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A’COURT, BILL (West Adelaide):

*Acourt was placed on Oliver and to keep this man from taking his sensational marks gives a man plenty to do. Acourt did not let him do too much, and played a good game beside.*¹

Father of star West Adelaide ruckman of the 1950s Fred A’Court (profiled below), Bill A’Court was a strong defender who also played with West. He debuted with the club in 1909, and was a key member that same year of its winning grand final team against Port Adelaide. He went on to play in the premierships of 1911 and 1912 as well. From 1909 to 1915 A’Court played 83 SAFL games and kicked four goals.

A’COURT, FRED (West Adelaide): Fred A’Court 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 11 seasons played a total of 159 league games and kicked 110 goals.

In January 1954, A’Court applied for a clearance to VFL club Richmond, claiming that, if he made the move, he would be £15 a week better off financially, but West Adelaide refused the application and he continued to play for the Blood and Tars for the remainder of his career.

A tough, tireless and talented ruckman, A’Court - popularly known as ‘Boof’ - represented South Australia eight times, kicking 10 goals.

AAMODT, COLIN (North Adelaide):

*In a brainy display of football Aamodt showed all the fleetness of foot that enabled him to run a place in a Stawell Gift. In addition, he drove the ball down with long distance kicks every time.*²

After a promising colts career, Colin Aamodt made his league debut for North Adelaide in 1938. A hard working and highly 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 combining in the first ruck with Len Pedler and

1 “Sport”, 1/7/1911, page 3. West Adelaide defeated Port Adelaide in this match by 44 points, 8.19 to 3.5.

2 “The Mail”, 20/4/46, page 13. The comments relate to a pre-season practice match.

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Darcy Cox in the 1949 grand final victory over West Torrens. Aamodt, who represented South Australia twice, returned to the red and whites as non-playing coach in 1955, but in three seasons in the ‘hot seat’ he only once managed to get his side into the finals.

AANENSON, VIC (Port Melbourne, South Melbourne):

*An intelligent ruckman who gives his rovers an armchair ride.*³

An awesome amalgam of height (200cm), strength, aggression, mobility and skill, Vic Aanensen should arguably have achieved even more than he did during the course of a 12 season, 169 game senior career with two clubs. He began that senior career with Port Melbourne in 1970, having progressed from the club’s thirds. In 1973 he crossed to South Melbourne where, over the course of the ensuing four seasons, he played 40 VFL games and kicked 30 goals, without ever really enhancing the reputation he had won in the VFA as a dominating ruckman of the highest rank.

Returning to the Borough in 1977, Aanensen produced the best and most consistent football of his career, playing a key role in the club’s 1977, 1980 and 1981 premiership wins. He also won club best and fairest awards on three occasions, and the Liston Trophy in 1979 and 1981. At the end of the 1982 season, however, while still capable of performing at his imperious best, he left Port Melbourne, and the VFA, for a life in the country at Sale.

His comparative failure at VFL level means that he cannot be regarded as a bona fide champion, but he was undoubtedly one of Port Melbourne’s favourite sons, a status confirmed in 2003 by his inclusion as second ruckman in the club’s official ‘Team of the 20th Century’.

ABALA SENIOR, STEVE (Buffaloes):

*Steve Abala served his side well with good anticipation and brilliant kicking.*⁴

A stalwart at Buffaloes for almost two decades, from the late 1930s to the mid-50s, Steve Abala was the quintessential gentleman footballer. A dual club best and fairest winner he also won the 1950/1 Nichols Medal. Heralded as an inspirational leader, he captained Buffaloes for four seasons and was a four time premiership player. He was an inaugural inductee in 2010 into the AFL Northern Territory Hall of Fame.

ABBEY, ANGUS (Footscray): Defender Angus Abbey was recruited by Footscray from local side Waratah and made his league debut in 1949. He

³ “VFA Recorder”, 25/9/77, page 17.

⁴ “Northern Standard”, 27/10/50, page 12. Abala helped Buffs to a 16.14 to 7.4 win over Wanderers.

was solid and reliable rather than flashy, and served the Bulldogs well in 78 games from 1949 to 1954. He failed to register a single goal. He was a first choice senior player for part of that time, but by his last season was only rarely selected. He did make the 1954 grand final team, however, albeit only as 20th man. His son Ross (profiled below) also represented Footscray with distinction.

ABBEY, ROSS (Footscray): Originally from Strathmore, Ross Abbey was an extremely versatile footballer who gave Footscray solid service between 1971 and 1981, during which time he played 123 VFL games and kicked 65 goals. He also represented Victoria. His father Angus (profiled above) played 78 games for the Bulldogs, a fact which happened to be of some significance as it enabled Footscray to recruit Ross under the father-son rule in spite of the fact that he resided in Essendon's zone.

ABBOTT, GORDON (Lefroy, Geelong, Glenelg, New Town, Essendon):

Gordon Abbott, Essendon half-forward, will be custodian of the whistle tomorrow when Melbourne and Essendon Rowing Clubs meet in their annual football match. Gordon was a first-class oarsman. He stroked Derwent Club (Tasmania) crews to success in State title events and also stroked the Tasmanian eight in the 1934 King's Cup event, but cannot compete in regatta events because he is a professional footballer.⁵

Gordon Abbott was a formidable footballer who could hold down key positions at both ends of the ground. He was also a highly capable ruckman. He was at centre half forward in Geelong's 1937 VFL premiership side and later played as a ruckman in Essendon's triumphant 1942 and 1946 combinations. Originally from Lefroy, he spent the 1939 season with Glenelg and was captain-coach of New Town in the TANFL in 1940. Abbott was a fine all round sportsman who rowed in Tasmania's King's Cup crew.

ABBOTT, JOHN (Central District): From Willaston, Central District's John Abbott was a useful defender who was ferocious in his attack on the ball. He was also capable of pinch-hitting in the forward lines. His 51 senior appearances for the Bulldogs from 1992 to 1997 included the losing grand final of 1995 against Port Adelaide. He recorded nine career goals.

ABBOTT, LES (Port Melbourne, Collingwood, Carlton, Brunswick, Richmond, Melbourne, South Melbourne, North Melbourne, Williamstown): Les Abbott was the first footballer to play for five different VFL clubs, but with one exception his stays at each of them were very brief. The exception was Richmond, for whom he played 31 games in 1910-11, impressing onlookers with his verve and vibrancy, commonly manifested in

⁵ "Sporting Globe", 30/9/44, page 3.

surging runs out of defence. The remainder of his VFL career, which took in stints at Collingwood, Carlton, Melbourne and South Melbourne comprised just eight appearances.

Abbott also spent time with four different VFA clubs, but only with Brunswick, where he played 22 games in 1908-9, did he manage more than a handful of appearances. He was a member in 1909 of the Wickers team which downed Prahran in the grand final by 16 points. A copybook full back of his era, he failed to register a single goal with any of his clubs.

ABBOTT, PADDY (South Melbourne, Fitzroy, Richmond):

His strong suit is in the ruck, and he was given a run in that position last Saturday against Collingwood.⁶

Paddy Abbott was a tall, quite thinly built ruckman from Howlong, and prior to that Albury, who had brief stints with three league clubs. Somewhat dour and formulaic in approach he nevertheless got the job done. He commenced his VFL career with South Melbourne for whom he played four games in 1913. Next came Fitzroy, where he was very much a fringe player between 1914 and 1918, playing 40 games and scoring one goal. His last port of call, Richmond in 1919-20, was arguably his most productive, and was highlighted by an appearance in a back pocket in the Tigers' first ever flag decider in 1919. Sadly for Abbott, opponents Collingwood proved too strong on that occasion.

ABBOTT, PAUL (Hawthorn, Fitzroy): Capable of playing in a key defensive role or as a marking option in attack, Paul Abbott, who made his league debut in 1984, was a key member of Hawthorn premiership sides in 1986 and 1988. In the latter grand final he contributed six goals to the Hawks' annihilation of Melbourne. Towards the end of his time at Glenferrie he encountered injury problems and indeed missed the entire 1990 season. In 1992, after 85 games and 30 goals in the brown and gold, he crossed to Fitzroy where he gave good service in 1992-3, adding a final 26 AFL games and 13 goals to his respective career tallies.

ABERNETHY, BRUCE (Port Adelaide, North Melbourne, Collingwood, Adelaide):

The Collingwood connection was prominent at Football Park yesterday when Port Adelaide crushed a tired-looking Central District by 85 points in the SANFL qualifying final. Port coach John Cahill, a former Collingwood coach, masterminded the victory by shifting talented former Collingwood follower Bruce Abernethy on to damaging Central follower Greg Smith after halftime, which sparked nine goals.⁷

⁶ "Richmond Guardian", 7/8/20, page 3.

⁷ "The Canberra Times", 17/9/89, page 15.

Bruce Abernethy was a highly poised and polished performer who enjoyed a 14 season, 300 plus game career with four clubs. Born in the Tasmanian town of Ouse, on 10th May 1962, he began with Port Adelaide in 1979, and played in a premierships team in each of his first three seasons before crossing to North Melbourne in 1982. He spent two seasons with North, and then three at Collingwood, impressing during this time as a classy attacking wingman or half back flanker who had great pace and considerable skill.

In 1987 he returned to Port Adelaide where he promptly won the best and fairest award, followed a year later by the Jack Oatey Medal after the Magpies' grand final defeat of Glenelg. He also played in Port's 1989, 1990 and 1992 premierships-winning teams. In 1991 he was a member of Adelaide's inaugural AFL squad, playing 11 games to add to his 190 for Port, 43 with North, 58 for Collingwood, and 10 interstate appearances for South Australia.

ABERNETHY, JIM (Melbourne):

*A high mark, an accurate right foot kick and rare pace were the attributes which made him an outstanding utility*⁸

Melbourne recruited Jim Abernethy from Wesley College and had to stave off opposition from St Kilda in order to sign him. Originally from Shepparton, he debuted with the Fuchsias in 1921, and impressed as a tough, hard hitting defender who was equally at home on a half back flank or in a back pocket. He could also 'pinch-hit' on the forward lines when required. He spent the 1925 season with his home town club, Shepparton, but resumed in the VFL in time to be a part of Melbourne's rousing, drought-breaking premierships triumph the following year. Indeed, Abernethy was one of the best players on view as the Fuchsias crushed Collingwood by 57 points, 17.17 to 9.8.

Jim Abernethy, who won his club's 'most versatile player of the season' award in 1927, continued with Melbourne until 1932, by which time he had played 130 VFL games and kicked 61 goals.

ABIKHAIR, RICHARD 'DICK' (Hawthorn, North Melbourne):

*Abikhair's improvement this season is remarkable. Previously he had been viewed as an honest player, but today he is right up in the championship class as a defender.*⁹

Hawthorn recruited Dick Abikhair from Rushworth and he developed into a handy player, capable of performing well either as a rover or in a back pocket.

⁸ "Shepparton Advertiser", 24/5/46, page 14.

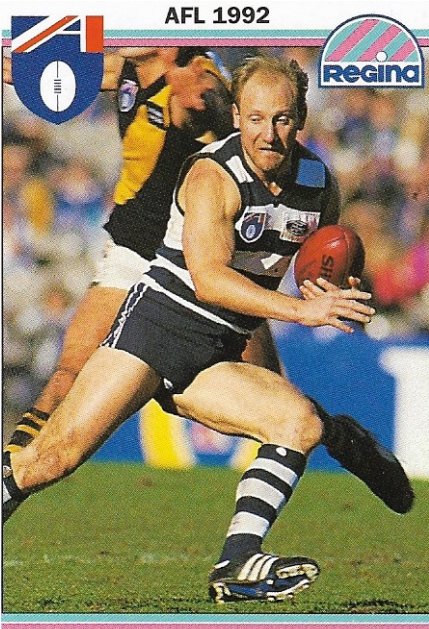
⁹ "Sporting Globe", 29/7/42, page 16. Abikhair's fine display contributed to a 9.10 to 6.16 win for North Melbourne against his former club Hawthorn.

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Between 1934 and 1938 he played 60 games and kicked 10 goals for the Mayblooms. He did not play VFL football in 1939 and 1940 and when he resumed in 1941 it was with North Melbourne, for whom he added another 60 games and two goals in five seasons. Depending on which source you consult, Abikhair was either of Lebanese or Syrian descent.

ABLETT, GARY (Hawthorn, Geelong):

A brilliant forward line player, Ablett is strong both on the ground and in the air and thrills spectators with his explosive pace and long penetrating kicks.¹⁰



GARY ABLETT - GEELONG

The mercurial Gary Ablett was one of the most supremely gifted footballers ever to play the game, and yet he might easily have been lost to top level football for good after a disastrous debut season with Hawthorn in 1982. Unable to settle in the city, Ablett played just six matches - mainly as a wingman - that year before 'retiring' back to the bush, where he threw in his lot with Ovens and Murray Football League club Myrtleford.

Geelong managed to lure Ablett back to the big time in 1984, and on this occasion he knuckled down to become, eventually, arguably football's biggest superstar of the late '80s and early to mid- '90s. Ablett's spectacularly eye-

catching style of play made the 'superstar' tag sit comfortably. Few players in the game's history have combined such extravagant high marking skills, explosive pace, and prodigious two-sided kicking ability, much of it attributed to his inordinately high concentration of 'fast twitch' muscles, which basically are muscles which help with sudden bursts of energy involved in activities like sprinting and jumping.

A notoriously poor trainer, this did not prevent him from producing football of unparalleled genius on match days. Early in his career in particular, it was sometimes said that he was susceptible under pressure, but this was belied by a sequence of consistently brilliant performances for the Big V, and most notably of all by his stunning best afield performance in a losing team in the 1989 VFL grand final against Hawthorn. Ablett did virtually everything short of winning

¹⁰ *VFL Yearbook 1985*, page 5.

the match off his own boot that day, marking almost everything that came his way, and booting a grand final record nine goals as the Cats got to within six points of achieving a major upset.

Towards the end of his career, when it appeared that he was beginning to slow down slightly, he began to play almost exclusively at the goal front, and with tallies of 124 goals in 1993, 129 in 1994 and 122 in 1995 secured the Coleman Medal on three successive occasions. He was Geelong's leading goal kicker nine times, and achieved AFL All Australian selection in 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995.

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, Ablett only won Geelong's top accolade once, in his debut season of 1984. However, some players arguably transcend subjective forms of commendation like best and fairest awards, and Gary Ablett was most emphatically one of those.

When he retired at the end of the 1996 season he had added 242 senior league games for Geelong to the half a dozen he had played with the Hawks. All but 10 of his career tally of 1,031 goals were booted for the Cats. Ablett's interstate career comprised 11 state of origin games for Victoria. In 2001 he was named on a half forward flank in Geelong's official 'Team of the Century'. Gary Ablett's brothers Geoff and Kevin also played VFL football, while his son, the recently retired Gary Ablett junior, more than lived up to his dad's name, stamping himself as one of the genuinely great footballers of the 21st century.

ABLETT, GEOFF (Hawthorn, Richmond, St Kilda):

*..... has proved he can be a match-winner with his tremendous pace and determination. Is tall enough to take a big overhead mark and regardless of the conditions can kick the ball long.*¹¹

Geoff Ablett was the first of the three Ablett brothers to make his mark in the VFL. Hawthorn recruited him from Drouin, and he overcame early injury problems to play a total of 202 senior games for the club between 1973 and 1982, kicking 135 goals. Exceptionally pacy, and a superb kick, he was one of Hawthorn's best players, as a wingman, in the 1976 grand final defeat of North Melbourne. He also played on the wing in the Hawks' 1978 premiership win against the same opponent.

His reputation as one of the fastest players in league football was endorsed by his winning the VFL footballers' sprint competition three times in succession. In 1983 Ablett was cleared to Richmond, for whom he played 16 games and kicked 12 goals in two seasons. He completed his league career with 11 games and six goals for St Kilda in 1985.

¹¹ "Football Record", 25/9/76, page 16.

ABLETT, LEN (Richmond):

On his showing in the practice match last Saturday Richmond officials have signed up Len Ablett, a tall centre half back from Myrtleford. Ablett certainly looks the goods. He possesses everything that goes to make a champion except polish, and he should quickly gain this at Punt-road.¹²

Len Ablett was a commanding centre half back who spent the majority of his football career in Myrtleford, with the Myrtleford Wanderers and Myrtleford Football Clubs. He also played 70 VFL games and kicked five goals for Richmond between 1939 and 1943. His last match for the Tigers was the 1943 grand final, in which he was named as 19th man. Richmond overcame Essendon on that occasion by five points, 12.14 to 11.15. Len Ablett's nephews Gary, Geoff and Kevin all played V/AFL football.

ABLEY, JOHN (Port Adelaide):

Abley was a dour and close checker who detested the thought of his opponent even touching the ball, leave along gaining possession to kick a goal. Standing 6' 1" and weighing 12 ½ stone, he was a perfect specimen of an athlete. He possessed wonderful judgment in knowing whether to mark or quietly 'poke' the ball away.¹³

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 Hawks 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

¹² "The Age", 29/3/29, page 8.

¹³ *South Australian Football: The Past - and the Present*, page 75.

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 eight 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 1951 and 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 it was his direct opponent who 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.*¹⁴

That 'habit of worry', inherited so conspicuously by Abley's immediate successor at full back, Ron Elleway, and yet so lamentably and obviously

¹⁴ *The Pash Papers* by Jeff Pash, page 201.

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 (Glenelg): 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 173 game league career affords evidence 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 11 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.

ABRAHAM, IAN (Collingwood, Dandenong, Claremont): A strong, pacy player who was sound overhead, Ian Abraham was at home in any key position, but played the majority of his football at centre half forward. After struggling to get a game at Collingwood, where he made just three senior appearances and kicked four goals in 1960 and 1961, he crossed to VFA first division side Dandenong where he spent the better part of five seasons. In 1966-7 he added 39 WANFL games and 19 goals for Claremont, and also played in three of Western Australia's four matches at the 1966 Hobart carnival. He rounded off his career back at Dandenong, for whom he had played 98 games and scored 64 goals by the time he retired in 1964. He was also chosen to represent the VFA in a match against Canberra at Manuka Oval in 1968.

ABRAHAM, WINSTON (Perth, Fremantle, North Melbourne):

Has magical skills across half forward and took the mark of the year in 1998. Always showed class with the Fremantle Dockers and, with better players around him at North last year, his status increased. Very dangerous, can make something out of nothing and his sharp eye netted him 40 goals in '98.¹⁵

Winston Abraham was a lightning fast, abundantly skilled footballer capable of the spectacular, but also quite volatile. Fremantle drafted him after he had played just eight WAFL games for Perth, but his time at the Dockers proved somewhat disjointed as he suffered a broken leg and incurred a couple of suspensions. He was also prone to inconsistency, and after managing just 13 games in 1997 he was de-listed. Overall, between 1995 and 1997 he played 38 AFL games and kicked 55 goals for Fremantle and was then picked up by North Melbourne, where he added 72 games and 104 goals from 1998 to

¹⁵ 1999 Select AFL number 23.

2001. The highlight of his time with the Kangas was participation in their 1999 grand final victory over Carlton, in which he booted a couple of goals. A knee injury sustained in the opening round of the 2001 season brought his career with North to a premature end.

Following his retirement as a player Winston Abraham served as an assistant coach at his original club Perth in 2006, and later coached Western Australian Sunday League side Kelmscott.

