasons

in charge were not successful, however, and seventeen years after his association with league football had begun, the man known during his career as 'the pocket battleship' moved on to pastures new.

When North Adelaide announced its official 'Team of the Century' in 2003, it is doubtful if many people who had seen him play would have been surprised to see Barrie Barbary included on a wing.

**BARNES, BOBBIE:** South Australian born, Bobbie Barnes moved with his family to Broken Hill while he was still a youngster. It was there that he played his first senior football as a member of the West Broken Hill club, winning the league's best and fairest award, the Kenwick Medal, and catching the attention of Adelaide clubs when he came to the metropolis in 1918 to play in a challenge match against West Adelaide, the club for which he was eventually to make his name. Apparently, most of the Adelaide clubs, whilst impressed with Barnes' natural football ability, regarded him as being too small to succeed at league level. Not so West, which snapped him up when he moved to the city in 1921.

A clever, hyperactive rover, particularly noted for his accurate disposal of the ball, it was not long before Barnes was earning rave reviews, and he was selected to represent South Australia in his debut season. The following year saw him secure South Australian football's premier individual honour, the Magarey Medal, but he was unable to prevent his team from going down heavily to Norwood in the premiership decider.

Barnes continued to give West Adelaide and the state good service for another four seasons, amassing a total of 59 games and kicking 67 goals for the red and blacks, and 8 games and 8 goals for South Australia. He was West's top goalkicker in 1924, albeit with just 17 goals.

**Barossa and Light Football Association:** This competition ran between 1908 and 1986 when it merged with the Gawler Football Association to form the Barossa, Light and Gawler Football League. Participating clubs

## Results of Barossa, Light and Gawler Football League Grand

### Finals 1987 to 2008

Year	Winning Team	G	B	Pts	Runner-up	G	B	Pts
1987	Tanunda	10	19	79	Kapunda	10	6	66
1988	Willaston	14	13	97	Tanunda	5	13	43
1989	Tanunda	15	14	104	Willaston	8	7	55
1990	South Gawler	12	16	88	Tanunda	9	12	66
1991	Gawler Central	14	15	99	Tanunda	10	14	74
1992	South Gawler	12	9	81	Freeling	9	17	71
1993	South Gawler	19	19	133	Freeling	3	7	25
1994	Freeling	22	13	145	Willaston	14	17	101
1995	Nuriootpa	24	16	160	Willaston	5	16	46
1996	Nuriootpa	18	15	123	South Gawler	10	12	72
1997	Nuriootpa	15	19	109	Tanunda	13	8	86
1998	Nuriootpa	15	12	102	Tanunda	16	5	101
1999	Willaston	7	8	50	Angaston	5	12	42
2000	Nuriootpa	20	26	146	Kapunda	8	8	56
2001	Gawler Central	12	15	87	Kapunda	10	13	73
2002	Tanunda	14	12	96	Nuriootpa	13	9	87
2003	Angaston	18	13	121	Willaston	11	12	78
2004	Kapunda	21	16	142	Angaston	11	9	75
2005	Kapunda	17	14	116	Freeling	9	6	60
2006	Barossa District	11	10	76	Freeling	7	11	53
2007	Barossa District	11	15	81	Freeling	10	9	69
2008	Tanunda	22	7	139	Barossa District	16	10	106

included Angaston, Eudunda, Freeling, Hamley Bridge, Kapunda, Nuriootpa and Tanunda. Overall, the most successful club was Angaston, which claimed a total of 22 senior flags. Next came Kapunda on 13, then Freeling (12), Nuriootpa (11), Tanunda (10) and Eudunda (4).

#### Barossa and Murray Valley Football

**Association:** This competition ran in 1947-8 and 1955-6 with its member clubs including Greenock, Sedan-Cambrai, Swan Reach and Truro. Senior flags went to Greenock in 1947, 1955 and 1956, and Truro in 1948. Future

SANFL champion Ken Eustice won a Mail Medal in 1956 with Swan Reach. Eustice, who claimed the 1962 Magarey Medal whilst playing for West Adelaide, shares with Harold 'Dribbler' Hawke, Ron Benton and Barrie Barbary the distinction of having won both a Mail Medal and the Magarey.

#### Barossa, Light and Gawler Football

**League:** The BLGFL was formed in 1987 when the Barossa and Light Football Association and the Gawler Football Association merged. Current member clubs are Angaston, Barossa Districts, Freeling, Gawler

Central, Kapunda, Nuriootpa, South Gawler, Tanunda and Willaston.

Grand final results 1987-2008 are listed on page 39. Tanunda's 2008 premiership triumph was especially noteworthy in two respects: the club was celebrating its centenary, and the flag was won unbeaten.

**BARRON, NORMAN:** Polished, effervescent and pacy, Sturt's Norm Barron was regarded as one of the best South Australian rovers of his generation. A smooth ball handler, and a fine drop kick, if he had a flaw in his game it was that over-confidence sometimes caused him to try to do too much. Nevertheless, his impact at Sturt was considerable, with his dynamic contribution to the 1926 premiership win being particularly significant. Barron made his senior debut for the Double Blues as an eighteen year old in 1919, and became a regular in the side the following year. He won the club's best and fairest award in 1924. His league career, which finished in 1931, comprised 132 games, and saw him kick 146 goals. He was an interstate player for South Australia 13 times, including games at the 1927 Melbourne carnival. He was included in the forward pocket in Sturt's official 'Team of the Twentieth Century'.

**BARRY, FRANK:** After beginning with South Adelaide in 1911, swift and hard-working rover Frank 'Dinky' (or 'Dink') Barry had played only 41 games of league football (plus 2 for the state) by the time, four years later, that the impact of the war caused the SAFL competition to be suspended. When football resumed in 1919, Barry, for reasons unknown, elected not to continue. However, his series of stellar performances for South during the 1915 season had already procured a kind of football immortality for Barry in the shape of South Australian football's highest individual honour, the Magarey Medal.

South Adelaide which, along with Norwood, had dominated South Australian football for much of the nineteenth century, had suffered greatly after the inception of the

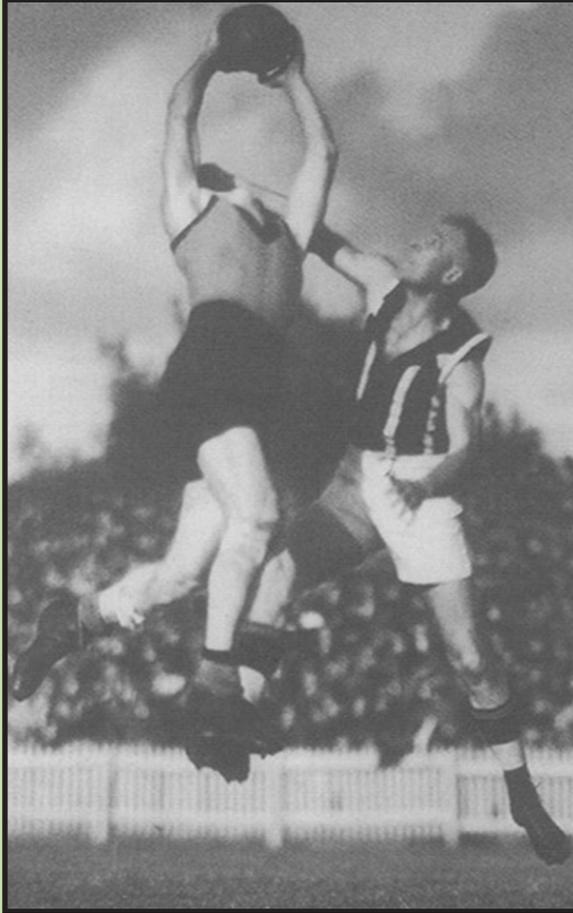
electorate system, and between 1906 and 1914 had never finished higher than fifth. In 1915, however, with Barry very much to the fore, it made the finals, and although its participation lasted only a week, courtesy of a semi final defeat at the hands of Sturt, there were definite signs that it had turned the corner. From 1916 to 1918, however, the SAFL competition went into mothballs, and all of South's momentum was lost.

Even in 1915, the impact of war on football was considerable; press coverage of the game was negligible, and so there is very little information available about Barry's Medal triumph. This, coupled with the brevity of his career, arguably makes Frank Barry one of the most intriguing and elusive figures in the early history of the game.

**BARTLETT, ALLAN** played 201 games for Glenelg between 1989 and 1999, 11 with the Crows in their debut season of 1991, and 1 for South Australia. A tall, slimly built defender or occasional forward, he was dogged, wholeheartedly committed and reliable, besides boasting good disposal skills by both foot and hand.

**BASHEER, MAX (HoF 2003)** was president of the SANFL between 1978 and 2003, a period of unprecedented challenge and change for football in the state. His importance in helping ensure that South Australia quickly became a significant player on the national stage would be difficult to over-stress. Combining a sound legal mind with a love of the game nurtured and honed in amateur circles Basheer worked tirelessly and selflessly on behalf of South Australian football, sometimes in the face of opposition or disruption from unexpected sources. Prior to his stint as SANFL president Basheer was a South Australian Amateur Football League commissioner between 1954 and 1960, undertook a similar role with the SANFL from 1962 to 1966, and was a senior vice president of the league between 1967 and 1978. He has also contributed to the work of

## BAYS BOUNCE BACK IN 1934 GRAND FINAL



*Glenelg ruckman 'Blue' Johnston takes the grab from which he was to kick the game's decisive goal late in the final quarter.*

To say Glenelg's record during its first thirteen seasons of league football was poor would be putting it mildly. The club's overall success rate was a calamitous 21.7% and only once - in 1933 - did it manage to win more games during a season than it lost. One thing Glenelg did possess, however, was plenty of individual players of high quality, several of whom were at the forefront of the team's sudden and unexpected emergence as a power in 1934. Perhaps foremost among these players was ruckman George 'Blue' Johnston, winner of that year's Magarey Medal, and one of the most inspirational players ever to pull on a black and gold

jumper. Others included tenacious and talented defender Mel Brock, who would win a Magarey Medal himself in 1940, deadly sharp-shooter Jack Owens, and the abundantly skilled Len Sallis, five times a Glenelg best and fairest award winner.

Signs that the Bays would be an improved combination in 1934 were slow in arriving. The side lost its first three minor round matches, to West Adelaide (by 8 points), West Torrens (18 points), and Port Adelaide (a soul-destroying 131 points). In round 4, it scraped a draw against North Adelaide, but round 5 brought another loss, by 15 points to Sturt. The first win did not arrive until round 6, when eventual wooden spooners South Adelaide were overhauled to the tune of 29 points, but even this did not herald a marked improvement in fortunes, and when the Bays lined up at home to Port Adelaide on 7 July their overall record of 3 wins and a draw from 9 matches was scarcely the stuff of potential finalists, let alone premiers.

The Port Adelaide match afforded the first indication that Glenelg could cope with finals-style pressure football. With 'Blue' Johnston, who was celebrating his 100th league game, in typically irrepressible form all around the ground, and hitherto 'unsung' players like Len Griffiths and Albert James defending heroically, the Bays were comprehensively the better side in winning by 26 points, 16.14 (110) to 11.18 (84). The victory sparked a sequence of 6 wins from the final 7 minor round games to produce a 10-6-1 season's record, and qualification for a first ever finals series in 2nd place on the ladder, behind minor premier Port Adelaide only on percentage.

By their own high standards, the Magpies had not enjoyed the most successful of times since the end of the Great War, claiming only two flags in fifteen years, and their form early in the 1934 season did not suggest that any immediate improvement was in the offing. Like Glenelg, however, Port came good over the second half of the season, winning the last seven minor round games, many of them by prodigious margins, to be firmly installed as most people's premiership favourite. After a one-sided second semi final that saw the Magpies outclass the Bays to the tune of 65 points, that favouritism was intensified.

Commenting on that second semi final loss, Glenelg's champion centreman Len Sallis remarked, "All the boys were too excited. They over-ran the ball, they played bad football, they didn't mark well and they couldn't kick". A big improvement was clearly going to be necessary if the Bays were to withstand the fierce challenge likely be afforded by preliminary final opponent Sturt, a finals-hardened combination that had contested two of the previous three grand finals.

The preliminary final proved to be a close, tense, frantically fought encounter, with the Double Blues seeming to have the edge until late on, when a Len Sallis-inspired revival saw Glenelg narrowly over the line. The Bays won by 13 points, 12.11 (83) to 9.16 (70), and although they had probably not done enough to suggest that they were capable of reversing the second semi final result on grand final day, there is little doubt that most people expected them to get a good deal closer than 65 points.

Both sides had non-playing coaches. Glenelg was coached by former West Adelaide champion Bruce McGregor, while Len Ashby (ex-West Torrens) was in charge of Port. The Bays' captain was Jack Owens, and Port's Vic Johnson.

It was a fine day, and the match attracted a crowd of 30,045, who would be treated to one of the all time great grand finals in South Australian football history.

### **Early Exchanges**

**T**he match commenced at a frenetic pace, with neither side able to maintain the initiative for long. Port Adelaide kicked the first goal of the game, but Glenelg fought

back quickly, and by the fifteen minute mark the scores were deadlocked, 2.2 (14) apiece. As is often the case in grand finals, neither side had truly managed to settle up to this point, but over the final few minutes of the term the Bays suddenly managed to tap into a rich vein of form to rattle on 3 goals without reply. Port players found themselves haplessly chasing shadows as Glenelg continued to perform at the breakneck pace that had characterised the opening minutes. The Bays had clear winners in centre half forward Archie Goldsworthy, centreman Len Sallis, and defender Mel Brock, while rover Roy Colyer was engaged in a 'battle royal' with Port's Bob Quinn. Besides Quinn, the Magpies had also been well served by wingman Jack Dermody and centre half forward Albie Hollingsworth, but overall it had been Glenelg's term. **QUARTER TIME: Glenelg 5.4 (34); Port Adelaide 2.4 (16)**

### **Wayward Magpies**

**T**he Magpies hit back hard in the second quarter, but atrocious kicking for goal prevented them from making any inroads into the Bays' lead. Port added 4.9 for the term, with key forward Albie Hollingsworth the worst offender (he ended the match with 4.7 to his name), while the Bays duplicated their opening quarter effort by kicking 5.4. Some of Port's misses were attributable to the fierce pressure being applied by the Glenelg backmen, but quite a few were simply the result of poor kicking. For much of the year, Port Adelaide had been renowned for "the machine-like system" of its play, but the Bays showed that success in football stems at least as much, if not more, from the emotion and will of the players as from tactics, strategies and methods of play. **HALF TIME: Glenelg 10.8 (68); Port Adelaide 6.13 (49)**

### **Nip And Tuck**

**P**ort Adelaide opened the third quarter by registering a sixth consecutive behind, whereupon the Bays moved into top gear by registering 3 quick goals. The danger signs were now clearly apparent for the Magpies, and to their credit they rallied strongly, adding 5.3 to 2.2 over the remainder of the term to be back within striking distance at the last change. Port rover Bob Quinn was in everything at this stage, to be arguably the best player on the ground, while half back flanker Basil Bampton and wingman Bill Whicker were also prominent. The momentum had clearly shifted in favour of the Magpies, and it is easy to imagine most spectators at the ground, other than the most diehard of Glenelg fans, spending the three quarter time interval pondering the seeming inevitability of a Port comeback. Glenelg appeared to be on the back foot, and badly in need of a lift from the likes of 'Blue' Johnston and the roving trio of Roy Colyer, Arthur Link and Lance Leak. **THREE QUARTER TIME: Glenelg 15.10 (100); Port Adelaide 11.17 (83)**

### **A Rousing Finale**

**T**he last quarter of the 1934 SANFL grand final was exhilaratingly memorable. Those anticipating a Port Adelaide comeback looked to be having their expectations fulfilled early on as the Magpies began the term with 2 quick goals to reduce their deficit to just 5 points. However, the Bays responded by raising both their intensity and their aggression levels, with rovers Colyer and Link in particular using their pace and guile to set up three quick scoring opportunities in succession for their team mates on the forward line. Unfortunately for Glenelg, only one of these opportunities was converted,

but at 16.12 (108) to 13.17 (95) the impetus was clearly back in favour of the black and golds.

Port's response was decisive and telling. Jack Dermody, who had been in dashing form on the wing all afternoon, embarked on a sweeping run which he rounded off with a perfect pass to Jack Prideaux, who goaled. A behind to Port then reduced the margin to a single straight kick, which was supplied shortly afterwards by Bob Quinn to bring the scores level. It was the first time since the fifteen minute mark of the opening term that the Bays had not been in front.

Glenelg responded by sending 'Blue' Johnston to the goalfront, a move which paid off almost immediately when Archie Goldsworthy collected the ball near the centre of the ground and, after twice exchanging handballs with team mates, kicked high towards full forward. Johnston, one out with a much smaller opponent in Murray Whitaker, took a towering mark and then kicked truly to put the Bays a straight kick in front once more.

Shortly afterwards, Glenelg's veteran full forward Jack Owens nabbed his third major to push the margin out to 12 points, but the Magpies responded almost immediately courtesy of another goal - his fifth - from Bob Quinn. Surely, now, Port would go on with things?

Far from it. Playing like men possessed, the Bays kept the ball in their forward line for the remainder of the game, adding 3 further behinds to establish a 9 point final margin and earn a victory that was applauded by all South Australian football supporters - even, so some accounts of the match insist, those of a black and white persuasion.

**FINAL SCORE: Glenelg 18.15 (123); Port Adelaide 14.18 (102)**

**BEST** - Glenelg: Goldsworthy, Colyer, Link, Sallis, Johnson, Brock Port Adelaide: Dermody, Quinn, Hollingsworth, Whicker, Bampton

**SCORERS** - Glenelg: Goldsworthy 4; Colyer, Johnston, Owens 3; Bergin 2; Leak, Link, Percy Port Adelaide: Quinn 5; Hollingsworth 4, Prideaux 4; Hender 2; Reval

**UMPIRE** - L.C. Thomas

**ATTENDANCE** - 30,045 at the Adelaide Oval

### **A Sting In The Tail**

**T**he Bays' fall from grace would be even faster and more dramatic than their rise. In 1935, with more or less the same playing personnel at their disposal, they slumped to last place with just a solitary win from 17 games for the season. The remainder of the 1930s were scarcely better as only in 1936, when they finished 7th, did they avoid the wooden spoon.

The Magpies, by contrast, were on the verge of great things, as they would contest every remaining grand final of the 1930s, for wins in 1936, 1937 and 1939. Such players as Bob Quinn, Vic Johnson, Alan 'Bull' Reval, Albie Hollingsworth and Jack Dermody would have to rank with any in the club's illustrious history.

Over the remainder of the twentieth century, Port Adelaide would enjoy a substantial measure of revenge over its 1934 nemesis, winning grand finals against Glenelg in 1977, 1981, 1988, 1990 and 1992. Nevertheless, it is at least arguable that none of these subsequent grand finals captured the public imagination to quite the same extent as the Bays' sensational, unexpected and thoroughly unforgettable victory of '34.

both the AFL's and SANFL's Hall of Fame Committees.

**BASSETT, NATHAN** commenced with Adelaide in 1998 after failing to notch a senior game with Melbourne. Originally from Norwood, the tough, close checking defender has suffered more than his share of injury woes, but really blossomed in 2006 when he made the AFL All Australian side. When he retired two seasons later it was with a career tally of 210 AFL games to his credit. His achievements in the game were all the more remarkable and praiseworthy when you consider that he suffers from type one diabetes.

**BAYNES, GEOFF** played league football for three clubs, but it was at South Adelaide, where he won a hat trick of best and fairest awards between 1977 and 1979, that he had far and away the greatest impact. He also skippered the Panthers from 1978 to 1981, and considering the consistent high quality of the football he produced during this period, it is a little surprising to note that he was never selected to represent the state.

Baynes commenced his league football career in 1971 with West Torrens, but over the course of that season and the next managed just 13 senior appearances. In 1975 he was coaxed into a second stab at the big time by South coach Haydn Bunton junior and, playing mainly as a ruck-rover, immediately found his feet. After playing 16 games in his debut season with the Panthers Baynes went on to become a critical component in the Bunton formula that went so close to bringing South its first senior flag since 1964. In the grand final of 1979 against Port Adelaide Baynes was one of the Panthers' best, but could not prevent their going down by 31 points.

In 1983, after 185 games for South, he transferred to Woodville, adding a final 4 senior appearances - just enough for him to edge past the elusive 200 game barrier.

**BELTON, PAUL** gave useful service to two league clubs: Port Adelaide, whom he joined from St Dominic's, and for whom his tally of 182 senior games between 1976 and 1985 included the grand final triumphs of 1977, 1979 and 1981, and West Adelaide, where he made a final 67 senior appearances between 1986 and 1989. A hard working, tenacious rover or crumbing forward, Belton played twice for South Australia.

**BENNETT, CHRIS** gave solid service to West Adelaide, mainly as a ruckman, between 1924 and 1930 and from 1933 to 1935. He was a key player for the black and reds when they claimed the 1927 premiership with a 10.11 (71) to 8.10 (58) challenge final defeat of North Adelaide. He represented South Australia at the 1930 Adelaide carnival when the home state finished second to the VFL.

**BENNETT GREG:** A nimble and clever rover with an eye for goal, Greg Bennett enjoyed a successful league football career in two states. He began with Perth, where his 107 WANFL games between 1967 and 1972 - many of them roving in tandem with all time great Barry Cable - included noteworthy performances in the winning grand finals of 1967 and 1968, both against East Perth. He crossed to Glenelg in 1973 and was immediately successful in playing in another winning grand final. Bennett played a total of 63 SANFL games in three seasons with the Bays. He also represented South Australia twice, kicking 5 goals. In 1976 he headed back to Western Australia where he added a final 32 league games in two seasons with Claremont.

**BENNETT, MICHAEL:** After failing to break his way into Sturt's senior line-up Michael Bennett crossed to South Adelaide in 1981. During his first couple of seasons with the Panthers he was in and out of the senior side, but from 1983 became a first choice

league player. He remained with South until 1992, playing a total of 267 games for the club, plus 1 for South Australia. He was the Panthers' captain in his final three seasons.

**BENNETT, PETER** joined North Adelaide from Broadview juniors and was handed his league debut in 1983, establishing himself soon thereafter as one of the finest centre half forwards in the competition. Excellent overhead, and a long, accurate left foot kick, he was a mainstay of the Roosters' side for thirteen seasons, during which he played 293 senior games. He won North's best and fairest award in 1988, and was at centre half forward in the winning grand finals of 1987 against Glenelg, and 1991 against West Adelaide. Bennett played twice for South Australia.

**BENNETT, RANDALL** was an effective if comparatively unsung contributor to the West Adelaide cause in 214 senior league games between 1979 and 1990. He joined the Bloods from Plympton High School, and was on a wing, and one of their best players, in the triumphant grand final of 1983 against Sturt.

**BENT, ROY:** Norwood's Roy Bent was the first great South Australian full forward of the post-World War One era. During the course of his comparatively brief, eight season, 98 game league career he topped the SAFL goal kicking ladder in his debut season of 1921 with 42 goals, as well as in 1924 (53 or 54 - sources vary), 1925 (59) and 1926 (65). He was Norwood's leading goal kicker five times. Lightweight and lithe, he outmanoeuvred full backs with a combination of pace and guile, and his left foot kicking for goal was perfection itself, both in terms of style and accuracy. With Bent at the goalfront, the Redlegs were a consistent force, winning premierships in 1922-3 and 1925. Some of Bent's best football was played in the interstate arena. His 17 appearances for South Australia included games at the 1924 Hobart carnival, and he

booted a total of 60 interstate goals. Roy Bent was a more accomplished all round footballer than many full forwards, and when required could play as a rover with almost equal effectiveness. Considering the enormously high regard in which he was held during his playing career, he was a perhaps somewhat surprising omission from Norwood's official 'Team of the Century'.

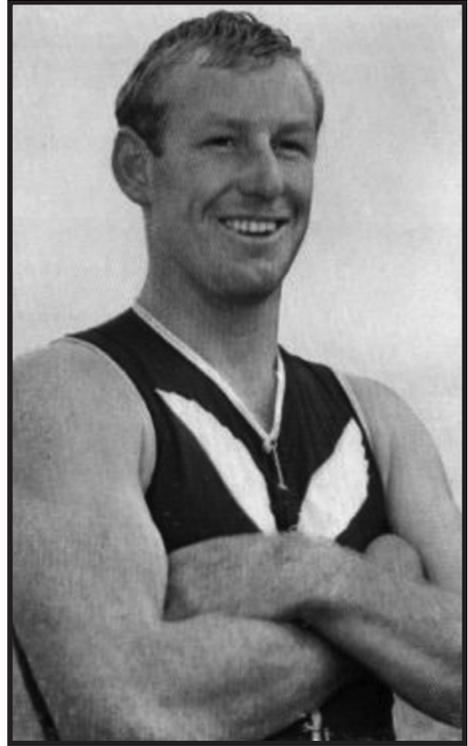
**BENTON, RON:** Fast, elusive and courageous, West Adelaide's Ron Benton was, in the words of Jeff Pash, "a heroic little figure" for whom "every game seems to be another survival". Over the course of his 178 game 172 goal league career between 1955 and 1959 and from 1961 to 1965 he achieved virtually everything the game had to offer: a Magarey Medal and club best and fairest award in 1957, interstate football (albeit only 1 game), a near best afield performance in the winning grand final of 1961 against Norwood, and West Adelaide's leading goal kicker award (with 29 goals) in 1963. He was, without doubt, one of the most illustrious players in the history of a club that, over the years, has been blessed with a disproportionately high number of top quality footballers.

**BERTRAM, HANS 'OSSIE':** A live wire rover with good skills and a penchant for goal kicking, 'Ossie' Bertram never really stayed long enough at one club to make the most of his obvious talent. He began with West Torrens in 1928, where he was nicknamed 'Dribbler'. In five seasons with the club he played 74 games and kicked 83 goals, and his form was good enough for him twice to earn interstate selection for South Australia. In 1933 he became a member of South Melbourne's much vaunted 'foreign legion' which helped propel the club to its first VFL premiership since 1918. In that year's grand final against Richmond, he shared the roving with Terry Brain as the Blood Stained Angels won convincingly, 9.17 (71) to 4.5 (29). He also played in the following year's premiership

decider when the Tigers achieved revenge. In 1935, after 23 VFL games and 43 goals for South, he crossed to St Kilda where he added another 15 games and booted 17 goals in his final two league seasons.

**BETSON, NORMAN** had impressed as a resolute and canny ruckman for Essendon in 78 VFL games spread over six war-interrupted seasons when he was appointed captain-coach of Glenelg in 1946. Unfortunately for both Betson and the Bays, however, he was beset with injury, and in July opted to stand down as coach in favour of Ray Curnow. In 1947 and 1948 Betson enjoyed an injury free time highlighted by selection in South Australia's Hobart carnival team in the former season, and as vice-captain of the croweater side that lost narrowly to the 'Big V' in Melbourne in the latter. His SANFL career comprised 42 games. Originally from Culcairn, Betson skippered the Bays in his final league season.

**BICKLEY, MARK (HoF 2007):** Adelaide's dual (and to date only) premiership captain Mark Bickley began his football life with Port Pirie club Solomontown before progressing to South Adelaide, where he played 53 SANFL games in 1989 and 1990. In 1991, while still appearing intermittently for South, he made his AFL debut with Adelaide, impressing observers with his courage, strong tackling and excellent team sense. Chunky and compact in build at 178cm and 82kg, Bickley was never the most polished or overtly eye-catching of performers, but he always provided 100% commitment. Appointed Crows captain in 1997, he had the good fortune to lead his side to a flag in his first season in the role, courtesy of a rousing grand final win over St Kilda. The following year saw him repeat the accomplishment as North Melbourne was humbled. Bickley, who played much of his football across half back, but who could also function effectively on the ball, carried on as skipper of the Crows until



*Freddy Bills (West Torrens)*

the end of the 2000 season, when he was replaced by Mark Ricciuto. He retired in 2003 after a then club record 272 AFL games in thirteen seasons.

**BIGGS, EDWARD**, invariably known as Ted, was a noteworthy performer for Sturt in 156 senior league games between 1934 and 1950. He also represented South Australia on 9 occasions, kicking 8 goals. A splendid foil in the ruck for the likes of Hartley Bagshaw and Paul Robertson, he could also be a damaging player in the forward lines as his career tally of 349 goals attests. Seventy-five of those goals came in the 1941 season when he topped the Double Blues' list. In the previous year's grand final he had starred as a follower as Sturt overcame South Adelaide by 23 points to claim their first flag in eight seasons.

**BILLS, FRED (HoF 2002):** Heroes come in different shapes and forms: some impress

us because we see ourselves reflected in them, if only palely; others are demi-gods whom we admire for perhaps the opposite reason.

Fred Bills, who played 313 games for West Torrens and 7 for South Australia between 1959 and 1975 was quintessentially of the former type. Definitely heroic, at least to Eagles fans, he nevertheless seemed to imply that heroism was almost universally attainable. Whereas Gary Ablett or Haydn Bunton senior might invite awe-struck admiration at their ability to perform the unlikely or even the 'impossible', Freddy Bills persistently served to reassure the onlooker that effectiveness and high achievement in football were within the grasp of anyone with even a modicum of ability. One-paced to the point of seeming plodding, almost half-heartedly aggressive, as though enacting a role, and so bereft of subtlety that one sometimes wondered if he understood the game at all, Bills was nevertheless an automatic choice for the Eagles for seventeen seasons, during which time he won four club best and fairest awards and arguably attracted more affection and esteem than any other Torrens player, even including that most illustrious of 'demi-gods', Lindsay Head.

Of course, the impression conveyed by players like Bills that the playing of football at league level is 'easy' and requires no special talent is an arch deception. Bills had talent, and plenty of it, albeit that it was serenely and modestly packaged. When South Australia was looking down the barrel against the West Australians at three quarter time of a 1962 interstate clash at Subiaco Oval, 12 points adrift and with only sixteen fit men on the field, it was not the 'demi-gods' who came to the rescue, but 'our Freddy', an heroic manifestation of the common man, who regarded the fact that he was bleeding profusely from the mouth as a minor distraction of scant importance, and who summoned up literally the quarter of his life to help steer his team to victory.

The following year, Bills was a member of the famous South Australian combination which scored a 7 point victory over the VFL in Melbourne. Although not conspicuous in terms of statistics, he undertook the vital role, along with Neil Kerley, of ensuring that the Victorians did not 'crowd' the ruck contests and thereby limit the effectiveness of SA's potential match-winner, 'Big Bill' Wedding. Given a free run at the ball, Wedding was unstoppable, but it was only the surreptitiously energetic solicitude of Bills and Kerley that enabled this to happen.

In contrast to his interstate exploits, there was little at club level for Bills to enjoy, with the Eagles qualifying for the major round only four times during his career without winning a single finals match.

**BIRT, JOHN:** Originally from Ballarat, jockey-sized (173cm, 68kg) rover Johnny Birt began his VFL career with Essendon in 1957, and was one of the Bombers' best in a losing grand final against Melbourne in his debut year. Quick, hyperactive and intelligent, he rapidly became acknowledged as one of the finest small men in the game. He made the first of his 11 interstate appearances for the VFL in 1960, and won the first of three Essendon best and fairest awards the following year. He was also dangerous around goal, and topped the Bomber goal kicking list in 1958 with 31 goals.

While with Essendon, Birt played in a total of four grand finals, and was high among his side's best players in all of them. The first two, both against Melbourne, were lost, but in 1962 and 1965 Birt enjoyed premiership success against Carlton and St Kilda respectively.

From 1968 to 1970 Johnny Birt coached West Torrens but the side achieved only modest success. As a player, however, Birt's prodigious talent remained in evidence as he won successive club champion awards in 1968-9 and became an automatic interstate selection for South Australia.

# A BREEZE FOR THE BLUES

## Unley Oval, Saturday 27 July 1968

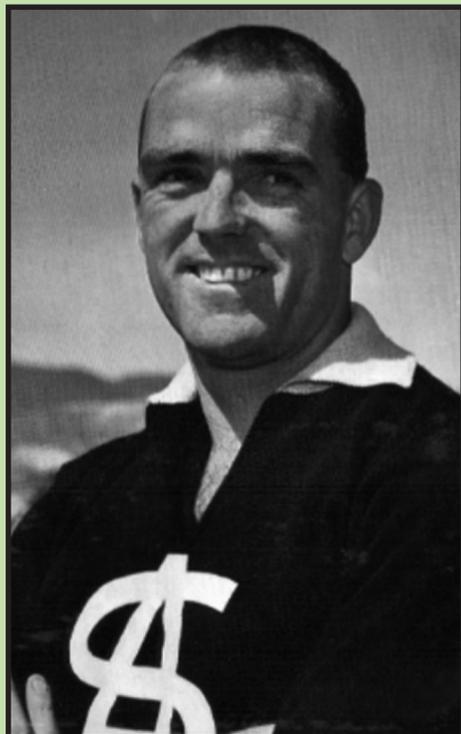


*South Adelaide centre half forward Lindsay Backman marks strongly within easy goal kicking range during his team's third quarter rampage. Backman kicked truly to register one of his 4 majors for the term. The other players pictured are (L-R) Darryl Hicks, 'Sandy' Nelson, Brian Norman, Bob Ball, Brenton Adcock and Terry Short.*

The emotions of South Adelaide supporters, typically among the most turbulent and capricious anywhere, underwent even greater trauma than usual during the 1960s. When Neil Kerley was appointed as coach in 1964 the club was at rock bottom, having just procured its second wooden spoon in succession, and its seventeenth - easily a league record - of the twentieth century. Under Kerley's astutely fervent leadership the Panthers enjoyed a seismic reversal of fortune, winning 17 out of 20 minor round games (as compared to just 2 from 20 the previous year) to finish second on percentage to Port Adelaide heading into the finals. A narrow 2nd semi final loss to the Magpies proved to be merely a momentary hiccup as South, over the course of the ensuing fortnight, went on to procure its first flag since 1938 with emphatic wins over Sturt in the preliminary final (by 41 points) and Port in the grand final (by 27 points). The key to South's win was its ability to blend skill and aggression, unbridled power and flair, and to do so at a speed and with a precision that often left other teams grasping at shadows. As far as Kerley was concerned:

*Emulating the F.N. Williams-Killigrew doctrine of getting the ball from A to B with as much brute force as possible, in as little time as possible and by the first method available is not good enough ..... He (Kerley) has gone one further. He likes this power football, but*

*he likes it done with a style and finesse. In most of South's triumphs ..... the ball players, men like Backman, Skuse, Day and Ross, were vital.<sup>1</sup>*



Neil Kerley (pictured left) remained at the helm at South Adelaide for another couple of seasons, during which the Panthers continued to play the same sort of vibrant, high adrenalin, intermittently exhilarating football, finishing third and fourth. Once Kerley departed, however, the decline was immediate and, if not quite as precipitous as the original rise had been seismic, it nevertheless heralded a perplexing and alarming time for South's supporters, who could all too readily perceive that the only major ingredient missing from the 1968 mix as compared to the previous year's was Kerley himself. At the end of the 1968 season, analysts pointed to a lack of dedication among the players and a decline in club spirit as the principal reasons for the Panthers' decline, but to all intents and purposes such an assessment merely represented another way of highlighting the absence of 'the Kerley Factor'.

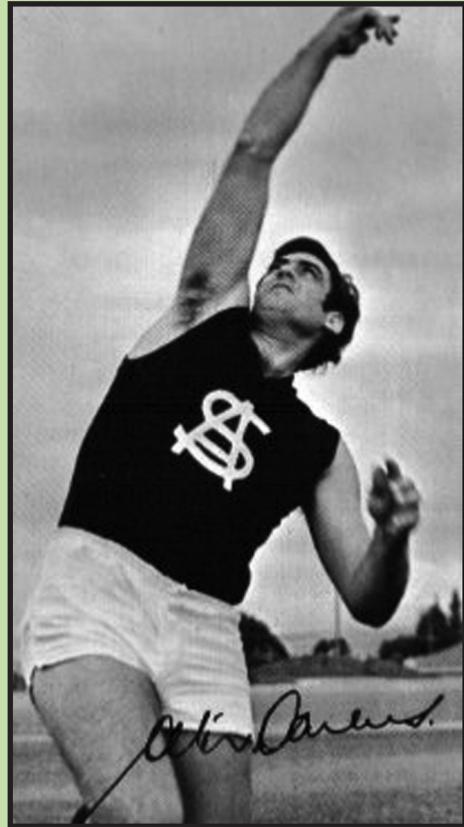
At no stage during the season was that absence more starkly demonstrated than on Saturday 27 July at Unley Oval.

Back in 1964, Sturt's supporters had found themselves in a similar position to their South Adelaide counterparts: the team they followed had recently appointed a highly respected coach with a proven track record under whose tutelage a long overdue emergence from the doldrums seemed to be occurring. Indeed, the similarities went still further, for under Jack Oatey, Sturt was rapidly developing a style of football which bore ready comparison with the Kerley formula of a quick, cohesive, flair-based game augmented by carefully controlled and precisely focused aggression. Over and above this formula, however, the Oatey approach centered heavily on - and, indeed, in the minds of many, was quintessentially characterised by - a pronounced reliance on handball as an offensive tool, to the extent that the first thing any Sturt player who gained possession normally did was to look for a potential handball recipient. The more this process became habitual and automatic over time, the better Sturt became, although it would also be fair to concede that, as other teams assimilated aspects of the Double Blues' style into their own game plans, the gap in standard narrowed. Nevertheless, for much of the 1968 season, Sturt appeared to be playing at a level or two above most of the other SANFL teams. By the time of the round 15 meeting with South Adelaide the Blues had suffered only one reversal,

<sup>1</sup> *South Australian Football Record Yearbook 1965*, page 15

a 19 point loss to Port Adelaide on ANZAC Day. If they won against the Panthers they would establish a new club record of 12 successive victories.

South Adelaide went into the match in seventh position on the ladder with a 7-7 record. Under new coach Peter Darley (shown at right), an immeasurably less intense character than Kerley, the Panthers had blown hot and cold, although 'the Jumbo Prince', as he was dubbed, had shown himself to possess an excellent football brain. His twin moves of centreman Lindsay Backman to centre half forward and wingman Mark Coombe to the pivot for the previous week's game against Central District had proved that, with Backman booting 5.7 and Coombe effectively 'running the show' as the side put in arguably its strongest performance for the year to win by 50 points. As a result, there was certainly no lack of confidence in the Panthers camp as they readied themselves to face the toughest task in SANFL football at the time, a trip to Unley Oval to take on reigning premiers and ladder leaders, Sturt.



Saturday 27 July was overcast but dry and mild, with a formidable, near gale force northerly breeze blowing. Indeed, so substantial was the strength of that wind that, of the aggregate total of 104.133 kicked in the day's 5 SANFL matches, only 14.14 was scored into it, with Glenelg and North Adelaide (both of which won) failing to register as much as a single behind against the breeze. Significantly, it was at Unley Oval, where both teams were heavily reliant on handball, that far and away the greatest amount of success was achieved by teams kicking into the wind.

### **Panthers Fail To Take Advantage .....**

**R**uckman Tony Clarkson, playing in his 100th League game, was given the honour of tossing the coin, but the honours went to South's captain-coach Peter Darley, who not surprisingly opted for first use of the formidable breeze. Despite this, it was the Double Blues who dominated the early proceedings, moving the ball around skilfully and cleverly by both hand and foot, and forcing the Panthers to Alf Skuse from his half forward flank to a loose defensive role.

