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NATIONAL SPORT INFORMATION CENTRE  
AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION  
LEYKRIER STREET  
BRUCE, A.C.T. 2617  
AUSTRALIA

12 MAY 1997

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE  
ANNUAL REPORT 1996





BIG DAY IN SEPTEMBER: THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL DOMINATED AUSTRALIAN CULTURE LIKE NO OTHER EVENT ON THE SPORTING CALENDAR. THE MCG WAS A SELLOUT, AND THE NATIONAL TV AUDIENCE BROKE ALL RECORDS.

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ANNUAL MEETING: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997

## AFL MISSION STATEMENT

The Australian Football League exists to:

- ▶ develop and manage the AFL competition to ensure it is Australia's most successful national sports competition in the entertainment industry.
- ▶ maximise the economic, cultural and social benefits of Australian football to its member clubs, the players, the football fraternity and the community at large.
- ▶ promote and develop participation and support for Australian football throughout Australia and overseas.
- ▶ foster good citizenship, both on and off the playing field.





## THE NATIONAL VIEW REMAINS FIRM

The many memorable events of the Centenary Season are mentioned elsewhere in this report and all associated with their presentation deserve to be commended for their competence and enthusiasm.

The celebrations formed part of another successful season marked by strong attendances at matches throughout the country and increasing numbers of television viewers.

Our congratulations go to the clubs who contested the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Grand Final, North Melbourne and Sydney, especially to the Centenary Premiers, North Melbourne; and to the players of all 16 clubs whose on-field efforts make for the great spectacle that is Australian football.

Season 1996 saw the demise of the Fitzroy Football Club as a separate entity – a matter of regret not only to its supporters but to all those closely associated with the former VFL competition. Unable to pay its debts, Fitzroy merged with Brisbane. The new club promises to be a football force in 1997.

A merger between Hawthorn and Melbourne, as proposed by the Board of Directors of both clubs, was rejected by the Hawthorn members. Although Melbourne members voted in favor, supporters of each club were finally convinced their team can survive into the future.

Season 1997 marks the entry of Port Adelaide into the competition, a club driven by tradition and success.

It is perhaps futile to look backwards. Nevertheless, the future of Australian football ought not to be determined largely by forces outside the AFL Commission and Clubs, and I reiterate below the five principles which underlay the preparation of the Commission's 1994 five year plan:

- ▶ Firstly, we take a national view of football, not simply an expanded VFL view. The AFL competition emerged from the VFL and a 'Victorian' focus was inevitable given this beginning. However, the Commission is of the view that football followers throughout Australia are of equal importance.
- ▶ Secondly, we adopt equalisation rather than survival of the fittest for competition health. The evenness of the current competition results from the draft, salary cap and financial equalisation strategies being pursued by the AFL and the Commission is convinced that these strategies are broadly correct.

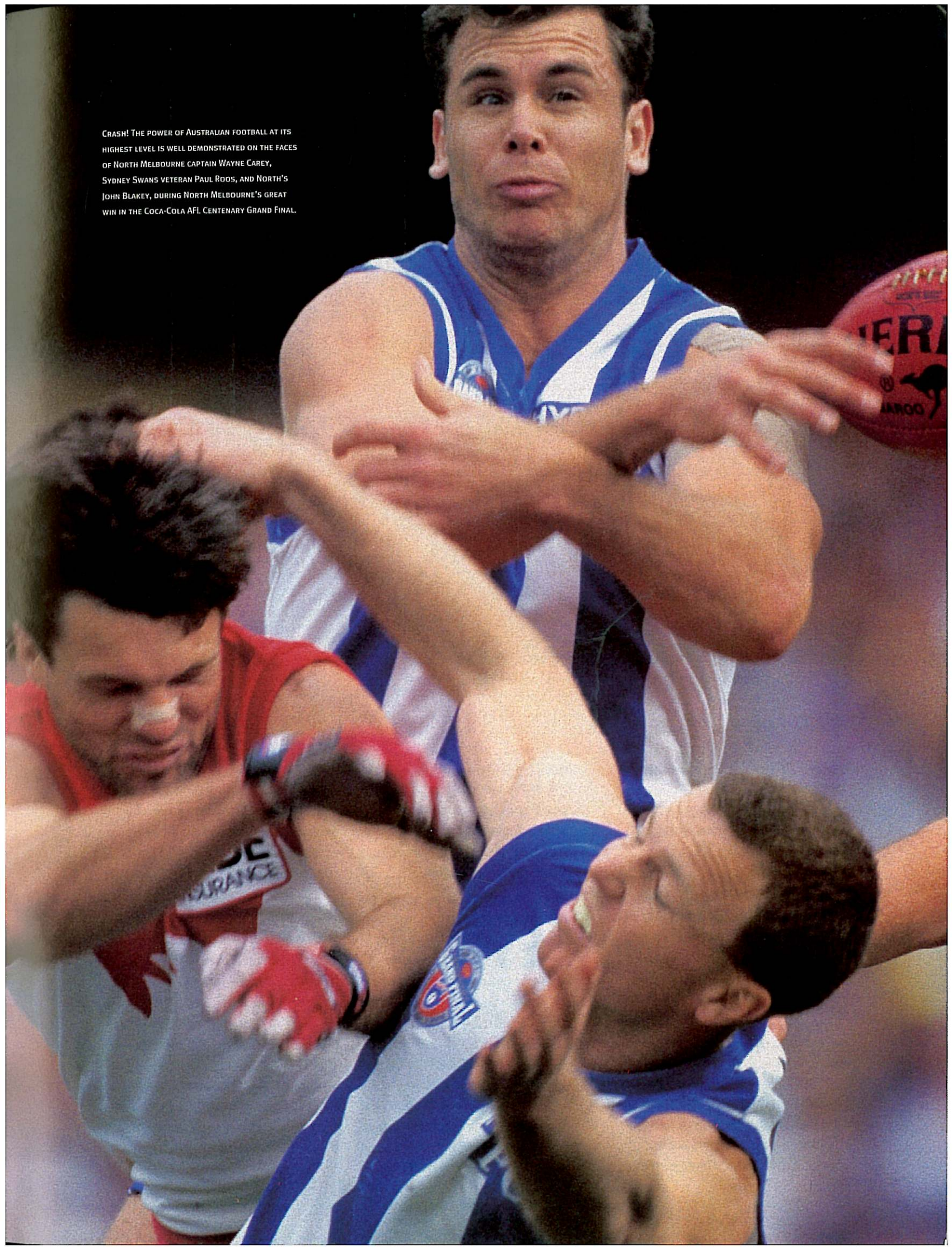
- ▶ Thirdly, we see the AFL as both keeper of the code and manager of the national competition. Our obvious responsibility is to the national competition, but the AFL accepts responsibility for development of the game, feeder structures and the overall health of the code.
- ▶ Fourthly, we see the AFL as a generator of income but not a banker to the clubs. It is not appropriate to guarantee club debts – to do this would destroy financial disciplines at club level. We must not weaken our resolve to foster the overall health of the game across Australia nor in our commitment to the national competition. Our adoption of equalisation rather than survival of the fittest is aimed at producing an even competition in which not so wealthy clubs have a real chance of success. The latter, on the other hand, cannot expect guaranteed immunity from their own inefficiency.
- ▶ Finally, we seek commercial sponsorships rather than adopt user pays admission prices. Sponsorships will often appear to be controversial, but the fact is that our low attendance prices are only possible because of sponsorships.

These principles retain their validity and shall continue to permeate Commission policy in 1997 and beyond. They do not prescribe details of policy; they do allow the flexibility necessary to meet the challenges of the modern competitive sports entertainment market.

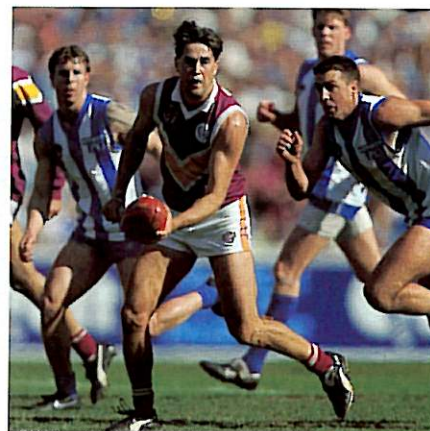
All Commissioners join with me in congratulating our retiring Chief Executive Officer, Ross Oakley, for his enormous contribution to the progress of Australian football during his term of office. The advancement of the game during the past 10 years is testimony to his great capacity as an administrative leader and his genuine love of football. We wish him well in his future career. On behalf of the Commission, I wish to thank all AFL staff for their continued dedication during season 1996.

JOHN KENNEDY  
CHAIRMAN  
AFL COMMISSION

CRASH! THE POWER OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL AT ITS HIGHEST LEVEL IS WELL DEMONSTRATED ON THE FACES OF NORTH MELBOURNE CAPTAIN WAYNE CAREY, SYDNEY SWANS VETERAN PAUL ROOS, AND NORTH'S JOHN BLAKEY, DURING NORTH MELBOURNE'S GREAT WIN IN THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL.



**ACTION:** THE SEASON BEGAN WITH A HUGE CROWD AT THE MCG FOR THE WILLS-HARRISON TROPHY BETWEEN GEELONG AND MELBOURNE; BRISBANE BECAME THE LEAGUE'S GLAMOUR CLUB; BUT IT WAS NORTH MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY WHO FOUGHT OUT AN EPIC MATCH IN THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL.



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT A MEMORABLE YEAR

By any measure, the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season was an outstanding success, confirming our competition as the clear leader in the Australian sports entertainment industry.

While considerable detail on all the major events, highlights and issues which faced us during the year is provided in this, our Centenary Season Annual Report, 1996 will be remembered as a year in which:

- ▶ The history, traditions and past champions who have shaped our game and culture were acknowledged and recorded for future generations.
- ▶ All mainland capital cities where AFL clubs are based embraced Australian football like never before – particularly Brisbane and Sydney, where spectator interest, TV ratings and media coverage

added new dimensions to the competition. These, of course, were fundamental reasons for the League's expansion program, which began 10 years ago. Victoria remained the heartland of the competition.

- ▶ All the key indicators of competition health – attendances, TV and radio audiences, club memberships, corporate support and media coverage – have never been healthier.

While the AFL and its 16 clubs have every right to be proud of the status and health of our competition, the challenge facing us is to continue to build on our achievements in a market with intense competition from many other sports and entertainment bodies.

The past year was not without its controversial moments, in particular the

constant debate about club mergers in Victoria. After reviewing the events of 1996, the AFL Commission decided not long after the Grand Final to withdraw the \$6 million incentive package previously available for clubs seeking to merge.

The reasons for this policy change are outlined on page 24 of this report, but in essence, the conclusions reached by the Commission were that the assistance package was a de facto guarantee of a club's debt, and that club members will not support a merger if there remained the slightest hope of a club continuing in its own right.

Should clubs wish to pursue a merger in the future, that will be a decision for directors of the clubs. The AFL Commission will wish to be certain that any such proposal has the approval of a large majority of club



NOW FOR THE GRAND FINAL: SYDNEY MADE THE GRAND FINAL WITH AN AFTER THE SIREN BEHIND SCORED BY SUPERSTAR FULL FORWARD TONY LOCKETT FROM OUTSIDE THE 50 METRE LINE. TO SAY THE SWANS WERE ELATED IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

members and supporters before considering the extent of the Commission's involvement, if any.

Agreement was reached for Brisbane and Fitzroy to merge at the end of the 1996 season. The chain of events which led to this ultimate decision started in late June when Nauru Insurance, Fitzroy's only secured creditor, applied successfully to the Supreme Court of Victoria to appoint an administrator to take over the running of the Fitzroy Football Club. Following the appointment of the administrator, it was revealed Fitzroy had debts of more than \$3 million.

After the overwhelming majority of clubs indicated they would reject a proposed merger between Fitzroy and North Melbourne, the AFL Commission, in conjunction with the clubs, reached agreement for the Brisbane-Fitzroy merger with the administrator, who

indicated that it was the best arrangement for Fitzroy's creditors.

It was regrettable that in the Centenary Season of the competition, a founding member could not continue to exist in its own right, but it is pleasing that the club's colors and Lion emblem live on in a new form with Brisbane and the club's history and memorabilia will be preserved.

Other major strategic issues were addressed by the AFL Commission in 1996.

During May, agreement was reached on player rules for the admission of the Port Adelaide Football Club to the AFL competition in 1997. Port Adelaide is perhaps the most successful senior football club in Australia, with 34 SANFL premierships, and 68 Grand Final appearances. The club has missed playing in the finals only five times in 126 years.

Port Adelaide's entry to the AFL completes a major priority identified in the AFL Commission's five year plan (August 1994) for a second team in Adelaide to improve the national balance of the competition, and to provide an AFL match each week in a key Australian football market.

Discussion started during the second half of the year with the Victorian Government and Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust about the possibility of AFL matches being played at the proposed Victoria Stadium in Melbourne's Docklands.

This proposed stadium is also being planned for rugby league, rugby union, soccer and major concerts, and the AFL Commission felt it was essential to establish the benefits of AFL matches also being scheduled at Victoria Stadium. Ultimately, the decision will depend on the willingness of AFL clubs to play ►►

**UPS AND DOWNS:** WAVERLEY PARK WAS USED FOR MID-SEASON NIGHT MATCHES, AS WELL AS THE ANSETT AUSTRALIA CUP GRAND FINAL AT NIGHT; NORTH MELBOURNE CELEBRATED GRAND FINAL VICTORY WITH ECSTATIC FANS; AND COACH RODNEY EADE, ALL AUSTRALIAN COACH IN HIS FIRST SEASON, CONSOLES HIS LOSING TEAM AFTER THE GRAND FINAL.



matches at Docklands. At the time of writing this report, no decision had been reached by the Commission, or any club about the proposed new stadium.

That decision is also linked to the future of Waverley Park and it is important to stress that, again, no decision has been taken by the AFL Commission concerning the future of this AFL-owned ground.

The use of Waverley Park will not change until at least the year 2000, and there are a number of major strategic issues which are yet to be addressed. In Sydney, we have had discussions with Stadium Australia about the opportunity for AFL matches to be played at the Homebush Stadium post Olympics.

Early in the next century, Sydney's population is projected to be more than 6 million, and the Olympic Stadium, with a capacity of between 70,000 and 80,000, is

situated close to the demographic centre of metropolitan Sydney and serviced by public transport. Such positioning is an opportunity which the AFL Commission believes should be pursued.

It should not be taken from this discussion that AFL matches will not be played at the SCG, should it be feasible to play at the Olympic Stadium. It may well be, in the next century, that a second AFL team could play out of Sydney.

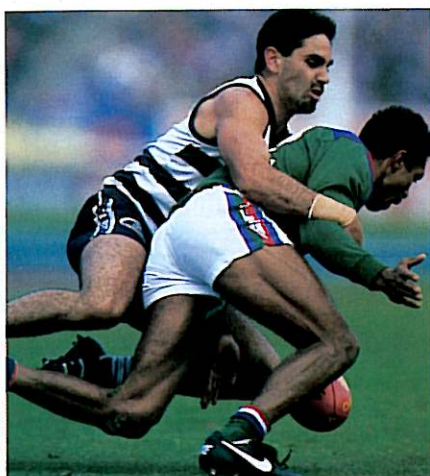
On June 17, 1996 Ross Oakley announced he would retire as Chief Executive Officer at the end of the Centenary Season. Ross has made an outstanding contribution to Australian football since becoming the Chairman of the Commission of the then VFL, in August, 1986, and has led the AFL competition through a period of unprecedented change and growth. In 1986, the competition was on its knees financially,

attendances and club memberships were declining, and the corporate sector had lost confidence in the game.

This is a stark contrast to the AFL of today. The role Ross has played, in conjunction with the AFL Commission, has been enormous. We wish Ross, his wife Christine, and their family every success in the future and look forward to them continuing their life-long interest in football. The AFL will be delighted to appoint Ross a life member of the AFL at our annual meeting.

I was delighted to be given the opportunity to become the AFL's new Chief Executive Officer. Football has been a major part of my life, and I am looking forward very much, together with the rest of the AFL team, to the challenges ahead.

I would like to acknowledge the outstanding support the AFL enjoys from



**ON THE JOB:** FOOTBALL IS TOUGH ON THE FIELD; AND TOUGH OFF IT. ROSS OAKLEY, WITH WIFE CHRISTINE, (RIGHT) AND AFL COMMISSION CHAIRMAN JOHN KENNEDY (LEFT) AT A MATCH AT THE MCG, CALLED IT A DAY AFTER TEN YEARS AT THE HELM.



**CROSSING STATELINES:** AFL FOOTBALL TOOK SYDNEY BY STORM, FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF THE SYDNEY SWANS, AND, ON GRAND FINAL DAY, SYDNEY CAME TO MELBOURNE TO OFFER STRONG SUPPORT TO THE SWANS.

## 1996: AT A GLANCE

- ▶ Attendances for all AFL matches passed the 6 million mark, more than three times our nearest competitors, and included a new attendance record for the Coca-Cola AFL premiership season of 5,216,148.
- ▶ A new record for club memberships: 286,907.
- ▶ AFL football on the Seven Network remained among the most watched TV programs in Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth and set new ratings records in Brisbane and Sydney
- ▶ The Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Grand Final was the most watched program in Australia in 1996.
- ▶ The Brisbane and Sydney communities embraced Australian football like never before as their two clubs finished in the top four.
- ▶ The AFL's corporate partners, Coca-Cola, Seven Network, Ansett Australia, Carlton and United Breweries, McDonald's, Norwich Union Financial Services Group and Challenge Bank, provided unprecedented financial and promotional support to the competition.
- ▶ A series of special events, celebratory matches, projects, publications and
- TV programs were organised and conducted by the AFL to celebrate the 100th season of the competition.
- ▶ The initial induction of 136 players, umpires, administrators, coaches and media representatives into the Australian Football Hall of Fame, including 12 legends of the game – Ron Barassi jnr., Haydn Bunton snr., Roy Cazaly, John Coleman, Jack Dyer, Graham Farmer, Leigh Matthews, John Nicholls, Bob Pratt, Dick Reynolds, Bob Skilton and Ted Whitten snr.
- ▶ AFL licensed product becoming the number one licensed sports brand in Australia.
- ▶ Participation rates in grass roots football grew and the AFL Commission made an investment of \$5.2 million in junior football development.
- ▶ Very high levels of media coverage in all markets.
- ▶ Sell out finals played in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney with the latter two cities experiencing AFL finals for the first time.
- ▶ Congratulations to North Melbourne, the Centenary Season premiers, beating the Sydney Swans, in the Swans' first Grand Final appearance for 51 years.

our corporate sponsors – Coca-Cola, the AFL's major naming rights sponsor, the Seven Network, exclusive TV rights holder, Carlton and United Breweries, Ansett Australia, McDonald's, Norwich Union Financial Services Group, and Challenge Bank. Without these sponsors, the competition would not be what it is today. I also wish to record our appreciation for the support provided to our Centenary Season by the Victorian Government.

To all members of the AFL staff and everyone associated with the AFL and our member clubs, I would like to pass on the AFL Commission's appreciation for their efforts during 1996, efforts which made the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season one to remember.

**WAYNE JACKSON**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



LINE-UP: THE STANDS ARE PACKED, AND THE TENSION IS PALPABLE AS NORTH MELBOURNE LINES UP FOR THE NATIONAL ANTHEM BEFORE THE 1996 COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL. CROWDS FOR MATCHES ACROSS AUSTRALIA, FROM SEASON'S START TO SEASON'S END, SET NEW RECORDS.

## ATTENDANCES

### A NEW HIGH, NEW HIGHS

A new all time attendance record of 5,216,148 was set during the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season. The previous record of 5,117,774 was set in 1995.

The 1995 and 1996 years are the only times in 100 seasons when 5 million or more spectators have attended premiership matches. In 1996, the average attendance per game was 29,637 compared to an average per game of 29,078 in 1995. This new record was achieved as a result of a 12.87 per cent increase in attendances at matches played outside Victoria.

There was a small drop of 1.94 per cent at matches played in Victoria. The Victorian attendances were primarily affected by Optus Oval being at about 50 per cent capacity due to the construction of a new grandstand and other spectator facilities, reduced capacity at Kardinia Park due to expanded seating areas, reduced attendances at Whitten Oval and drops in attendance at Collingwood and Richmond matches when compared to 1995.

In addition, Victoria experienced a very wet winter, with the first nine months of the year being the wettest on record.

Average attendance per game in Victoria was 30,653 in 1996 which is

still well ahead of average attendances at games in Victoria during the past four decades as the following figures indicate (per game):

1955	21,677
1965	23,616
1975	20,877
1985	20,661
1996	30,653

More than 300,000 people attended a round of matches on two occasions – in round seven (305,783) and round 21 (313,530) – the first time in the history of the competition that this mark has been broken for single rounds.

Sydney's attendances at the SCG totalled 270,309 at an average of 24,574 compared to 175,736 at an average per game of 15,976 in 1995.

With the 'Gabba at full capacity after construction of a new grandstand was completed for the Centenary Season, Brisbane attendances totalled 198,968 at an average per game of 18,088 compared to 113,355 at an average per game of 10,305 in 1995.

TABLE 1 ATTENDANCES 1996

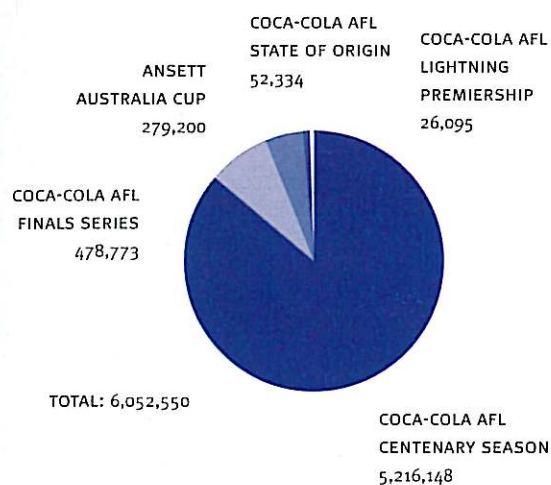


TABLE 2 ATTENDANCES BY VENUE

	'96 GAMES	ATTENDANCE	AVERAGE	'95 GAMES	ATTENDANCE	AVERAGE
WAVERLEY PARK	24	613,079	25,545	24	499,037	20,793
KARDINIA PARK	10	226,701	22,670	10	241,102	24,110
MCG	51	2,351,808	46,114	50	2,406,331	48,127
OPTUS OVAL	17	265,888	15,640	18	348,830	19,379
VICTORIA PARK	4	94,322	23,581	3	68,567	22,886
WHITTEN OVAL	15	157,224	10,482	15	218,588	14,573
SCG	11	270,309	24,574	11	175,736	15,976
'GABBA	11	198,968	18,088	11	113,355	10,305
WACA/SUBIACO	22	604,136	27,261	22	610,290	27,740
FOOTBALL PARK	11	433,713	39,428	11	424,566	38,597

TABLE 3 HOME GAME ATTENDANCE BY CLUB

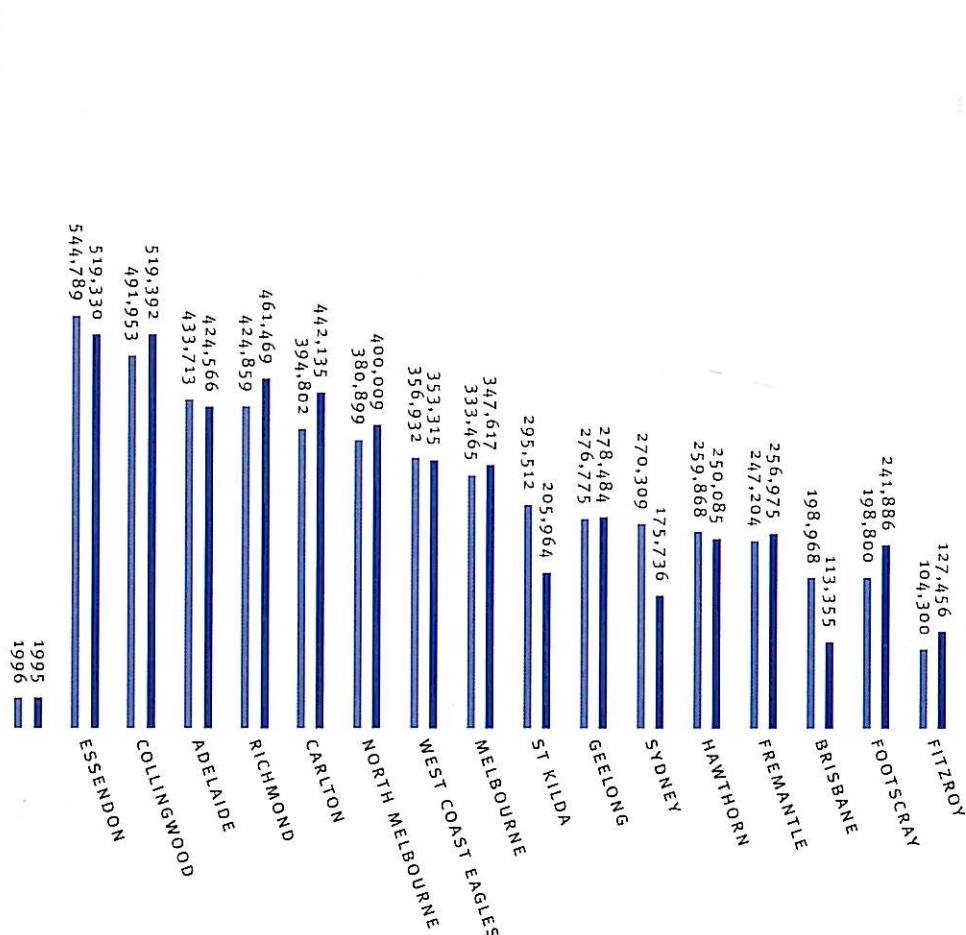
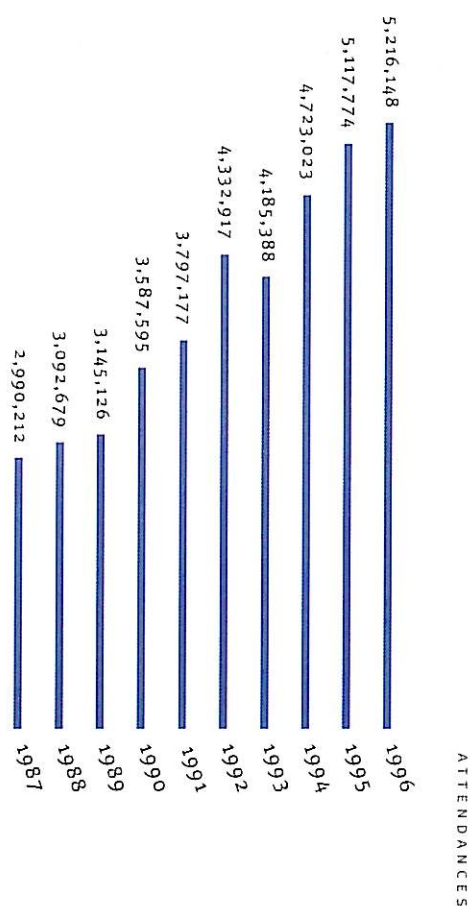


TABLE 4 TOTAL ATTENDANCES 1987-1996





## CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

### MEMBERSHIPS CONTINUE RAPID GROWTH

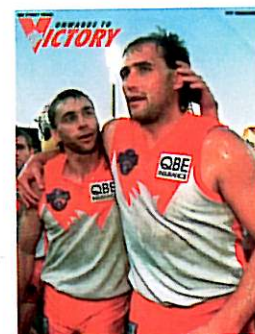
For the tenth successive year, club memberships reached record levels during the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season with a total of 286,097, a growth of 9.58 per cent on 1995's high of 261,067.

In 1987, when the competition expanded to include the West Coast Eagles and Brisbane, club membership stood at 71,238.

Total revenue from club membership in 1987 was \$2.77 million compared to \$18.93 million in 1996. All such revenue goes to the clubs. The 1996 revenue from club membership was up \$2.27 million on 1995.

For the fifth successive year, Adelaide headed the membership tally with a total of 42,283 club members. Other clubs in the top eight of membership were West Coast, 26,663; Essendon, 24,324; Carlton, 23,278; Collingwood, 20,752; Richmond, 20,308; Fremantle, 19,622 and Geelong, 17,346.