ABRAHAMS, OWEN (Fitzroy):

*Fitzroy has its eyes on Owen Abrahams, Commonwealth Bank full forward, who kicked four goals for his side on Saturday. Former A.N.F.C. and club secretary, Mr. Percy Mitchell, who saw Abrahams play, said: "He is not yet a John Coleman, but he should be a most useful player and could develop."*¹⁶

Half forward flank specialist Owen Abrahams (shown right) overcame the disappointment of being rejected by Fitzroy's thirds to return to the club a few years later and eke out a career for himself as one of the most audaciously talented players of his era. Quick, wily and extremely skilful, he played a total of 132 VFL games for the Roys between 1954 and 1962, kicking 230 goals. Along with club-mate Kevin Murray he was awarded an All Australian blazer after the 1958 Melbourne carnival, making them the first pair of Fitzroy footballers to be so honoured. Abrahams also topped his club's goal kicking list in both 1957 (31 goals) and 1961 (32).



ACKERLY, DAVID (South Melbourne/Sydney, North Melbourne): A highly dependable back pocket, David Ackerly enjoyed a fine 191 game career with two clubs. He played his first senior game with the Swans, then still based in Melbourne, in 1979, having come up through the club's junior ranks, and quickly established himself as a permanent member of the team's last line of defence. Ackerly moved with the Swans to Sydney in 1982 but four years later, after a fall out with the administration, switched to North Melbourne. Over the next four seasons he proved to be just as reliable in defence for North as he had

¹⁶ "The Argus", 25/5/54, page 15.

been with the Swans, although injury limited his appearances on the field in his last two years.

ACKLAND, SYD (Norwood):

*Ackland played a good, staunch game in goals but was not given the opportunities enjoyed by Ford, the other side's custodian. He showed remarkable judgment in the last quarter and did the most to keep Port's score down.*¹⁷

Sydney Ackland 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 seven occasions, including games at the 1927 Melbourne carnival, when he took over from the recently retired Frank Golding as the state's regular full back. 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. It is for his achievements as a player, however, that he is undoubtedly best remembered.

ADAMS, CHARLES (Port Adelaide): Charles Adams 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 quite 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 longest-running official 'hall of fame' in top level football.

ADAMS, CHOOK (North Launceston, North Shore): Chook Adams was an extremely useful forward who achieved distinction in two states. He played with NTFA side North Launceston from 1925 to 1928 before spending the 1929 season with North Shore in Sydney. Whilst with North Launceston he enjoyed

¹⁷ "Daily Herald", 16/5/24, page 7.

a stellar 1927 season, representing Tasmania at that year's Melbourne carnival, playing in the club's local and state premierships-winning teams, and topping the competition's goal kicking list with 68 goals. While with North Shore he was sufficiently impressive to achieve selection for New South Wales on five occasions, during which he recorded the highly creditable tally of 21 goals.

ADAMS, FRANK 'BLUEY' (Melbourne):

*Bluey Adams, Melbourne rover, is a typical example of 'Ginger for Pluck'. He has improved out of sight since he was promoted from the Thirds and on Saturday he gave a very bright display against Richmond.*¹⁸

A supremely talented and pacy wingman or rover, Frank 'Bluey' Adams was a major driving force behind Melbourne's domination of the VFL during the mid to late 1950s and early '60s. He is probably best remembered for the accidental collision with Collingwood's Des Healey during the last quarter of the 1955 grand final which left him with a severely fractured jaw.¹⁹ However, he deserves to be remembered more for his electrifying displays in no fewer than six Demons premierships sides over the course of a twelve season, 164 game league career. After his retirement as a player, he served as a Melbourne committee member.

ADAMS, GRAHAM (Windsor-Zillmere): After playing junior football with Sandgate Graham Adams made his senior grade debut with Windsor-Zillmere in 1981, aged just 15. It could hardly have been a more memorable first season as it culminated in a premierships triumph.

Early in his career Adams played mainly across centre or on the ball before migrating to a back pocket. A club best and fairest winner, he played in a second flag-winning team in 1988. He played 22 times for Queensland, and his form in the famous maroon jumper was almost invariably impressive.

ADAMS, TOM (West Torrens): Resolute, skilful and pacy, Tom 'Snook' Adams was equally at home in the ruck or occupying a set position. Combining aerial prowess with sure ball handling skills his only real weakness was that his kicks lacked penetration. He played 69 league games and booted 32 goals for West Torrens between 1923 and 1929. Among his appearances in the blue and gold was the 1924 challenge final victory over Sturt, when he lined up on a half forward flank. He won Torrens' best and fairest player award the same year.

¹⁸ "Sporting Globe", 19/5/54, page 4. Adams had helped Melbourne defeat Richmond by 30 points, 14.13 to 10.7.

¹⁹ Adams subsequently recovered and resumed his Demons playing career, but Healey never played VFL football again.

ADAMS, WILLIAM (South Fremantle, Fitzroy, Northcote, Preston, North Launceston, Prahran, Melbourne):

*For Fitzroy Adams was the best, and no man in the game surpassed him. He turned innumerable rushes, and was always in the thick of it.*²⁰

William Adams, who was known as ‘Bill’ in Western Australia, and ‘Bull’ during his time in Victoria, began his varied and colourful league football career with South Fremantle in 1917. He showed excellent form from the start, and was a premiership player in his first season, leading the rucks in a 6.5 to 3.8 challenge final defeat of East Fremantle. Later, he was included in Western Australia’s squad for the 1921 Perth carnival, although he failed to make the final 18 for either of the state’s matches.

In 1924, after 52 games with South, he ventured east where he joined a Fitzroy team that was on the wane after reaching the two previous grand finals. Adams’ tough-as-nails approach was ideally suited to the hurly burly world of the VFL, and he was particularly prominent for the Maroons during the 1924 round-robin finals series, which saw them ultimately placed fourth.

Although he only spent three seasons with Fitzroy, playing a total of 51 games, his commitment, tenacity and dedication made him an extremely popular player. In 1926, he was appointed club captain, and was also selected to represent the VFL. As a defender, he was extremely difficult to beat, and he was equally useful when taking a run on the ball.

The period from 1927 to 1929 saw ‘Bull’ Adams plying his trade in the VFA, first with Northcote, where he played 18 games and scored 23 goals, and then Preston (40 games, 88 goals). Sadly for him, however, when the Brickfielders emerged as a force in 1929 he had already left the fold, whereas Preston were still more than three decades away from achieving anything approaching pre-eminence. Nevertheless, his performances as a player were often of the highest quality, and in 1929, with Preston, he won the coveted ‘double’ of club best and fairest award and leading goal kicker trophy (with 69 goals).

Adams spent the 1930 season as playing coach of NTFA side North Launceston before being appointed to a similar position with VFA club Prahran in 1931, for whom he played seven games and kicked six goals. However, midway through the year he returned for one final stint in the VFL with Melbourne, where he added 16 games over the course of that season and the next.

His final involvement in senior football, and easily the most dramatic, came from 1945 to 1948 when he coached South Melbourne. In his debut season,

²⁰ “The Argus”, 22/6/25, page 16. Adams’ fine display failed to prevent Geelong downing Fitzroy by a couple of goals, 9.15 to 7.15.

the red and whites reached the grand final, losing to Carlton by 28 points after one of the most brutal and controversial matches in history. Unfortunately for Adams, South declined as a force after 1945, and when the team began the 1948 season in inept fashion he was replaced as coach by Jack Hale. Until the arrival of Rodney Eade nearly four decades later, however, William ‘Bull’ Adams remained the last South coach to steer the Bloods to a grand final.

ADAMSON, BRIAN (West Perth, Norwood):

When in top form he can be a match winner from centre half forward. Makes up for his slight build with an exceptional leap and strong mark.²¹

Brian Adamson 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 five 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 last 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 two interstate matches for Western Australia.

ADAMSON, LEE (Collingwood): Lee Adamson was a fine half back flanker who commenced at Collingwood with the thirds before making his senior VFL debut in 1966. Slight of build, he nevertheless played the game with vigour and was not averse to ‘mixing it’. Capable both of keeping things tight and going on long individual forward forays he was in his accustomed position on a half back flank when the Magpies lost the 1970 VFL grand final to Carlton. When he retired at the end of the 1973 season he had donned the famous black and white striped jumper 96 times without registering a single goal. His games tally would have been significantly higher had he not experienced a horror run with injuries midway through his career. Adamson later returned to Collingwood in a coaching support role.

²¹ *Who’s Who in West Australian Football 1983*, page 39.

ADAMSON, RONALD ‘JIMMY’ (North Melbourne): Recruited from Penshurst, ‘Jimmy’ Adamson gave North Melbourne fine service, mainly as a back pocket player, in 180 VFL games spread over 13 seasons. A Victorian interstate representative on numerous occasions, he captained his club in 1937 and was captain-coach in 1940, the same season he won the team’s best and fairest award. It would seem reasonable to regard Adamson as one of the foremost footballers in the early phase of North Melbourne’s VFL involvement.

ADCOCK, BRENTON (Sturt):

*Turns defence into attack with long clearing dashes and drop kicks. Perfectly balanced and a resting rover’s shadow.*²²

Brenton Adcock 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 many observers’ choice as best afield. Contemporary sources likened his style to that of triple Port Adelaide best and fairest winner of the 1940s and ‘50s, Dick Russell.

ADCOCK, CECIL (South Adelaide, West Torrens):

*Cecil Adcock is among the veterans of the game. For a number of years he was a leading player at Gawler. Coming to the city he joined South, and played some good seasons for the city team. In 1910 he captained Torrens, and remained in the side until 1912. He was a big man, and solid in the half back lines.*²³

Cecil Adcock was a prominent pre-world war one footballer, initially with South Adelaide between 1907 and 1909, and later with West Torrens, where he transferred in 1910 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. He played a total of 39 games and kicked 10 goals with Torrens but stats for his time at South have proved untraceable.

ADCOCK, JACK (West Torrens): Jack Adcock 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

²² “SA Football Budget”, 15/6/68, page 9.

²³ “News”, 9/9/24, page 15.

best and fairest award triumph in 1934, the same season which saw him head Torrens' list of Magarey Medal vote recipients with 16 votes.

ADLER, PAUL (Norwood): After lining up at full back in Norwood's 1975 and 1976 reserves premiership teams Paul Adler was converted into a full forward when he commenced his senior career. In 1977 he booted 78 goals to be the Redlegs' top goal kicker for the year. He was a member of the club's 1978 and 1982 grand final-winning teams, starting on the bench in both games. During the second half of his career he returned to the backlines, where he showed plenty of assurance and dependability. Between 1976 and 1983 he played 148 SANFL games for Norwood and kicked 173 goals.

AGARS, MERV (West Adelaide): Mervyn Agars 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 eight 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 19 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.

AGIUS, ROSS (Port Adelaide): A handy forward from Rosewater, Ross Agius never wholly cemented a place in Port Adelaide's senior line up but could be relied upon to give good value when selected. His 53 appearances for the Magpies between 1979 and 1984 included the winning grand final of 1980 against Norwood, when he contributed a team high tally of three goals from a half forward flank.

AH MAT, WILLIAM 'PUT' (Vestey's/Buffaloes): After commencing with Vestey's in 1919 'Put' Ah Mat went on to enjoy a highly noteworthy career spanning more than two decades. His distinctive nickname was conferred on him because of the telling precision with which he repeatedly managed to steer, or 'put', the ball between the big sticks. He was the NTFL's top goal kicker on two occasions, and runner-up three times.

In what was a glittering period of success for his club, which altered its name from Vestey's to Buffaloes in 1926, Ah Mat was a member of no fewer than seven premiership-winning teams from fourteen grand finals. He won a club best and fairest award in 1935/6, the same season that saw him finish as runner-up in the league's top award. When the AFL Northern Territory Hall of Fame was launched in 2010 'Put' Ah Mat was an inaugural inductee.

AHEARN, JIM (Subiaco): Jim Ahearn commenced his league career with Subiaco as a forward but was transformed into a highly dependable and effective defender, whereof it was said that he had “found his true vocation”. He represented Western Australia in both his incarnations. His career with the Maroons saw him play a total of 121 games between 1925 and 1934, although he did not play at all in 1932. He died at the unconscionably young age of 38 in 1942.

AHEARNE ‘COCKY’ (Launceston, North Hobart, Cananore):

*In ‘Cocky’ Ahearne North Hobart possess a player who can adapt himself to the centre or either the forward or back lines, and it is difficult to say where he is most at home, although he is usually to be seen goal shooting, of which he gets his share.*²⁴

For the bulk of his career ‘Cocky’ Ahearne played as a traditional goalsneak in the mould of ‘Dick’ Lee or Roy Bent, in which position he combined considerable pace and elusiveness with indefatigable accuracy in front of goal. He was a key member of the great Cananore sides which won three consecutive local and state premierships between 1925 and 1927. He also played regularly for Tasmania, including games at the 1927 Melbourne carnival. Ahearne was the TFL’s top goal kicker in 1925 with 50 goals, and in 1927 with 45. In the Canaries’ famous 178 point annihilation of a visiting Port Adelaide side in 1925, he was the leading goal kicker in the match with eight of the victors’ 31 goals. Prior to joining Cananore he had spent time at both Launceston and North Hobart.

AHMAT, ROBERT (Darwin, Collingwood, Sydney, Norwood, St George, Southern Districts): Of aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, Robert Ahmat was a copiously skilled footballer only let down by a slight lack of consistency. A Darwin Football Club product, he played representative football for the Northern Territory at secondary school, Teal Cup and senior level. After playing 25 games and kicking 22 goals for from 1995 to 1997 for Collingwood he seemed to be starting to find his feet, and it was something of a surprise when he was traded to Sydney. Between 1998 and 2001 he made 42 senior appearances and scored 46 goals for the Swans, but only produced his best football sporadically. Ahmat went on to have stints at Norwood (14 games, 14 goals, 1993-4), St George, Southern Districts and Dunolly.

AINSWORTH, GEOFF (Geelong): A rover during his time with University Blues, Geoff Ainsworth was converted by Geelong into a permanent back pocket. Rugged, strongly built and hard at the ball, he also showed great judgement as well as an acute awareness of when to drop back and cover for

24 “World”, 21/7/22, page 6.

team mates. In his debut season of 1967 he lined up in his customary position on the last line of defence in Geelong's losing grand final team against Richmond. He played 135 VFL games and kicked three goals for the Cats between 1967 and 1973, captaining the side in his final season.

AISBETT, ARTHUR (North Fremantle, East Fremantle): After 16 league games for North Fremantle in 1911-12 Arthur Aisbett switched to East Fremantle where he established himself as one of the foremost full backs of his era, although he was also eminently capable of filling other roles. For example, in the losing premiership decider of 1916 against arch-rivals South Fremantle he played as a follower changing in the forward pocket. His 113 WAFL games for Old Easts included the grand final triumphs of 1914 against South Fremantle and 1918 over East Perth.

AISH, ANDREW (Norwood): Andrew Aish arguably boasted as diverse a range of football skills as his more famous brother, Michael, but his career was cut short by injury. Highly creative and pacy, he was also excellent overhead, and liked to kick a goal, although much of his football was played as a half back flanker. He made his senior Norwood debut in 1981, and went on to play 89 SANFL games and kick 62 goals for the club prior to his retirement, which was brought about by his having to deal with knee, hand and ankle injuries, in 1986. Among his appearances was the 1982 grand final in which the Redlegs trounced Glenelg by 62 points. Aish also represented South Australia twice.

AISH, MICHAEL (Norwood): 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 which made him exhilarating to watch in full flight. A popular winner of the Magarey Medal as a 20 year old in 1981, he won Norwood's club champion award on four occasions, and was a member of Redlegs premiership 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 his club's official 'Team of the 20th Century'. He is the son of former Norwood captain Peter Aish whose career is profiled below.

AISH, PETER (Norwood): Having worked his way through the ranks at Norwood, Peter Aish made his league debut as a 19 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. By this time 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 five times. His sons Michael and Andrew (both profiled above) were fine players for Norwood in the 1980s and, in Andrew's case, also the '90s.

AISTROPE, FRED (Sturt): Fred Aistroke was a solid, close checking defender who was a key player for Sturt in the 1932 grand final against North Adelaide. Lining up on a half back flank he was among the victorious Double Blues' best players. His career with Sturt spanned the years 1930 to 1935 in which he played 67 SANFL games and scored two goals.

AITKEN, IAN (Carlton, St Kilda): In 1987 Ian Aitken enjoyed a stellar debut season with Carlton which saw him win the inaugural VFL Players Association Rookie of the Year award and assume a starring role in the Blues' 15.14 to 9.17 grand final defeat of Hawthorn. A powerful and resolute defender, he continued to play reasonably well in 1988-9 but there then followed four seasons of injury-affected under-performance. In 1993, after playing 61 V/AFL games and scoring 10 goals for Carlton, he requested, and was granted, a transfer to St Kilda. It did not prove to be a productive move as he managed just five appearances and no goals for the year, with rumour having it that he and Saints coach Stan Alves did not see eye to eye.

After leaving the AFL scene behind Aitken had spells as coach of Cowes, Barwon Heads and Kew, among others.

AITKEN, MICHAEL (Claremont, Carlton): Michael Aitken, known as 'Doc' because of his profession, was a versatile and extremely reliable centre half back and utility who played 107 league games for Claremont during the late 1970s and into the '80s. He also represented Western Australia on three occasions. In the 1981 grand final he was at centre half back as the Tigers came from a point down at the final change to overcome South Fremantle by 15 points.

Aitken also had a brief stint with Carlton, playing one senior VFL game in 1985. After playing reserves football throughout 1986, he retired to pursue a

medical career in the UK. This did not prevent Carlton from nominating him (along with Bruce Reid, who had also just retired) as one of its three recruits mandated by the VFL to assist in the establishment of the new Brisbane Bears Football Club.²⁵ [*Post-career details courtesy of Adam Cardosi.*]

AKED, FRANK (Footscray, Hawthorn): Nicknamed, for some reason, ‘Dolly’, Frank Aked commenced his senior playing career with Preston while that club was a member of the VJFA. In 1925 he was recruited by Footscray, which had just joined the VFL. Tall, strong and angular, he quickly developed into a useful ruckman whose wholehearted attitude compensated to a certain extent for any skill deficiencies.

Aked was competent in general field play in addition to being a good knock ruckman, and was the sort of player who inspired others to greater heights because of the way he wore his dedication to the club’s cause on his sleeve. Aked played 108 VFL games and kicked 57 goals for the Tricolours between 1925 and 1932. He then spent a season with Hawthorn, where he added a final eight games and two goals, but his name will forever be associated with Footscray, whose reserves he later coached, and where he also served for many years as a trainer. His son, Frank Aked junior, played four games for Footscray in 1951-2.

ALBISTON, ALEC (Hawthorn, North Melbourne):

*There was no doubt of his value to the side against Melbourne. His clever and unselfish play when either roving or in attack, received unstinted praise from the crowd. They were treated to something different, and liked it.*²⁶

During an era of unrelenting gloom for the Hawthorn Football Club, Alec Albiston was a stand-out performer, as well as an embodiment of many of the qualities that would eventually enable the Hawks to become the pre-eminent force in Australian football. Recruited from Kew, he made his senior VFL debut in 1936 as an 18 year old, and quickly proved that, despite his lightweight frame and boyish demeanour, he was ideally suited for the rigours and requirements of a man’s game. As a rover he was inevitably subject to a considerable amount of physical duress, but his durability was such that, over the course of a 15 season, 170 game career at Hawthorn, he was never once sidelined with injury. A supreme getter of the hard ball, he also used it well, and was deadly near goal, as his tally of 383 goals with the Mayblossoms/Hawks attests. Clever, tricky, and boasting plenty of pace, he was also a better than adequate overhead mark, in spite of his comparatively diminutive (175cm, 72.5kg) frame.

25 Post-career details courtesy of Adam Cardosi.

26 “Sporting Globe”, 10/5/50, page 12. The report appertains to Albiston’s senior league debut with North Melbourne.