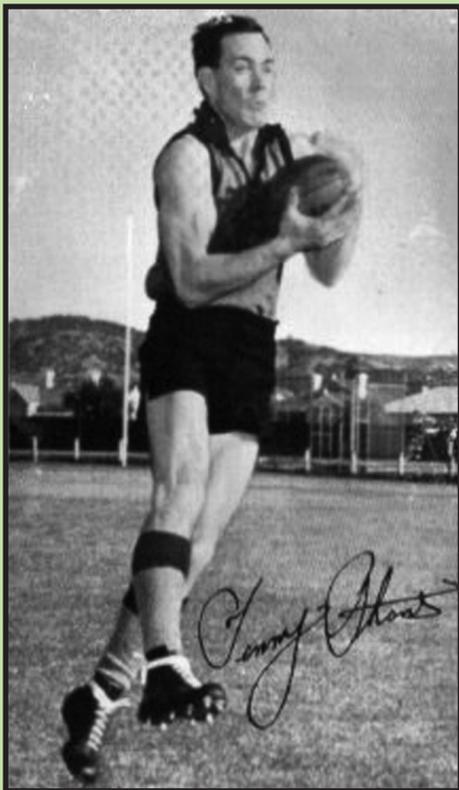
Peter Endersbee notched the game's first goal after marking Keith Chessell's pass deep in a forward pocket before making light of both the angle and the breeze to split the centre in typically nonchalant fashion.

The move of Skuse began to pay dividends for South as he repeatedly proved a foil to Sturt's aspirations, before launching the ball back towards the Panther half forward line, where Lindsay backman and Brian Norman were beginning to get on top of Phil Nelson and Terry Short. Moreover, despite the fact that Tony Clarkson was winning most of the hit-outs, it was the South Adelaide 'crumbers' in White and Thredgold who were picking up the spills.

With the Panthers, of necessity, trying to play a more direct game, centreman Mark Coombe was frequently in the thick of the action, and he appeared to have too much pace for his opponent, Bob Shearman. By contrast, when Sturt attacked, it was often down the wings, where Hicks and Clarke were well on top of Hendrie and Foster.

After Sturt's early dominance the remainder of the term saw South enjoy most of the possession, but a combination of resolute defence and clever counter-attacking enabled the Double Blues to remain well in touch on the scoreboard.

**99QUARTER TIME: South Adelaide 4.4 (28); Sturt 3.4 (22)**



*The Double Blues' ultra reliable half back flanker, Terry Short.*

#### ..... As Do The Blues

O ther than the most one-eyed of Panther supporters, no one seriously gave South much hope of holding out against the Double Blues, whose class had clearly been evidenced by their feat of being the only team in that afternoon's league competition to manage more than a single goal playing into the breeze in the opening term. Within moments of the re-start, however, the Panthers gave notice that they were not prepared - with due apologies for the atrocious pun - to be blown away, as Brian Norman snapped a goal to put them 12 points clear.

The Blues' response was predictably spirited as goals from Chessell and Halbert brought them level, and then Paul Bagshaw snapped truly to put them in front for the first time since early in the opening term. Almost everyone in the crowd now expected to see Sturt pulling away to secure a comfortable half time lead, but the South players had other ideas. Tackling

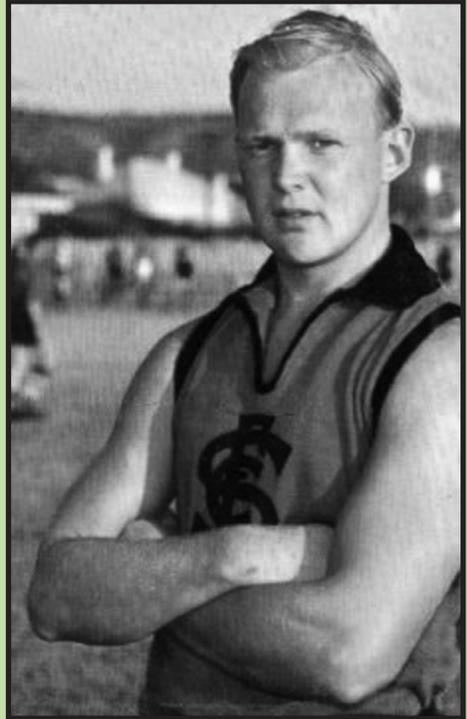
ferociously and attacking the ball with great desperation they stemmed the tide of Sturt attacks and began to re-gain the ascendancy. Emulating the short game which the Blues had used with some degree of success during the first quarter, South visibly improved the longer the term progressed, and by the long break had recaptured the lead after having registered an incredible 6.1 into the hurricane. **HALF TIME: South Adelaide 10.5 (65); Sturt 9.7 (61)**

### South Well On Top

With ruckman Darley and rover White now combining to telling effect, South assumed almost complete control in this quarter. Lindsay Backman at centre half forward was also prominent; proving much too mobile for 'Sandy' Nelson, he booted 4 goals straight for the term.

Ten minutes into the quarter Sturt's problems were compounded when Paul Bagshaw, who had been a solid contributor all day, was forced to leave the fray after receiving a solid bump. He was replaced by Greg Weir.

In contrast to their cohesive, penetrative first quarter display, the Double Blues looked disjointed and ramshackle. On the few occasions that they did manage to get the ball into their forward lines, the South defenders, notably centre half back Craig Cock and half back flanker Bob Schmidt, repelled the invasion with ease. The Panthers were on top both in the air, through Darley, Ball, Norman and Backman, and at ground level, where White, Thredgold and Skuse appeared to possess an extra gear compared to their Sturt opponents. By three quarter time South Adelaide, having added 6.3 to 0.1 for the term, had extended the margin to 42 points, and looked to be well on the way to victory. **THREE QUARTER TIME: South Adelaide 16.8 (104); Sturt 9.8 (62)**



*Sturt's 'jack-of-all-trades', Rick Schoff.*

### Brilliant Blues Absail Home

Right from the opening bounce of the final term it was clear that Sturt was a team on a mission. Whatever coach Jack Oatey had said to his troops over the lemon time break clearly worked as players who had hitherto scarcely been sighted suddenly found an extra yard in pace or simply began to attack both ball and man with greater desperation. Within 10 minutes of the resumption, goals to Halbert, Shearman and Schoff, coupled with a flurry of behinds, had reduced the deficit to less than 4 goals and suddenly the Unley faithful began to find their voices. Showing their inexperience perhaps, the Panthers reacted by going on the defensive, with virtually every player crowding into their defensive zone leaving them with no attacking outlets. Moreover, when endeavouring to clear the ball they repeatedly erred by heading straight down the middle of the ground rather than endeavouring to bottle play up on the 'dead', western wing.

Suddenly, the Blues were enjoying a surfeit of possession, with players like Darryl Hicks and Bob Shearman coming into their element; time and again the Sturt centre line players and on ballers found themselves in possession of the ball, in the clear, and with plenty of time to measure their options before unleashing another bullet like pass onto the

chest of a team mate. When, as time on approached, two such passes found John Tilbrook within easy reach of goal the result, each time, was inevitable, and suddenly the scoreboard read South Adelaide 16.8 (104); Sturt 14.14 (98) - one straight kick in it.

That 'straight kick' was not long in coming as, with just three minutes left, Malcolm Greenslade got on the end of a pinpoint pass from Brenton Adcock and registered his first full pointer of the afternoon. From the ensuing centre bounce, the Panthers somehow managed to force the ball forward for just about the first time in the quarter, eliciting enormous - and voluble - excitement from their cheer squad behind the goals. After a series of short kicks the ball reached the South goal square only for indecision to set in as the only two Panther players in the area simultaneously left the ball to one another. Sturt was able to clear, and two kicks and scarcely that many seconds later the ball nestled in the arms of Double Blues skipper, John Halbert, whose prodigious goal-bound kick from centre half forward scudded off hands and through for a minor score. A minute or so later the siren sounded, with no addition to the score; quite incredibly, the Blues had scored their third 1 point victory in just over a month, and neither their nor the Panthers' fans could scarcely believe it. **FINAL SCORE: Sturt 15.15 (105); South Adelaide 16.8 (104)**

**BEST** - Sturt: Chessell, Hicks, Clarkson, Halbert, Adcock, Murphy, Schoff, Tilbrook  
South Adelaide: Backman, Thredgold, Darley, Norman, Skuse, Coombe, Ball, White

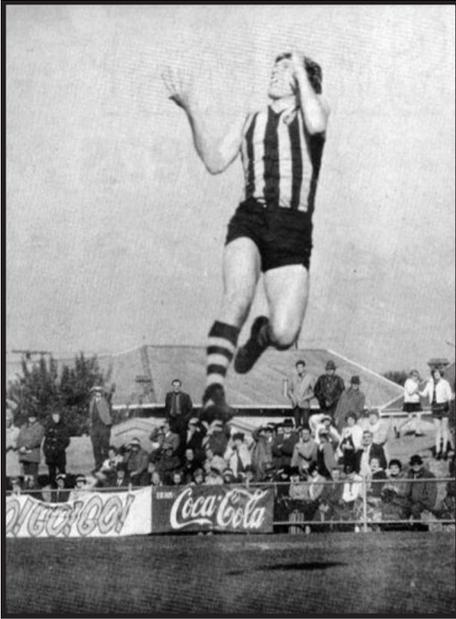
**SCORERS** - Sturt: Halbert 4.1; Shearman, Tilbrook 2.2; Chessell, Endersbee, Greenslade, Rigney, Schoff 1.1; Bagshaw, Murphy 1.0; Clarkson 0.2; Adcock, Weir 0.1; rushed 0.1 South Adelaide: Backman 6.0; Thredgold 3.3; Norman 3.1; Coombe, White 1.1; Hendrie, Jones 1.0; Ball 0.1; rushed 0.1

**ATTENDANCE** - 8,538 at Unley Oval (the average attendance per game at Unley in 1968 was 11,004)

### **The Two Clubs' Contrasting Post-Match Fortunes**

**S**turt went on to extend its record-breaking winning sequence to 13 games before lowering its colours to Port Adelaide in round 17 at Alberton; two years later it set a new, and as yet unsurpassed landmark, when it won a total of 16 consecutive games. In 1968, the round 17 loss to Port was the Double Blues' last for the season.

South Adelaide's capricious run continued, with comfortable wins over Glenelg and Woodville being counterbalanced by inept displays against West Torrens and North Adelaide. The Panthers finally finished the season in 6th place, which was at once their worst showing since 1963, and would prove to be their best for a decade. Peter Darley's reign as coach came to an end after successive wooden spoons in 1969 and 1970, and it was not until the arrival of the 'little master', Haydn Bunton junior, in 1975 that the club began to turn things around, albeit that a losing grand final against Port Adelaide in 1979 was the closest it came to claiming a premiership.



*Malcolm Blight soars high for Woodville during a match against North Adelaide at Prospect in 1969.*

Following his retirement as a player at the end of the 1970 season he returned home to Essendon as coach but after one disastrous year in charge he was replaced by Des Tuddenham. Between 1972 and 1976 Birt was assistant coach at Footscray, following which he served as skills coach at Hawthorn (1977 to 1980) and Carlton (1981). Thereafter, he maintained his involvement in football through a variety of administrative roles.

**BISHOP SENIOR, JACK:** After playing a couple of games for West Adelaide in 1915, the last season before the league competition was suspended owing to the Great War, rover Jack Bishop became a regular member of the side in 1919, and remained so until 1928. Despite standing just 160cm in height, and weighing a mere 60kg, he was a tenacious and fearless competitor who was widely acknowledged as one of the finest small men in the game. Boasting lightning fast reflexes, and extremely quick over that vital first

five or so metres, he typically racked up numerous possessions during a game, and was always a danger when resting in the forward lines. His 120 league games for West included the 13 point challenge final victory over North Adelaide in 1927. He kicked a total of 117 career goals. Winner of his club's best and fairest award in 1919, his 2 appearances for South Australia came at the 1921 Perth carnival, when he booted 3 goals. Jack Bishop was the son of Toby Bishop, who played 46 games for West between 1897 and 1901, and the father of Jack Bishop junior, who represented the club on 16 occasions in 1954-5.

**BLIGHT, MALCOLM (HoF 2002):** During its comparatively fleeting involvement in the SANFL it is doubtful if the Woodville Football Club produced a more prodigious all round talent than Malcolm Jack Blight. In two separate stints at Oval Avenue Blight played a total of 163 games, won the 1972 Magarey Medal, was twice named Woodville's best and fairest player, made 7 appearances for South Australia earning All Australian selection on two occasions separated by thirteen years, and, for good measure, topped the SANFL goalkicking in 1985, his final league season, with 126 goals. In between he spent a decade with North Melbourne where he became arguably the most celebrated South Australian to transfer to the VFL up to that point. His record while in Melbourne is worth summarising:

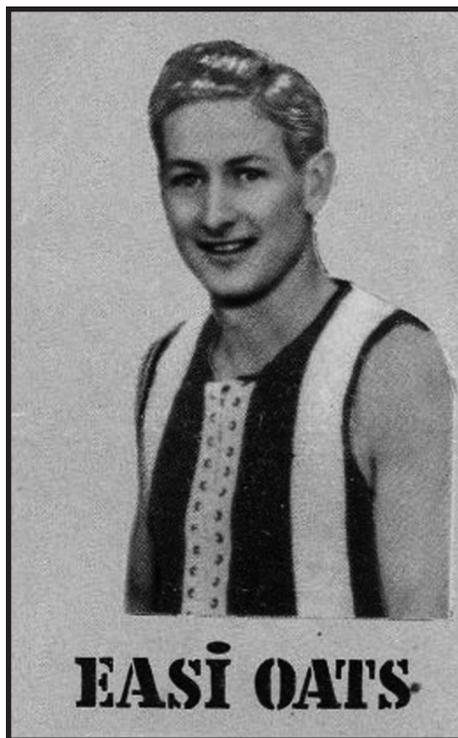
- member of premiership sides in 1975 and 1977
- member of North's 1980 night premiership team
- 1978 Brownlow Medallist
- 7 interstate appearances for the VFL including 2 as captain
- 4 times club leading goalkicker
- Coleman Medallist in 1982
- played 180 club games including 22 consecutive finals appearances

The bare facts reveal nothing of the artistry, power and genius of Blight's play, however. Thankfully, his career coincided with the onset of the video age, and so a fair number of his more memorable feats have been recorded for posterity.

If Malcolm Blight the player was among the greatest to have adorned the game, Malcolm Blight the coach was no slouch either. After proving himself the most successful coach in Woodville's brief and predominantly ignominious history, he steered a hitherto under-achieving Geelong side to three grand finals, before returning home to South Australia and masterminding the first two premierships in the history of the Adelaide Crows. A brief stint at St Kilda was less successful, but his achievements with the Crows would doubtless have been sufficient to earn him the keys to the city of Adelaide for life.

**BOCK, NATHAN** of Adelaide is currently one of the finest centre half backs in the game, a status he enhanced in 2008 with inclusion, in that position, in the AFL All Australian team, followed a few weeks later by his selection as the Crows' best and fairest player of the season. Bock is also quite versatile, and is sometimes used to good effect in the forward lines. At the conclusion of the 2008 season he had played a total of 86 games in five seasons with Adelaide, kicking 53 goals. He joined the Crows from Woodville-West Torrens, spending a couple of seasons on the club's rookie list before being elevated to full, senior status in 2004.

**BORLASE, DARYL** - nicknamed 'Daisy' - was a firm favourite among Port Adelaide fans, particularly during the second half of his fourteen season, 246 game league career. He joined the Magpies from Ceduna, and after playing 3 games in his debut season of 1985 became a regular, first choice senior player the following year. Struggles with injury and form during the late '80s and early '90s would have derailed a lesser player, and it



*Dave Boyd (Port Adelaide)*

cannot have been easy for Borlase to watch from the sidelines as the Magpies procured a hat trick of flags between 1988 and 1990. When they next went top in 1992, however, 'Daisy' Borlase was not only back in harness, but a key contributor, as he would be when further premiership triumphs were attained in 1994 and 1996. A knee injury, suffered during the 1995 finals series, put paid to his chances of playing in three successive winning grand finals. Borlase, who skippered the Magpies in his final league season, was the club's leading goalkicker in 1991 with 25 goals. Equally at home on a half forward flank, across centre or on the ball, he was the sort of player who could turn a match with a moment or two of brilliance. He represented South Australia once.

**BOYALL, MARCUS** made his VFL debut with Collingwood in 1935 but did not become a regular in the side until two years

later. In 1936 he won the Gardiner Medal for best and fairest in the VFL reserves competition.

Strong overhead, and deceptively dashing for one who appeared so angular and uncoordinated, Boyll made the centre half back position his own in 1937-8, but in 1939 he accepted an offer to join Glenelg, much to the ire of the Magpie committee, which refused to clear him. Boyll was forced to stand out of football for the whole of the 1939 season, but quickly made up for lost time by performing heroically when finally cleared the following year. Boyll spent part of the 1940 season as Glenelg captain-coach only to resign mid-season when things were not going well. With the coaching burden removed he began to play better than ever, and this stellar form continued during a 1941 season which saw him land both a Bays best and fairest award and South Australian football's most prestigious individual honour, the Magarey Medal.

Boyll once again played for Collingwood while stationed in Melbourne on war service in 1944-5, but in the latter year he courted further controversy by crossing to VFA club Camberwell without a clearance. He gave the Tricolours excellent serviced over the next three seasons, winning a best and fairest award during a 1947 season that saw him replaced as senior coach half way through the year by Harry Collier, and later achieving selection on a half back flank in Camberwell's official 'Team of the Century'.

Marcus Boyll's last season in top level football, 1948, was spent with Glenelg, although as he was actually based at Whyalla at the time he only managed to front up occasionally. His final tally of league games with the Tigers was 49. He also played 50 games for Collingwood, and 54 for Camberwell.

**BOYD, DAVID (HoF 2002):** Local product and lifelong Port Adelaide supporter Davey

Boyd (he was almost never referred to as 'David' or 'Dave') made his league debut with the Magpies in 1948, after topping the club's seconds goal kicking list with 80 goals from full forward the previous year. He did not play at full forward in the seniors, however; after spending most of his debut season as a half forward flanker, in 1949 he replaced retiring champion Lew Roberts in the centre and never looked back.

Tireless, beautifully balanced, and a superb stab pass, Boyd went on to play 222 SANFL games for Port in thirteen seasons and was never once dropped. He was also a near automatic choice for South Australia for much of his career, playing at the 1950 Brisbane, 1953 Adelaide and 1956 Perth carnivals. One of his greatest displays came against the VFL in Perth when he lowered the colours of champion Footscray centreman Peter Box; later that year, Boyd and Box would win their respective competition best and fairest awards.

A member of seven Magpie premiership teams, Boyd was often cited as a primary reason for the team's dominance, and yet somewhat surprisingly never won a club best and fairest award. Part of the reason for this may have been his tendency to reserve his finest performances for big games - he was almost invariably among the best players afield in grand finals, for instance - but his Magarey Medal win in 1956 suggests that he was also perfectly capable of playing well consistently.

In 2000, Davey Boyd was selected on a half forward flank in Port Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team 1870-2000'. His sons Greg and Russell later maintained the family tradition by playing premiership football for the Magpies.

**BRADLEY, CRAIG (HoF 2006):** Almost universally acclaimed as one of the bona fide greats of the modern game, Craig Bradley might well have been lost to football had he enjoyed greater success at his first sporting love, cricket. Indeed,

Bradley will probably be looked back on as one of the last Australian sportsmen to enjoy simultaneous pre-eminence, or near pre-eminence, in arguably the country's two principal team sports.

Once it was clear that he would not quite achieve his ambition of playing cricket internationally, Bradley chose to devote more and more of his time, commitment and energy to football. In 98 SANFL games for Port Adelaide he proved that he was a player of the top echelon, but it was in his seventeen seasons at Carlton, where he accumulated a club record 375 games, that Bradley really stamped himself as one of the all time greats. Quick, both in mind and body, sublimely skilled, and always impeccably fair, there have been few better recent role models for youngsters aspiring to succeed in sport than Craig Bradley.

A star in Port Adelaide's grand final defeat of Glenelg in his debut season of 1981, Bradley would go on to play in another six premiership deciders, one more with Port, and five with the Blues. When Carlton went top in 1987 and 1995, Bradley's contribution was telling. Equally significantly, when the Blues underwent a re-building exercise early in the twenty-first century, Bradley, as club skipper, played a crucial role in helping maintain equilibrium, as well as providing a constantly reassuring sight to supporters of longer standing.

Six times a club champion, Bradley's failure to land a competition best and fairest award remains more than a trifle surprising. However, he emphasised his brilliance in numerous other ways, most notably with his habit of producing his very best football when it mattered most (he won no fewer than four Fos Williams Medals, for example).

Bradley's aggregate of 501 senior games at the top level is likely to remain unchallenged for some time, while it is hard to imagine the powers-that-be allowing his record of 15 South Australian state of origin appearances (held jointly with John Platten)

ever to be overhauled. (Bradley also played 4 interstate matches for South Australia which were not classified as state of origin affairs.)

Craig Bradley was included in both Carlton's official 'Team of the 20th Century', and Port Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team 1870 to 2000'.

**BRAY, JEFF (HoF 2007):** Although nowhere near as immensely gifted as the likes of Lindsay Head or John Halbert, Jeff 'Buckets' Bray was a highly talented footballer whose value to his club was immense. Barrel-chested and resolute, he seldom lowered his colours in individual contests, and was renowned for his talkative on field presence which helped make him the consummate team player. Strong overhead, and always hard at the ball, he enjoyed a particularly stellar year in 1963 when he participated in South Australia's historic win over the VFL at the MCG, and, in addition to landing his second Westies club best and fairest award, picked up both the ADS7 Footballer of the Year Award and the Advertiser Trophy to boot. Two years earlier, Bray had been at centre half back as West Adelaide defeated Norwood to win its first SANFL premiership in fourteen years.

Between 1964 and 1966 Jeff Bray played for South Melbourne, but persistent injuries restricted him to just 34 VFL games, and when he returned home to West Adelaide in 1967 he was nothing like the same player. He finally retired from SANFL football in 1970 after a total of 196 games, having commenced in 1956 as a seventeen year old. Bray sadly died of a heart condition in 2006, aged sixty-eight.

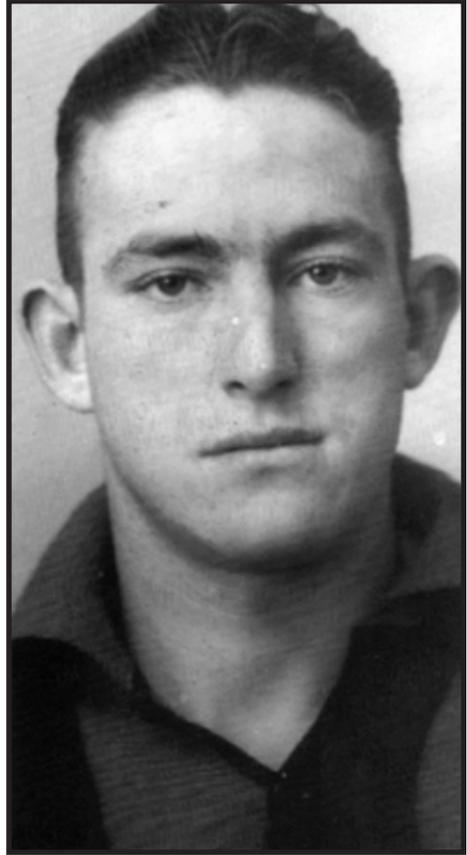
**BREBNER, DON (HoF 2002)** was one of the pre-eminent football administrators of his day. His first administrative post was at Norwood, the club for which he had made 20 senior SANFL appearances in 1951 and 1952. Brebner served on the Redlegs' Management Committee in 1959 and 1960 before assuming

the role of vice chairman of the SANFL in 1961. Five years later he was elected president of the league, overseeing a crucial period in the game's development in the state, including the construction and implementation of a dedicated home venue for the code at Football Park, West Lakes. He retired as SANFL president after the 1975 season.

**BREWER, IAN:** Key position forward Ian Brewer had the rare distinction of enjoying top level success in the three main football states. At Collingwood he impressed as a full forward, kicking 164 goals in 84 VFL games between 1956 and 1961, which included topping the league list with 73 goals in 1958. He headed the Magpies' goal kicking ladder twice, and was at full forward in the 1958 when the Woods upset firm flag favourites Melbourne by 3 goals. Earlier that season, on the Queen's Birthday holiday, he had produced arguably his most memorable performance for Collingwood in booting 6 of the side's 10 goals in an 11 point loss to Melbourne in front of an all time record VFL home and away crowd of 99,346.

In 1962 he crossed to St Kilda, but proved unable to break into the senior side. As a result, he seems to have decided that a change of scenery might suit him, and travelled to Western Australia. He spent the next couple of seasons with Claremont where, playing mainly as a centre half forward, he booted 55 goals to top the club's list in 1963, and was a member of its sensational 'rags to riches' premiership team the following year.

The next stop was the SANFL where Brewer lined up with Norwood. In 1965 he was the competition's outstanding forward, missing the elusive ton by just 4 goals. He also topped Norwood's list with 76 goals the following year. After three years spent captain-coaching Wangaratta Rovers in the Ovens and Murray Football League he made a somewhat faltering return with the Redlegs in 1970, when his 3 appearances for the season gave him a career total of 171 league



*Jack Broadstock  
(West Adelaide, Richmond, West Torrens)*

games comprised of 84 with Collingwood, 43 with Claremont, and 44 for Norwood.

**BRIDGMAN, CHARLES 'ERNIE':** An accomplished follower renowned for his aerial strength, Ernie Bridgman was one of the most noteworthy West Torrens footballers of the 1930s. Close to best afield when the blue and golds downed Norwood in the 1933 grand final, he continued to give fine service throughout the remainder of the decade. All told, he played a total of 172 league games and kicked 105 goals between 1929 and 1939, won Torrens' best and fairest award in 1935, and captained the club the following year. Bridgman represented South Australia 16 times, kicking 6 goals.

**BROADSTOCK, JACK:** Audaciously talented, and well ahead of his time in terms of tactical acumen and nous, Jack Broadstock almost certainly failed to achieve anything like as much as he ought to have done in the game he loved. Part of this failure was attributable to the war, which coincided with the peak years of his career, but Broadstock's temperament also played a part. In 1947, for example, according to West Adelaide skipper Johnny Taylor, "West was the first SA team to develop handball as an attacking weapon - and Broadstock was the king-pin", but a needless altercation with Port Adelaide ruckman Bob McLean in the preliminary final led to his missing the club's first grand final victory in twenty years. Accused of hacking by boundary umpire Aplin, he was found guilty by the Tribunal, and handed a 3 match suspension

Broadstock actually had three separate stints with West, playing a total of 65 games over seven seasons, the first of which was in 1938, and the last, as captain-coach, in 1950. From 1943 to 1946 he played for Richmond, and was centreman in the club's 1943 grand final defeat of Essendon. Although he only played 33 VFL games for the Tigers, he did enough to persuade Jack Dyer that he "was the most talented footballer I have ever seen".<sup>1</sup>

Many others shared this vaunted opinion of Broadstock's prowess, including Jeff Pash, who during his first year as a football journalist, and Broadstock's last as a league player, wrote of him that:

*Jack Broadstock can be taken as a very good example of a player who moves with perfect balance. He is so well poised that changes in his movements are effected with lightning rapidity. He can change direction, kick, or handball equally quickly. Knowing to the full the value of sudden immobility, he is the present expert in the art of throwing opponents off balance.<sup>2</sup>*

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1 *Captain Blood* by Jack Dyer, page 92.

2 'The News' 20/9/50.

In 1948, Broadstock spent the early part of the season with West Torrens, before accepting the position of captain-coach of GNFL club Boulder City, whom he promptly steered to a premiership. The 1949 season saw him once more at West Torrens, and he was a major driving force behind the side's reaching that season's grand final. In the preliminary final defeat of Norwood he produced a truly virtuoso display that made it seem he was playing football on a different level to everybody else, but a pulled thigh muscle badly hampered his performance in the grand final and Torrens went under to North Adelaide.

The following year saw Broadstock heading back to West Adelaide for one last season in the 'big time'.

The peripatetic nature of much of his career, coupled with the inimical impact of war in terms of the number of games he managed to play overall, have led to Jack Broadstock being accorded a somewhat less prominent place in football's unofficial 'hall of fame' than he perhaps deserves. He was one of those inordinately rare individuals who possessed the ability to turn a match on its head almost single-handedly - something Jack Dyer saw him do for South Australia against the Vics on one occasion, for example. He also played a significant, if largely uncredited role, in pushing South Australian football down an avenue later explored more thoroughly, and with greater ostensible success, by the likes of Jack Oatey; an avenue in which constant, fluent movement of the ball, by hand as much as by foot, was pivotal.

Perhaps future generations will accord him greater credence and approbation, but you would have to be very brave indeed to bet on it.

**BROCK, MEL** "never entertained the thought of winning a Magarey Medal, not in my wildest dreams", but win a Medal he did, testimony to his consistency, determination and raw talent. A Glenelg man to the core, he made his league debut with the Bays in 1932, enjoyed the ultimate thrill when he participated in an unforgettable against-the-odds premiership in 1934, and went on to play a total of 166 senior



*Pat Broderick (West Torrens)*

games, including 3 with the West Adelaide-Glenelg wartime combine. He was Glenelg's best and fairest player on two occasions, and won the most consistent player award 4 times. His career highlight, however, came in 1940 when, with 19 votes, he scored a runaway Magarey Medal triumph, 5 votes clear of runner-up Max Murdy of South Adelaide.

As well as being consistent, Mel Brock was highly versatile. Much of his early football was played in the backlines, but later he excelled as both a follower and a rover. He retained his passion for football for the rest of his life and was a regular spectator at Glenelg matches, both home and away.

**BRODERICK, PATRICK:** Tough, dogged and gutsy, West Torrens' Patrick Broderick played the demanding ruck shepherd role during the 1920s with great verve and - unusually - consummate fairness. He could also perform effectively in the backlines, and was a master at collecting what these days would be referred to as the 'hard ball'. A highly popular figure at Torrens, he won the club's best and fairest award in 1928, and

was captain and joint coach (with Phil Read) the following year. When the blue and golds broke through for their first ever premiership by beating Sturt in the 1924 challenge final, Broderick was one of the best players on view, particularly during the first half when the going was at its most strenuous. Pat Broderick played a total of 122 senior games for West Torrens, and was selected to represent South Australia twice.

**Broken Hill Football League:** Although Broken Hill is in New South Wales, it has strong economic and cultural links with South Australia, and indeed the fact that it has long been a hotbed of Australian football is in no small measure a legacy of this. During the second half of the nineteenth century in particular the majority of the town's inhabitants originated from South Australia, and crucially it was during this period that Broken Hill's identity and character were being shaped.

The BHFL currently comprises four clubs: Central Broken Hill, North Broken Hill, South Broken Hill and West Broken Hill. The league is affiliated with both the SANFL and AFL New South Wales-ACT.

The history of football in Broken Hill is rich and fascinating, and footballers from Broken Hill have had a significant impact on the SANFL.

A brief history of Australian football in Broken Hill, including a list of senior grade premiership-winning teams, appears on pages 62 to 69.

**BROOKSBY, PHIL** was one of many fine players unearthed by South Adelaide during the Haydn Bunton junior. The Panthers recruited him from East Gambier, and he made his league debut in 1978. The following year he was joined at South by twin brother Graham, and the pair were very much to the fore as the Panthers reached their first grand final for fifteen years, only to lose to Port Adelaide. The twin brothers combined to give sterling service to the club for the next five seasons,

## FOOTBALL IN THE SILVER CITY



**F**or a city which has never in its history boasted a population in excess of 30,000,<sup>1</sup> Broken Hill's contribution to the sport of Australian football has been extraordinary, and indeed arguably unrivalled. The fact that the city is situated in New South Wales makes its story even more intriguing, even if not quite unique.

The original Broken Hill settlement was founded by Charles Rasp, a boundary rider who discovered iron ore (although he originally thought it was tin) in the region in 1883. Almost forty years earlier, in 1844-5, Charles Sturt had coined the expression 'Broken Hill' when writing, in his diary, of the distinctive, boomerang-shaped orebody protruding from the earth right at the very heart of the region that he decided to name the Barrier Ranges. That region has proved to be far and away the world's single richest source of silver, lead and zinc for well over a century. As for the city of Broken Hill, as intimated in the opening paragraph, this has proved to be one of, if not the, richest sources of Australian football talent anywhere in the world, on a per capita basis at any rate - of which more later.

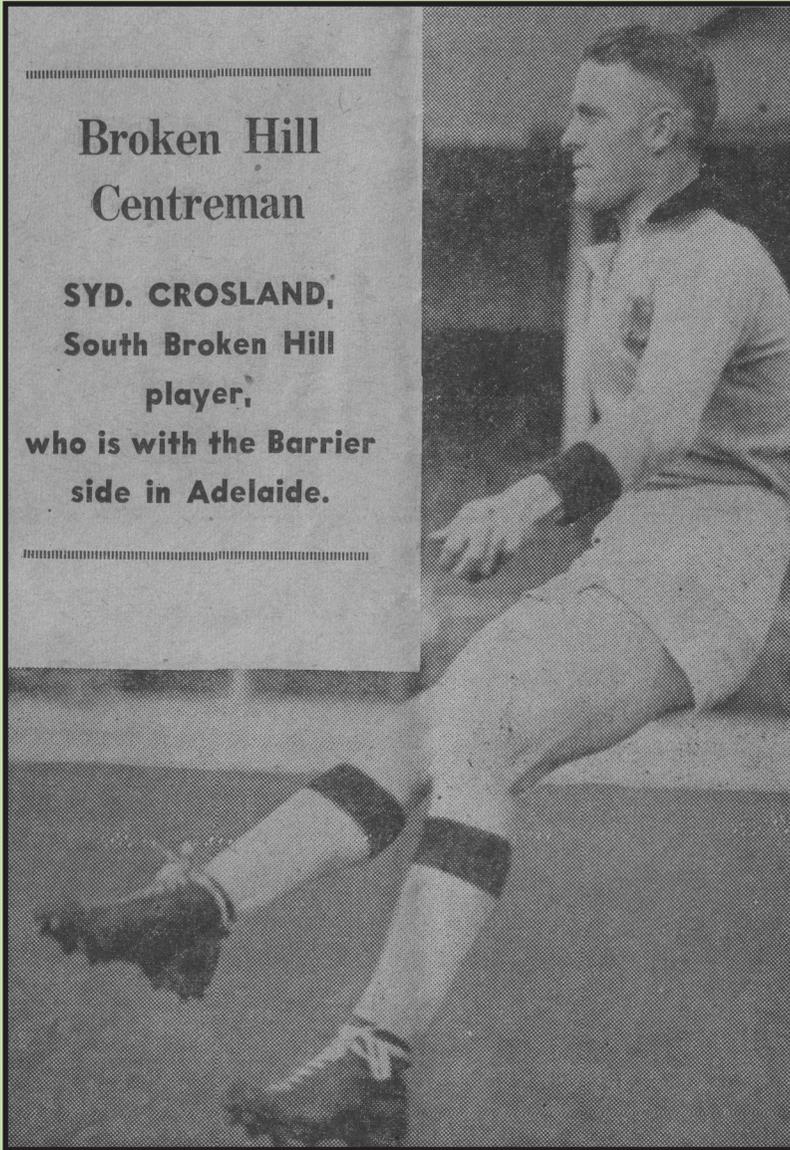
Football first came to Broken Hill on 4 April 1885 when a scratch match between Day Dream and Silverton took place at the Day Dream mine. This was the first of many such matches, and by 1888 an informal competition involving Broken Hill, Silverton, and Silver and Blues had commenced. Two years later this competition achieved formal status with the establishment of the Barrier Ranges Football Association, precursor of today's

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<sup>1</sup> The official population of Broken Hill at the 2001 census was 20,096, but there have been a number of occasions during the settlement's history when this figure has been exceeded. Indeed, within ten years of Broken Hill's founding as a discrete settlement the population was estimated as being in the region of 27,000, while during the 1960s this figure reached approximately 30,000.

Broken Hill Football League.

Life in this remote corner of New South Wales was very rough and ready, but



football rapidly became an important civilising influence (much needed in a region where the ratio of males to females often exceeded two to one), as well as a key element in the social fabric. One of the main reasons for this was that many of Broken Hill's earliest inhabitants hailed from either the Victorian goldfields, which had long been, and of course remain, a hotbed of the indigenous game, or the copper mines of Moonta and Kadina in South Australia. Later on, there was much movement to and fro between the Barrier and the Kalgoorlie-Coolgardie axis in Western Australia, where gold was discovered in 1892. Once at the Barrier people tended, as is almost

always the case, to emphasise and cling to those aspects of their lifestyles and behaviour patterns that they regarded as being quintessential to their identities, as well as to socialise and mix primarily with people hailing originally from the same geographical areas as themselves. Such predilection, needless to say, was as readily observable in footy as in any other walk of life, as is clearly evidenced by the fact that the two strongest clubs during the BRFA's formative years were known simply as 'Victorians' and 'South Australians'. Indeed, between them these two clubs shared all of the fledgling Association's first ten premierships, with the South Australians indeed annexing all bar two.<sup>1</sup> Fulfilling the role of 'whipping boys' at various times, and to varying degrees of ineptitude, during this era were Broken Hill, North Broken Hill, South Broken Hill and Hotham.

The days of generic clubs such as South Australians were numbered, however. In 1900, in accordance with what was happening in many other competitions throughout Australia, the BRFA was reorganised along district lines, a development which perhaps emphasised Broken Hill's transmutation from transitory mining settlement to permanent town. The first premiership of the reorganised competition was contested by the same four clubs which continue to make up the BHFL today: West Broken Hill, which became the first 'non-colonial' premier, North Broken Hill, Central Broken Hill and Alma (later re-named South Broken Hill). The inception of the district scheme also brought a reduction in the number of players per side from twenty to eighteen, three years after the same innovation had been implemented by the VFL.

As the population increased, and the number of players boasting top level experience in other parts of Australia continued to rise, so the standard of football being played in Broken Hill improved. In 1904, a combined Barrier side took on and defeated a visiting Port Adelaide side, a result that was clearly no fluke as it was promptly repeated the following year. The 1905 season also brought the first ever match between a BRFA team and one from the VFL, when a Collingwood side that was to reach that season's grand final visited the 'Silver City'<sup>2</sup> and left with honour and pride intact but also, one imagines, with rather less skin on their knees than when they arrive.<sup>3</sup>

The national significance of the Barrier Ranges competition at this time is indicated by its being invited to send delegates to the first ever Australasian Football Conference, held in Melbourne in November 1905. In addition to the delegates from the BHFA there was representation from Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Kalgoorlie-Border, Brisbane, Sydney, Hobart, Launceston and New Zealand. The Conference, which was chaired by H.C.A. Harrison, paved the way for the inaugural Australasian football championships, held in Melbourne in 1908, as

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1 One of the Victorians' two wins came in 1895 when the South Australians went into temporary abeyance as a mark of respect for two of their players, 'Scrap' Panter and Archie Trembath, who were among those killed in an underground disaster at the South Mine.

2 'Silver City' is just one of several popular descriptions for Broken Hill coined over the years. Others include the 'Oasis of the west' and the 'Capital of the Outback'.

3 In 1905 the BRFA spent £300 on the Jubilee Oval, which remains the League's headquarters to this day. For many years this oval had no covering of grass, meaning that players needed a special, if not quite unique, kind of courage in order to succeed. Clearly the Collingwood players were not found wanting in this regard as they triumphed over the Barrier combination with some comfort, eventually winning by 28 points, 7.7 (49) to 2.9 (21).

well as constituting, in effect, the establishment of the Australasian Football Council (AFC), which would provide a national administrative underpinning of sorts for the code for much of the twentieth century, until eventually usurped as an authority by the VFL during the 1980s.