St Kilda had the greatest increase in club membership, rising from 8870 in 1995 to 14,375 in 1996, an increase of 38.3 per cent. Sydney increased its membership by 36.09 per cent from 6085 in 1995 to 9525 in 1996 while Brisbane's membership rose 32.87 per cent, from 6893 in 1993 to 10,267 in 1996. This was the first time that the Brisbane membership exceeded that of leading rugby league club, the Brisbane Broncos. Other clubs with substantial membership increases included Richmond, up 27.88 per cent, (Richmond passed 20,000 for the first time in 1996 compared to its 1992 membership total of 8158), Melbourne, 26.39 per cent, and Carlton, up 22.54 per cent.



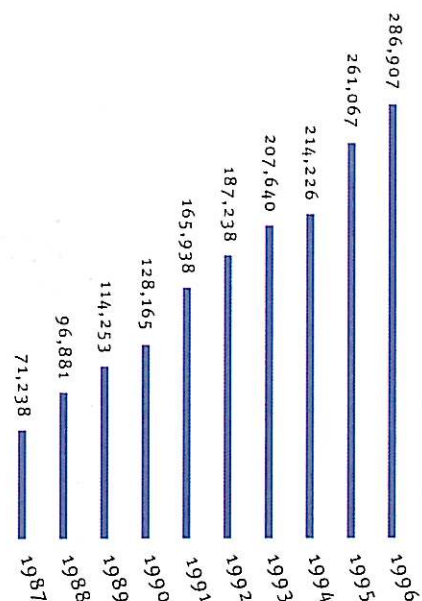
LOOKING FOR MEMBERS: CLUBS  
PRODUCE LAVISH MARKETING  
BROCHURES TO ENSURE THEIR  
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH IS SECURED.

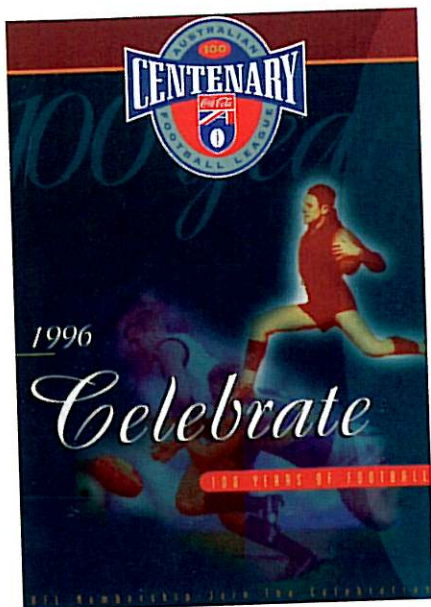
EUPHORIA: THE CHEER SQUAD IS THE MOST PUBLIC REPRESENTATION OF THE PASSION OF THE FANS FOR THE CLUB. AFL CLUB MEMBERSHIPS ARE THE BACKBONE TO THE SECURITY OF THE CLUBS AND THE COMPETITION. MANY CLUBS SET NEW MEMBERSHIP RECORDS IN 1996. NORTH MELBOURNE'S 14,438 MEMBERSHIP HAS RISEN FROM 6083 IN 1992.

#### CLUB MEMBERSHIP YEAR BY YEAR

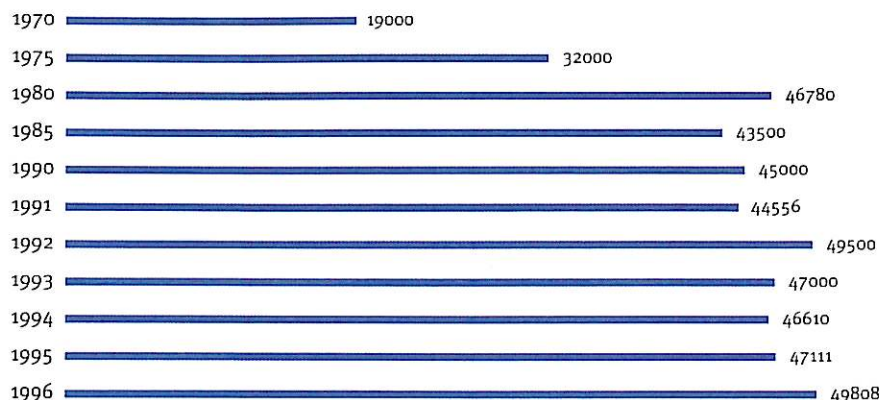
Club	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
ADELAIDE	38,673	40,100	40,611	41,645	42,283
BRISBANE	5,401	5,750	6,158	6,893	10,267
CARLTON	12,354	14,445	18,308	18,032	23,276
COLLINGWOOD	18,921	21,882	20,843	22,543	20,752
ESSENDON	10,034	11,546	19,720	23,833	24,324
FITZROY	5,177	6,853	8,164	8,806	7,628
FOOTSCRAY	9,311	11,478	9,339	12,212	10,650
FREMANTLE	--	--	--	18,456	19,622
GEELONG	13,535	15,500	14,312	15,922	17,346
HAWTHORN	12,368	11,388	11,245	12,728	12,484
MELBOURNE	8,681	10,097	10,648	9,544	12,964
NORTH MELBOURNE	6,083	6,851	10,296	14,027	14,438
RICHMOND	8,158	9,918	8,229	14,647	20,308
ST. KILDA	11,650	12,956	12,009	8,870	14,375
SYDNEY	3,020	3,097	3,327	6,088	9,525
WEST COAST EAGLES	23,902	25,779	24,265	26,821	26,663

#### CLUB MEMBERSHIP GROWTH





## AFL MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS



MARKETING MEMBERS: AFL MEMBERSHIP SEEKS NEW MEMBERS WITH HIGH QUALITY MARKETING BROCHURES.

## AFL MEMBERSHIP

### NEW HIGHS FOR MEMBERS AT ALL LEVELS

AFL Membership continued its rapid growth path in 1996 with revenue, new members, and total member budgets being exceeded. Total membership was only a touch under 50,000 – 49,808 (table 1).

Total Membership income reached \$11.3 million, against a budget of \$10.84 million (Tables 1 and 2). The target for new members in 1996 (4,118) was exceeded by 886 – 5,004 new members joined in 1996.

In April 1996 the Restricted Membership was closed and a waiting list introduced as membership capacity approached. With more than 7,000 inactive members on the data base, a waiting list was introduced and letters were sent to all inactive members advising them that in 1997 they could no longer sit on the database but must become active financial members. Inactive members owing entrance fees were advised that they needed to pay the balance of entrance fee owing or they would cease to be members.

All this was necessary to ensure that in 1997 there were not too many members for the available seating capacity. By the end of 1997 the membership database will contain only active financial members. In 1996 for the first time, AFL Membership enforced punctual payment dates. Members have to pay on time or risk losing their membership. It is essential

to know exactly the number of members so projections can be made as to how many places will be available for those waiting.

By October 1996 there were more than 1000 people on the waiting list. The closing of membership has instantly made the membership more valuable, which in turn should ensure that members will protect their memberships more and reduce the amount of misuse. A member who joined AFL Restricted Membership in 1996 would now expect to wait between 25 and 30 years to achieve Full Membership. 1996 saw the introduction of a new program to improve security within the Members' Reserve. Observers did signature checks at all games.

The growth in AFL membership has been due to a variety of benefits being added for members so that they have maximum flexibility in matches they can attend each week.

Another major benefit of AFL membership has been the provision of a special Football Record Almanac Edition distributed to members five times per season.

### CLUB SUPPORT PACKAGES

The flexible Competition and Club Support Package arrangements continued in 1996 allowing members entry to their 24 or 13 "other" games at the MCG, Waverley Park or

Optus Oval in any combination. AFL Members also still have the added bonus of free entry into all Ansett Australia Cup games.

\$2.068 million in revenue from the Club Support Package – in which members can nominate their favored club – was distributed to the clubs during the 1996 season (table 3). The package continues to grow in popularity each year as members change from Competition or Waverley Park Packages to provide direct support to their club.

### MEMBERSHIP GROWTH 1970-1996

The construction of Waverley Park provided an opportunity for the AFL to offer membership packages in its own right. The year was 1970, and 19,000 Victorians saw the future and took up membership of the VFL. By its 21st birthday in 1991, the membership package had become so attractive that its numbers had more than doubled to 40,000. In 1992, the Great Southern Stand was completed at the MCG and the AFL moved its membership base to the MCG. This allowed an immediate growth of members to 49,500. Income increased from \$6.3 million in 1991 to \$10.8 million in 1992. By 1996, the membership numbers had risen to 49,808, with \$11.3 million in revenue.

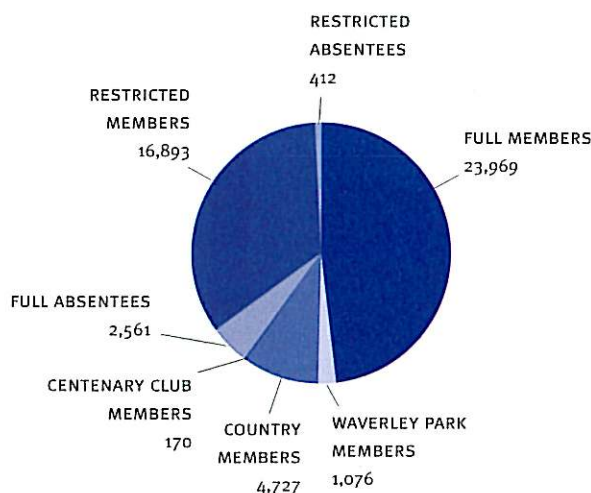
## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

FULL MEMBER	24 game package plus all finals in Victoria, including the Grand Final.
RESTRICTED MEMBER	24 game package plus all finals in the first two weeks in Victoria.
COUNTRY MEMBER	Full membership offered at discount to eligible members living more than 120 km from the GPO.
WAVERLEY PARK MEMBER	A full member whose 24 game package only allows entry to Waverley Park. Does include Preliminary and Grand Final entry.
FULL CENTENARY CLUB MEMBER	Enhanced full membership - entry to MCG, Waverley Park, Optus Oval. Private Restaurant, reserved prime seating, car parking.
RESTRICTED CENTENARY CLUB MEMBERS	As above excluding reserved seat and dining privileges during finals.
ABSENTEE MEMBERSHIP	holds place in membership queue but allows no ticketing rights or entry to games.

TABLE 2 PACKAGE BREAKDOWN

	NUMBER	% OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
COMPETITION PACKAGE		
Full Members	6,388	12.8%
Restricted Members	2,760	5.5%
Country Members	4,727	9.5%
CLUB SUPPORT PACKAGE		
Full Members	17,581	35.3%
Restricted Members	14,133	28.4%
Waverley Park	1,076	2.2%
CENTENARY CLUB PACKAGE		
Full Members	110	.2%
Restricted Members	60	.1%
ABSENTEE		
Full Members	2,561	5.2%
Restricted Members	412	.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49,808</b>	<b>100%</b>

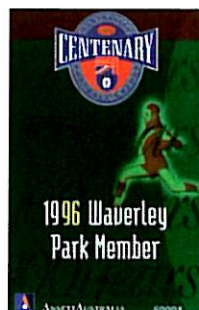
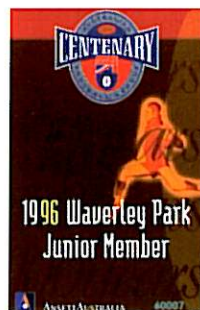
TABLE 1 MEMBERSHIP BREAKDOWN



TOTAL MEMBERS 49,808

TABLE 3 CLUB SUPPORT TABLE

Club	Members	Income (\$)
ADELAIDE	473	29,280
BRISBANE	28	1,800
CARLTON	4,767	311,640
COLLINGWOOD	6,736	451,440
ESSENDON	5,862	365,000
FITZROY	457	29,040
FOOTSCRAY	922	62,760
FREMANTLE	9	480
GEELONG	2,761	179,880
HAWTHORN	1,766	113,240
MELBOURNE	1,871	111,840
NORTH MELBOURNE	1,375	93,080
RICHMOND	2,630	181,160
ST KILDA	1,812	119,600
SYDNEY	181	12,960
WEST COAST EAGLES	78	5,040
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31,725</b>	<b>\$2,068,240</b>



HI TECH: ALL AFL MEMBERS  
RECEIVE SWIPE CARDS AS  
ACCESS TO MATCHES.



## SPONSORSHIP

### SPONSORS UNDERWRITE THE GAME

Corporate sponsorship is vital to the long term health of the AFL competition and its member clubs.

An important benefit to supporters provided by the game's corporate partners is that this funding allows admission prices to be kept at relatively low levels.

AFL admission prices are among the lowest in the world for any major sporting competition. Our admission price for children under 15 – \$1-60 in 1996 – is the lowest among other comparable competitions such as the NFL, NBA, NHL and Major League Baseball in America, soccer in England and Europe, Australia's NBL and Rugby League.

As outlined in the AFL Commission's five year plan (August, 1994) the AFL seeks commercial sponsorship rather than adopt user pays admission prices.

While the placement of corporate logos on playing uniforms and match footballs have, at times, provoked a great deal of media and public comment, the competition as we know it today would not exist without corporate support.

When one considers total competition revenue – the combined revenue of the AFL and the clubs passed the \$200 million mark for the first time in 1996 – an estimated two thirds of that revenue comes from various forms of corporate sponsorship.

The AFL Commission wishes to acknowledge the contribution to Australian football of the following major corporate partners whose support underpins the finances of the competition well into the next century.



#### COCA-COLA

Major corporate sponsor of the AFL since 1995 and contracted until the year 2001.

Coca-Cola's sponsorship includes naming rights to the Coca-Cola AFL premiership season, Coca-Cola AFL State of Origin, Coca-Cola AFL finals series, the Brownlow Medal and National Recruit Draft. Coca-Cola, through its State-based bottler system, also supports most of the AFL clubs.



#### SEVEN NETWORK

Exclusive free to air and pay TV rights holder and contracted until the year 2001.

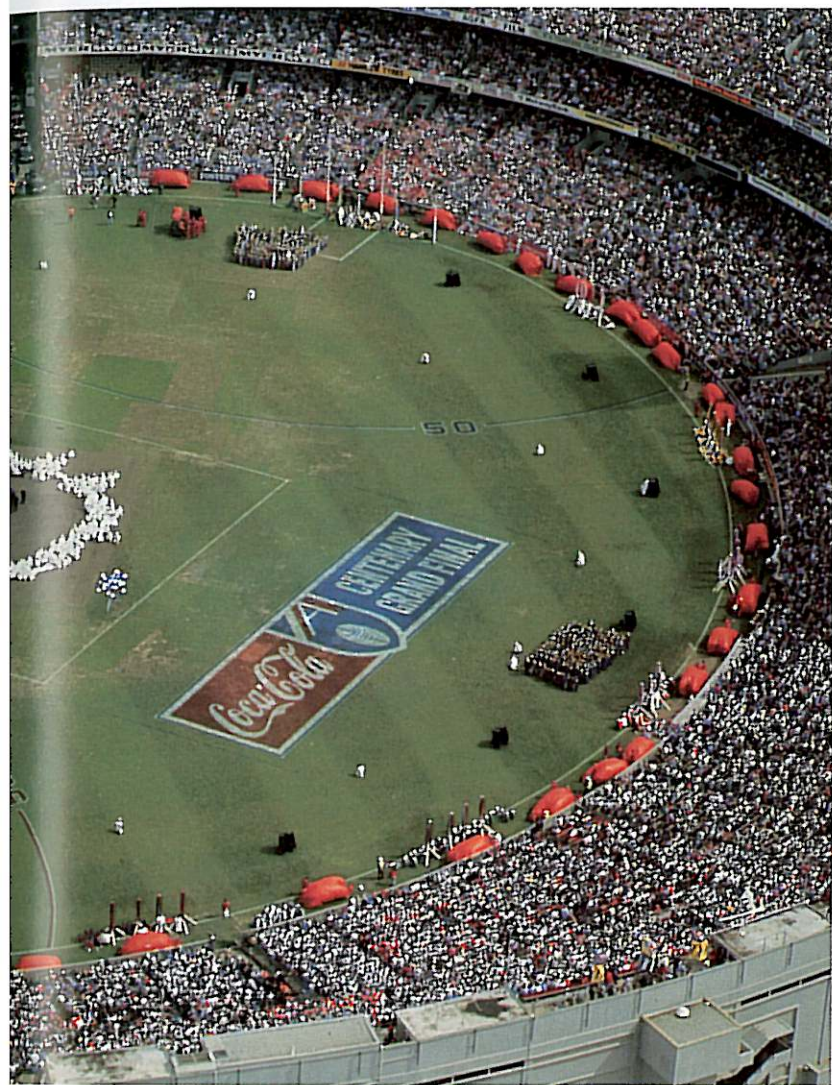
The Seven Network has broadcast VFL/AFL matches every year except one since 1956. In 1987, when the rights were held by Broadcom. Seven has been the exclusive TV rights holder since 1988.

**Carlton & United**  
AUSTRALIA'S LEADING BREWER

#### CARLTON AND UNITED BREWERIES

Major support sponsor and contracted until the year 2006.

Before deciding to become a major support sponsor as of the 1995 season, CUB was the AFL's major sponsor and also has individual sponsorship arrangements with most of the AFL clubs.



**ON THE BALL:** CHALLENGE BANK BROKE NEW GROUND IN AFL SPONSORSHIP WHEN IT BECAME THE SPONSOR OF THE MATCH DAY FOOTBALLS FOR THE 1994 SEASON. THEIR CONTRACT EXPIRED AT THE END OF THE 1996 SEASON AND IN 1997, McDONALD'S WILL TAKE OVER AS THE SPONSOR OF THE MATCH DAY FOOTBALL.

**EXPOSURE:** COCA-COLA IS THE OFFICIAL NAMING RIGHTS SPONSOR TO THE AFL COMPETITION, AND TO ALL MAJOR EVENTS, INCLUDING THE AFL GRAND FINAL. COCA COLA'S SPONSORSHIP OF THE AFL EXTENDS UNTIL THE NEXT CENTURY.



**ANSETT AUSTRALIA**

#### ANSETT AUSTRALIA

Has been the AFL's official carrier since November 1, 1989, a relationship which also includes team travel for all AFL matches. Sponsor of the Ansett Australia Cup since 1995. Both agreements have another year to run.



#### MCDONALD'S

Joined the AFL in 1996 as the major sponsor of the national junior development program administered by the Australian Football Foundation. McDonald's Auskick was a national program for the first time, with more than 50,000 registered 'Auskickers'. The sponsorship also includes rights to the match day football from 1997. Contracted for an initial period of five years.



**NORWICH UNION**

#### NORWICH UNION FINANCIAL SERVICES GROUP

Sponsors of the Norwich Rising Star Award since 1993.

The award, which recognises the best young player in the competition each season, has quickly become a major feature of the AFL. During 1996, Norwich and the AFL extended the agreement for the award until the year 2000.

## MEDIA



### COVERAGE GROWS IN ALL AREAS

One of the key strengths of the AFL competition is the amount of coverage it receives from all sections of the media, a coverage reflecting the extraordinary level of public interest in the game.

As the exclusive rights holder for free to air and pay television, the Seven Network plays a vital role in the continued promotion of the AFL and its member clubs. While more than 200,000 people usually attend AFL matches each week, between three and four million people watch AFL matches each week around Australia via the Seven Network.

The Seven Network's coverage of the 1996 Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Grand Final was the highest rating television program in Australia with a national average audience in metropolitan Australia of 3,311,500 people. This was 1 million more viewers than the second highest rating program for the year.

In Sydney, the Centenary Grand Final reached a new record rating of 48 while Seven's coverage of the early finals were the highest rating sports programs in that period.

The first week of the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Finals attracted a peak audience of 6.29 million people across the weekend which included 534,000 Sydneysiders watching the Sydney v. Hawthorn clash at the SCG and 274,000 viewers in Brisbane watching the Brisbane v. Essendon qualifying final.

Other top rating programs on the Seven Network during 1996 included the Brownlow Medal, the joint Seven Network/AFL documentary, *100 years of Australian Football*, and the Coca-Cola AFL Team of the Century.

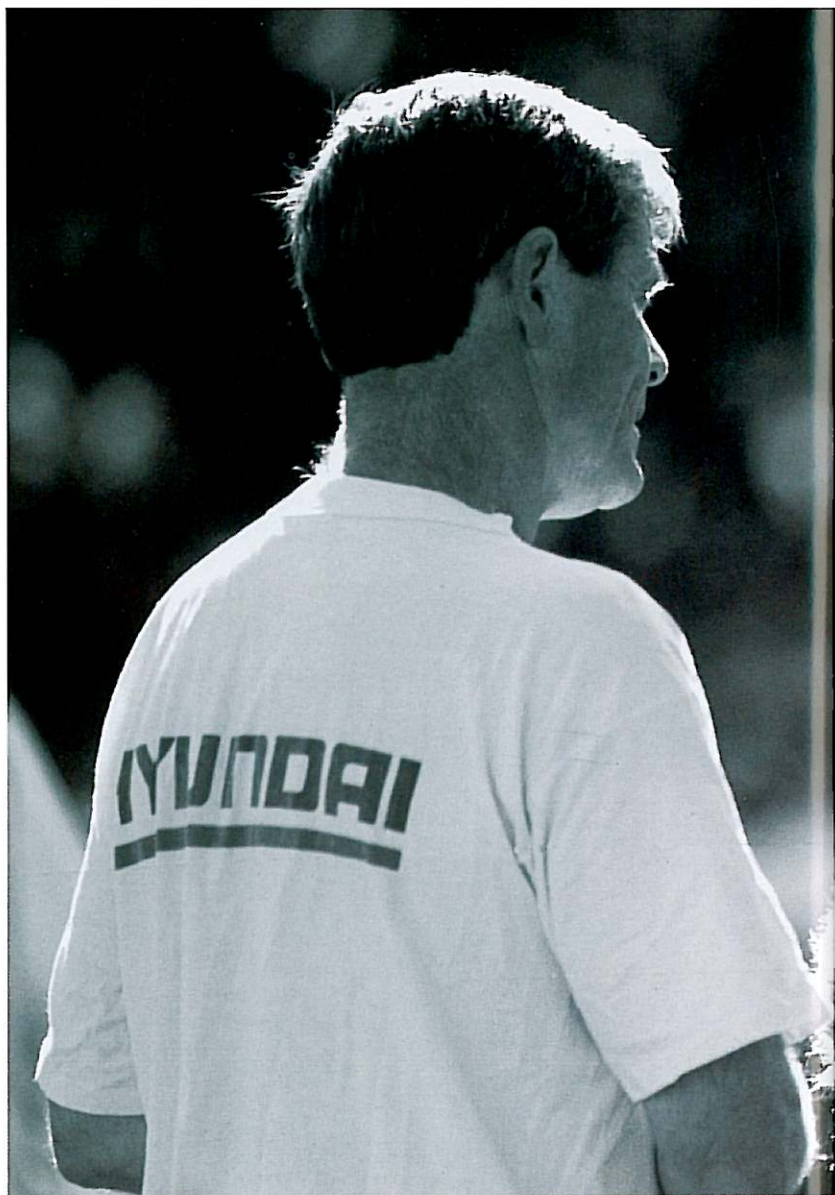
The growth in interest in the AFL competition has also led to the development of new football programs, notably the Seven Network's *Talking Footy* and the Nine Network's *The Footy Show*.

At least another million people listen to AFL matches each week on radio via the ABC in all states, and through commercial stations 6PR Perth, 5AA Adelaide, Melbourne's 3AW and Magic 693, K Rock Geelong and, for the first time, Kick AM Sydney. Leading Sydney station, 2UE, broadcast the memorable preliminary final between Sydney and Essendon at the SCG and the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Grand Final between North Melbourne and Sydney for the first time.

In 1997, Melbourne FM-station Triple M will broadcast AFL matches for the first time while the Brisbane-based station, 4BC, will debut as an AFL broadcaster.

In 1996, newspapers in all markets expanded their coverage. In Victoria, the AFL entered into an agreement for the *Herald Sun* and *Sunday Herald Sun* to become the official newspapers of the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season.

That led to a number of special liftout supplements being published on various Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season special events including the announcement of the initial Legends of the Game and Australian Football Hall of Fame inductees, the Centenary Art Expo, a series of features to coincide with the re-enactment of the first round of the competition, in May, and a major promotion at season's end, linked to the selection of the Coca-Cola AFL Team of the Century.



Melbourne's *Age* and *Sunday Age*, the nationally circulating *The Australian*, Perth's *West Australian* and *Sunday Times* and Adelaide's *Sunday Mail* and *Adelaide Advertiser* provided extensive coverage of the AFL during the 1996 season.

Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*, *Sunday Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sun Herald* and Brisbane's *Courier Mail* and *Sunday Mail* continued the trend of recent years and provided substantially increased coverage for the Sydney and Brisbane clubs in particular and the AFL competition in general.

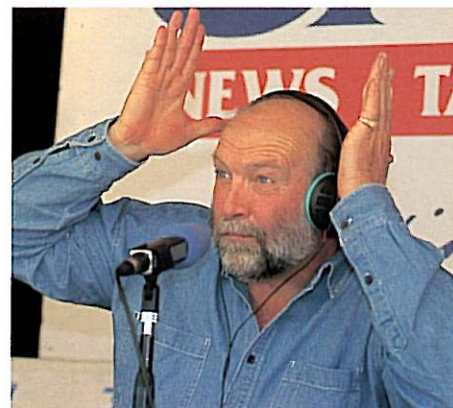
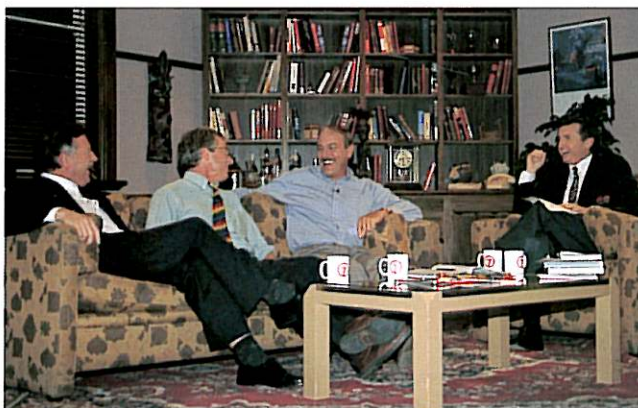
The AFL Commission regards this continued media exposure in all markets as vital to the long term future of the game and, in line with its five year plan, has been working with ground managers at key venues to improve facilities for the media. The Commission has encouraged clubs to appoint media and public relations managers to their staff to improve the management of this side of their businesses and also implemented a media relations policy for the competition in 1996.

It is likely that up to five clubs will make such appointments for the 1997 season, joining Sydney and Brisbane who have media and public relations managers on staff.

Some 800 media representatives – consisting of journalists, broadcasters, photographers, media statisticians and TV production crew – were accredited to cover the AFL competition in 1996. This represents a 400 per cent increase on the number of media people covering the competition before it expanded nationally.



INTERVIEW: TV AND THE AFL HAVE A CLOSE AND VALUED RELATIONSHIP. THE OFFICIAL TV RIGHTS HOLDER FOR AFL MATCHES, SEVEN, HOLDS THOSE RIGHTS UNTIL 2001. FOOTBALL IS BIG BUSINESS ON ALL NETWORKS NEWS BROADCASTS, AND SCENES LIKE THAT ABOVE, WITH CARLTON COACH DAVID PARKIN, AND SEVEN'S TIM WATSON, ARE SEEN NIGHTLY IN SEASON, AND OFF SEASON.