Albiston was Hawthorn's leading goal kicker in 1938, 1939, 1941, 1942 and 1945, and a dual winner of the club's best and fairest award. Between 1947 and 1949 he served as captain-coach, but was unable to get the side above 11th place on the ladder. Indeed, only once during his time with Hawthorn did the team manage to achieve what the Americans call 'a winning season', by recording more victories than losses for the year, and on no fewer than eight occasions they finished either last or second to last. In 1950, Alec Albiston crossed to North Melbourne after being deprived of the Hawthorn captain-coach's position, and added a final seven VFL games and six goals. Somewhat surprisingly, he only earned one Big V jumper, but no doubt this was at least in part because he was at his peak during the wartime years, when interstate fixtures were suspended. Albiston had two brothers - Harold, a year older, and Ken, nine years younger - who also played league football, and who are both profiled below.

ALBISTON, DAVID (Hawthorn): David Albiston is the son of former Collingwood and Hawthorn footballer Harold Albiston (profiled below). Originally from Melbourne High School Old Boys, his VFL career with Hawthorn spanned the years 1962 to 1966 during which he played 61 games and scored 30 goals. In the Hawks' 1963 grand final loss to Geelong he shared roving duties with Ian Law.

ALBISTON, HAROLD (Collingwood, Hawthorn): From VAFA club Kew, Harold Albiston commenced his league football career with Collingwood in 1935, but he only played once for the year. The following season found him at Hawthorn, where he played alongside his brother Alec, who was also taking his bows for the Mayblossoms. Harold Albiston played 62 games for Hawthorn, including 60 in succession at one point. He failed to score a goal with either of his clubs.

ALBISTON, KEN (Richmond, Melbourne): Not quite blessed with the same ability as his older brother Alec, Ken Albiston was nevertheless a useful footballer, as he proved by giving creditable service to two league clubs. He was spotted by Richmond while playing in the VAFA with Melbourne High School Old Boys, whom he ironically left just prior to the club's securing its first ever B Section premiership.

That was in 1946, and it could perhaps be called doubly ironic in that Richmond, which had been a force for most of the previous two decades, was about to embark on a prolonged decline. Indeed, during Albiston's six season, 58 VFL game stint with the Tigers they only took part in one finals match - the losing first semi final of 1947 against Fitzroy.

Albiston's next club, Melbourne, was by contrast re-emerging as a power when he arrived and in 1954 the Demons made it through as far as a grand final clash with Footscray. In what proved to be the last of his 45 game stint with the club, Ken Albiston produced a fine display as second rover, changing in the forward pocket with Stuart Spencer, but he could not prevent the Bulldogs from romping to a conclusive win.

ALDENHOVEN, ALAN (North Adelaide): A tireless and formidable ruckman, North Adelaide's Alan Aldenhoven's league career was restricted to just 55 games over 10 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.

ALDERMAN, BILL (Subiaco, West Perth):

Bill Alderman was a dashing centre half back, making many fine clearances. He looks certain to again represent the State in that position.²⁷

Bill Alderman was one of the most accomplished Subiaco footballers of the immediate post-war period. Strong overhead, solid, and exceptionally pacy, he was among the foremost defenders in Western Australia at the time. Best suited to centre half back, where he used his judgement to sterling effect, he played a total of 93 games for the Maroons between 1946 and 1951. He also made half a dozen interstate appearances for Western Australia. In 1952 he left Subiaco in order to take up the position of reserves coach at West Perth, but while with the Cardinals he also added another four senior games to his career tally.

ALDERSLEY, RALPH (North Adelaide, West Torrens): Ralph Aldersley 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

²⁷ "Sunday Times", 13/6/48, page 4.

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was state captain on half a dozen occasions, including some of the games at the 1908 Melbourne carnival.

Aldersley commenced his senior career with North Adelaide, for whom he played 21 games in 1898 and 1899, following which he enjoyed an 11 season, 130 game stint with Torrens. 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.

ALDERTON, ROD (West Perth): Strong overhead, and a long, straight kick, West Perth's Rod Alderton seemed ideally suited to a key forward position, and indeed he spent the first two-thirds of his league career playing mainly at full forward, in which position he twice topped the club's goal kicking list. He joined the Cardinals from Merredin, and made the first of an eventual 126 senior appearances in 1978. He kicked a total of 241 goals over the course of his career.

During the 1982 season club coach Dennis Cometti had the inspired idea to try him on a wing, and he proved a revelation, producing far and away the best and most consistent football of his career. He continued in excellent form in 1983, and many observers considered him unfortunate not to gain selection for the state. In 1984, however, he sustained a serious knee injury, and after being restricted to just five league appearances for the year decided to retire.

ALESSIO, STEVEN (Essendon): After preferring basketball to football as a youngster Steven Alessio belied this by carving out a fine AFL career with Essendon. Strongly built and very dynamic, he could operate as a ruckman or in a key forward position. Between 1992 and 2003 he played 184 senior games for the Bombers and registered 193 goals. After struggling for regular selection early in his career - he did not make the cut for the ultimately triumphant grand final clash with Carlton in 1993, for instance - he assumed the role of number one ruckman in 1995. When Essendon next went top via an emphatic grand final defeat of Melbourne in 2000 Steven Alessio was a key member of the team.

At the end of an injury-ruined 2002 campaign Alessio was de-listed only to be re-drafted a few months later after Essendon proved unable to find a suitable replacement. The 2003 season saw him play a final 16 AFL games before retiring.

Since that retirement he has occupied a number of off-field roles at Essendon.

ALEXANDER, HAROLD (South Melbourne): Recruited by South Melbourne from local side Leopold, Harry Alexander was a capable follower

who was a key member of the side from 1922 to 1925 before falling down the pecking order in 1926, his last season. He played 70 VFL games and booted 40 goals. In both 1923 and 1924 he played for Victorian B teams against New South Wales.

ALEXANDER, RON (East Perth, Fitzroy, East Fremantle):

*Has adopted a more responsible approach to his ruck work this season and is the state's no. 1 ruckman. Works hard in the packs and is difficult to out-position.*²⁸

Ron Alexander was a formidable, highly team-orientated ruckman whose qualities of leadership were evident from very early in his career. That career commenced in 1971 with East Perth, for whom he played a total of 98 senior games in five seasons, including the winning grand final of 1972 against Claremont. Under the tutelage of Mal Brown, Alexander became a club leader and won his team's fairest and best award in 1974, the same year that saw him awarded a Simpson Medal after a fine performance for a losing Western Australian side against the VFL at Subiaco.

After captaining the Royals in his final season he transferred to Fitzroy where he spent six highly successful years, captaining the side in 1979 and 1980, and winning a club champion award in 1981. At the Roys he earned a reputation as a big-hearted ruckman always looking out for his smaller teammates. Somewhat perversely, he was also chosen to represent Victoria during his tenure in the east, the introduction of state of origin football in 1977 notwithstanding.

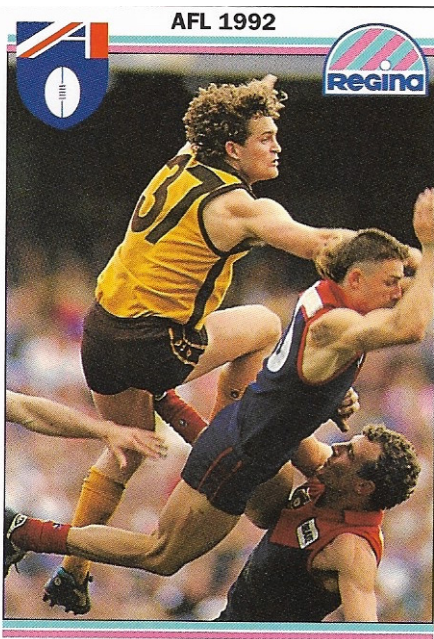
In 1982, after 133 VFL games for the Lions, he returned to the west as captain-coach of East Fremantle, a role he ended up undertaking for four seasons, culminating in the 1985 grand final defeat of Subiaco. Alexander continued to perform with great credit and consistency as a player, although at this stage in his career he tended to spend more time resting up forward. In 1984 he booted 52 goals for the year to be the Sharks' joint top goal kicker, along with Jeff Cassidy. When he retired after the 1985 grand final Alexander had added 76 WAFL games to those he had played previously with East Perth.

He continued at East Fremantle as non-playing coach in 1986, and the following year was appointed as the inaugural coach of Western Australia's fledgling VFL club, West Coast. However, despite overseeing a highly respectable return of 11 wins from 22 home and away matches for eighth position on the ladder, he was replaced at season's end by John Todd.

ALLAN, BARRY (North Melbourne): North Melbourne recruited Barry Allan from South West Gippsland League club Beaconsfield and he made his

²⁸ "NFL Championship Series Football Record", 14/6/75, page 8.

senior VFL debut in round four 1962. During his first couple of seasons he played mostly reserves football before becoming a regular senior player in 1964. A ruckman, in 1966 he wanted to join Pakenham as a captain-coach but the 'Roos refused to clear him. He remained with the club until the end of the 1967 season by which time he had played 61 VFL games and scored 18 goals.



BEN ALLAN - HAWTHORN

ALLAN, BEN (Claremont, Hawthorn, Fremantle): Ben Allan commenced his senior league career with Claremont in 1987 and played 66 games there in three years, including the winning grand finals of 1987 and 1989. He rounded off the first phase of his Tigers career by winning a Simpson Medal, his second, in the 1989 grand final victory over South Fremantle. (The first had been claimed after the previous season's interstate match against South Australia.)

Drafted by Hawthorn in 1990, Allan endured a tough first season in which he managed just half a dozen senior appearances, but in 1991 he really came into his own, winning the club's best and fairest award, and maintaining

his record of playing in a premiership team every other year as the Hawks overpowered West Coast in the only AFL grand final ever to be played at Waverley.

A smoothly skilled, industrious centreline player or on-baller, Allan was consistently one of the Hawks' top possession getters, and arguably the side's single most important player. He emphasised his status by winning AFL All Australian selection in 1993 and 1994 before seeking pastures new with AFL debutant Fremantle, which appointed him as its inaugural captain, in 1995.

Allan's career with the Dockers was undermined by injury and he managed just 47 games in three seasons to add to the 98 he had played with the Hawks. While with the Dockers he added another three WAFL games for Claremont. Ben Allan represented Western Australia six times. He returned to top level football midway through the 2001 season when he replaced Damian Drum as coach of Fremantle, but he spent just half a year in the role before giving way to Chris Connolly.

ALLAN, GRAEME ‘GUBBY’ (Sunshine, Fitzroy, Collingwood):

*Fitzroy rover Graeme Allan has taken his fight for a clearance to Richmond to the Supreme Court. He is suing Fitzroy club and the Victorian Football League. Allan, 23, physical education instructor, wants the court to invalidate Fitzroy’s agreement with Carlton not to clear him to any club but Carlton. This agreement was made in return for the clearance of a former Carlton captain, Robert Walls, to Fitzroy.*²⁹

Popularly known as ‘Gubby’, Graeme Allan commenced his senior career with Sunshine in the VFA, where he ran third in the 1974 Liston Trophy count, before moving to Fitzroy in 1975. Clever, highly skilled and adaptable, he was a prominent player for the Roys in 87 VFL games over half a dozen seasons, during which he booted 97 goals. Crossing to Collingwood in 1981 he continued to perform at a high standard over another 54 games, which included the losing grand final against Carlton at the end of his first season. He booted 29 goals for the Magpies in a career that ended in 1986. Allan also represented the Big V. Much of his best football was played as a centreman, but he was also highly versatile, capable of assuming a variety of roles. After his playing career was over he became a prominent football administrator, initially with Collingwood, and later at Brisbane.

ALLAN, MATTHEW (Carlton, Essendon): Despite preferring his skateboard to a football while he was growing up Matthew Allan developed in to a strong, dynamic ruckman whose best was as good as anyone’s. Carlton recruited him from North Ringwood, and, after a prolonged grounding in the seconds, during which time he was being groomed as Justin Madden’s eventual replacement as the club’s principal ruckman, he debuted with the firsts in 1994. Three years later Madden had departed and Allan shouldered the enhanced responsibility with great aplomb. When Carlton reached the premiership decider in 1999 Allan was a significant driving force, and he duly won the club’s best and fairest award, earned AFL All Australian selection, and polled 20 votes to finish third in the Brownlow count. However, he was unable to prevent the Blues succumbing to the Kangaroos in the aforementioned match.

Injuries undermined Allan’s impact over the ensuing three campaigns and he ended up being traded to Essendon. Ironically, the first of his two seasons with the Bombers was injury free and he recaptured some of his best form. The injury problems resurfaced in 2005 and at the end of the season he took the decision to retire. His AFL career comprised 140 games and 72 goals for Carlton and 21 appearances and a goal with the Bombers.

²⁹ “The Canberra Times”, 24/6/78, page 36. Allan remained at Fitzroy until 1981, when he crossed to Collingwood.

ALLANSON, NOEL (Essendon, Williamstown): Solid and dependable, if lacking somewhat in pace, Noel Allanson played for the most part in defence, although he could also do a serviceable job across centre. From 1947 to midway through the 1951 season he played 57 VFL games and scored one goal for Essendon. He then finished the 1951 season with Williamstown, and continued there for one more year, playing a total of 26 VFA games and scoring one goal.

If anything, Allanson was even better at cricket than football as he represented Victoria at the summer sport.

ALLARD, WAYNE (Perth, East Fremantle): After debuting with Perth as a 16 year old in 1991 Wayne Allard went on to become one of the club's most noteworthy performers of the 1990s. His 139 game, 31 goal stint with the Demons ran from 1991 to 1998 and saw him win the 1993 fairest and best award. He also represented Western Australia once during the Perth phase of his career.

Between 1999 and 2002 Allard registered 54 games and 10 goals with East Fremantle, with the highlight perhaps being participation in the 2000 grand final, albeit that the thrill was soured by East Perth comfortably claiming the flag.

ALLEN, BILL (Melbourne): Strong, courageous and highly dependable, Bill Allen gave Melbourne some noteworthy service as a ruckman in 142 VFL games between 1910 and 1923. He originally came from South Yarra, and was also a fine cricketer, representing his state in the Sheffield Shield.

ALLEN, CHRIS (East Perth, Swan Districts): Chris Allen was a damaging on-baller, wingman or half forward from Dianella who debuted with East Perth in 1976, and was a member two years later of the Royals' victorious grand final team against Perth. His form and consistency improved over time, and in 1982 he was chosen in the West Australian state team which trounced South Australia at Subiaco.

When, at the end of the 1983 season, and after playing 116 games for the club, he sought a transfer to Swan Districts, a protracted clearance wrangle broke out, which was eventually resolved in favour of the player and Swans. However, Allen then endured an injury-plagued year which restricted him to a mere five league appearances, a tally he increased by 12 in 1985. The 1986 season saw him back at East Perth where he added a final 36 games over two seasons, producing some of the best and most telling form of his career in the process.

ALLEN, ERNIE 'IKE' (East Perth):

A surprise packet was 'Ike' Allen last Saturday. On the flank he was a grand grafter and time and time again led the Royals down the road the goal-shooting

*area. The man with the big smile is a slippery customer, and finishes off his heady work with an accurately directed pass to a team mate. In addition the fact that he has been so long below his best made his improved showing every bit the more pleasing.*³⁰

A clever, elusive wingman with pace to burn, East Perth's 'Ike' Allen was, for a time, arguably the finest exponent of his position in Australia. He commenced with the Royals in 1916, but his peak years coincided with Phil Matson's initial term as the club's coach between 1918 and 1924. Under Matson, East Perth went top for five successive seasons from 1919 to 1923, with Allen playing - and starring - in the last four of these flag-winning combinations. He was also a 'shoe-in' for Western Australia during this time, and was a key member of the state's victorious 1921 Perth carnival team.

Had the Royals seen fit to bestow annual fairest and best awards during this stage of their history it seems reasonable to imagine that 'Ike' Allen, who had played a total of 124 WAFL games and kicked 25 goals by the time he retired in 1924, would have been the recipient of several. As it is, in June 2006 he was a fairly predictable selection on the wing in East Perth's official 'Team of the Century 1906 to 1944'.

ALLEN, FRANK (East Perth): Undoubtedly one of the foremost East Perth players of his generation, Frank Allen was a fixture in the side for over a decade. He was also a regular on the interstate scene, representing Western Australia a total of 11 times, including games at both the 1950 Brisbane and 1956 Perth carnivals. Skilful, pacy and creative, he played most of his football across centre, although towards the end of his career in particular he also played some fine games on a half forward flank.

He commenced with the Royals in 1943, when the under-age wartime competition was running, and was a member in 1944 of the club's unbeaten premiership side in that grade. He missed the 1945 and 1946 'open age' seasons while serving in the Navy, but when he resumed he performed with the assurance of a veteran allied to the verve and sparkle of a spring colt.

By the time Allen retired in 1956 he had amassed 190 WANFL games, and kicked 30 goals. He was the winner of his club's fairest and best award in 1950, and finished runner-up on a countback in the Sandover Medal the same year, to East Fremantle's Jim Conway. Just over 40 years after his retirement, however, he, along with all the other players who had originally lost a Sandover either on a countback of votes or the decision of the league president, received the unexpected fillip of a retrospective Medal. Allen also came third in the Sandover Medal count in 1951.

³⁰ "Call", 25/7/24, page 12. The Royals lost to Subiaco by three goals.

His career ended in disappointment when, owing to a knee injury, he missed out on the 1956 grand final win over South Fremantle, which brought the Royals their first senior premiership for 20 years.

ALLEN, LES (Carlton, North Melbourne): As a full forward, Les Allen seemingly had all the attributes necessary to succeed in the position. Cool under pressure, resourceful, boasting good anticipation skills and an extremely accurate kick for goal, he might have been expected to develop into a bona fide champion. However, after an impressive debut campaign with Carlton in 1930, when he headed the club's goal kicking list with 56 majors, he failed to kick on.

Part of the problem might have been psychological. It was the time of the Great Depression, and Allen found it difficult to procure work, a state of affairs which it is not difficult to imagine having a damaging effect on his mental well-being. At any rate, in 1932 he sought and was granted a clearance to North Melbourne after a Shinboners club benefactor found him a job. He had played 29 VFL games and kicked 87 goals in three seasons with the Blues, and would add another 41 appearances and 101 goals for North from 1932 to 1934.

ALLEN, RODNEY (Woodville):

*There is nothing showy about his work - he just consistently wins the ball in the air and on the ground. He is a direct player who can swerve when necessary without losing pace.*³¹

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 or centreman, in precisely 200 league games over 11 consecutive seasons.³² He kicked 24 goals. After retiring from league football at the age of 28 he played for various suburban and country clubs in both South Australia and Victoria for almost a decade.

ALLEN, WALLY (North Broken Hill, South Adelaide):

*One of the chief results of Saturday's games is the injury to Wally Allen, South Australia's erstwhile champion wingman. The soft ground was the contributing cause of the slip that again caused knee trouble, and though we much regret the necessity, yet football supporters one and all are in full accord with him when he decides to go out of the game. It is hard luck for him and the Souths, for he is but at the zenith of his career; but knee injury is the worst of all for footballers' stability.*³³

31 *South Australian Football Record Year Book 1966*, page 75.

32 Allen was the first Woodville player to reach the 200 game milestone.

33 "Sport", 29/6/23, page 2.

Born in Boulder City on 24th September 1900, Wally Allen learned to play football at Christian Brothers' College, Kalgoorlie. At the age of 11, 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 premierships teams with that club 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 were 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 Garden³⁴ 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'. (From "The SA Footballer", 30/6/23, page 33)

Allen did, in fact, make an attempted comeback with South two years after announcing his retirement, but it was short-lived. All told 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 adjudged 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.³⁵

34 This refers to the winner of Essendon's 1920 best and fairest award, Jack Garden, who was a regular VFL representative player during the first half of the 1920s.