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The emergence of the AFC was a clear indication that football was becoming more professional in its outlook, a fact emphasised in Broken Hill in 1908 with the appointment, at Wests, of Bert Renfrey as the first paid coach in the Association's history. Renfrey would go on to enjoy an auspicious career in the SANFL, leading South Australia to its historic carnival win of 1911, but at Wests he was less successful. Indeed, for much of the pre-world war one period it was Norths who dominated the competition, winning premierships in 1902, 1904-5, 1907 (unbeaten), 1908, 1909, 1911 and 1915. The Bulldogs' main rivals during the early part of this period were Wests, who secured flags in 1900-1 and 1903, while Broken's (a temporary name change from Central Broken Hill) provided stiff opposition in the years leading up to the outbreak of war with premierships in 1910 and 1912-13.

Renfrey was just one of many 'big name' players, mainly from South Australia, to ply their trade at the Barrier during this time; most notable amongst the others perhaps were Magarey Medallists Jack Mack and Harold Oliver, both from Port Adelaide. Home grown champions also emerged, with North's Dave Low, who went on to win the 1912 Magarey Medal with West Torrens, Jack Woollard, captain of Port Adelaide's 1910 championship of Australia-winning team, and Algy Millhouse, who captain-coached Norwood in 1914, arguably the pick of these.

Meanwhile, the Barrier's combined teams continued to engage in fixtures against powerful interstate clubs and representative eighteens. In 1909, East Fremantle became the first West Australian club to visit Broken Hill, losing the first but winning the second of a two match series en route to Melbourne. From the East Fremantle perspective it was certainly an educational experience, with "the hard gravel ground..... as strange to the team as the WACA ground in a wet July would have been to the combined Barrier team". Moreover, "interpretations of the rules frequently nonplussed the visitors, but the home team's handball resembled throwing to such an extent that Wilson (Old East's captain) protested strongly".<sup>1</sup>

The following year saw the Barrier take on the Ballarat Football League in another two match series, with its players kicking themselves out of contention in the first match, which was lost by 4 points, but making emphatic amends a view days later with

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1 *Celebrating 100 Years Of Tradition* by Jack Lee, page 60. East Fremantle was one of the most regular interstate visitors to the Barrier. Between 1909 and 1965 Western Australia's most successful club engaged in a total of 5 matches against Broken Hill combinations, winning 3 and losing 2.

a 16.13 (109) to 6.8 (44) triumph.

Barrier and later Broken Hill representative sides took to the field wearing yellow and blue playing jumpers, a colour combination that was chosen to reflect the distinctive combination of blue skies and yellow wattle blossom that often dominated the region's scenery.

In 1912 the BRFA's representative team ventured interstate for the first time when it engaged in a return fixture against the Ballarat Football League, losing a hard fought match by 3 straight goals.

Mining activity in and around Broken Hill reached a peak in the years between the two world wars, and coincidentally the quality of the football being produced also "reached a previously unequalled standard".<sup>1</sup> This was no thanks to the SA(N)FL and its clubs for whom the Barrier competition provided as rich and consistent a vein of readily plunderable talent as did the surrounding hills for the smelting works at Whyalla, Port Kembla and Port Pirie. Among the many top ranking players to make a highly successful transition from the outback to the city were Dick Osborne, an eventual South Australian state representative initially rejected by Sturt but who soon afterwards found success with West Torrens, Alan Beck, a premiership player with Port Adelaide, livewire, intelligent rover Matt Kinnear (North Adelaide), Len Sly (South Adelaide), 'Singer' Barnes (West Adelaide), 'Tiger' Potts and Roy Bent (both Norwood). Even better perhaps than these noteworthy players were a handful of bona fide champions in the shape of 1922 Magarey Medallist Bobby Barnes, brother of 'Singer', his team mate at West Adelaide, Bruce McGregor, who went one better with consecutive Medals in 1926-7, and one of the deadliest goalsneaks the game has seen in Jack Owens, who topped the SA(N)FL's goal kicking ladder on three occasions (once jointly) and his club, Glenelg's, on no fewer than ten in amassing what, until the emergence of Ken Farmer a decade later, was a South Australian record 817 career goals.

The Barrier Ranges Football Association became the Broken Hill Football League in 1927, a name it has retained ever since. The competition during the 1920s tended to be closely contested, with Wests proving the most successful club with four senior flags, one clear of Souths, and two more than Norths. The remaining premiership, that of the 1925 season, was not won by Centrals as you might imagine, but was actually withheld by the Association after Centrals refused to take the field after half time in the grand final against Wests because they maintained that the central umpire was not giving their players 'a fair go'. This debacle led to the establishment of a much more accountable controlling body, in relation to which the name change can be seen as being virtually tantamount to a statement of intent; nevertheless, compared to the streamlined and highly competent administrative underpinning enjoyed by competitions like the VFL the BHFL remained, in certain senses, something of a backwater, a state of affairs which may not have been devoid of charm, but which nevertheless prevented the game in Broken Hill from developing in ways that hindsight tells us may have been feasible, such as by entering a team in the SANFL at some point, for instance.

During the height of the economic depression of the 1930s mining centres such as Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Broken Hill enjoyed, if not quite prosperity, then certainly an average standard of living measurably superior to that which was readily attainable

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<sup>1</sup> From an article by Ian Stewart entitled 'High Standard At Broken Hill' in 'The SA Football Budget', 29/7/39, page 11.

elsewhere. This meant that, for a time at least, the escalating drain of players away from Broken Hill to clubs in the capital cities (mainly Adelaide) was arrested, and the standard of play, as intimated above, remained as high, if not higher, than ever before (or indeed since). Among the numerous matches engaged in by Broken Hill representative sides during the inter-war period was a long-running series of contests against South Australian 'second best' eighteens. The Broken Hill combinations were never remotely disgraced in these contests, and indeed were victorious on quite a number of occasions, including a hefty 40 point success at home in 1938.

The match between South Australia's second eighteen and the BHFL at the Adelaide Oval on 29 July 1939 was a near classic which, although eventually won narrowly by the home side, emphasised in no uncertain terms that the football being played at the Barrier at the time was of comparable standard to that being played almost anywhere in Australia. The South Australian team was by no means the ramshackle collection of 'has beens' and 'not quites' that might be supposed. It was captained by Sturt's Parker 'Bo' Morton, one of the finest full forwards of his day, and included the likes of George 'Bluey' Johnston of Glenelg, a young Jack Broadstock (West Adelaide), plus Magarey Medallists Bill McCallum (Norwood) and Jack Cockburn (South Adelaide). Despite this, and the unfamiliarity of the cold, wet conditions, the visitors dominated the early exchanges to lead 5.6 to 1.1 at the first interval. South Australia played its best football of the match in the second term to seize back both the initiative and the lead (by 7 points) at the main break, but thereafter it was only poor kicking for goal by the Broken Hill combination that prevented what might nowadays, in hindsight, be regarded as something of an upset. Almost certainly this would not have been the case at the time, however: Barrier football was widely, and rightly, respected, and had there been any kind of national competition in existence during the 1930s it might have been reasonable to expect to see the name 'Broken Hill' appearing more than once on any roll of honour. The final scores in this particular match were South Australia 19.14 (128) to Broken Hill 16.17 (113) with the Barrier's forwards in particular proving that they were the equal, if not better, than anything South Australia had to offer.<sup>1</sup>

Other noteworthy matches engaged in by the BHFL during the inter-war period included an 18.14 (122) to 3.10 (28) annihilation of CANFL club Acton in Canberra in 1929, a 26 point defeat of a CANFL combined side, again in Canberra, in 1935, and wins against East Fremantle and Claremont (both at home) in 1938 and 1939 respectively.

Since world war two the profile and standing of competitions like the BHFL has steadily diminished, but the key word here is 'steadily' as it was certainly not an overnight occurrence. Indeed, as late as the 1970s the BHFL's representative side was still enjoying a fair amount of success, recording wins over the likes of Woodville (by 24 points in 1970), Coburg (by 25 points the same year), and West Adelaide (by 7 points, 1972). By the early 1980s, however, the developing professionalisation of the code was beginning to have a distinctly detrimental effect on the competitiveness of 'non-league' combinations such as the BHFL; when the league took on perennial

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1 Morton booted 6 of South Australia's 19 goals in this game, with ruckman Reg Mullins (West Torrens) chipping in with 4 while resting up forward; for Broken Hill, however, key forwards Smith (7 goals) and Brenton (5) did even better.

SANFL wooden spooner Woodville in 1982, for instance, it was unequivocally beaten.

The talent conduit between BHFL and other, ostensibly superior competitions, notably the SANFL, was still in full swing, however. Neil Davies, for example, was a star with Glenelg, Richmond and St Marys, Colin Casey played 251 league games in thirteen seasons with Sturt, while Andy Bennett enjoyed a successful career as a player and coach in three states, and these are just a few of examples. As late as the 1970s Broken Hill could realistically lay claim to still being one of the genuine hotbeds of the game, but one is forced to wonder whether that is still the case. For example, a glance at The 'AFL Record' Guide To Season 2005 reveals that only two players then on AFL club lists (Essendon's Dean Solomon, and Brent Staker of West Coast) actually hailed originally from the city which could arguably, at one time, lay claim to being the per capita capital of Australia's only indigenous sport. Of course, it may simply be that football is undergoing a temporary slump, and that all will be well once more in a few years time, but somehow this is hard to accept. Football today, for both participants and observers, is increasingly perceived as providing just one among many potential ways of utilising the leisure dollar, and in country Australia, once the heart and soul of the game, it is all too easy nowadays to choose alternative spending outlets. This state of affairs is likely to be here to stay, one senses, forever leaving the history of Australian football in Broken Hill as perhaps the code's quintessential tale of romance, sparkling ambition, excitement, allure, and against-the-odds achievement - but, ultimately, one is constrained to admit, of unfulfilled potential, missed opportunity, and acutely exasperating failure.

## BHFL Premiers 1890 to 2008

1890 South Australians	1911 Norths
1891 South Australians	1912 Brokenks
1892 South Australians	1913 Brokenks
1893 South Australians	1914 Norths
1894 South Australians	1915 Brokenks
1895 Victorians	1916 Wests
1896 South Australians	1917 Wests
1897 Victorians	1918 Wests
1898 South Australians	1919 Souths
1899 South Australians	1920 Norths
1900 Wests	1921 Wests
1901 Wests	1922 Wests
1902 Norths	1923 Souths
1903 Wests	1924 Norths
1904 Norths	1925 <i>Competition abandoned</i>
1905 Norths	1926 Souths
1906 Souths	1927 Wests
1907 Norths	1928 Souths
1908 Norths	1929 Wests
1909 Norths	1930 Wests
1910 Brokenks	1931 Souths

1932 Wests	1979 Centrals
1933 Wests	1980 Wests
1934 Norths	1981 Centrals
1935 Centrals	1982 Centrals
1936 Norths	1983 Centrals
1937 Centrals	1984 Centrals
1938 Centrals	1985 Centrals
1939 Wests	1986 Norths
1940 Centrals	1987 Souths
1941 Centrals	1988 Norths
1942 South	1989 Souths
1943 Centrals	1990 Wests
1944 Souths	1991 Souths
1945 Norths	1992 Norths
1946 Norths	1993 Centrals
1947 Norths	1994 Norths
1948 Norths	1995 Centrals
1949 Wests	1996 Souths
1950 Norths	1997 Souths
1951 Norths	1998 Norths
1952 Souths	1999 Souths
1953 Souths	2000 Norths
1954 Wests	2001 Centrals
1955 Wests	2002 Souths
1956 Souths	2003 Souths
1957 Norths	2004 Norths
1958 Souths	2005 Souths
1959 Norths	2006 Centrals
1960 Norths	2007 Norths
1961 Souths	2008 Norths
1962 Wests	
1963 Wests	
1964 Wests	
1965 Norths	
1966 Wests	
1967 Souths	
1968 Souths	
1969 Souths	
1970 Souths	
1971 Centrals	
1972 Centrals	
1973 Centrals	
1974 Souths	
1975 Norths	
1976 Norths	
1977 Norths	
1978 Wests	

**SUMMARY OF WINS:**

<b>34</b> North Broken Hill
<b>27</b> South Broken Hill
<b>24</b> West Broken Hill
<b>23</b> Central Broken Hill/Brokens
<b>8</b> South Australians
<b>2</b> Victorians

with Phil continuing for another five seasons after that, by which time he had played a total of 277 senior games. Tall and strongly built he played most of his career, including 1 state appearance for South Australia, as a defender.

**Broughton Football Association:** This competition ran between 1910 and 1979, with its regularly competing clubs including Blyth, Brinkworth, Port Broughton, Gulnare, Koolunga, Red Hill, Snowtown and Wokurna.

**BROWN, COLIN** spent the beginning and end of his West Adelaide career playing in the back pocket, while during the intervening time he established a reputation as one of the premier rovers in South Australia. He earned state selection and won club best and fairest awards in both positions. Brown made his senior debut in 1946, and the following year was in the back pocket as West overcame Norwood by 5 goals in the SANFL grand final. His switch to roving came shortly after the club's leading rover Fos Williams was cleared to Port Adelaide in 1950. For much of the next decade, Brown combined with Jim Wright to give Westies arguably the best roving duo in South Australia. Quick, cool and precise, Brown was a ball player par excellence - when a donnybrook erupted at half time of the 1954 grand final against Port Adelaide, Brown was the only one of the thirty-six players on the field not to get involved.

Between 1946 and 1959, Colin Brown played 227 games for West Adelaide, winning best and fairest awards in 1948, 1953 and 1954. He represented South Australia 10 times.

**BROWN, ROY:** Best remembered for being captain of West Torrens' inaugural premiership team in 1924, Roy Brown was an accomplished centreman who was particularly admired for his general adeptness at ground level, and for his superb distribution by both hand and foot. In addition to captaining the blue and golds, he shared the coaching for a time with team mate

Johnny Karney, and between them the pair encouraged a fast and flexible style of play in which the flick pass featured prominently. Following the banning of the flick pass in 1925, Torrens underwent a gradual decline as a league power.

Roy Brown joined West Torrens in 1921 and, over the ensuing seven seasons, went on to play between 104 and 106 league games (sources vary) for the club. He won a best and fairest award in 1923, and was appointed captain the same year, a position he retained until he left the club for Glenelg at the end of the 1927 season. After Torrens refused him a clearance, Brown was forced to serve the Seaside as non-playing coach in 1928, but he resumed his playing career briefly in 1929, adding a final 9 games to his overall tally. Brown left Glenelg at the end of the 1929 season, but he returned to the club as non-playing coach in 1938. In both 1928 and 1929 the black and golds had finished seventh, but in his second two season stint as coach the club finished dead set last twice.

It is as a player, however, that Roy Brown deserves to be best remembered. Intelligent, wily and creative, he was a regular choice for South Australia during the early 1920s, with his 7 interstate appearances including games at the 1924 Hobart carnival, when he was the team's captain.

**BROWN, TONY** joined St Kilda from Geelong Falcons and impressed as a hard running, highly determined on-baller. Between 1995 and 2000 he played a total of 108 AFL games for the Saints, kicking 62 goals, but his form dipped markedly towards the end. The 2001 season saw Brown at Port Adelaide Magpies, where he proved a decided acquisition, sharing that season's Magarey Medal with team mate Ryan O'Connor, and going on to give the club five seasons of good service, the last two of them as captain.

**Brownlow Medal:** Named after the prominent Geelong and VFL administrator Charles

Brownlow, the Brownlow Medal was first awarded in 1924 when, fittingly, it was won by a Geelong player in Edward 'Carji' Greeves. Like the Magarey Medal, the Brownlow is awarded on the basis of votes cast by field umpires.

A total of nine South Australian-born players have, between them, so far won a total of ten Brownlow Medals, i.e. -

- 1953 Bernie Smith (Geelong)
- 1978 Malcolm Blight (North Melbourne)
- 1987 John Platten (Hawthorn)
- 1993 Gavin Wanganeen (Essendon)
- 1999 Shane Crawford (Hawthorn)
- 2003 Nathan Buckley (Collingwood)
- 2003 Mark Ricciuto (Adelaide)
- 2003 & 2006 Adam Goodes (Sydney)
- 2008 Adam Cooney (Western Bulldogs)

**Browns Well Football Association:** This competition commenced at the end of the first world war and continued until 1968. Member clubs at various times included Alawoona, Meribah, Paruna, Peebinga, Taplan, United Ramblers (formed via the merger of Meribah and Paruna) and Wanbi. Between 1926 and 1931 the competition was amalgamated with the somewhat stronger Loxton Football Association, with five of the six premierships during that time being claimed by former LFA clubs. The exception was the 1931 flag, won by Paruna.

BWFA premierships totals 1920-68 were: 13 Paruna; 12 Meribah; 4 Alawoona, United Ramblers; 3 Taplan; 1 Peebinga, Wanbi.

**BRUCE, GEORGE** made his debut for West Adelaide in 1899 and went on to play 43 matches for the club over the next four years. In 1903 he transferred to Carlton, where he immediately impressed with his immense pace, determination, elusiveness and intelligence. Bruce's arrival coincided with the onset of a halcyon era for the Blues, and the livewire wingman was one of the key contributors to that success, being listed high among the best players in each of the side's three successive grand final wins from 1906 to 1908. Quite why

Carlton chose to ignore players from this key era in the club's history, such as Bruce, when it named its official 'Team of the Twentieth Century', remains something of a mystery.

The 1908 season saw the inaugural interstate championship series in Melbourne, and Bruce was named on a wing for the VFL's match with South Australia. However, an injury sustained in that match forced him out of the team for the decisive clash of the carnival against West Australia.

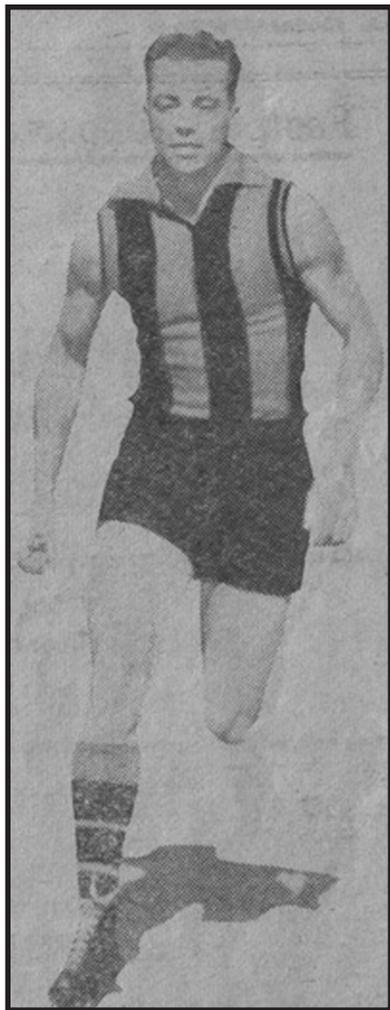
During the final couple of years of his illustrious eleven season, 181 game VFL career George Bruce acted as Carlton's secretary.

**BUBNER, PETER** joined central District from Hamley Bridge in 1977, and the following year was a Teal Cup player for South Australia. An accomplished all round sportsman, he also represented the state at both junior and senior level athletics.

Bubner made his senior league debut for the Bulldogs in 1980 en route to becoming a key player for the club throughout the ensuing decade. Capable of playing almost anywhere, he probably produced his best football on the last line of defence, and it was almost certainly no coincidence that, when shifted to full back by coach Darryl Hicks in 1983 - somewhat against his wishes, apparently - he went on to produce the most consistent season of his career, earning prominent mention in despatches on numerous occasions, culminating in a club best and fairest award. He later went on to represent South Australia with distinction 7 times, mainly as a defender.

In 1991, after 199 games with Centrals, Peter Bubner crossed to Sturt, which was being coached at the time by his former Bulldogs team mate Steven Trigg, and he rounded off his career with a final 28 games over two seasons.

Bubner's father, John Bubner, was an interstate ruckman who played 105 games for North Adelaide between 1957 and 1962.



*Don Budarick (West Adelaide)*

**BUCKLEY, NATHAN** is best remembered in South Australia for a single season of dominance in 1992 which saw him claim the Magarey Medal and help his club, Port Adelaide, to an emphatic grand final win over Glenelg, following which he was awarded the Fos Williams Medal for best afield. Buckley also won Port's best and fairest award that year before going on to carve out a memorable fifteen season AFL career with Brisbane (20 games in 1993) and Collingwood (260 games, 1994-2007). Besides sharing the 2003 Brownlow Medal with Adelaide's Mark Ricciuto and Adam

Goodes of Sydney, Buckley claimed a Norm Smith Medal in a losing grand final team in 2001, won the Copeland Trophy as Collingwood's best and fairest player half a dozen times (including once jointly), and made the AFL All Australian team in 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001 and 2003. Nathan Buckley's father, Ray Buckley, had played league football with Woodville during the 1960s and 1970s.

**BUDARICK, DONALD:** Recruited by West Adelaide in 1937, Don Budarick made his league debut the same year and immediately stamped himself as a defender of considerable class. Sadly, his five season, 74 game senior career was brought to a premature end by the war, but he nevertheless managed to win a club best and fairest award in 1940, and to represent the state on 2 occasions.

**BUNTON JR., HAYDN (HoF 2002):** Following in the footsteps of a famous father is never easy, even at the best of times, but Haydn Bunton junior, son of the player whom some regard as the most audaciously gifted of all time, had more obstacles to overcome than most. As a boy he suffered from Perthe's disease, and spent six years trapped within leg-irons or a frame before gradually re-acquiring the ability to walk by using crutches. By the time he was fifteen he was not only playing high school football with and against boys who were, on average, two or three years older than he was, he had also made some telling adaptations to his style of play in order to compensate for his perhaps understandable lack of leg speed. Chief among these adaptations was his uncanny proficiency at handball, which in terms of its accuracy and the speed with which it could be implemented was ahead of its time. Quick to note its effectiveness, Bunton would later, when coaching, accord intelligent use of handball pride of place among his arsenal of attacking weaponry. He was also one of the first coaches in Australia to discourage

# BULLDOGS FIND THEIR BARK

## Elizabeth Oval, Saturday 15 July 1967

### Stumbling Toward Tradition: Central District's Early Years

Since the turn of the present century, the Central District Football Club has enjoyed unequalled success in the SANFL, but this position was not arrived at easily. Over the years, the club and its supporters suffered many disappointments and false dawns, eliciting considerable derision and disdain in the process. Indeed, something that very few people today probably recall or realise is that, four decades ago, the club actually went within a hairsbreadth of being stillborn.

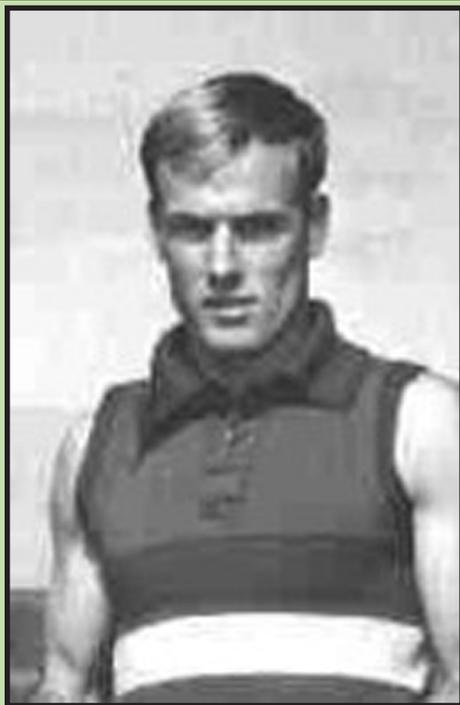
In 1959 the SANFL made the momentous and highly controversial decision to expand its competition from eight clubs to ten via the admission of Central District, representing Adelaide's rapidly growing northern suburbs, and Woodville. The two cinderella clubs would initially be required to serve an indeterminate probationary period in the seconds competition, beginning in 1960, but by 1962 it was clear that many of the key figures in the SANFL hierarchy were beginning to doubt the wisdom of the proposed expansion. Consequently, in a bid to clear the air and focus minds, the league set up a special three man committee, chaired by its vice-chairman, Don Brebner, to examine the issue in detail, and to make formal recommendations to the clubs as to how the competition ought to be structured from 1964 onwards. In brief, the committee's recommendations were:

- That the senior league competition should continue to comprise just eight clubs
- That the projected future population of the northern suburbs clearly warranted a league presence, and therefore South Adelaide should be required to re-locate to Elizabeth
- That no more teams representing areas west of Adelaide should be admitted to the competition
- That preparatory work should be undertaken to facilitate the expansion of the league competition to ten clubs in about 1975 by means of the admission of teams based in Noarlunga and Tea Tree Gully

When these proposals were submitted to the eight club delegates for approval, voting was split 4-4, with Port Adelaide, Sturt, West Adelaide and West Torrens voting 'yay', and the other four club delegates 'nay'. The decision as to whether or not Central District and Woodville should be admitted to the league competition, or even continue to exist, was therefore placed squarely in the hands of league chairman, Tony Kenny, who had the casting vote. Seldom can such power over the entire future of the game in South Australia have been conferred on one individual, but thankfully for future fans of the Bulldogs he made what history has shown to be a wise decision.<sup>1</sup>

Not that Centrals' problems were over - far from it. When the club was finally admitted to the senior SANFL competition in 1964 it was the equivalent of a lamb among wolves, and if adversity can be regarded as one of the essential building blocks of maturity and

<sup>1</sup> *The South Australian Football Yearbook 1963*, pages 7-8.



*Centrals' captain-coach Ken Eustice*

tradition, there was plenty of it to come during the side's early seasons, much of it ruthlessly dispensed by men wearing the black and white jumpers of South Australia's most famous club. In 1964, the Bulldogs met Port Adelaide twice, losing by 124 points at Alberton and 137 points at Elizabeth, and managing an aggregate score over the two games of just 6 goals 9. For inaugural Centrals captain-coach Ken Eustice, the Port Adelaide system represented something to which the fledgling club could do much worse than aspire.

Despite being a West Adelaide product, Eustice's own style of play bore many of the characteristics espoused by Port Adelaide mentor Fos Williams, himself an avowed and ardent Eustice admirer, and it was largely because of Eustice's influence that Central District, in its early years, developed a style of play in which the old fashioned virtues of passion, aggression and determination often helped compensate for a basic lack of talent. That said, it would be wrong to suggest that Eustice saw football as a game for mindless

thugs. In a coaching manual published in 1967 his key advice to young, aspiring footballers was, "Always keep your cool. Play with your head as well as your body. Try to play intelligently - but always play with determination".<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately for Eustice, most of his charges at Centrals lacked the talent necessary to implement his philosophy, which meant that, to the objective onlooker, there was little apparent system to the Bulldogs' play, which seemingly revolved around the simple expedient of getting the ball and kicking it as far as possible in a goalwards direction in the often forlorn hope that a team mate down field would be successful in doing the same. My father, a Sturt supporter, frequently amused himself by referring to the Centrals style of play as "bush football", and indeed compared to the scientific, skill-oriented Double Blues approach of the day, he undoubtedly had a point.

### **A Trip To Elizabeth**

**M**y best friend Charlie was a West Torrens supporter, which is the main reason that Saturday 15 July 1967 found me, an ardent Port Adelaide fan, at Elizabeth Oval for the meeting of home side Central District and the Eagles. Accompanying us was Charlie's granddad - 'Pops' - a jocular and, to my youthful perception, extraordinarily wizened man, with brown teeth and firm, unwavering opinions. Some of these opinions related to footy, and were characteristically expressed with adamantine terseness, almost as if by rote.

"How do you think Centrals will go against Torrens at the weekend, Pops?"

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *The South Australian Football Record Yearbook 1968*, page 87.

“Ah, no hope Centrals, no hope.” (Uttered machine gun style, almost as a single word, and rounded off with a half embarrassed, mirthless chuckle.)

“What about Sturt against South?”

“Ah, no worries Sturt, no worries.” (The same knee-jerk, staccato certainty; the same mirthless laugh.)

Regardless of the opposition, Pops’s answers never varied. Centrals was always “no hope”, Sturt “no worries”.

Mind you, in 1967 you did not have to be a football genius to make these kinds of assessments. The premiership ladder printed inside the ‘SA Football Budget’ for 15 July made the contemporary balance of power clear:

	<b>Won</b>	<b>Lost</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Ag.</b>	<b>Pts</b>	<b>%</b>
Sturt	11	1	1469	909	22	61.77
North Adelaide	10	2	1298	981	20	56.95
Port Adelaide	8	4	1089	886	16	55.13
Norwood	7	5	1234	1155	14	51.65
Glenelg	6	6	1206	1027	12	54.00
South Adelaide	5	7	1156	1162	10	49.87
West Adelaide	5	7	1128	1145	10	49.62
West Torrens	5	7	1045	1278	10	44.98
Central District	2	10	817	1391	4	37.00
Woodville	1	11	996	1504	2	39.84

However, what the ladder does not reveal is the recent trend of disastrous form that had seen West Torrens sustain five consecutive losses to tumble from third from top after seven rounds, to third from bottom prior to this match. Indeed, so poor had Torrens’ recent displays been, that the Budget writer felt justified in suggesting that “All Centrals need is a return to top form from Tom Grljusich, to be reasonably confident of their third win for the season”.<sup>1</sup>

Originally from South Fremantle, where he would return at the end of the season, Bulldogs vice-captain Grljusich was a strong marking, quick thinking, powerful key position player who, along with Ken Eustice, formed the backbone of Centrals’ woefully under-resourced and extremely inexperienced side.<sup>2</sup> Other key players for the Bulldogs included Sonny Morey, an original member of the club’s League team whose career would finally blossom after Eustice’s replacement as Centrals coach, Dennis Jones, transformed him from a livewire but erratic wingman into the best rebounding back pocket in the state; former East Fremantle rover Keith Shorthill; promising ruckman Gary Smith; and long kicking full back Terry Phillips, who later in the year would beat off the challenges of players from Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania to win the inaugural ‘Craven Filter Champion Kick of Australia’ contest.

On paper, West Torrens had a much stronger line-up than Centrals, even allowing for the absence through injury of two key players in the shape of centre half forward Geoff

1 ‘SA Football Budget’, 15/7/67, page 8.

2 This is evidenced by the fact that, in the 1967 Magarey Medal count, the Bulldogs polled an aggregate of 42 votes, with Eustice (15) and Grljusich (11) netting more than half of that total between them. Grljusich, who grew up in Perth idolising all time great Graham ‘Polly’ Farmer, shared to some extent his hero’s uncanny ability to open up the play with prodigious, perfectly directed hand passes to unmarked team mates.

Kingston and ruckman Chris Butler. In Lindsay Head, the Eagles had one of the most skilful players in the League, indeed in Australia, while centre half back Glen Pill, utility Fred Bills, rover David Lee, half forward Peter Phillipou, and full back Tracy Braidwood were all players of the top rank. Also appearing for the Eagles in this match was a man by the name of Wayne Jackson, who would later enjoy much greater notoriety as a football administrator. In the view of Pat Hall, "there is no doubt that Torrens have the ability to extend any side in the competition, if they decide to put their best foot forward".<sup>1</sup> This ability had been amply demonstrated during the first meeting between Torrens and Centrals in 1967 when, in round four at Thebarton, the Eagles had enjoyed an effortless 59 point success, but since then the players' confidence had declined appreciably. At season's end, second year coach Ron Ashby would become the inevitable scapegoat for the team's decline, making way for former Essendon and Victorian rover Johnny Birt.

In contrast to the old world charm of Thebarton, the verdant splendour of Adelaide, the almost palpable air of tradition at Alberton, or the ramshackle claustrophobia of Norwood, Elizabeth Oval in 1967 was a threadbare and uninviting place. Despite the fact that you were only some 24 kilometres from the heart of Adelaide, you almost got the feeling that you had 'gone bush' with, as suggested above, some of the football played by the home side only serving to reinforce the impression.

During the interval between the seconds game (won surprisingly by ninth placed Centrals against second placed Torrens by 60 points), a brief ceremony took place out on the ground in which the General Manager of John Martins donated a perpetual best and fairest trophy to the Central District Football Club. At the time, such an event was a comparative novelty, with business and football enjoying at best a platonic friendship rather than the full-blown love affair that would all too rapidly develop.

After the two teams had engaged in a couple of warm up laps, and had their sprigs and fingernails inspected, Torrens captain Fred Bills won the toss and elected to kick to the southern end of the ground, which was favoured by a fairly stiff, four or five goal breeze.

### **Eagles Dominate early Exchanges**

The Eagles were straight into attack from the opening bounce and, with the exception of a brief spell during the middle of the term, that was where they remained. The Bulldogs, however, defended with commendable determination, repeatedly forcing the play onto the eastern side of the ground from which, given that the wind was blowing from the north west, kicking for goal was more problematical. That, at least, was certainly the Eagles: experience: as time-on commenced, they led by 7 points, 1.8 to 1.1, having squandered numerous scoring opportunities either by poor kicking or over elaboration. On at least two occasions, players marked within easy goal kicking range, but elected to play on, placing team mates under intense pressure with poor handballs, as a result of which the Centrals defenders were able to clear the danger.

Deep into time-on, the Bulldogs back line finally cracked, not once, but twice, allowing a somewhat relieved group of West Torrens players to head for the quarter time huddle 19 points to the good. Even so, on balance of play it ought to have been much more.

Up in the grandstand, where the three of us were sitting as a concession to Pop's advancing years, I munched cheerfully on the pie I had bought in preference to a Budget, and asked Charlie what letter Port was on the progress scoreboard. "D," he informed me, from which intelligence I was able to ascertain that the Magpies, like Torrens, had seemingly squandered

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<sup>1</sup> 'Footy World', 19/7/67, page 3.

scoring opportunities in the opening term against North at Prospect, as despite having managed 7 scoring shots to 3, they trailed by a point. Ah well, early days.

"What letters are South and Sturt?" I asked. "G and H," proffered Charlie, and then added. "Hey, Pops - Sturt's leading South by 4 points."

The old guy chuckled sagely, or was it wistfully? "Ah, no worries Sturt, no worries."

**QUARTER TIME: West Torrens 3.8 (26); Central District 1.1 (7)**

### **Bulldogs Fail To Take Advantage**

**C**entral District's lack of experience and poor team discipline were glaringly exemplified for most of the second term. Despite enjoying the not inconsiderable wind advantage, Centrals failed to dominate to anything like the same extent that Torrens had in the opening quarter. Kicking long and hopefully only succeeds as a tactic if you have superior numbers at the fall of the ball, or else players who are capable of winning more than their share of one on one contests. With Braidwood, Jackson and Graham in superb touch on the Torrens back line, the Bulldogs were unable to concoct more than a handful of scoring opportunities, and although by the long break they had managed to reduce the margin to 11 points, there was nothing to suggest they were capable of overhauling their more poised and efficient opponents. **HALF TIME: West Torrens 4.9 (33); Central District 3.4 (22)**

### **Eagles Back In Command**

**T**he third term was a virtual carbon copy of the first, with Torrens enjoying almost total territorial domination, but Centrals defending with considerable grit and effectiveness. A prolonged break in the play when Torrens forward John Staker was taken from the ground on a stretcher after sustaining a badly gashed leg threatened to undermine the Eagles' momentum, but with David Lee, Freddie Bills, John Graham and Lindsay Head in the thick of the action they maintained their ascendancy virtually all over the ground except in front of the big white sticks.

During the lemon time interval, Charlie and I jumped the fence and headed out onto the ground. While Charlie trotted over to the Eagles camp to listen to Ron Ashby's words of wisdom, I elected, for some obscure, unknowable reason, to eavesdrop on Eustice. It was a providential decision, giving rise to an experience that I can still recall quite vividly almost 40 years later, an experience rendered almost seminal in my recollection - no doubt disproportionately so - by the subsequent events of the final quarter.

By no means the most formidable of physical specimens, Eustice nevertheless commanded rapt attention from every one of his players, not to mention the thirty or forty or so interested onlookers. It wasn't so much the substance of what Eustice was saying - indeed, other than assimilating a handful of expressions that my father later painfully convinced me ought never to form part of a well-behaved eleven year old's vocabulary, I remember little of what was actually said - it was more the expression on his face, and the sheer animal ferocity with which the words were uttered. Quite why I should find such bald, unfettered emotion so inspiring is unclear, but the fact that I did so is undeniable. Indeed, had Eustice asked me to don a Centrals jumper and line up on Eagles champion Lindsay Head for the final term I have little doubt that I would have succeeded in comprehensively blanketing him, to the extent that he would probably have been dragged, leaving me to run riot during the closing minutes of the match with 3 or 4 match-winning goals.

OK, I exaggerate.... but seldom can so much invective, and so much saliva, have been so fervently and advantageously expended. Footy may well be the world's most majestic and spectacular sport, but underpinning and informing it is a primal energy that the conventions

of civilised society for the most part emasculate or divert. Footy too, which inevitably reflects society to some extent, is not above such emasculation, but thankfully to date the essence of the game has remained untouched, although recent needless experimental tinkering with the scoring system, as essential an element in the fabric of the game as the shape of the ball or the concept of the handpass or the mark, perhaps prefigures a worrying stage in the sport's development. The more regimented and subject to measurement and control a sport becomes, the less capable it is of tapping into those elemental reaches of the human soul in which philosophy, science and theology alike inform us, fulfillment and self-realisation lie. **THREE QUARTER TIME: West Torrens 6.14 (50); Central District 3.4 (22)**

### **The Bulldogs Find Their Bark**

**B**ut back to Elizabeth Oval in 1967, and the to me incredible sight of a hitherto inept and uncoordinated Central District outfit raising both the tempo and the tenor of its performance to such an extent that, for the entirety of the last quarter, Torrens scarcely managed to get the ball ahead of centre, let alone trouble the scorers. It is a dreadful cliché, but no less true for that, that the Bulldog players played like men possessed, always seeming to have more bodies at the fall of the ball than their opponents, and slowly but surely reducing the margin with what, at the time, seemed like predetermined certainty. With a couple of minutes to go, and scores deadlocked, Julian Swinstead, having marked within easy goal kicking range, kicked truly, and Centrals had finally captured the lead, so that Eustice's passionately fiery, if scarcely comprehensible, diatribe had born fruit. Indeed, during that tumultuous final term, no one took the sentiments uttered in the 'lemon time' huddle to heart more thoroughly and unquestioningly than the coach himself, whose 12 final quarter kicks gave him a match total of 35, and automatic selection - later endorsed by the umpires at Magarey Medal time - as best afield.

The Bulldogs' eventual 6 point win was one of only five achieved by the team all year, and like all the others (Woodville by 4 and 7 points, West Adelaide by 4 points and Norwood by 4 points) it was achieved both against the odds and against the grain, a victory not so much for talent as for passion and strength of will, two of the most essential contributors to success, not just in football, but in virtually any field you care to name.

"Port's lost," said Pops, with rather too much relish for my liking. He pointed at the scoreboard, where the attendant had just affixed the fateful numbers 'C 12.7 D 8.12'. I determinedly adopted a poker face, belying my inner angst. '19 points!' I quickly calculated. 'That's almost a massacre!'

Then came a moment I couldn't help but enjoy. 'G 8.25' the scoreboard informed us. Dreadful kicking, but..... Yes! There it was: 'H 9.8' - a win to South by 11 points. "Hey Pops, Sturt's lost," I helpfully announced, carefully if somewhat exaggeratedly adopting my most cherubic facial expression. His response, like so much else, is lost in the mists of time.