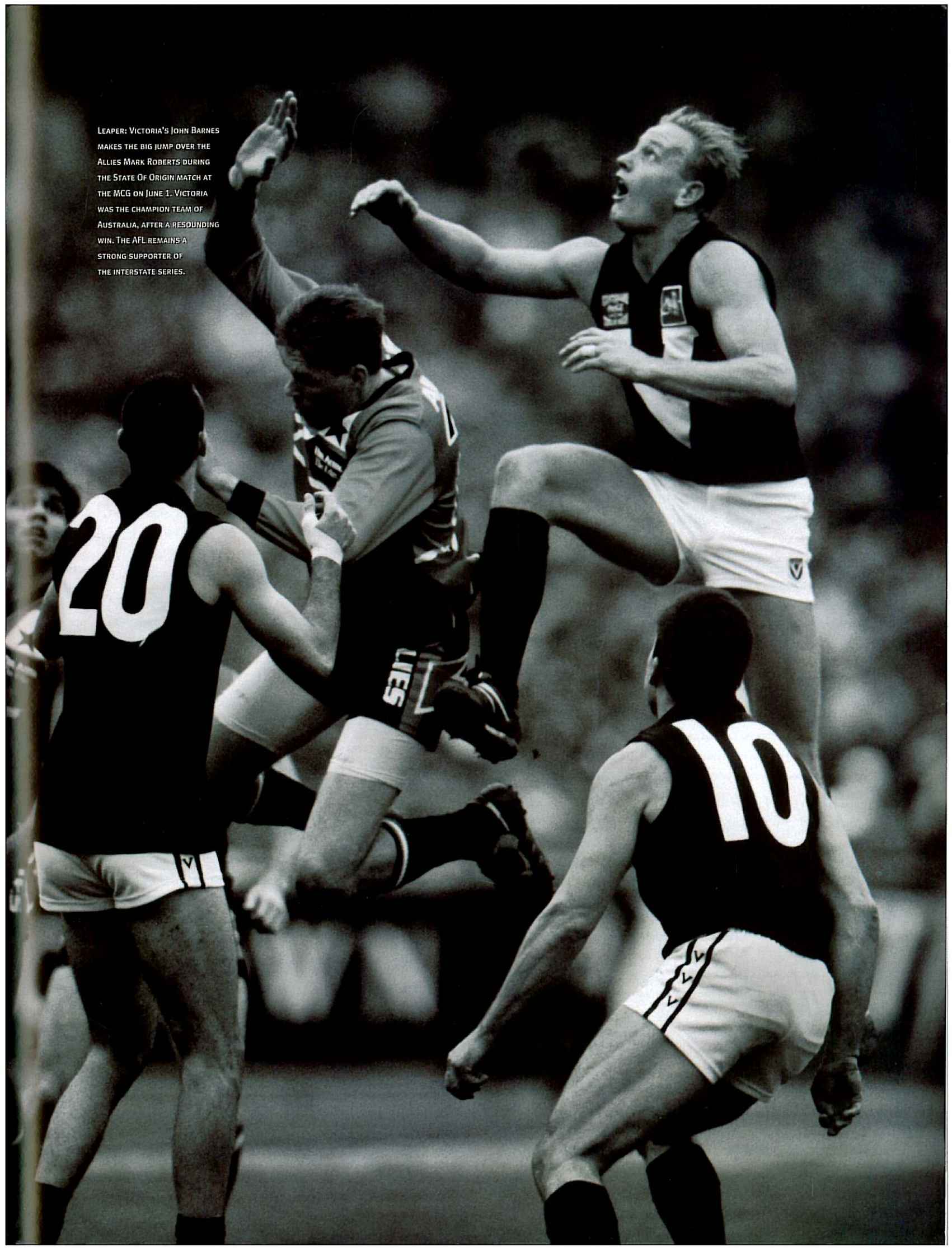


STARS: MEDIA COVERAGE OF FOOTBALL INCLUDED THE FUNNY SIDE, DEMONSTRATED BY (LEFT) NINE'S EDDIE MAGUIRE (FRONT MAN OF THE HUGELY SUCCESSFUL *THE FOOTY SHOW*), AND (RIGHT) 3AW'S REX HUNT; AND THE SERIOUS, WITH SEVEN'S LATE NIGHT *TALKING FOOTY*, FEATURING (L-R), AFL CEO ROSS OAKLEY, MIKE SHEAHAN, MALCOLM BLIGHT AND BRUCE McAVANEY.

## Policy

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LEAPER: VICTORIA'S JOHN BARNES  
MAKES THE BIG JUMP OVER THE  
ALLIES MARK ROBERTS DURING  
THE STATE OF ORIGIN MATCH AT  
THE MCG ON JUNE 1. VICTORIA  
WAS THE CHAMPION TEAM OF  
AUSTRALIA, AFTER A RESOUNDING  
WIN. THE AFL REMAINS A  
STRONG SUPPORTER OF  
THE INTERSTATE SERIES.





## DISBURSEMENTS

### REVENUE STREAMS GROW

In 1996, the AFL's total revenue was a record \$74.274 million, producing an operating surplus of \$38.7 million which is distributed as outlined on Page 23. Total revenue excludes income generated from Centenary Season activities and the licence fee from Port Adelaide.

Major sources of income included the Ansett Australia Cup and Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Finals, broadcast rights, AFL membership, sponsorship, licensing, and *The Football Record*.

Since 1991, club revenue streams which are directly influenced by AFL Commission strategies have risen dramatically, from some \$29 million in 1991 to more than \$54 million in 1996.

This increase of \$25.8 million during the past five years was revealed during 1996 in a study of competition revenue by AFL Finance Manager, Kevin Lehmann.

The study included an assessment of revenue from gate receipts, club membership, AFL membership's club support package as well as growth in AFL distributions.

Club revenue streams directly influenced by AFL strategies are:

	\$m. 1991	\$m. 1996
AFL distributions to clubs	16,159	23,680
Club support package	-	2,068
Club membership	8,607	16,867
Net gate receipts	4,248	12,184
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,014</b>	<b>54,799</b>

While most attention is given to the AFL distribution each year, that is only part of the financial support from the AFL to the clubs.

In 1996, the AFL distribution per club was \$1.48 million but as the following chart shows, Collingwood, Essendon and Carlton each received more than \$2 million in payments from the AFL while eight other clubs each received payments of between \$1.9 million and \$1.6 million.

#### PAYMENTS TO CLUBS - 1996

Club	Distribution \$	Club Support	Match Contribution	Total \$
COLLINGWOOD	1,480,000	451,440	249,714	2,181,154
ESSENDON	1,480,000	365,000	287,105	2,132,105
CARLTON	1,480,000	311,640	245,905	2,037,545
RICHMOND	1,480,000	181,160	201,632	1,862,792
GEELONG	1,480,000	179,880	145,763	1,805,643
ST KILDA	1,480,000	119,600	199,071	1,798,671
NORTH MELBOURNE	1,480,000	93,080	181,812	1,754,892
HAWTHORN	1,480,000	113,240	158,006	1,751,246
MELBOURNE	1,480,000	111,840	122,265	1,714,105
FITZROY	1,480,000	29,040	94,494	1,603,534
FOOTSCRAY	1,480,000	62,760	31,765	1,574,525
SYDNEY	1,480,000	12,960	65,065	1,558,025
ADELAIDE	1,480,000	29,280	31,334	1,540,614
WEST COAST	1,480,000	5,040	20,144	1,505,184
BRISBANE	1,480,000	1,800	9,733	1,491,533
FREMANTLE	1,480,000	480	6,560	1,487,040
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,680,000</b>	<b>2,068,240</b>	<b>2,050,368</b>	<b>27,798,608</b>

The table lists the club distribution plus revenue distributed from AFL membership's club support package in which the member nominates the club supported and match contributions where money is paid into the gate by the AFL each time an AFL member attends a match at the MCG, Waverley Park or Optus Oval.

Payment into the gate per AFL member attending a game in 1996 was \$9 or 75 per cent of the adult admission charge.

The total AFL distribution has more than doubled during the past 10 years while the number of clubs has grown from 12 to 16.

In 1986, the then 12 clubs each received \$867,000 or a total of \$10.4 million while in 1996, each of the 16 clubs received \$1.48 million or a total of \$23.68 million.

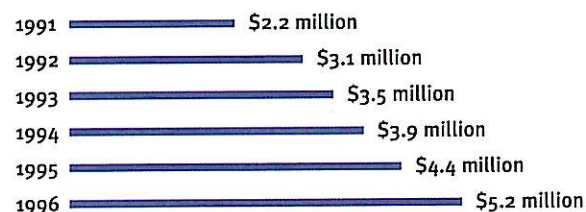
Looking ahead, the AFL distribution in 1997 will increase by \$150,000 per club to \$1.63 million and is expected to rise by a further \$100,000 per club to \$1.73 million in 1998.

From 1999, when the AFL's extended TV contract takes effect, each club will receive an increase of between \$400,000 and \$500,000 in its AFL distribution. Because broadcast revenue is one of the income streams upon which the salary cap is based, there will be a further salary cap increase from 1999.

In addition to the direct payments, clubs have also benefitted by a number of other initiatives taken by the AFL Commission since 1991. These include financial assistance for ground rationalisation, public facility upgrades at Kardinia Park, Whitten Oval, Optus Oval and Victoria Park and the re-surfacing of Subiaco Oval.

During the next four years, a total of \$1 million has been committed by the AFL Commission to assist with the installation of lights at Subiaco Oval which will in turn benefit the competition by providing greater flexibility in fixturing for the Coca-Cola AFL premiership season and Ansett Australia Cup. In 1996, the AFL Commission also agreed to provide \$500,000 to assist the Carlton Football Club with part of the major re-development program at Optus Oval. Half the amount related to a long standing commitment by the AFL to Optus Oval while the other half was for facilities for the Western Bulldogs and other clubs.

The AFL Commission remains committed to investing in the future of football at the grass roots level, with \$5.2 million allocated in 1996 to various State and Territory football bodies. The growth in junior football development grants (co-ordinated on behalf of the AFL by the Australian Football Foundation) since 1991 is illustrated below:



## WHERE THE MONEY GOES (1)

### SOME KEY ADMINISTRATION EXPENDITURE ITEMS IN 1996 INCLUDED:

Club/team travel	\$2,497,000
Club/team accommodation	\$318,000
Advertising and promotion:	
National campaign	\$737,000
Match day attendance	\$443,000
Centenary Season expenses (net)	\$446,000
Corporate hospitality packages (servicing costs)	\$539,000
Depreciation	\$1,007,000
Drug code operations	\$81,000
Finals - MCG ground rental	\$1,079,000
Finals - other MCG expenses	\$1,014,000
Finals match expenses	\$196,000
Football Record distribution/publication	\$1,621,000
General expenses	\$256,000
AFL museum	\$106,000
Insurance:	
General	\$262,000
Player related	\$220,000
International TV	\$416,000
Legal fees	\$612,000
Lightning premiership	\$630,000
Match day catering	\$458,000
Match expenses Ansett Australia Cup	\$199,000
Match expenses State of Origin (net)	\$274,000
Merger costs	\$450,000
Players' Association licensing fees	\$650,000
Postage	\$184,000
Printing - AFL membership	\$436,000
Printing - Football Record	\$1,750,000
Printing, other	\$516,000
Property expenses:	
Rent, including use of Great Southern Stand by AFL members	\$1,418,000
Electricity, gas, rates, taxes, other	\$724,000
Salaries	\$3,201,000
Payroll tax, workcover, FBT	\$700,000
Superannuation	\$326,000
Signage	\$354,000
Trade marks and patents	\$282,000
Travel and accommodation, general	\$80,000
Telephones	\$227,000

In the past year, the AFL Commission decided to increase this investment in junior football to \$6.2 million during 1997 which includes the establishment of a specific development program for football in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, northern Western Australia and northern Queensland and the introduction of an Australian football academy linked to the Australian Institute of Sport.

Another source of revenue which goes back to grass roots football is the transfer fees paid by AFL clubs for each player they draft. In 1996, transfer fees totalled \$4.75 million.

Funding arrangements in Western Australia and South Australia are different from other states because they take into account the revenue received by the WA and SA Commissions from owning the licences of the AFL clubs in Perth and Adelaide.

In 1996, the WAFC received an estimated \$4 million from the combined surplus of the West Coast Eagles and Fremantle plus another \$1 million from each club in rental for the use of Subiaco Oval and the WACA ground.

Adelaide Football Club paid \$1.46 million from its surplus to the SANFL Commission in 1996. At least another \$2 million is generated for the SANFL Commission from Adelaide games played at Football Park through catering revenue, corporate box sales and ground rental.

In 1997 this revenue will increase with the entry of Port Adelaide to the competition.

The revenue generated by the AFL clubs in Perth and Adelaide is then invested back into State football.

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES (2)

Total central administration costs amounted to \$35.33 million leaving an operating surplus of \$38.7 million and from that surplus, the following payments were made:

Payments to Clubs:	\$
Annual distribution	23,680,000
Club support package	2,068,240
Match day gate contributions	2,050,037
Prizemoney	1,506,000
Compensation - Fremantle players	106,667
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS TO CLUBS</b>	<b>\$29,410,944</b>
Other payments:	
Junior football development grants	5,278,000
Umpire development grants	506,687
Media/marketing support Brisbane	411,000
Media/marketing support Sydney	725,000
Ground rationalisation	205,622
<b>TOTAL OTHER PAYMENTS</b>	<b>\$7,126,309</b>



## RULE CHANGES

### STRICT GUIDELINES ADOPTED

Three important rules designed to assist and protect the development of the AFL competition were either amended or adopted by the AFL Commission in 1996.

**Rule 29**, which relates to the financial solvency of clubs, was amended to allow the AFL Commission to act at any time to require a club to satisfy the AFL that it can pay its debts as and when they become due.

The amendment was adopted in light of the AFL's experience with the Fitzroy Football Club during 1996, and allows the AFL to act earlier should any club get into financial difficulties in the future.

Before the rule was amended, the Commission had to receive information which was verifiable and which would give it reasonable grounds to believe that a club was experiencing financial difficulties so that the procedure set out in Rule 29 could be implemented.

Despite requesting and receiving various financial information from Fitzroy, it was not until Nauru Insurance appointed an administrator to take control of the club that Fitzroy's true financial position became clear.

In effect, the amendment speeds up the process of the rule.

**New Rule 40**, which relates to AFL clubs having a total commitment to the AFL competition, was adopted by the Commission during 1996.

This new rule simply expands on a condition contained in the licence agreement for each club to participate in the AFL competition.

The AFL Commission believes AFL clubs should not be directly or indirectly involved in other codes of football and Rule 40 reflects that philosophy.

Of primary concern is the potential long term impact on Australian football if some AFL clubs sponsor, in effect, the development of other football codes.

Australian football faces increasingly tough competition from global sports and a key part of our defence of the AFL's traditional markets is the saturation media coverage and extraordinary level of public interest enjoyed by the AFL competition.

Anything which has the potential to dilute this level of interest must be regarded as a threat.

An analogy which best describes the situation is that you do not see the AFL's major corporate sponsor, Coca-Cola, promoting a direct competitor's brand.

In Victoria, for example, Australian football has a dominant market position which is in no small way due to the very strong franchises such as Collingwood, Essendon and Carlton.

Other football codes would love to make their game more interesting to Australian football followers by piggy-backing on the strength of AFL clubs.

The Commission is also concerned about the potential impact on junior development if AFL clubs are directly or indirectly involved in the running and promotion of other football codes.

What the AFL wants to ensure is that young people grow up dreaming of playing Australian football for an AFL club.

AFL clubs can still lease their grounds for use by other sports – in fact the Commission encourages clubs to do so – thus generating revenue for AFL clubs through ground rental income, catering rights and signage.

The only stipulation is that any rental arrangements should not prevent AFL matches from being programmed at any venue.

Another new rule, **Rule 41**, relating to private ownership of clubs, was also adopted by the AFL Commission in 1996.

Each club's licence agreement to participate in the AFL competition restricts any individual person from exercising more than 5 per cent of the voting rights in any club and Rule 41 leaves no doubt about the private ownership of clubs.

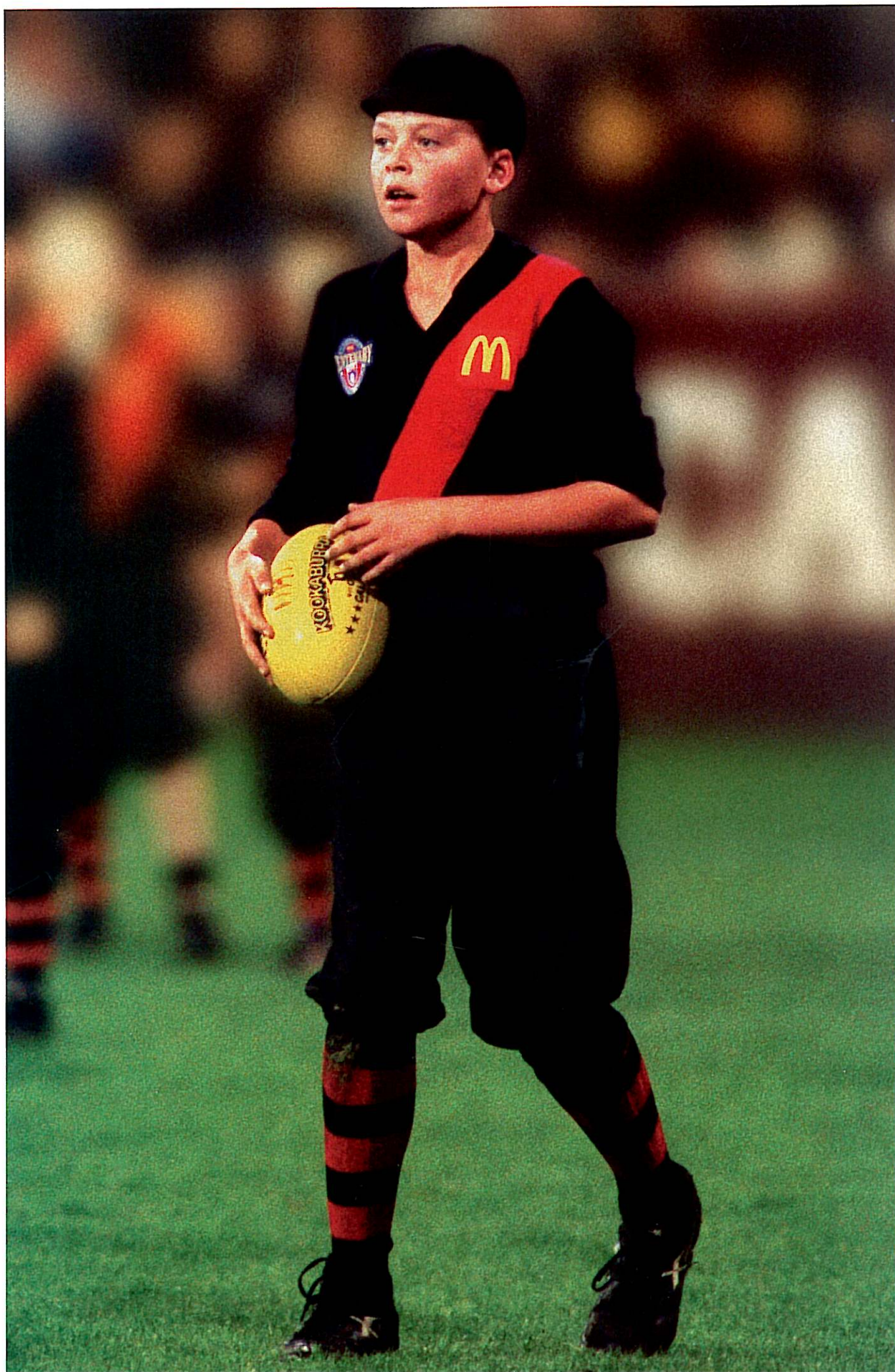
The Commission is totally opposed to private ownership of clubs because it has found that private ownership alienates club supporters, members and sponsors.

These groups are not prepared to back a club in the same numbers because of the perception that what they are contributing to is not going to the club but instead to wealthy, private owners.

That is why the Commission was actively involved in converting the Sydney and Brisbane clubs from being privately owned to ones which are membership based.

THE FUTURE: AFL POLICY INCLUDES LARGE INVESTMENTS IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF PLAYERS, FROM THE VERY YOUNG, PROMOTED THROUGH THE McDONALD'S AUSKICK COACHING PROGRAM, THROUGH TO NATIONAL YOUTH TITLES, AT THE UNDER 16 AND UNDER 18 LEVELS.

DURING 1996, THE AFL PROVIDED MORE THAN \$5.2 MILLION TO THE GRASS ROOTS OF FOOTBALL. THE YOUNG MAN, PICTURED, WAS REPRESENTING ESSENDON IN THE McDONALD'S LITTLE LEAGUE DURING THE RE-ENACTMENT ROUND ON MAY 8, 1996.





NEW LOOK: THE MERGER OF THE BRISBANE FOOTBALL CLUB WITH THE FITZROY FOOTBALL CLUB HAS CREATED A NEW ENTITY FROM THE START OF THE 1997 SEASON. ALASTAIR LYNCH, A FORMER FITZROY STAR, AND ONE OF BRISBANE'S TOP PLAYERS, WAS APPOINTED CO-CAPTAIN OF THE NEW CLUB.



FAREWELL: FITZROY FOOTBALL CLUB, ONE OF THE LEAGUE'S FOUNDATION CLUBS, MADE A SAD FAREWELL FROM THE COMPETITION, AS A CLUB IN ITS OWN RIGHT, IN A ROUND 22 MATCH AGAINST FREMANTLE IN PERTH. THE LIONS LAST TEAM, AND COACH, IS PICTURED ABOVE.

## MERGERS



### MERGE POLICY CHANGED

After some ten years of public debate, and several unsuccessful attempts, the question of club mergers was the dominant off field issue faced by football in 1996.

On Thursday, July 4, 1996, the AFL Commission and its member clubs reached agreement on a proposal for the Brisbane and Fitzroy Football Clubs to merge at the end of the 1996 season. The Boards of the Melbourne and Hawthorn Football Clubs each voted unanimously for the two clubs to merge, but at meetings in September Melbourne members voted in favour of the merger proposal, while it was strongly rejected by Hawthorn's members. ►►

The events which led to the first merger in 100 seasons, started on Friday, June 28, 1996, when the Supreme Court of Victoria approved an application from Nauru Insurance (Vic.) Co. Pty. Ltd., to appoint an administrator, Michael Brennan of accountants Ernst and Young, to administer the affairs of the Fitzroy F.C.

Fitzroy's debt to Nauru Insurance was \$1.25 million and was the club's only secured creditor. From the time of his appointment, all decision making powers relating to the club rested with Mr. Brennan.

Also on July 4, an earlier meeting of AFL clubs indicated by overwhelming majority that they would not support a proposal for North Melbourne and Fitzroy to merge because the proposed list size for the merged club – 50 – and the salary cap allowance of \$400,000 were too high.

When finally agreeing to the proposal for Brisbane and Fitzroy to merge, Mr. Brennan indicated it was the best available option for Fitzroy's creditors.

Key elements of the merger agreement, which the AFL Commission believed was in the best interests of the competition, included:

- ▶ A \$6 million support package from the AFL.
- ▶ The merged club would trade as the Brisbane Lions Australian Football Club, subject to the name being available.
- ▶ Fitzroy's colors and the lion emblem would be retained in the jumper for the new club.
- ▶ At least eight Fitzroy players would be included on the Brisbane list for 1997.
- ▶ Brisbane would have a player list of 44 in 1997 reducing to 42 in 1998, the same as every other club.
- ▶ The merged club would have a salary cap allowance above the level which applies to other clubs of \$300,000 in 1997, \$200,000 in 1998 and \$100,000 in 1999.
- ▶ The merged club will play 11 premierships games per season at the 'Gabbie' and as many away games as possible at Optus Oval and the MCG in Melbourne.

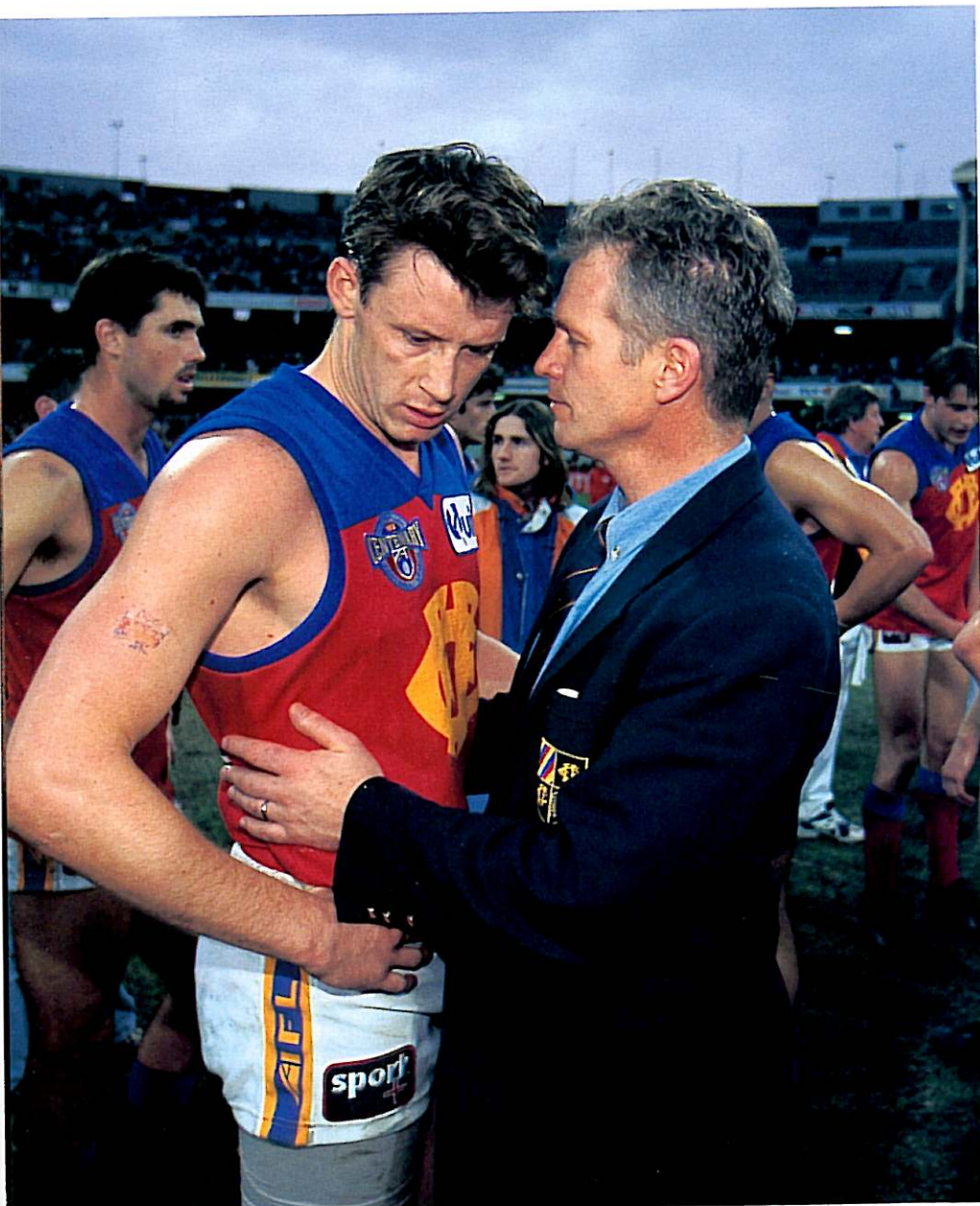
While the AFL Commission believes that the Brisbane-Fitzroy merger was the best outcome for the competition, it recognises that the inability of Fitzroy to continue in its own right was a fact with which it was difficult for the club's supporters to cope.

In an ideal world, no one wanted to see a founding club of the competition be unable to continue as a separate entity but because of the emotion involved, it is almost impossible to discuss football in economic terms.

The harsh reality, though, of 1996 was that with debts of more than \$3 million and an administrator appointed by Nauru Insurance to run the club, the future for Fitzroy was going to be in a different form.

While part of a new entity, the Fitzroy colors and Lion live on, as well as the club's history and memorabilia.

**SADNESS:** FITZROY FOOTBALL CLUB FAREWELLED ITS LOYAL SUPPORTERS IN ITS LAST MELBOURNE MATCH, THE ROUND 21 GAME AGAINST RICHMOND AT THE MCG. EMOTIONS RAN HIGH AT THE END OF THE GAME. COACH ALAN MCCONNELL, THE CLUB'S LAST COACH, AND CAPTAIN BRAD BOYD EMBRACED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GROUND. BOYD IS ONE OF EIGHT FITZROY PLAYERS WHO WILL PLAY WITH THE MERGED BRISBANE-FITZROY CLUB IN 1997.



After the Melbourne-Hawthorn debate, the AFL Commission re-assessed its merger policy, and decided to withdraw the \$6 million incentive package which was developed after consultation with clubs during June, 1995.