35 The leading place-getters in the poll were: 1st Wally Allen (South Adelaide) 2,489 votes; 2nd Vic Richardson (Sturt) 2,084; 3rd Clem Dayman (Port Adelaide) 1,670; 4th Bobby

ALLENDER, STEPHEN (Port Melbourne, Sydney, Hawthorn): Stephen Allender was a powerful, high leaping ruckman who rose to prominence at Port Melbourne where, in 1980, he won both the Liston Trophy and club best and fairest award as well as helping the team claim a premiership. Recruited by South Melbourne, he was in and out of the team - which was re-named Swans in 1982, and Sydney Swans the year after - for three seasons. This was considered something of a disappointment given the way he had dominated in the Association. After playing 28 VFL games and scoring 28 goals for the Swans he crossed to Hawthorn in 1984 but found it well nigh impossible to break into one of the competition's strongest teams, playing just twice and kicking one goal for the year. He then returned to Port Melbourne where he continued playing until 1988, making a total of 41 appearances and scoring 69 goals for the club.

ALLEY, TED (South Melbourne, Williamstown): After playing 16 games for South Melbourne in 1902 and 1903 Edwin 'Ted' Alley (some sources refer to him as 'Ned') commenced with Williamstown in 1905 and became a key contributor to that club's gradual emergence as a power in the VFA. After qualifying for the finals for the first time in his debut season with them, the Villagers contested their first premiership decider two years later. Reigning premier West Melbourne provided the opposition, but Williamstown, which had finished the season as minor premier, proved too strong.

A key reason for this was the display of Alley who, in the absence of regular captain Paddy Noonan, skippered the side. In those days, a club's captain was tantamount to a coach, and Alley made all the right moves in masterminding an opening term burst by his charges that effectively finished the game as a contest. The Villagers led 4.4 to 0.2 at the first change, and went on to win by 18 points, with Alley's place in history, as Williamstown's first ever premiership captain, thereby secured. He continued with the club until 1915, playing a total of 151 VFA games and scoring 19 goals.

ALLFORD, GRANT (Latrobe, Richmond, Claremont, Launceston): Despite his comparatively light (184cm, 80kg) frame Grant Allford was able to hold down either a key defensive or forward position with conviction. He commenced his senior career with Latrobe in 1968 for whom he played 17 games and kicked 19 goals before crossing to Richmond in the VFL where he spent two seasons in the lower grades before making his senior debut in 1971. Playing mainly as a full back, he made a generally good impression, without

Barnes (West Adelaide) 1,625; 5th Guy Stephens (Norwood) 1,526; 6th Les Marvel (West Torrens) 1,073. Allen's prize was a suit worth £12 12/ from Syd Ingerson, the 'Up-To-Date Tailor', of King William Street. Bobby Barnes was the winner of the 1922 Magarey Medal. Source: "The SA Footballer", 5/5/23, page 30.

necessarily stamping himself as an invaluable player. Between 1971 and 1973 he played 30 VFL games for the Tigers whilst registering one goal.

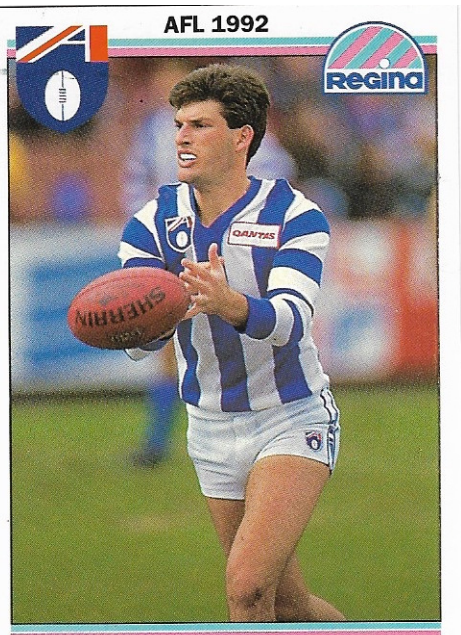
The 1974 season found him at Claremont where he gave good service in 79 WANFL games over four seasons, during which he booted 62 goals. He then returned to Tasmania where his five season (81 game, 36 goal) stint with Launceston saw him represent Tasmania on a couple of occasions besides winning both a club best and fairest and the equivalent award for the NTFA as a whole, both in 1980.

ALLINGHAM, MAURIE (Port Adelaide):

Control at centre gives a team an inestimable advantage, and Maury Allingham was the man in charge at that crucial point in this match. He assisted largely towards the victory.³⁶

Maurie Allingham 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 every season between 1921 and 1924, with 47 goals in 1922 his best return.

Allingham captain-coached the Magpies to second position in 1926, and was club vice-captain in 1925 as well as 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 five times, and kicked one goal. He won the Magpies' best and fairest award in his last league season.



BRETT ALLISON - N. MELBOURNE

³⁶ "Saturday Journal", 5/5/28, page 14. The comments relate to a match played on the previous Saturday in which Port Adelaide had defeated Glenelg, after a tense tussle, by seven points at the Bay Oval.

ALLINGTON, HAROLD (Norwood):

Probably the unluckiest man in league football is Harold Allington. Almost ever since he made his debut in A grade ranks he has been dogged by ill-luck in the form of serious injuries Most football supporters will agree with his remark to me that the law of averages should mean that he is due for a long spell of immunity from accident on the playing field.³⁷

Athletic, determined, strong overhead and an excellent kick, Harold Allington overcame the loss of a toe as well as other serious injuries to produce some superlative football for Norwood. Named club best and fairest in 1934, he was capable of filling any set position on the field as well as taking a turn in ruck. Between 1931 and 1935 he played 56 SANFL games and scored 11 goals for the Redlegs, as well as representing South Australia twice.

ALLISON, BOBBY (Port Melbourne, South Melbourne): After playing just once for Port Melbourne in 1919 Bobby Allison was recruited by South Melbourne the following year. A forward of genuine quality, he played 54 VFL games for South and scored 81 goals in 1920-1 and from 1923 to 1926. He was a Victorian interstate representative in both 1923 and 1924.

ALLISON, BRETT (Belconnen, North Melbourne, Sydney):

A dangerous middle-sized player, Brett Allison has taken many double storey marks in the line of duty³⁸

One of the best crumbing forwards of his era, Brett Allison enjoyed the perhaps unique distinction during his career of playing interstate or representative football for five different teams: his home territory of the ACT, Victoria, New South Wales, New South Wales-ACT combined, and the Allies. Between 1987 and 1999 he was a key member of a North Melbourne/Kangaroos side that came to have few equals, winning premierships in 1996 and 1999, and a pre-season flag in 1995. Brett Allison played in all three of these premiership-winning combinations.

Equally capable of both the spectacular and the honest and straightforward, Allison was almost certainly one of the first names entered on the Kangas team sheet every weekend throughout coach Denis Pagan's reign. He topped the club's goal kicking list with 43 goals in 1997, and ran third in the best and fairest voting the same year.

At the end of the 1999 season, having played 219 games in a blue and white jumper, he was released by the Kangaroos and picked up at number 70 in the

³⁷ "The Advertiser", 17/5/35, page 9.

³⁸ 1995 Select AFL card number 44.

national draft by Sydney. However, he failed to sparkle in his new surroundings, and retired at the close of a 2000 season which had brought his final tally of AFL games to 228; he also booted 285 goals, a large proportion of them as a result of expert scouting of packs in and around the goal square.

ALLISON, BRIAN (Coburg):

*Courageous utility player who plays a hard tough game. Never gives in and is always an asset Great club stalwart.*³⁹

Coburg hall of famer and official 'Team of the Century' member Brian Allison commenced with the Lions in 1981, having failed to establish himself at Essendon. He encountered no such problems at Coburg, where he played 174 games and scored 150 goals in a 12 season career. He was a premiership player in 1988 and 1989 and was renowned for his tough as nails approach, which sometimes saw him fall foul of the umpires.

ALLISON, TOM (North Melbourne, Belconnen): Tom Allison was a speedy, elusive footballer who joined North Melbourne from West Coburg and played 106 VFL games and kicked 61 goals for the club between 1963 and 1970. He was chosen to represent the 'Big V' in 1965. In 1971 he moved to Canberra and was appointed captain-coach of Belconnen, which, having just relocated to that district, had changed its name from Turner. In his second season at the helm, Allison managed to get his side into the four, but they bowed out in the first semi final. During his five season stint with Belconnen, he played for and coached the ACT representative team.

Tom Allison's son Brett (profiled above) later played with distinction for Belconnen, North Melbourne and Sydney.

ALLISTER, JACK 'TICH' (Essendon, Sandringham, North Melbourne):

After failing to make his mark at Essendon, where he managed just one game and one goal in 1938, Jack Allister threw in his lot with Sandringham in the VFA. A dynamic and highly productive rover, he spent three seasons with the Zebras, playing 49 games and scoring 113 goals. Confidence presumably restored by the experience, he returned to the VFL in 1941 with North Melbourne, where he fared much better than with the Dons. His five season stint with the Shinboners saw him add 58 appearances and 54 goals to his respective career tallies and the scale of his improvement was evidenced by his claiming the club's 1942 best and fairest award.

ALLSOP, RAY (Richmond, Oakleigh): From VAFA side Collegians, having earlier played for University Blacks, Ray Allsop continued to play as an amateur after commencing his VFL career with Richmond. A clever and courageous

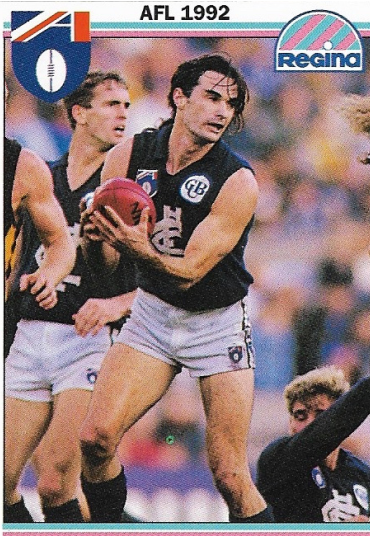
³⁹ "VFA Recorder", 24/9/89, page 19.

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rover with good goal sense, he played 54 games and scored 69 goals for the Tigers between 1955 and 1959. He also played three times for Victoria in 1957, kicking five goals.

Once his VFL career was over Allsop spent the 1960 season with VFA side Oakleigh, for whom he would play 14 games and boot 24 goals, highlighted by participation, as first rover, in an 18.14 to 8.14 grand final defeat of Sandringham.

ALLSOP, TOM (Hawthorn, Sandringham):



TOM ALVIN - CARLTON

Hawthorn wingman and half-forward Tom Allsop suffered a hernia at training last night and will not play again this season. Allsop came off the ground complaining of a sore leg, and examination revealed the hernia. An operation will be necessary.⁴⁰

Recruited by Hawthorn from Melbourne High School Tom Allsop was a useful centreman or wingman who consistently did what was asked of him over the course of 58 VFL games between 1949 and 1954, during which he registered 42 goals. He then crossed to Sandringham in the VFA where he added another 52 games and 89 goals. Although it is suggested in some sources that he played in the Zebras' 1962 premiership

team this was not in fact the case.

ALLTHORPE, NEIL (Subiaco, West Perth): After playing a handful of games in 1942 with Subiaco's war time under-age combination Neil Allthorpe took his senior league bows in 1945. Best suited to a midfield role, he was often required to occupy a key position, either forward or back, because of the club's dire lack of quality players. When he 'retired' at the end of the 1952 season he had played 127 WANFL games and kicked 60 goals. He made a single game comeback with West Perth in 1953.

ALVES, STAN (Melbourne, North Melbourne):

Has a ton of pace and in 198 VFL games has played many outstanding ones. A brilliant ball handler, mark and kick, Stan would have to be one of the most courageous players around.⁴¹

⁴⁰ "The Age", 29/6/51, page 14.

⁴¹ "NFL Championship Series Football Record", 14/6/75, page 9.

Excellent wingman though he undoubtedly was, Stan Alves might never had made the grade in league football had he not persisted at Melbourne when legendary coach Norm Smith thought him too lightweight and feeble. Once given his chance, however, he quickly proved both his coach and all other sceptics at the club wrong as he went on to amass 226 VFL games for the Demons between 1965 and 1976, winning best and fairest awards in 1972 and 1974. He also played interstate football for the VFL. In 1977, he crossed to North Melbourne where he had the satisfaction of appearing in a premiership team in his first season. Alves added 40 VFL games for the Kangas, and also booted 14 goals to bring his final career tally to 174. Between 1994 and 1998 Stan Alves coached St Kilda, leading the side to only its fourth ever grand final in 1997 (which it lost to Adelaide), plus a night flag in 1996.

ALVIN, TOM (Carlton, Sandringham):

Tom Alvin played like a man possessed, kicking the goals of a goal sneak not a half-back galloper⁴²

Tom Alvin was an energetic, determined and adaptable footballer who is probably unfairly remembered at least as much for his trademark flowing locks as his football ability, which was considerable. Carlton recruited him from Bairnsdale, and he gave the club 218 games of largely meritorious service between 1984 and 1994, kicking 95 goals. He was equally comfortable undertaking a creative, attacking role either on the ball or across centre, or playing as a tagger.

Lining up as a ruck-rover, Alvin was arguably the Blues' best player in their seven goal grand final loss to Hawthorn in 1986. The following season he again played well as Carlton gained revenge over the same opponent with a 15.14 to 9.17 grand final win. He played in a third grand final in his penultimate AFL season, but the Blues went under to Essendon.

Appointed captain-coach of Sandringham in 1995, Alvin spent two years in the role, steering his side to a losing grand final against Springvale in his first season before seeing them miss out entirely on finals participation in 1996. He played a total of eight games for the Zebras, all in his first season, and scored 16 goals.

AMARANTI, MARK (East Fremantle): Best afield in his last game for East Fremantle, strongly built midfielder Mark Amaranti was rewarded with the Simpson Medal. This was because the match in question was the 1994 WAFL grand final in which the Sharks outpointed Claremont, with Amaranti

⁴² "The Canberra Times", 22/8/94, page 25. The comment relates to a rousing Carlton win over ladder leaders West Coast at Princes Park.

registering four of his team's 13 goals. It was the undoubted high point of a career which involved precisely 100 league games during which he tallied 43 goals between 1985 and 1994

Amaranti was a highly promising junior footballer as evidenced by his winning the 1985 Medallists Medal awarded to the fairest and best player in the WAFL colts competition.

AMARANTI, PETER (South Fremantle, Subiaco): After failing to establish himself at South Fremantle, where he managed just 12 games and three goals between 1952 and 1954, Peter Amaranti forged out a highly noteworthy career for himself at Subiaco, playing 169 WANFL games and kicking 32 goals from 1955 to 1963. A brilliant centreman capable of dominating games, he frequently took on and beat the best of opponents. He won the Lions' fairest and best award in 1955 and might be considered unlucky never to have achieved state selection. After retiring as a player he coached Subi's seconds for a time.

AMBROSE, RICHARD (Sydney, Port Adelaide/Port Magpies, Subiaco): A skilful utility who could operate fairly effectively at both ends of the ground, although he was somewhat prone to making errors, Richard Ambrose carved out a memorable career for himself at state league level after failing to make the grade at two AFL clubs. He was picked up by Essendon in the 1990 National Draft but in two seasons with the club he failed to play a senior game. After crossing to Sydney in 1993 he fared only slightly better, making three senior appearances for the year and scoring one goal.

The 1994 season found him at SANFL club Port Adelaide where he proved a decided asset. Frequently used as a full back, he could also pinch-hit up forward when the occasion demanded. His 52 game stint with the Magpies culminated in a grand final defeat of Sturt in 1998. He booted 29 goals.

From 1999 to 2004 he played 113 games and scored 88 goals for Subiaco, appearing in at least one finals game in all six seasons. In 2000, playing mainly at centre half forward, he was an emphatic winner of the Sandover Medal for fairest and best in a competition which, somewhat idiosyncratically, was known at the time as Westar Rules. Just as in South Australia his last appearance in the west came in a winning grand final, with the Lions accounting for Claremont by eight goals. During his time with Subi he played four times for Western Australia, having early represented South Australia during his time with Port.

ANDERSON, BRUCE (Essendon, Yarraville): Essendon's Bruce Anderson was an outstanding half back flanker or centre half back who was a regular 'Big V' representative. Between 1931 and 1937 he played 97 VFL games for the Dons whilst registering just a single goal. He spent the 1938 and 1939 seasons captain-coaching Yarraville in the VFA with minimal success.

ANDERSON, CLAYTON (East Fremantle): Named on a wing in East Fremantle's 1992 grand final-winning team against South Fremantle, Clayton Anderson backed this up two years later by operating as a rover as the Sharks overcame Claremont in the flag decider. Between 1991 and 1997 he played 96 senior games for the Sharks and kicked 16 goals.

ANDERSON, COLIN (Melbourne, Glenelg): After struggling to establish himself at Melbourne, where he only played twice for the seniors in 1972, Colin Anderson went on to carve out a respectable career for himself at Glenelg, playing 90 SANFL games and scoring 93 goals from 1973 to 1981. A pacy on-baller and forward, away from football he enjoyed some success as a professional sprinter, including a victory in the 1975 Bendigo 2000 Race.

ANDERSON, DEAN (Hawthorn, St Kilda): Hawthorn recruited Dean Anderson from Caulfield Grammarians. A former student at the school, he had exhibited considerable prowess as a runner during his time there as well as on the football field. The Hawks capitalised on this former ability by utilising him in a free running role, either across centre or on the ball, as well as sometimes on a half forward flank, and he provided sterling service in 83 V/AFL games between 1988 and 1992, during which he booted 74 goals. He was a member of the club's winning grand final teams against Geelong in 1989, and West Coast two years later. After the 1992 season, however, he was somewhat surprisingly traded to St Kilda, where he continued to produce consistently impressive football for another four years. During that time he added a final 67 AFL games to his career tally, and kicked 26 goals. While with Hawthorn, Anderson played two state of origin games for Victoria.

ANDERSON, DOUG 'DUGGAN' (Swan Districts):

..... at centre halfback skipper 'Duggan' Anderson played his usual solid game using spoiling tactics to good advantage.⁴³

Douglas 'Duggan' Anderson played for most of his 210 game league career as a defender. Given that over the course of the 12 year period of that career his club, Swan Districts, managed an overall success rate of just 22.9%, it seems reasonable to suppose that Anderson found himself in the thick of the action more often than not. Moreover, the fact that he was three times adjudged Swans' fairest and best player, and was selected to represent his state on four occasions, makes it clear that his contribution to that action was consistently conspicuous and telling. Presumably, his club's success rate would have been even worse had he not been around to bolster the backlines so superbly.

⁴³ "The Swan Express", 7/8/52, page 6. Despite his commendable personal performance, Anderson could not prevent Swans from succumbing to a 10 goal defeat at the hands of East Perth.

Anderson made his debut with Swans in 1945, the season which saw the WANFL senior competition restored after three years of under-age football. At season's end he enjoyed major round participation for the first and only time in his career, but his sterling work at centre half back was insufficient to prevent a first semi final loss to South Fremantle.

Other than his fairest and best awards and interstate involvement, the highlight of Anderson's career was probably his two season stint as club captain in 1951-2. The importance of his all round contribution to Swan Districts was later commemorated by his inclusion on the interchange bench in the club's official 'Team of the Century'.

ANDERSON, FRANK (Brunswick, Carlton, Preston):

Frank Anderson was one of Carlton's outstanding players against North Melbourne. Stationed at centre half back his spectacular high marking and sure ground play turned many North attacks.⁴⁴

Frank Anderson commenced his senior career at Brunswick in the VFA, where he caught the eye as a lively, powerful and extremely vigorous key position forward. In 1934, the Magpies found themselves in dire financial trouble, and one means they found of alleviating this was to sell some of their better players to clubs in the VFL. Thus, without being involved in any of the preliminary discussions, and indeed with no prior warning, Anderson found himself included in a group of three players off-loaded to Carlton in return for a princely, for the times, three figure sum. He had played 35 games for the Magpies and kicked 62 goals.