**FINAL SCORE: Central District 8.8 (56); West Torrens 6.14 (50)**

**BEST - Centrals:** Eustice, Shorthill, Hage, Stutley, Bentley **West Torrens:** Braidwood, Graham, Jackson, Bills, Head, Lee

**SCORERS - Centrals:** Hage, Swinstead 2.0; Webber 1.2; Foley, Grjusich 1.1; Shorthill 1.0; Eustice 0.2; Bentley, Smith 0.1 **West Torrens:** Lee 2.2; Tucker 2.1; Staker 1.3; Shepherd 1.0; Head 0.3; Phillipou 0.2; Bills, Caldow 0.1; rushed 0.1

**ATTENDANCE:** 4,098 at Elizabeth Oval

and eventually ban completely the use of the erratic and unreliable drop kick by his players.

Bunton commenced his league career as a seventeen year old with North Adelaide in 1954 and two years later was one of South Australia's best players at the interstate carnival in Perth, earning All Australian selection and the plaudits of team mates and opponents alike. At the end of the season he finished first in North's best and fairest voting, but was controversially stripped of the honour when he asked for a clearance to Norwood - a club which, ironically, he had loathed as a Port Adelaide-loving youngster. Although still aged only nineteen, Bunton already had coaching aspirations, and aware of this the Redlegs had offered him the job of senior coach for 1957.

Bunton coached Norwood for two years, the first in a strictly non-playing capacity after North refused to clear him, and in 1958 he steered the side to a losing grand final against Port Adelaide. In 1959 he moved to Tasmania as coach of Launceston, but after suffering horrendous injuries in a car accident prior to the start of the season it was feared he might never walk again. However, the same determination that had helped him shrug off the effects of Perthe's disease returned to the fore again, and Bunton not only walked once more, he returned to the football field. In that season's final series he picked himself at centre against City-South and managed over 30 disposals, all but 4 of them handpasses.

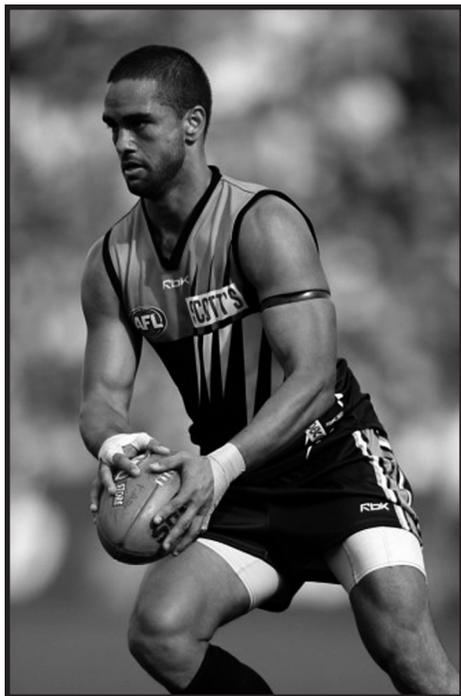
After spending the 1960 season back with Norwood, Bunton embraced the greatest challenge of his career to date by accepting an offer to coach WANFL club Swan Districts, which at that point in time had yet to win a senior flag. Bunton's achievement in lifting Swans from last place in 1960 to an odds-defying grand final defeat of East Perth in 1961 seems, if anything, even more miraculous in hindsight than it probably did at the time. Further premierships followed in 1962 and 1963, and Haydn Bunton's reputation as a master coach was born. Perhaps even more miraculously, the man

who just three and a half years earlier had been groaning semi-conscious in a crushed vehicle, with shattered ribs, mangled kneecap, and profuse internal bleeding, was in 1962 awarded the Sandover Medal as Western Australia's pre-eminent footballer.

The 1965 season saw Bunton back at Norwood where, although he failed to achieve success in premiership terms, he played a major part in establishing the youth policy that would prove to be the foundation of the club's eventual return to greatness in the 1970s. It was a similar story at Bunton's next port of call, Subiaco, where he remained from 1968 to 1972, the last two years of which saw him coaching from the sidelines. In 1973, with Bunton's replacement Ross Smith at the helm, the Lions broke through for their first flag in almost half a century, but few people were in any doubt that it was the man affectionately dubbed 'the little master' who was in actual fact the prime architect of the victory.

Haydn Bunton's coaching reputation was further enhanced by stints at South Adelaide (from 1975 to 1982) and back again at Subiaco, where he masterminded premierships in 1986 and 1988. Only at Sturt, where he failed to lift the club off the bottom in 1993 and '94, could he be said to have under-achieved. In many ways the antithesis of his flamboyant, some would even say egotistical father, Haydn Bunton junior was like him in one respect: his contribution to the game he loved was significant, unique and enduring.

**BURGAN, TONY:** One of only two South Australians to achieve All Australian selection after the 1972 Perth carnival, Tony Burgan had overcome a slow start to his league career, during which he had had difficulty breaking into the all powerful Sturt line-up, to become one of the finest, and most adaptable players, in the SANFL. Quick, resourceful and highly skilled, Burgan was equally at home across half back, centre and half forward, or as an on-baller. He made his Sturt debut in 1967, the second year of the club's halcyon 'five flags in a row'



*Peter Burgoyne (Port Adelaide)*

era, but did not play in a premiership team until the following season (as nineteenth man) when the Blues comfortably overcame Port Adelaide. In the 1969 grand final annihilation of Glenelg, Burgoyne began in a back pocket, and later had stints on the ball, while in 1970, again against the Bays, he was at half forward right.

All told, Tony Burgoyne played a total of 248 SANFL games for the Blues, plus 8 for the state. He was selected on a wing in Sturt's official 'Team of the Twentieth Century'.

**BURGOYNE, PETER:** A livewire, will o' the wisp type player, deadly near goals, and pre-eminently capable of the spectacular, Peter Burgoyne's only major problem early in his senior career was a lack of consistency. After playing junior football with St Marys in Darwin, and gaining All Australian selection after representing the Northern Territory at the National Under Eighteen Championships in 1995, he was invited to join Port Adelaide's

under nineteen academy. In 1996 he was a member of Port's SANFL reserves premiership team, having played a number of senior games - some scintillating, some ordinary - earlier in the season. It was a similar story in 1997 when he was a member of Port Adelaide's inaugural AFL squad. After starting the season brilliantly, he lost his way and was dropped. However, he showed commendable persistence by applying himself to the task at hand, and gaining selection once again for the final 3 games of the season.

Burgoyne's form over the course of the next couple of seasons showed sustained improvement, as did his level of consistency. Having begun his AFL career chiefly as a crumbing forward, feeding off the likes of Warren Tredrea and Scott Cummings, later on he began to be used more across centre or on the ball, where his pace and precise ball delivery made him highly damaging and effective. He was a key member in 2004 of the Power's inaugural AFL premiership-winning team and has continued to produce highly effective, occasionally dazzling, football ever since. At the end of the 2008 season, Burgoyne had played a total of 225 AFL games and kicked 189 goals.

**BURKETT, GARTH:** Clever, quick and abundantly talented, Garth (usually abbreviated to 'Gar') Burkett had a somewhat spasmodic career at the top level but it was nevertheless enough to stamp him in many observers' minds as a rare talent. A centreman in most of his 92 games with West Adelaide and West Adelaide-Glenelg, Burkett was close to best afield in the winning grand final team of 1947, while his 4 interstate appearances for South Australia included games at the 1947 Hobart carnival. His league career began with West Adelaide-Glenelg during the final year of the reduced scale wartime competition, 1944, and ended, after several highly successful intervening stints with West Broken Hill, plus two West Adelaide best and fairest awards, eleven

seasons later. During the Broken Hill phases of his career, Burkett played interstate football for New South Wales, and won a competition best and fairest award in 1949. His nephew John Burkett later also enjoyed a successful, decade long career with Westies during which he played 146 games and kicked 139 goals.

**Burra Football Association:** The earliest incarnation of the BFA comprised three teams, Aberdeen, Kooringa and Ramblers, and was in existence as early as the 1880s. Between the wars the competition was bolstered by the addition of such clubs as Booborowie, Booborowie South and Mt Bryan. The BFA was not reformed after world war two with its former clubs migrating en masse to the North Eastern Football Association.

**BURTON, SYDNEY:** A formidable all round footballer, Syd Burton could play as a follower or in any key position with equal effectiveness. He took his league bows with North Adelaide in 1930, and at the end of the season, playing at centre half forward, was close to best afield in a stirring 4 point challenge final victory over Port Adelaide. In the following season's premiership decider - the first to take place under the Page-McIntyre finals system - he performed even better, and, fronting up this time at centre half back, was a popular choice as the most damaging player on view as the red and whites comfortably accounted for Sturt. Always an eye-catchingly vigorous performer, he finished joint fourth in the Magarey Medal voting in 1932, and came fourth in his own right two years later. His versatility and big game mentality helped make him an invaluable interstate player, and he represented South Australia a total of 17 times, including games at the 1933 Sydney carnival, during the course of his nine season SANFL career. In 1936 he served as club skipper, leading the side as far as the preliminary final. He was made a playing

life member of the club when he retired in 1938, and later became a life member of the SANFL as well.

**BUSHBY, ALF** was an extraordinarily versatile and highly skilled player who, during a halcyon era for his second club South Adelaide, was allegedly "recognised as the finest player in South Australia, and second only to A.J. Thurgood of Essendon, Victoria, as the champion footballer of Australia". Always a threat near goal, Bushby topped the SAFA goal kicking list with 25 goals in 1897.

Bushby actually began his senior career with Port Adelaide where he was a member and captain of the club's runner-up combination in 1889. Three years earlier he had been leased to South Melbourne for its final match of the season against Geelong, an encounter which would decide the destiny of the 1886 VFA premiership. In front of a then record crowd of 34,121, Geelong won comfortably, 4.19 to 1.5 (behinds not counting).

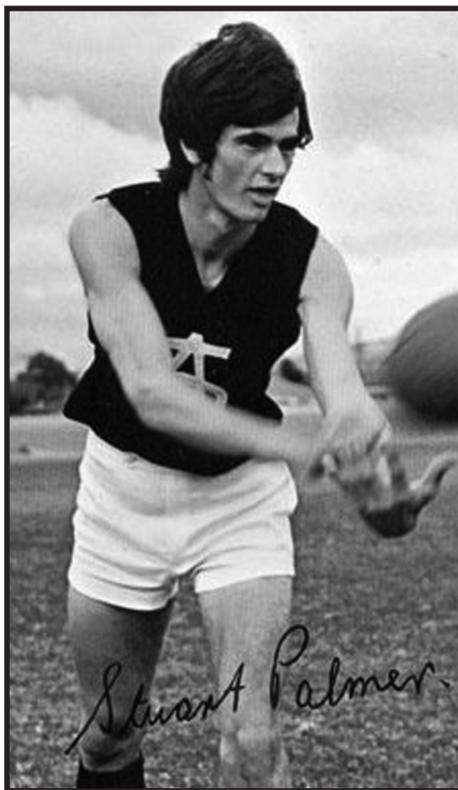
During his time with the blue and whites in the early to mid-1890s the club won four premierships and was once runner-up.

**BUTCHART, GIL:** Born in eastern Scotland, Gil Butchart moved with his family to Australia while still a youngster. Settling in Mount Gambier, he soon showed an aptitude for Australian football, and at the age of just fifteen made his senior debut for West Gambier. Three years later, in 1966, he was recruited by Norwood, where he soon became a regular player, tending to be used wherever the team most needed bolstering. A strong, confident, no frills footballer, he was perhaps best suited to centre half back, although he also played many fine games at centre half forward, particularly in his club best and fairest award-winning year of 1969. Butchart

continued to give good service to the Redlegs until 1974, which ironically was the season before the club broke through to claim its first premiership for a quarter of a century. Gil Butchart played a total of 152 senior SANFL games.

**BUTTON, NEIL:** A superb ruckman who gave tremendous value all over the ground, Neil Button was a distinguished servant of the Norwood Football Club in what, at the time of his retirement in 1985, was a Redlegs record 283 senior games. During the 1970s in particular he was without doubt one of the two or three best big men in the SANFL, a status he emphasised with outstanding performances in Norwood's victorious finals campaigns of 1975 and 1978. In the 1975 grand final defeat of Glenelg he was most observers' choice as best afield, and his display in the premiership-clinching victory over Sturt three years later was only marginally inferior. Button also helped the Redlegs to victory in the 1982 grand final against Glenelg in which he lined up at centre half forward. Two years earlier he had undergone a knee reconstruction, and he would be prevented by further injury problems from participating in a fourth flag-winning side in 1984.

Neil Button's 9 interstate appearances for South Australia included games at the 1972 Perth carnival when he was in only his second league season. Away from football, he enjoyed success as an oarsman, with the strength he derived from that sport standing him in good stead repeatedly on the various suburban ovals of the SANFL on Saturday afternoons. Button's immense reputation at the Parade, where he was universally and affectionately known as 'The Bear', was endorsed a decade and a half after his retirement as a player when he was named at centre half forward in Norwood's official 'Team of the Twentieth Century'.



*South Adelaide's Stuart Palmer*

**BUTLER, SHANE:** A North Gambier product, Shane Butler achieved virtually everything possible with South Adelaide, except the most important thing of all - a premiership.

Between 1977 and 1989 he played a total of 285 games for the club, but the losing grand final of 1979 against Port Adelaide was the closest he came to achieving every footballer's ultimate dream. Compensation of sorts came in the form of a best and fairest award in 1980, and participation in the night flag victories of 1978, 1979, 1984 and 1986.

Butler, who gave equally effective service on the ball, across centre or on a half forward flank, was skipper of the Panthers in his last two seasons of league football. Somewhat surprisingly, he was never chosen to represent his state.



*Crows stars Geg Anderson (rear left) and Ben Hart (rear right), with young fans.*

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**CAHILL, DARRELL:** A top class golfer in addition to a footballer, Port Adelaide's Darrell Cahill was probably less fêted than his older brother John, but was no less effective in his way. Playing initially across half back or on a wing, but later mainly as a rover, he was hard working and industrious, and formed an excellent on ball partnership with Brian Cunningham. His 263 league games between 1969 and 1982 included the winning grand finals of 1977, 1979 (when he was best afield), 1980 and 1981. Darrell Cahill also represented South Australia 8 times.

**CAHILL, JACK** - popularly referred to as 'Lick-Lack' - was a fine player for West Adelaide before, partly during, and immediately after World War Two. He may indeed have lost his best years to that conflict, and was singularly unfortunate in that he retired in 1946, a year before Westies broke through to claim their first senior flag in two decades. Between 1936 and 1941 and in 1945-6 he played a total of 117 SANFL games and kicked 103 goals. He also represented the state on 4 occasions. His father, Jack Cahill senior, played 35 games for West during the first decade of the twentieth century.

**CAHILL, JOHN (HoF 2002):** In 267 club and 29 state games John Cahill never performed with an intensity of effort below 100%. To football followers who can recall seeing him play his very name is synonymous with courage. However, 'Gentleman Jack' as he became known was also a superlatively skilled footballer, capable of taking a strong and sometimes spectacular mark as well as being a smooth ball handler and penetratingly accurate left foot kick.

Beginning with Port Adelaide in 1958 Cahill quickly developed into one of the state's top wingmen, thereby following in the footsteps of his uncle, Laurie Cahill, who had played the position with distinction for both South Adelaide

and South Australia a couple of decades earlier. Midway through his career, however, John Cahill was switched to centre, where he performed with equal distinction until replaced, late in his career, by another all time great in the shape of Russell Ebert. Cahill played much of his later football across half forward, where he proved a prolific goal kicker.

A tremendous on-field leader, Cahill captained Port between 1967 and 1973. He also skippered South Australia for three consecutive years and, after the 1969 Adelaide carnival, was selected as vice-captain of the All Australian team. Some observers felt that South Australia's failure to maintain its challenge to the VFL in the second half of that carnival's decisive game was attributable in no small way to Cahill's effectiveness being blunted after he pulled a muscle during the second term; up to that point he had been the single most influential figure in the match.

When John Cahill retired after the 1973 season he was still close to the peak of his form as 59 goals from his half forward flank and a fourth club best and fairest award proved.

As a coach, Cahill achieved a legendary reputation that few can rival, steering his beloved Port Adelaide to no fewer than ten premierships, and sowing the seeds of an eleventh. Moreover, in the second of his two seasons with VFL side Collingwood he steered a mediocre combination to third place on the ladder, while a brief stint at West Adelaide might easily, with a bit more luck, have yielded a flag. Cahill was also Port Adelaide's inaugural AFL coach, and his illustrious standing at Alberton was amply demonstrated when the club opted to name its annual best and fairest award after him. In 2005 he made a brief return to coaching when he took charge of Port Adelaide Magpies for a season, and promptly brought the club's three season finals drought to an end by steering them as far as the preliminary final, where they lost to the Eagles.

In September 2007 it was announced that Cahill would be returning to football as senior coach of the club for which he had played at colts level half a century earlier, South Adelaide. However, after 8 games of the 2008 season he tendered his resignation, indicating that his decision had been taken in reaction to "outside influences".

**CAHILL, LAURIE:** A superb wingman or rover, who was a key factor in South Adelaide's dominance during the late 1930s, Laurie Cahill played 187 SANFL games, won his club's best and fairest award in 1938 and 1939, and was a regular South Australian interstate representative whose 11 state appearances included both of the croweaters' games at the 1937 Perth carnival. Jeff Pash, who played with North Adelaide, and was a contemporary of Cahill for part of his career, later described the South champion as:

*One of the best ever ..... showing that rare combination, long-striding speed and beautiful control of the ball. Supremely fast and graceful, he had a magnificent running drop kick and was extremely quick to send his side deeply into the attack.*

While briefly stationed in Melbourne late in the 1943 season Cahill played 7 VFL games for Richmond including the grand final, when he was first rover in the Tigers' 12.14 (86) to 11.15 (81) defeat of Essendon. A week earlier, his superb 3 goal performance in the preliminary final against Fitzroy had been a key reason for Richmond's advancement. The Richmond flag win was Cahill's third as he had previously starred for South Adelaide in grand final victories over Port Adelaide in both 1935 and 1938.

After the war, Laurie Cahill had stints as coach of his former club (1947-8 and 1957) as well as West Adelaide (1953-6), steering the latter to two losing grand finals against Port Adelaide. His nephew, John Cahill, went on to become one of South Australia's greatest ever players and coaches.

Laurie Cahill was chosen at centre wing in South Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team'.



Laurie Cahill (South Adelaide)

**CALDWELL, NEVILLE** was an important player and fine clubman for Glenelg during a league career which spanned a dozen seasons and saw him play 265 senior games. He also represented South Australia once. Nicknamed 'Twiggy', Caldwell joined the Bays straight from school (Seacombe High) and made his league debut in 1970 when he ended up playing 23 matches for the year, culminating in a losing grand final against Sturt. A highly skilled, versatile footballer, he would suffer grand final disappointment on no fewer than five occasions, including his last ever game in a Glenelg jumper in 1981. On the credit side of the ledger was his typically unselfish, team-orientated contribution to the Bays' 1973 premiership triumph which was achieved against North Adelaide after one of the greatest SANFL grand finals ever.

**CAREY, PETER (HoF 2002):** Glenelg hero Peter 'Super' Carey enjoyed a long and varied career which saw him amass a South Australian record 448 league games between 1971 and

1988. He also played 19 games for South Australia, achieving All Australian selection after both the 1979 and 1980 state of origin carnivals. Strongly built and extremely adept overhead, he played much of his early football at centre half forward, in which position he starred with 6 goals in the famous 1973 grand final win over North Adelaide. Twelve years later, when the Bays next went top, Carey was there again, this time as a veritable man mountain of a ruckman whose ability to give his smaller team mates first use of the ball was unrivalled. Glenelg beat North Adelaide in the 1985 grand final, and when they did so again the following year Peter Carey was many observers' choice as best afield.

A best and fairest award winner with the Tigers in 1975, 1979 and 1981, Carey also topped the club's goal kicking ladder in 1973 with 70 goals. Mainly as a result of his exploits as a centre half forward during the early 1970s, he amassed the highly creditable career total of 521 league goals. Bays captain from 1983 until his retirement, he also enjoyed the distinction, in 1981, of winning the first ever Fos Williams Medal. A Glenelg man through and through, Peter Carey later served as a member of the club board. It almost goes without saying that when, in 2002, Glenelg implemented its own official 'Hall of Fame', Peter Carey was selected as an inaugural member.

**CARMAN, PHIL:** Phil Carman's playing career was laced with controversy from the start. In 1970 he joined Norwood from Edenhope, which was zoned to VFL club Collingwood, and although the ANFC initially approved the arrangement it later rescinded his permit to play after the Magpies appealed. An interstate, inter-club tug-of-war then ensued, which eventually saw Carman cleared to continue his career with the Redlegs. He played a total of 58 games for the club, as well as representing South Australia, and earned a reputation as a dynamic, audaciously skilled, occasionally fiery performer. Collingwood kept close tabs on his progress, and when he finally decided to give the VFL a try at the end of the 1974 season it

was the Magpies who procured his signature. His stupendous form over the first two-thirds of the 1975 season made him just about the league's most newsworthy property. Had injury not intervened to bring his season to a premature end, there seems little doubt that he would have won the Brownlow. As it was, he polled 17 votes, just 3 adrift of winner Gary Dempsey. Hardly surprisingly, he won the Copeland Trophy, Collingwood's best and fairest award.

Although he intermittently continued to play some fine football, a combination of injuries and regular vacations courtesy of the Tribunal ensured that he never quite recaptured the consistent brilliance of his debut season in the VFL. In 1977, he incurred a suspension for striking Hawthorn's Michael Tuck in the second semi final, and was ruled out of both the grand final and the grand final replay against North Melbourne. To this day, Collingwood fans remain adamant that his enforced absence cost their team the flag.

In 1979, after 66 games and 142 goals for the 'Pies, 'Fabulous Phil' crossed to Melbourne, where he added another 11 games and 23 goals. A two season stint at Essendon followed, but a 20 week suspension, imposed after he was found guilty of head-butting a boundary umpire, restricted him to just 10 appearances and 11 goals. Carman finished his VFL career with North Melbourne where he played 13 games and booted 27 goals in 1982. He then played briefly for Eastlake in the ACTAFL, followed by stints with a succession of country clubs, before retiring.

Phil Carman returned to top level football in 1995 as coach of Sturt. In seven seasons at the helm he helped elevate the club from perennial wooden spooner to regular finals contender, although a losing grand final against Port Adelaide Magpies in 1998 was the closest the Blues came to a flag.

There can be little doubt that Phil Carman possessed enough raw talent to have become one of the all time greats of the game. As it was, however, owing to a mixture of ill

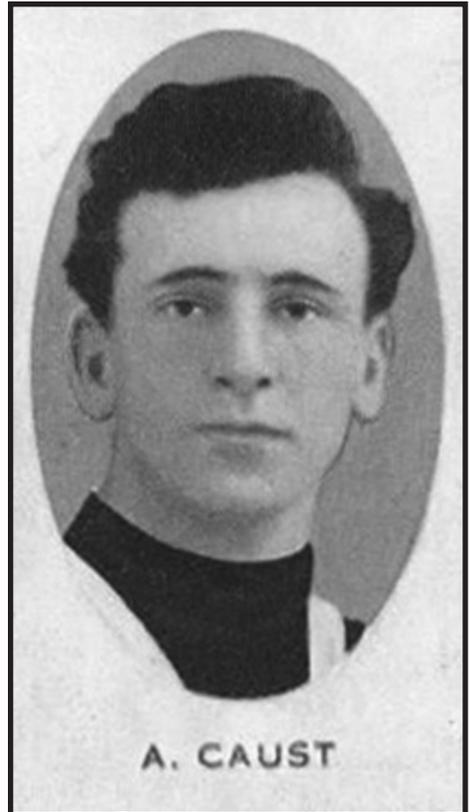
discipline and bad luck, he ended up as one of the many footballers whose final report card read 'could have done better'.

**CASEY, COLIN:** Recruited by Sturt from West Broken Hill, where he had played a couple of senior seasons, Colin Casey made his league debut in 1971 as a nineteen year old and made an immediate impact. Playing mainly at full back he was selected in that position in the prestigious 'Advertiser Team of the Year', a rare achievement for a first year player. Solidly built at 191cm and 89kg Casey was capable of holding down any key position, but spent most of his thirteen season, 251 game Sturt career on the last line of defence. A state representative 5 times, he won the Blues' best and fairest award in 1972, and played in two premierships teams.

**CASSERLY, TONY** began his senior league football career with East Fremantle where he played a total of 154 league games during the 1960s. Playing as a ruck-rover he was one of Old Easts' best in the 1965 grand final defeat of Swan Districts. He also represented Western Australia 10 times. In 1970 he moved to South Australia and joined Central District where he would add another 101 league games plus a couple more state appearances, this time for South Australia, over the course of the next six seasons.

Tough, hard running and abundantly skilled, Casserly took over the coaching at Centrals from Trevor Stanton in 1971, and the coaching mantle from Dennis Jones a year later. In the latter role he developed a fast, run-on style of play that enabled the Bulldogs to reach the preliminary final in 1972, but thereafter the wheels fell off somewhat, and the side was beset by inconsistency. Nevertheless, Tony Casserly's impact at both Centrals and Old Easts was considerable, and he is remembered with admiration by supporters of both clubs.

**CAUST, ARNOLD** was a noteworthy performer for South Adelaide during the first half of the 1920s, a time when the club was fairly competitive without ever quite boasting



premiership credentials. Strong in the air, and mobile, Caust played most of his football as a follower resting across half forward. He was a highly respected figure at South, and captained the club in 1923 (to third) and 1924 (fourth). As there was no coach at the club at the time, Caust was responsible for overseeing training, as well as for leading the team every Saturday. In the five seasons from 1920 to 1924 he played a total of 53 league games and booted 25 goals for South. He also represented South Australia 8 times, kicking 7 goals.

**CAUST, PAUL** was a strong marking forward who arguably never quite managed to realise his full potential. A major part of the problem was that, playing with a perennially poor to mediocre side in Sturt, his opportunities tended to be somewhat limited. Nevertheless, his tally of 57 goals in 1955 (a comparatively good year for the Blues, who ran third) was good enough to head the league list. He was also

## CENTRAL DISTRICT

**Club Address:** P.O. Box 10, Elizabeth 5112, South Australia

**Website:** www.cdfc.com.au

**Home Ground:** Hamra Homes Oval Elizabeth (formerly known as NAP Oval, and originally and traditionally as Elizabeth Oval)

**Formed:** 1959 (B grade); 1964 (seniors)

**Colours:** Royal blue, red and white

**Emblem:** Bulldogs

**Premierships:** SENIORS -2000-1, 2003-4-5, 2007-8 (7 total) RESERVES - 1971, 1989, 2002-3 (4 total) UNDER 19S - 1970, 1981-2, 2003 (4 total) UNDER 17S - 1966, 1977-8-9, 1985, 1992, 1996, 2004 (8 total) OTHER PREMIERSHIPS - Stanley H. Lewis Memorial Trophy 2001-2-3-4, 2007 (5 total); Foundation Cup/Living Health Cup (minor premiers) 1995-6, 2001-2-3-4-5, 2007 (8 total)

**Magarey Medallists:** Gary Window 1965; John Duckworth 1979; John Platten 1984; Gilbert McAdam 1989; Paul Thomas 2004 (5 total)

**All Australians:** Peter Jonas 1979; John Platten 1985 (2 total)

**League Top Goalkickers:** Enrico Vidovich (62) 1968; Rudi Mandemaker (93) 1989; Daniel Schell (74) 2004 & (81) 2005 (4 total)

**Highest Score:** 35.23 (233) vs. West Torrens 4.11 (35) at Elizabeth Oval in round 4 1988

**Most Games:** 308 by Peter Vivian from 1969 to 1985

**Record Home Attendance:** 16,029 in round 18 1984: Port Adelaide 15.13 (103); Central District 12.9 (81)

**Record Finals Attendance:** 46,132 for 1996 grand final at Football Park: Port Adelaide 11.14 (80); Central District 6.8 (44)

**Overall Success Rate 1964-2008:** 51.2%

**D**uring the years immediately following the second World War the population of Australia increased rapidly as a result of the government's policy of actively encouraging immigration from Europe. In South Australia, the city of Elizabeth was specifically earmarked during the 1950s to cope with this mass influx. Situated on the Adelaide Plain some thirty kilometres north of Adelaide the city quickly came to boast a cosmopolitan mix which in some ways prefigured that to be found in the country as a whole some quarter of a century later.

Australian football was totally new to these immigrants, and in most cases their immediate reaction, on being exposed to the game, was negative. The SANFL's acceptance in 1958 of an entry bid from a team based in Elizabeth might therefore be viewed as courageous in the extreme.

The bid was made by the Gawler Football Association which had been in existence since the 1880s. Indeed, a Gawler Football Club was a founder member of the South Australian Football Association (precursor of the SANFL) in 1877, and maintained a sporadic involvement in that competition until 1890.

It was resolved at a meeting of the GFA in March 1958 that its new club should be known as the Central District Football Club (not, as people to this day persist in terming it, Central Districts Football Club), a name which emphasised its links with the whole area rather than just a single town. The chosen colours of red, white and blue were said to have been derived from a cigarette card depicting an English soccer team which a delegate to the meeting was carrying, and this, coupled with the chosen nickname of 'Bulldogs', served to reinforce the club's perceived, albeit extremely loose, British connection. Another important early link was

with VFL club Footscray which shared both emblem and colours and made a donation to Centrals of thirty long sleeved jumpers and thirty pairs of socks.

At the same time as Central District's application to join the SANFL was accepted a similar application from the Woodville Football Club was also approved. Both clubs were required to spend a probationary period of five years, commencing in 1959, in the seconds competition, before their full admission to league ranks. Centrals' record during this probationary phase was not distinguished, with the team collecting wooden spoons in 1959, '60 and '62, with a third place in 1961 proving their best effort. The Bulldogs finished in eighth position (out of ten teams) in 1963 but the year did have one memorable feature in that exciting half forward Gary Window landed the seconds Magarey Medal.

The team's under achievement at seconds level did not augur well for the future, but with the appointment of experienced West Adelaide star Ken Eustice as captain coach and the recruitment of a number of well-credentialed players from interstate there was a fair amount of optimism in the air at Elizabeth on the eve of the club's inaugural league campaign in 1964. Sadly, however, the season developed into something of a nightmare, with Eustice being prevented by clearance problems from taking his place in the side until round 7, and the team failing to record a single victory in any of their 20 league fixtures.

The club's home ground at Goodman Road, Elizabeth was not ready for use until the 12th round, when Glenelg had the honour of providing the opposition. The Tigers won easily, 11.21 (87) to 7.4 (46), but the carnival style atmosphere and large attendance gave promise of better times ahead.

Centrals' leading recruit for 1965 was highly rated South Fremantle centre half forward Tom Grljusich who gave the team something vital which it had hitherto lacked: a focal point ahead of centre. With a season

of league football under its belts the team gradually began to show improvement. Round 2 brought a first ever senior win, albeit only against fellow newcomers Woodville, but even in their losses the team were proving much more resilient and competitive. In round 11 at Richmond Oval Central District finally broke through for a win against an established SANFL club; what is more, they won impressively by 38 points, kicking a club record score of 17.19 (121) to West Adelaide's 11.17 (83).

After that, the floodgates opened, with the Bulldogs securing 6 further wins during their 9 remaining matches for an 8-12 win/loss record and seventh position on the premiership ladder. Even more excitingly, Gary Window's career reached another pinnacle when he won the league Magarey Medal to go with the seconds Medal won two years earlier. The general consensus was that the club had now genuinely arrived, a view which was still being expounded well into the following season:

*Centrals have gone past the 'give them a bit of encouragement' stage. They need none. Rival teams do. Centrals have developed into a combination which no other side can even start thinking about lightly. They have height, strength, speed and will-to-win, and if ever a side looked a final four prospect they do.<sup>1</sup>*

In hindsight, such optimism seems almost ludicrously misplaced. In successive seasons from 1966 to 1969 the Bulldogs finished ninth, ninth, eighth and eighth, only once (in 1967) managing more than 4 victories for the season. Quite simply, apart from Eustice, Grljusich, Window and one or two others the team lacked quality players, and when confronted by the likes of Sturt and Port Adelaide they sometimes appeared totally out of their depth.

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<sup>1</sup> 'The South Australian Football Budget', volume 40, number 9, 14 May 1966, page 12.



*Tom Grljusich*

Eustice and Grljusich, in fact, both departed Elizabeth at the end of the 1967 season, Eustice to re-join his former coach Neil Kerley who was now at the helm at Glenelg, and Grljusich to return to South Fremantle in the WANFL. Window meanwhile missed the whole of the 1967 and 1968 seasons while coaching East Gambier in the South Australian country, and after his return to league football in 1969 only rarely recaptured his Magarey Medal form.

Central District during these years was, in essence, a team of battlers, possessed of nuisance value and little more. Nevertheless, club spirit was developing all the time, and in a number of intangible ways the foundations were being laid for a dramatic upswing in on field fortunes.

In 1966 the club's Colts (precursor of the Under 17s) side won a premiership, the club's first at any level. Another triumph of sorts came a year later when full back Terry Phillips won a televised competition

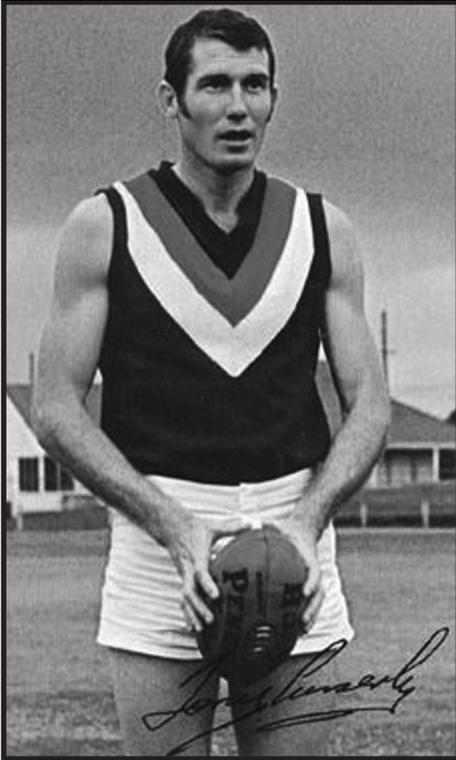
to find the champion kick in South Australia, and then went on to surprise everyone by defeating vaunted interstate opposition from Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania to claim the national title.

In 1970 the Bulldogs experienced a similar end to the season as five years earlier, including at one stage a club record 4 wins in succession. A win/loss record of 7-13 gave them seventh place on the premiership ladder, and as in 1965 there was talk of Centrals having 'arrived'. This time, though, it was to be no false dawn.

Despite a slow start in 1971 it gradually became clear that the Bulldogs were developing into an accomplished side. Once again, the team really hit its straps during the run home and, with 12 wins and 9 defeats in the home and away matches, managed its first winning return in eight seasons in the SANFL. Much more importantly, however, the team had made the finals for the first time by displacing Norwood from fourth spot late in the season, thereby booking a first semi final date with reigning premiers, Sturt.

In the eyes of most observers Centrals had done enough for the time being simply by reaching the finals. The aim now should be to consolidate on that achievement by going a step or two further in 1972. The Bulldogs, however, had other ideas, despite being confronted first up by a side which was bidding to equal Port Adelaide's SANFL record of six consecutive premierships. What is more, Centrals had never once managed to defeat Sturt in 16 previous meetings, and indeed had never even got to within 3 goals of the Double Blues.

The match was tight for three quarters with the Bulldogs enduring everything the Double Blues could throw at them to go into the lemon time break just 5 points adrift. Then, with the breeze at their backs, and the majority of the 36,400 crowd roaring them on, they quickly gained the initiative in the final term thanks largely to a dominant on ball unit to run out comfortable victors by 27 points, 13.13 (91) to 8.16 (64). That on ball



*Tony Casserly*

unit included rovers Barry Norsworthy and Robin Mulholland, the latter an Irish convert from Gaelic football, Western Australian ruck rovers Phil Haughan and Tony Casserly, and 206 cm ruckman Dean Farnham, one of the tallest players ever to play senior Australian football. Elsewhere in the team there were sterling contributions from Lyndon Andrews, Peter Nicks, Lyle Skinner and Peter Vivian.

With 5 goals during the final quarter Mulholland won unanimous acclaim as best player afield, and the press and media were equally unanimous in declaring this Central District's finest ever moment. Almost a quarter of a century later, recent premierships triumphs notwithstanding, it would still be hard to think of more than a handful of finer ones.

The Bulldogs of 1972 showed still further improvement to manage 14 wins out of 21 during the home and away season before comprehensively accounting for Norwood

in the first semi. Now coached by Casserly, Centrals once again met their match in Port Adelaide on preliminary final day, but not before giving the Magpies a real fright. Leading by 21 points at three quarter time the Bulldogs looked to have a grand final berth in their grasp, but in a heart stopping final stanza their inexperience under pressure proved their undoing as the Magpies clawed their way to a 7 point triumph.

Consecutive third places remained Central District's best ever sequence of finishes for over two decades.

From 1973 to 1975 the Bulldogs were a middle of the road combination capable of upsetting the best but equally capable of disappointing when pitted against the league's strugglers. Gary Window replaced Casserly as coach in 1976, but when the Bulldogs plummeted to their first wooden spoon since 1964 a season later he gave way to Daryl Hicks.

Hicks, a wingman in each of Sturt's five successive grand final wins from 1966 to 1970 had inherited his former mentor Jack Oatey's ideals on the game, and it was not long before an improvement was shown. In 1978 the Bulldogs missed the finals but in '79 they swept all before them in securing a first ever minor premiership, generating unprecedented finals fever in the northern suburbs as a consequence. However, in a pattern that was to become all too familiar they were then unceremoniously bundled out of the flag race with finals losses in successive weeks against Port Adelaide.

Vietnam war veteran John Duckworth became Centrals' second Magarey Medallist in 1979 after a barnstorming debut season with the Dogs. Duckworth was the latest in a series of outstanding West Australians to represent the club, and although he only played a total of 42 games over two seasons at Elizabeth his impact on the club as well as on the game in South Australia in general went well beyond this.

At the close of the 1970s optimism within the club was so high that Hicks was moved

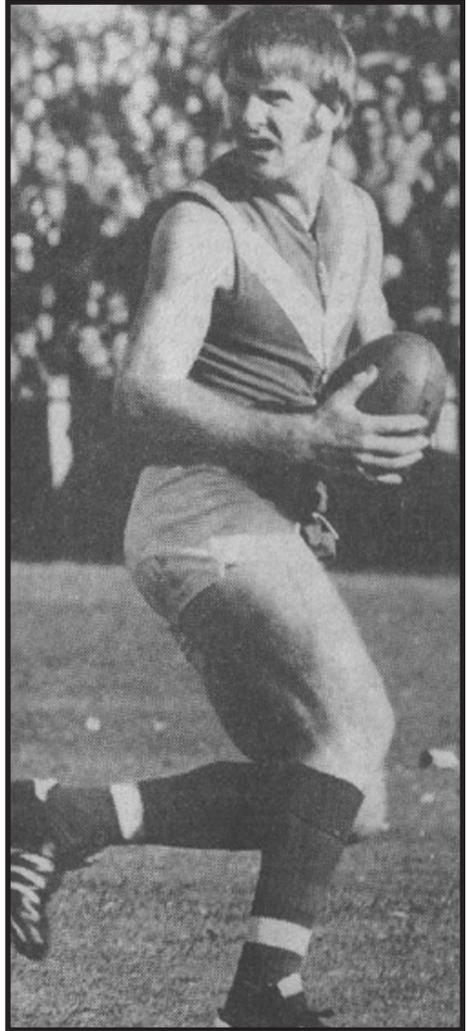
to declare the 1980s 'the Decade of the Dogs'. Such pronouncements rarely help, and in hindsight it is possible to see how it may have imposed unnecessary additional pressure on the players, whilst also providing opposition sides with an extra incentive to do well against the 'big heads'.