The Commission withdrew the merger package for three reasons.

- Firstly, it was apparent after the emotion generated by members' meetings held by Melbourne and Hawthorn that there was little likelihood of clubs pursuing the merger option in the foreseeable future. It was clear that regardless of the considered opinions of the clubs' Boards, the chance of receiving adequate member support is minimal.

Notwithstanding this fact, clubs wishing to explore merger options with the Commission in the future are welcome to do so, but each case will be considered on its merits.

The Commission's decision as to whether or not to provide any financial assistance will, in each case, be significantly influenced by how much of any assistance package remains in football. Before considering any proposal, the Commission would also have to be satisfied that the merger proposal has strong support from the members of the clubs involved.

- Secondly, it became evident during events and public discussion surrounding the financial collapse of Fitzroy, and the merger debate relating to Melbourne and Hawthorn, that the AFL's \$6 million assistance package was regarded as the ultimate safety net for the clubs and their creditors. There was a view that the package could allow future directors to manage a club with the confident knowledge that if insolvency occurs, a merger, albeit under administration, would enable directors to be absolved from financial responsibility for the club's debts.

The Commission has also made it clear that it is unlikely in future to use competition funds to pay out the debts of failed clubs. The Commission adopted this approach with Fitzroy in the interests of football, and to help preserve a football tradition, rather than simply let the club die. However, this also had the effect of providing a safety net for clubs which takes away the financial accountability which club directors must accept under the law.

- Thirdly, the Commission will assess the use of the competition's money in light of what is best for the competition at that time. Of the \$6 million assistance package provided to the Brisbane-Fitzroy merger, \$3.5 million was spent paying out debts incurred by the insolvent Fitzroy FC.

The Commission retains the view that mergers are the preferred path to the future for Melbourne clubs with small supporter bases. However, the Commission fully acknowledges the right of club members to choose to go it alone, or even, as many suggested during 1996, to die rather than merge.

Existing strategies adopted by the Commission which assist the financially weaker clubs will be maintained. These include the draft, salary cap, and revenue equalisation.

The sole purpose of these mechanisms is to assist financially weaker clubs, and thus, in turn, to produce a more even competition.

While the AFL will continue to build the revenue streams for the competition and so, payments to clubs, the financial responsibility for each club rests firmly with its directors and members.



FLOATED: MELBOURNE PRESIDENT IAN RIDLEY, AND HAWTHORN PRESIDENT, BRIAN COLEMAN, DISPLAY MOOTED GUERNSEY DESIGNS FOR THE PROPOSED MELBOURNE HAWKS MERGED CLUB. MEMBERS FROM MELBOURNE VOTED 'YES' FOR A MERGER, BUT HAWTHORN MEMBERS REJECTED THE OPTION. THE TWO CLUBS WILL CONTINUE IN THEIR OWN RIGHT IN 1997.



HAPPY DAYS: BRISBANE FANS HAD MUCH TO CELEBRATE IN 1996, A YEAR IN WHICH THE CLUB WON TWO FINALS AT THE 'GABBA, REACHED ITS HIGHEST POSITION ON THE TABLE (3RD), AND WAS THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER IN A MERGER ARRANGEMENT WITH THE FITZROY FOOTBALL CLUB ... AND CLUB CHAMPION MICHAEL VOSS TOOK OUT THE BROWNLOW MEDAL.

## SALARY CAP

### DRAMATIC RISE IN PLAYER SALARIES

The salary cap, along with the draft and income equalisation, are the major instruments used to maintain an even competition.

How the salary cap is set and the various ingredients which determine its level are often the subject of debate.

The level of the salary cap also recognises the contribution of the competition's most valuable asset, its players, and is part of an overall package of benefits which form part of a collective bargaining agreement between the AFL, on behalf of the clubs, and the AFL Players' Association.

During the last five seasons, total player payments, including Ansett Australia Cup, finals and injury payments, have risen by 80.39 per cent from \$26,588,000 in 1992 to \$47,961,000 in 1996.

In 1992, the average player salary was \$47,940 while in 1996, the average salary was \$77,695.

In 1992, 20 players were paid \$100,000 or more while in 1996, 140 players were paid \$100,000 or more.

The differences between 1989 and 1996 are even more startling (see chart opposite)

Income streams which determine the salary cap are:

- ▶ Broadcast rights and finals revenue, controlled by the AFL.
- ▶ Club membership and gate receipts from the premiership season, received and promoted by the clubs and enhanced by AFL strategies.
- ▶ In 1996 revenue from these sources was more than \$73 million. This is expected to rise to more than \$78 million in 1997.

	1996	1997 (forecast)
<b>CLUB REVENUE:</b> Premiership season gross gate receipts and club membership (including club support package):	\$43.950 million	\$46.895 million
<b>AFL REVENUE:</b> gross finals and broadcast rights revenue:	\$29.520 million	\$31.865 million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$73.470 million</b>	<b>\$78.760 million</b>

In 1996, the salary cap per club was \$2.550 million (total \$40.8 million) representing 55.5 per cent of the above income streams.

In 1997, the salary cap per club will be \$2.9 million (total \$46.4 million) representing 58.9 per cent of the above income streams.

This increase is in line with AFL Commission policy to move the salary cap progressively to 60 per cent of the key revenue streams.

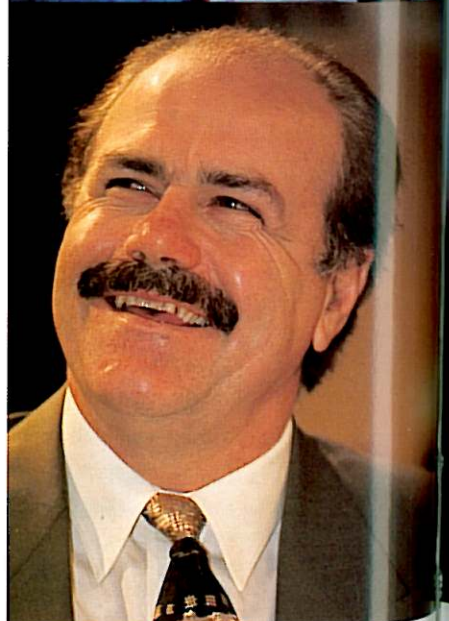
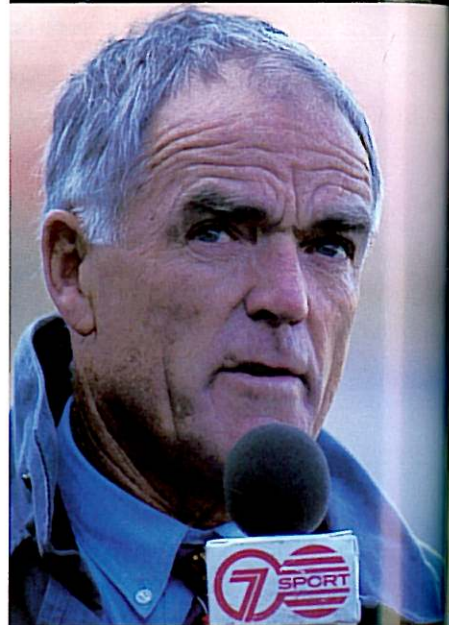
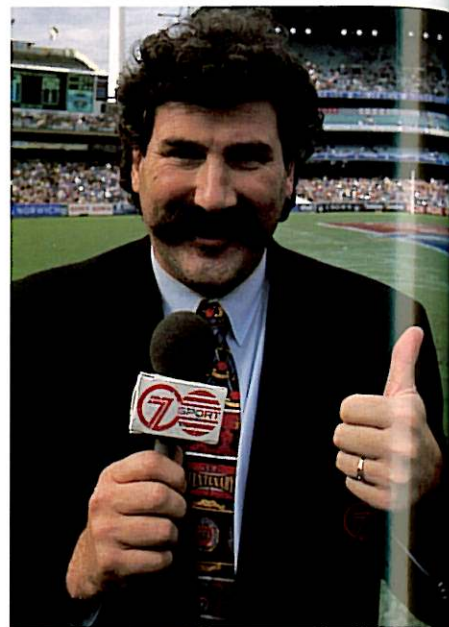
The increase in 1997 represents \$350,000 per club and of that amount, an extra \$150,000 per club will come from the AFL via an increased distribution to clubs.

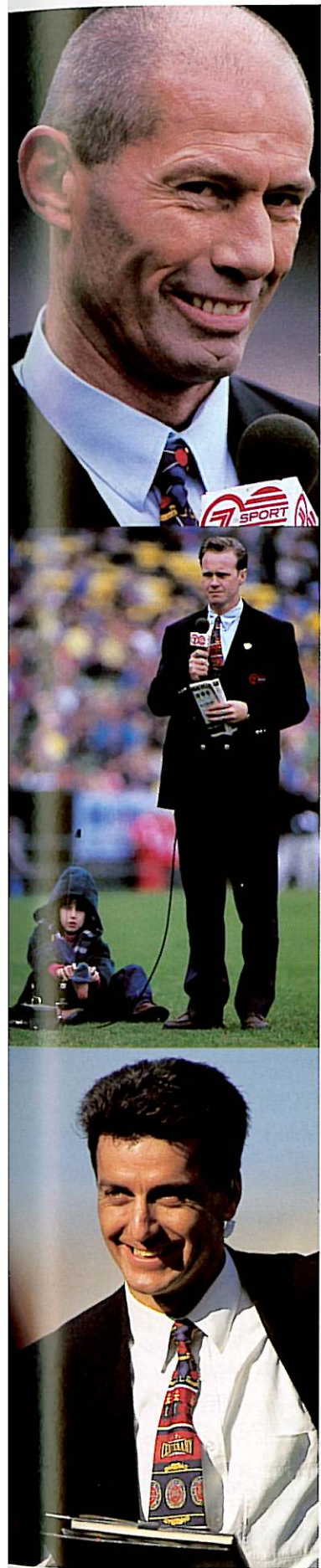
On average, the other \$200,000 per club will be funded via increased gate receipts and club membership.

It is recognised that clubs with larger membership bases and attendance figures will be able to meet the balance of the increase in salary cap payments from those revenue streams but clubs with smaller membership and support bases will find it more difficult.

There is no direct link between the salary cap and AFL distribution because two of the key revenue streams on which the salary cap is based are directly controlled by clubs and their ability to attract annual paid up members, assisted by AFL strategies.

That is why the AFL Commission continues to stress the importance to clubs of a substantial, sustainable support base.

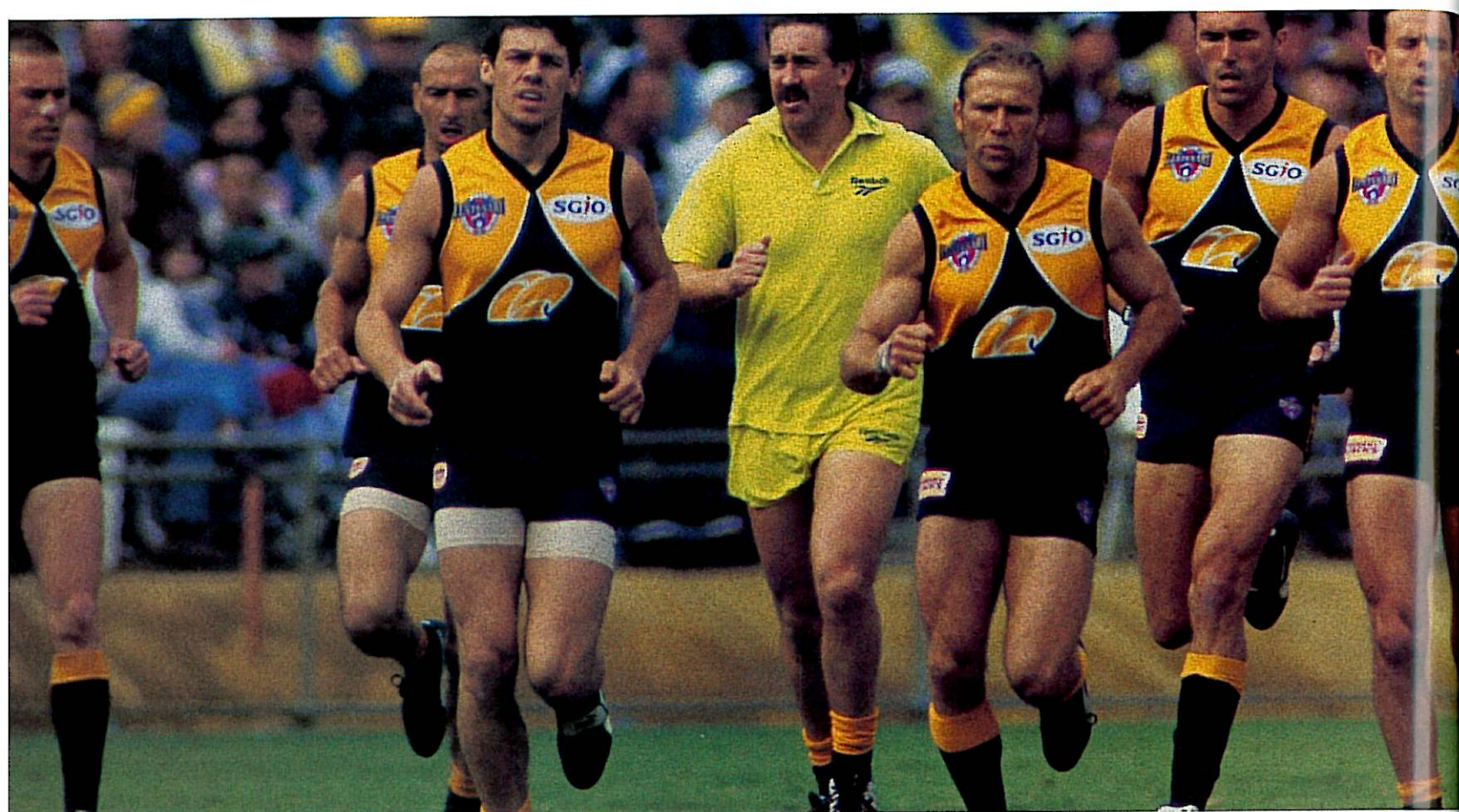




MAKING THE LINK: SEVEN, THROUGH ITS BROADCASTERS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ROBERT DIPIERDOMENICO, DON SCOTT, RUSSELL MORRIS [AND FRIEND], JOHN RUSSO, LEIGH MATTHEWS, AND NEIL KERLEY) NOT ONLY PROVIDE THE LINK BETWEEN THE GAME AND THE FANS, BUT ALSO, THROUGH ITS TV RIGHTS AGREEMENT WITH THE AFL, PROVIDES FOR ONE OF THE PLANKS OF THE SALARY CAP.

#### SUMMARY OF AFL PLAYER PAYMENTS 1989 - 1996

	Under \$20,000	\$20,000 to \$29,999	\$30,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$59,999	\$60,000 to \$69,999	\$70,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to \$89,999	\$90,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 or more
1989	145	95	82	69	57	41	18	11	5	4
1990	153	96	82	61	50	43	29	8	8	8
1991	148	92	80	76	52	50	27	12	11	17
1992	132	69	91	65	52	46	47	16	16	20
1993	103	85	67	68	50	44	37	27	18	34
1994	57	84	80	58	58	57	32	33	25	46
1995	49	63	70	76	49	52	41	35	34	100
1996	6	64	59	73	58	49	53	42	29	140



## THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

### AFL AND THE STATES

Australian football's national development plan, in which the AFL invested \$5.2 million in 1996 (see chart page 33), is administered via the Australian Football Foundation (AFF).

The AFF issues development licences to each State and Territory and monitors the performance of the various State and Territory development foundations in key areas such as participation numbers, provision of career pathways for elite juniors, and the general administration of local football.

A joint New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory development foundation was operational for the first time in 1996 with a major focus being the inclusion of the NSW/A.C.T. Rams in the Victorian State Football League's under 18 competition (VSFL).

In their first year, the Rams were runners-up to the Northern Knights in the VSFL Grand Final. The Rams also had four players drafted by AFL clubs at the AFL National Draft in October. Since the VSFL's inception in 1992 – the VSFL also includes the Tassie Mariners – half the players drafted by AFL clubs have been products of the VSFL competition.

Another initiative during 1996 was the establishment of the Northern Australia Development Foundation with specific responsibility for development in northern Western Australia, the Northern Territory and northern Queensland. A major emphasis will be on football development throughout Aboriginal communities and in addition to financial support from the AFL, the NADF will be sponsored by CRA Ltd.

The \$5.2 million distribution tells only part of the funding relationship between the AFL and the various States and Territories; another \$4.745 million was distributed to the various States in transfer fees paid by AFL clubs when they draft players.

Under the transfer fee formula, AFL clubs pay via the State body \$13,700 upon drafting a player, another \$13,700 when the player makes his AFL debut, \$10,950 when the player plays his tenth game and \$10,950 at the start of his second year or a total of \$49,300.

Transfer fee payments by State or Territory in 1996 were:

	\$
Western Australia	1,162,740
South Australia	840,880
Tasmania	130,860
Northern Territory	99,030
Queensland	109,340
NSW/A.C.T. Development Foundation	82,900
A.C.T.AFL	10,000
VSFL	2,239,270
NSWAFL	70,930
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,745,950</b>

This total of \$4.745 million compares to the \$1.979 million in transfer fees paid by AFL clubs in 1993.



**GO EAGLES GO:** THE SUCCESS OF THE WEST COAST EAGLES HAS BEEN AN UNDERPINNING FACTOR IN THE SUCCESS OF THE GROWTH OF THE AFL FROM A COMMUNITY COMPETITION, TO A NATIONAL POWER. THE AFL CONTRIBUTED \$5.2 MILLION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF FOOTBALL AT ALL LEVELS, IN ALL STATES, DURING 1996.

The other key point about the relationship between the AFL and the various States and Territories is that different circumstances prevail in each case.

In Victoria, the level of funding recognises that the State produces more than 50 per cent of players at AFL level and the bulk of transfer fees are divided among the Victorian Metropolitan Football League (\$558,000 in 1996) and Victorian Country Football League (\$532,000 in 1996) and their respective clubs.

Different funding arrangements apply in Western Australia and South Australia. In those cases, the West Australian Football League and the South Australian National Football League own the two licences of the AFL clubs based in those States. The WAFL owns 80 per cent of the West Coast Eagles, with the balance held by Indian Pacific Pty Ltd.

Each year, the AFL clubs contribute substantial revenue to both States which in turn is invested in State football by both bodies.

The Eagles and Dockers contribute a total of about \$4 million to the WA Football Commission from their combined surplus while each club also pays about \$1 million in rental for the use of Subiaco Oval and the WACA ground to the WAFC.

The Adelaide Football Club paid \$1.46 million from its surplus to the SANFL in 1996 while the SANFL earns at least another \$2 million per year in catering rights, corporate box sales and general rental

from AFL matches played at Football Park, which is owned by the SANFL.

The total revenue picture including revenue going back to State football in Western Australia and South Australia from the four AFL clubs present in those markets, along with transfer fees, is taken into account when development grants are allocated by the AFL Commission.

#### HOW THE AFL FUNDS NATIONAL FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

	\$
NSW/A.C.T. Rams	160,000
NSW/A.C.T.	700,000
Northern Territory	195,000
Queensland	550,000
Tasmania	291,000
Tassie Mariners	160,000
National under 16 and under 18 championships	346,000
Victorian Football Development Foundation	1,094,000
Victorian Country Football League	155,000
Victorian Metropolitan Football League	135,000
VFL	37,500
VAFA	20,000
VSFL under 18	1,387,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,230,500</b>



IN CHARGE: THE AFL COMMISSION WAS GRANTED FULL POWERS TO RUN THE AFL COMPETITION FROM JULY 1993, WHEN THE AFL CLUBS ACCEPTED THE CRAWFORD REPORT ON THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE. THE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABOVE ARE: BACK ROW: RON EVANS, GRAEME SAMUEL, TERRY O'CONNOR, COLIN CARTER, WAYNE JACKSON (APPOINTED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 2.10.96) FRONT ROW: JOHN KENNEDY, (CHAIRMAN) ROSS OAKLEY (RESIGNED AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 15.11.96)

#### THE AFL AND THE CLUBS



### THE EVOLUTION OF THE AFL COMMISSION

December 4, 1985, is one of the most significant dates in the history of football because it forever changed the way the game is administered.

On that date, the then VFL Board of Directors voted to appoint a Commission with specific powers to run the competition. Before that historic vote, the competition had been run by a Board of Directors consisting of a representative from each club.

The vote by the Board of Directors referred all responsibilities and powers to the Commission to run the competition, with the following exceptions, where the clubs retained the power:

- A to admit any Club to, or expel or suspend any Club, from the competition.
- B to amalgamate or join in any other League.
- C to take over the administration of any additional football club.
- D to approve the move of any Clubs out of Victoria.
- E to provide any financial assistance to any Club (other than by payment of advances of final dividends) or to guarantee the obligations of any Club.

F except as expressly authorised in any budget approved by the Board of Directors, to purchase or dispose of any capital asset with a cost of more than \$100,000.

G except as expressly authorised in any budget approved by the Board of Directors, to borrow any money otherwise than for the ordinary purposes of the League or to give any security for any such borrowing.

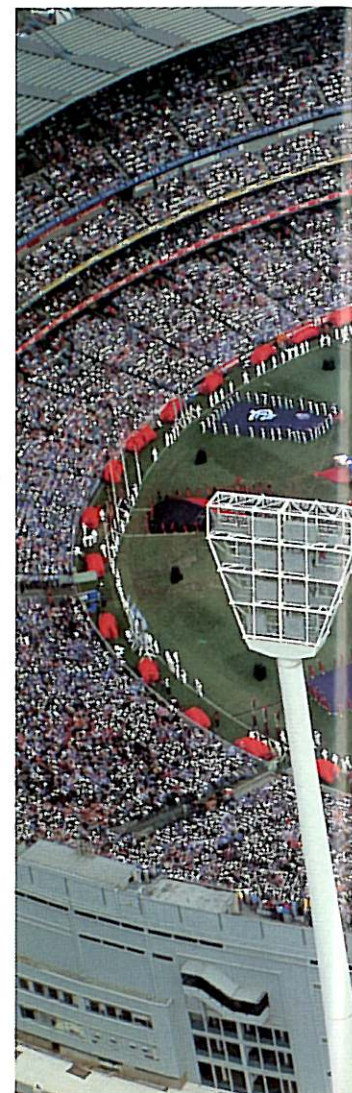
H to undertake any major capital works (including major works in relation to existing assets of the League) involving a total expenditure of more than \$100,000.

I to exercise any of the powers of the League in owning or operating any television or radio station.

J to appoint representatives of the League on the National Football Championships Pty. Ltd.

K to amend any Laws of the Game.

That structure continued until August 11, 1992, when the AFL Board of Directors accepted a recommendation from the AFL Commission to conduct an independent review of the AFL administrative structure.



CLUB POWER: THE AFL CLUBS CEDED MANY ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE AFL COMMISSION IN AUGUST 1992, BUT THE CLUBS RETAIN RESERVE POWERS IN RELATION TO THE ADMISSION, RE-LOCATION AND MERGING OF CLUBS. THE STRENGTH OF THE CLUB SYSTEM IS A KEY POLICY PLANK OF THE AFL, AND THE CLUBS WERE CELEBRATED DURING THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PRE-GAME ENTERTAINMENT AT THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL.



Mr. David Crawford, a senior partner of KPMG was subsequently appointed to conduct the review.

On July 19, 1993, the AFL Board of Directors unanimously approved new Memorandum and Articles of Association which reflected the recommendations of the Crawford Report.

This date was effectively the last meeting of the Board of Directors as the Crawford Report recommended that all powers and responsibilities to run the competition be referred to the AFL Commission.

The Clubs, however, retained specific reserve powers in relation to the admission, re-location and merging of clubs.

Any decision by the Commission to admit a new club, re-locate a club or approve the merger of clubs, can be reversed by the Clubs at a duly constituted meeting of Clubs called within 14 days of receiving formal notice of a Commission decision to admit or re-locate a club or approve the merger of clubs.

A two-thirds majority of Clubs is required to reverse any such decision by the Commission. Three Clubs may requisition a meeting of clubs to reverse a decision by the Commission to admit or re-locate a club or approve the merger of clubs. Clubs cannot be merged unless the clubs who are party to the merger first agree.

Clubs also have a reserve power on the possible expulsion of a club from the competition. Any decision by the AFL Commission to expel a Club must be ratified at a general meeting of Clubs on a vote by simple majority.

While the AFL Commission was given wider powers to run the game when the recommendations of the Crawford Report were adopted, Clubs retained the right to appoint the Commission.



CLUBS: NEW CLUBS AND NEW LOGOS WILL ARISE IN 1997: THE NEW CLUBS ARE PORT ADELAIDE AND BRISBANE, THE NEW LOGOS BELONG TO HAWTHORN AND WESTERN BULLDOGS.

## EXPANSION



### WELCOME TO PORT ADELAIDE

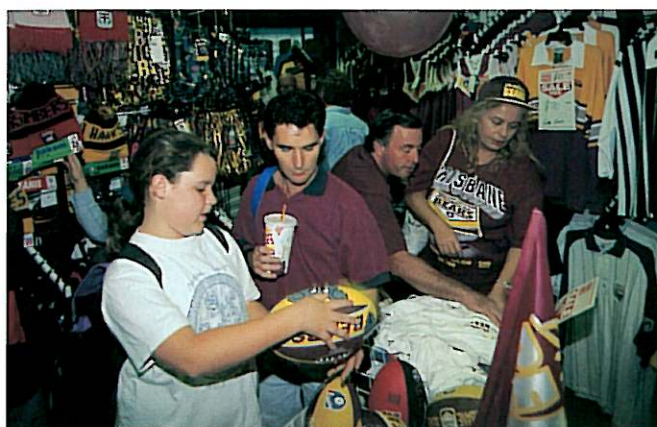
The entry of the Port Adelaide Football Club to the 1997 Coca-Cola AFL premiership season was finalised when player rules for its admission were approved by the AFL Commission, after consultation with the clubs, during May, 1996.

Port Power's entry completes a key component of the AFL Commission's five year plan (August, 1994) which highlighted the importance of having second teams in Perth (Fremantle) and Adelaide (Port Adelaide) for national balance of the competition, and to provide those two vital Australian football markets with an AFL match each week.

Because of the size of those markets, including population base and corporate sector, the AFL Commission regarded both as priorities ahead of other cities or regions mentioned from time to time as potential homes for AFL clubs.

It is important to consider why the initial decision was taken in 1986 to add the West Coast Eagles and Brisbane Football Clubs for the 1987 season followed by Adelaide (1991), Fremantle (1995), and Port Adelaide (1997).

Expansion was necessary to save the competition from financial collapse. New markets provided more spectators, club members, TV audiences and corporate support while at the same time promoting participation at the grass roots level.



**PURCHASING POWER:** THE BRISBANE FOOTBALL CLUB'S LICENSED PRODUCT SHOP SEES A CONSTANT STREAM OF FANS SEEKING A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR FAVORITE TEAM.

All of those objectives have been met during the past 10 years, as indicated by the key indicators of competition health outlined in this report.

For example, the AFL estimates that the New South Wales and Queensland markets generate at least \$5 million per year for the competition through their impact on TV rights and corporate sponsorship which in turn forms part of the revenue distributed by the AFL to the clubs.

It is also estimated that club sponsorships are enhanced by another \$1 million per year because of TV coverage in the two northern markets with the net benefit to the competition and clubs being between \$6 and \$7 million per year.

**ELEATION:** SYDNEY'S SUCCESS IN 1996 SAW A HUGE INCREASE IN ATTENDANCES, AND PASSION FOR THE GAME, AND THE SWANS IN THE HARBOR CITY; WHILE IN ADELAIDE, THE UNDERLYING PASSION FOR FOOTBALL IN THE CITY OF CHURCHES SAW THE ADELAIDE CROWS WITH THE HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP OF ANY AFL CLUB.



In recent years, the AFL Commission has had regular approaches concerning the possible entry of teams from areas such as Tasmania, Canberra, the Northern Territory and northern Queensland.

While markets such as those will remain on the AFL Commission agenda, the Commission believes the maximum number of teams in the competition should remain at 16 for the foreseeable future, and it is unlikely there will be a vacancy in the competition.