Tried in a variety of positions, he struggled for a while to make his mark with the Blues, although he always managed to do just well enough to retain his place in the side. After being switched to the backlines, however, he really blossomed. He could play with equal effectiveness in almost any defensive position, and was regarded as one of the toughest and hardest to beat defenders in the VFL.

When the Blues beat arch-rivals Collingwood in the 1938 grand final, Frank Anderson, lining up on a half back flank, scarcely put a foot wrong to be among the victors' best. He represented the VFL against South Australia in Adelaide in 1941, and would probably have played more interstate football had not the war intervened. Never one to take a backward step, he was reported eight times (but only suspended twice) during the course of a VFL career that saw him play 155 senior games and kick 44 goals between 1934 and 1944. In that time he had

⁴⁴ "Sporting Globe", 19/5/37, page 9. Anderson's fine display was in vain as North downed Carlton in this round four clash by two points.

the misfortune to finish a narrow runner-up in the club's best and fairest award voting on three occasions.

The final phase of Frank Anderson's playing career took place back in the VFA, this time with Preston, where he served as captain-coach in 1945 and 1946, playing a total of 28 matches and scoring 22 goals.

One imagines that Frank Anderson would have been a strong candidate for inclusion in Carlton's official 'Team of the Century', but for some reason the club's selectors opted almost exclusively for players from the post-world war two era. (Indeed, the only exception to this was the selection of Harry Vallenge at full forward.)

ANDERSON, GEORGE (South Melbourne, University): George Anderson, a defender, commenced his VFL career with South Melbourne in 1906 and went on to play 42 games for the club over three seasons without kicking a goal. After not playing in 1909-10 he joined University, adding a final 20 VFL games between 1911 and 1914. He scored the only goal of his career whilst playing for the Students against Geelong in 1911.

ANDERSON, GEORGE (Collingwood):

*"George Anderson, the ex-Collingwood champion, was the greatest left and right foot kick that I have ever seen. He was also one of the fastest men in football boots."*⁴⁵

A blond-haired defender renowned for his penchant for using his exceptional pace for going on long, weaving forward forays, George Anderson gave solid, consistent service to Collingwood in 104 VFL games between 1911 and 1917. He kicked eight goals. His last game for the Magpies was their 1917 challenge final defeat of Fitzroy in which he was listed high among the victors' best players.

ANDERSON, GORDON (Hawthorn): Gordon Anderson, who hailed from Blackburn, enjoyed a brief but moderately noteworthy VFL career with Hawthorn. A follower and forward, he played 59 games for the Hawks and scored 70 goals between 1947 and 1951. His tally of 25 goals in 1950 was good enough for him to top the club's list.

ANDERSON, GRAEME (Carlton): Like his father, 1938 Carlton premiership player Frank Anderson, Graeme Anderson was a highly dependable defender for the Blues. Early in his Carlton career he was deployed at full back but he really came into his own after being moved out to a half back flank.

Between 1961 and 1968 Anderson played 79 VFL games for the Blues without scoring a goal. He was somewhat unfortunate in that he fell out of favour

⁴⁵ Dan Minogue, quoted in "Daily Advertiser", 30/7/37, page 2.

with the selectors on the eve of a 1968 finals series from which Carlton would emerge triumphant. Six years earlier he had been a member of the Blues team which had lost to Essendon, their victims of 1968, in the grand final.

ANDERSON, GRAEME (Port Melbourne, Collingwood): Graeme Anderson commenced his senior career with Port Melbourne in 1970 and spent five seasons with the club, capped by an appearance in the 1974 first division grand final in which the Borough downed Oakleigh by 69 points. In 1975 he crossed to Collingwood and, playing mainly either as a ruck-rover or forward, was a steady and consistent performer, with his ability to kick the ball long distances being particularly heralded. His 71 VFL games included both the drawn and replayed 1977 flag deciders against North Melbourne, and the 1979 grand final loss to Carlton. He kicked a total of 91 career goals.

The 1981 season saw him back at Port Melbourne where he enjoyed further premiership success in 1981 and 1982. When he retired at the end of the 1984 season he had totalled 74 VFA games and 283 goals with the Borough.

ANDERSON, GREG (Port Adelaide, Essendon, Adelaide):

*Devastating wingman or centreman whose pace and penetrating kicks always keep opposition defences in trouble.*⁴⁶

Port Adelaide recruited Greg Anderson from St Michael's, and he made his league debut as a 17 year old in 1983. The following year he was among the Magpies' best players in a nine point grand final loss to Norwood. Tall, quick, and a sure ball handler, Anderson was also 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 well enough built physically 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. A year later he was chosen as an All Australian after representing South Australia.

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

⁴⁶ "South Australian Bicentennial Football Budget", 2-5 March 1988, page 16.

to deteriorate, and he ended up managing 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, IAN (Essendon, West Perth): Originally from Miga Lake, Ian Anderson was recruited by Essendon and commenced his senior VFL career in 1967. After two seasons with the Bombers, during which he played mainly as a forward, he missed the next two whilst serving in the army in Vietnam. Resuming his football career in 1971 he took his final total of VFL games played to 27 and goals kicked to 49. He next joined West Perth for whom he played 37 WAFL games and registered 38 goals from 1972 to 1974. He also played once for Western Australia, against Tasmania at the 1972 Perth carnival.

ANDERSON, JACK (St Kilda, West Perth):

Advice has been received in Perth that Jack Anderson, the West Perth footballer, will return shortly. Anderson, who came from Victoria originally, left some weeks ago for Melbourne with his wife, intending to settle down there. He was assured of an engagement with the St. Kilda Club and it was thought that the last had been seen of him in local football. However, something has brought about a change in his plans, as it is stated that he proposes again to live in Perth Anderson has played so many brilliant games for the cardinals that that club is not likely to regret his latest decision.⁴⁷

Originally from Balldale, Jack Anderson was a capable utility who gave St Kilda consistently strong service between 1931 and 1933, during which time he played 42 VFL games and kicked 46 goals. He represented Victoria at the 1933 Sydney carnival. The 1934 season saw him at West Perth where he enjoyed premiership success in his first season, an achievement duplicated in 1935. A Cardinals fairest and best award winner in 1934, he played 71 WANFL games and bagged 78 goals from 1934 to 1936 and in 1938. He also played interstate football for Western Australia.

ANDERSON, JACK (Richmond, North Melbourne): Jack Anderson only played nine senior games for Richmond, but two of the matches were the grand finals of 1932 and 1933, for both of which he started on the bench. In the 1932 affair he helped seal the Tigers' triumph over Carlton with a late goal, one of just two recorded during this phase of his career. The 1933 game ended in defeat at the hands of South Melbourne.

⁴⁷ "The Daily News", 23/3/37, page 4.

After playing only seconds football in 1934 Anderson was cleared to North Melbourne, where he proved himself a handy acquisition, playing 53 games and kicking nine goals from 1935 to 1939.

ANDERSON, JIM (Buffaloes/Darwin, West Perth): In a football career spanning the years 1954 to 1971 Jimmy Anderson was both highly respected and much decorated. A three time club best and fairest award winner, he also twice finished runner-up in the voting for the Nichols Medal. The precise number of NTFL games he played is not clear but it is known that he played in no fewer than nine grand finals for three wins. Anderson spent the 1962 season with West Perth for whom he played half a dozen WANFL games and kicked seven goals.

ANDERSON, LEN (East Fremantle): East Fremantle's Len Anderson was an accomplished full forward whose wobbly punt kicks for goal were paradoxically almost unfailingly accurate. Over the course of his 108 WANFL games between 1956 and 1963 he kicked 353 goals at an average of 3.27 per game. He was Old Easts' top goal kicker in 1957 with 77 goals, 1958 with 89, 1959 with 91 and 1960 with 79. He represented a West Australian number two side which twice defeated visiting VFL club Hawthorn in 1959. After his retirement as a player he continued to serve East Fremantle in an administrative capacity.

ANDERSON, PETER (North Adelaide, Glenelg, Woodville):

*Anderson is equipped with great speed, good anticipation, a long accurate boot and one of the best pairs of hands in the league.*⁴⁸

Peter Anderson 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 81 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 seven point victory over his old. Anderson finished his league

48 "SA Football Budget", 12/9/64, page 5.

career at Woodville, where he added another 36 senior games for a final career tally of 233 (including five interstate matches for South Australia). He booted a total of 140 goals, 137 of them with North.

ANDERSON, ROBERT (Queanbeyan, Footscray): After commencing with Queanbeyan in 1976, Robert Anderson went on to enjoy a highly memorable 19 season league football career, the highlights of which included:

- 229 ACTAFL games (a total bettered by only two other Queanbeyan players)
- 16 day and two night matches with VFL club Footscray in 1980 and 1983-4
- numerous representative appearances for the ACT, including the 1979 state of origin carnival in Perth
- membership of Queanbeyan senior grade premierships teams in 1985, 1988 and 1991, as well as a reserves premiership side in an injury and illness-affected 1989 season
- captain of the Tigers for two seasons
- twice Queanbeyan's leading goal kicker
- third place in the 1979 Mulrooney Medal
- joint winner of the 1982 Canberra Permanent Player of the Year Award
- Queanbeyan's assistant senior coach for two years

ANDERSON, SID (Melbourne): Sydney Anderson, typically referred to as 'Sid' in contemporary sources, spent three seasons in Melbourne's seconds before forcing his way into the seniors in round seven, 1939. Thereafter, he established himself as a key player, and was a member of the club's 1939, 1940 and 1941 premiership teams. In the 1939 grand final defeat of Collingwood he was listed high among Melbourne's best players. A centre half forward at the outset of his career, he was shifted later to a wing, a position to which his exceptional pace arguably made him better suited. From 1939 to 1941 he played 52 VFL games and scored 12 goals.

Having enlisted in the RAAF, Sid Anderson lost his life during combat in New Guinea, New Guinea on 20th May, 1944.

The award for second place in Melbourne's annual best and fairest is named the Sid Anderson Memorial Trophy in his honour.

ANDERSON, STUART (North Melbourne, Fremantle, Peel, South Fremantle): After a comparatively slow start to his AFL career with North Melbourne Stuart Anderson developed into a fine wingman, half back and half

forward, hitting his peak in a 1996 season which culminated in the Kangas claiming the premiership. On grand final day Anderson himself had a quiet game by his standards, but the fact that he contributed to a conclusive triumph over Sydney can nevertheless be looked back on as the crowning achievement of his career.

In 1997, after 61 games and 20 goals for North, Anderson was traded to Fremantle, in direct exchange for Winston Abraham, but it would seem reasonable to infer that he found it difficult to settle in the west. In any case, he managed just nine games and three goals in 1998 whilst also playing briefly for Peel Thunder (eight games) and South Fremantle (one game), before heading home to Melbourne.

ANDERSON, SYD (Melbourne): A solid ruckman who arrived at Melbourne from Leopold in 1902, Syd Anderson overcame the setback of a dislocated shoulder, sustained in a pre-season practice match, to become a handy player for the Reds. From 1902 until 1907 he played a total of 53 VFL games and kicked 10 goals.

ANDERSON, TONY (Melbourne): Tony Anderson was a pacy half back flanker who, because of injuries, failed fully to build on a highly promising start to his league career with Melbourne. Originally from University Blacks,⁴⁹ he debuted for the Demons in 1963, and by the following year was acknowledged as one of the best half back flankers in the game, a status endorsed by his selection to represent Victoria during the 1964 season. At the end of that season he experienced the highlight of his playing career when he helped Melbourne to an 8.16 to 8.12 grand final victory over Collingwood.

By this stage, however, he was beginning to be troubled by knee issues, and over the remainder of his career he never again managed to play anything like a full season. Three games into the 1969 season he pulled the plug on his career, having made 75 senior appearances and scored two goals.

ANDREW, BRUCE (Collingwood): Famous at least as much for the centre parting in his hair as for his undoubted football prowess, Bruce Andrew played 62 games for Collingwood, mainly as a wingman, between 1928 and 1932 and in 1934. His games tally would have been much higher had he not been so injury prone. Blessed with good all round skills, he was regarded as one of the paciest VFL players of his day. He was a member of the Magpies' 1928 and 1930 grand final-winning sides, earning the nod as best afield on the latter occasion.

Once his playing career was over Andrew enjoyed an illustrious career as a football administrator and journalist, including a 28 year term as the ANFC's

49 "The Age" 2/4/1962 gives his origin as University Blues.

(Australian National Football Council) field director, responsible for promoting the game both in Australia and overseas.

ANDREWS, ARTHUR ‘SKINNY’ (East Fremantle, East Perth):

The East Perth Club is incensed with the Fremantle Public Hospital. One of their players, ‘Skinny’ Andrews, was taken to that institution just at the half-time of the match against South Fremantle yesterday. To the chagrin of the visitors they found that the resident doctor was away playing golf, and as no other Fremantle doctor could be roused by phone Andrews, who, it was believed, was suffering from a fractured jaw (as it happened there was no fracture, although the jaw was badly swollen) had to be brought to Perth.⁵⁰

Invariably known as ‘Skinny’, defender Arthur Andrews made his debut with East Fremantle in 1903. He played just one match that year, and one more - the grand final replay - in 1905. He then crossed to East Perth in 1906, which was the club’s first season in the Western Australian Football Association. Thereafter he became a stalwart of the side for the ensuing eight seasons, playing a total of 94 senior games.

When the Royals made their finals debut in 1909, he was one of the side’s best players on a half back flank, but could not prevent a crushing loss to East Fremantle in a semi final. Andrews also played in the following year’s grand final against the same opposition when, after a closely fought first three quarters, the Royals went under by 13 points.

ANDREWS, BRIAN (South Sydney, Queanbeyan-Acton, St George, North Shore):

Eric Paynting, field umpire of the Queanbeyan-Acton v. Eastlake National Football match at Kingston Oval on Saturday, was injured five minutes before the final bell when Brian Andrews, a Combine ruckman, crashed heavily on top of him after a ball-up.⁵¹

Brian Andrews commenced with South Sydney in 1951 when he displayed such good form that he was selected in the NSWANFL representative team which overcame a Broken Hill League combination by 39 points at Trumper Park. A follower, he re-located to Canberra and played for Queanbeyan-Acton the following year.

Upon his return to Sydney in 1953 he resumed with South Sydney before transferring to St George in 1955. The move precipitated the most noteworthy

⁵⁰ “Sunday Times”, 3/8/1913, page 2. Rubbing salt into the wound, as it were, was the fact that South Fremantle defeated East Perth by 23 points.

⁵¹ “The Canberra Times”, 2/6/52, page 5.

campaign of his career as he claimed the Dragons' best and fairest award as well as playing for New South Wales, albeit in a disappointing 90 point loss to Tasmania.

After two seasons with St George, Andrews crossed to North Shore in 1957, where he finished his playing career.

ANDREWS, GARETH (Geelong, Richmond): Gareth Andrews made his senior VFL debut in the opening round of the 1965 season as a replacement for injured full forward Doug Wade. He did well in the position, kicking a total of 35 goals for the year. As time went on he demonstrated great versatility, playing with success as a ruck-rover as well as in key forward and back positions. Particularly noted for his aerial ability, his kicking style was almost preposterously clumsy, but surprisingly effective. In Geelong's 1967 grand final loss to Richmond he was one of the Cats' best players.

Midway through the 1974 season, after 136 VFL games and 127 goals for the Cats, he transferred to Richmond where he added a final 31 league appearances, and one goal, over the course of his two last seasons in the game. The Tigers deployed him mainly as a defender, and he was in a back pocket, and one of the best players on view, in the 1974 grand final defeat of North Melbourne.

After retiring as a player Gareth Andrews became an administrator at Richmond and then worked as a football commentator on both TV and radio. He also had a long stint as vice president of the Geelong Football Club.

ANDREWS, HAROLD 'SKINNY' (Swan Districts):

In 1939 Harold Andrews, who recently returned to the Swan Districts League football team from the R.A.N., played in the first Australian rules football match seen in Hong Kong. The teams,- drawn from Australian Naval Reservists, fought out the game on a ground measuring 90 yards by 55 yards and with a surface of hard baked clay. This, as can be imagined, did not allow for the best features of the game, but nevertheless a large crowd thoroughly enjoyed the display, according to Andrews.⁵²

Between 1936 and 1939 and from 1945 to 1947 Harold 'Skinny' Andrews played 92 WANFL games and booted 23 goals for Swan Districts. Had he not lost five years to the war, it is distinctly possible that his games played tally would have been nearer 150.

Tall and rangy - hence his nickname - he was a superb overhead mark and boasted an excellent temperament. He played in both of Western Australia's home matches against Victoria in 1939, for one win and one defeat, and also represented the state's second XVIII twice, once as captain.

⁵² "The Daily News", 6/6/46, page 13.

ANDREWS, LYNDON (Central District): Central District's Lyndon Andrews was a solid, close checking defender who probably produced his best football at centre half back. He played 79 SANFL games without registering a goal from 1967 to 1972 and in 1974-5.

ANDREWS, MIKE (Fitzroy): Originally from Wodonga, Mike Andrews could play in the centre or in defence. He was a solid performer for Fitzroy during a predominantly bleak era for the club. From 1966 to 1972 he played 80 VFL games for the Lions and scored 13 goals.

ANDREWS, RON (Essendon, Collingwood, West Adelaide):

*The VFL tribunal last night suspended Essendon defender Ron Andrews for four matches for allegedly striking Hawthorn's Robert Dipierdomenico during the first quarter of their match at Brisbane on Sunday.*⁵³

A genuinely tough, formidably aggressive player, 'Rugged Ronnie' Andrews was renowned for his apparently indiscriminate tear-through approach which paid scant regard for his own or anyone else's safety. During his 151 game VFL career with Essendon between 1973 and 1983 he missed a total of 24 matches through suspension. In 1974 he was one of the chief protagonists in an all-in brawl that flared up at Windy Hill during the half time interval of a game between the Bombers and Richmond. After fronting up to the league tribunal, Andrews was found guilty of delivering a 'king hit', and suspended for six weeks. Nevertheless, he had too much genuine football talent to be considered a mere thug. Playing mainly as a centre half back, he was strong overhead, a useful kick, and boasted excellent anticipation and judgement. He was a firm favourite at Windy Hill because of his wholehearted endeavour and obvious passion for the team. A Victorian representative in 1977 and 1978, he finished second to Graham Moss in the Bombers' 1976 best and fairest count. He also made the 1976 "Inside Football" team of the year.

A succession of injuries slowed him down later in his career, but he remained a feared opponent, and a respected on-field leader, captaining his side in 1982. After failing to make the Dons' 1983 grand final team he crossed to Collingwood where he played half a dozen games in 1984. The following season saw him follow departing Magpies coach John Cahill to West Adelaide, where he rounded off his league career by playing 26 games and topping the club's goal kicking list with 51 goals for the year.

ANDRISKE, JAMIE (West Adelaide): Jamie Andriske managed the rare, indeed quite possibly unique, feat of winning best and fairest awards at all four

⁵³ "Canberra Times", 30/6/81, page 16. The match in question was one of several VFL fixtures scheduled for Brisbane during the late '70s and early '80s. Essendon downed Hawthorn on this occasion by 18 points.

SANFL levels: under 17s, under 19s, reserves and seniors. His senior triumph in 1994 was the undoubted highlight of a 135 game league career which ran from 1990 to 2001.