Under Kevin 'Cowboy' Neale, a former VFL star with St Kilda, and later under well-travelled South Australian football identity Neil Kerley, the Bulldogs contested four finals series during the 1980s without winning a single game. Not surprisingly therefore, by the close of the decade a definite feeling of resignation had set in. In the 1989 qualifying final against Port Adelaide, for example, the Bulldogs played outstanding football in the first half to establish an in truth not entirely flattering 13 point lead only for their challenge to evaporate completely after the interval when they could only add 2.6 to Port's 17.14 to go under by 85 points.

Most of the highlights of the '80s were individual ones. The 1981 season saw the debut of a long haired rover wearing the number 44 guernsey who served immediate notice of what was to come by immediately earning best afield honours. John Patrick Platten was the first Elizabeth born player to represent the Bulldogs, and over the forty plus years of their involvement it is doubtful if there has been a more effective or highly celebrated one.

In 107 games with Centrals Platten booted 259 goals and was winner of the Norm Russell Medal for club best and fairest in both 1984 and 1985. In addition, he won the 1984 Magarey Medal with a record 66 votes (both field umpires bestowing separate sets of 3-2-1 votes at the time) and was a regular South Australian representative in interstate matches, gaining All Australian selection in 1985. During his time with the Bulldogs Platten was the focus of an ongoing clearance wrangle between VFL heavyweights Carlton and Hawthorn, a battle which the Hawks eventually won. During his ten season career with Hawthorn 'the Rat'

went on to become one of the highest profile players in the game.



*Lyle Skinner*

In 1989 a fourth Central District player was awarded a Magarey Medal in Gilbert McAdam. A quick, highly skilled on-baller or wingman, McAdam played 73 games for the Dogs before following the by then well worn path to Victoria in 1991 to join St Kilda. McAdam's victory in the Magarey Medal was particularly fitting as he was the first Australian aboriginal player to be so honoured, and over the years Elizabeth Oval has been home to

probably more aboriginal players than any other ground in South Australia.

'King' Kerley's reign as coach ended after the 1990 season with Centrals having finished a disappointing seventh. His successor, Alan Stewart, was a former player with the club, albeit mainly at seconds level, who had experienced success as coach of both Centrals Under 17s and the South Australian Teal Cup side. Stewart's first season as coach of the Bulldogs coincided with the formation of the Adelaide Crows, a development which contributed significantly to the SANFL's transition from being the 'shop window' of the state's football talent to little more than a breeding ground for the AFL. The fact that Stewart's background involved nurturing and developing youthful talent perhaps made him an ideal choice as coach, and certainly his results would appear to have borne this out.

That said, improvement was not immediate, the Bulldogs finishing some way off the pace in each of Stewart's first two seasons in charge. In 1993, however, the team was good enough to reach the finals for the first time since 1989, and, despite going down to Norwood in the elimination final, there appeared to be good reason for optimism over the future.

Off the field things were not looking quite so rosy. A 1993 operating loss of more than \$120,000 meant that there was no money available for recruitment prior to the start of the 1994 season, but the Bulldogs took this in their stride and it soon became clear that young players like Rick MacGowan, Tim Cook, John Abbott and Michael Wakelin had matured sufficiently to provide that extra impetus necessary to transform the side into genuine premiership contenders.

With a 5-3 win/loss record after the first complete round of matches Centrals did enough to qualify to face ladder leader Woodville-West Torrens in the final of the SANFL's re-vamped night competition, the Foundation Cup. (In 1994, for the first time,

the Foundation Cup's qualifying rounds were deemed to coincide with the first nine rounds of the official league programme, the two leading sides after that time playing off for the Cup.) In a battle of defences played



*John Platten*

in near perfect conditions the Bulldogs went down by 14 points, 2.7 (19) to 4.9 (33), but were far from disgraced. It was Centrals' first grand final of any kind, and, it goes without saying, whetted the appetite for more.

Four months later the Bulldogs faced perennial finalist Port Adelaide in the qualifying final having finished the home and away rounds in third place with 13 wins from 22 games. Prior to the match, Alan Stewart backed his charges to do well:

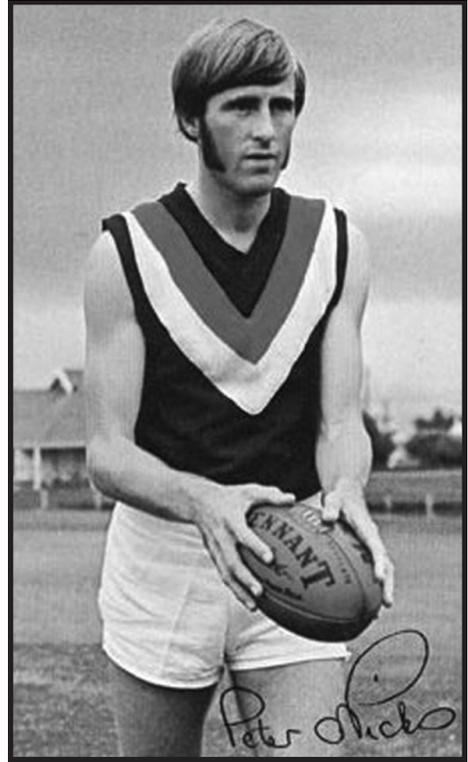
*"I have confidence and I rely on the players being very focused in what they have to do. I believe we have to set a standard and let the opposition worry about us. That means you are backing your 20 against their 20. When it comes down to it, our players know - and have*

*experienced - that when they put in a disciplined, honest, team effort to the best of their abilities, they can beat any side in the competition.”<sup>1</sup>*

In the event, the Bulldogs and Magpies staged one of the all time classic SANFL finals matches, the Magpies eventually emerging victorious by 15 points after the teams had been forced into playing extra time for the first ever occasion in a SANFL final.

The Bulldogs showed they had learnt from the experience a week later in the first semi final when they held off a fast finishing Norwood to clinch their first finals victory since 1972. However, in a preliminary final re-match with Port Adelaide the bubble was well and truly burst to the tune of 90 points, and the Bulldogs had once again, as on three previous occasions, failed to advance to a grand final.

Central District were the outstanding side in the SANFL for most of the 1995 season, winning the minor premiership<sup>2</sup> for only the second ever time, and surviving a 2 point second semi final loss against Port Adelaide to make it through to the grand final. For the first time since the formation of the Adelaide Crows the match was a sell out with 45,000 spectators at the ground being joined by over a quarter of a million who watched it 'live' on television. Sadly for the Bulldogs, the occasion and Port Adelaide's finals acumen proved too much for them to handle, and the result was a disappointing 48 point loss. With a young, vibrant and highly committed group of young footballers at his disposal, however, coach Alan Stewart had good reason to feel optimistic about the future. "We have to learn the lesson of (the 1995



Peter Nicks

grand final) performance and store it away. We have to work hard at it, like we did in last year's finals, to get another opportunity to win enough games in the minor round and play finals footy. Hopefully next year we can do a better job.”<sup>3</sup>

Stewart's replacement as coach was Steve Wright, a former VFL player with South Melbourne/ Sydney and a dual premiership coach with Clarence in the TFL. Under Wright the Bulldogs again won the minor premiership<sup>4</sup> and this time, after a torrid encounter played in extremely windy

1 'The South Australian Football Budget', volume 69, number 26, 10 September 1994, page 13.

2 The Bulldogs also received the Foundation Cup, which was now awarded to the SANFL minor premiers, making this technically the club's first senior premiership.

3 Quoted in 'Football Plus', volume 1, number 36, 4 October 1995, page 13.

4 En route to the minor premiership the Bulldogs met and defeated Port Adelaide on three occasions, the last of which, at Elizabeth Oval in round 20, saw them 31 points down at three quarter time before storming back to claim a stirring 10 point victory.

conditions, emerged victorious against old nemesis Port Adelaide in the second semi to take the easy route to the grand final.

Centrals were 6/10 on favourites to win the 1996 premiership after grand final opponents Port Adelaide emerged bruised, battered and bloodied from a last gasp 2 point win over Norwood in the preliminary final. However, just as in 1995 the Bulldogs failed to match the Magpies' physicality and intensity and they went under by 36 points. Victorious Port coach Stephen Williams paid the Bulldogs the compliment of acknowledging that they were the closest side to the Magpies in terms of style but it would be extremely surprising if anyone at Elizabeth derived any consolation from this.

The Central District hierarchy were doubtless acutely conscious of the fact that, in 1996, their club was the pre-eminent force in the SANFL for all bar the last 120 minutes of the season. Achieving dominance in that vital two hour period is the final, and probably the biggest, leap which a club ever has to make. After two consecutive grand final losses, and with the complexion of the SANFL set to change with the admission of a second Adelaide-based club to the AFL, the Bulldogs had a perfect opportunity in 1997 to make that leap, but unfortunately this proved easier said than done.

True, they qualified for the finals with a fair degree of comfort, but a 17 point qualification final loss to Port Adelaide saw them start off on the wrong foot. The following week in the first semi final, North Adelaide were comfortably eliminated, but Norwood in the preliminary final proved too strong, and the Bulldogs' season was over.

The most eagerly anticipated event of the 1998 season was the return to Elizabeth Oval of the club's favourite son, John Platten. Sadly, however, Platten struggled for most of the year with a knee injury, and his appearances in the seniors were limited. The side itself also struggled, eventually scraping into the finals with just 9 wins - the lowest total by a finals qualifier since 1975 - before capitulating by 61 points to eventual premier Port Adelaide.

Things deteriorated even further in 1999 when the club's five season sequence of appearances in the major round came to an end, although it would probably be fair to observe that this was more a result of inconsistency than any inherent lack of talent.

Astute recruiting over the summer months was to bear spectacular fruit in the 2000 season as the Bulldogs finally vanquished their premiership hoodoo in decisive, if not exactly spectacular, fashion. Among the new names to bolster the club's ranks were Danny Stevens from the Kangaroos, and James and Chris Gowans from St. Kilda. An additional bonus was the return of Daniel Healy - the 1999 Gardiner Medallist for fairest and best in the AFL reserves competition - also from St. Kilda. It took them a few rounds to find their feet but once they did it became clear that the Bulldogs were going to prove extremely difficult to beat in 2000. Finals qualification in second spot with a 14-6 record ultimately proved the perfect perch from which to launch a premiership assault. A 22.11 (143) to 10.10 (70) annihilation of Port Adelaide in the qualifying final got the finals campaign underway in exhilarating style - indeed, it represented arguably the Bulldogs' best display of the season - but thereafter it became something of a grind. Minor premiers Woodville-West Torrens succumbed by 18 points in the second semi, but the contention of many observers was that the Eagles would be much stronger next time round (credence to this point of view being provided by the fact that, having had the bye at the end of the minor round, they had not fronted up for a fortnight, and were therefore likely to be 'under done').

The Eagles duly got their second crack at Centrals after a hard fought preliminary final defeat of Sturt and opinion in Adelaide was almost evenly divided as to where the 2000 flag would eventually end up. A disappointing crowd of just 34,819 - the lowest at an SANFL grand final since 1947 - turned up at Football Park on a wet September Sunday afternoon knowing that, one way or another, they would witness history in the making. On the one hand an Eagles win would give that club a clean

sweep of premierships in all four grades, an achievement that not even the redoubtable Port Adelaide had ever managed, while a victory to Central District would see the red, white and blue colours adorning the top of the West End Brewery chimney for the first time ever.

From the start it was clear that, even by grand final standards, this was going to be a hard, slogging affair, with 'scientific' football at a premium. After a goalless first quarter the Bulldogs, having enjoyed the benefits of a two or three goal breeze, led narrowly 0.5 to 0.3. According to many observers this represented a moral victory to the Eagles who, with the breeze at their backs, would kick away during the second term. However, such a view ignored the ferocious determination with which the Central District players, to a man, were approaching the game. Such an approach rendered incidentals like wind advantage irrelevant, and over the remaining three quarters the Bulldogs systematically proved this by adding 8.8 to 5.6 to secure a memorable victory by 22 points. James Gowans won the Jack Oatey Medal for best afield with brother Chris not far behind in terms of his overall contribution. Others to play well included Graham, Macgowan, Healy, Geister and Dew.

Twelve months later it was almost a case of *déjà vu* as Centrals and the Eagles clashed again on grand final day in near identical weather conditions. The only difference was that Centrals were by this stage an even more assured and well balanced outfit than a year earlier, and victory was achieved with correspondingly greater comfort, 10.11 (71) to 4.8 (32). The Jack Oatey Medallist on this occasion was Rick Macgowan, with the Gowans brothers again prominent along with Hicks, Slade, Geister, Healy and Guerra.

For most of the 2002 season it appeared that all the Bulldogs would need to do would be to turn up at Football Park on grand final day in order to secure a third successive pennant. After completing the minor round with only 2 defeats they enjoyed a week's rest at the outset of the finals before comfortably booking a place in the premiership decider with a 9.14 (68) to 8.6 (54)

second semi final defeat of Sturt. A fortnight later against the same opposition Centrals were widely tipped to win again but the Double Blues, showing great desperation and commitment, overturned the odds in spectacular fashion. The early loss of Damian Hicks, who sustained a rib injury after a clash with Barnaby French, undoubtedly disrupted Centrals' forward set-up, but this alone was not enough to account for the Bulldogs' capitulation.

Twelve months later and if anyone out Centrals way remembered the side's 47 point mauling at the hands of Sturt in 2002 they were not admitting to it. On Sunday 5 October 2003 the Bulldogs gave a highly disciplined and at times remorseless exhibition of modern team footy in overcoming sentimental favourites West Adelaide in a one-sided but entertaining grand final. The Gowans twins, Chris, who won the Jack Oatey Medal, and James, were both in splendid touch, as were ruckmen Paul Scoullar and Damien Arnold, whose efforts in nullifying West's Ben Marsh, a former AFL premiership player with Adelaide, were crucial in setting up the win. 'Advertiser' sports writer Doug Robertson felt that Central's victory marked "the evolution of a golden Dogs dynasty",<sup>1</sup> recalling Daryl Hicks' 'Decade of the Dogs' prognostication of more than two decades earlier which, it seems, was not so much misplaced as mistimed.

In 2004 the Bulldogs reached a new pinnacle of excellence. After winning the minor premiership yet again they survived a scare in the second semi final against the Eagles to edge into their fifth straight grand final courtesy of a 2 point win. When the Eagles duly qualified for the grand final themselves, most people expected another close, hotly contested game, but under Roy Laird<sup>2</sup> Centrals had repeatedly proved capable of lifting their level of performance to new heights. On Sunday 3 October 2004, they did so in the most resounding sense imaginable, making

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1 'The Advertiser', 6 October 2003.

2 After steering Centrals reserves to the 2002 flag, Laird took over the senior coaching role the following year.

the Eagles look completely out of their depth in the process. The Bulldogs' final tally of 23.15 (153) was the highest grand final score since 1969, while their eventual winning margin of 125 points was by some measure the biggest ever, not just in a grand final, but in any SANFL finals match whatsoever.

Centrals also emulated Port Adelaide and Norwood in securing the elusive 'trifecta' of premiership, Magarey Medallist (Paul Thomas), and leading goalkicker (Daniel Schell) in the same season.

Best players for the Bulldogs in an awesome all round team display included Nathan Steinberner (Jack Oatey Medal), Marco Bello, Daniel Schell (6 goals), Daniel Healy and Stuart Cochrane.

The only sour note was struck by the dismal crowd of just 24,207 spectators who elected to show up on what was a perfect day for watching football.

The 2005 season saw Centrals struggle early, only to move ominously into form once the finals loomed. In the end, a 15-5 record was good enough to procure a fifth successive minor premiership, and thereafter the Bulldogs performed with consummate skill, aggression and purpose to overcome Port Adelaide Magpies by 45 points in the second semi final, and the Eagles by 28 points in the grand final, thereby securing a third consecutive flag, and their fifth in total. The Jack Oatey Medal for the best player afield went to Luke McCabe.

In 2006, the Bulldogs looked to have put a somewhat stuttering minor round performance behind them when they comfortably overcame North Adelaide and the Eagles in successive finals to qualify for their seventh premiership play-off in a row. However, on grand final day they were comprehensively outplayed to the tune of 76 points by a ferociously competitive Eagles combination. If there was a consolation, it was that there were only 25,130 spectators at AAMI stadium to witness their humiliation, affording further sad evidence that, through no fault of its own, the SANFL had in a few short years been irreversibly transformed from a major player on the Australian football stage to an incidental cameo of comparatively negligible importance and interest.

Just as they had done after the Sturt debacle of 2002, the Bulldogs bounced back from their 2006 humiliation at the hands of the Eagles to capture the 2007 premiership in emphatic fashion. Comfortably top of the ladder after the minor round with an 18-2 record, they cruised to their sixth flag on the strength of convincing wins over North Adelaide in both the second semi final (by 20 points) and the grand final (by 65 points).

The 2008 season brought yet another grand final appearance, and a new grand final opponent in the shape of Glenelg. In front of a crowd of 34,128 - the largest for a premiership decider since 2002 - the Bulldogs found the going tough during the first two quarters, and entered the long break hanging on to a meagre 4 point advantage. After half time, however, with ruckman Jason Mackenzie continually giving the likes of Paul Thomas, Matthew Slade, the Gowans brothers, Ian Callinan and Brayden O'Hara first use of the ball the match developed into a red, white and blue procession. Centrals added 12.7 to 6.5 in the second half to win pulling away by exactly 7 goals, 17.11 (113) to 10.11 (71), with Mackenzie being rewarded for his efforts with the Jack Oatey Medal for best afield. By claiming seven senior flags in a decade the Bulldogs equalled a record established by Norwood in the 1880s, and later emulated by Port Adelaide during the 1950s.

In forty-plus years of League competition Central District Football Club has boasted its share of champion players, with names such as Platten, Eustice, Duckworth, Window, McAdam, Grljusich, Casserly, Farnham and Haughan being as noteworthy as almost any in the game over that period. Although it was not until the early years of the twenty-first century that the club could truly be said to have 'arrived' as a consistently viable force in the competition, once it did arrive it gave the distinct impression that it was not remotely interested in the short term haul; Centrals now possess, not to put it limply, dynastic aspirations.

Other SANFL clubs beware - the Bulldogs have battled long and hard to acquire their current pre-eminence, and it will take something quite exceptional on the part of their regular adversaries to bring them back down to earth.

his club's leading goal kicker in 1951 with the more modest tally of 29 goals. Caust's senior league career comprised 110 games, played in 1950 and 1951 and from 1954 to 1961. As the total suggests, he was not always a first choice senior player. He kicked 200 goals.

**Central District Football Association:** See Northern Metropolitan Football Association.

**Central Eyre Peninsula Football Association:** See Le Hunte Football League.

**Central Flinders Football Association:** See Streaky Bay Football League.

**Central Football Association:** Key members of the CFA, which commenced after world war two and continued until 1956, included Alsbra Park, Darke Peak, Lock, and United, which was based in the town of Murdinga. Overall, the most successful club was Darke Peak, which claimed a total of six senior flags.

**Century Goalkickers:** The first SANFL footballer to kick in excess of 100 goals in a season was Ken Farmer of North Adelaide, who tallied 105 goals in 1930. Farmer went on to achieve the feat in each of the ten subsequent seasons as well. His haul of 134 goals in the 1936 season remained a league record until 1969, when Glenelg's 'Fred' Phillis booted 137. Phillis's total was subsequently overhauled by Tim Evans of Port Adelaide (146 goals in 1980), Rick Davies (Sturt - 151, 1983) and Port Adelaide's Scott Hodges (153, 1990).

Up to the end of the 2008 season a total of twenty-two SANFL footballers had kicked 100 or more goals in a season a total of forty-seven times, i.e.-

1930	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	105
1931	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	126
1932	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	102
1932	Jack Owens (Glenelg)	102
1933	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	112

1934	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	106
1935	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	128
1935	'Diddy' Munro (South Adel.)	115
1936	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	134
1937	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	108
1938	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	112
1939	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	113
1940	Ken Farmer (North Adelaide)	123
1940	'Bo' Morton (Sturt)	101
1941	Bruce Schultz (Norwood)	100
1950	Colin Churchett (Glenelg)	105
1951	Colin Churchett (Glenelg)	102
1969	'Fred' Phillis (Glenelg)	137
1970	'Fred' Phillis (Glenelg)	107
1973	Ken Whelan (Sturt)	107
1973	Dennis Sachse (North Adel.)	105
1974	Ken Whelan (Sturt)	108
1975	'Fred' Phillis (Glenelg)	108
1980	Tim Evans (Port Adelaide)	146
1982	Tim Evans (Port Adelaide)	125
1982	Greg Edwards (Central District)	104
1982	Trevor Pierson (Woodville)	104
1983	Rick Davies (Sturt)	151
1983	Neville Roberts (Norwood)	117
1983	Grenville Dietrich (North Adel.)	109
1983	Roger Luders (West Adelaide)	105
1984	Tim Evans (Port Adelaide)	127
1984	Neville Roberts (Norwood)	106
1984	Rick Davies (Sturt)	102
1984	Grenville Dietrich (North Adel.)	101
1985	Malcolm Blight (Woodville)	126
1986	Ian Wilmott (Sturt)	123
1986	Stephen Nichols (Woodville)	103
1987	John Roberts (North Adelaide)	111
1987	Stephen Nichols (Woodville)	108
1988	Stephen Nichols (Woodville)	103
1990	Scott Hodges (Port Adelaide)	153
1990	Allen Jakovich (Woodville)	101
1994	Scott Hodges (Port Adelaide)	129
1996	Scott Hodges (Port Adelaide)	117
2007	Brant Chambers (Sturt)	112
2008	Brant Chambers (Sturt)	109

See also: Ken Farmer Medal; Leading Goalkickers.

**CHAPLIN, WILFRED:** Popularly known as 'Chatta', Wilf Chaplin was a talented

defender who made a significant contribution to West Adelaide's surprise premiership win in 1927. Between 1924 and 1929 he played 89 senior SANFL games for West, and kicked 10 goals. He also represented South Australia 4 times. Playing mainly at centre half back Chaplin was the fulcrum of a fine black and red defence which also featured the likes of Ernie Schoff (father of Sturt's Rick), Harry Lee and Harry Shugg.

**CHESSELL, KEITH:** Despite his lightweight (187cm, 75.5kg) frame, Sturt's Keith Chessell played a fair number of his 181 league games as a ruckman, where his agility, prodigious leaping ability and deceptive strength enabled him to compete more than favourably with his mostly bigger opponents. He also played as a ruck-rover on many occasions, combining with the likes of Paul Bagshaw and John Murphy to give the Double Blues probably the best on-ball division in the state at the time. A product of the club's junior ranks, he made his senior debut in 1964, and thereafter never looked back. One of eight Sturt players to play in every one of the club's five premiership teams between 1966 and 1970, he often reserved his most imposing displays for finals, with his 8 goal performance against Port Adelaide in the second semi final of 1968 arguably the most noteworthy. Always dangerous near goal, he booted a total of 177 league goals, and was the Blues' top goal kicker, with 40, in 1968. Perhaps his most memorable goal came in the dying seconds of a match against Port Adelaide at Alberton in 1966; Sturt had trailed all afternoon, but with Chessell's goal it took the lead, which it held, by 2 points.

Keith Chessell, who played 4 interstate games for South Australia, kicking 2 goals, retired from league football in 1974.

**CHIGWIDDEN, NICK** was the longest serving Glenelg captain ever, leading the Tigers for eight consecutive seasons (1993 to 2000). During the 1990s his name was



*South Adelaide's Graham Christie*

virtually synonymous with the Glenelg Football Club which he represented at senior level 293 times between 1987 and 2000. Despite obviously having the ability to have played at AFL level - he was actually claimed by Sydney in the 1988 national draft - Chigwidden remained loyal to the Bays throughout his career. An effervescently energetic rover with a fine team ethic he was at his peak during the first half of the 1990s when he claimed four consecutive club best and fairest awards. He also finished second in the Magarey Medal voting twice. His state league appearances for South Australia included a game as vice-captain against Tasmania in Hobart in 1995.

**CHRISTIE, DAVID:** On 11 April 1964 David Christie was a member of the Woodville team which lost to North Adelaide at Prospect in the club's first ever league fixture. Just over five years later, in the fourth round of the

1969 season at home to West Torrens, he became the 'Peckers' first ever 100 game player. Woodville lost that fixture as well, albeit by only 2 points, as indeed they lost the overwhelming majority of Christie's 124 games for the club between 1964 and 1970. Christie, who played Seconds football for the Woodpeckers prior to their elevation to league ranks, was a polished and tenacious rover for much of his career, but also played some fine football in a back pocket during his final few seasons.

**CHRISTIE, GRAHAM** was the sort of player who sometimes appears inconspicuous because of his seemingly effortless mastery of the basic skills. Indeed, according to Jeff Pash, he was "monotonously good". The fact that he did almost everything competently made him suited to almost any position, although it was as a defender that he played the majority, and arguably the best, of his football. He joined South Adelaide in 1956 from Port Pirie and, over the course of the next ten seasons, played a total of 128 league games. That total would have been considerably higher had he not suffered from a serious back injury during the early 1960s which seriously threatened his career for a time. Under the coaching of Neil Kerley, however, Christie enjoyed something of an Indian Summer, highlighted by a top quality performance in a back pocket in South's 1964 grand final defeat of Port Adelaide. Earlier highlights had included a club best and fairest award in 1958, the captaincy in 1961 and 1962, and 5 interstate games.

**CHURCHETT, COLIN (HoF 2002):** Glenelg full forward Colin Churchett achieved the distinction of being the first post-world war two footballer in the SANFL to register 100 goals in a season. He managed the feat twice, in 1950 and 1951, and all told kicked 555 goals in his 145 game league career (which includes one game played with South Melbourne in 1944, while on war service in Victoria).

With characteristic eloquence, Jeff Pash described Churchett as "a wizard when it came to the matter of directing the essentially irregular object that is a football through the goals". He did this with almost equal facility in weak Glenelg teams as he did when the club was battling for the premiership. Although not a particularly long kick, his unerring accuracy extended to both feet, a comparatively rare capability at the time. He was equally effective from a snap shot or when kicking on the run, but formidable ground play was his acknowledged forté, with his ability to get boot tellingly to ball in awkward situations unparalleled among South Australian full forwards of his time.

Churchett topped Glenelg's goal kicking list six times in seven years and only Jack Owens and 'Fred' Phillis have kicked more goals in the black and gold.

**CLARK, NORMAN:** Glorifying, for reasons now lost in the mists of time, in the distinctively unusual nickname 'Hackenschmidt', Norm Clark enjoyed a highly successful and varied football career that perhaps deserves to be feted more widely than it is. He began with North Adelaide, where he established a reputation as a tough, no frills, ultra reliable half back. He was also extremely quick, as he proved by winning the 1899 Stawell Gift. A year later he helped North to their first ever premiership as they overcame South Adelaide in the grand final by 13 points, 4.3 (27) to 1.8 (14). Clark was on a half back flank that day, and two years later played at centre half back as the red and whites won a second flag, once again at the expense of South Adelaide.

Midway through the 1905 season he made his second interstate appearance for South Australia in an 8.14 (62) to 6.19 (55) defeat of the VFA in Melbourne, and among the impressed onlookers were officials from VFL club Carlton. Round 10 of that same season saw Clark lining up for the Blues against South Melbourne in the first of an eventual 125 appearances for the club

at which he was to achieve his greatest success. Among those 125 appearances were the winning grand finals of 1906 against Fitzroy, 1907 against South Melbourne, and 1908 against Essendon. Playing in a back pocket, Clark was listed high in the best players in 1906, performed serviceably the following year, while against the Same Old he was a popular choice as best afield.

In 1909 Clark was the centre of controversy when Carlton dropped him for two games after he sought additional match expenses both for himself and his team mates. He was later strongly instrumental in bringing influential secretary-coach Jack Worrall's tenure at the club to an end.

In 1912, Clark embarked on a new phase of his career when he took on the role of playing coach, but despite steering his charges to a creditable third place his services were not retained. Clark also chose this moment to retire as a player. Two years later, however, after spending the 1913 season as coach of VFA side Brighton, he was back at Carlton, this time as non-playing coach, and he was immediately successful in steering the club to its sixth senior flag (and its fourth in the VFL). In 1915, he repeated the achievement, meaning that he was the only person to have had direct involvement in the Blues' first five league premierships. Clark remained at the helm until 1919 when he spent a one year sojourn at Richmond, masterminding that club's first ever bona fide VFL finals campaign (discounting the 1916 season when, as one of only four club's in the competition, Richmond's finals participation had been automatic).

In 1920 Clark once again assumed the reins at Carlton, but two years later he was controversially replaced by Horrie Clover, with the committee expressing the view in the club's 1922 annual report that Clark's methods were not in the team's best interests. Although the Blues ultimately made the finals in 1922 it would be the last time for five years. During Clark's seven full seasons at the helm the club had never once failed to

contest the final round, had won two flags, and had managed a magnificent overall success rate of 70.7%.

Norm Clark later undertook coaching stints at St Kilda (1925-6), Prahran (1930), and North Melbourne (1931) without ever threatening to emulate his earlier achievements. Nevertheless, those achievements, notably his involvement in no fewer than seven senior premierships in two states, clearly mark him as one of the prime shaping forces of the game in the early twentieth century.

**CLARKE, TREVOR:** Wingman Trevor Clarke was an important if often underrated contributor to Sturt's phenomenal run of success during the second half of the 1960s. His 139 SANFL games between 1962 and 1971 included appearances in the losing grand final of 1965, and the wins of 1966-7-8-9. Tall, lithe and extremely quick, he used the ball effectively, and was useful overhead. He was also capable of long, weaving, sometimes spectacular runs. Along with the likes of Bob Shearman and Darryl Hicks he gave the Double Blues arguably the best centreline in South Australia for several years. When, at the end of his coaching career with Sturt in 1982, Jack Oatey nominated his 'Vintage 21', comprising the best players he had coached during his twenty-one seasons with the club, Trevor Clarke was selected on a wing.

**CLARKSON, TONY:** Amateur footballer Tony 'Doc' Clarkson played two league games with Sturt in 1959 - a minor round match, and the first semi final - but then returned to amateur ranks. Over the ensuing four seasons he won two Hone Medals as the best and fairest player in A1, South Australian amateur football's leading competition, captained his club University, and represented the state's amateur team. In 1964 he received an 'SOS' from Sturt when regular senior ruckman Fred Smith was seriously injured in a road accident, and virtually by accident one of

the final major pieces in coach Jack Oatey's multiple premiership jig-saw was slotted into place.

Clarkson was not only an ever-present for the Blues in 1964, he was one of their best players. Built like a beanpole at 194cm and 81.5kg he combined athleticism with surprising strength, while his strict adherence to Oatey's favoured checkside ruck strategy minimised the likelihood of serious injury arising out of full on body clashes. Clarkson won Sturt's best and fairest award in 1965, and again two years later, and was a South Australian interstate representative on half a dozen occasions. He was a member of three successive premiership teams from 1966 to 1968 but, as a medical doctor (hence the nickname), his working career was always of primary importance, and in 1969, after 107 league games, that career took him abroad, effectively ending his involvement in football.

**CLAXTON, NORMAN:** For much of the twentieth century sporting activity in Australia, even at its highest level, was much more akin to a hobby than a profession, making it possible for individuals to excel at more than one sport. In pre-world war one South Australia one of the finest of such all-rounders was Norman Claxton. A state representative at both football (3 times) and cricket, he also played 'A' grade hockey and baseball, and won a Bendigo Gift at cycling. A baseball trophy, the Claxton Shield, was named in his honour. As a footballer, he was a cool, highly poised defender, who marked well, and handled the ball with consummate surety. He was not afraid of backing his judgement, and was often known to go on exciting runs downfield, showing great elusiveness and verve as he dodged and weaved around opponents. When North Adelaide broke through for their first ever senior premiership with a 4.3 (27) to 1.8 (14) grand final defeat of South Adelaide in 1900, Claxton was a popular choice as best afield. Two years later, when North again overcame South to clinch the flag, he was,

if anything, in even more dominant form. His combined play with team mates like Norm 'Hackenschmidt' Clark and Ernie Jones (a fellow South Australian cricketer) was first rate, and for a time North Adelaide was acknowledged as having the finest defence in the state. In 1902, Claxton shared a trophy as North's best player of the year with John Earl.

**CLAYTON, JEREMY** joined Port Magpies in 2005 from the Kangaroos, for whom he had played 8 AFL games in 2003-4. He was the outstanding SANFL player of the 2005 season, claiming both the Magarey Medal and Port's best and fairest player trophy. His fine form continued in 2006, 2007 and 2008 when he added further club best and fairest awards.

**Cleve Cowell Football Association:** See County Jervois Football League.

**Cleve and District Football Association:** The CDFA was established in 1919, and continued to operate until 1960. After a year in recess it was merged with the Franklin Harbour Football Association to form the Cleve Cowell Football Association.

Member clubs of the CDFA included Alsbra Park, Arno Bay, Cleve, Darke Peake, Kilroo, Mangalo, Rudall, Verran, Western Rovers and Wharminda.

**CLIFFORD, STEPHEN:** After struggling to make a mark at Collingwood (as just 38 games in six seasons attests), Stephen Clifford joined Port Adelaide in 1978 and went on to enjoy an illustrious and highly productive career with the South Australian Magpies. Best and fairest in his debut season, he landed the award again in 1980 and 1983, and was a member of Port's 1979-80-81 premiership teams. His final games tally of 162 would have been considerably higher had he not broken his ankle on two occasions and fallen out with the club over player payments for a time in 1984. Not



*1990s action involving Port and Glenelg  
at Football Park.*

quick, but tough, combative, skilful, and a thumping kick, Clifford, who exulted in the nickname 'Bomber', was lauded at Alberton and loathed elsewhere, and was without doubt one of the single biggest reasons behind Port Adelaide's success under John Cahill during the late '70s and early '80s.

**CLIFT, ROGER:** One of those players who seems blessed with a total disregard for personal safety, Roger Clift in many ways epitomised the Port Adelaide ethic, in which courage, determination and selflessness are central.

Clift, who hailed from Jamestown, made his Magpies debut in 1948, and went on to play a total of 155 club and 5 interstate games, as well as participate in four premiership teams. He won Port's best and fairest award in 1954. Mainly used as a centre half back, he was in some ways a prototype of the modern practitioner of that position with his attacking mentality and his penchant for backing his judgement rather than religiously affixing his attention on his opponent.

Always a favourite with Port fans because of his cheerful demeanour and overtly reckless devotion to the team cause, Roger Clift died at a tragically young age after sustaining a heart attack while playing squash.

**CLINGLY, MICK** of West Torrens was a solidly built centre half forward or centre half back whose play combined power, aggression and skill in ample measure. Well liked by Torrens supporters, and highly respected by those of opposition teams, he played a total of 156 SANFL games for the blue and golds, amassing the highly creditable total of 219 goals in the process. He topped the club's goal kicking list on three occasions, and was best afield - playing in the unaccustomed position of back pocket - when Torrens defeated Port Adelaide by 7 points to annex the 1953 premiership. In a game against Glenelg in



*Mick Clingly (West Torrens)*

1956, during which he booted 12 goals, Clingly became the last player in SANFL history to use a place kick.

**CLISBY, TREVOR:** A superb defender who combined a relentlessly vigorous approach with good all round skills and a predilection for going on prolonged, surging

# Club Championship Of Australia



*Carlton players celebrate the club's 45 point victory over Sturt in the 1970 Champions of Australia match at the Adelaide Oval.*

Year	Winning Team	G	B	Pts	Losing Team	G	B	Pts	Venue
1888	Norwood			3 wins	South Melbourne			0 wins	Kensington
1890	Port Adelaide	7	10	N/A	South Melbourne	6	13	N/A	Adelaide Oval
1893	Essendon	10	23	N/A	South Adelaide	3	6	N/A	Victoria Park
1907	Norwood	13	12	90	Carlton	8	10	58	Adelaide Oval
1908	West Adelaide	12	9	81	Carlton	7	10	52	Adelaide Oval
1909	South Melbourne	11	8	74	West Adelaide	7	14	56	MCG
1910	Port Adelaide	15	20	110	Collingwood	7	9	51	Adelaide Oval
1911	West Adelaide	8	9	57	Essendon	7	12	54	Adelaide Oval
1913	Port Adelaide	13	16	94	Fitzroy	4	7	31	Adelaide Oval
1914	Port Adelaide	9	16	70	Carlton	5	6	36	Adelaide Oval
1968	Carlton	13	15	93	Sturt	6	20	56	Adelaide Oval
1969	Richmond	15	27	117	Sturt	9	10	64	Adelaide Oval
1970	Carlton	21	13	139	Sturt	12	22	94	Adelaide Oval
1971	Hawthorn	13	13	91	North Adelaide	10	7	67	Adelaide Oval
1972	North Adelaide	10	13	73	Carlton	10	12	72	Adelaide Oval
1973	Richmond	12	20	92	Subiaco	10	19	79	Adelaide Oval
1974	Richmond	27	11	173	Sturt	13	17	95	Football Park
1975	North Melbourne	17	15	117	Norwood	5	11	41	Football Park
1976	Hawthorn	12	17	89	North Melbourne	5	11	41	Norwood Oval

# COCK O' THE NORTH

## The 1919 SAFL Final and Final Replay

In South Australia, top level football was suspended, owing to the war, between 1916 and 1918. This was in contrast to the situation in both Victoria and Western Australia where league football was persevered with, albeit, inevitably, on a reduced scale. As far as South Australia was concerned, the closest thing to league football was a patriotic competition, which was formed in 1916 at the instigation of the Railways Football Club. A fair number of past and future league players participated in this competition, and indeed teams bearing the names of five of the seven SAFL clubs competed at some stage. Other participating clubs included Prospect, St Francis Xavier, Sturt Central and Kenilworth. Railways, the original instigators of the venture, only lasted a few weeks before withdrawing.

Matches in the patriotic league received scant media coverage, but grew in popularity as the end of the war approached. The 1918 grand final, for instance, attracted a crowd of roughly 7,000 to watch West Torrens 5.13 (43) defeat West Adelaide 3.11 (29). The 1916 and 1917 premierships had both been won by Port Adelaide.

Hardly surprisingly, the 1919 South Australian league football season - the first for four years - was the subject of enormous public anticipation, with the media doing much to stimulate and reinforce this. The resumption of top level sport, in addition to providing a reassuring reminder that the status quo had been restored, afforded a ready-made opportunity to luxuriate in the cultural values and ideals which, in the view of many, the recent war had defended and maintained. Thus Saturday 3 May 1919 at the Adelaide, Unley and Alberton Ovals was a time for celebration and relief, albeit tinged with a certain sadness over what had been irrevocably changed or lost.