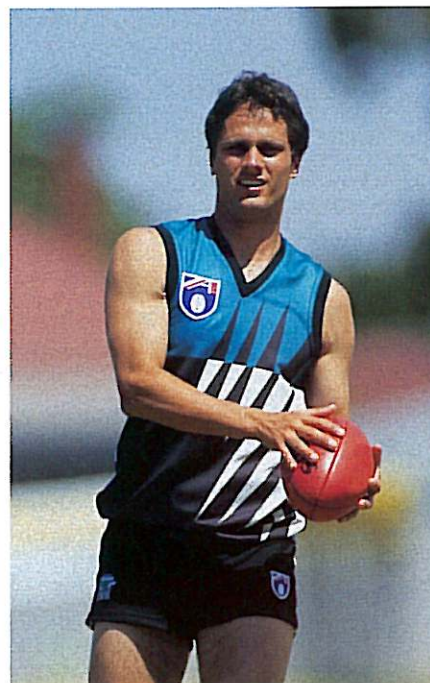
The fact that the National Basketball League has reduced the number of its teams, particularly those in some of the smaller markets, and the same issue is on the rugby league agenda, typify the factors which football also has to take into account.

With the financially stronger clubs generating between \$10 million and \$14 million each year, cities or regions wanting an AFL club must be able to demonstrate to the AFL Commission they can generate that level of revenue to sustain a club, including through the not so good times which all clubs experience.

Some of the early problems experienced by West Coast and Brisbane as new clubs, and Sydney in a so-called "foreign" market, reinforce the need to ensure that any new club is financially viable in the long term.

As the AFL competition moves into the next century, it may well be that one or two clubs may consider re-locating to another city or region.

Options such as Hobart, Canberra, Darwin and northern Queensland will be among those considered. If we look 5-10 years out, a second team in Sydney – where the population will be between six and seven million – is another possibility, assuming of course that the Sydney Football Club continues the outstanding progress made in the last year or so.



**NEW CHUM:** FORMER ESSENDON CHAMPION, AND BROWNLOW MEDALLIST, GAVIN WANGANEEN RETURNED HOME TO PLAY FOR THE NEW AFL CLUB, PORT ADELAIDE FOOTBALL CLUB, PLAYING AS PORT POWER. WANGANEEN STARTED HIS SENIOR CAREER WITH PORT ADELAIDE IN THE SANFL, AND, AS A PLAYER OUT OF CONTRACT, WAS ABLE TO BE PICKED UP BY PORT ADELAIDE UNDER DRAFT CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE TO THE NEW CLUB.





## ACTING AS A CORPORATE CITIZEN

The AFL Commission's Mission Statement defines four major responsibilities. They are that the AFL exists to:

- 1 Develop and manage the AFL competition to ensure it is Australia's most successful national sports competition in the entertainment industry.
- 2 Maximise the economic, cultural and social benefits of Australian football to its member clubs, the players, the football fraternity and the community at large.
- 3 Promote and develop participation and support for Australian football throughout Australia and overseas.
- 4 Foster good citizenship, both on and off the playing field.

In relation to the fourth responsibility, the AFL Commission has adopted several initiatives and policies.

In 1995, the AFL Commission became the first Australian sporting organisation to adopt a special rule and procedures to deal with on-field racial abuse.

The issue continued to be addressed in 1996 with a public education program involving a television commercial and advertisements in *The Football Record* carrying the message that any form of racial abuse is not acceptable.

Via AFL clubs, a brochure was distributed to each player outlining the rule and how the AFL has acted to counter racial and religious abuse.

Another element agreed to as part of the overall program – to review the development of Australian football in Aboriginal communities – was completed in 1996 which led to the formation of the Northern Australia Football Development Foundation.

The AFL Commission also provided financial support for the production of a television documentary on the history of Aboriginal players in Australian football, as part of the Centenary Season celebrations.

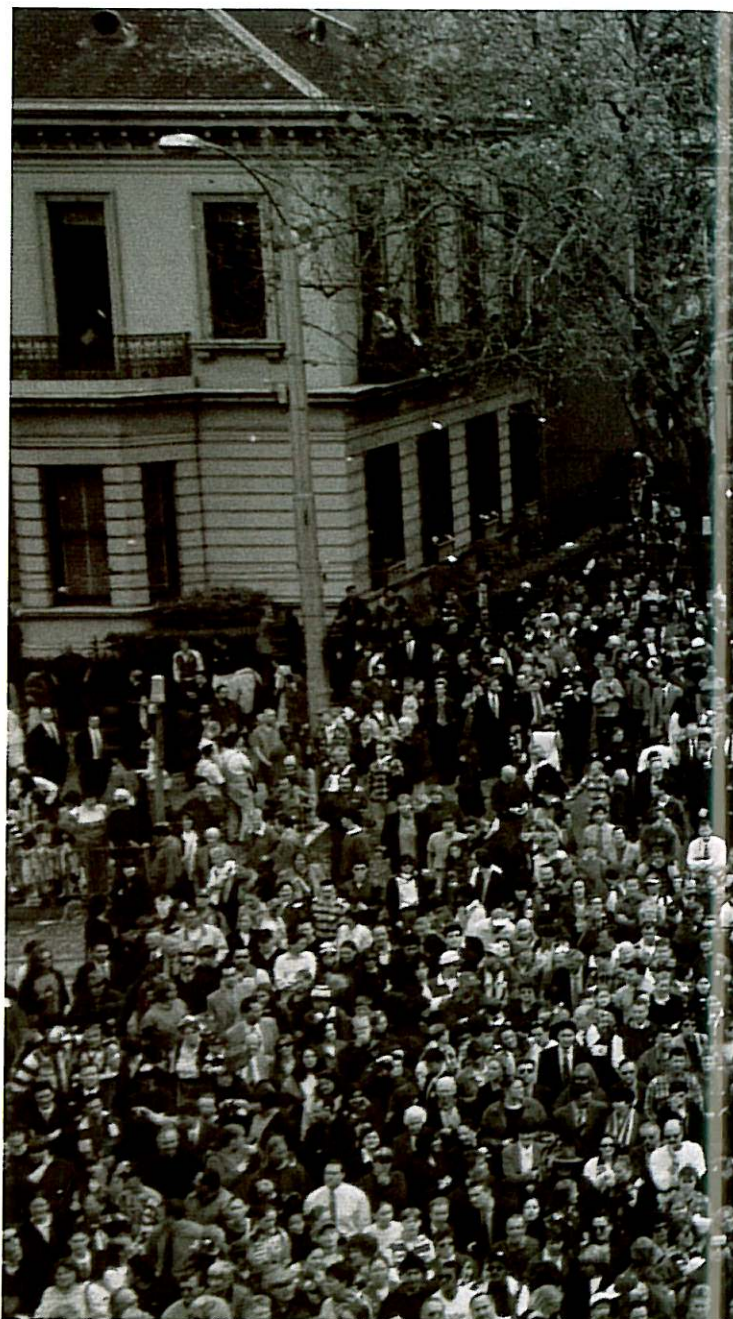
Two cases of on-field racial abuse, (one at senior level, the other in the reserves) were dealt with in 1996 through confidential mediation with the assistance of the Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria. This procedure is in line with the racial and religious vilification rule.

The AFL drug code and testing program is designed to ensure that as far as is humanly possible, the AFL competition remains free of performance enhancing drugs but it also involves the education of players and club officials on the dangers of drug abuse.

Another important area for the AFL is the support it provides the AFL Players' Association for player welfare programs. Under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement between the AFL and the Players' Association, in 1996, the AFL paid \$650,000 from licensing revenue to the Players' Association with 40 per cent of this amount designed for a second career plan for players. In 1997, this payment from licensing revenue to the Players' Association will increase to \$700,000.

The AFL has also agreed to pay \$50,000 per year to the Players' Association for the three years of the collective bargaining agreement to establish a player welfare advisory service.

As far as the broader community is concerned, the AFL Foundation (see page 53), which was established in 1984, provides financial support to groups



and individuals in the community through Golden Opportunity Awards, in the following categories:

**CATEGORY A** - to overcome a social or educational disability of an individual.

**CATEGORY B** - to assist with the further development of skills or exceptional talent by a young person in a particular field of endeavour who would otherwise be unable to realise the full potential of such talents.

**CATEGORY C** - to assist a specific ongoing project which will benefit other members of the community in a clearly defined and original way.

**CATEGORY D** - to assist a dependent family of an actively participating footballer who is seriously or permanently injured, or killed, while playing or training.



Another major community project was the production and distribution of a teachers resource kit to schools throughout Australia which uses the theme of Australian football in a variety of subjects which make up the national school curriculum. This was a major component of the Centenary Season.

On another front, the AFL's Group Training Company (page 52) completed its second full year of operation in 1996.

With the support of the Federal Government, the AFL's traineeship program was established in late 1994 to provide young people with training so that they can ultimately find employment within the football industry in particular and sport in general.

Traineeships are open to young men and women and through various TAFE colleges, training is provided in areas such as sports administration, ground maintenance, catering and hospitality.

### ONE GAME FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS



**How Australian  
Football has acted to  
counteract racial and  
religious abuse**



**EUPHORIA:** THE ANNUAL GRAND FINAL PARADE THROUGH THE STREETS OF MELBOURNE ON GRAND FINAL EVE IS AN INDICATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE AFL ON THE WIDER COMMUNITY. THE AFL CHARTER RECOGNISES THE AFL'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY. DURING 1996, THE AFL COMMISSION INSTITUTED SEVERAL INITIATIVES TO FULFILL THIS RESPONSIBILITY, INCLUDING ENHANCING ITS GROUP TRAINING SCHEME, AND WORKING WITH THE AFL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION TO DEVELOP PLAYER WELFARE PROGRAMS.

**UNITY:** DURING 1996, THE AFL DISTRIBUTED A DETAILED BROCHURE TO ALL PLAYERS NOTING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, AND NOTING THE PROCEDURES THE AFL HAS PUT IN PLACE TO COUNTER RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS ABUSE.

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WINNERS: BRISBANE CAPTAIN ROGER MERRETT  
AND STAR MID-FIELDER GILBERT MCADAM  
CELEBRATE ONE OF BRISBANE'S MANY HIGH  
MOMENTS DURING THE CLUB'S WONDERFUL 1996  
SEASON. MERRETT RETIRED AT SEASON'S END,  
AND, AFTER REACHING 300 GAMES DURING THE  
SEASON, BECAME AN AUTOMATIC LIFE MEMBER OF  
THE AFL. ELEVEN NEW LIFE MEMBERS WERE  
PRONOUNCED AT THE AFL'S ANNUAL MEETING IN  
FEBRUARY, 1997.





## FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

### YOUNG STARS CONFIRM EXPANSION POLICY

The outcome of strategies adopted by the AFL Commission for the development of the national competition was never more clearly evident than during the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season.

Our Grand Finalists, North Melbourne and Sydney, were captained by Wayne Carey and Paul Kelly, two young athletes from Wagga Wagga in New South Wales.

The Brownlow Medal was a truly national affair, with joint winners James Hird and Michael Voss making long treks to win football's highest individual award. Hird was born and raised in Canberra but followed a family tradition by playing with Essendon; Voss, born in Orbost, Victoria but raised in Queensland when his family moved there, played with Brisbane. Their tie was one of the Medal's most popular victories.

Look further at club lists and you get a greater feel for the national aspect of the competition as the draft and salary cap continue as fundamental components of an even and financially viable competition.

The West Coast Eagles have, in recent years, drafted some fine young Victorian-born players, headed by Fraser Gehrig from the Murray Bushrangers in north-eastern Victoria;



**FOOTBALL'S MANAGER:** FOOTBALL OPERATIONS MANAGER IAN COLLINS IS IN CHARGE OF ALL THINGS TO DO WITH THE OPERATIONS OF FOOTBALL, FROM THE DRAFT TO THE TRIBUNAL, AND THE MEN IN WHITE.

Brisbane has a mix of Victorians and South Australians on its list, as well as local players, and all clubs have embraced the philosophy of drafting the player they consider the best available, no matter where he resides.

Finals were played in Sydney and Brisbane for the first time, as well as Perth and Melbourne, in keeping with the AFL

Commission's philosophy that all club members and supporters have an equal right to see their team play in a final in their home state if the team wins sufficient games during the season to do so.

During 1996, the AFL Commission appointed Michael Easy as a special investigations officer to assist our Player Payments Commissioner, Ralph Lane, with the policing of the salary cap and draft. This was in line with various recommendations contained in the Commission's five year plan.

After receiving a detailed report from Mr Easy during July, 1996, the AFL Commission fined the Essendon Football Club \$112,000 and removed the club's second round draft selection at the national recruit draft.

Mr. Easy investigated the circumstances surrounding the drafting by Essendon of Ben Doolan in March, 1993. While the investigation cleared Essendon and Doolan of conduct prejudicial to the draft, subsequent charges arose under the AFL's salary cap rules.

Essendon was penalised for breaching the salary cap, failing to lodge contract variations, failing to lodge statutory declarations in



**DRAFT:** THE AFL NATIONAL DRAFT, HELD IN OCTOBER, IS CONSIDERED THE MOST IMPORTANT RECRUITING EVENT IN THE YEAR.



NIGHT OF STARS: BROWNLOW WINNERS MICHAEL VOSS (LEFT WITH BRISBANE COACH AND TEAMMATES) AND JAMES HIRD (RIGHT WITH THE ESSENDON TABLE) WERE WORTHY WINNERS OF THE 1996 BROWNLOW MEDAL.

support of contract variations and failing to provide full and complete details to the Player Payments Commissioner.

The draft and salary cap are only part of the many areas of responsibility under the heading of Football Operations.

Junior development is fundamental to the long term future of football and 1996 produced some satisfying results and also saw some major strategic decisions implemented.

McDonald's joined the AFL as the major national sponsor of junior football development and will no doubt have a very positive impact on grass roots football during the years to come.

McDonald's Auskick player registrations increased to 52,716, up by more than 5000 from 1995. The McDonald's Auskick program introduces children of primary school age to our game.

Nationally, participation in all levels of Australian football increased to 413,450 in 1996 up from 395,087 in 1995.

Many challenges still face Australian football in attracting young players and their families, particularly from the Olympic sports leading up to the Sydney Olympics which will have large sums of money invested in them by the Federal Government and Australian Olympic Committee.

An important breakthrough was achieved late in the year when the Australian Sports Commission announced that it would provide \$300,000 a year for the next three years to establish an Australian football academy linked to the Australian Institute of Sport.

DRAFTED: NATHAN BROWN (LEFT) WAS DRAFTED BY THE WESTERN BULLDOGS, AT NUMBER 10 IN THE AFL NATIONAL DRAFT, AFTER A GREAT SEASON FOR BENDIGO PIONEERS IN THE VSFL. BOWEN LOCKWOOD (GEELONG FALCONS) WAS PICKED UP BY PORT ADELAIDE, AT NUMBER 7 IN THE DRAFT. THE VSFL IS ONE OF THE PRIME SOURCES OF TALENT FOR AFL CLUBS.

The AFL will match this amount dollar for dollar and the decentralised program will involve development squads in each State totalling some 450 with a national squad of 30 ultimately being selected each year after the Australian National Under 16 championships.

Apart from specialised training, the national squad will also have an opportunity to participate in international competition against Gaelic football teams from Ireland.

Participation by the NSW/A.C.T. Rams and Tassie Mariners in the VSFL under 18 competition has given football development in those States a real push.

About three years ago, no player was drafted from Tasmania, a great disappointment for a state which has been such a rich breeding ground for Australian football. In 1996, five Tassie Mariners were drafted, including three in the first nine players selected, while the NSW/A.C.T. Rams had four players drafted.

The AFL Commission invested some \$5.2 million in junior football development in 1996 via the Australian Football Foundation which has now established development foundations in each State and Territory. ►►





EARLY ACTION: CARLTON AND HAWTHORN IN ACTION IN A PRE-SEASON PRACTICE MATCH.

These foundations are responsible for junior development and are accountable for how AFL junior football development grants are spent and addressing issues such as participation rates and Australian football in schools.

The importance of junior development to our future was one of the major reasons why the AFL Commission introduced a new rule, Rule 40, to prevent AFL clubs from being directly or indirectly involved in the running of clubs in other football codes.

A new foundation was established to oversee football development in northern Australia covering the Northern Territory, northern Western Australia and northern Queensland with particular emphasis on development in Aboriginal communities. The northern Australia foundation has also attracted the sponsorship of CRA and Kormilda College in Darwin which will act as a host boarding school for the program

For schools, the AFL's Centenary teachers' resource kit was distributed around Australia

and was enthusiastically received by the various education departments, teachers and schools. The resource kit used football as a theme in a range of subjects in the school curriculum and further promotion of the kit will take place in 1997.

Another element of the development side of the game was the adoption of a rookie rule for AFL clubs. This will allow clubs to select young players outside their AFL list of 42, develop them and then have the right to list them. They can be tied to their club for one or two years, depending on their contract terms, or three years if from overseas.

Rookies must also have a minimum age of 18 and be under 23 on or before January 1 following the national draft in any year. It may well be that we see again players from overseas recruited, as were Jim Stynes and Sean Wight drawn from Ireland by Melbourne during the 1980s. Clubs could even look to some of the American professional sports as new recruiting grounds.

OPPORTUNITY: THE AFL, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM CRA, HAS SET UP A NEW FOUNDATION TO OVERSEE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FOOTBALL IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPMENT IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES. A TEAM FROM DARWIN'S KORMILDA COLLEGE PLAYED A TEAM FROM MELBOURNE'S BILLANOOK COLLEGE AT THE MCG DURING THE 1996 SEASON.



Football operations also involves administering the various rules and regulations which govern the competition including the AFL Tribunal, investigations, video reporting, umpiring, liaison with the AFL Players' Association and the drug code.

A review of the AFL Tribunal in 1996 will lead to a change in its procedure for 1997. An advocate will be appointed to represent the umpires at all hearings instead of Tribunal members leading the cross examination of players and others involved in a case.

While individual cases can cause a great deal of debate, the AFL Tribunal gets the vast majority of decisions right.

In 1996, our review indicated there were possibly three instances where the outcome could be debated, but the Tribunal must make a decision on the spot, and in the broader sense, has played a vital role in ensuring that the laws of the game are enforced and that the game's public appeal and image remain high among the vast majority of football followers who, according to our research, are opposed to on-field breaches of the laws.

During the past year, the AFL Tribunal also took over responsibility for administering the melee rule, formerly handled by the AFL Commission.

The three umpiring system continues to improve and we should not overlook the fact that a number of inexperienced umpires were added to the AFL panel when three umpires were introduced for the 1994 season.

A national development program for umpiring has been established with all States identifying and developing umpires along a career path via State leagues to the AFL.

In 1996, our video review and reporting procedures changed so that field umpires were also responsible for laying charges under the laws of the game, instead of the AFL administration.

Umpires are the independent people appointed to control games and their role in video reporting is an appropriate responsibility.

It is pleasing to report that we again received a clean bill of health via the Australian Sports Drug Agency's drug testing

program in the 1996 season. Apart from testing, the program also has an important education element to it with players and clubs being educated on the issue of drugs in sport. In 1997, the testing program will increase from 232 tests in 1996 at a cost of \$79,300 to 298 tests at a cost of \$109,000 with the increased tests occurring during the pre-season period.

While not being played in 1997, the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Lightning Premiership was a very useful exercise in that it allowed several rules which had been suggested in recent years to be trialled under match conditions.

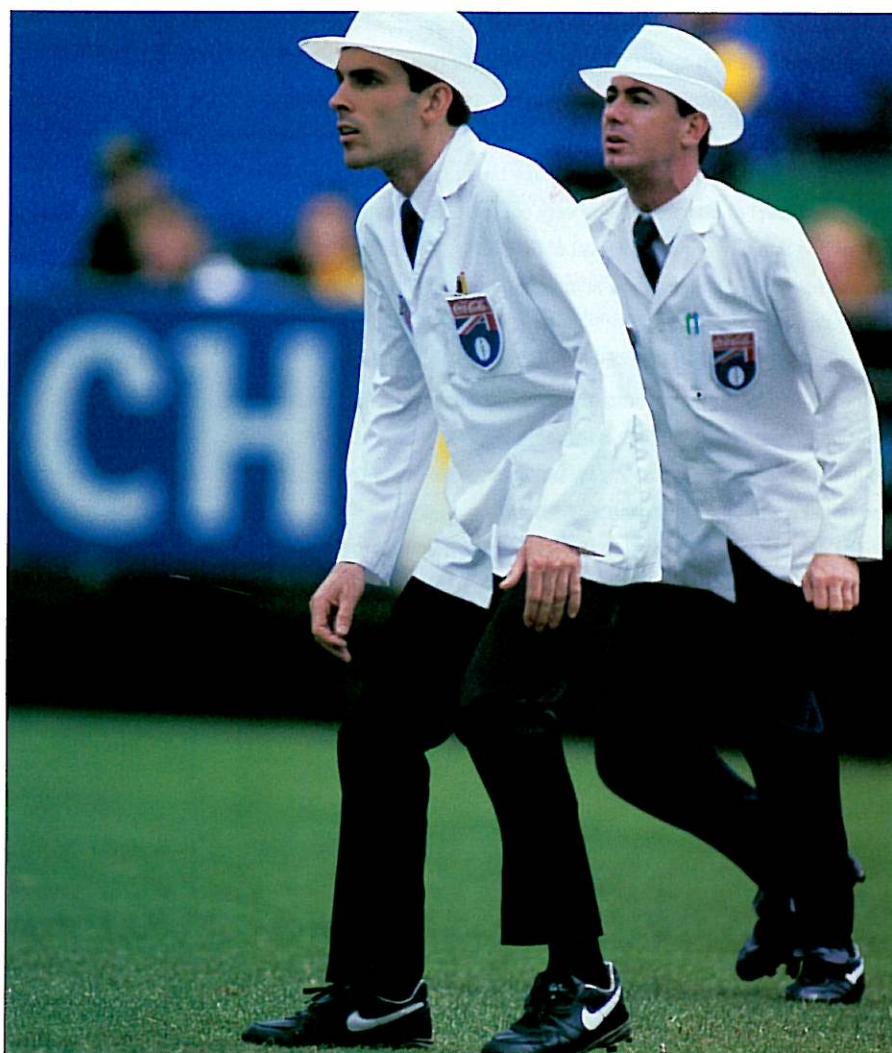
Shocking weather – heavy rain through all three days – impacted on the Lightning Premiership held in early February, but it was a clear ratings winner on the Seven Network, and showed early in the year the potential of Brisbane, later confirmed with the club's great finals performances.

Exciting performances by the Sydney and Brisbane Football Clubs during our Centenary Season meant that the excitement, promotion and exposure enjoyed by Australian football in our other capital cities took over in the northern States.

An indirect benefit of that excitement was evident in junior football, particularly in the Sydney metropolitan area where some local football clubs reported they were having difficulty coping with the demand from youngsters to take up the game.

Gaining a far greater presence in the schools system throughout New South Wales and Queensland remains a priority for 1997 and beyond.

IAN COLLINS  
GENERAL MANAGER  
FOOTBALL OPERATIONS



SEEING DOUBLE: SEVERAL NEW RULES AND CONCEPTS, WERE TESTED DURING THE 1996 LIGHTNING PREMIERSHIP, HELD AT WAVERLEY PARK IN FEBRUARY. FOUR GOAL UMPIRES MADE FOR A NEW LOOK IN THE GOAL MOUTHS.

## UMPIRES



### GREATER FREEDOM FOR UMPIRES A PLUS

At the end of the season, the Laws of the Game committee and AFL coaches conference both felt that the greater freedom given to umpires to use their initiative had been a plus; further freeing up of the system is planned for 1997.

The season started with new interpretations of rules relating to ruck contests and holding the ball if a player had a prior opportunity to dispose of it. These interpretations provoked considerable public debate and comment early in the season. This was largely caused by a technical approach taken by the umpires, but as the season unfolded and umpires became more accustomed to, and comfortable with, the new interpretations, they became more effective.

There was also positive comment about how the three umpire system operated during 1996. Clubs in general, and coaches in particular, felt that the changes implemented for the operation of the three umpire system had a positive impact. The changes included giving field umpires more flexibility in terms of the zones they worked in and discretion in their general positioning.

Another aspect of the three umpire system which cannot be underestimated is that its introduction in 1994 led to a number of young and inexperienced umpires being fast tracked as the panel increased from 16 to 24 for any given round.

Like young players, young umpires take time to develop and adjust to the highest level of play and we are very conscious of the need to continue to improve our overall level of officiating. Rest assured that our process of evaluating umpires is at least as detailed as that used by clubs to assess players.

Considerable comment was also received about the pale blue uniforms used by boundary umpires which were introduced so that timekeepers could differentiate between officials on the ground. As a result of the feedback, the boundary umpires will return to their traditional white uniform for 1997!

The AFL continued to develop and implement training programs which are recognised as being the best in Australian sport. During 1996,



**TEAMWORK:** UMPIRES HAD A NEW LOOK IN 1996, AND NEW INTERPRETATIONS TO UNRAVEL. IN 1996 AFL UMPIRES RECEIVED \$2.19 MILLION IN TOTAL PAYMENTS, A FIGURE WHICH WILL RISE TO \$2.983 MILLION IN 1997.



**VETERAN:** FIELD UMPIRE ROWAN SAWERS CONTINUED HIS RECORD-BREAKING CAREER IN 1996, OFFICIATING IN 20 MATCHES. HE FINISHED THE SEASON, HIS 20TH, WITH 387 SENIOR GAMES UNDER HIS BELT.

Don Casey joined the umpiring department as our National Education and Training Officer and has converted our umpiring courses to a Competency Based Training format in line with broader trends in education.

The aim of this approach to umpiring development was to provide a more effective education program for umpires and the feedback we have had is that the revised approach is helping to prepare umpires more effectively for an AFL career.

Another important step was the involvement of Australian football umpires from New Zealand in our umpiring accreditation scheme.

In the broader sense, the AFL remains committed to the development of umpires for all levels of football with the best qualified and performed following a career path to the AFL via the various State leagues around the country.

Some \$507,000 was allocated to umpiring development in 1996 through the various States and this will marginally increase to \$511,000 in 1997.

As far as total payments to AFL umpires are concerned, in 1996 they were \$2.19 million and under new terms and conditions agreed to by the AFL Commission, total payments to AFL umpires will increase to \$2.983 million in 1997, \$3.272 million in 1998 and \$3.548 million in 1999.

These new payments recognise the important role of umpiring in the game and to further enhance the career path for officials in our game.