ANESBURY, BOB (Glenelg): From Orroroo, Bob Anesbury was a versatile footballer who was at home on a half forward flank, wing, in the centre or following. He was a consistently sound performer for Glenelg in 134 SANFL games between 1961 and 1970 during which he scored 156 goals. His tally of 45 goals in 1967 was joint best, with Ray Button, for the year. In 1967 he had planned to take a sabbatical; indeed “He was practically on a boast for England when he was talked out of it”.⁵⁴ The man with the persuasive tongue, needless to say, was newly installed Bays coach Neil Kerley. Anesbury went on to have a fine season.

ANGUS, GEOFF (Hawthorn): Hawthorn’s Geoff Angus was the grandson of former Collingwood and Williamstown footballer George Angus (profiled below). Probably best described as a utility, he played most frequently in the centre, including the Hawks’ winning grand final against St Kilda in 1971. Between 1967 and 1973 he played 73 league games for Hawthorn and scored 35 goals.

ANGUS, GEORGE (Collingwood, Williamstown):

“My opinion at the start was that we would win” said George Angus, the Collingwood captain, on Saturday evening. “I thought, however, that we would be pretty hard pressed. We are entitled to the feeling of satisfaction, apart from that inspired by having won the premiership - we have beaten the side that won the first round. Had Carlton won they would have fully deserved the victory, for they have suffered many reverses which severely handicapped them. Nobody could have felt more sorry for them in their troubles than I have.”⁵⁵

George Angus made his VFL debut with Collingwood in 1902, aged 27. Immediately prior to that he had been fighting in the Boer War. He played, for the most part, either on a half forward flank or as a follower. Despite his late start, he enjoyed an illustrious career, playing in the Magpies’ premiership teams of 1902, 1903 and 1910, and captain-coaching the side in 1910 and 1911. In 1909 he was the club’s coach but Bob Nash retained the captaincy. Angus spent 10 seasons with Collingwood, playing a total of 157 VFL games, and kicking 64 goals. He crossed to Williamstown in the VFA as captain-coach in 1912 but was unable to get his side into the finals. He made 14 appearances for the Villagers, kicking 11 goals.

⁵⁴ “SA Football Budget”, 9/9/67, page 13.

⁵⁵ “The Herald”, 3/10/1910, page 5. Collingwood defeated Carlton in the match to which this quote refers, the 1910 challenge final, with scores of 9.7 to 6.11.

A son Les later played for Collingwood while his grandson Geoff (profiled above) was a premierships player with Hawthorn.

ANGWIN, ANDY (Port Melbourne, Hawthorn): After playing just a couple of VFA games for Port Melbourne in 1937 Andy Angwin joined Hawthorn where he made a big impression in a comparatively short time. Between 1938 and 1944 he played a total of 75 VFL games and kicked 10 goals, mainly as a wingman, in which position he was rated as one of the league's best. He won Hawthorn's best and fairest award in 1940, and represented the VFL in the interstate arena. After his retirement as a player he acquired near legendary status with the Hawks as a long serving, and extremely popular, property steward.

ANNAND, BUD (St Kilda): A tough, rugged follower who played the game hard, Baden-Powell 'Bud' Annand gave reliable service to St Kilda over 106 VFL games between 1956 and 1962. He could feasibly have continued his league career but, having been forced through his work as a policeman to relocate to the Ballarat area, he threw in his lot with local club Redan as captain-coach instead.

ANNEAR, JOHN (Claremont, Collingwood, Richmond, West Coast, South Fremantle): After a season with GNFL club Kambalda, John Annear joined Claremont in 1978, and immediately impressed as a dashing, determined footballer who played with plenty of energy and pluck. After 62 games in three seasons with the Tigers he was lured to the VFL by Collingwood, where he played 43 games from 1981 to 1983, without really doing himself justice. He moved to Richmond in 1984, and promptly started producing the most vibrantly effective football of his career, finishing second in the club's 1984 best and fairest count, and earning his state of origin debut for Western Australia the following year. When West Coast entered the VFL in 1987 Annear was enticed back home to assume a leadership role with the fledgling club. From 1987 to 1990 he added 58 games for the Eagles to the 65 he had played during his time at Richmond. He rounded off his career with 18 WAFL games for South Fremantle in 1991.

ANNESLEY, BOB (Swan Districts, Essendon): Bob Annesley was a lightly built, smooth moving rover whose career was interrupted by the second world war. He spent most of his career with Swan Districts, playing 64 WAFL games and kicking 63 goals from 1939 to 1941 and in 1946-7. During the 1945 season he was posted to Melbourne and obtained a war time services permit enabling him to play for Essendon. However, a niggling hamstring injury restricted him to just half a dozen appearances in which he booted seven goals. Some sources suggest he played one final league game in 1948 with West Perth.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ See, for instance, *Those Magnificent Men 1897-1987* by Michael Maplestone, page 72.

ANTROBUS, TONY (North Adelaide, Essendon, St Kilda): 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 nine 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.⁵⁷ 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 augmented nickname of ‘The Angry Ant’. It was the injuries, however, which ultimately brought an untimely end 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 packs. No lesser experts than Barrie Robran and Jim Deane (with five Magarey Medals between them) rated the dual-sided Antrobus as the fastest footballer over the first 10 metres they had ever seen.⁵⁸

This was an assessment with which the committee responsible for selecting North Adelaide’s official ‘Team of the 20th Century’ obviously concurred, given that they saw fit to include ‘the Ant’ in the side ahead of such fine players

⁵⁷ Technically, following Don Lindner’s retrospective elevation to the ranks of Magarey Medallists in 1998, Antrobus should now be regarded as the eleventh North Adelaide recipient of the award.

⁵⁸ *North Adelaide’s Greatest* by the NAFC History Committee, page 14.

as Terry Von Bertouch, Darel Hart, Geoff Marsh, Darcy Cox, Harold Pash, Josh Francou and Haydn Bunton junior.

APPLEYARD, MERV (Mayne, Wilston Grange): Merv Appleyard commenced his senior football career with Mayne in 1955. After four seasons with the Tigers he transferred to Wilston Grange and went on to stamp himself as one of the leading Queensland footballers of his generation, representing his state 17 times, winning the 1968 Grogan Medal, and his club best and fairest award on four occasions. All told, he played 208 league games for the Gorillas, mostly as a centre half back.

APTED, ROY (North Launceston, St Kilda, Launceston):

*A brilliant future is forecast for 16-year-old Roy Apted, who received three trophies at the annual dance and trophy night of the Riverside Football Club.*⁵⁹

Roy Apted was a bona fide star during a halcyon era for Tasmanian football. He commenced his playing career in 1956 with North Launceston and went on to play roughly 50 games for the club over three seasons. In 1958 he wished to accept an invitation to join VFL side St Kilda but his clearance request was refused, not least because the Tasmanian authorities were desirous of having Apted in their squad for the Melbourne carnival. Apted duly went to the carnival, where he helped Tasmania achieve momentous victories over both South Australia and Western Australia.

Between 1959 and 1963 he plyed his trade in the VFL with St Kilda, but found it hard to nail down a consistent place in a team which was on the cusp of greatness. Over the course of his five season stint he only played 44 senior games, and scored one goal.

Used principally as a defender in the VFL, he spent more time as an on-baller when in his home state. His displays in both roles were laced with vim, vigour and a direct, no-nonsense approach.

Apted rounded off his playing career back in Tasmania with Launceston, for whom he played in the region of 80 games over five seasons, before injury brought the curtain down on his playing career. His consistently eye-catching performances earned him the opportunity to play carnival football with Tasmania once more, this time at Hobart in 1966.

Apted's induction into the AFL Tasmania Hall of Fame was fitting reward for a memorable career.

ARCERI, MARK (North Melbourne, Carlton, St Kilda, Williamstown): Of extremely slight build at 170cm and 70kg Mark Arceri was a quintessential

⁵⁹ "Examiner", 22/9/53, page 13.

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hard working rover with a keen goal sense. He commenced in the junior grades at VFA club Williamstown, before being picked up by North Melbourne, the club at which he would produce his best and most consistent football. After registering 70 VFL games and 102 goals with North between 1984 and 1990 he crossed to Carlton where he added another 17 games and 26 goals in 1991-2. His time with the Blues was arguably most memorable for his feat in kicking his team's only goal of the match in a 41 point loss to Footscray at the Western Oval. Things could have been even worse as the goal came just seconds before the match ended.

The 1993 season saw Archer at St Kilda where he added a final five AFL games and five goals before spending the 1994 season, his last in senior football, back at original club Williamstown, where he played 12 games - his first at senior level in the VFA - and kicked 21 goals for the year.

ARCHER, GLENN (North Melbourne/Kangaroos): Only 78kg in weight when he commenced his senior career with North Melbourne in 1992, Glenn Archer rapidly added some 16kg en route to becoming something of the equivalent of a human tank. If he sometimes overdid the aggression there could be no doubt that, overall, North were a measurably stronger side with Archer in the line-up. A case in point was the 1996 grand final against Sydney when he produced a Herculean 22 disposal performance to end up being awarded the Norm Smith Medal as best afield. Of course, the number of possessions say nothing about his defensive contribution, which was immense, not least in terms of his role in helping minimise the impact of Swans' potential match-winner Tony Lockett. Capable of playing almost anywhere, he probably produced his most memorable football as a defender.

An AFL All Australian in 1996, 1998 and 2002, Archer represented Victoria three times during a period when the state of origin concept was losing its appeal (as far as the clubs were concerned, at any rate) and in light of this there were much fewer such matches played.

Between 1992 and 2007 Glenn Archer played 311 games and kicked 143 goals for the Kangas with, to date, only Brent Harvey having donned the famous blue and white striped jumper on more occasions. Archer, who is a member of the official North Melbourne 'Team of the Century', was recently accorded the accolade of 'Shinboner of the Century' in recognition that, of all players in the club's history, he was deemed most closely to conform to the North Melbourne 'ideal'.

ARKLAY, TOM (Geelong):

There is every justification for Geelong's claim that in Tom Arklay they have

*one of the best half-back flankers in the league.*⁶⁰

Tough, dependable and quick, Geelong's Tom Arklay stood out among the players of his generation by virtue of being genuinely two-sided. Recruited from North Geelong, he played most of his 137 game VFL career between 1933 and 1941 as well as in 1944 as a half back flanker, although he could also do a serviceable job on the ball. Extremely adept overhead, he was regarded as one of the physically strongest players in the league, and typically ran straight at the ball regardless of potential impediments (whether hostile or friendly). He was on a half back flank in the Cats' winning grand final of 1937 against Collingwood, and he won the club's best and fairest award twice. Arklay was Geelong's captain in 1941 and for part of 1944; he also coached the side in 1944.

ARMFIELD, MICHAEL (Glenelg, North Adelaide): From Millicent, Michael Armfield was a hard working rebound defender who enjoyed prominence with two SANFL clubs over 10 seasons. He commenced his senior league career in 1979 with Glenelg, for whom he played 40 games and kicked one goal in three years. His last game for the Tigers was the 1981 grand final loss to Port Adelaide. The 1982 season saw him venture onto pastures new in the shape of the North Adelaide Football Club where he would prove himself a stylish and consistent performer as well as a key contributor to a premiership triumph. Although sidelined by injury at times he managed to play 111 SANFL games for the Roosters and score 10 goals. He was a member of the North team which lost the 1985 grand final to Glenelg as well as the side which achieved revenge against the Bays in the flag decider of two years later.

ARMOUR, DAVID (Geelong, East Perth, Norwood, Geelong West): The highlight of David Armour's time at Geelong, his home town club, was playing in the club's 1975 reserve grade premiership team. In addition, he played 19 senior games and kicked 14 goals for the Cats between 1974 and 1976. The 1977 season saw him adding 18 WANFL games and seven goals with East Perth. He also played in that year's Ardath Cup final in which the Royals lost to Norwood, which by strange coincidence would be Armour's next club.

His time with the Redlegs was probably the most productive of his career. His 69 SANFL games included the 1978 grand final defeat of Sturt, while his last appearance in a Norwood jumper was the grand final loss to Port Adelaide in 1980.

David Armour returned to his roots in 1981 when he turned out for VFA first division club Geelong West.

⁶⁰ "The Herald", 13/9/37, page 20.

ARMSTRONG, ALBERT (North Melbourne, Essendon, Essendon Association): Described as “a more than competent full forward”,⁶¹ Albert Armstrong commenced his career with North Melbourne in the VFA at a time when the club was not a force in the competition, finishing second last in both 1907 and 1908. Hungry for success, he crossed to VFL club Essendon in 1909 but although he proved serviceable, when the Same Old went top in 1911 and 1912 he was not selected for either grand final. Nevertheless, he was good enough to top the club’s goal kicking list in 1910 with 30 goals, and overall managed the creditable total of 76 goals in 61 matches between 1909 and 1912. One possible reason for his exclusion from finals teams was that it was apparently a recognised ‘fact’ that the worse the weather the better he played. Finals, of course, tend to take place in predominantly clement conditions (although needless to say there are always exceptions).

In 1912 Armstrong was restricted to just six appearances because of sciatica, and he then missed the whole of the 1913 season. In 1914 he fronted up with Essendon Association, where he finished his playing career.

ARMSTRONG, BARRY (Carlton): Combative, hard working and versatile, Carlton’s Bundoora recruit Barry Armstrong was a tremendous servant of the Blues in 204 VFL games between 1969 and 1981, during which time he kicked 142 goals. He was in the centre when Carlton overcame Richmond in the 1972 grand final, and played as a ruck-rover in the flag decider of 1979, when Collingwood was vanquished. He was among the best players afield in both games. Armstrong later served as a Carlton club official.

ARMSTRONG, JOHN ‘JACK’ (Balmain, St Kilda, Sydney): Jack Armstrong was an accomplished centreman hailing from Kyneton in Victoria but who spent most of his football playing career in Sydney. He played for Balmain from 1922 to 1924 and Sydney in 1926. He spent the 1925 season in Melbourne playing 14 VFL games and kicking six goals for St Kilda.

In 1924 Armstrong played in all five of New South Wales’ games at that year’s Hobart carnival, helping the state to fifth place out of six teams.

ARMSTRONG, JOHN ‘JACK’ (South Sydney, Newtown, Liverpool): Jack Armstrong was a larger than life character whose love of the game was infectious. A ruckman, he played for his home town club of Coolamon during world war two, and after that for South Sydney (1945-8 and 1967-9), Newtown (1949-55 and 1960) and Liverpool (1956-9). At various times he served as captain-coach of all the NSWANFL clubs for which he played.

Widely acknowledged during his career as one of the premier ruckman in Sydney he represented New South Wales on half a dozen occasions. During

61 *Those Magnificent Men 1897-1987* by Michael Maplestone, page 8.

a break in his playing career from 1961 to 1965 he was a much admired NSWANFL field umpire.

ARMSTRONG, KEN (Perth):

Ken Armstrong, of the Perth team, won the Cyril Norton medal for the fairest and best player in the Temperance League this season. When the umpires' votes were counted last night Armstrong's total was 22. Others who polled well were . Groves (East Fremantle) 18, and N. Bell (Claremont), L.Jinman (East Fremantle), E.Miller (Wembley) and I. Whittaker (Floreat Park) each with 17.⁶²

As both player and coach, Ken Armstrong was Perth through and through. After supporting the Redlegs as a boy he enjoyed a dream start to his league career with them in 1955 by helping them acquire their first flag since 1907. Armstrong played most of his eventual total of 170 WANFL games as a centreman. Combining courage, flair and cleverness to an impressive degree, he was an enormously damaging footballer who always seemed on the fringe of interstate selection, but only actually achieved it once, against South Australia at Subiaco in 1959.

Having captained Perth in 1961, Ken Armstrong retired as a player two years later. In 1971 and 1973 he coached the club's reserves to premierships, and in 1974 he was appointed coach of the senior side. In six seasons in charge, Ken Armstrong led the Demons to two flags from four grand finals, a run of success that has only been bettered once in the entire history of the Perth Football Club. He undertook a second spell as coach from 1991 to 1993 but this proved rather less successful.

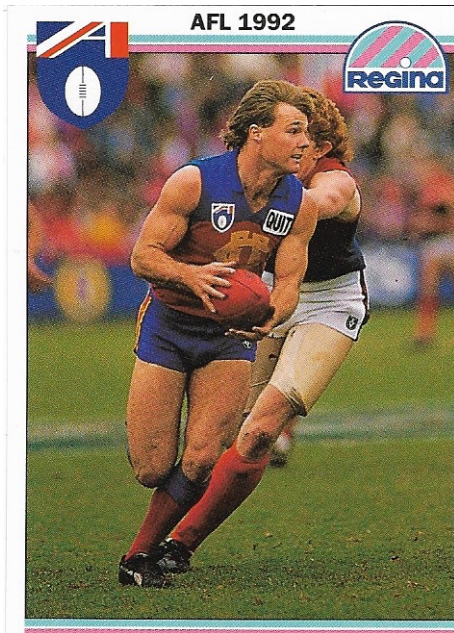
ARMSTRONG, LES (Geelong): Geelong's Les Armstrong was an excellent half back flanker and back pocket who was superb overhead and backed his judgement very effectively. Recruited from Mercantile, he gave the Pivotonians consistently solid service in 175 VFL games from 1908 to 1915 and between 1917 and 1920. Renowned for his fairness, he nevertheless attacked the ball fiercely, and he was not afraid of taking his lightly built (180cm, 72kg) frame deep into the heart of battle. Les Armstrong is a member of Geelong's Hall of Fame.

ARMSTRONG, LOU (West Melbourne, Essendon, Essendon Association): Although standing only 175cm in height, and weighing in at a mere 70kg, Lou Armstrong played a large proportion of his senior football career as a key position forward. He began that career with West Melbourne, and in 1906 was the best player afield as the club scored a 7.8 to 5.9 grand final victory over Footscray to clinch its first and only VFA premiership. When West Melbourne

⁶² "The West Australian", 27/8/53, page 22.

merged with North Melbourne at the conclusion of the 1907 season Armstrong, having played 43 games and scored 70 goals for Wests, crossed to Essendon in the VFL, where he proved himself a highly useful acquisition. Seldom spectacular, he was efficiency and effectiveness personified, and was a key member of the club's 1911 premiership team as a centre half forward, and the 1912 team at the goal front. A VFL interstate representative, he had played a total of 105 VFL games and kicked 109 goals by the time, midway through the 1914 season, that he transferred to Essendon Association, where he finished his career.

ARMSTRONG, MATTHEW (Hobart, Fitzroy, North Melbourne, Northern Bombers): A strong running, talented on-baller, wingman or half



MATTHEW ARMSTRONG - FITZROY

back, Matthew Armstrong commenced his senior football career with Hobart, playing a total of 56 TFL games before joining Fitzroy in 1987. He went on to be one of the Lions' most noteworthy performers during the closing years of the club's VFL/AFL tenure. Were it not for a serious knee injury sustained in 1990, just as he was showing signs of developing into a genuine superstar, Armstrong's achievements might well have been even more noteworthy, with even a Brownlow being within the bounds of possibility. As it was he was a consistent and occasionally brilliant player for the Lions over the course of 132 games between 1987 and 1994. He also represented both Victoria (once) and his home state of Tasmania (three

times) in state of origin football, and was a particularly impressive performer in the 1988 bicentennial carnival in Adelaide. In 1995 Fitzroy traded him to North Melbourne where he added a final 40 AFL games over two seasons. In 1995 in particular he was an extremely damaging player for North, but his AFL career ended in immense disappointment when he was omitted from the 'Roos' 1996 grand final team against Sydney, and thus missed the chance to earn a premiership medallion. After leaving the Kangaroos, Armstrong joined the Northern Bombers of the TFL Statewide competition, where he finished his senior career. When Tasmania entered a team in the VFL in 2001 Matthew Armstrong was appointed as the fledgling club's inaugural coach. In 2003 he

managed to steer the club into the finals, an achievement that was repeated in both of the next two seasons. However, a sequence of poor results midway through the 2006 season precipitated his departure.