Eventual challenge finalists Sturt and North Adelaide were the first sides to declare their hands. When they met at Adelaide Oval in round 6 both were still undefeated, the Blues with 3 wins and 2 byes, and the northerners with 4 and 1 bye. Sturt gave a hint of how the season was ultimately to pan out with a dominating performance that was only sullied by some atrocious kicking. They won by 19 points, 5.15 (45) to 3.8 (26). Having won the 1915 premiership the Blues were effectively in pursuit of back to back titles, a quest that would be aided by the arrival at the club of a crop of excellent recruits including former patriotic league players Ted Colquhoun, Stan Scrutton, Reg Whitehead and Freddy Odgers, together with a sprinkling of talent from interstate. According to club secretary Wilfred Tank, "We have a solid, evenly-balanced team, without a weak spot. Bill Mayman is the best captain around, the old players respect him, the juniors worship him". All told, Sturt would blood eighteen newcomers at some stage during the 1919 season.

At North Adelaide, there was a much smaller turnover of players, with only seven debutants. However, one of these was Jack Hamilton, rated by some judges in the 1920s as the greatest all round footballer seen until then. North also had undoubtedly the best ruckman in South Australia, if not Australia, in Tom Leahy, plus other noteworthy players in Clem Dayman, Bert Fooks, Cec Curnow and Dan O'Brien.

West Torrens, coached by pre-war star Bert Filsell, and with the imposing figure of Stan Patten as captain, were expected by many to be the team to beat in 1919, especially

given that they had retained a fair number of the players who had helped them win the 1918 patriotic premiership. Playing a fast, open brand of football which was heavily reliant on handball there were times during the 1919 minor round when they seemed head and shoulders above any other team in the competition, but all too often their dominance did not translate into scoreboard superiority. The main reason for this was their woeful kicking for goal, with their season's tally of 692 points being comprised of 88 goals and 164 behinds, which constituted an accuracy rate of a dire 34.92%. In the round 6 clash with West Adelaide at Hindmarsh, Torrens produced one of the most goal-shy displays in league history when they amassed 8.27 (75) to Westies' 5.4 (34).

In welcoming back eight of the players who had helped propel them to unprecedented greatness in 1913 and 1914 Port Adelaide might reasonably have been expected to mount a formidable premiership challenge in 1919. However, most of these players were now well past their best, while the new members of the team were still a couple of seasons away from making their mark. Nevertheless, the Magpies might be considered a touch unfortunate to have been drawn to play West Torrens in the semi finals rather than North Adelaide, as the blue and golds had clearly had Port's measure in 1919, winning both minor round clashes convincingly. By contrast, the ease with which the Magpies had overcome North in round 12, just a month before the start of the finals, suggested that a semi final re-match would have elicited few fears at Alberton.

The premiership ladder at the conclusion of the home and away rounds read as follows (except that percentages have been converted to the modern format):

	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Pts</b>
Sturt	10	2	-	771	563	57.79	20
West Torrens	9	3	-	692	569	54.87	18
North Adelaide	7	5	-	610	471	56.42	14
Port Adelaide	6	5	1	693	544	56.02	13
South Adelaide	4	7	1	605	662	47.75	9
West Adelaide	4	8	-	595	854	41.06	8
Norwood	1	11	-	549	852	39.18	2

Len Lackman of Port Adelaide, one of the eight pre-war returnees mentioned above, booted 26 goals for the season to top the league's goal kicking ladder, while South Adelaide centre half back Dan Moriarty won the first of his three successive Magarey Medals.

On the interstate front, South Australia met the VFL on 5 July in Adelaide, losing 8.8 (56) to 9.8 (62), and on 2 August in Melbourne, when the outcome was uncannily similar, the Vics winning 11.8 (74) to 10.8 (68).

Betting on football was rife in 1919, and the expected evenness of the finals series produced a welter of business for the bookmakers. Sturt, who would enjoy the right of challenge if beaten in either their semi final or the final, were narrowly favoured to retain their title, but there was considerable backing for West Torrens, too. North's and Port's chances were not rated so highly, the former because of their worrying decline in form over the final month of the minor round, and the latter because of their inability to beat either Sturt or Torrens during the year.

## Semi Finals

A crowd of 16,000, equalling the record for a semi final established in 1909, attended the clash between Sturt and North Adelaide at the Adelaide Oval on Saturday 30 August. The Double Blues had beaten North by 19 points at Adelaide in round 6, and by 8 points at Unley in round 16, and as a result were warmly favoured to win. However, to the dismay of Sturt supporters, and the scepticism of both the media and many members of the public, the unfancied red and whites produced what, on the face of it, was far and away their best performance of the season to win with ease, 7.18 (60) to 3.5 (23). Thus, for the eighth time in ten seasons, the minor premier had capitulated during the finals against supposedly weaker opposition, thereby ensuring that the league would enjoy a lucrative bonus in the shape of a bumper challenge final pay-out. Hardly surprisingly, cynics were quick to suggest that the Blues had 'laid down', but such allegations are notoriously difficult to prove. What does seem certain, however, is that, despite Wilfred Tank's previously quoted confident assertion to the contrary, there was dissension in the ranks at Unley, with a yawning gap emerging between many of the players and what they saw as an overbearingly autocratic committee. Moreover, club skipper Bill Mayman, far from being an object of respect and even 'worship', was regarded as a quintessential 'committee man', and was widely mistrusted and disliked. Not surprisingly, therefore, he would end up being deprived of the captaincy the following year, a fact which, in retrospect, makes Sturt's 1919 premiership triumph seem all the more laudable and extraordinary.

The second semi final between West Torrens and Port Adelaide took place a week later, on Saturday 6 September. During the minor round Torrens had twice beaten the Magpies by an identical 18 point margin: 7.10 (52) to 3.16 (34) in round 5 at Alberton, and 9.18 (72) to 7.12 (54) at Hindmarsh in round 15. They maintained their supremacy in a one-sided finals encounter, winning by 4 straight goals, 9.5 (59) to 5.5 (35). The win, and perhaps even more significantly the quality of the performance, earned the blue and golds outright premiership favouritism at that stage, despite the fact that they would have to win two more games, compared to Sturt's one, to take out the flag. Quite remarkably, it was Torrens' first ever victory in a finals match, bringing to an end a sequence of 7 semi final losses stretching back to 1900.

The first of the games that Torrens needed to win would be a cut-throat final against North Adelaide, who had beaten the blue and golds in round 4, but lost to them in round 13. Both matches had been fiercely contested and close, and so what transpired at Adelaide Oval on Saturday 13 September 1919 should not really have taken anyone by surprise.

## The Final: North versus Torrens

*"..... football has seldom been witnessed in such dreary circumstances."*

(*'The Advertiser'*, 15/9/19, page 10)

The match commenced in heavy rain, with an extremely strong north-westerly breeze blowing more or less directly across the oval from wing to wing. Apart from the seated areas in the grandstands, the crowd was sparse - quite understandably, given the weather conditions. At one point a large group of male spectators, tired of being at the mercy of the elements, stormed the members' stand after its gates had been opened to admit a contingent of ladies; before the police could intervene, the stand was full to overflowing,

with not only the seats but all of the aisles crammed with boisterous, bedraggled, but mainly good humoured supporters.



*Messrs Leahy (left) and Patten pictured shaking hands prior to the 1920 semi final between North and Torrens, which was won by the former by 15 points.*

North Adelaide's captain Tom Leahy won the toss and elected to kick to the southern end, which was probably marginally favoured by the wind, although overall its impact was negligible. The ground surface was exceptionally slippery, rain having been falling continuously since mid-morning, and there were also about a dozen puddles of water of various sizes ranged all over the oval. Within minutes of play starting the ball had become like a heavy, sodden bar of soap, and for most of the afternoon the spectacle presented to the crowd would be more akin to soccer or water polo than football.

### **A Scrambly Start**

**P**redictably, play from the outset was very scrambly, with numerous scrimmages, and much soccering of the ball off the ground. Torrens attacked first, but the North half back line held firm. Then it was North's turn to push forward, which they did with a fair amount of craft and purpose given the conditions, and five minutes in Fullarton snapped the first goal of the game.

During the opening minutes, players of both sides had had difficulty keeping their feet, but as the quarter went on they began to cope better with the conditions.

Torrens responded to North's goal by raising the tempo of the play. They even managed to produce a few passages of decent football, one of which culminated in their first score of the match, a behind. For most of the remainder of the term the blue and golds were in the ascendancy, but it was not until moments before the bell that a chain of passes involving Karney, Patten and Marvell ended with the last named running into an open goal to fire his team to a 1 point advantage at the first change. **QUARTER TIME: West Torrens 1.1 (7); North Adelaide 1.0 (6)**

### Splash Carnival Time



*West Torrens centremen  
Johnny Karney.*

With the rain showing no signs of abating, North opened the second quarter by mounting their first concerted attack since the early stages of the first term, but Torrens were quick to repel them.

With the ball still comparatively dry, Torrens were making good use of handball, and a neat sequence of inter-passing saw them maneuver the ball to within a few metres of goal, only for Tom Leahy to intervene for the northerners and relieve the pressure. The blue and golds attacked again, and a snapped behind from Marvell gave them the first score of the term.

As the quarter continued, all science and system departed from the play, which consisted mainly of a series of frantic scrimmages, interspersed with hurried, hopeful kicks off the ground. Moreover, the ball seemed to be out of bounds almost as often as it was in play. Many of the players were soon coated from head to toe in mud, and it became increasingly difficult to tell the teams apart. There appeared to be little adherence to the principle of sticking to your position, and for the most part upwards of twenty players might be said to be on the ball. From time to time, Torrens would endeavour to initiate a sequence of handpasses, and although one such move gave rise to a second behind of the term to Marvell, for the most part the conditions were quick to reassert themselves and play reverted to a frenetic, uncoordinated mud scramble.

Midway through the quarter North mounted a promising attack, but Torrens centremen Johnny Karney, having intercepted the ball close to goal, embarked on an exhilarating fifty metre run that briefly brought the somewhat sombre crowd to life. His kick landed on the half forward line for the blue and golds, but North's will 'o the wisp defender Jack Hamilton intervened and promptly and resolutely sent the ball back from whence it came.

An untidy sequence of "punches, kicks along the ground, and certain unorthodox maneuvers" enabled North to launch another promising attack, but the Torrens defence seemed virtually impregnable at this stage of the match, and combined well to relieve. Moments before the bell North full forward Dan O'Brien had

his team's first and only shot for goal of the term, but the ball sailed out of bounds. At the long break, Torrens had extended their lead from 1 to 3 points, with Les Marvell having been responsible for his team's entire score. **HALF TIME: West Torrens 1.3 (9); North Adelaide 1.0 (6)**

### Hamilton Ignites North

Quite a number of players changed their shorts during the half time interval, and when they re-emerged from the changing rooms they would have been gratified to discover that the rain had, at last, abated. Once play got underway, however, it proved to be just as scrambly and unkempt as ever.

Five minutes into the quarter a rushed behind gave the red and whites their first score since the opening term, and when Torrens attempted a swift riposte they were repelled by Hamilton who, almost alone among the thirty-six players on view, seemed capable of handling the ball cleanly, and disposing of it with vim, vision and purpose.

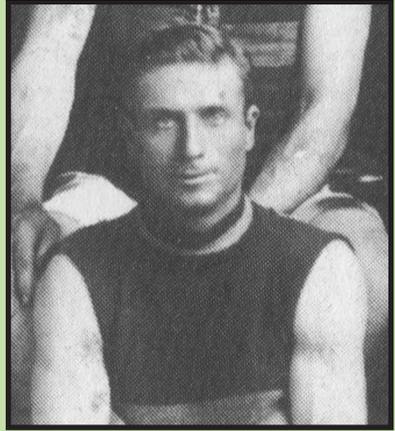
North, seemingly the stronger and more desperate side at this stage of the match, forced the ball forward once more and it was scrambled through for another behind to reduce the margin to just 1 point. Shortly afterwards, Bert Fooks, a former Torrens player, cleverly gathered the ball in a scrimmage and snapped truly to give the northerners the lead their more decisive play since half time warranted.

From the ensuing centre throw-up (bouncing the ball being entirely out of the question) Torrens attacked briskly, but O'Brien, now taking a run on the ball, took a well judged relieving mark.

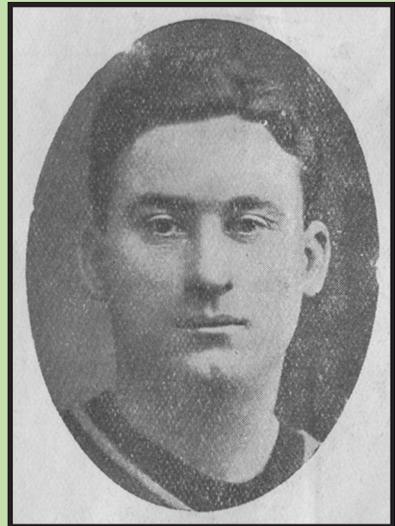
An unusually fluent phase of play saw Torrens maneuver the ball to well within range of goal, only for Marvell to ruin everything by fumbling badly. As a result, he was unceremoniously bundled aside by the North defenders, and the danger was cleared.

Play was becoming more willing and strenuous, and there was a good deal of illicit activity - tripping, jumper tugging, even hacking - going on outside the ken of umpire Johnstone, who in any case seemed inclined, for the most part, to keep his whistle in his pocket, no doubt as a concession to the conditions.

Towards the end of the term it was noticeable that the strength of the wind had declined, but the heavy surface and slippery ball still made skilful football virtually



*Bert Fooks of North Adelaide*



*Torrens full back Edwin Daviess*

impossible. Torrens finished the quarter in the ascendant, but found it hard to get closer to goal than their half forward line. At last, however, a loose ball was gathered up by Manning some forty metres out and, with time and space to run on and steady, he made no mistake from a distance of about twenty-five metres to restore the blue and golds' lead. **THREE QUARTER TIME: West Torrens 2.3 (15); North Adelaide 2.2 (14)**

### A Closing Stanza "full of sound and fury signifying nothing"

Torrens had played with a loose man in defence for most of the third quarter, and, despite only leading by the narrowest of margins, persisted with this ploy in the final term. Ironically, it almost succeeded, for although North spent a lot of time in attack they were largely unable to get close enough to goal to attempt a shot.



*North's Dan O'Brien*

The first golden opportunity of the quarter fell to Torrens, however, as Marvell gathered the ball in acres of space well within scoring range, with only North full back Wallis between him and the goals. Instead of taking a shot though the nippy rover backed himself to dodge around his opponent and was comprehensively collared.

Hamilton and Curnow then combined well for North but the latter's seemingly goal bound kick was marked almost on the goal line by Daviess, the Torrens 'goal keeper' and future captain. Moments later the red and whites again managed to maneuver the ball to well within scoring range, but the umpire picked out a free kick to the Torrens skipper, Patten, and the danger was quelled.

Midway through the quarter the sun came out for the first time in the game, and almost as if in celebration North registered a behind to level the scores. The hitherto moribund crowd was now beginning to make a considerable amount of noise as North pressed repeatedly forward in a bid to snatch the game. Torrens, however, defended with grim efficiency, kicking the ball out of bounds at every opportunity, and repeatedly hurling bodies en masse at the ball in order to force scrimmages, and hold up play. For all their pressure and territorial superiority the red and whites failed to eke out a single, clear-cut scoring opportunity, and with a couple of minutes left to play it was Torrens who almost clinched the game. A long, probing kick from Marsh seemed to be skidding and rolling ominously goalwards until Hamilton, who for much of the afternoon had been playing football on a different plane to virtually every other player on the field, made an electrifying dash across the face of goal, scooped up the soggy ball as though it was dry, and sank his boot into a hefty punt kick that transferred the focus of play to the veritable buffalo wallow that masqueraded as the centre of the ground. A frantic, all-in melee ensued which was still in full swing when the bell sounded to end the match. **FINAL SCORE: West Torrens 2.3 (15); North Adelaide 2.3 (15)**

**BEST** - West Torrens: Johnson, Wade, Karney, Patten, Campbell, Marsh North Adelaide: Hamilton, Curnow, Dayman, Leahy, Fooks, Frost

**GOALS** - West Torrens: Marvell, Manning North Adelaide: Fooks, Fullarton

## The Final: North versus Torrens

*“There will be few who will gainsay this. Never this year have teams been so evenly matched. West Torrens died hard.”*

(‘The Advertiser’, 22/9/19, page 12)

In contrast to a week earlier, the weather was fine, and the condition of the turf, according to ‘The Advertiser’s’ football reporter, “first-class”. A large crowd, estimated at somewhere between 25,000 and 30,000, was in attendance - somewhat more than might have been expected had there been any major counter-attractions, such as an important race meeting, on offer.

The West Torrens line-up was identical to that which took the field in the previous week’s drawn final, while North were forced to omit Trescowthick because of injury, with his place being taken by Vincent Leahy.

Just as he had a week ago, North’s captain Tom Leahy won the toss and elected to kick to the southern end of the Adelaide Oval, although what slight breeze there was seemed to favour the northern end.

### A Sense Of Déjà-Vu

Many of the Torrens players must have experienced a sense of déjà-vu as they saw their team surge into attack from the opening bounce, only for Jack Hamilton to intervene, and clear the danger with archetypal smoothness and conviction. North then pressed hard in a bid to find an opening, but Torrens defender Clarence Curnow marked strongly in front of the goal posts to relieve.

The next few minutes saw the blue and golds displaying some of the excellent combined play, featuring deft, intelligent handball and short, crisp stab passing, that had characterised their best performances during the minor round. A frantic passage of play near the Torrens goal culminated in a North defender spearing a low kick toward the half back left boundary, only for Stan Patten to pick the ball up on first bounce, run on, and register the first goal of the game with a thumping punt kick from roughly fifty metres distance.

Torrens continued to play the better football, and a couple of minutes later Patten nabbed a second goal from a similar position to his first. With only six minutes having elapsed, the blue and golds had almost equalled their entire previous week’s score. In complete contrast to a week earlier, players of both sides, particularly North, were kicking long, and marking well. There were occasional fumbles, but these seemed to be attributable to over-eagerness, and as the quarter went on they were less frequent.

For several minutes the play moved from end to end at considerable pace, but there was no addition to the scores, although a long shot from North’s centre half forward Dayman seemed to be sailing through for a goal only to be marked right on the line by Allen, the West Torrens back pocket player.

Several minutes elapsed before North again had a chance to score, through Fullarton, but this time it was Marsh who came to the blue and golds’ rescue with a fine saving mark.

North continued to attack, however, and with time running out Dayman finally managed to post their first score of the afternoon, a major, courtesy of a hurried snap from close in. Moments later, and within seconds of the bell, another seemingly goal-

bound shot from the northerners was juggled and then dropped a metre or so from the line by a Torrens defender, and umpire Johnstone controversially awarded a mark. Needless to say, many of the North players protested, but the umpire was unmoved, and before play could resume the bell sounded to end the term. **QUARTER TIME: West Torrens 2.0 (12); North Adelaide 1.0 (6)**

### A Flurry Of Goals

**T**orrens centreman Karney had injured his shoulder during the opening term, and began the second quarter in a forward pocket. He was replaced in the centre by O'Loughlin.

Stan Patten, the Torrens skipper, grabbed the ball from the opening centre bounce of the term and kicked toward centre half forward, where Marvell marked well. His shot for goal failed to make the distance, however, and the North defence combined well to relieve. The blue and golds were soon back on the attack again, and during a strenuous passage of play near goal umpire Johnstone, adjudging that a North defender had thrown the ball away when tackled, awarded a free kick to the tackler, Les Marvell. From a mere twenty metres out directly in front the Torrens goalsneak had no trouble in raising two flags.



*Les Marvell (Torrens)*

North's response was spirited and effective as a long, probing punt kick by Davey was marked in the goal square, three metres out, by Dayman, who made no mistake. From the ensuing centre bounce, North attacked again, and as Tom Leahy chased the ball in front of goal he was manhandled by his Torrens opponent and promptly awarded a free. His goal to tie the scores elicited the loudest roar of the afternoon from the hitherto fairly subdued crowd.

The first behind of the afternoon arrived a couple of minutes later, to Torrens. From the kick in, Dayman took an excellent mark and initiated a promising looking North rush which was eventually short-circuited by O'Loughlin.

For some five minutes around the middle of the quarter Torrens enjoyed a purple patch during which they attacked relentlessly, but the red and white defence was, for the most part, equal to the task of containing them.

The most fluent move of the game so far saw the blue and gold quartet of Manning, Marvel, Karney and Patten maneuver the ball the length of the ground to well within range of goal, where Mayne marked. He kicked badly, however, only just managing to register a minor score. North responded with some neat football of their own which culminated in Fullarton hitting a fast leading Vin Leahy on the chest with a bullet like stab pass. Less than thirty metres out, on the slightest of angles, Leahy duly converted to put the northerners in front for the first time in the match.

The play of both teams was becoming faster, and better to watch, and the crowd was beginning to give voice to its appreciation.

Hollis and Campbell teamed well for Torrens along the grandstand wing, and the latter found Manning in the forward pocket with a good pass. Manning's kick was a beauty, and the blue and golds were back in the box seat.

No more than a minute later Hollis was again in the thick of the action, this time combining well with Stone to release Karney close to goal, and the nimble Torrens rover was able to run to within near point blank range and easily secure full points.

Another dangerous looking Torrens attack followed almost immediately, but North's half back flanker Hamilton, playing with his customary verve, poise and brilliance, intercepted superbly and sent the ball well over the centreline into his team's attacking half, where Fooks gathered and kicked long towards the goal square. As the inevitable pack formed, Tom Leahy came rushing in from behind and soared high to take a sky-scraping mark, easily the best of the game so far. He made no mistake with his kick, and shortly after the resumption the bell sounded with the scoreboard showing the blue and golds holding a slim, 2 point advantage. **HALF TIME: West Torrens 5.2 (32); North Adelaide 5.0 (30)**

### A Trickle Of Behinds

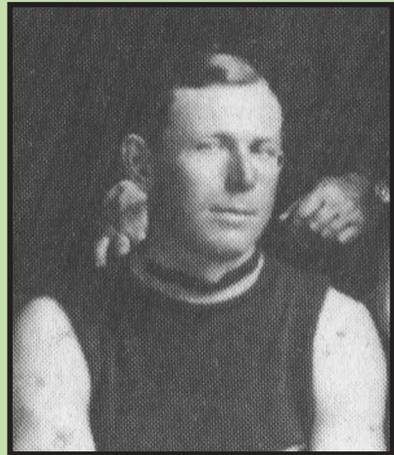
Johnny Karney resumed after half time with his left arm strapped to his side, a legacy of the shoulder injury sustained during the opening term. As in the second quarter, he stationed himself in a forward pocket, but it was clear that West Torrens would effectively be playing a man short from now on.

The first five minutes of the third term saw the ball being swept repeatedly from one end of the ground to the other, although there was a discernible contrast in the way the two teams achieved this. The northerners favoured long kicks to position, whereas Torrens relied heavily on handball, which they utilised with swift, almost unerring efficiency. The opening score of the quarter, a behind to North, came courtesy of a Vin Leahy place kick.

As Torrens endeavoured to battle their way back into contention the play became more scrumbly, with many players of both sides leaving their positions to chase the ball. Tom Leahy was playing a hero's game both in the ruck and all over the ground, and the blue and golds were reduced to employing illicit means to keep him under control. Umpire Johnstone was quick to penalise any misdemeanours, however, and 'the prince of ruckmen' was awarded at least ten free kicks during the term.

Another player to catch the eye was North's half back flanker Williams, who took a series of telling marks. Taking a leaf out of his fellow half back flanker Hamilton's book, his disposal was first rate, too.

During the second half of the quarter it was noticeable that Torrens were playing with much greater aggression, and there were many more scrimmages and stoppages



*Percy Lewis (North)*

as a result. On one occasion, play had to be suspended for a couple of minutes after the North Adelaide centre half forward Clem Dayman was knocked out cold during a marking contest. He eventually got groggily back to his feet.

The blue and golds' only score for the quarter came via a rushed behind, but had Johnson's booming kick from almost the centre of the ground carried a couple of metres more it would have produced one of the goals of the season. **THREE QUARTER TIME: West Torrens 5.3 (33); North Adelaide 5.1 (31)**

### **O'Brien Breaks The Stalemate**

**T**he early running in the final term was made by North, who soon had a behind on the board off the boot of Tom Leahy. The veteran ruckman was at his indefatigable best, and the behind came after he comprehensively out-bodied his Torrens opposite number in Wade to take a typically commanding mark.

The blue and golds attempted to respond, but North's half back line was too good, and within a couple of minutes it was the northerners who were again attacking relentlessly. After a particularly frantic scrum close to goal the ball spun loose into the goal square and North's full forward Dan O'Brien was just able to toe poke it over the line before being flattened. The goal gave the red and whites a lead of 5 points, but there were still at least twenty minutes of play remaining.

Those twenty minutes saw plenty of fast, furious football, but also plenty of fumbling as the pressure of the situation got through to the players. North were winning consistently in the air, but Torrens' ground play was superior. Overall, this produced something of a stalemate, with neither side able to manufacture a decisive opening. Torrens were clearly missing the drive from centre that would normally have been provided by Karney, and as the quarter wore on their forwards began to wander further and further towards the middle of the ground in search of kicks. This proved to be entirely counter productive, however, as all it did was make the play more congested, enabling North to force repeated stoppages in the play.

Towards the end of the match Tom Leahy had an excellent chance to score when he was freed across half forward but his kick for goal was well saved almost on the line by Mayne.

When the bell sounded, the red and whites were on the attack, and Torrens had only one man, the injured Karney, ahead of centre. Although overall there was very little if anything between the two teams, the blue and golds looked a very tired lot by the end. **FINAL SCORE: North Adelaide 6.2 (38); West Torrens 5.3 (33)**

**BEST** - North Adelaide: T. Leahy, Williams, Dayman, Davey, Hamilton, Fooks  
West Torrens: Johnson, Manning, Willis, Wade, Campbell, Mayne

**GOALS** - North Adelaide: T. Leahy 2; Davey, Dayman, V. Leahy, O'Brien  
West Torrens: Patten 2; Karney, Manning, Marvel

### **Blues Burst North's Bubble**

Prior to the 1919 challenge final, North Adelaide and Sturt had never met in a finals match. It was somehow appropriate, therefore, that their first encounters should be so grimly and closely fought.

In the challenge final on Saturday 27 September North, having won the toss through Tom Leahy and kicked to the Cathedral end, opened brightly, and seemed well on course for victory when they led by 26 points at the first change. The Double Blues, however, fought back strongly in the second term, and by the long break had reduced their deficit to just 5 points.

Play in the third quarter was congested, untidy, and pressure-packed. Only 3 behinds were registered, 2 to Sturt, and 1 to the northerners, meaning that at 'lemons' the difference between the teams was a mere 4 points, with North on 5.4 (34) to the Blues' 4.6 (30).

The early stages of the final term were similarly frenetic, with defences still very much in the ascendancy. With time-on approaching, and North ahead by one straight kick, 5.9 to 4.9, Sturt full forward Frank Golding marked near goal and played on immediately with a handpass to Les Smith, who kicked truly to level the scores. The last significant scoring chance fell to the Double Blues, deep into time-on, but Owen Beatty, having marked a mere thirty metres from goal on no appreciable angle, kicked woefully to miss everything. Final scores: North Adelaide 5.9 (39); Sturt 5.9 (39).

The replay was scheduled for the Labor Day holiday on Wednesday 8 October, and proved to be just as thrilling as the initial encounter between the teams. After an evenly contested opening term, North gradually seemed to be asserting themselves, and they led by 7 points at the half, and 14 points at the last change. Early in the final term North almost grabbed another goal but Ted Colquhoun rescued his team, and their season, with a spectacular last gasp save. Sturt then went straight to the other end of the ground and goaled. A second goal midway through the quarter reduced the margin to just 2 points, and with two minutes of the game left a behind to Owen Beatty made the scoreline North 2.6 (18) to Sturt 2.5 (17). Ivor Nicolle's winning goal just 35 seconds before the final bell has entered football folklore, and remains arguably the most memorably dramatic moment in the entire history of the Sturt Football Club, perhaps only seriously challenged for that distinction by Keith Chessell's demon-exorcising post-siren goal to beat Port at Alberton in 1966.

The Double Blues had won the flag, and the dissension at Unley was briefly forgotten as the team and its supporters celebrated joyously. Entering the Sturt changing rooms along with his chairman Fred Bennett, North captain Tom Leahy manfully suppressed his personal disappointment by declaring, "No doubt it was thought, after your long recess, that you would not find your feet again. After the match which we made a draw, I expected a harder struggle today. The game was played in a splendid spirit. We would have loved to get the premiership, but it was not to be ours".

North Adelaide's moment would soon come, however. Less than twelve months later, still under Leahy's captaincy, they would procure the 1920 pennant without the need for a challenge on the strength of a resounding 9.15 (69) to 3.3 (21) final victory over Norwood.

runs out of the backlines, Trevor Clisby was a stalwart of the fine teams fielded by North Adelaide during the 1980s and early 1990s. He arrived at North from Modbury Juniors, and made his league debut in 1980. He was at centre half back when the Roosters annihilated Glenelg in the 1987 grand final, and played there again in the tempestuous 1991 premiership decider when West Adelaide was comprehensively vanquished. Clisby retired at the end of that 1991 season after a career tally of 279 club games plus 1 interstate appearance for South Australia.

#### **Club Championship Of Australia:**

Contests which might reasonably be regarded as being for the club Championship of Australia occurred during two main phases of the game's history.

Post season matches played during the period 1888 to 1914 between the premier teams of South Australia and Victoria were consistently described in the Melbourne ('the Age') and Adelaide ('the Advertiser') press of the time as being for the championship (or premiership) of Australia. These contests did not resume after World War One.

The games of 1968-69-70-71 were described at the time as being for the 'unofficial championship of Australia', basically because the Australian National Football Council had decreed that official status could only be conferred on the championships when involvement extended to the premier teams of Western Australia and Tasmania, as it did from 1972.

Between 1972 and 1975 the premier teams of South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia, together with either the Tasmanian state champions (1972-73 and '75) or a composite team of players drawn from the premier clubs of the NTFA, NWFU and TFL (1974) contested a bona fide Australian championship series in Adelaide.

The National Football League's 1976 series involved leading clubs from the VFL

(5), SANFL (4) and WAFL (3) and was, prior to the VFL's late 1980s metamorphosis from state to national competition, the closest thing to a genuine, full scale Australian club championship ever to take place, although it was not strictly described as such at the time.

A list of all championship-deciding matches held between 1888 and 1976 is shown on page 105.

**COAD, JAMES** was an adaptable and talented forward who made his league debut with West Adelaide in 1938, and, taking into account a two year absence during the war while engaged in military duties, had given the club ten seasons and 138 games of service by the time he retired in 1949. He booted 269 goals, including tallies of 50 in 1946 and 38 in 1949 to top the club's list. Coad was at half forward right, and was vice-captain, in the grand final of 1947 when West overcame Norwood by 5 goals. He won the Trabilsie Medal as Westies' best and fairest player in his final league season, and represented South Australia twice, kicking 4 goals.

**COCHRANE, BILL** was a solidly effective performer for Central District in 172 league games between 1971 and 1981, booting 83 goals. He captained the club in 1975. An extremely versatile player who could do an effective job in any key position or as a ruckman Cochrane was part of a mini dynasty at Elizabeth which also included brother Richard Cochrane, brother-in-law Peter Jonas, and nephew Stuart Cochrane (Richard's son). Bill Cochrane was a South Australian state representative on 3 occasions.

**COCK, CRAIG** was a handy player for South Adelaide during a predominantly dismal era for the club. During the course of his 206 game league career between 1967 and 1978 the Panthers only contested one finals series. Ironically, the season after Cock

retired they reached only their second post-war grand final. Recruited from Westminster school, he was a dogged and pacy defender who typically kept very tight reins on his opponent. However, he was not afraid of backing his judgement and leaving his man to tear downfield after the ball if the occasion allowed.

**COCKATOO-COLLINS, CHÉ:** Recruited from City Cobras in Cairns by Port Adelaide, Ché Cockatoo-Collins played 25 SANFL games before being drafted by Essendon. A mercurial player, capable of dazzling heights of virtuosity inter-mixed with bouts of extraordinarily questionable decision making, Cockatoo-Collins played 75 games and kicked 109 goals for the Bombers between 1994 and 1998, and was a member of the club's 1994 night series premiership team. In 1999 he returned home to Port Adelaide, which was now competing in the AFL, and the quality roller coaster continued. He endured two injury affected seasons to begin with, although the side always looked better for his presence, before enjoying arguably his best ever AFL season in 2001 with 41 goals and seventh place in the voting for the club's best and fairest award. In 2002, however, he was often less than convincing, and was dropped from the side towards the end of the year, although his performance when recalled for the semi final win over his old club, Essendon, was encouraging. Nevertheless, in hindsight it is possible to see that the writing was on the wall, and twelve months later he was delisted, a perhaps unfortunate scapegoat for his club's continued under-achievement in finals.

**COCKBURN, JACK (HoF 2003):** Despite a late start to his league football career - he was already twenty-four when he joined South Adelaide from Blyth in 1934 - Jack Cockburn was one of the most accomplished footballers of his generation. Often evocatively referred to as 'the human horse stinger', he won a Magarey Medal in

only his second season, was a key member of two South Adelaide premiership teams, and played 7 times for the state. His Magarey Medal win was memorably saluted in the 'SANFL Football Budget' thus:

*Although of particularly robust physique, Cockburn has compelled admiration by the transparent fairness of his methods, and his concentration on the ball. What an easy task our umpires would be set if every player emulated Cockburn's style! The ball is invariably his objective, and his brilliance in gaining possession by dashing groundwork, and brilliant high flying, has made him the outstanding player of the season.*

While stationed briefly in Melbourne during World War Two, Cockburn played 10 VFL games with Essendon. The last of his 167 league games for South Adelaide was played in 1947.

Few people would have been surprised when he gained a place on a half back flank in South Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team'.

**Coca Cola Cup:** See Other Competitions.

**COLBEY, BRIAN:** Socks at half mast, and with a characteristic angular gait that suggested he had difficulty running in a straight line Brian Colbey scarcely looked like a league footballer, let alone a very good one. Other players - Kevin Murray and Martin Leslie spring to mind - have afforded similarly less than conclusive overt evidence of their prowess, but in football, as in life, looks can be deceptive.

Tough, resilient and unrelenting, Colbey was a key fixture across half back in Neil Kerley's powerful Glenelg sides of the late 1960s and early '70s. He played a total of 206 SANFL games for the Tigers, plus 11 for the state, between 1966 and 1976. A member of the Bays' 1973 grand final winning team against North Adelaide, another career highlight came in 1969 with selection in the All Australian team after the Adelaide carnival.

**COLIGAN, MICHAEL** made an important contribution to Norwood's emergence from a prolonged period in the doldrums during the early 1970s. A chunkily built, well balanced, strong marking full forward, his tally of 77 goals in 1970 was good enough to top the Redlegs' list, while the 81 he managed two years later was the season's best in the SANFL. Between 1969 and 1975 Coligan played 83 senior games, but his career ended disappointingly when he managed just 1 league appearance during his final year, and ended up playing in the reserves grand final on the day that the seniors lifted their first flag in a quarter of a century. Nevertheless, good clubman that he was, Coligan will doubtless have gleaned at least a small measure of consolation from the fact that the reserves won their premiership as well.

**COLQUHOUN, TED:** A top ranking defender, Ted Colquhoun commenced with Sturt in 1919, and was a member of the club's premiership-winning team that year. In the decisive match of the season against North Adelaide he played a crucial role in securing victory when his desperate goalmouth lunge late on prevented what seemed likely to be a certain goal to the red and whites. Had the ball gone through for a major score, North would have moved into a virtually unassailable 20 point lead. As it was, the Double Blues quickly moved the ball to the other end of the ground and reduced the deficit to just 8 points before, with the momentum now firmly in their favour, going on to secure a last gasp 5 point victory, courtesy of a goal from Ivor Nicolle.

In 1922, Ted Colquhoun was one of several Sturt players to quit the club in protest at the sacking of dual premiership captain-coach Bill Mayman. However, he resumed in 1923 and went on to complete 83 senior games for the Blues before retiring two seasons later. Colquhoun also represented South Australia on 3 occasions.

If he had a weakness as a player, it was that, on occasion, he tended to hold onto the ball too long. However, the converse of this was that his runs from defence were sometimes exhilarating and team-lifting.

**Colts Grade:** See Under Seventeens.

**COLVILLE, GAVIN:** In the brief history to date of the Woodville-West Torrens Football Club it is doubtful if there has been a more important on-field contributor than Gavin Colville. Nicknamed 'Scratcher', the distinctively red-haired on-baller joined the Eagles from TAC under eighteens club Geelong Falcons, and made his league debut in 1996. Four times a club best and fairest award winner (once jointly), he suffered the ultimate agony in 2006 when, in his sixth season as club captain, he missed out on the Eagles' long overdue premiership triumph owing to injury. Runner-up in the Magarey Medal voting in both 2000 and 2004, Colville has been a regular South Australian state league representative for much of the past decade. Combining an abundance of energy with finely honed skills, he had, when he retired in 2008, been an adornment both to his club and the SANFL in an Eagles record 232 senior games, plus 3 for South Australia.

**COLYER, ROY** of Glenelg is probably best remembered by those old enough for the dazzling display of roving he produced alongside fellow small men Lance Leak and Arthur Link in the Bays' sensational 1934 grand final defeat of Port Adelaide. Pace and plenty of it was the lightweight Colyer's principal asset and when in optimum form he was almost impossible to contain. His league career with the Tigers was only brief - 63 games between 1930 and 1936 netting him 96 goals - but it was also captivating in the extreme. Colyer played 4 games for South Australia, kicking 11 goals.

**CONGEAR, ANGELO:** A member, along with E.J.Callinan and Frank Curnow, of the famous 'three-Cs' ruck combination which helped propel Port Adelaide to the 1910 SAFL flag and Australian championship, wily rover 'Ongie' Congear was still going strong with Port Adelaide a dozen seasons later. In fact, he began with the Magpies in 1908, and went on to play in no fewer than four premierships and three Australian championship-winning sides, as well as representing South Australia at the victorious 1911 Adelaide carnival. This truly exceptional record was shared with two other great players, 'Shine' Hosking and Harold Oliver. Owing to uncertainty over records pertaining to the 1908, 1910 and 1915 seasons, it is unknown exactly how many league games Congear played, but it is believed to have been in the region of 150. It is known that he represented South Australia on 15 occasions, kicking 35 goals.

As a rover, he was extremely clever, nimble both of body and mind, and well able to look after himself. He was a great favourite among Port Adelaide's loyal following, and perhaps the only surprising fact about his career is that he somehow failed to procure a club best and fairest award.

**CONLIN, ALEC:** Robust, vigorous and speedy, West Adelaide's Alec Conlin was one of the best specialist half forward flankers of his day. Especially renowned for his prodigious place kicking, on one occasion at Adelaide Oval he scored a goal from a distance later measured at 80 yards. Spectacular to watch when in full flight, Conlin's prominence was short-lived as he played just 37 games for West between 1911 and 1913, kicking 30 goals. He was a member of premierships sides in 1911 and 1912, and in the former year was one of the best players afield as the red and blacks overcame Essendon by 5 points in a championship of Australia

match at the Adelaide Oval. Alec Conlin's 3 interstate appearances for South Australia all came at the 1911 Adelaide carnival, which the home state won convincingly.

**CONLIN, ARTHUR** enjoyed a slightly longer league career than brother Alec, and played in three premierships compared to his younger sibling's two. The first of these flags was claimed in Arthur Conlin's debut season of 1909, but he then missed the entire 1910 season apparently in protest at the administrative wrangles at the club which had led to the resignation of secretary George Leahy. Arthur Conlin returned to the fray in 1911, when he was joined by his brother, and with the pair in excellent form Westies returned to the top of the tree after missing the four the previous year. Another flag followed in 1912, with Arthur Conlin a key contributor. He continued with West for just one further season taking his final tally of league games to 53 and the number of goals kicked to 5. He also represented South Australia twice, kicking 3 goals.