## 1996 FIELD UMPIRES AND GAMES

	1996 Games	Total	First Game	Recruited From
David Ackland	8	8	1996	Goulburn Valley
Brett Allen	22	88	1992	VSFL
Keith Callaghan	12	48	1992	VSFL
Peter Carey	23	252	1985	VFL Reserves
Geoff Caulfield	7	60	1991	Diamond Valley
Andrew Coates	20	112	1989	Essendon Dist.
Gavin Dore	24	156	1986	West Gippsland
Craig Durham	9	15	1995	QAFL
Martin Ellis	12	12	1996	Preston Dist.
Darren Goldspink	24	131	1989	Preston Dist.
Steven Hanley	7	7	1996	Preston Dist.
John Harvey	17	67	1990	VFA
David Howlett	19	205	1982	Essendon Dist.
Derek Humphrey-Smith	3	3	1996	QAFL
Hayden Kennedy	23	161	1988	Essendon Dist.
Sam Kronja	3	3	1996	WAFL
Anton Lewis	3	3	1996	NSWAFL
Jamie Love	11	11	1996	Ballarat
Stephen McBurney	15	29	1995	South East Sub.
Darren McCauley	10	19	1993	Essendon Dist.
Shane McInerney	15	35	1994	Ballarat
Mark McKenzie	12	33	1994	Doncaster Dist.
Scott McLaren	21	39	1994	Eastern Dist.
Chris Mitchell	23	217	1984	Footscray Dist.
Mark Nash	25	64	1994	Waverley Jnrs.
Kieron Nicholls	8	8	1996	Riddell Dist.
Matthew Norden	11	24	1995	Doncaster Dist.
Tim Pfeiffer	16	40	1994	SANFL
Mark Prince	8	47	1993	VSFL
Denis Rich	21	228	1983	Western Sub.
Rowan Sawers	20	387	1977	Southern Ump.
Greg Scroop	21	73	1990	WAFL
Vince Sercia	3	3	1996	Southern Ump.
Bryan Sheehan	21	221	1986	Dandenong Dist.
Grant Vernon	24	168	1987	WAFL
Stuart Wenn	7	9	1995	Eastern Sub.
Mark Westgarth	5	74	1982	Western Sub.
Richard Williams	18	24	1995	SANFL

## MILESTONES ACHIEVED IN 1996

### 100 MATCHES

Field	Andrew Coates
Boundary	Allan Cook, Shane Doran
Goal	David Flegg

### 200 MATCHES

Field	David Howlett, Chris Mitchell
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## CURRENT FINALS UMPIRES AND THEIR FINALS GAMES TOTALS

	Elim.	Qual.	1st	2nd	Prel.	G.F.	Total
Rowan Sawers	5	6	6	5	7	4	33
Bryan Sheehan	4	4	5	2	5	5	25
Peter Carey	3	5	1	4	4	4	21
Denis Rich	1	5	3	1	3	3	16
Gavin Dore	1	4	-	2	2	1	10
Darren Goldspink	-	4	-	-	4	2	10
Hayden Kennedy	-	4	1	1	3	1	10
Chris Mitchell	2	4	2	-	1	-	9
David Howlett	1	2	1	2	1	1	8
Andrew Coates	-	3	2	1	2	-	8
Grant Vernon	1	3	4	-	-	-	8
Greg Scroop	-	2	-	1	1	-	4
Mark Nash	-	2	-	1	-	1	4
Brett Allen	-	1	-	1	1	-	3
Mark McKenzie	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
John Harvey	-	1	-	-	-	-	1

## 1996 HIGHLIGHTS AND HONOURS

### AFL GRAND FINAL

Field	Gavin Dore, Mark Nash, Bryan Sheehan
Boundary	Allan Cook, Daniel Gooch, Peter McDonald
Goal	Craig Clark, Steven Stirling

### ANSETT AUSTRALIA CUP GRAND FINAL

Field	Peter Carey, Mark Nash, Bryan Sheehan
Boundary	Michael Bell, Shane Jansen, Samuel Leslie
Goal	Rodney Davies, Mark Harrison

### STATE OF ORIGIN - VICTORIA VS ALLIES

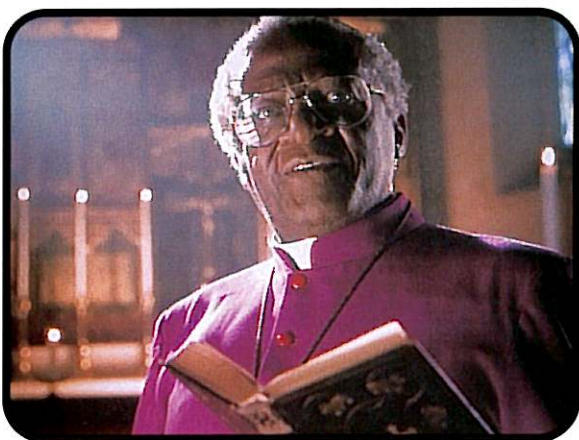
Field	Darren Goldspink, Chris. Mitchell, Mark Nash
Boundary	Shane Doran, Daniel Gooch, Greg. Harding
Goal	Rodney Davies, Steven Stirling

### STATE OF ORIGIN - SOUTH AUSTRALIA VS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Field	Brett Allen, Andrew Coates, David Howlett
Boundary	Allan Cook, Shane Jansen, Peter McDonald
Goal	Craig Clark, Mark Powell

### ALL AUSTRALIAN UMPIRE

Mark Nash



## AFL MARKETING

### AFL BRAND IS THE MODEL FOR AUSTRALIAN SPORT

The AFL Commission's five year plan, of August 1994, noted the AFL's number one financial objective as maximising the competition's net revenue generation. This is the primary responsibility of the AFL Marketing division: to maximise opportunities to profit from the AFL's pre-eminent brand.

AFL Marketing is also responsible for another key objective of the Five Year Plan: 'To achieve high levels of public interest and support throughout Australia, both through attendances at matches, and audiences on TV and radio'.

During the highly successful Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season, each of these objectives was achieved, and the measures of success are noted elsewhere in this report: outstanding television and radio ratings, and a higher than ever level of reporting in the media (page 18); growth in attendances (page 10); and growth in club and AFL Membership (page 14).

All levels of the media have embraced the AFL as *the* model for Australian Sport, and the AFL, by all parameters, is the number one sporting brand throughout Australia. The outstanding on field and off field performances by Brisbane and Sydney in the northern states provides a wonderful basis for further growth of the AFL product in areas which were once all but barren outposts of Australian football.

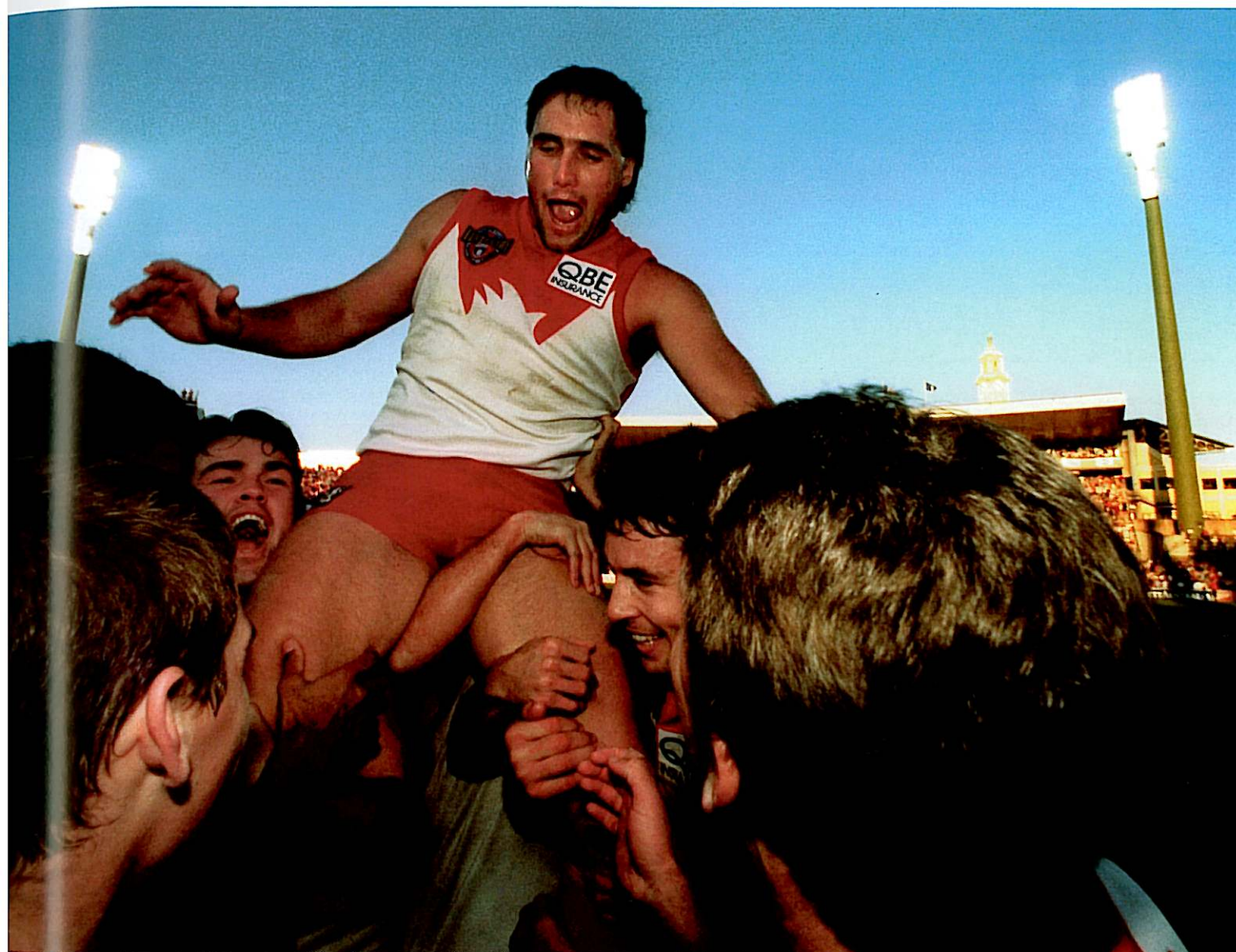
Club and AFL Membership numbers have risen to new record levels, with AFL Membership now at maximum levels.

There was much debate as to the value of the 'I'd like to see that' campaign during the past two seasons, but the results speak for themselves, and this campaign will be further developed in 1997.

The strength of the AFL brand is well represented through its portfolio of major sponsors: Coca-Cola (contracted until 2001), CUB (2006), the Seven Network (2001), Challenge Bank (contract concluded 1996), and Norwich Union Financial Services Group (re-signed during 1996 until the year 2000), Ansett Australia (1997), and, in 1996 the introduction of McDonald's as the major sponsor of the AFL's junior development program. McDonald's will assume naming rights to the match day footballs from the start of the 1997 season.

The involvement of McDonald's sits neatly with another part of the Commission's five year plan: 'To achieve growth in player

**I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT:** THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL TV CAMPAIGN CONTINUED THROUGH THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY SEASON, WITH AN INTERNATIONAL TWIST. SOAP STAR HEATHER LOCKYER, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU, COMEDIAN GEORGE BURNS, AND BLUES LEGEND JOHN LEE HOOKER, ALL DECLARED 'I'D LIKE TO SEE' AFL FOOTBALL.



participation at all levels, and to maintain the flow of talented players into the AFL'. McDonald's Auskick extended the highly successful Vickick program into the national arena, with participants in the program reaching more than 50,000. The AFL was instrumental in the development of the highly innovative 'Interfooty' program, broadcast for the first time in 1996 on the Seven Network. Interfooty, targeting the teenage market, has had extraordinary responses from its target audiences.

The AFL Licensed Product program continues to grow despite a downturn in national retail sales (see report page 50). Its success is well demonstrated by the incredible success of the Centenary Year stamp issue. Australia Post reported the AFL issue was 'the most successful stamp issue ever'.



**ELATION:** THE OUTSTANDING SUCCESS OF SYDNEY IN THE 1996 YEAR MADE THE AFL THE MOST TALKED ABOUT SPORTING ORGANISATION IN THE HARBOR CITY. ATTENDANCES WERE UP AT SWANS MATCHES, MEMBERSHIPS ROSE BY 36 PER CENT, TONY LOCKETT (INSET) WAS THE KING OF SYDNEY, AND TV RATINGS FOR THE SWANS FINALS APPEARANCES BROKE ALL RECORDS, WITH THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL ACHIEVING A RECORD RATING OF 48 IN SYDNEY.

**STAMP-ED:** AUSTRALIA POST CELEBRATED THE AFL CENTENARY WITH THE RELEASE OF A CLUB BY CLUB STAMP ISSUE. IT WAS REPORTED BY AUSTRALIA POST AS 'THE MOST SUCCESSFUL STAMP ISSUE EVER'.



TRADITION: PLAYERS FROM THE AFL'S FOUNDATION CLUBS, ST KILDA (NATHAN BURKE), SOUTH MELBOURNE [SYDNEY] (PAUL KELLY), CARLTON, (STEPHEN KERNAHAN), MELBOURNE (GLENN LOVETT), COLLINGWOOD (ANDREW SCHAUBLE), ESSENDON (GARY O'DONNELL), GEELONG (JOHN BARNES), AND FITZROY (SIMON ATKINS), MODEL THE RE-ENACTMENT UNIFORMS AT MELBOURNE TOWN HALL. THE AFL'S MARKETING AND LICENSING DIVISIONS HAVE WORKED WITH THE CLUBS TO CREATE MANY NEW LOOKS, AND MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LICENSED PRODUCT.

#### AFL LICENSED PRODUCT

### IMPRESSIVE GROWTH DESPITE RETAIL SLUMP

The licensing division of the AFL maintained strong growth through the AFL Centenary Season, further consolidating the AFL Brand as the leading property in sports marketing.

A wide range of companies, from retailers to promotional companies, to sports marketers, have seen the value of using the AFL Licensed Product brand to build their business.

This national recognition of the strength of the AFL has been hard earned, and only obtained through the strength of our centralised, collective bargaining policy.

The primary goal of this division, as described in the AFL Commission's five year plan (1994), is to make the AFL the largest sports licence in Australia. We have successfully built on last year's achievements to become Australia's largest domestic sporting licence.

Exceeding our retail sales target of \$75 million was particularly significant given the depressed state of retail growth in this country during 1996. Our growth rate of 25% was an excellent result when considered against the average retail growth of 6.5% for the year (source: *Australian Financial Review*). All our major retail partners achieved increased AFL business.

This growth is seen to be sustainable for

the future. Success in two key areas will assist this growth:

- ▶ Developing to equitable levels the #1 and #3 retail markets (Sydney and Brisbane)
- ▶ Developing the massive Christmas sales period.

Maintaining such strong growth brings with it inevitable challenges. These include quality management of our own growth, servicing the large increase in the number of wholesalers wishing to license merchandise, and protecting against saturation of products to outlets. We must control our distribution base.

Retailers who have been committed to the AFL Licensed Product program will continue to prosper.

The strength of the AFL Brand and its positive impact on product sales is constantly monitored. The official AFL Brand is becoming a clear point of difference for an increasingly sophisticated purchaser, although there remains the threat of unlicensed product drifting into the marketplace and damaging the AFL Brand and program.

Product licensing is the most visible (and core) area of the AFL's licensing program, and, as such, can overwhelm other

important promotions and endorsements, including the development, with clubs, of new and updated logos and guernsey designs. These continue to contribute strongly to the overall program.

Several highlights of the 1996 year included:

- ▶ The Australia Post stamp release: the most successful stamp release yet by Australia Post
- ▶ *Herald Sun* Centenary Club coin promotion
- ▶ McDonald's poster and coin promotions
- ▶ CUB's '100 years of cheers' campaign
- ▶ *100 Years of Australian Football* TV program (Seven Network) video and book
- ▶ Development, with clubs, of new logos, guernseys, fabrics
- ▶ Working with the AFL Players' Association to ensure payment for all player images utilised.
- ▶ re-branding of the AFL Licensed Product identity, with new logo, marketing and co-operative advertising program
- ▶ First full season of the highly successful AFL Pro Squad

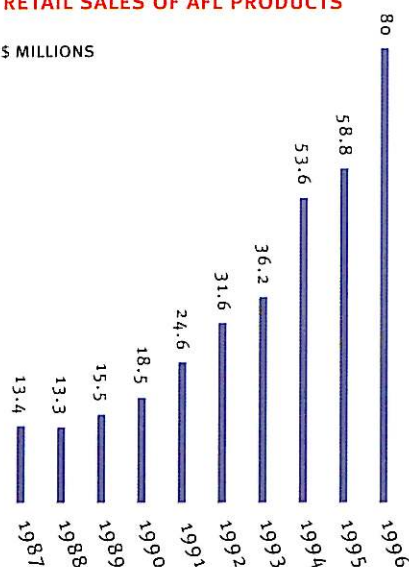


**NEW LOOK:** THE AFL MARKETING AND LICENSING DIVISIONS WORKED WITH CLUBS TO CREATE NEW STRIPS FOR THE ANSETT AUSTRALIA CUP, AND CERTAIN HOME AND AWAY MATCHES DURING THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY SEASON. THE NEW LOOKS – THAT'S COLLINGWOOD'S MODELLED BY STAR FULL FORWARD SAVERIO ROCCA PICTURED – WERE WARMLY RECEIVED BY PLAYERS AND FANS, AND PROVIDED NEW MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFL CLUBS THROUGH THE AFL LICENSED PRODUCTS DIVISION.



#### RETAIL SALES OF AFL PRODUCTS

\$ MILLIONS



#### A TESTIMONIAL FROM AN AFL LICENSEE:

'People often ask me how Davenport had the vision to see the enormous business potential of an AFL merchandise program and the answer is painfully simple - in Australia the AFL is a way of life.

To me Davenport and the AFL have a natural synergy. Davenport is passionate about creative design and brand marketing and the AFL is an astute marketer with a supporter base that reflects extraordinary passion. No other sport in Australia is engulfed by such religious like fervour. The AFL had captured a market hungry for product – consumers desperate to show their allegiance to "their" team.

Since Davenport began with the AFL in 1993 the program has exceeded every one of my expectations. I am delighted with the results.

I am confident that 1997 will once again be a record breaking year.'

Clyde Davenport

Davenport Industries



## AFL SPORTSREADY

### PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

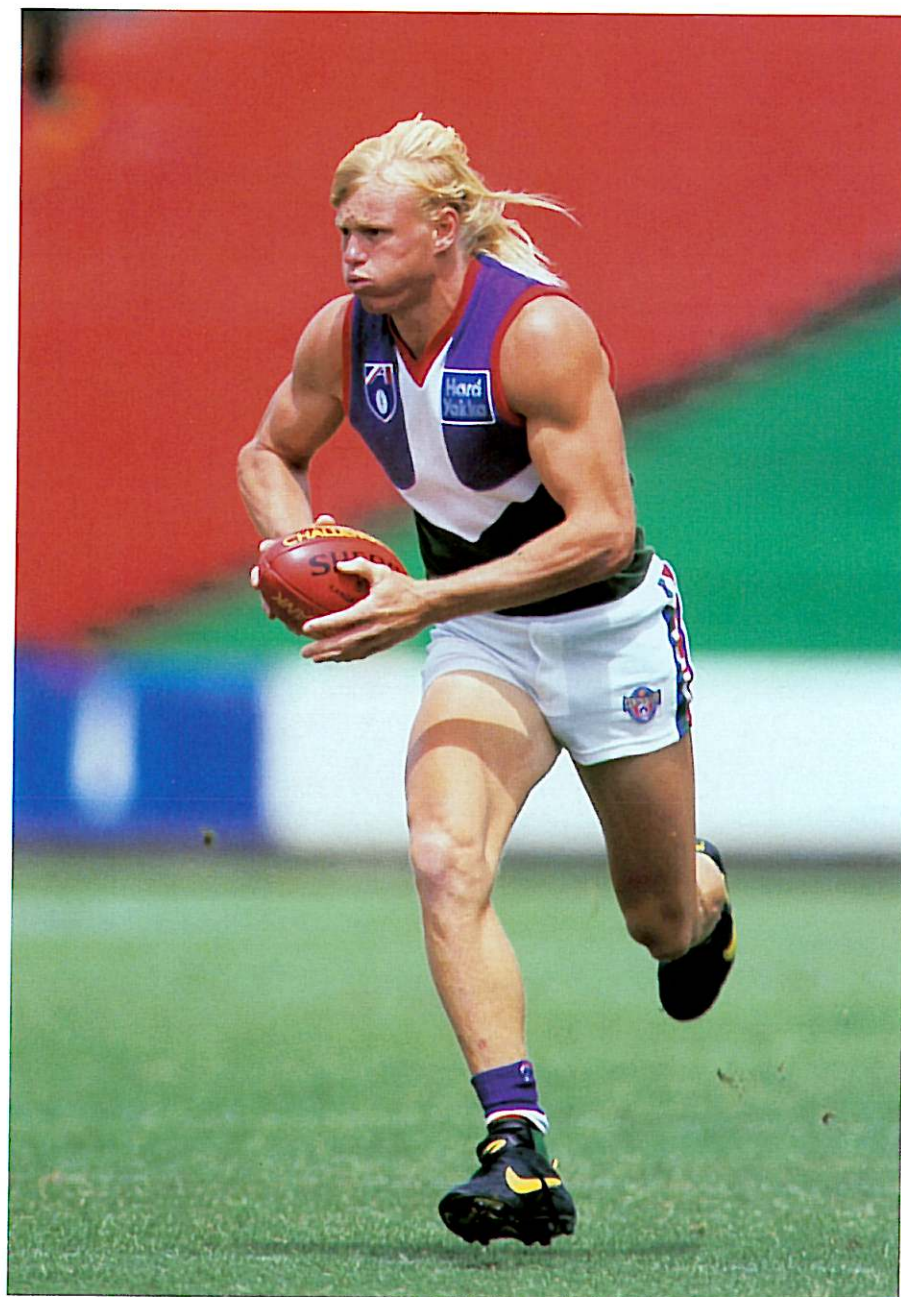
The AFL Group Training Company set up in October 1994 is a highly professional organisation supported by AFL and Government funding to promote job training opportunities for young Australians. During its short history it has attained a growing level of recognition in the sporting community.

It has been a remarkable display of co-operation and concern by successive Federal Governments, the AFL, and various associated bodies to establish what is now a structured program designed not only to assist AFL footballers, players of the ilk of Jason Akermanis, Clive Waterhouse, Justin Leppitsch, Rayden Tallis, Chris Naish and Ronnie Burns, but all sports men and women, as well as those in the wider community who are interested in working in the sports industry. The program works for AFL clubs, their players, and the sports industry, but just as importantly, for the broad community.

The traineeships, a Federal Government initiative, provide successful introductions for many youngsters to the working environment. Young Australians employed under the scheme are managed by the Group Training Company, while working for outside employers within the sports industry.

During 1996, the AFL Group Training Company employed 230 AFL Sportsready trainees bringing to 437 the number of people who have had their employment managed by the AFL Group Training Company since its inception. Of these, 56 were listed players with AFL clubs. Players from all clubs with the exception of Carlton were represented, although the Carlton Football Club was still involved employing trainees from outside the ranks of their playing list.

A survey of graduate trainees from 1995 showed that 89% of those surveyed in 1996 remained either in full time employment or full time study. Although the sample number was only 60, the results showed that the



**SPORTSREADY:** FREMANTLE'S MID-FIELDER CLIVE WATERHOUSE WAS ONE OF MANY OF THE AFL'S YOUNG STARS TO TAKE UP TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE AFL'S GROUP TRAINING COMPANY, AFL SPORTSREADY.

traineeship was a good launching pad to further employment or education – a satisfactory result.

While the bulk of AFL Sportsready trainees are not listed AFL players, 94 have been employed in the football industry. The remaining 136 have been employed in various arms of the sports industry, notably golf, cricket, netball, swimming, fitness and basketball. Many AFL footballers have found they can successfully combine the demands of the program, and training requirements. Many are employed by club sponsors or other employers aware of their needs and have learned valuable skills both on and off the job.

Qualifications gained through the traineeship are recognised Australia-wide.

The program continues to rely on funding from the Federal Government through the Ministry for Employment and Training. There was a change of Government in 1996 but the group training policy remained in place. AFL funding comes from a \$1 levy imposed by the AFL on all finals tickets.

The challenge for 1997 is to continue to increase awareness of the program throughout the Australian sporting community and, in particular convince more potential employers of the value a Sportsready traineeship can add value to their business.

## USING THE STRENGTH OF THE AFL FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY



The AFL foundation was set up in 1984 to use the strength of the Victorian Football League to provide funding for the greater benefit of the community. Since then, the AFL Foundation has helped a great many people in our community to strive for and attain personal goals.

In the past year the AFL Foundation has made grants to two young men suffering paralysis. They have used the grant to purchase cars to bring some kind of mobility and independence to their lives. John Theodoropoulos sustained his injuries playing in a football match in 1992. The AFL Foundation took some time, after consultation with him and his family, to establish the best way of helping him.

In 1996 we were also able to help 16 year old ice-skater Peter Nicholas of Daylesford in his quest to compete at the world junior selection trials in Slovakia in October. Despite their best efforts, local fundraisers had been unable to collect the full amount required for the trip. The AFL Foundation was able to make up the difference and Peter Nicholas was able to represent his country. These grants were made possible through the AFL Foundation's *Golden Opportunity Awards*. There are four categories of *Golden Opportunity Awards* – to overcome social or education disabilities of individuals; to assist in development of skills of those with exceptional talent, who may suffer financial difficulties in fulfilling their potential; to assist in self-financing

### AFL FOUNDATION: MISSION STATEMENT

- To aid, assist, develop and promote sport and recreation within the Australian community and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to aid and assist any sporting or recreational facility, organisation or concern, and to aid, assist, develop and promote the participation of Australian youth in sporting and recreational activities.
- To aid, assist, develop and promote any charitable or other institution, fund, or appeal formed for the benefit of the Australian community, or any part, section or individual member thereof.

community projects; to assist dependents of footballers, seriously injured or killed while participating in the game. The AFL Foundation assesses every case minutely and endeavours to establish a personal relationship with each organisation or individual making an application.

The Foundation has also been involved in some extremely worthy community projects in the 95/96 year, including sponsorship of a new indoor football league, which uses a large leather balloon instead of the traditional Sherrin and offers people with severe and multiple disabilities opportunities to participate as part of a team that competes in a serious competition.

The list of *Golden Opportunity Awards* made in 1995/96 shows the diverse range of applicants who have been successful in gaining funding from the AFL Foundation.

The bulk of our applicants this year were from Victoria but the AFL Foundation is not just a Victorian institution. The AFL Foundation provides opportunities Australia-wide and is keen to receive applications from any part of Australia.

Funding for the AFL Foundation comes primarily from proceeds of the "Toss the Coin Raffle" – the winner tosses the coin at the AFL Grand Final. The AFL Foundation takes one-third of the nett profits, shared equally with Rotary Australia and the Australian Olympic Committee.

### AFL FOUNDATION: 1996 GRANTS

\$

BROSNAN YOUTH CENTRE	Drop-in centre for young people with mental illness	10,000
JOHN THEODOROPoulos	Modified motor vehicle	24,000
ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND	To convert <i>100 Years of Australian Football</i> to audio format	2,000
MICHAEL SHORT	Motor vehicle and computer equipment	16,000
TERRY PASCOE TRUST APPEAL	Towards children's education costs	10,000
VICSRAPID	Promotion of sport for women with intellectual disabilities	5,000
EDDIE GRIFFIN (dec'd.)	Purchase of computer for children's schooling needs	5,000
ASHBURTON INDOOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE	Sponsorship of League set-up costs	4,982
VICTORIAN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL LEAGUE	To cover cost of publication of year book	920
PETER NICHOLAS	To attend overseas competition	4,360
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$82,262</b>

### AFL FOUNDATION

1996 Chairman Ross Oakley (an AFL Foundation member for all his time as AFL CEO)

COMMITTEE: Dame Phyllis Frost, Mick Miller, Ian Collins, Kevin Lehmann, Tony Peek, Philip Wallbridge and Greg Durham.

SECRETARY: Karen Phelan



## JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT

### DEVELOPING THE GAME AT ALL LEVELS

In its role as "keeper of the code", the AFL Commission has implemented, through the Australian Football Foundation, a multi-level junior development program.

Broadly, the base of the football development pyramid is the McDonald's Auskick program which provides primary school children with quality coaching, introduces them to a modified rules version of the game and also encourages them and their families to become AFL supporters.

From that broad base, other links in the football development chain include:

- ▶ McDonald's Little League, and McDonald's Grid games, played at half time of AFL matches.
- ▶ Encouraging children as they graduate from McDonald's Auskick to participate in local junior football clubs and ultimately to community senior clubs.
- ▶ AFL school clinic program which involves current AFL players conducting clinics in Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.
- ▶ An emphasis on maintaining and increasing participation in Australian football played in schools.
- ▶ Development squads in various age groups as part of the talent identification program.
- ▶ National under 16 and under 18 championships involving all States and Territories. The AFL's national under 18 championships are a showcase for the best young talent in the country which in turn identify potential AFL players before the national recruit draft.
- ▶ Education of coaches, administrators, umpires and sports trainers.

New initiatives approved during 1996 included the establishment of an Australian Football Academy linked to the Australian Institute of Sport and supported by funding of

\$300,000 a year for the next three years by the Australian Sports Commission. This funding is matched dollar for dollar by the AFL. The Northern Australia Development Foundation was also launched to oversee football development in that region, particularly among Aboriginal communities in northern Western Australia, northern Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Overall, participation in Australian football increased to a total of 413,450 players nationally at all levels in 1996 compared to 395,087 in 1995.

This overall improvement has occurred against the backdrop of major changes which have occurred as a result of shifts in population in metropolitan areas of Australia as well as enormous competition from other sports for the hearts and minds of young Australians.

The shifts in population quite often mean that football clubs, like other sporting clubs, may have difficulty getting sufficient numbers to make up teams in certain areas, particularly those close to major cities, while new teams

emerge in newer developing residential areas.