ARNOLD, DAMIEN (Central District): At his best, Damien Arnold of Central District was one of the premier ruckman in the SANFL, and he could also do a more than serviceable job as a tall forward. A member of losing grand final teams in 1995 and 1996, he later had the satisfaction of helping the Bulldogs claim flags in 2000, 2001 and 2003. In 1992 and from 1994 to 2004 he played 181 league games and scored 34 goals.

ARNOLD, GARY (Richmond, Dandenong, Claremont): Gary Arnold was recruited by Richmond from Rosebury in Tasmania where he had won a club best and fairest award and played in two premierships. A skilful, nippy rover, he probably fell just short of the standard required to succeed at VFL level. Between 1962 and 1964 he played 30 games with the reserves and just 13 for the seniors, winning the Gardiner Medal for best and fairest in reserve grade in 1964. He booted seven goals with the seniors and 25 for the reserves.

Arnold spent the 1965 season playing 16 games and scoring 46 goals for Dandenong in the VFA where he performed consistently well to finish fourth in the competition's best and fairest award, the Liston Trophy. In addition, he was the Redlegs' top goal kicker with 46 goals. He rounded off his senior league career with two seasons at Claremont, where he added a final 30 games and 36 goals to his portfolio.

ARNOLD, LANCE (Melbourne): Mildura recruit Lance Arnold played 149 VFL games and kicked 88 goals for Melbourne between 1946 and 1954. He was a real asset in that he could hold down any key position. In 1948, playing mainly at centre half forward, he was Melbourne's leading goal kicker with 41 goals. He was at centre half forward that same year in both the drawn grand final and the subsequent win against Essendon.

ARNOLD, PAUL (East Perth, South Fremantle): A hefty forward who marked well and was a thumping kick, Paul Arnold gave solid service to two league clubs over the course of a nine season playing career. That career commenced in 1977 with East Perth, for whom he had played 90 WANFL games and kicked 248 goals by the time he departed in 1982. He was the Royals' top goal kicker in 1979 and 1980, with his career best tally of 76 goals in the latter year including bags of 10 against Subiaco and 11 against East Fremantle in successive weeks in August.

The 1983 season saw Paul Arnold at South Fremantle where, in three seasons, he added a final 40 games and 111 goals to his respective career tallies. His

total of 39 goals in 1984 saw him tie for the club's top goal kicker award with Brad Hardie.

During the East Perth phase of his career Arnold twice represented Western Australia.

ARNOLD, PAUL (North Adelaide): Paul Arnold joined North Adelaide from Risdon and gave the club solid, if comparatively unheralded, service in 226 senior games between 1980 and 1990. He was at full back in the Roosters' 1987 grand final triumph over Glenelg.

ARTHUR, GRAHAM (Hawthorn):

*Arthur is something special. He came straight from Sandhurst, a country team, into league football and began to star immediately A fine mark and kick, his handball is amazingly clever, and he has given Hawthorn some badly needed skill in attack.*⁶³

Recruited from Bendigo Football League side Sandhurst, Graham Arthur made his Hawthorn debut in 1955, a couple of months before his 19th birthday. He quickly impressed as a half forward, where he was described as "unspectacular, but magnificently efficient in all the skills".⁶⁴

After making his VFL representative debut in 1957, Arthur was an almost permanent feature in state teams for the next eight years. He became skipper of the Hawks in 1960 after John Kennedy, who had been appointed to the coaching role that season, recognised how well respected and inspirational he was. In 1961, Graham Arthur went down in history as the first man ever to lead Hawthorn to a senior premiership as the Hawks comfortably beat Footscray in the grand final by 43 points. When John Kennedy departed after Hawthorn had lost the 1963 grand final to Geelong, Arthur took over the coaching reins for a couple of seasons, but was unable to re-ignite the premiership flame. He even retired briefly as a player in 1965 in the hope that he could bolster the club's fortunes by concentrating solely on coaching, but when this failed he returned to the team, and went on to play for the better part of another three seasons.

After 237 VFL games and 201 goals for the Hawks, Graham Arthur left the big time for good in 1968. The following year saw him coaching Echuca in the Bendigo Football League whilst working as a sports shop proprietor in the town. In 1970, Arthur led his charges to a flag. He later returned to Hawthorn as an administrator, and in 2003 he was selected as captain of the club's official 'Team of the Century'.

63 Jack Dyer, "Sporting Life", July 1955, page 27.

64 *Football's 50 Greatest* by Greg Hobbs and Scot Palmer, page 88.

ARTHUR, VIN (St Kilda, Carlton):

*St Kilda let a good man go in Vin Arthur. Since he has been with Carlton he has given consistently good service. On Saturday he capped off a number of meritorious performances by excelling against Melbourne. Arthur's strength enabled him to play a robust game, but in the clean, open work he was equally effective with sharp dashes, clever pick-up from the ground, and good kicks to position.*⁶⁵

Vin Arthur was a pacy, tenacious wingman and occasional centreman recruited by St Kilda from Richmond District in 1925. He went on to play 16 VFL games and score five goals for the Saints in 1926 and the early part of the 1927 season, whereupon he transferred to Carlton. He would prove to be a decent acquisition for the Blues, playing 64 games and kicking 27 goals in 1927-8 and from 1930 to 1933. He spent the 1929 season playing for South Bendigo. A highly influential player when at his best, he liked to run forward and kick a goal. However, he was also prone to bouts of inconsistency. At the age of 28 he appears, for reasons which are unclear, to have retired completely from all his multifarious sporting pursuits, including football..

ASHBOLT, BRIAN (Perth):

*Brian Ashbolt is having a little trouble gaining a regular place in the Perth senior 18, but could become a match winner for the Redlegs before very long. Young (20), and well built (6ft 1 in., and 12 st.) he has a ton of natural ability and works hard to improve his play with every match.*⁶⁶

Renowned for his prodigious kicking and vigorously effective spoiling, Brian Ashbolt was a key player for Perth for a decade, during which time he played 121 WANFL games and kicked one goal. A full back for most of that period, he made his senior debut in 1954, and was custodian, and one of the Redlegs' best, in the following season's thrilling grand final victory over East Fremantle. He was chosen to represent the league on three occasions against visiting interstate clubs. After his retirement as a player he served stints as coach of both the club's seconds and thirds teams.

ASHBY, LEN 'BUCK' (West Torrens): Immensely solid and reliable, Len 'Buck' Ashby was a significant 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 later also played, as a ruckman, in Torrens' second premiership

⁶⁵ "Sporting Globe", 24/6/41, page 8. Thanks to a strong last quarter Carlton pulled away to overcome Melbourne by 27 points, 19.10 to 14.13.

⁶⁶ "Sunday Times", 22/8/54, page 3.

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 which yielded just three wins from 17 matches, and the club's first wooden spoon since 1895. Len Ashby's four 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 (West Torrens):

*Best of the juniors was 19-year-old Ron Ashby, who captained the colts team last season. His skilled handling on a half-forward flank must entitle him to serious consideration by the selection committee.*⁶⁷

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 seven points in the 1953 SANFL grand final. Ashby represented South Australia eight 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.

ASHCROFT, MARCUS (Southport, Brisbane): Marcus Ashcroft started his senior playing career with Southport, but it was at Brisbane, where he played a club record 318 V/AFL games between 1989 and 2003, that he made his name. Tough, energetic and unflappable, Ashcroft was a vital if sometimes unsung member of his club's redoubtable midfield unit, happily alternating between attacking and negating briefs as required. In addition to his on-ball role, Ashcroft played many fine games across half back, where his strong marking allied to excellent anticipation skills served him well. He was a member of Brisbane's premiership-winning combinations in 2001-2-3, and finished in the top three places in the club's best and fairest voting no fewer than half a dozen

⁶⁷ "The Advertiser", 18/4/49, page 7. The comments refer to the final West Torrens pre-season trial in 1949. Ashby went on to cement his place in the side.

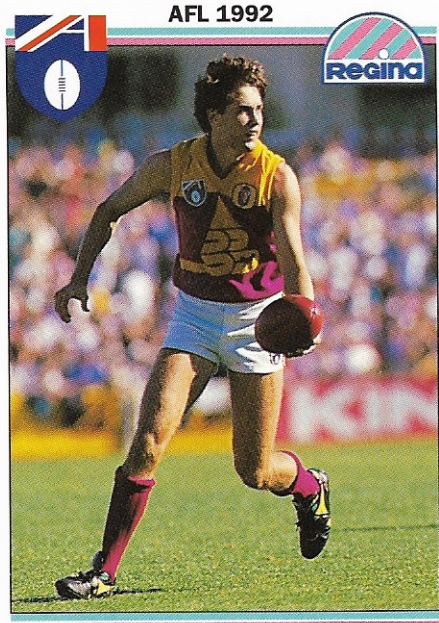
times. He was compelled to retire after the 2003 season because of a chronic hip injury which necessitated a full replacement.

ASHDOWN, KEN (West Perth):

*Ken Ashdown, the 22 year-old centre half-forward for West Perth has had varied interests in the field of sport. Apart from football, he has also been active in gymnastic and basketball circles with considerable success.*⁶⁸

Supremely adaptable, and red and blue to the core, Ken Ashdown was without doubt one of the all time greats of the West Perth Football Club. He made his league debut midway through the 1949 season, and at the end of the year lined up at full forward in the grand final against South Fremantle as the Cardinals sought their first open age premiership for eight years. Proving far from overawed, he did everything coach Stan Heal asked of him, and contributed three goals to his team's eventual 16.13 to 12.7 win. Two years later, Ashdown again helped the Cardinals to a flag at South Freo's expense, this time at centre half forward, and indeed it was across the half forward line that he played much of his early football before being transformed into an assured and commanding centre half back or half back flanker. The 1951 season also saw Ashdown make the first of an eventual nine interstate appearances for Western Australia. These included games at both the 1953 Adelaide and 1956 Perth carnivals, for the former of which he was accompanied by half a dozen club colleagues, but for the latter of which - reflecting a temporary downturn in his side's fortunes - he was the only Cardinal selected.

Ken Ashdown continued to produce consistently eye-catching football as he entered the veteran stage, and in 1960 he had the satisfaction of appearing on a half back flank as West Perth overcame arch rivals East Perth by 32 points in the grand final. Much of the satisfaction would have derived from the fact that not only was he the only survivor of the club's previous premiership triumph in 1951, he had actually played in the flag win before that as well. Ashdown carried on for another year with the Cardies, and when he retired he had played



MARCUS ASHCROFT - BRISBANE

⁶⁸ "Western Mail", 12/5/51, page 28.

a total of 218 senior games. In October 2000 he was named on the interchange bench in West Perth's official 'Team of the 20th Century'.

ASHLEY, JACK 'SPUD' (Balmain, East Sydney, Port Adelaide):

His type of game was a pleasure to behold. Strong and vigorous,. and though conceding a few inches to most of his rivals, he, with great anticipation and ball sense, outplayed the vast majority of them. A wizard in getting the ball to his rover.⁶⁹

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, with Balmain, between 1908 and 1911, representing his adopted state at the inaugural Australian interstate championship series in Melbourne in the first of those years. Indeed, he played for either New South Wales or Combined Sydney no fewer than 17 times. On his return home to South Australia he joined his local club, and quickly made an impression. After just five 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 coupled with great anticipation and awareness to not only 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 in league history, during which they won every match played, including the championship of Australia clash with Carlton and a challenge game against the rest of the league. 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', but also having been slowed down by a succession of injuries, at the conclusion of the 1919 season he announced his retirement from league football. He later umpired in the Adelaide suburban competition.

⁶⁹ *South Australian Football: The Past - and the Present*, page 72.

ASHMAN, ROD (Carlton):

*The Blues got great drive from their band of rovers, particularly Rod Ashman, who relished the heavy conditions.*⁷⁰

Rod Ashman was a bone fide great of the game who made a significant contribution to Carlton's back to back premierships in 1981 and 1982. In the former year he finished runner-up in both the Brownlow Medal and club best and fairest voting as well as contributing three goals from a forward pocket to the Blues' 20 point grand final defeat of Collingwood. A year later he was one of the best players afield, with 23 possessions and a couple of goals, in Carlton's 14.19 to 12.13 grand final victory over warm pre-match favourite Richmond. The twin premierships triumphs were doubly satisfying in that Ashman had missed his team's 1979 grand final win against Collingwood with injury. Much of his football was played in the forward lines, with occasional runs on the ball. He played a total of 236 VFL games and kicked 370 goals between 1973 and 1986. He was also selected to represent Victoria on four occasions. Later in his career he wore a helmet on the instructions of the Carlton club doctor after sustaining concussion on several occasions, a legacy of his penchant for boring into packs regardless of his own physical safety. Rod Ashman is a member of both the Blues' Hall of Fame and, as a forward pocket, the official Carlton 'Team of the 20th Century'.

ASTBURY, GREG (West Perth):

*One of the most reliable defenders in WA. Plays opponents closely. Great mark and kick.*⁷¹

After playing just three games in his debut season of 1967 Greg Astbury established himself as a regular member of the West Perth side in 1968, and was more or less ever present after that until his retirement in 1972. A defender ideally suited to a key position, he played 93 WANFL games and kicked two goals over the course of his career. In 1971 he represented the state against both South Australia and Victoria. A dual premierships player, he was at centre half back in the 1969 grand final defeat of East Perth, and played full back two years later when the same opponent was vanquished.

ASTON, IAN (Fitzroy): A rover or wingman who boasted truly exceptional pace, Ian Aston was one of the driving forces behind Fitzroy's emergence as a league power in the late 1950s and early '60s. Between 1956 and 1962 he

⁷⁰ "The Canberra Times", 19/8/79, page 30. This refers to a round 20 clash with Footscray at VFL Park, which the Blues won with considerable comfort by 36 points with Ashman contributing three of the victors' 12 goals.

⁷¹ "SA Football Budget", 3/7/71, page 9.

played 98 VFL games and kicked 22 goals for the Roys. He also represented Victoria once, in 1959.

ASTONE, PAT (Perth): Although not tall or heavily built for a ruckman, Pat Astone had the rare ability to ‘hang’ in the air and deliver the ball perfectly to his rovers. He gave an early sign of his promise by winning Perth’s fairest and best award at colts level in 1961, two years before he made his senior debut. His 215 WANFL games included telling performances in Perth’s winning grand finals of 1966-7-8. He captained Perth in 1970, and represented Western Australia twice. The last of his 215 league appearances came in 1972. The high esteem in which he was held at Perth was evidenced in 1999 by his selection in a forward pocket in the club’s official ‘Team of the 20th Century’.

ATHANASIOU, MICHAEL (St Mary’s, West Torrens, South Fremantle, Darwin):

*Most consistent footballer in the NT. A very solid player who is undaunted by his opponent’s reputation.*⁷²

Perhaps the Northern Territory’s most decorated footballer, Michael Athanasiou, who had already enjoyed a highly successful junior career, made his senior NTFL debut with St Mary’s during the 1980/81 season. Twenty years later, as captain-coach of Darwin, he played his last match, having achieved virtually everything possible for a ‘Top End’ footballer.

In addition to his 20 season NTFL career Athanasiou also played six WAFL games for South Fremantle in 1985, and 44 SANFL games for West Torrens in 1988 and 1989.

However, it was in Darwin that the bulk of the Michael Athanasiou legend was compiled. After playing as an on-baller early in his career, Athanasiou became an outstanding success when shifted to centre half back, where he remained for most of the rest of his time in football. A member of no fewer than 12 St Mary’s premiership teams, Athanasiou played representative football for the NTFL every season between 1985 and 1996, including the bicentennial carnival of 1988 in Adelaide when the Northern Territory won section two. On the individual front he won a Nichols Medal in 1990/91, having previously been a runner-up in 1986/87. Voted St Mary’s’ best and fairest player on three occasions, he added a Buffaloes club champion award in his final league season.

ATHORN, MARK (Footscray, Fitzroy, Sydney, Carlton): Mark Athorn was a genuine football journeyman in that he played for no fewer than four different V/AFL clubs, without fully settling at any of them. His seven season career comprised stints at Footscray (17 games, four goals, 1987-9), Fitzroy (21

⁷² “South Australian Bicentennial Football Budget”, 2-5 March 1988, page 37.

games, no goals, 1990), Sydney (15 games, seven goals, 1991) and Carlton (30 games, six goals, 1992-3). Often deployed as a tagger, that was the commission handed to him whilst playing for Carlton in the 1993 AFL grand final, with the focus of his attentions being explosive Essendon wingman Michael Long, who ended up winning the Norm Smith Medal for best afield. It may merely have been coincidental, but it is much more likely to be significant, that this proved to be Mark Athorn's last AFL appearance.

ATKINS, BERT (South Melbourne, Essendon Association, St Kilda): George Bertram Atkins - usually known as 'Bert' - was a tough, dependable defender who began his senior career with South Melbourne, where he played 32 VFL games in 1907 and 1908. In his debut season, he was at centre half back in South's five point grand final loss to Carlton. Atkins moved to Essendon Association in 1909, and was on the half back line in the club's 1911 and 1912 premiership-winning teams. He finished his career back in the VFL, playing seven games for St Kilda in 1918-19.

ATKINS, GRAME (North Melbourne, Collingwood): Originally from South Melbourne Districts, Graeme Atkins was a handy rover who, in common with innumerable other players down the decades, had his career curtailed by knee problems. He commenced with North Melbourne in 1982 and enjoyed a fine debut season, playing 19 games whilst eliciting generally positive reviews, and he continued to do well for much of his time with the Kangaroos. In 1987, after 61 VFL games and 39 goals for North, he crossed to Collingwood, where after a bright start he encountered the aforementioned knee issues, as a result of which he managed just three appearances in total in 1988 and 1989 after playing 18 games in his debut season. His 21 games for the Magpies gave him a total of 82, in the VFL and he registered 53 goals.

ATKINS, MARTY (South Fremantle): Englishman Marty Atkins was a key feature of the football landscape at South Fremantle for over a decade. Recruited from Kwinana, the 189cm, 92kg Atkins was a former soccer goalkeeper who successfully transferred some of the skills required in that sport to football. Determined and adaptable, he proved to be equally adept in key positions at either end of the ground. His promise was immediately recognised when he was awarded the Arthur Hankinson 'Player of the Future' Medal at the end of his debut season with the Bulldogs in 1990.

Tough and resilient, Atkins embraced few frills in his approach to the game but was almost invariably effective.

First chosen to represent Western Australia in 1992, Atkins made a total of six appearances for his state in an era when interstate representative football was in decline. After the 1993 state league clash with South Australia at Subiaco, a

game which Western Australia won by 24 points, he was awarded the Simpson Medal as best afield. A policeman, he also represented the Western Australian police team at a number of interstate carnivals, gaining All Australian selection several times. By the time of his retirement he had played a total of 266 WAFL games, breaking a long standing club record held by Tom Grljusich.

The highlight of Atkins' career came in 1997, when he was one of his team's best players in an emotionally charged come-from-behind grand final victory over perennial arch rivals East Fremantle. Two years later, in South Freo's centenary season, Atkins was controversially forced to miss the Bulldogs' premiership showdown with West Perth after incurring a suspension following an apparently innocuous incident in the second semi final game against the same club. Without his experience and steadying influence, the Bulldogs narrowly lost a match they might otherwise have won.

ATKINS, NOEL (Hobart, North Launceston, Launceston, East Devonport):

*Launceston and N.T.F.A. rover Noel Atkins was appointed captain coach of Launceston Football Club for 1953 at a meeting of the club in Launceston last night. Atkins held that position in 1950 and 1951 seasons, but missed last season as he made a trip to England.*⁷³

Noel Atkins was one of the foremost Tasmanian rovers of his generation. He commenced his senior career in 1945 with Hobart, which was taking its bows in the TANFL that year. After two seasons with the Tigers he transferred to NTFA side North Launceston, where he spent three years and was a member of three consecutive premiership-winning combinations. He also represented Tasmania at the 1947 Hobart carnival, and would ultimately go on to play 11 state games.