**CONNELL, JOHN** was a handy utility for West Adelaide during a somewhat unmemorable era for the club. He made his debut in 1928, and over the next seven years played a total of 118 SANFL games and kicked 49 goals, captaining the club for part of the 1931 season and the whole of 1933. He was a near automatic choice for South Australia for much of his career, and played a total of 13 interstate matches, which included games at both the 1930 Adelaide and 1933 Sydney carnivals. During the Adelaide carnival he was one of the home state's most consistent and noteworthy performers.

**CONNELL, MATTHEW** had a pronounced impact on the Crows when he joined them from West Coast in 1995 winning the club's best and fairest award at the

first time of asking. An industrious and energetic on-baller or centreline player, he seemed to lose some of his sparkle after suffering a thigh injury during the 1996 season. Nevertheless, he made worthy contributions to the Crows' 1997 and 1998 premiership wins before struggling to hold a place in the team in his final two AFL seasons. In 2001 after 96 AFL games with Adelaide he returned to his home state of Western Australia and his original league club, Subiaco, whom he represented in the losing grand final of 2003 against West Perth before retiring.

**CONOLE, REGINALD:** Solidly built, hard at the ball, and with a fine turn of pace, Reg Conole was a key player for Port Adelaide between 1926 and 1929, during which time he played a total of 61 club games, plus 1 for South Australia. In 1928 he was a member of the Magpies' victorious challenge final team against Norwood. Twelve months later, however, he was one of four injured first choice players forced to watch from the sidelines as the Redlegs gained their revenge with somewhat disquieting ease. Still carrying his injury, Conole crossed to VFL club Melbourne in 1930, for whom he impressed after making a delayed debut mid-way through the year. Used mainly across half back, with occasional runs on the ball, he had played a total of 47 senior games for the Fuchsias by the time he hung up his boots in 1933.

**CONRAD, DARRELL:** Consistently reliable, and capable of the odd burst of genuine brilliance, Darrel Conrad was a highly rated member of North Adelaide's teams for over a decade. An excellent ball handler, he was a key factor in North's re-emergence as a power in 1926, with his injury during the challenge final against Sturt being viewed in the wash-up as perhaps the single main reason for his team's eventual 13 point loss. A South Australian interstate representative

on 9 occasions, including games at both the 1924 Hobart and 1930 Adelaide carnivals, Conrad rounded off his league career in style with telling performances on a half back flank - his favoured position - in the 1930 and 1931 premiership deciders against Port Adelaide and Sturt respectively. Between 1922 and 1932 he played a total of 125 senior matches, and was named North's best and fairest player twice during an era when such awards were not conferred every year.

**COOMBE, MARK:** A truly gifted, two-sided footballer who played with great verve, invention and skill, Mark Coombe suffered the misfortune of having his career peremptorily de-railed by a shoulder injury while he was still just twenty-four years of age. Nevertheless, he achieved enough in his eight season, 119 game league career to earn inclusion, on the wing, in South Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team'. (Indeed, as early as the opening round of the 1969 season a writer in the 'SA Football Budget' felt sufficiently confident to proffer the percipient suggestion that, in Coombe, South possessed a player "who could go on and join their club's hall of fame".)

It was on a wing that Mark Coombe, having risen through the ranks, commenced his senior career at South Adelaide in 1968. So noteworthy were his performances in that debut season that he was widely considered to be the SANFL's recruit of the year - no mean achievement when you consider that 1968 also introduced the likes of Russell Ebert, Ian Verrier, Robin Mulholland, Malcolm Blight and Mike Poulter to the South Australian football public. Coombe was runner-up to Peter Darley in that year's Knuckey Cup, South's best and fairest trophy, and the following season he went one better to become, at just eighteen, one of the award's youngest ever recipients. His good form continued over the next three years, culminating in selection in South Australia's 1972 Perth carnival team.

# CROWEATERS CROW IN PERTH

## 1925 Interstate Match: WA versus SA

The first interstate match between South Australia and Western Australia took place at the Jubilee Oval in Adelaide in 1904, with the Western Australians winning by 9 points. South Australia did not confront the sandgroppers on Western Australian soil until the decisive match of the 1921 Perth carnival, when the home state won by 10 points at Perth Oval. Thereafter, however, the two states began to meet one another much more regularly, both in Adelaide and Perth. In 1923, South Australia won easily at the Adelaide Oval, 10.13 (73) to 3.5 (23), only for Western Australia to reverse the result quite conclusively, 13.13 (91) to 4.3 (27), at Perth Oval a fortnight later. The states' next confrontation took place at the 1924 Hobart carnival when, after a closely fought first half, the West Australians pulled away to win convincingly by 37 points, 16.13 (109) to 10.12 (72). On that basis, the home state was strongly favoured to emerge triumphant when Western Australia and South Australia fronted up at Subiaco Oval on 20 June 1925, but the croweaters, it soon emerged, had other ideas.

In 1925, most South Australian and Western Australian footballers still pursued their entire playing careers in their home states, but major changes were on the horizon. The onset of a major economic depression at the end of the 1920s triggered significant changes in the way that elite footballers viewed the game. Whereas previously it had tended to be regarded simply as a hobby, or a form of recreation, it now began to be seen as an important potential source of income. For West Australians in particular, the difference between playing football in the WA(N)FL and playing in the VFL was sometimes tantamount to the difference between living just below or just above the breadline. Small wonder, then, that the player exodus from west to east, which had been barely a trickle in the early 1920s, had become a veritable flood a decade or so later.

One obvious legacy of this development was that interstate football, particularly among the three major states, became a good deal less competitive. In the first eight years after the Great War, the VFL's overall success rate in interstate football was 70.6%, compared to 62.5% for Western Australia, and 50% for South Australia. Between 1927 and 1934 there was a seismic shift in favour of the VFL, which by that time had access to many of the finest footballers from other states. The VFL's success rate in interstate football during this period was 86.8%, Western Australia's was 54.2%, and South Australia's was 39.1%. As far as the VFL-orchestrated future of football was concerned, the writing was already clearly on the wall as long ago as the 1930s.



In 1925, however, the pen had not yet been dipped in the ink. The Western Australian and South Australian teams which took the field at Subiaco Oval on 20 June that year were replete with some of the finest footballers in the land. The home state boasted past and future Sandover Medallists in the shape of Subiaco rover Johnny Leonard, the mighty George 'Staunch' Owens (East Perth) at centre half forward, and the West Perth pair of Jim Craig and Jim Gosnell. There was the redoubtable Carlisle 'Bub' Jarvis of East Fremantle on the last line of defence, team skipper Arthur Green of Subiaco (shown left) across

half back, Perth's Harry Grigg on centre wing, Hugh 'Bonny' Campbell (East Perth) at the goal front, and West Perth's indefatigable Jack McDiarmid leading the ruck.

The South Australians, too, had plenty of top quality players. They were captained by West Australian-born Frank Golding of Sturt (pictured right), one of the finest full backs of any era, while Magarey Medalists Dan Moriarty (South Adelaide), Bruce McGregor (West Adelaide), Jim Handby (Glenelg), and Walter Scott and Alick Lill (both Norwood), spectacular high-flyer Leslie 'Bro' Dayman of Port Adelaide, talented goalsneak Roy 'Cool Alec' Bent (Norwood), and formidable South Adelaide utility Alf 'Bulla' Ryan were others to help give the side a formidable look.



Presumably because of the heavy rain which had been falling for much of the week, the match attracted a slightly smaller crowd than in 1923, 16,000 spectators as against 18,000. Nevertheless, there were loud cheers as the two sides lined up for the toss of the coin, which was won by West Australian captain Arthur Green.

### An Even Opening

The Western Australians moved straight into attack from the opening bounce, only to be repelled three times in quick succession by Golding, who looked in fine touch. When South Australia attacked, however, they found 'Bub' Jarvis to be just as hard to get past.



*Jim Craig of West Perth and WA*

The first score of the match was a behind to South Australia from 'Bulla' Ryan, but Western Australia quickly levelled the score courtesy of Owens. Moments later an apparently goal-bound kick was marked on the line by the South Australian full back, Golding.

Although the ground surface looked in good condition players of both sides were finding it difficult to keep their feet, and when steady rain began to fall this state of affairs was mitigated. Western Australia seemed intent on playing a short-passing game ill-suited to the conditions, whereas the South Australians were kicking the ball long to position, with reasonable success.

Making light of the greasy ball and inclement weather, 'Staunch' Owens soared high above Moriarty to mark cleanly. The resultant kick was true, and Western Australia hit the front.

A heavy body clash between West Australian full back Harry Sherlock and South Australian centreman Alick Lill saw the former player laid out and in need of attention from the trainers. The visitors continued to press hard, and McGregor snapped their first goal to level the scores.

A feature of the game was the confrontation between the two centremen, Gosnell and Lill, with honours even to this stage.

After South Australia had snatched the lead by a point, the home side moved the ball sweetly to the other end of the ground culminating in a mark and goal to Johnny Campbell. South Australia responded with some determined attacking, but West Australian wingman Harry Grigg, having been shifted temporarily into the backlines, took some telling defensive marks. The seemingly inevitable breakthrough finally came when Harry Potts marked close to goal and kicked truly, putting South Australia in front by a point.

The remainder of the quarter saw the Western Australians, with Jim Gosnell continually in the thick of the action, assume control, but manage to register only behinds. **QUARTER TIME: Western Australia 2.3 (15); South Australia 2.2 (14)**

### Croweaters Cruise

Another brilliant mark to Owens just after the resumption brought the crowd to life. With half forward flanker Cliff Parks suddenly providing a reliable route to goal, the home side was firmly in the ascendancy, but Frank Golding was still proving impassable at full back.

Following a behind to Leonard, South Australia moved the ball straight down the middle of the ground, with Lill marking strongly over Gosnell and finding Ryan, but the bullocking half forward could only manage a point. Shortly afterwards, however, Leslie Dayman registered a major score after marking spectacularly, and South Australia edged in front by 5 points.

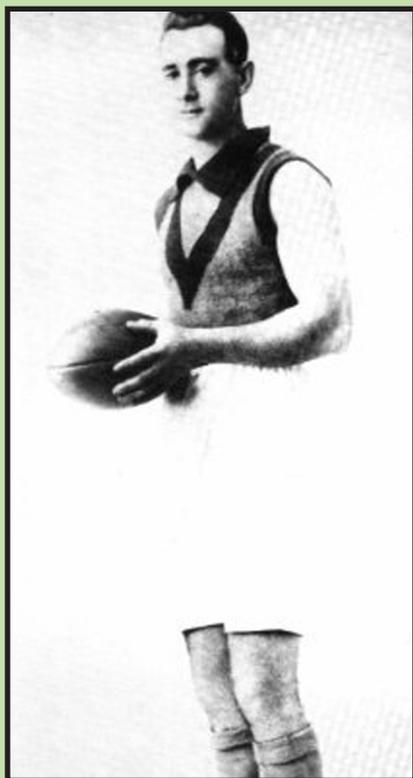
The goal seemed to inspire the croweaters, whose levels of intensity and determination lifted noticeably. Another goal to Dayman, this time from an elegant drop kick on the run, extended their lead, and moments later Ryan missed an easy chance to register the South Australians' 5th goal.

The visitors were now playing with considerable cohesion and purpose, while the home side's players always seemed to be under pressure, making their handling inelegant and their disposal correspondingly wayward.

Bruce McGregor beat his man to the ball and kicked accurately to extend the croweaters' lead to 19 points, a margin that by no means flattered them.



'Wat' Scott



East Perth's 'Staunch' Owens

Western Australia's first attacking thrust for several minutes culminated in a goal to Park, and shortly afterwards Johnny Campbell had a good chance, but only managed a minor score.

The last few minutes of the quarter were dominated by South Australia, which registered a behind through Maurie Allingham, and then a goal, shortly before the bell, from Ryan, after some smart work by Bampton and Scott. **HALF TIME: South Australia 6.6 (42); Western Australia 3.5 (23)**

### The Home Side Rallies

West Australian coach Tom Cain had clearly had some stern words for his charges during the half time break as the sandgroppers opened the 3rd term with newfound aggression and purpose. Moments after the resumption they registered a behind, and for several minutes afterwards continued to attack relentlessly. Yet another spectacular mark to Owens visibly lifted his team mates, and moments later 'Bonny' Campbell beat Golding to the ball, flung it hastily onto his boot, and sent it tumbling through an unguarded goal. The West Australians were

now in the ascendancy as firmly as the South Australians had been during the 2nd quarter, and when Johnny Campbell goaled to reduce the arrears to 8 points it was no more than their incisive play warranted. For the next few minutes the home side continued to attack frantically, only for Golding, who remained a tower of strength in the goal square, to save repeatedly.

For a few minutes during the middle of the term South Australia managed to procure some useful possession, and a goal to Bent pushed the margin out to two straight kicks. The sandgroppers fought back strongly, however, and a major score to Johnny Campbell sandwiched in between behinds to Ahearn and Beasley brought them back to within 4 points. The West Australians were still attacking when the bell sounded to end the quarter. **THREE QUARTER TIME: South Australia 7.7 (49); Western Australia 6.9 (45)**

### A Tense, Tight Finale

The home players began the final term as they had ended the third, but the South Australian backlines, with Handby suddenly prominent, stood firm. Finally, however, 'Bonny' Campbell marked close to goal and made light of the acute angle to steer the ball through and give the home side a 2 point advantage. Not long afterwards another good chance went begging as Golding yet again took a saving mark near the goal line.

Attack and counter attack now ensued, with Lill and Dayman prominent for the visitors, and Gosnell and 'Bonny' Campbell for the sandgroppers, but neither side was able to procure a major score.

After taking a towering mark, McGregor's kick looked goal-bound, but Sherlock 'did a Golding' and saved right on the goal line. The teams then exchanged behinds and, with the clock rapidly running down, the scoreboard showed Western Australia 2 points to the good, 7.11 to 7.9.

Players were still finding it difficult to handle the ball cleanly, and much of the play was scrappy, but South Australia seemed to be finishing the match the stronger. When Roy Bent collected the ball near goal his plight looked hopeless as he was surrounded by three opposition defenders, but he somehow managed to manufacture enough space to enable him to get boot cleanly to ball before he was tackled. The ball never deviated as it sailed through for a goal, and South Australia had hit the front.

During the closing moments of the game, Moriarty and Lill were prominent in the visiting side's backlines as Western Australia pushed forward desperately, but a behind to Grigg was all they could manage before the final bell sounded. At this, the South Australian players rushed en masse to their captain, Golding, who was chaired from the ground in celebration. It had been a superb, intense encounter, with neither side really deserving to lose, but overall the South Australians' more productive use of the ball probably gave them the slightest of edges, while in former West Perth player Frank Golding they possessed comfortably the best and most influential player on view. **FINAL SCORE: South Australia 8.9 (57); Western Australia 7.12 (54)**

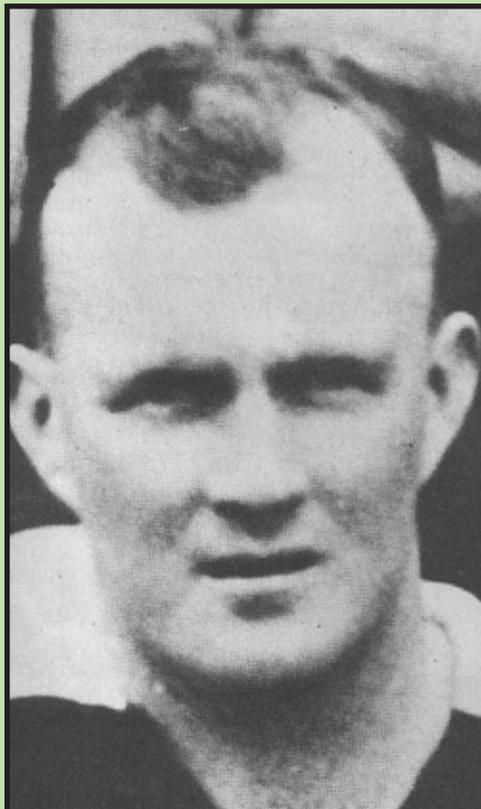
**BEST** - South Australia: Golding, Dayman, Lill, Moriarty, Ryan, Whitehead Western Australia: Craig, Sherlock, Leonard, J.Campbell

**GOALS** - South Australia: Bent, Dayman, McGregor 2; Potts, Ryan Western Australia: J.Campbell 3; H.Campbell 2; Owens, Parks

**ATTENDANCE** - 16,000 (approx.) at Subiaco Oval



*Les Dayman*



*Alf 'Bulla' Ryan*

### **The Match In Context**

Just over a month after their game against South Australia, the West Australians faced the VFL at the MCG, and, in a sign of things to come, sustained a frightful 85 point hiding. At half time the Vics led 13.6 to 1.3, and although Western Australia improved somewhat after that, adding 7.7 to 9.5 in the second half, it was still arguably the most embarrassing defeat in the state's history up to that point.

On the way home, the sandgroppers fronted up to South Australia once more, this time at the Adelaide Oval, where after a closely fought first half they succumbed to another hefty defeat. The home state won by 44 points, 12.22 (94) to 7.8 (50), with only some slipshod kicking for goal giving a semblance of respectability to the scoreline.

South Australia's encounters with the VFL in 1925 were squared, the croweaters winning by 3 points in Adelaide, and the Vics by 13 points in Melbourne. The South Australians also played a match

against Tasmania at the Adelaide Oval, winning resoundingly by 135 points, 27.16 (178) to 6.7 (43).

The VFL met New South Wales home and away in 1925, winning by 41 points in Melbourne, but losing by the narrowest of margins in Sydney.

The 1926 season produced matches that were similarly competitive, with little to separate the top three states. Western Australia and South Australia squared their two game home and away series, with each state winning comfortably at home. In Perth, the West Australians gained a measure of revenge over the VFL by defeating them twice, albeit by the narrow margins of 3 and 8 points. A stunning South Australian victory on the MCG against the VFL was comprehensively reversed when the Vics visited Adelaide later in the season. Meanwhile the VFL scored emphatic victories over New South Wales, both at home (by 80 points) and away (33 points), and over Tasmania in Melbourne (62 points).

South Adelaide was a struggling team for most of Mark Coombe's playing career, and did not manage to qualify for the finals even once. Ironically, following his enforced retirement the club entered a mini-halcyon phase under the innovative and energetic coaching of Haydn Bunton junior.

**COONEY, ADAM** was widely regarded as the finest footballer under eighteen in the land of his age when taken by the Western Bulldogs as the number one choice in the 2003 national draft. The former West Adelaide on-baller has since gone on to stamp himself as one of the nation's pre-eminent footballers of any age, a status enhanced in 2008 by his inclusion in the AFL All Australian team and shock victory in the Brownlow Medal. As of 2008 Cooney had played 112 AFL games and kicked 113 goals.

**COOPER, GRAHAM** was a fine defender who gave Port Adelaide good service in 118 SANFL games between 1961 and 1967. He was at centre half back in the Magpies' winning grand final teams of 1962, 1963 and 1965, but was equally effective as a full back, in which position he represented South Australia 3 times in 1965 when club and state colleague Ron Elleway was injured.

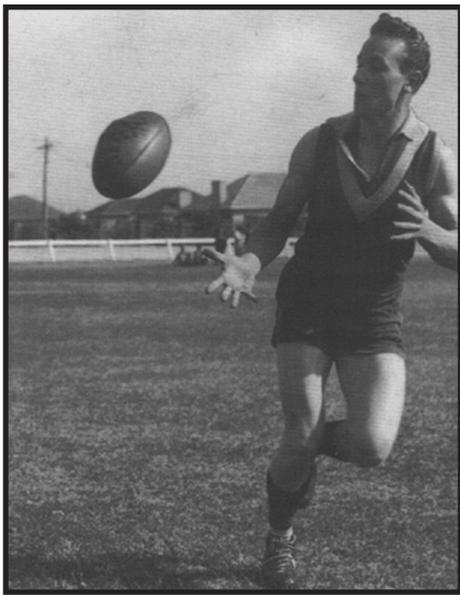
**COPPING, STEPHEN** was a talented and highly flexible forward who almost always gave good value. He commenced his league career in 1974 with Glenelg and had played a total of 246 senior games for the club by the time he retired following the victorious grand final of 1986 against North Adelaide. Copping had also played in the previous season's grand final defeat of the same opposition. He spent the period from 1982 to 1984 with Essendon in the VFL where he was sometimes hampered by injury, but overall did well, playing 42 games including the losing grand final of 1983 against Essendon, and kicking 88 goals. With the Bays he amassed a career tally of 460 goals

and was their top goal kicker of the season three times. He represented South Australia on 5 occasions.

**CORBETT, RICHARD** - known as 'Dick' - was a solid player for Glenelg in a war-interrupted career that saw him play 166 games and boot 10 goals for the club. He commenced in 1935, and played his last game in 1946, having captained the side the previous year. Pacy, strong overhead, and a good kick, he was chosen to represent the state twice, a total that would almost certainly have been higher had the war not forced the cessation of interstate football from 1942 to 1944.

**CORNES, CHAD** has been one of the foremost Port Adelaide players of the past decade. Hailing from Glenelg, the club his father Graham Cornes served so illustriously, he took his AFL bows with the Power in 1999, and by the following year was widely acknowledged as one of the best marking forwards in the league. In 2004, however, he was reinvented as a centre half back, and his energetic, purposeful rebound from this position was a key factor in Port's eventual march to the flag. Racking up disposal stats that most on-ballers would die for, Cornes was a shoe-in for the centre half back position in the 2004 AFL All Australian team, and also ran third in the Brownlow. In the grand final defeat of Brisbane he was somewhat quieter than usual but still effective, garnering 13 possessions and 7 marks as well as keeping tight wraps on a highly rated opponent in Jonathan Brown. Since 2004 Cornes has shown considerable versatility by performing well in a variety of roles, and when named an AFL All Australian for the second time in 2007 it was as a wingman. By the end of the 2008 season he had played 198 games for the Power and kicked 154 goals.

**CORNES, GRAHAM (HoF 2002):** Among post-war South Australians, perhaps only Fos Williams and Neil Kerley can rival Graham Cornes in terms of the extent and duration



*Stan Costello (West Adelaide)*

of their all round contributions to interstate football, both on and off the field of play. In Cornes' case, that contribution began with 21 appearances as a player, highlighted by All Australian selection in 1979 and 1980, a Simpson Medal against Western Australia at Subiaco Oval in 1979, and culminating in the 1980 Tassie Medal.

Described by his first league coach Neil Kerley as looking "like a skun rabbit", Cornes nevertheless belied his physical appearance with considerable all round football ability that was effectively redoubled by his exemplary wholeheartedness, endeavour, energy and enthusiasm, qualities which would earn him three club best and fairest awards in 317 games with Glenelg between 1967 and 1982. Cornes also played 5 games with North Melbourne under Ron Barassi, and a further 47 games for South Adelaide, where he commenced his career as a league football coach in 1983. Cornes later enjoyed considerable success as coach of Glenelg, steering the club to two premierships from five grand finals over half a dozen seasons, and was also the man responsible for establishing the Adelaide Crows in the 'big time' when that

club took its AFL bows in 1991. However, it was as an interstate coach in charge of South Australia that he achieved the greatest renown, twice achieving selection as All Australian coach, and leading his team to an astonishing 6 wins in 8 games against the hitherto virtually invincible 'Big V'.

These days Cornes is a co-presenter, along with Ken Cunningham, of radio Five AA's popular daily sports programme.

**CORNES, KANE** commenced his senior football with Glenelg before following older brother Chad to Port Adelaide, where he made his AFL debut in 2001. Of smaller stature and lighter frame than Chad he has inevitably tended to be used differently, at first mainly as a 'run with' defender, but more recently across centre or on the ball. He was one of the Power's best players in their 2004 grand final win over Brisbane, and the following year was included in the AFL All Australian team for the first time. He made the team again in 2007, the same season that saw him claim the John Cahill Medal as Port's best and fairest player. He won the Medal again the following year by which point he had played a total of 162 AFL games and kicked 69 goals.

**COSTELLO, STAN** played 126 SANFL games for West Adelaide in three separate stints, beginning in 1954, and ending ten years later. An old-fashioned, straight ahead, hard-hitting defender, he won All Australian selection after the 1956 Perth carnival, and was a joint winner of Westies' best and fairest award (with Aldo Rossetto) the same year.

#### **County Jervois Football League:**

Originally known as the Cleve Cowell Football Association this competition was formed in 1962 by means of a merger between the Cleve and District Football Association and the Franklin Harbour Football Association. Member clubs included Arno Bay, Carpa, Cleve, Cowell

(which split later into Cowell North and Cowell South), Darke Peake, Mangalo, Port Neill, Rudall, Rudall United and Wharminda. After the 1988 season the competition joined with the Kimba Districts Football League to form the Eastern Eyre Football League.

**COVERLID, JIM:** Tough, dependable and relentlessly aggressive, ruckman Jim Coverlid was a tremendous clubman for West Torrens in the first decade after World War Two, during which time he played 178 SANFL games and kicked 164 goals. He was a member of a Torrens premiership team in his debut season of 1945, and later was one of the best players afield in the winning grand final of 1953. His tenacity, courage and resolve made him a valuable player in interstate games, particularly against the VFL, and he represented South Australia 14 times, kicking 13 goals. His commitment to West Torrens was always wholeheartedly overt, and in 1956, his final season, he was rewarded with the club captaincy. Coverlid would be a strong candidate for inclusion, as a ruckman, in any official West Torrens 'Team of the Century'.

**COX, DARCY** was a tenacious, hard hitting rover who made a key contribution to North Adelaide's emergence as one of the power side's of the SANFL during the late 1940s. He made his league debut in 1946, and three years later booted 3 goals and was close to best afield as first rover in North's 13.17 (95) to 9.18 (72) grand final defeat of West Torrens. When North next went top in 1952, courtesy of a 108 point grand final annihilation of Norwood, Cox was again first rover, and again contributed 3 goals to what was at the time a record tally for a grand final of 23.15 (153). The grand final was the last of Cox's 115 league games, during which he booted 98 goals.

**COX, STANLEY** was a fine player for West Torrens before, during and just after

world war two. He played a total of 148 senior games for the club, winning its best and fairest award in 1940. His 4 interstate appearances for South Australia included games at the 1947 Hobart carnival.

**CRABB, ALLAN (HoF 2002):** Ruckman Allan Crabb began his senior career in 1942 with the West Adelaide-Glenelg wartime combination. When full-scale football resumed in 1945 he made his home at the Bay Oval, where he went on to give a dozen seasons of excellent service, becoming in the process one of the most popular and well-respected footballers in the state.

Outwardly placid, indeed seeming almost contemplative at times, Crabb was nevertheless well able to take care of himself when the going got vigorous. A superbly deft palmer of the ball, he was equally proficient at thumping it mightily forward when the occasion demanded it. His kicking was polished, accurate and appealing to the eye, and he was almost equally capable with either foot.

Allan Crabb was a regular member of South Australian interstate teams for many years, often forming a highly effective ruck partnership with Norwood's John Marriott. He was runner-up in the Magarey Medal in both 1949 (on a countback) and 1950, with the former loss being retrospectively upgraded to a win by the SANFL in 1998. Crabb also won the Bays' 1949 best and fairest award, and captained the club for three seasons.

**CRAIG, NEIL (HoF 2002)** enjoyed a noteworthy eighteen season league career with three clubs during which time he played a total of 321 SANFL games, plus 11 for South Australia. A skilful, hard running footballer, he commenced with Norwood in 1973, and two years later was a member of the club's first senior premiership team for a quarter of a century. When the Redlegs again went top in 1978, Craig was close to best afield in a stirring, come from behind grand final

victory over Sturt. In 1980, after 126 games for Norwood, he crossed to Sturt where he added another 134 games in seven seasons, skipping the side in 1985 and 1986. He also captained his state against Victoria in 1984. His final port of call was North Adelaide, where he played 61 games in four years.

Towards the end of the 2004 season Neil Craig was appointed coach of Adelaide and in a highly promising first full season in charge the following year he led the side to the minor premiership and in 2006 as far as the preliminary final. After that, the 2007 season was a major disappointment as the Crows only just managed to qualify for the finals before having their premiership aspirations immediately derailed by Hawthorn. It was a similar story twelve months later, albeit with Collingwood inflicting the coup de grace on that occasion.

**CRANE, LUKE** is an extremely pacy, determined and skilful on-baller who achieved his career highlight to date in 2008 when he became the thirteenth Sturt player to win the Magarey Medal.<sup>1</sup> The Blues recruited him from the Zillmere Eagles in Queensland, for whom he won three club best and fairest awards. However, he spent his formative years in Tasmania. Crane made his SANFL debut in 2007 and enjoyed a fine season, capped by victory in his club's best and fairest award. His form in 2008 was even better, and he was a key member of the state team which trounced the VFL during the year by 65 points. He claimed the Magarey Medal with 22 votes, 3 ahead of South Adelaide youngster James Boyd.

**CUMBERLAND, HARRY:** Playing at a time when football, paradoxically, had

a much more universalist flavour than has latterly become the case, the recent emergence of a nominally 'national' competition notwithstanding, Harry Vivian Cumberland epitomised the spirit of his era by eking out an auspicious three decade football career in three Australian states plus New Zealand. When he finally retired from top level football in 1920 he was, at forty-three years of age, the oldest player ever to have appeared in the VFL. He was also, arguably, one of the best.

That said, his greatest achievements came not in Victoria but in South Australia where, during a three season 39 game career with Sturt as one of 'Dempsey's immigrants', he won the 1911 Magarey Medal and was a member that same year of his adopted state's victorious carnival team.

Born in Toorak, Victoria, Cumberland's early senior football was played across the Bass Strait in Tasmania where he soon caught the eye with his skill, endurance and tremendous marking ability. Between 1898 and 1901 he played 50 games for Melbourne before going on to the first of four separate stints with St Kilda, where all told he participated in a total of 126 premiership matches, including the losing 1913 challenge final against Fitzroy. On two occasions, in 1904 and 1913, he was adjudged the 'Outstanding Footballer of the Year' by Melbourne's leading football writers. Interspersed between his stints at St Kilda were the periods in New Zealand and South Australia previously alluded to plus time spent abroad on military service during world war one.

Just seven years after retiring as a player Cumberland died tragically in a motor cycle accident.

**CUNNINGHAM, BRIAN (HoF 2005)** was an impishly determined rover in 262 league games for Port Adelaide between 1971 and 1983, during which he kicked 426 goals. Appointed Port captain in 1979

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<sup>1</sup> Between them, these thirteen players have won the Medal a total of sixteen times.

he led the Magpies to premierships in the first three seasons of his four year stint in the role. Six times a South Australian interstate representative, Cunningham was avidly courted for a time by VFL club Essendon, but he remained loyal to the Magpies. After his playing career was finished, he maintained involvement in football in a number of capacities, including commentating on SANFL matches for television, and serving as Chief Executive of Port Adelaide between 1992 and 2004, during which time the club made its transition from local to national competition.

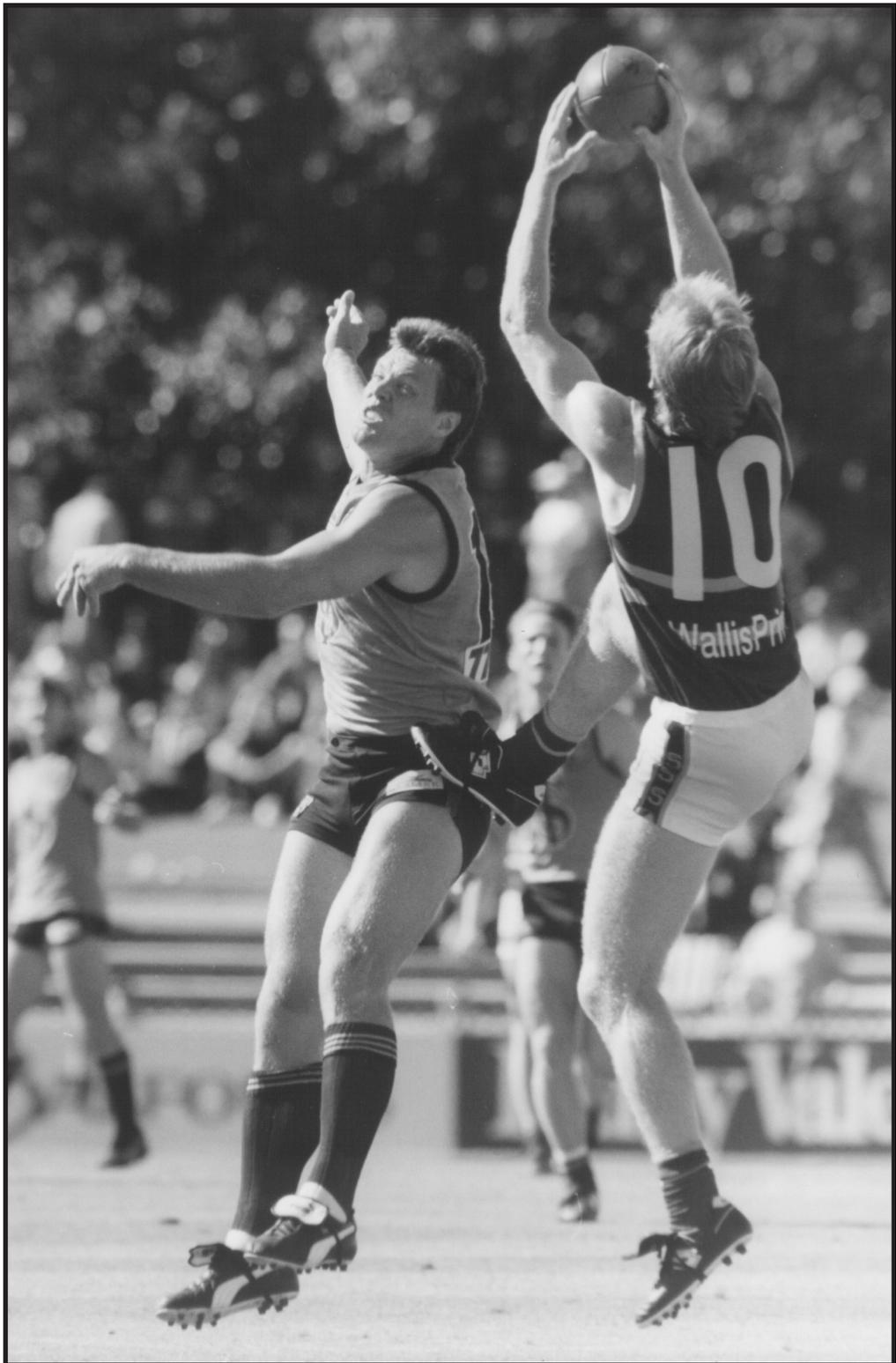
**CUNNINGHAM, KENNETH** was a noteworthy SANFL umpire during the 1960s whose career included officiating at the 1963-4-5-6 grand finals. He also took charge of numerous interstate matches including 3 of the games at the 1966 Hobart carnival. In addition to his football umpiring, Cunningham was a talented cricketer who was a mainstay of South Australia's Sheffield Shield team between 1960 and 1975. In 1967 he was selected in a second string Australian combination that toured New Zealand. Since the mid-1970s Cunningham - or 'KG' as he is popularly known - has remained in the public eye in a variety of media roles, including most recently that of co-host, with Graham Cornes, of Adelaide radio station FiveAA's daily sports show.

**CURTIS, STEPHEN** was a powerful, purposeful defender who enjoyed a fine 300-plus game league career in two states. That career began in 1973 at East Perth where, over the course of the next ten seasons, he played a total of 215 senior games and kicked 61 goals. Playing in a back pocket, he was among the Royals' best players in an 11.15 (81) to 12.7 (79) grand final defeat of Perth in 1978. Undoubtedly one of the finest West Australian defenders of his generation, he

represented his state 12 times, including the inaugural state of origin match against Victoria in Perth in 1977. Curtis won the Royals' fairest and best award in 1977 and 1982. In 1983, he transferred to Port Adelaide, where he added a final 125 games and 44 goals over the next half a dozen seasons. In his debut season with the Magpies he was selected to represent his adopted state of South Australia against his state of origin, Western Australia, in Perth. The home state won by 4 goals, but Curtis's performance in what proved to be his only state appearance for South Australia was so eye catching that he ended up being selected in the 1983 All Australian team. However, overall his best and most consistent football was produced during his time with East Perth, a fact that was recognised in 2006 with his selection in a back pocket in the Royals' official 'Team of the Century 1945 to 2005'.

**CYBULKA, BOHDAN** is one of just four footballers to have won the prestigious Mail Medal seven times. His wins came with River Murray Football League clubs Tailem Bend (1965, 1968-9-70-1-2) and Ramblers (1975). A dashing and talented centremen, he turned down numerous offers to join Adelaide clubs. His achievements appear all the more remarkable when you consider that he preferred soccer as a youngster and did not take up Australian football until twelve months before his first Mail Medal win.

*NEXT PAGE: The Eagles and Sturt in action during the 1990s.*



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**D'ANTOCHIA, JERRY:** In a career that was considerably undermined by injury Jerry D'Antochia nevertheless managed to put together in excess of 200 senior games, and when fit was one of the foremost Norwood players of his era. He joined the Redlegs straight from school and made his senior SANFL debut in 1986. A cool, authoritative, ultra reliable defender, his career highlight came when he was a member of the Norwood team which thrashed Port Adelaide by 73 points in the 1997 grand final. D'Antochia continued with the 'Legs for another two seasons with the last of his 204 senior appearances coming in the 1999 grand final, which Norwood lost to Port.

**DAILEY, JOS:** During tens seasons of senior football with West Adelaide Jos Dailey witnessed both ends of the achievement spectrum. When he started with the club in 1902 it was little better than a chopping block for most opponents and managed just 1 win and a draw from a dozen matches to finish above only relative newcomer Sturt on the premiership ladder. When Dailey retired in 1913, however, he had been a member of no fewer than four league premiership sides, and had played in three championship of Australia deciders for two wins.

Dailey, who missed the entire 1904 and 1905 seasons, did not become a regular senior player with West until 1906, when he actually ended up captaining the side for most of the year after regular skipper A.Mesecke was injured. Thereafter, he went from strength to strength. Capable of playing as both a forward and a defender, he probably produced his best football across half forward, from where he could usually be relied on to contribute a goal or two plus plenty of intelligent link play. Always popular with his team mates, Dailey again captained West between 1910 and 1912, with the last two years yielding premierships. He had

earlier played in both the 1908 and 1909 flag winning combinations. Championship of Australia victories against Carlton in 1908 and Essendon three years later capped off a highly memorable career which saw him play a total of 106 senior games, boot 56 goals, and win the West Adelaide fairest and most brilliant award in 1911.

**DALWOOD, PETER** was a powerful if ostensibly cumbersome giant who, predictably, was well nigh unbeatable in the air, but tended to struggle on occasion at ground level. He was also a superb exponent of the drop kick, which he favoured. Principally used as a ruckman, he could also hold down a key forward position, and indeed was the Redlegs' leading goal kicker on three occasions, with a league ladder-topping 70 goals in 1946 his best tally. Dalwood's senior SANFL career consisted of 147 games between 1945 and 1954. He was a member of Norwood premiership teams in 1946, 1948 and 1950. In the 1946 grand final against Port Adelaide he booted 5 of the Redlegs' 13 goals to be close to best afield. He was also listed high among the best players after the 5 goals grand final loss to West Adelaide in 1947. Peter Dalwood represented South Australia in the interstate arena half a dozen times, kicking 13 goals.