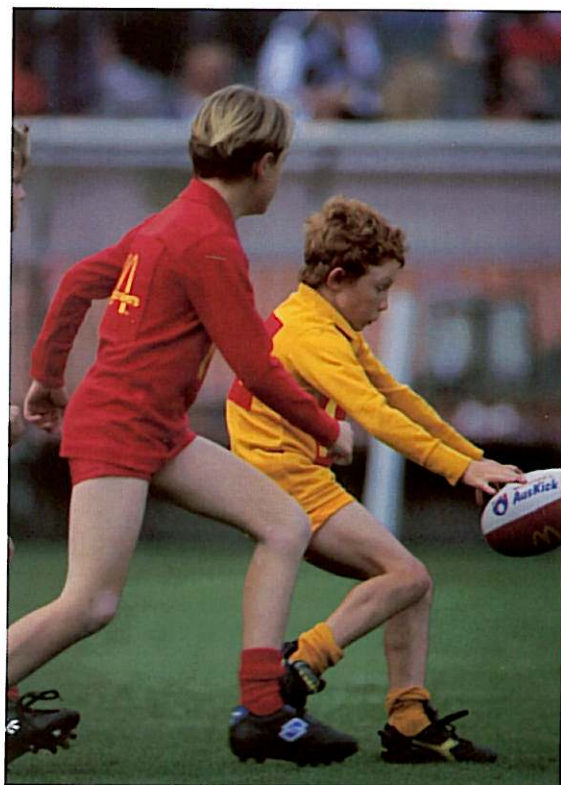
More than 50 different sports are now available to primary school children through the Aussie Sports program.

Significant socio-economic change has also occurred in country Australia which has been an important breeding ground for Australian football over the years.

As rural economies have declined, and organisations such as banks and schools have rationalised their numbers, population shifts have occurred which in turn has placed pressure on some country clubs and leagues to survive.

The other side benefit of the national development program occurs via the number of complimentary tickets made available to parents of youngsters who participate in the McDonald's Little League and grid games at AFL matches.

In 1996, some 30,000 complimentary tickets were made available to parents so that they could watch their children participate at AFL venues while another 16,000 complimentary tickets were provided to schools and junior football clubs.



GRASS ROOTS: McDONALD'S FAMILY RESTAURANTS WERE THE MAJOR SPONSOR OF THE AFL'S JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, THROUGH THE McDONALD'S AUSKICK PROGRAM, AND, ON MATCH DAYS, THE McDONALD'S LITTLE LEAGUE AND McDONALD'S GRID GAME (LEFT).

## PUBLICATIONS

### NEW MARKETS FOR FOOTBALL RECORD

The AFL took its publishing division to a new level during 1996, with a large and rapid expansion of *The Football Record* masthead, and through this the value of the AFL's publishing overall. *The Football Record* brand extended from the game day edition to several other publications, including *The Football Record Almanac*, *The Football Record for Kids*, and *The Football Record Pocket Edition*. *The Football Record Almanac*, a new magazine, was offered five times during the season, with pre-season and post-season editions proving very popular.

*The Football Record* masthead was printed more than three and a half million times during 1996 – 3,600,000 copies were printed, far and away the greatest print run ever. *The Football Record* is Australia's best selling sports magazine, with average weekly sales in the order of 80,000 copies. The Grand Final edition has sales of 150,000, with 85,000 sold through newsstands across Australia. In 1996, Coles Supermarkets sold the Grand Final edition for the first time.

A total of 2,055,594 editions of *The Football Record* and *Football Record Almanac* were sold either at the ground or throughout newsagents, a slight drop in game day sales. This figure was affected by five finals played outside Victoria, at grounds with reduced capacity, particularly the 'Gabba. Sales percentages against attendances were slightly down on 1995, because of the growing number of night matches.

On top of this *The Football Record for Kids* was distributed to 52,000 Auskick members 4 times during the year, and the *Football Record Almanac* was distributed to 35,000 AFL members five times during 1996, with 3 editions also being sold in newsagents.

Advertising in AFL publications continued the remarkable growth of the past two years where revenues, under the guidance of Cameron Media Sales, have risen by 93%. The profitability of *The Football Record* increased markedly for the year.

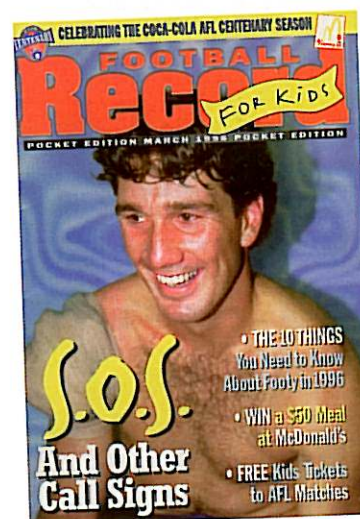
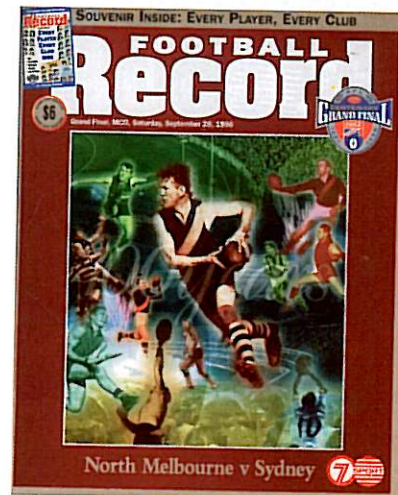
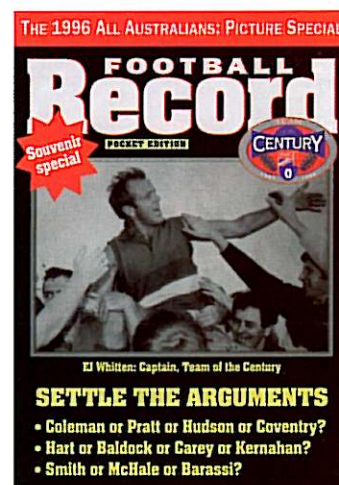
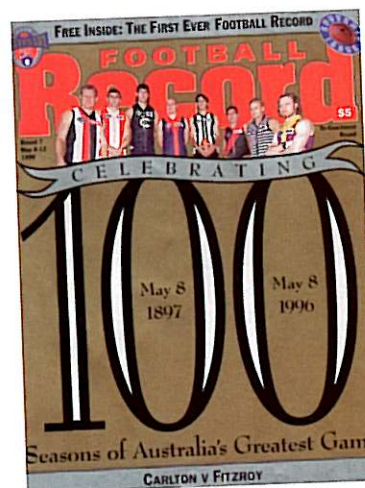
AFL 96, the official statistical guide to the AFL, was also produced by the AFL publishing division, and published by Reed Books, an arrangement which continues in 1997.

In 1997, *The Football Record* will have a new editor, Michael Lovett, to drive the publishing agenda. He has an extensive football and publishing background, most recently as editor of *Inside Football*.

The year ahead promises an increase in the growth and diversity of AFL publishing. *The Football Record for Kids* will be revamped to ensure it reaches its target market, along with an assessment of how to fully realise the potential of all publications.

The growth in the quality of the AFL's publishing output will continue with various new editions, promotional documents, media releases, and other material all supporting the AFL's brand.

RECORDS: *THE FOOTBALL RECORD* REACHED NEW HEIGHTS IN 1996 WITH NEW EDITIONS, NEW SHAPES AND SIZES, AND NEW MARKET SHARES. *THE RECORD*, PUBLISHED SINCE 1912, IS AUSTRALIA'S TOP-SELLING SPORTS MAGAZINE.



## UNITED PLANTERS AND STEPHEN W. WEAVER

As the 1990s draw to a close, the AFL-CIO has been blessed with a number of outstanding leaders. One of the most notable is Stephen W. Weaver, who has served as the president of the United Planters since 1987. Weaver is a man of many talents, and his leadership has been instrumental in the success of the union. He is a man of vision, and he has been able to inspire his members to achieve their goals. He is also a man of action, and he has been able to put his ideas into practice. His leadership has been a major factor in the success of the union, and he is a man who is truly dedicated to his work.

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## AFL People

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BIG TEAM: THE AFL CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION HAS GROWN IN DIRECT RELATION TO THE GROWTH OF THE GAME. THE TEAM, PICTURED WITH STAFF OF THE VFL AND VFD, AND THE AFL'S GROUP TRAINING COMPANY, CELEBRATED A SUCCESSFUL CENTENARY SEASON AT THE AFL'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY, HELD, IN 1996, AT MELBOURNE'S AUSTRALIA CLUB.

## FAREWELL

### THE OAKLEY YEARS REPRESENT HUGE STRIDES FORWARD

Ross Oakley never disguised the fact that he believed a long tenure for a chief executive of a major company like the AFL was somewhere between seven and 10 years. He was not going to create a 20-year rule in the AFL's top job.

So it was no surprise that on June 17 1996, Oakley announced that he would retire as the AFL's Chief Executive Officer at the end of the season. There was no fuss or fanfare surrounding the decision; indeed, he gave his notice at a quarterly club information meeting.

By the time Oakley cleaned out his desk and farewelled League colleagues on November 15, he had been in the job just over 10 years, having been appointed in September, 1986.

Originally, Oakley had been planning to stay in the job for five years ("Time flies when you are having fun," he was quoted saying) but there is no doubt the AFL saw the most significant changes in its history in what has already been described as "the Oakley years".

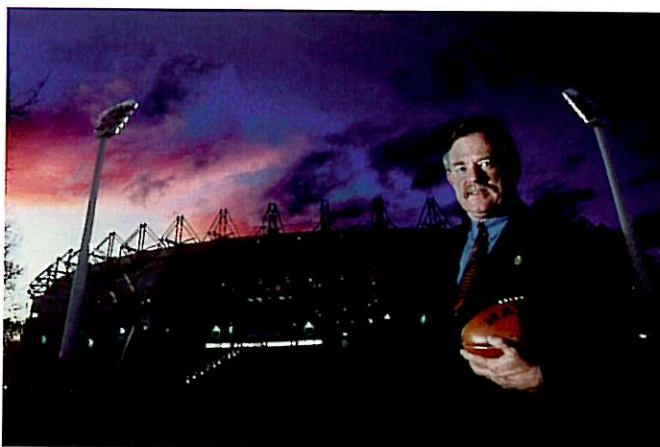
The most tangible evidence of Oakley's influence is the very structure of the competition. In 1986, there were 11 Victorian-based teams, and the relocated South Melbourne (Sydney Swans), playing in what was known as the Victorian Football League.

A decade later, the Australian Football League has teams playing out of Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. The emphasis has been national and Oakley makes no apology for the shift in direction.

With the addition of West Coast, Fremantle, Adelaide, Brisbane and, from this year, Port Adelaide, the competition, overseen by Oakley, in conjunction with the AFL Commission, has seen remarkable change. A vibrant, national competition has been supported by record attendances, club memberships, television and radio ratings. It is worth noting that the AFL now attracts more than three times the number of spectators as its nearest rival.

Competition revenue increased from \$51 million in 1986 to more than \$200 million in 1996; player salaries have risen from an average of \$47,940 per player in 1992 to \$77,695 in 1996; and long-term corporate sponsorship and broadcast rights have secured the finances of the League beyond the year 2000.

Fittingly, Oakley's final year coincided with the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season, a wonderful celebration of a competition that has shaped and forged the lives of thousands of men and women. While the baton has been officially handed over to Wayne Jackson, the contribution of Oakley has not, and will not, be forgotten.



DEPARTED: ROSS OAKLEY LED THE AFL DURING THE MOST VIGOROUS PERIOD IN ITS HISTORY. HE HAS LEFT THE COMPETITION IN A BUOYANT STATE.



FAREWELL: ROSS OAKLEY ANNOUNCED HIS IMPENDING DEPARTURE AT A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE MCG IN JUNE. MEDIA INTEREST IN ALL THINGS TO DO WITH THE AFL ROSE YET AGAIN IN 1996.

## WELCOME



### NEW AFL CHIEF HAS SOLID BUSINESS, FOOTBALL BACKGROUND

The AFL's new Chief Executive Officer Wayne Jackson brings a wealth of business acumen, corporate experience and a solid football background to League headquarters.

Jackson was appointed on October 2, 1996, as the replacement for retiring CEO Ross Oakley and by November 18 he had taken residence in what many believe is the highest profile sports administration position in the country.

While Jackson was no stranger to the machinations of the AFL, having served as a non-executive commissioner since June 1995, he was all but unknown to the general football fan.

Putting business first, his curriculum vitae is long and impressive. He attended the renowned Prince Alfred College in Adelaide and in 1964 completed his Bachelor of Economics at the University of Adelaide. He subsequently became an Associate of the Australian Society of Accountants and in 1980, rounded off his academic career by completing a program for management development at Harvard Business School in Boston.

After graduating, Jackson spent three years with the accounting firm Deloitte, Touche, Tohmatsu before stepping into what was to be a long career in the wine and brewing industry.

In 1968, Jackson joined Thomas Hardy & Sons as accountant/assistant secretary and by 1977 he was general manager of the firm, reporting to the board of directors. Four years later (1981), Jackson was appointed group managing director, a position he held until July, 1992.

There were two more important stages of Jackson's business

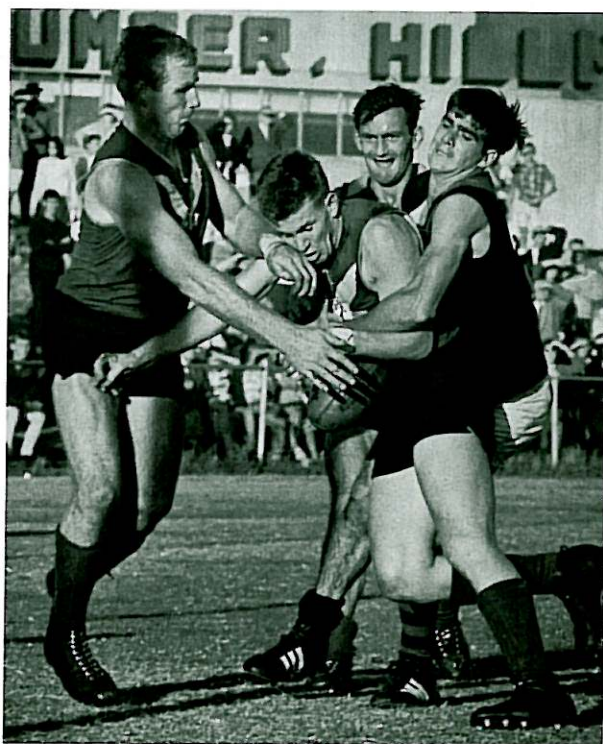
background before he joined the AFL. During 1992, Thomas Hardy & Sons merged with another leading wine producing firm, Berri Renmano Ltd., and was publicly floated under the new banner BRL Hardy Limited. After the merger, Jackson was appointed business development director of BRL Hardy Limited and in October, 1993, he became managing director of the South Australian Brewing Company.

In between his busy working schedule, Jackson was actively involved in other business interests. He was director of Austrade from 1989-92; deputy chairman of the Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation; a board member of SA Tourism from 1989-93; a member of the Special Events Committee reporting to the Minister for Tourism (appointed 1994); and between June, 1994, and June, 1995, he was a member of the Customs Advisory Board reporting to the Federal Minister for Customs.

Jackson's business life has certainly been fulfilling but it has not prevented him being actively involved in sport, particularly football. While at university he represented the South Australian Amateur Football League and won All-Australian selection in 1962 and 1964. By 1965, he had joined West Torrens and played 160 games (seniors and reserves) with Torrens until 1973.

After retiring as a player, Jackson devoted his football energies to honorary administration. He was chairman/president of West Torrens from 1975-79 and is a life member of what is now known as the Woodville-West Torrens Football Club, the first merged club in the SANFL.

He was a member of the SANFL Commission for five years before joining the AFL Commission in 1995.



WELCOME: WAYNE JACKSON BRINGS THE PERFECT MIX TO THE AFL'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S CHAIR: A LONG HISTORY OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, ALMOST TWO YEARS AS A NON-EXECUTIVE AFL COMMISSIONER, AND A LONG CAREER AS A HIGH QUALITY PLAYER, AND ADMINISTRATOR IN THE SANFL, WITH WEST TORRENS. THAT'S JACKSON TACKLED FROM ALL ANGLES DURING A MATCH FOR TORRENS AGAINST WEST ADELAIDE IN 1967.





## AFL COMMITTEES

### PLAYER PAYMENTS COMMISSIONER

RALPH LANE

### TRIBUNAL - SENIOR & RESERVE

NEIL BUSSE (CHAIRMAN), MICHAEL GREEN, BRIAN LE BROCCQ, SHANE MAGUIRE (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN), GRAHAM SHERRY, DR DAVID SHILBURY, EMMETT DUNNE, BRIAN COLLIS QC, ELAINE CANTY

### PLAYERS ADVOCATES - SENIOR & RESERVE

IAN FINDLAY, BERT GAUDION, RICK LEWIS, BOB MOORE

### ADMINISTRATION STAFF EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE

ROSS OAKLEY (CHAIRMAN), IAN COLLINS, DAVID ANNING, GRANT BURGESS, BILL DELLER, GRAEME FINN, KEN GANNON, KEVIN LEHMANN, JILL LINDSAY, MARIS O'SULLIVAN, DEAN MOORE, MARK PATTERSON, TONY PEEK, KEVIN SHEEHAN.

### AFL LAWS COMMITTEE

ROSS OAKLEY (CHAIRMAN), ROD AUSTIN, KEVIN BARTLETT, IAN COLLINS, BILL DELLER, ROBERT FLOWER, DEAN MOORE, MARK PATTERSON, BOB SKILTON, TIM WATSON.

### PUBLICATIONS BOARD

ROSS OAKLEY (CHAIRMAN), DAVID ANNING, GRANT BURGESS, IAN COLLINS, ROB FILDES, GREG HOBBS, KEVIN LEHMANN, HAROLD MITCHELL, TONY PEEK, GEOFF SLATTERY.

### UMPIRING SELECTION COMMITTEE

BILL DELLER (CHAIRMAN), DAVID LEVENS, ROD AUSTIN.

### AFL FOUNDATION

ROSS OAKLEY, IAN COLLINS, DAME PHYLLIS FROST, KEVIN LEHMANN, "MICK" MILLER, KAREN PHELAN, TONY PEEK.

### LEGAL ADVISOR

JEFF BROWNE, BROWNE & CO.

### MEDICAL COMMISSIONER

DR TONY CAPES, PROF. KEN HARDY (DEPUTY)

### AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL FOUNDATION BOARD

JOHN ADAMS (CHAIRMAN), ED BIGGS, IAN COLLINS, PRUE DIGBY, KEN GANNON, BOB GOZZI, JOHN HALBERT, JAMES MACKENZIE, PETER MACKINLAY, JEFF OVENS.

### AFL ALL AUSTRALIAN TEAM SELECTION COMMITTEE

ROSS OAKLEY (CHAIRMAN, NON-VOTING), KEVIN BARTLETT, MALCOLM BLIGHT, IAN COLLINS, ROSS GLENDINNING, GERARD HEALY, LEIGH MATTHEWS, MARK PATTERSON.

### APPEALS BOARD

PETER O'CALLAGHAN (CHAIRMAN), BRIAN BOURKE, JACK CLARKE, COLIN STUBBS, GAVIN FRANCIS, JOHN REINEHR.

### GRIEVANCE TRIBUNAL

KEVIN POWER, JACK RUSH QC, PETER SINN, MICHAEL MONCRIEFF, LAURIE SERAFINI

### SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR

MICHAEL EASY

### AUDITORS

KPMG

### ADVERTISING AGENCY

THE CAMPAIGN PALACE

\*NOTE: ALL COMMITTEES CHAIRED BY ROSS OAKLEY WILL BE CHAIRED BY WAYNE JACKSON IN 1997.

## AFL COMMISSION 1996

### COLIN CARTER

Bachelor of Commerce (Melbourne University).

Master of Business Administration (Harvard University).

Director, The Boston Consulting Group.

Played a key role in the development of the report

adopted by the original VFL Commission in 1986 "Establishing the Basis for Future Success" which set out the frame work for the national competition.

Also assisted in developing the concept of the AFL using the MCG as its headquarters which ultimately led to the development of the Great Southern Stand.

Director of the Geelong Football Club, 1987-1993.

Appointed to AFL Commission 1993.



### RON EVANS

Bachelor of Science (Melbourne University).

Master of Business Administration (Monash University).

Managing Director, Spotless Services Limited.

61 games and 209 goals for Essendon, 1959-1962.

Leading VFL goalkicker 1959, 1960.

President of Essendon 1988-1992.

Appointed to AFL Commission 1993.



### TERRY O'CONNOR

Bachelor of Laws (University of Western Australia).

Appointed Queen's Counsel 1987.

Chairman Ausdrill Limited and Environmental Solutions Limited.

Chancellor University of Notre Dame, Australia.

Played 300 games of amateur football in Western Australia.

President West Coast Eagles 1989-1993.

Chairman, Interim West Australian Football Commission.

Appointed to AFL Commission 1993.



### GRAEME SAMUEL

Bachelor of Laws

(Melbourne University).

Master of Laws (Monash University).

Trustee Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust.

Chairman, Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust.

Chairman of Opera Australia.

President of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Chairman of the Inner and Eastern Health Care Network. Councillor of the National Competition Council.

Partner of Phillips Fox & Masel from 1972 to 1980, Executive Director of Hill Samuel Australia Limited and subsequently Macquarie Bank Limited from 1981 to 1986 and co-founder of Grant Samuel & Associates, corporate strategic consultants in 1988.

Appointed to the original VFL Commission in 1984.



THE TRIBUNAL: THE AFL TRIBUNAL IS CONSTANTLY UNDER PRESSURE TO MAKE JUDGEMENTS OVER ON-FIELD INDISCRETIONS. THE 1996 TRIBUNAL (L-R) MICHAEL GREEN, SHANE MAGUIRE, GRAHAM SHERRY, EMMETT DUNNE, NEIL BUSSE (CHAIRMAN), BRIAN LE BROCCQ, ELAINE CANTY, BRIAN COLLIS, AND DR DAVID SHILBURY.



## ADMINISTRATORS, PLAYERS, COACHES RECOGNISED

Eleven Life Members of the Australian Football League will be appointed at the 1997 Annual Meeting of the AFL.

Administrators Ross Oakley, John Winneke, and Peter Tannock, and players Roger Merrett, Paul Roos, Dale Weightman, Alex Jesaulenko, Chris Langford, Rod Carter, Gary Ayres and Michael Malthouse will join the elite group of Life Members.

### ROSS OAKLEY

Ross Oakley announced his retirement as the AFL's Chief Executive Officer in June, 1996, completing a term in office that presided over remarkable changes to the game. He retired in November 1996.

Oakley joined the then VFL in 1986 as the Chairman of the Commission and his role was reshaped in 1993, as Chief Executive Officer.

When Oakley took office the League consisted of 12 clubs, with Sydney the sole club outside Victoria. He left the AFL with 16 teams and new clubs in Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia.

He saw spectator appeal grow immensely and club membership rise to new heights. He was instrumental in ground rationalisation, big sponsorship, night finals, greater television exposure of football, and higher television rights.

Oakley said that two of the major achievements during his stay were playing a part in the building of the Great Southern Stand at the MCG and seeing the game transform from a semi-professional to a highly-professional outfit.

In the 1960s Oakley played 62 games with St Kilda, and missed selection in the Saints' 1966 premiership side because of a knee injury that ended his playing career. Before his League appointment he was a member of the Hawthorn FC board.

### JOHN WINNEKE

John Winneke played in Hawthorn's first premiership side in 1961 and retired as a player at the end of 1962 to pursue a legal career.

He served as a member (and chairman) of the VFL Tribunal from 1968-75, was chairman

of the VFL/AFL Appeals Board from 1989-92 and was an AFL Commissioner from 1993 until his resignation in May, 1995. At that point he was appointed President of the Victorian Court of Appeal.

John's father, the late Sir Henry Winneke, was a patron of the VFL.

### PETER TANNOCK

Dr. Peter Tannock has been chairman of the WA Football Commission since 1989 and was appointed to the WA League board in 1986.

His contribution to football in WA has been outstanding. He was also chairman of the WAFL Football Development Trust from 1987-88 and he played 52 games with East Perth from 1962-65. From 1969-71 he was captain and coach of University Amateurs.

### ROGER MERRETT

Roger Merrett automatically qualified for Life Membership of the AFL when he played his 300th game with Brisbane in 1996. He retired at the end of the season after his 313th match.

He had a colorful career as a forward and ruckman, making his debut with Essendon in 1978 and playing in Essendon's 1984-85

premierships during his 149 games with the club. In 1988 he moved to Queensland and became the most famous of all Brisbane players. He captained the club from 1990-1996 during his 164 games with Brisbane. He had the honor of leading Brisbane into its first finals game in 1995.

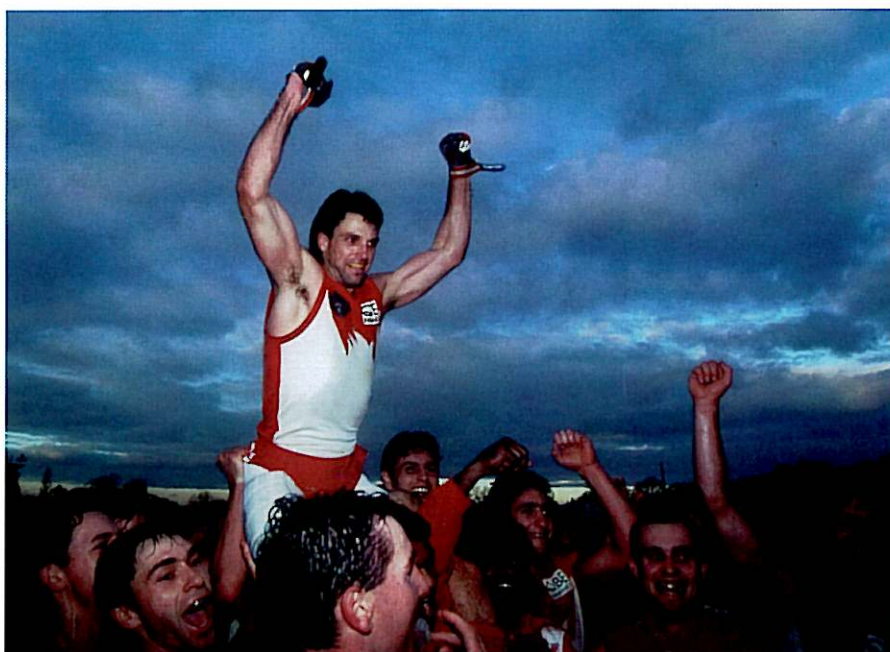
He kicked 433 goals and captained Victoria in 1986.

### PAUL ROOS

Paul Roos is a former Victorian captain who started his League career with Fitzroy in 1982. He is still playing with Sydney. At the end of last season he had amassed 314 games – 269 with Fitzroy and 45 with Sydney.

Roos was the Fitzroy captain from 1988-90, and 1992-94. He was named in the All-Australian side for the first time 1985 and as late as 1996 again won All-Australian selection.

Along the way he has also won the E.J. Whitten Medal, five Fitzroy best and fairest awards and finished high up in Brownlow Medal voting – but he has never played in a premiership side. Last year he played in his first Grand Final, which Sydney lost to North Melbourne.



HERO: PAUL ROOS' CAREER WAS RE-BORN DURING 1996, AFTER, FOR HIM, A RELATIVELY DISAPPOINTING FIRST YEAR IN SYDNEY IN 1995. ROOS WAS AN ALL AUSTRALIAN, PLAYED IN HIS FIRST AFL GRAND FINAL, AND STARRED, AND WAS MADE AN AUTOMATIC LIFE MEMBER AS A 300 GAMER, WITH FITZROY (269) AND SYDNEY (45).



HEROES: BOB PRATT, JACK DYER, AND JOHN NICHOLLS TELLING TALL TALES AT THE AFL LIFE MEMBERS' ANNUAL DINNER AT THE MCG.

#### DALE WEIGHTMAN

Dale Weightman is a former Richmond and Victorian captain who played 274 premiership games with Richmond – but his games total swelled to 314 with the inclusion of 20 night series games and 20 State matches. When checking its records, the AFL discovered that Weightman and several other players had previously qualified because night matches and State games are counted in a player's total. Night series and State Games are included in playing totals, allowing Weightman, Alex Jesaulenko, Chris Langford, Rod Carter, and Gary Ayres to qualify.