The remainder of Atkins' career saw him captain-coaching Launceston to the 1951 NTFA premiership before later occupying an identical role with East Devonport, which featured in its ranks a young Darrel Baldock. Atkins was the first person to play intrastate football for all three major intrastate associations, TANFL, NTFA and NWFU. He was an inaugural inductee in the Tasmanian Football Hall of Fame.

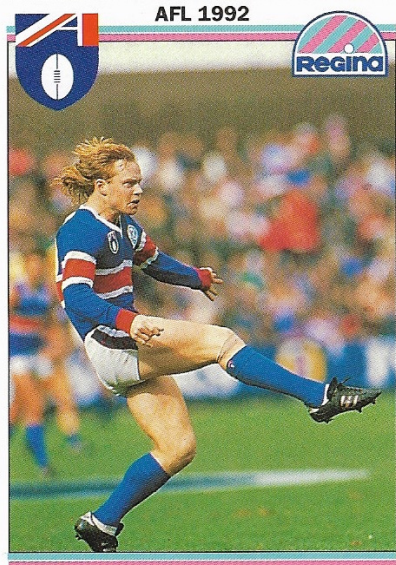
ATKINS, SIMON (Wynyard, Footscray, Fitzroy, Werribee):

*Centreman Simon Atkins, after a quiet first term against Don Pyke, dominated the third term setting up almost every forward move.*⁷⁴

⁷³ "Examiner", 19/11/52, page 20.

⁷⁴ "The Canberra Times", 22/8/93, page 14. It was close to a match-winning performance by Atkins as he helped the Bulldogs add six goals to nil to forge ahead of West Coast who had led by eight points at half time. Footscray ultimately won by seven straight goals.

After playing briefly with Wynyard, Simon Atkins was recruited by Footscray and made his VFL debut in 1987. Superb in the clinches and on heavy grounds, he was a prolific possession gatherer who used the ball extremely effectively, especially by hand. During the 1990 season he executed no fewer than 291 handballs to head the AFL's list in that category. A Tasmanian state of origin representative, he twice finished second in the Bulldogs' best and fairest voting. After 127 games for Footscray, Atkins crossed to Fitzroy in 1995 and was a consistently conspicuous performer in 41 games during that club's final couple of seasons in the AFL. Between 1997 and 2000 he played 80 games for Werribee, winning the club's best and fairest award in his debut season. He coached Coburg in 2004, and in 2005 returned to Werribee as senior coach, remaining at the helm for half a dozen seasons.



SIMON ATKINS - FOOTSCRAY

ATKINSON, ALAN (Collingwood, Footscray): After a stuttering start to his league career Collingwood's Hamilton recruit Alan Atkinson bedded down to become a useful member of the side for nigh on a decade, without ever quite becoming what might be called an automatic selection. Debuting in 1970, he made five appearances that year but was not chosen during the finals, which ended for the Magpies with a humiliating grand final loss to Carlton. In 1971 he struggled at first for selection, but when finally picked in round six he did well, ultimately going on to play 18 matches for the year.

Pacy, dynamic and strong overhead, he was equally at home across half forward or on a wing, although he also lined up at full back on occasion during the early part of his career. Those with long enough memories will tell you of the day in 1973 that he used Hawthorn's Leon Rice as a step-ladder in taking the mark of the season, and arguably among the half dozen or so greatest V/AFL marks of all time.

Between 1970 and 1978 Atkinson played 134 VFL games and kicked 49 goals for the Magpies. At his best, he could be influential, even damaging, but he lacked consistency. He rounded off his league career with half a dozen games and three goals for Footscray in 1980.

ATKINSON, BOB (Coburg, Carlton, Northcote): Indisputably one of the Coburg Football Club's favourite sons, Bob Atkinson was a last line defender who played the game hard but fair. His career at Coburg encompassed 111 VFA games which he played from 1935 to 1941 and in 1945-6. He scored 10 goals. He was a member of the Lions' losing grand final team of 1941 against Port Melbourne when he was one of his side's best players. Skipper of Coburg in his last two seasons, he was named in a back pocket in the club's official 'Team of the Century'.

From 1942 to 1944, while the VFA was in recess, Atkinson played 44 VFL games for Carlton, without registering a goal. He skippered the Blues for most of the 1944 season after the previous incumbent, Jim Francis, was forced to retire from the game because of injury.

In 1947 Bob Atkinson agreed to join VFA strugglers Northcote for what turned out to be his final season as a player. He did not exactly go out in a blaze of glory as the club finished dead set last after winning just four games out of 22 for the year.

ATKINSON, BRODIE (North Adelaide, St Kilda, Sturt, Adelaide): Brodie Atkinson was a copiously talented 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.⁷⁵ 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 five games for the year, at the end of which he was de-listed. 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 six times for South Australia's state league team.

ATKINSON, JAMES 'SNOWY' (Fitzroy, Lefroy):

There was only one 'fly in the ointment' during the meeting. 'Snowy' Atkinson, in accepting his trophy as one of the best players for the season, said that it

⁷⁵ The mauling was not just figurative, it was also quite literal, as the two sides engaged in a series of unseemly pitched battles which made the match indisputably the roughest and dirtiest premierships play off in SANFL history.

*probably would be the last trophy he would receive from the Fitzroy club, as he had decided to go to Tasmania. He would value the trophy more as the last ho had received from a club In which he had spent many years of pleasurable service.*⁷⁶

A hard-hitting, tenacious defender, Jim Atkinson had the misfortune to break virtually every bone in his body during an eventfully auspicious 14 season league football career in two states. He began with Fitzroy in 1917, and was a key member of that club's 1922 premiership-winning side, earning best afield accolades after the 11 point challenge final win over Collingwood, when he played in a back pocket. Atkinson also won the Maroons' best and fairest award that year, and captained the club in 1924-5. In 1926 he accepted the position of captain-coach of TFL side Lefroy, where he remained for the next four and a half seasons, gaining a reputation as one of the finest players in the league, and representing Tasmania at the 1927 Melbourne carnival. Strong overhead, and dashing, he was always conspicuous because of his blond mop of hair, which gave rise to the obvious nickname of 'Snowy'. Midway through the 1930 season he was forced to retire when the injuries that had dogged him throughout his career finally became completely debilitating. Ironically, Lefroy that year went on to win the premiership that had eluded them throughout Atkinson's spell as coach.

A fine all round sportsman, 'Snowy' Atkinson also represented both Victoria and Tasmania on the cricket field.

ATWELL, MALCOLM (East Perth, Perth):

*Dashing, fiery type of player who comes through full-chested*⁷⁷

Fiercely tenacious and competitive, indeed almost combative, Malcolm Atwell was said during his playing career to be the West Australian player the Victorians most respected and feared, presumably because his approach to the game was so similar to their own. He made his interstate debut in 1960, and the following year was a member of the Western Australian party which travelled to Brisbane to contest the Australian championships. After playing at full back in the opening game against Tasmania, which the sandgropers won by 111 points, he was dropped to the bench for the clash with South Australia, only to be recalled for the decisive match against the Big V after a two point loss to the croweaters was felt to necessitate a re-shuffle.

At half time of the crunch encounter, the VFL led 11.3 to 5.8, and looked 'home and hosed'. During the second half, however, the West Australians, to a man,

⁷⁶ "The Herald", 26/7/26, page 16.

⁷⁷ "ANFC Championships Opening Day Programme", 9/6/66, page 11.

raised both their tempo and their intensity, forcing the Vics onto the back foot. With Atwell in near impassable form at full back, West Australia hit back to get within three points at the final change, before clinching victory - and the title of Australian champions - with as potent and devastating a last quarter as you could wish to see. For the 23 year old Atwell - the best player afield in the estimation of most observers - it was a vital and significant lesson, one from which he would extract much benefit in years to come.

Malcolm Atwell began his league football career with all conquering East Perth in 1958, and had the good fortune of participating in premierships wins in both of his first two seasons. Thereafter, however, things began to go wrong for the Royals, who despite being perennial finals contenders would not manage to procure another flag until 1972, by which time Atwell had been retired as a player for three years and was coaching South Fremantle. Prior to that, between 1966 and 1971, he undertook the task for which he is probably best remembered, coaching persistent under-achievers Perth to a position of greatness in Western Australian football. In doing so, he implemented many of the lessons he had learned in the interstate arena, particularly against the VFL, and most especially in that memorable Australian championship year of 1961. Perth under Atwell combined what might be termed a traditional West Australian approach to the game, rooted in skill, pace and fluent movement of the ball, with a heightened awareness of, and concentration on, elements like shepherding, backing up, spoiling, talking, pressurising the ball carrier, and tackling - cornerstones, it might be said, of the typically Victorian approach to football. All in all, it was a heady and compulsive mixture, and it earned the Demons three successive flags, all courtesy of wins over Atwell's old club, East Perth.

Between 1966 and 1969, Atwell continued as a player, adding 76 games to the 162 he had played for the Royals. He continued as non-playing coach in 1970-71, but other clubs, notably 'Polly' Farmer's West Perth, and 'Hassa' Mann's South Fremantle, had by now cottoned on to Atwell's approach, and he was unable to add to the club's haul of premierships.

In 1972 and 1973 he oversaw a rebuilding programme at South Fremantle which eventually saw the club re-emerge as a force from 1975 onwards. It is for his impact at East Perth and Perth, however, that Malcolm Atwell is best remembered today, a fact endorsed by his selection in official 'best of' combinations for both clubs, the Royals' 1945 to 2005 side in the back pocket, and the Demons' 'Team of the Century' as coach.

AUSTEN, COLIN (Hawthorn, Richmond, Box Hill):

In the Hawthorn team this season is Colin Austen, who seems likely to develop into one of the best back pocket players in the game. Each Saturday Colin has

the task of minding the resting rover, and usually does a good job. Since he joined the Mayblossoms last season Colin says his hardest task has been minding the elusive Alby Pannam. Austen is only 20, 5ft. 9in. and 12 stone, the ideal build for the position he occupies Colin Austen's task as a back pocket player is rendered doubly difficult in view of his playing with a weak team and consequently the frequency of the opposing onslaughts.⁷⁸

Today's record books show Colin Austen as Hawthorn's first ever Brownlow Medallist, but in actual fact he originally lost the 1949 Medal to South Melbourne's Ron Clegg on a countback. A defender of exceptional brilliance, Austen rarely lowered his colours, and was a springboard for many Hawthorn attacks. He gave 91 war-interrupted VFL games of service to the Mayblossoms and Hawks⁷⁹ before quitting the club in disgust after his close friend Alec Albiston was sacked as coach prior to the start of the 1950 season. Austen spent the 1950, '51 and '52 seasons with Richmond, adding a further 50 VFL games to his career tally. In 1953 he coached the Richmond reserves and won the Gardiner Medal as the best and fairest player in that grade. Between 1956 and 1959 he coached VFA side Box Hill, playing a dozen senior games (for one goal), and getting the team as far as the preliminary final in his first season. He also coached the VFA representative side at the 1958 Melbourne carnival.

AUSTEN, GEOFF (Fitzroy, Collingwood, Preston): Geoff Austen was a dynamic, highly mobile ruckman who gave solid service to two VFL clubs before enjoying an Indian summer to his career in the VFA. The son of former Hawthorn player Ces Austen, he joined Fitzroy from Macleod-Rosanna, and played 85 VFL games and kicked 35 goals for the club between 1972 and 1978. He joined Collingwood in 1979 and, when selected, which was not all that often, operated as a support ruckman to that year's eventual Brownlow Medallist, Peter Moore.

After playing 13 VFL games and scoring three goals in three seasons with the Magpies Austen crossed to Preston in the VFA where he rounded off his career in style, winning the 1982 Liston Trophy and helping the side to the following year's first division flag when he also won the Norm Goss Memorial Medal as best afield in the grand final. His stint with the Bullants comprised 27 games in which he scored 16 goals.

AUSTIN, GRAEME (Footscray): Footscray recruited Graeme Austin from Orbost and, after spending several seasons playing solely reserves football, he made his senior debut in 1970. A capable midfielder, he never really established himself as a first choice senior player, managing just 50 appearances, plus 17 goals, in five seasons.

⁷⁸ "Sporting Globe", 2/7/41, page 10.

⁷⁹ Hawthorn's nickname was changed from Mayblossoms to Hawks in 1943.

AUSTIN, JOHN ‘JACK’ (South Melbourne):

*Jack Austen (sic.) was a fine half back He had lots of dash, was a sound mark and a lovely kick. His clearing kick, landing with his half forwards, started many a South Melbourne attack.*⁸⁰

Jack Austin was a solid, consistent and reliable performer for South Melbourne in 140 VFL games between 1930 and 1938. Capable of playing well in almost any set position, he was most commonly used, and probably most effective, as a defender. He was one of the best players afield when South overcame Richmond by 42 points in the 1933 VFL grand final, and was also named among the best players after the losing grand finals of 1934-5. He was excellent overhead, whether marking or spoiling, and was rarely beaten at ground level in one on one contests.

AUSTIN, ROD (Carlton): Rod Austin played 220 senior VFL games for Carlton between 1972 and 1985, a period during which the Blues won no fewer than four flags. However, owing to injury Austin played in just one of these premiership sides, that of 1979. A genuinely adaptable footballer, he once held the great Peter Hudson goalless in a match, despite being relatively small (180cm and 84.5kg) for a full back. After retiring as a player Austin coached Footscray reserves for a time before spending the 1989 and 1990 seasons as coach of Fitzroy, for sixth and twelfth place finishes. In 1994 and 1995 he coached the Victorian state of origin team.

AVERY, BERT (South Melbourne, Melbourne, Prahran, Camberwell): Bert Avery was a dependable follower and defender who struggled to have an impact at South Melbourne, where he played just 25 games and scored five goals from 1927 to 1930. By contrast, his first couple of seasons with Melbourne saw him displaying consistently fine form, as a result of which he became a regular senior player. However, in 1933 he slipped down the pecking order, playing only six games for the year to give him a final tally of 39 for the club, with two goals kicked. Prior to the opening of the 1934 season he was cleared to VFA side Prahran where, in 1934 and 1936-7, he played 26 VFA games and scored an identical number of goals. He spent the 1935 season with Camberwell, but only appears to have made a single appearance.

AVERY, NOEL (East Fremantle, Glenelg): Noel Avery was a swift moving, elusive half forward flanker who was also perfectly capable of doing a job in the backlines when required. The highlight of his 112 game, 116 goal WANFL career between 1971 and 1976 was lining up in his usual half forward flank position in the 1974 grand final against Perth, a match which East Fremantle

⁸⁰ Jack Dyer in “Sporting Life”, August 1955, page 27.

won by 22 points. In addition to his club games, Avery represented Western Australia in a loss to Victoria at Subiaco Oval in 1974.

In 1977 Avery joined SANFL club Glenelg for whom he played 17 games and registered 14 goals without really doing himself justice. He was not selected in the Bays' grand final team that year against Port Adelaide.

AYLETT, ALLEN (North Melbourne):

*He draws teeth during the week, and applause on Saturdays for his remarkable feats as a rover.*⁸¹

As a football administrator, Allen Aylett was undoubtedly one of the most important figures in the game's history during the second half of the 20th century, but prior to that he enjoyed a career of considerable note as a player. The highlight of that career came in 1958 when, as first rover in arguably the strongest ever VFL side to take the field, he polled seven Tassie Medal votes (two first preferences and a third) at the 1958 centenary carnival in Melbourne to edge out team mate Ted Whitten (also seven votes, but containing only one first preference) for what was, at the time, football's most prestigious individual award. A quick and highly elusive player, Aylett was also a good deal stronger than the average rover, enabling him to win possession of the ball seemingly at will. Once in possession, his disposal skills were immaculate, and few rovers in the history of the game have been as dangerous near goals. At the 1958 Melbourne carnival he booted 15 goals, second only to North Melbourne team mate John Dugdale (18) on the goal kicking list, while three years later at Brisbane he was the tournament's leading scorer with 19 goals.

Aylett enjoyed a stellar season all round in 1958, not only securing the Tassie Medal and All Australian selection, but also winning the first of three successive club champion trophies, and topping the poll in virtually every VFL media award for the year. In the Brownlow Medal, however, he finished a disappointing seven votes adrift of surprise winner, Neil Roberts from St Kilda.

AYRE, ROSS (West Perth): Without doubt, the highlight of Ross Ayre's league career was his seven goal performance from full forward in West Perth's 17.13 to 12.11 grand final defeat of East Perth in 1960. Ayre was in his sixth season with the Cardinals in 1960, and although he had served the club well he was not really a headline-stealer. His performance against the Royals changed all that, however, particularly given that his opponent on the day was none other than John Watts, who had been full back in Western Australia's previous dozen interstate matches.

⁸¹ Lou Richards, 1964 Mobil Footy Photos number 7.

Perhaps surprisingly, Ayre did not top West Perth's goal kicking list in 1960, although he had done so in 1958 with 64 goals and 1959 with 67, and would do so again in 1962 with 36 goals. His senior career with the Cardies comprised 94 games between 1955 and 1962. He kicked 271 goals.

AYRES, DOUGLAS (Newtown, Footscray):

*Doug Ayres, who early this season left the Newtown Australian Rules Club to play for Footscray (Melb.), may come back to his first love. Anyway, every effort is being made by the club executive to bring him back. Ayres, who went to Melbourne with Jack Hayes, is one of the best rovers in the game, and should he return he will be of great assistance to Newtown.*⁸²

Originally from Leeton, Douglas Ayres enjoyed considerable prominence in Sydney football circles over the course of a comparatively brief league career. Between 1927 and 1930 he played for Newtown, and also represented New South Wales no fewer than 15 times, including all four of the state's matches at the 1927 Melbourne carnival. Although normally deployed as a rover, he was sufficiently versatile to be able to play in almost any set position on the field, even including full forward.

The 1931 season saw Ayres trying his hand in the VFL with Footscray, but he only managed a couple of senior games and a goal for the year.

AYRES, GARY (Hawthorn):

*Gary Ayres, Hawthorn's monolithic defender, seems to have been patrolling Australian Football League backlines for an eternity. Certainly, he has haunted the hallowed halls of Hawk-land for a while - 13 years to be precise - and most of those have been spent repelling some of the strongest attacks in Australian football history. Ayres is one of those Hawthorn mainstays who actually remembers what it was like to lose.*⁸³

Originally from Warragul, defender Gary Ayres was a key member of Hawthorn's great 1980s combinations, a fact emphasised by his feat in winning dual Norm Smith Medals in 1986 and 1988. Solidly built, ultra courageous, and seldom flustered, Ayres epitomised the Hawthorn style of play at a time when the club was the undisputed benchmark for excellence in the game. He made his debut in 1978 as a 17 year old, and by the time he retired in 1993 he had played a total of 269 V/AFL games, and booted 70 goals. A member of five Hawthorn premiership teams, Ayres won the Hawks' best and fairest award in 1986, and was club captain for his final two seasons in the side. After his retirement as a player he coached Geelong from 1995 to 1999, and Adelaide

82 "The Sun", 25/6/31, page 9.

83 "The Canberra Times", 23/2/90, page 15.

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between 2000 and 2004. In October 2007 he was appointed coach of VFL club Port Melbourne, and was still in the post in 2021. When Hawthorn's official 'Team of the 20th Century' was announced in 2003, Gary Ayres was selected in his favoured back pocket position (although it has to be conceded that he played some of his most captivating and influential football when moved to the pivot, as sometimes was the case when the team needed a lift).