**DALY, ANTHONY (HoF 2002):** The first great goalsneak in the South Australian game, 'Bos' Daly began at Norwood and went on to play for West Torrens, West Adelaide, South Adelaide and North Adelaide. He was the SAFA's top goal kicker on a total of seven occasions with three different clubs between 1893 and 1905, and his record of 23 goals in a match, established while playing for Norwood against Adelaide in his debut season, has been equalled (by Ken Farmer) but never bettered. Daly also topped his various clubs' goal kicking lists on



*Anthony 'Bos' Daly*

thirteen occasions, and tallied 556 goals in 213 games. He played 10 games for South Australia, kicking 9 goals. A premiership player with Norwood on four occasions, Daly was the top goal kicker for his club no fewer than thirteen times.

**DALY, JOHN D (HoF 2002):** Widely acknowledged as the finest rover of his day, John 'Bunny' Daly was at the forefront of the game for almost twenty years. Commencing at Norwood in 1887, his blistering pace and exquisite skills of evasion made him a virtual overnight sensation, and he was one of the main reasons for the Redlegs' hat trick of premierships between 1887 and '89. In 1888 he helped his club to an emphatic triumph 3-0 over South Melbourne in a three match 'Test' series to determine Australia's champion club.

After twelve seasons and roughly 130 games with Norwood, Daly was forced to

move to West Adelaide in 1899 because of a new rule stipulating that players had to play for the club in whose electoral district they resided. At the time, West Adelaide was consistently floundering near the base of the premiership ladder, and although 'Bunny' Daly continued to perform with great distinction, he was unable to improve the club's lot. He retired at the end of the 1904 season after a total of precisely 200 games which spawned four premierships (all for Norwood) and saw him spend time as captain of both of his clubs. He also played 7 times for South Australia.

John Daly's brother Anthony was a champion goal kicker with no fewer than five different clubs, while his son, John junior, was a star rover with South Adelaide and South Australia during the 1920s.

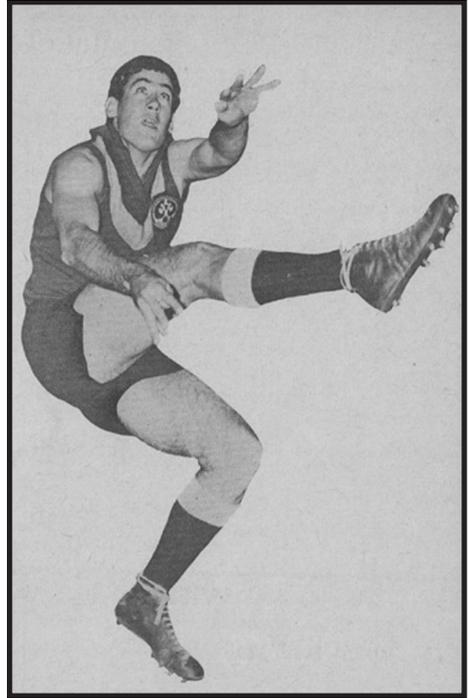
**DALY, JOHN W.** was the son of John D. Daly and the nephew of Anthony Daly, and every bit as accomplished a player as either of them. Usually referred to as 'Jack' to distinguish him from his father, he roved with great success in 76 league games for South Adelaide between 1919 and 1924, over the course of which he booted 86 goals. Pacy, tricky and skilful, he loved nothing better than to kick a goal, and was South's leading goal kicker in 1923 with 24 of them. Daly was a member of South Australia's 1921 Perth carnival team, and played a total of 8 interstate matches, kicking 12 goals.

**DALY, MICHAEL:** A member of Central District's first ever league team in 1964, Mick Daly shared with Colin Stutley the distinction of being the first ever Bulldogs players to amass 100 senior games. Both players achieved the feat in 1969. A spare parts player for much of his eight season, 139 game, 157 goal senior career, Daly was good enough as a key position forward to top the club's goal kicking list on two occasions, while he arguably produced his best and most consistent football as a centre half back under the coaching of Dennis Jones

during the late sixties. Strong, adaptable, and boasting more skill than he was often given credit for, Daly was a popular figure at Elizabeth and his tenure as captain between 1968 and 1970 can, in hindsight, be seen as helping in no small measure to lay the foundations for the club's initial stab at greatness during the early seventies.

**DARCY, DAVID:** Footscray recruited Dave Darcy from Sunshine YCW and used him initially as a half forward, where he was serviceable but hardly outstanding. At the end of Darcy's debut season of 1963, Bulldogs coach Ted Whitten tried him as a defender during the VFL night series, and his performance levels lifted noticeably. After that, he never looked back, and became one of the most reliable and consistent key position backmen in the league. In 1967 he had to relocate temporarily to South Australia for business reasons, and he spent the year playing for South Adelaide, where his form was outstanding, and he was regarded as unfortunate not to make the state team. Resuming with Footscray in 1968, Darcy carried on playing for another four seasons, taking his final career tally to 133 VFL games. He had also represented the VFL in 4 interstate matches in 1965. In 1972 he was enticed back to South Adelaide as captain-coach. He spent two seasons in the role, steering the consistently under-achieving Panthers to consecutive ninth place finishes, and taking his personal SANFL games tally to 44. In eleven seasons of league football, Dave Darcy never once participated in a finals series. He remained at South as non-playing coach in 1974 and the team managed marginal improvement, winning 7 of its 22 matches to finish eighth, but it was not enough to persuade the club committee to retain his services, and he was replaced by Haydn Bunton junior.

**DARLEY, PETER (HoF 2002):** For most of his thirteen season, 205 game League career Peter Darley was the archetypal



*South all time great Peter Darley*

'man among boys', playing in losing, sometimes woeful, South Adelaide teams. (The Panthers managed a paltry 37% success rate over the period.) A fair measure of Darley's stature can be inferred from his being voted club champion no fewer than seven times. He also represented the state on 13 occasions and, but for injury, would almost certainly have done so more frequently as he invariably performed with great distinction when confronted by top class opposition. (His selection in the 1969 All Australian team attests to this.) Hardly surprisingly, Peter Darley was selected as first ruckman in the Panthers' official 'Greatest Team'.

One of Darley's most redoubtable interstate adversaries, Carlton's John Nicholls, said of him that "he was an inspiring leader and.....good mark, a very strong kick and above all (he knew) how to use his body when positioning for centre bounces and boundary throw-ins".

High praise indeed from someone who knew the art of ruckwork better than most.

After his league football career was over, Peter Darley played for a time for Hills Football League club Hahndorf.

**Datsun Cup:** See Other Competitions.

**DAVIES, JAMES:** Nicknamed 'Welshy', James Davies was a superb ruckman who played for Port between 1896 and 1909, and of whom the great Tom Leahy said "I class him as one of the great ruckmen of all time. He always made the ball his objective, and his long, skimming drop kicks on the run were features of his play".

A South Australian intercolonial or interstate representative on 5 occasions, Davies was a member of Port Adelaide premiership teams in 1897, 1903 and 1906.

**DAVIES, NEIL (HoF 2002)** enjoyed a varied and mercurial football career in six competitions but overall his achievements fell a little short of what might reasonably have been expected for someone possessing his formidable array of talents.

Touted as 'the next big thing', Davies joined Glenelg from Broken Hill in 1951 and had an immediate, and significant, impact. In only his second senior game, playing in the centre, he comprehensively outpointed his West Torrens opponent Bob Hank and was instrumental in steering the Tigers to a comfortable win. After only 3 games of league football he was selected in the state squad for the forthcoming match against the VFA, and played well as South Australia won by 95 points.

The Davies cocktail comprised equal parts aggression, determination, speed and skill, making him, when on form, almost irrepressible. In 1953 he mixed this cocktail to perfection almost every week, winning Glenelg's best and fairest award, and finishing second to South Adelaide's Jim Deane in the Magarey Medal. He was also one of South Australia's most prominent performers at that

year's Adelaide carnival, earning All Australian selection as a result. All told, Neil Davies represented South Australia a total of 20 times, kicking 11 goals.

In 1955 Neil Davies moved to Richmond in the VFL but he quit the Tigers after just 2 games over what he considered to be his harsh treatment by the club. With time on his hands, Davies decided to see Australia. He ended up in Darwin, where he captain-coached St Marys to a premiership and won the 1955-6 Nichols Medal for good measure.

The NTFL ran its competition on Saturday afternoons in those days, and for want of something to do on a Sunday Davies decided to throw in his lot with a local rugby league team. So successful was he in this 'heathen' sport that he attracted the attention of talent scouts from British team Warrington, who enticed him to join them briefly that winter.

Come April 1956, however, and Neil Davies was back at the Bay Oval, ready for another season of proper football. He soon showed that he had lost none of his natural ability, winning his second club best and fairest award, and topping Glenelg's goal kicking. The following season he was appointed captain, a position he held for three years, while in 1958 and '59 he coached the side, steering them to a rare preliminary final in the latter year.

With the addition of leadership responsibilities, Neil Davies' personal form began to decline somewhat. That is not to suggest that he became a poor player, merely that he no longer seemed able to perform at his very best as consistently as during the early part of his career. He retired from SANFL football at the end of the 1963 season and spent the final few seasons of his league career with Western Districts in Queensland, during which time he also represented Queensland's interstate team, and with Sydney club Balmain.

**DAVIES, RICK (HoF 2002):** If he is probably best remembered today for his Herculean performance for Sturt against

Port Adelaide in the 1976 SANFL grand final, Rick Davies nevertheless enjoyed numerous other highlights during the course of his 370 game league career with three clubs. Far and away the majority of those games (317) were played with the Double Blues, for whom he made his debut as an eighteen year old during a 1970 season that brought the club the last of its extraordinary, near record breaking sequence of five premierships. Davies did not participate in that season's winning grand final against Glenelg, but from 1971 he became a regular fixture in a Sturt team that would spend the next three seasons re-building before re-emerging as the state's definitive football force in 1974.

Having played much of his early football as a forward, Davies had developed into a top notch ruckman by the time of the 1974 grand final which saw the Double Blues overcome the challenge of reigning premier Glenelg by 15 points. Davies was a widespread choice as best afield that day, the perfect consummation of a season which would also see him claim the second of an eventual seven club best and fairest awards.

Two years later, the SANFL grand final saw a Sturt side which, in the public imagination at least, occupied the role of 'David', fronting up to Port Adelaide's 'Goliath' in front of an all time record crowd officially given as 66,897, but almost certainly at least 10,000 more. It proved to be one of the most memorable afternoons in South Australian football, with Davies' deceptively casual 21 kick, 21 handball, 15 mark, 21 hit-out performance the most eye-catchingly significant feature of the Double Blues' eventual 41 point win. "From the beginning of 1974 to the end of 1976 he (Davies) controlled every match he played in," recalled team mate Phil 'Sandy' Nelson years later. "For those 60 or 70 games he had football by the short and curlies. Very few people could do that. Rick did it."

When Sturt next contested a grand final, in 1978, Rick Davies was again prominent,

but on this occasion it was Norwood which assumed the role of indefatigable underdog to perfection in scoring an improbable come from behind victory by the narrowest margin.

Despite the fact that he was clearly nearing the end of his career, Davies opted to spend the 1981 season with Hawthorn in the VFL. Playing mainly in a forward pocket, he booted 37 goals in 20 games and, if his abilities had dimmed somewhat since his halcyon phase of the mid-1970s, he nevertheless looked totally at home in a competition which by then was on a fast track towards unrivalled national pre-eminence.

The closing seasons of Davies' league career saw him acquire a new reputation as one of the most damaging key position forwards around, topping Sturt's goal kicking list every year from 1982-4, and that of South Adelaide, where he went as captain-coach after Don Scott was sacked in 1985, both that year and the next. In 1983, he topped the SANFL's goal kicking with 151 goals, a new league record.

A regular South Australian interstate representative (20 appearances) in both the pre- and post-state of origin eras, Davies was selected as captain of the 1980 All Australian team after that year's Adelaide carnival. His inclusion in Sturt's official 'Team of the Century' as first ruckman was presumably almost automatic.

**DAVIESS, EDWIN** Edwin Daviess (the double 's' is correct) of West Torrens was arguably the premier South Australian full back of the immediate post-world war one era. He represented South Australia at both the 1921 Perth and 1924 Hobart carnivals, and all told played a total of 8 games for his state. Extremely solid and reliable, he was an expert at the full back's art of racing confidently out from goal to meet the ball and then clearing it with interest back toward the centre of the ground. Strong overhead, he knew when to spoil,

and when to try for the mark, and was rarely caught out of position. His 107 SAFL games for Torrens included the challenge final of 1924, when he was one of the best players afield in the blue and golds' 8 point win over Sturt. Daviess, who captained his club in 1922, would be a warm favourite to occupy the full back position should any official 'all time great' West Torrens team ever be selected.

In 1937 Daviess returned to Torrens as non-playing coach, leading the side as far as the first semi final, where, in what was his sole season in charge, it lost by 50 points to South Adelaide.

**DAWES, JAMES:** An extremely capable footballer who exuded ardent concentration and fixity of purpose in everything he did, Jim Dawes played a total of 128 senior games for South Adelaide between 1934 and 1941, plus another 23 for the Sturt-South Adelaide wartime combination. A glorious high mark, and a fine kick, he helped South to premierships in 1935 and 1938, both times at the expense of Port Adelaide. He represented South Australia 3 times. After his retirement as a player, he served as a league umpire for a time, and in 1948 officiated at two finals matches. Appointed non-playing coach of South Adelaide in 1949 he spent two seasons in the role. However, in complete contrast to his time as a player with the club, this was a rankly inglorious period, and Dawes oversaw just 4 wins in 34 matches.

**DAWES, JOHN** - usually referred to as 'Jack' - played 120 league games for South Adelaide between 1935 and 1941, many of them alongside his older brother Jim. He also played 21 games during the war years for the temporary Sturt-South Adelaide combined team. Jeff Pash called him "a polished footballer in all respects, and one of the best leaders I have known". His finest hour came when he skippered South to a startling 23.14 (152) to 15.16 (106) grand

final defeat of Port Adelaide in 1938. The previous year he had won both the club best and fairest trophy and its top goal kicking award, and represented South Australia at the Perth carnival. He captained South between 1938 and 1941, during which time it enjoyed a success rate of over 65%.

Jack Dawes was named in the forward pocket in South Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team'.

**DAY, IAN (HoF 2007):** An accomplished and combative rover, Ian Day gave good service to two league clubs in a twelve season career at the top level. He began at West Adelaide in 1952, and played a total of 67 league matches there (missing the whole of the 1953 season) before crossing to South Adelaide in 1961. The timing of this move meant that he missed the opportunity later that year to participate in West's grand final defeat of Norwood, but he made amends three seasons later by helping South to its first flag since 1938. Day formed part of a powerful first ruck combination that day along with Peter Darley and Neil Kerley, and had the satisfaction of kicking the Panthers' 9th, and final, goal of the match. It was the last of Ian Day's 68 SANFL matches for the club. He also kicked a total of 178 goals, 80 with Westies, and 98 for South which included a club list heading tally of 35 in his last season.

Ian Day's younger brother Robert played with distinction for West Adelaide and Hawthorn. Once his playing career was over, Ian Day became, and continued for many years as, a television football commentator of note.

**DAY, ROBERT (HoF 2002):** After making his league debut with West Adelaide in 1962, Robert Day, younger brother of Ian, rapidly established himself as one of the finest centremen in South Australia. Speedy, strong, well balanced, and elegant, he was a driving force behind West's assault on the 1962 premiership. In the grand final that year he was widely considered to be the best



*Ian Day of West Adelaide and South Adelaide*

player afield, despite playing in a losing side. One of the most eye-catching features of Day's game was his kicking. According to Jeff Pash, his "long drop is a most handsome and powerful kick. He puts the ball well out, lies back on it, and gets it away with an elegant ease".

Between 1963 and 1966 it is doubtful if there was a more damaging centreman in the game, a status confirmed by his selection in that position in the 1966 All Australian team. Sadly, over the remainder of his career, Day was beset by frequent injuries, although he managed to perform with some of his old consistency in 1969, achieving selection as

centreman in the 'Advertiser' Team of the Year, while in 1970 he won his third club best and fairest award. The following season he ventured to Hawthorn for a stint in the VFL, and the long overdue fulfilment of every footballer's primary ambition, participation in a premiership team. Day was on a half back flank as the Hawks overcame St Kilda by 7 points, but after putting in a solid first half performance he was forced from the fray with injury. After another season in the VFL he returned to West for one last season, with niggling injuries continuing to limit his effectiveness, as a total of just 175 league games in twelve seasons of football confirms. Day also played for South Australia a dozen times, kicking 2 goals.

**DAYMAN, CLEM:** A formidably effective forward and follower, Clem Dayman enjoyed success with two league clubs, besides representing South Australia in the interstate arena 7 times. He commenced his career with North Adelaide, and was heavily instrumental in that club's emergence as a force when league football in South Australia resumed in 1919 following a three year hiatus because of the Great War. Dayman was North's top goal kicker in 1919 with 18 goals, and during that season's marathon finals series he vied with the legendary Tom Leahy as his side's most effective all round contributor. It was after crossing to Port Adelaide, however, that he truly established himself as one of the foremost footballers in the league. Between 1921 and 1925 he played 69 games for the Magpies, including the winning challenge final of 1921 against Norwood. Skipper of the club in 1923, he is listed by some sources as its fairest and most brilliant award recipient in 1922, although according to certain other sources the award went to Charlie Adams. What is certain, however, is that he was a highly respected figure at Alberton who, along with his younger brother Leslie, implemented something of a mini dynasty at the club, with his son

Lisle Dayman later representing both Port Adelaide and the state with distinction during the 1940s.

**DAYMAN, LESLIE (HoF 2002):** Almost invariably known as 'Bro', Les Dayman arrived at Port Adelaide from the Salisbury Football Club in 1921, the same season that saw his brother Clem transfer to the Magpies from North Adelaide. A dominating presence whether in a key position or as a ruckman, 'Bro' Dayman was without doubt one of the Port Adelaide Football Club's all time greats. In his debut season he was a noteworthy contributor to Port's first post-war premiership, and throughout the 1920s he went on to prove himself one of the game's finest all round exponents. Powerful overhead, and abundantly skilled, he won Port Adelaide's best and fairest award on three occasions and topped the club's goal kicking four times. He was the league's top goal kicker in 1929 with 86 goals, and was a near automatic choice for South Australia for much of his time in that state, playing a total of 19 interstate matches and booting 30 goals.

After 165 games for the Magpies, Dayman was enticed east by Footscray in 1932. He played 33 VFL games in three seasons for the Tricolours, topping their goal kicking list in his first year with 37 goals. He continued his senior career with a brief stint at Coburg in the VFA before rounding things off back home with Port Adelaide where he added a final league game to his tally in 1937. He kicked a total of 401 goals for the Magpies.

After World War Two 'Bro' Dayman returned to Port Adelaide and served in a variety of off field capacities including secretary and coach of the club's seconds. At the turn of the century he was named at centre half forward in Port's official 'Greatest Team 1870 to 2000'.

**DEANE, JIM (HoF 2002):** Arguably the most famous name in the post-war history of the

South Adelaide Football Club, Jim Deane won the 1953 Magarey Medal and was runner-up on a countback in 1957 (in 1998 the SANFL retrospectively converted this into a second Medal), claimed half a dozen club best and fairest awards, was an automatic selection in South Australian interstate teams (15 appearances, and 12 goals), and yet never played in a single major round match in a league career stretching twelve seasons, which included a two year stint at Richmond. His reputation transcended state boundaries, and in the early 1950s he was widely regarded as the best half forward flank specialist in Australia, a status which was endorsed by his consistent selection in that position, during both the South and Richmond phases of his career, in the prestigious 'Sporting Life' Team of the Year.

As a player, Deane possessed all the attributes necessary to succeed in the tough and frenetic world of the VFL: powerful and resilient, no matter how heavy the traffic he almost always seemed able to get his hands on the ball and off load it purposefully. Whereas contemporaries like Bob Hank or Lindsay Head were masters at dodging and pirouetting their way out of trouble, Jim Deane seemed almost to glory in confronting it head on. He picked up numerous injuries as a result, but this eschewing of personal safety in the interests of the team arguably made him a more effective and valuable player than the Torrens pair.

After his league career came to an end in 1957, Deane continued as a player in country football for the better part of another decade. He captain-coached Myrtleford in the powerful Ovens and Murray Football League from 1958-62, winning the Morris Medal for best and fairest in the competition twice. He spent his final seasons as a player in Port Pirie.

In 1971, Jim Deane returned 'home' to South Adelaide as non-playing coach, but in two seasons in charge he was unable to lift the side above second from bottom on the ladder.

**DELANEY, ROGER** was an elegant, long kicking defender who was prone to the odd 'clanger', but whose overall contribution to the Port Adelaide cause was noteworthy in the extreme. He joined the Magpies from Port Districts and made his league debut, aged eighteen, in 1984, but after 3 appearances that year he that did not again achieve senior selection for three years. From 1987 he became a mainstay of the Port defence, and he was at full back in the victorious grand finals of 1988, 1989, 1992, 1994, 1995 and 1996. He missed playing in another possible premiership in 1990 because he had transferred to Fitzroy, but an injury on debut put paid both to his season and his budding VFL aspirations.

When he retired in 1997 Roger Delaney had played 208 games for the Magpies, most of them at full back alongside evergreen back pocket George Fiacchi, with the pair's close affinity leading to their being popularly referred to in the media, as well as by team mates and supporters, as 'Batman and Robin'. Delaney played 4 times for South Australia.

**DERMODY, JOHN:** Recruited from Kapunda, for whom he won the Barossa and Light Association's best and fairest award, the Doering Medal, in 1930, wingman Jack Dermody was a key figure in the great Port Adelaide sides of the 1930s. Between 1932 and 1938 he played a total of 108 SANFL games, which included the winning grand finals of 1936 against Sturt and 1937 against South Adelaide, in both of which he appeared as the Magpies' captain. Pacy and skilful, Dermody represented South Australia on 16 occasions, and was state captain for the 1937 Perth carnival, having also played in the Sydney carnival four years earlier. He won Port Adelaide's best and fairest award in 1933 and 1935, and ran third in the voting for the 1933 Magarey Medal. He would have to be considered slightly unfortunate not to have been selected in Port Adelaide's official 'Greatest Team 1870-2000', but the fact that he felt constrained to retire from league

football early, aged just twenty-seven, may have counted against him. Throughout his Port career Dermody had to travel back and forth from Kapunda twice a week, once for training, and once for the game on Saturday. In return, all he received was his travelling expenses, plus an end of season bonus of two shillings and sixpence for every senior game played during the year. In 1939, Dermody resumed playing with Kapunda, and continued until he broke his collar bone in the second quarter of the 1950 grand final. He went on to serve in various off-field roles with the Barossa and Light Association, confirming himself as one of the greatest names in that competition's history.

**DERRINGTON, JIM:** Dynamic, tenacious and intermittently classy, rover Jim Derrington gave Sturt loyal service for eleven seasons, playing 188 SANFL games and kicking 232 goals, besides missing many other games through injury. He made his senior debut in 1977, when he became one of a select group of footballers to register a goal with his first kick in league football. In the losing grand final of 1983 against West Adelaide Derrington was one of the Double Blues' best players.

**DEW, STUART** has, for much of the past decade, enjoyed a reputation as one of the finest kicks in the game. The solidly built left footer first garnered plaudits while playing in the SANFL with Central District, but it was in the AFL with Port Adelaide that he really made his name. So prodigious and accurate was his kicking with his favoured left foot that he was one of the few players in the league genuinely capable of turning a match off his own boot. In 180 games with Port from 1997 to 2006 he booted 245 goals, including a club list topping tally of 51 in 2002. When the Power confronted Brisbane in the 2004 grand final Dew, who started the game on the interchange bench, had a comparatively quiet day, but still made a useful contribution to the 17.11 (113) to 10.13 (73) win, kicking a goal and picking up 14 possessions.

After being delisted by Port in 2006, Stuart Dew made a return to the AFL two years later with Hawthorn whom he helped to a triumph over Geelong in that year's grand final.

In addition to his Power and Hawks triumphs Dew was a member in 2000 of Central District's inaugural SANFL premiership-winning team.

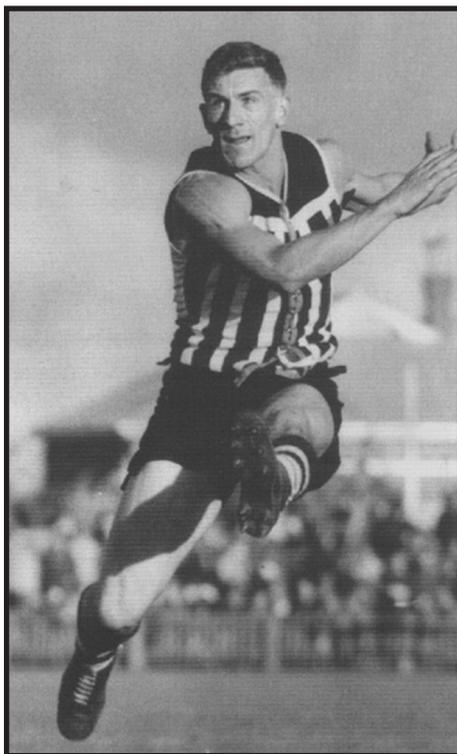
**DEWAR, ERIC** was a prominent Magpie during the first decade after world war one. Between 1919 and 1927 he played a total of 90 league games and was Port's leading goal kicker with 24 goals in 1920. Capable of playing anywhere on the forward lines he was at full forward when the Magpies overcame arch rivals Norwood by 8 points in the 1921 challenge final. Dewar represented the state 3 times, kicking 8 goals.

**DIETRICH, GRENVILLE** was a full forward of considerable talent who was sometimes let down by a lack of discipline. He joined North Adelaide from Mildura club Bambill and was the Roosters' top goal kicker every year between 1982 and 1986. In 1983 and 1984 he kicked in excess of 100 goals, but was not the league's leading goal kicker in either year. He remains the only SANFL footballer to suffer this misfortune twice.

At the end of the 1986 season, after kicking 445 goals in 103 matches for North, Dietrich was somewhat surprisingly cleared to West Torrens, allegedly because of "philosophical differences" with Roosters coach Mick Nunan. Dietrich topped the Eagles goal kicking list in 1987 with 54 goals but the following season played just a couple of games before quitting both the club and league football.

Dietrich's interstate career comprised 2 games in 1986 during which he booted 7 goals.

**DILLON, ROSS:** A strong, one grab mark, and an accurate kick for goal, Ross Dillon joined Melbourne from Goulburn Valley Football League side Kyabram and played 85 VFL



*The Magpies' Wally Dittmar*

games for the club between 1966 and 1972. He topped the Demons' goal kicking in 1969 with 53 goals and the following year with 47. In 1973 he joined Norwood and added another 114 league games over the next six seasons. He was the Redlegs' top goal kicker in his debut season at the club with 46 goals, and again in 1975 with 66. He won the club's best and fairest award in 1975, and was at centre half forward in that year's grand final as the Redlegs downed Glenelg by 2 goals. Dillon, who had earlier represented the VFL at the 1969 Adelaide carnival, also played 2 games of interstate football for South Australia.

**DINNISON, LEO** - known as 'Pinky' - gave fine service to West Torrens and the state in a seven season league career that was brought to a premature end by world war two. Between 1935 and 1941 he played 110 games and kicked 4 goals for the blue and golds, plus 2 games for South Australia. He

also played a couple of matches for state second eighteens. Excellent overhead, and a fine kick, he played most of his football at full back, and was widely acknowledged as one of the foremost exponents of the position in the league. Dinnison won the West Torrens best and fairest player award in 1937 and was club captain in 1939 and 1940. He made 1 appearance in 1942 for the Port-Torrens combined team which operated from that season until 1944.

**DITTMAR, WALLY** was, in Jeff Pash's view, "a highly accomplished footballer; technically..... at least as well equipped as the best" - which immediately begs the question, why was he so often little better than a fringe player at Port Adelaide during his league career which spanned twelve seasons, and yet saw him play just 79 senior games (plus half a dozen for the state). When given a concerted run in the senior side, as he was in 1959-60, he proved himself to be arguably the most effective full forward in the SANFL; at any rate, with tallies of 74 and 69 goals, he topped the league's goal kicking list in both seasons. For the most part, however, he was given only sporadic opportunities at the top level, for reasons which will probably always remain a mystery, although perhaps Jeff Pash's wry observation that he had "not the flashing eyes and floating hair, and in fact the gritted teeth so beloved of those who see football as a battle" hints as closely at the truth of the matter as we are ever likely to get. Sometimes, at least as far as clubs like Port Adelaide, which pride the team ethic above all else, are concerned, it is paradoxically possible to be too audaciously gifted for one's own good.

**DIX, ERIC:** West Torrens ruckman Eric Dix only had a comparatively brief league career, but he was a key player for the Eagles when, under the coaching of Dick Reynolds, they mounted arguably their last realistic assault on the flag in 1963. Torrens won the minor

premiership that year but, significantly, lost their last two home and away matches when Dix was on the sidelines injured. He resumed during the finals but, unable to recapture his best form, was unable to prevent the Eagles bowing out in straight sets against Port Adelaide and North Adelaide. Extremely tall and thin, but beautifully balanced, Dix was a smooth mover who had the knack of unsettling his opponents so that they appeared awkward by comparison. He was one of the few SANFL ruckman of the time who always seemed to give as good as he got against Norwood champion Bill Wedding. In 1959 and between 1962 and 1965 he played a total of 66 senior games for Torrens. During the 1966 season, when the Eagles were short of ruckmen, he interrupted his coaching stint in the country to answer the club's SOS and line up for the seconds.

**DIXON, MALCOLM** joined North Adelaide in 1961 and spent the season commuting backwards and forwards from his home in Port Augusta in order to play. After managing just 3 senior games for the year he decided to 'retire' from league football, but the yearning to prove himself remained, and two years later the Roosters managed to woo him back for another stab at the big time. On this occasion, he managed to play 21 of the team's 23 matches for the year, including the losing grand final against Port Adelaide. Thereafter, his performances steadily improved in both quality and consistency, and in 1966, after a series of eye-catching performances on his half forward flank, he captured the club's best and fairest award, and was named in the prestigious 'Advertiser Team Of The Year'. The only people oblivious to Dixon's brilliance in 1966 were the umpires, who astonishingly failed to award him a single Magarey Medal vote. When Mal Dixon retired a year later, he had played a total of 82 league games, and probably travelled close to 50,000 kilometres in order to do so. During his career he was widely acknowledged as one of the paciest players in the SANFL, and might

reasonably be adjudged as unfortunate not to have achieved state representation.

**DONAGHY, MICHAEL:** After managing just 10 VFL games with Carlton in 1898 Michael Donaghy re-emerged with Geelong two years later and went on to establish a reputation for himself as one of the competition's most damaging key position players. An exhilarating overhead mark, he possessed considerable pace for a big (193cm, 92kg) man, and was a penetrative and accurate kick. After 80 VFL games in six seasons with the Pivotonians he moved to Port Adelaide where he played on for another four years, captaining the side for part of 1908 and in 1909. A VFL interstate representative on 2 occasions during his Geelong phase, Michael Donaghy also played once for South Australia while with Port. He was appointed non-playing coach of the Magpies for a time in 1911, and went on to serve Port in a variety of off-field roles, including chairman in 1913-14-15, until the club went into recess because of the war in 1916.

**DONALDSON, ALEX** was a gifted, somewhat mercurial footballer whose every movement exuded grace and panache, but who sometimes let himself down by apparent lapses in concentration. At his best he was among the most damaging players of his generation, as he proved by winning Glenelg's best and fairest award in 1948. His career at the Bay comprised 63 games between 1947 and 1951 and was followed by a 28 game stint with Sturt in 1953 and 1954. He played twice for South Australia, kicking 3 goals.

**DOWLING, WILLIAM:** It is doubtful if any player has enjoyed a more illustrious career in the black and red of West Adelaide than William 'Shrimp' Dowling. A tenacious and richly talented rover,

particularly noted for his adeptness with the stab pass, he was a key reason behind West's emergence as a power in 1908, his second league season. Under the shrewd coaching of Jack 'Dinny' Reedman, the red and blacks, who had never previously finished higher than fifth, confounded observers in 1908 by making light of every challenge with which they were confronted, both locally and interstate. After being a key contributor to the challenge final victory over Norwood, 'Shrimp' Dowling was later unanimously acclaimed as best afield when West defeated Carlton by 29 points at Adelaide Oval for 'the premiership of the Commonwealth'.

Over the next few seasons West Adelaide enjoyed a level and consistency of success never equalled before or since, and no player made a greater all round contribution to that success than Dowling. Consistently named among the best players, he won his club's best and fairest award in 1910, and produced another best afield performance when West again secured the championship of Australia, this time with a win against Essendon, in 1911. First rover in the club's 1908-9 and 1911-12 premiership wins, he was a regular in South Australian interstate teams between 1910 and 1914, including the Adelaide and Sydney carnivals. When football resumed in 1919 after the war, Dowling was again chosen to represent his state in what was to be his final season in league football. In all, he played 14 interstate matches, kicking 21 goals.

Dowling's final total of 136 league games included 109 in succession, which at the time was proclaimed - and indeed commemorated - as an Australian record.

**DREW, NORMAN:** A player of consummate verve, polish and skill, Norm Drew had the rare good fortune to play in premiership teams in the senior football competitions of both South Australia and

Western Australia. Born in Adelaide, he commenced his league career with North Adelaide as a twenty year old in 1928, and, playing mainly as a wingman, went on to be a major driving force behind that club's rise to prominence in the early 1930s. In both 1931 and 1933 he won North's best and fairest player award, and he made a total of 5 interstate appearances for South Australia during this period. He played on a wing in the premiership deciding matches of both 1930 (against Port Adelaide) and 1931 (against Sturt) which saw the red and whites securing consecutive flags.

In 1934, Drew ventured to Western Australia, where he continued his league career with West Perth. He spent three years with the Cardinals, and in both 1934 and 1935 was on a half forward flank as the side won consecutive grand finals against East Fremantle and Subiaco.

Norm Drew returned home in 1937 and played one last season with North Adelaide to bring his final tally of SANFL games to 103. In 2001 he was selected on a wing in North Adelaide's official 'Team of the Twentieth Century'.

**DRURY, MALVERN** was one of the foremost West Torrens footballers of the 1930s. He commenced with the club in 1931, and was a key member of its 1933 premiership team, contributing 3 goals to the 13.10 (88) to 9.11 (65) grand final win over Norwood, and topping the club's goal kicking list for the season with 34 goals. Drury crossed to Hawthorn in 1934 where he played 15 VFL games and kicked 12 goals. He resumed with Torrens in 1935, and over the ensuing three seasons took his games tally with the club to 61 and the number of goals kicked to 111. A speedy and tenacious rover with a keen eye for goal, he represented South Australia twice, against the VFL at the 1933 Sydney carnival, and on the Adelaide Oval against the same opponent two years later.

Drury skipped the blue and golds in 1937, and three years later returned to the club as non-playing senior coach, although in 1941 he actually donned the boots for 3 late season games when the club's playing stocks had been severely denuded by wartime demands. After acting as assistant coach to 'Shine' Hosking of the Port-Torrens combined team which operated from 1942 to 1944 Mal Drury resumed his duties as senior coach of West Torrens when full scale league football resumed in 1945, and he had the satisfaction of steering the side to its first flag since 1933. He continued at the helm for two further seasons but was unable to add to his 1945 success.

**DUCKER, MURRAY (HoF 2002)** was the foremost South Australian umpire of the late 1960s through to the middle of the subsequent decade. He umpired a total of 198 senior SANFL games including the grand finals of 1968, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973 and 1974. He also umpired 5 interstate matches. After his umpiring career finished he served as the SANFL's umpiring coach between 1976 and 1984.

**DUCKWORTH, JOHN:** While engaged in National Service training in Melbourne, West Australian John Duckworth turned up at Fitzroy Football Club asking for a game. He had already had a couple of trials with East Perth and failed to impress, but the Lions brains trust liked what they saw, and signed him up. Volatile, dynamic and robust, he also possessed plenty of flair, and would probably have enjoyed a highly successful VFL career had his National Service commitments not repeatedly interfered. As it was, Duckworth performed serviceably in 58 VFL games in 1970 and between 1974 and 1976, kicking 24 goals. Some of the intervening time was spent serving his country in Vietnam.

In 1977 Duckworth - who gloried in the nickname 'Whatsa' - returned home to

Western Australia and joined West Perth, the team he had supported as a boy. He enjoyed a fine year, representing the state, and running fifth in the Sandover Medal voting. After just two years and 44 WANFL games, however, he decided he wanted to leave, and Central District won the race to procure his signature.

John Duckworth spent just two seasons at Elizabeth but created a significant impression. His coach at Centrals, Darryl Hicks, said of him, "I doubt if a bigger, truer or more real personality has ever played the game in South Australia". In 1979, Duckworth represented South Australia, headed his club's goal kicking list with 41 goals, and topped things off by becoming a surprise, but highly popular, winner of the Magarey Medal. The following year, however, he suffered a ruptured kidney during the opening round clash with Port Adelaide, and although he returned to the fray later in the year, he was never able to produce his best form. At season's end, now aged thirty-one, he decided it was time to return home and finish his career with West Perth. He continued playing league football for the Cardinals for three more years, took a year off, and then made a one season comeback at the behest of club coach John Wynne, who needed an experienced hand to help steady his predominantly young team. All told, John Duckworth played a total of 120 senior games for West Perth to add to the 42 he had played with Central District and the 58 with the Lions. He also represented both Western Australia and South Australia 3 times.

Although his time in South Australia was brief, he probably made the biggest impact there, and few people would have been surprised with his inclusion, at centre half back, in Centrals' official 'Best Ever Team 1964 to 2003'.

**DUNN, KEITH** (full given name William Keith Dunn) overcame a slow start to his

league career with Sturt to develop into an excellent ruckman. Between 1927 and 1933 he played a total of 74 senior games, and represented his state 3 times. He rounded off his career with the Double Blues in style, winning both the Magarey Medal and his club's best and fairest award. Between 1934 and 1937 he added 38 VFL games for Carlton before retiring.

**DUNN, ROGER:** Solidly built (174cm, 80.5kg) rover Roger Dunn was the personification of consistency throughout his 139 game league career with Sturt between 1957 and 1960, and then from 1963 to 1968, during which he kicked 200 goals. Unfortunately, he was prevented by injury from displaying that consistency as often as both he and his club would have wished. Combining well with his fellow rover Roger Rigney, he struck a particularly rich vein of form toward the end of his career, representing South Australia 3 times at the 1966 Hobart carnival, and helping the Blues to consecutive wins over Port Adelaide in the grand finals of 1966 and 1967. Dunn also won three Mail Medals while playing on the Eyre Peninsula for Tumbly Bay, whom he also captain-coached to a couple of flags.

**DUTHY, CHRIS:** A tall, strong, competent defender from South Broken Hill, Chris Duthy gave useful service to Glenelg in 201 league games between 1982 and 1986 and from 1988 to 1992. He kicked 21 goals. In 1987 he joined Fitzroy, but injury restricted him to just 3 senior games. He struggled with injury again on his return to the Bays in 1988, but his last three seasons saw him approaching his best form again. Duthy was at full back in Glenelg's 1985 and 1986 grand final defeats of North Adelaide. His last league game was the Tigers' grand final loss to Port Adelaide in 1992. He had earlier also played in the losing grand finals of 1982 and 1990.