Weightman played with Richmond from 1974-1993, was the captain from 1988-92, played in a premiership team in 1980, is a dual best and fairest winner and is regarded as one of the greatest rovers in the club's history.

#### ALEX JESAULENKO

Alex Jesaulenko, the former Carlton premiership captain-coach, has been awarded Life Membership with the help of night series and State matches.

Jesaulenko was a champion Carlton forward, and later backman, before finishing his career at St Kilda. He played 279 premiership matches, but with eight night and 15 State games his total was 302.

Jesaulenko played with Carlton from 1967-79 and with St Kilda in 1980-81. He captained Carlton from 1975-76 and was the captain and coach in 1978-79. He coached St Kilda in 1980-81 and returned to coach Carlton in 1989-90. In 1996 Jesaulenko was selected in the AFL's Team of the Century.

#### CHRIS LANGFORD

Chris Langford started with Hawthorn in 1983 and at the end of 1996 had played 295 premiership games. But, he is well over the 300 games – 342 – required for AFL Membership. He has played 32 night series games and 15 State games during his career.

Langford has played in four Hawthorn premiership sides plus another four in the night series. He is a former Hawthorn captain and is also a dual winner of the E.J. Whitten Medal.

He has also been decorated with All-Australian selection and is one of the leading full backs of his era.

#### ROD CARTER

Rod Carter was regarded as one of football's unluckiest players when he initially missed AFL Life Membership by seven games. As he struggled for that handful of games to reach 300 in his last season in 1990 he was not only dropped by the Sydney selectors, but suspended by the Tribunal.

His career ended at 293 day games for Fitzroy and Sydney. But, AFL Life Membership is now with him.

Carter was a close-checking full back who played 76 games with Fitzroy from 1974-79 and 217 games with Sydney from 1980-90. His only goal in league football came in 1986 against Melbourne at the SCG.

#### GARY AYRES

Gary Ayres finished his playing career with Hawthorn in 1993 after 269 games. The back line was his forte, but he was also a brilliant mid-fielder when required. He is the only player to win the Norm Smith Medal more than once (1986, 1988).

He started in 1978 and played in the Hawthorn premiership sides of 1983, 1986, 1988-89 and 1991. He was the Hawks' skipper in 1992-93.

Ayres' games total is 302, boosted by 30 night series and three State matches. He took over as Geelong assistant and

Reserves' coach in 1994 and has been senior coach since 1995.

#### MICHAEL MALTHOUSE

Michael Malthouse is the current coach of West Coast, but his football background also takes in the Footscray coaching job plus an illustrious playing career with St Kilda and Richmond.

He played a total of 174 games with St Kilda and Richmond from 1972-83 and his coaching tally is 307 - 135 with Footscray (1984-89) and 172 with West Coast (1990-96). The highlights as coach were the premierships in 1992 and 1994.

He also played in Richmond's 1980 premiership, but will be mainly remembered as the first coach of a non-Victorian premiership club (West Coast, 1992).

#### JACK TITUS AWARD

Former Fitzroy player, Fitzroy coach and Essendon coach Bill Stephen is the winner of the Jack Titus award.

Bill played 163 games with Fitzroy from 1947-57, won the club best and fairest award twice, and represented Victoria 14 times.

He was Fitzroy's captain-coach from 1955-57 and non-playing coach from 1965-70. From 1976-78 he coached Essendon and he returned as coach of Fitzroy from 1979-80. He has also served as a specialist coach at North Melbourne, St Kilda and South Melbourne.

The Jack Titus award is named after former star Richmond forward Jack Titus who also became a fine Richmond committeeman, representing Richmond for many years at the League board table. Titus kicked a total of 970 goals in 294 games.

Until last year his feat in playing 204 games without a miss was a League record. Melbourne ruckman Jim Stynes now holds the record.



**RIP: BRUCE ANDREW, DES FOTHERGILL, TREVOR BARKER, JIM CARDWELL, DOUG BIGELOW, BILL BRITTINGHAM, IAN MORT, KEITH FORBES, JOCK CORDNER, JIM GUYATT, 'MAC' HOLTEN, TOMMY LAHIFF, LEN MURPHY**

**BRUCE ANDREW, AFL LIFE MEMBER**

Bruce Andrew, who died on June 6, 1966 aged 88, was a man of great football vision and apart from playing in Collingwood premiership sides he was one of the pioneers of the game north of the Murray River.

He was an ambassador for the game and a long-term secretary of the Australian National Football Council, when the ANFC was responsible for the development of Australian Football throughout the nation.

He received an MBE for his service to football, was a Life Member of the AFL and was recognised and honored by the football bodies in NSW and Queensland who knew first-hand of his untiring work in opening up the game in isolated areas.

Andrew was also a well known figure for more than 20 years on the long-running *World of Sport* program on Channel 7 and one of his assignments was helping to run the long kick segment.

He made his football name as a Collingwood wingman from 1928-31 and 1934 and his 62 games included selection in the 1928 and 1930 premiership sides.

In 1934 he took on a full-time role as a football educator and even promoted the game in Papua New Guinea. He also became a vice-president of Collingwood FC and during World War II served with the RAAF and was posted overseas. He helped organise football matches wherever there were Australian servicemen.

**DES FOTHERGILL, BROWNLOW MEDALLIST**

Champion Collingwood half-forward and rover Des Fothergill figured in a unique Brownlow Medal finish in 1940 with South Melbourne star Herb Matthews.

They both finished with a record 32 votes and even after an exhaustive countback system was put into place they could not be separated.

Fothergill, considered one of Collingwood's most precociously talented players, died on March 16, 1996 aged 75.

He broke into the senior side in 1937 aged just 16 and despite missing five games he won Collingwood's Copeland Trophy for the team's best player that year. He won the trophy again in 1938 and 1940 and during that period he knocked up half a dozen centuries for Northcote in District Cricket. He also played Sheffield Shield cricket for Victoria.

In 1941 Des followed his good friend and Collingwood teammate Ron Todd to VFA club Williamstown and won the Recorder Cup as the VFA's best player. After World War II Fothergill returned to Collingwood before his battle-scarred knees forced his retirement in 1947. He was only 26 and had played 111 games and kicked 325 goals.

**TREVOR BARKER, ST KILDA HERO**

The football world was saddened to lose St Kilda's popular and loyal Trevor Barker after a battle with cancer. Barker died on April 26, 1996 aged only 39.

The former Saint in the No. 1 guernsey thrilled football crowds with his spectacular marking in a 230-game career that stretched from 1975 to 1989. He kicked 134 goals, was St Kilda's skipper from 1983-86, the club's Best and Fairest winner in 1976 and 1981, represented Victoria seven times and, at the time of his death, was coach of St Kilda Reserves.

He was an outstanding player with exciting flair on both the forward line and in defence and it was fitting that players and spectators at the St Kilda-Footscray game in Round 5 observed a minute's silence for the blond-haired St Kilda hero.

**BILL TWOMEY, COLLINGWOOD GREAT**

The name of Twomey is synonymous with Collingwood and Bill Twomey was a major player in the family dynasty. Twomey, a flamboyant centreman in his heyday with Collingwood, died on October 1, 1996, aged 71.

He played 189 games with Collingwood and kicked 152 goals from 1945-58, was a member of the 1953 premiership side, won the club's famous Copeland Trophy in 1956 and was captain in 1957.

The Twomey brothers created VFL history in the 1953 Grand Final when three of them – Bill, Pat and Mick – played in the side that defeated Geelong for the flag.

Bill Twomey was a gifted and dynamic player who had explosive speed which he inherited from his father Bill Twomey snr. also a Collingwood player (54 games from 1918-22) and winner of the 1924 Stawell Gift.

**JIM CARDWELL, GREAT ADMINISTRATOR**

Jim Cardwell, who died on December 23, 1996, was described by football legend Ron Barassi as 'one of the most influential figures in the history of the Melbourne FC.'

Cardwell, who was 80, was a forthright secretary of Melbourne from 1951 to 1975, a period which included the club's golden era when the Demons won premierships in 1955-56-57, 1959-60 and 1964, the club's last.

Cardwell often said that one of his most pleasant memories was persuading Norm Smith, who had been coaching Fitzroy, to return to Melbourne as coach. Smith went on to fabulous premiership success as a coach of the Demons and was named as the 'coach of the century' by the AFL in 1996.

**DOUG BIGELOW, ESSENDON RUCKMAN AND RADIO STAR**

Doug Bigelow played in a great era at Essendon in the 1940s and 50s when the club was blessed with players such as Dick Reynolds, John Coleman and Bill Hutchison.

Bigelow was a rugged ruckman/backman who played 148 games from 1947-56. He didn't play in a premiership side but was a member of the 1948 drawn Grand Final side against Melbourne and the losing 1951 Grand Final team against Geelong.

He lost his battle with cancer on June 21, 1996 at his Queensland Gold Coast home. He was 67.

Bigelow was a Life Member of Essendon, served as a committeeman with Essendon and in 1964 he became a football commentator on 3LO. The familiar voice of 'Bigs' became the voice of ABC football for the next 24 years. In more recent years he lived in Queensland.

#### **BILL BRITTINGHAM, LEADING VFL GOALKICKER**

Essendon lost another of its stars from the Reynolds era in 1996. Bill Brittingham, the League's leading full-forward in 1946 with 66 goals, and later a top-line full-back, died on June 18, aged 72.

He played 172 games and kicked 181 goals from 1943-52. His career highlights included playing in the 1946, 1949-50 premierships sides. He also played in the losing Grand Final team in 1947, the 1948 drawn Grand Final against Melbourne, the losing replay side and the losing 1951 Grand Final side.

Brittingham was a Life member of Essendon FC and the Essendon Past Players' Association, and for several years was a club historian.

#### **IAN MORT, HAWTHORN PREMIERSHIP STAR**

Ian Mort was a powerfully-built half-forward who left Kew in the Victorian Amateur Football Association to play in Hawthorn's first VFL premiership team in 1961.

He also played in the losing Grand Final team against Geelong in 1963 and represented Victoria at the 1961 national carnival in Brisbane.

He had the strength to mix it with the toughest backmen, and the skill to break open a tight match.

Mort died of cancer on January 19, 1996 aged 58. His career at Hawthorn went from 1960-64 and he played 73 games and kicked 56 goals.

#### **KEITH FORBES, ESSENDON CAPTAIN**

Keith Forbes was a formidable goalsneak rover who played with Essendon, North Melbourne and Fitzroy in a VFL career that started in 1928 and ended in 1940. He played a total of 187 games – 152 for Essendon (1928-37), 31 for North (1938-39) and 4 for Fitzroy (1940).

He also kicked a total of 475 goals – 415 of them with Essendon where he was captain in 1934-35 and 1937. He won the Bombers' Best and Fairest award in 1930 and 1935. He was beaten by one vote for the 1930 Brownlow

Medal and was second (17 votes) to the brilliant Haydn Bunton in 1935. His team-mate, and three times Brownlow Medallist Dick Reynolds polled 13 votes that year.

At North Melbourne Forbes was captain and coach in 1938-39. He played only four games with Fitzroy before joining the 2nd AIF during World War II in 1940.

Forbes was one of League football's oldest surviving players when he died on May 28, 1996 aged 90.

#### **JOCK CORDNER, NORTH BEST & FAIREST**

Jock Cordner was a classy centreman who made his name at North Melbourne after earlier playing with Footscray and Fitzroy. He played a total of 119 games – 7 with Footscray (1931-32), 24 games with Fitzroy (1933-34) and 88 with North (1935-41).

Cordner also played for Victoria in 1938-39 and was North's Best and Fairest in 1938.

He died on September 16, 1966 at Tweed Heads, aged 86.

#### **JIM GUYATT, ST KILDA DEFENDER**

Jim Guyatt, the tough St Kilda defender, died on July 2, 1996 aged 54, after suffering a stroke.

St Kilda teammate, Brownlow Medallist Neil Roberts, described Guyatt as 'a tough, quick, skilful and dedicated player. He was a true blue on and off the field and would stick with you through anything.'

Guyatt came to the Saints from Maffra, in Gippsland, and played 114 games with St Kilda from 1957-64. In 1962 he represented Victoria.

A knee injury in his mid-20s ended his League career two years before St Kilda won its first – and only – premiership.

#### **RENDLE MCNEILAGE 'MAC' HOLTEN, PLAYER AND PARLIAMENTARIAN**

'Mac' Holten was a fine all-round footballer who played football with Collingwood and cricket with Melbourne in the District competition.

He was also a Federal parliamentarian, holding the seat of Indi for the Country Party for 19 years and rising to become the Minister

for Repatriation. He died of cancer in October, 1996, aged 74.

He played 82 games and kicked 83 goals with Collingwood from 1942-48 and later coached the Wangaratta Magpies to four successive premierships. He also dominated cricket locally and in Country Week competition.

#### **TOMMY LAHIFF, FOOTBALLER/COMMENTATOR**

One newspaper headline labelled Tommy Lahiff as a 'Legend of sport and airwaves,' on his death on December 8, 1996, aged 86.

Lahiff became a famous football figure for his unique style which did not give strict attention to text book English. He had a rough and ready approach but was loved by all – supporters, coaches, players and officials.

He worked for many years as commentator Harry Beitzel's 'sidekick' on 3KZ and 3AW.

Lahiff was born in Port Melbourne and played with Port in the VFA. In 1935 he made his debut with Essendon and in 1940-41 he led Port Melbourne to successive flags. In 1942 he rejoined the VFL with South Melbourne and transferred to Hawthorn in that same year. By 1944 he was captain-coach of Hawthorn. In 1962 he returned to Port as captain-coach and in 1965 he started his radio partnership with Harry Beitzel.

#### **LEN MURPHY, OF COLLINGWOOD'S GOLDEN YEARS**

Len Murphy, who played in Collingwood's 1928-29-30 premierships sides, died on December 20, 1996, aged 87.

Murphy, who played 173 games for Collingwood, was also the 19th man in the losing Grand Final team in 1937. He missed selection in the 1935 premiership side because of a shoulder injury and was unavailable for the 1936 premiership team because of a VFL suspension.

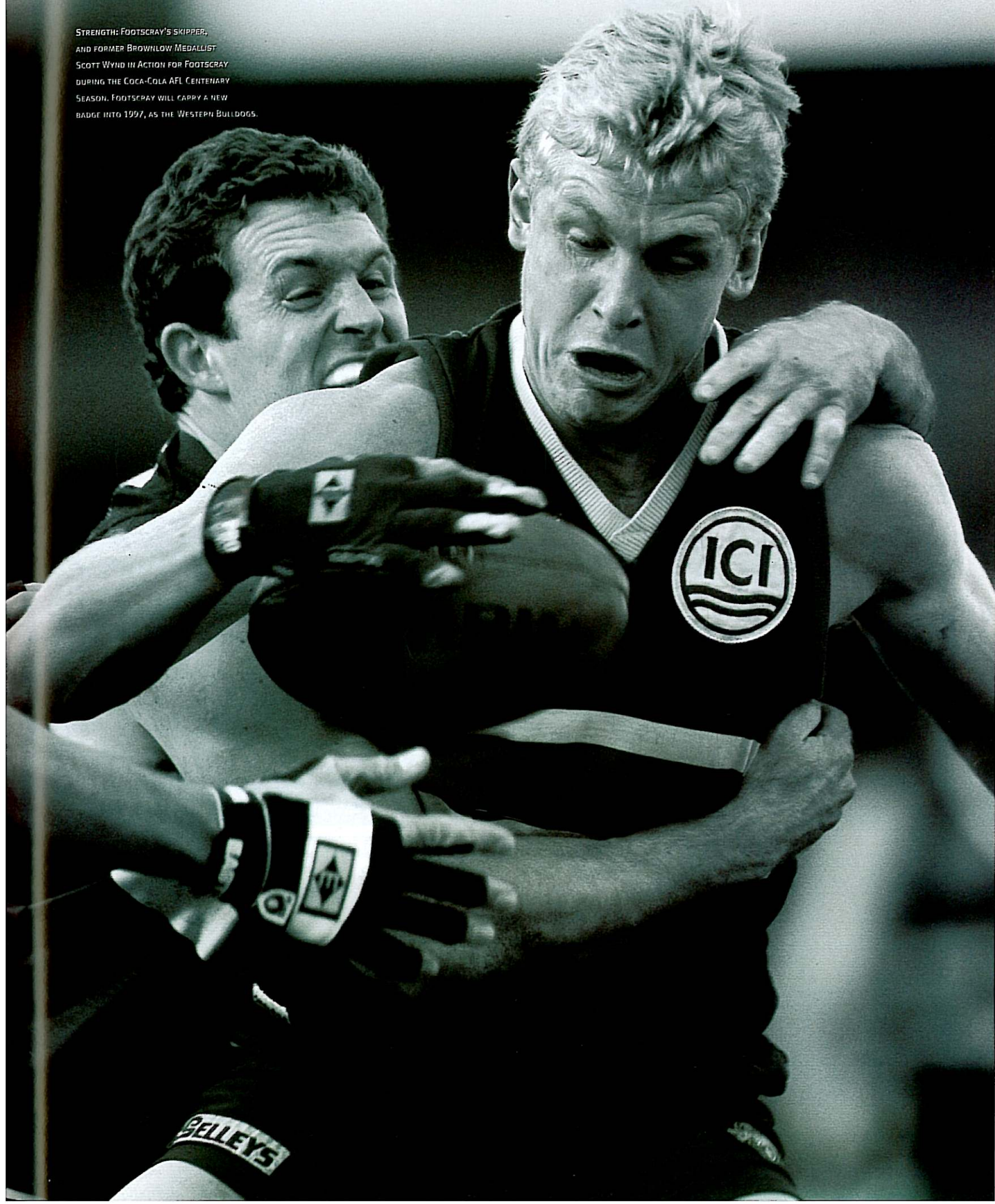
After Collingwood, he coached Nhill in the Wimmera League. He returned to Melbourne to play 25 games with Footscray from 1940-41.

Len's older brother Frank was a member of the Collingwood 1927-28-29-30 premiership sides.

## The Game

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STRENGTH: FOOTSCRAY'S SKIPPER,  
AND FORMER BROWNLAW MEDALLIST  
SCOTT WYND IN ACTION FOR FOOTSCRAY  
DURING THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY  
SEASON. FOOTSCRAY WILL CARRY A NEW  
BADGE INTO 1997, AS THE WESTERN BULLDOGS.



## A SPECIAL SEASON FOR FOOTBALL

### FEBRUARY

The Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season was launched on a cold Thursday evening on February 8. The celebration embraced the Australian game as 136 inductees were announced for Football's Hall of Fame – this group consisting of 100 players, 10 coaches, 10 administrators and six media representatives. Twelve from the list were elevated to the status of Legends of the Game – Ron Barassi Jr., Haydn Bunton snr., Roy Cazaly, John Coleman, Jack Dyer, Graham Farmer, Leigh Matthews, John Nicholls, Bob Pratt, Dick Reynolds, Bob Skilton, and Ted Whitten snr.

A Lightning Premiership was staged at Waverley Park over three days – February 9-11. It was the first Lightning Premiership conducted by the League since 1953 and all clubs competed. Unfortunately the series was marred by wet and cold weather, but on the Sunday, Essendon emerged the winning club over Brisbane. Games consisted of two halves, each of 17 minutes, 30 seconds, plus time on. Five minutes were allowed at half-time and players were not permitted to leave the arena. Four goal umpires were tested, and several rule options were considered.

On February 23 the Ansett Australia Cup summer competition started, the first match being played at night at Football Park, South Australia between Adelaide and Melbourne.

### MARCH

The Ansett Australia Cup Grand Final was played at Waverley Park on Saturday, March 23. It was a night-game spectacular, with St Kilda beating Carlton to win its first night series premiership since 1958. A crowd of 66,888 saw the match, the second largest in night series history.

On March 27 the Norwich Rising Star award was launched at the MCG. It would be the fourth year of the award, which focuses on the best young players in the competition.

The Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season opened on Friday night, March 29 and in keeping with the Centenary Season theme the first game was played at the MCG between the AFL's two oldest clubs Melbourne and Geelong. The two clubs competed for the Wills-Harrison Trophy and Geelong was successful. Wills and Harrison were two founders of the Australian game, both were associated with Melbourne and Geelong.

### APRIL

On April 3 the AFL Centenary Art Expo was held at the Melbourne Park Function Centre. The display represented a visual history of 100 years of Australian Football, featuring club memorabilia, photographs, and specially commissioned art works from some of Australia's finest artists.

The AFL black tie Centenary Ball was held on the MCG on Tuesday, April 16 and was one of the highlights of the year. More than 3000 guests dined and danced under a huge marquee which covered most of the arena. Not even more of the wet weather which seemed to plague AFL special events marred the spirit of the night. Described as the biggest free-standing marquee in the southern hemisphere, measuring 110 metres by 72 metres, it took eight days to erect. Many dignitaries were in attendance, ►►



## YEAR IN REVIEW

### A SEASON IN 100

The Centenary Season is over, gone but not forgotten, and now the Australian Football League has 99 years to think about its Bi-Centenary celebrations. Scary thought, isn't it?

Our obituaries will have long been written and to think there are probably three generations of stars still on the horizon. Heaven forbid, the 2096 version of Wayne Carey will be fitter, faster and even more skilled than the North Melbourne Premiership skipper ... but

by then Carey will probably have a grandstand named in his honor.

So how will history record 1996, the 100th year of VFL/AFL competition? One of the lasting images might be of Carey himself holding aloft the 1996 Centenary premiership cup with his triumphant coach Denis Pagan standing alongside him.

When the 2096 premiership captain and coach take the dais, the look of immense pride and satisfaction



CHAMPIONS: COACH DENIS PAGAN AND CAPTAIN WAYNE CAREY HOLD ALOFT THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY PREMIERS CUP, THE FIRST IN 100 SEASONS TO BE GOLD PLATED. IN THE BACKGROUND, AND WITH JUST AS FIRM A GRIP ON THE CUP AS THE STARS OF THE DAY, IS AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEGEND JACK DYER.

will be no different. We dare not suggest which team it might be!

But next time you look at the photograph of the victorious North Melbourne duo, cast your eye on the man standing in the middle. Jack Dyer, a 1996 Hall of Famer, Australian Football Legend (one of 12) and Team of the Century member ... Dyer is in on the act too.

Even at age 83, Captain Blood is claspings Denis Pagan's hand, as though he is trying to touch the

premiership cup. Dyer hasn't played since 1949 when he was a Richmond hero frightening the living daylights out of opposition teams. But he gave the impression he was very much part of it in 1996.

And to that end he was. Dyer was one of 136 players, coaches, administrators, umpires and media inducted into the inaugural Australian Football Hall of Fame. At last football has a tangible way to pay homage to the greats of the game. The federal Government has

including newly-elected Prime Minister Mr John Howard and Victorian Premier Mr Jeff Kennett. It was a truly spectacular event and among those providing the entertainment were John Farnham, Mike Brady, and the Music Men. The Meetings Industry Association named the ball the 'Melbourne event of the year.'

On April 18 Australia Post launched a Centenary Season stamp series featuring some of the game's greats. The players featured ranged from Haydn Bunton and Jack Dyer to Ted Whitten and Polly Farmer to modern day heroes Stephen Kernahan and Glen Jakovich.

The huge hype generated in the Centenary Season increased to fever pitch with the Collingwood-Essendon blockbuster game at the MCG on Anzac Day, April 25, before a crowd of 87,549.

#### MAY

On Monday night, May 6, Channel 7 screened a two-hour documentary on the history of Australian Football.

The book of the Century, 100 Years of Australian Football was launched at the MCG on May 7 by the AFL, in conjunction with Penguin Books Australia. Football legends Ron Barassi and Graham 'Polly' Farmer introduced the most informative book compiled on the Australian game. It was fitting the celebration took place in the Legends Room in the Great Southern Stand.

In a lunchtime time gathering on May 8 the Essendon FC launched its Hall of Fame at its home base, the 'Windy Hill' ground.

On the night of May 8 one of the year's most memorable events was staged at the MCG with the re-enactment match between Essendon and Geelong. It was a gala evening with the main game preceded by a Legends match where players wore period costumes. The Essendon-Geelong game was played on May 8 - the same date as the first VFL game in the first round of the first season of the VFL in 1897.

A crowd of 75,632 were at the MCG and Essendon won the historic match by 29 points. The Essendon and Geelong players entered the arena, after a magnificent fireworks display, wearing knickerbockers, caps and guernseys depicting the old-style - but after formalities they quickly changed into normal gear - save for old-style guernseys - for the big game. Some of the legends who played in the early game were Gary Dempsey, Alex Jesaulenko, Bernie Quinlan, Robert Flower, Des Tuddenham and Peter Daicos and they brought back a flood of memories. Three other games from Round 7 - Collingwood v St Kilda, Melbourne v Sydney (South Melbourne) and Carlton v Fitzroy also re-enacted the first round of 1897.

An AFL club officials function was held on May 22 to recognise the huge number of people who support the game as officials and contributors to football: timekeepers, trainers, masseurs, administrators, runners, and so many more.

#### JUNE

On June 1 a Coca-Cola AFL State of Origin match was played between Victoria and the Allies at the MCG. The next day South Australian and Western Australia met at Football Park in Adelaide. Victoria and South Australia were too powerful for their rivals.

On June 3 more than 1000 players who >>

►► had played 25 or more VFL/AFL games, plus coaches were entertained in what many claimed later was 'the function of the century'. Players through the decades were drawn together and the theme of the evening was certainly one of nostalgia. It was a huge task for the AFL administration tracking down players to make this such a unique and memorable night.

The Queen's Birthday match on June 12 between Melbourne and Collingwood at the MCG represented the 100th anniversary of their first match in 1897. Melbourne won that first game and the 1996 match as well.

All umpires (field, boundary and goal) who had officiated at 25 or more games attended the Gala 'Umpires of the Century' function at The Legends Room at the MCG. A total of 225 Umpires (field, boundary and goal) who had officiated at 25 or more games were invited to the function held on the 19th June.

On Saturday night, June 22 Carlton and Collingwood celebrated the 100th anniversary of their first game which took place on June 22, 1897 – the first game ever played at Princes Park (since renamed Optus Oval). A crowd of 61,448 saw the 1996 contest.

## JULY

The Centenary Season Dinner of the 200 Club was held in the Legends Room at the MCG on July 31. This ever-growing group of players must have played at least 200 matches (night series games and State games are included).

The 1996 inductees were John Blakey, Andrew Collins, Tim Darcy, Peter Dean, Greg Dear, Ian Fairley, David Grant, Mark Harvey, Tony Lockett, Stewart Loewe, Garry Lyon, Stephen Macpherson, Scott McIvor, Gary O'Donnell, Darrin Pritchard, Stephen Silvagni and Earl Spalding.

Field umpires Peter Carey, Denis Rich, John Russo and Bryan Sheehan were also inducted into the umpires' '200' section.

## AUGUST

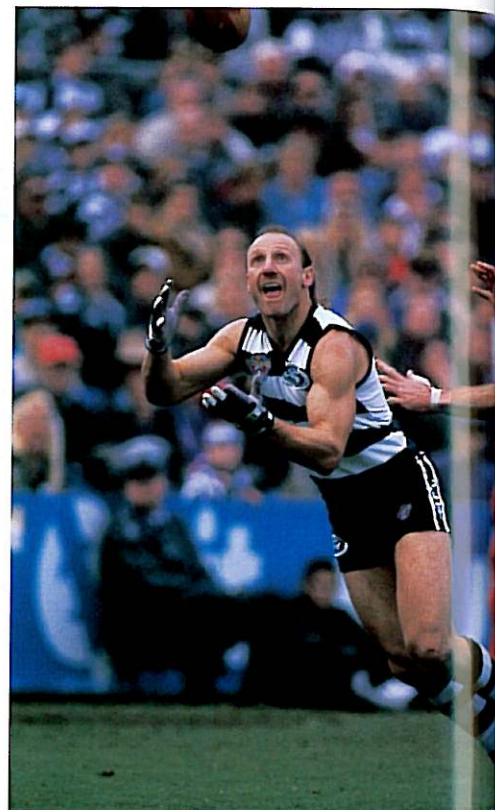
On August 14 the official induction of Hall of Fame members took place at Melbourne Park Function Centre. This drew an audience of 1000, containing many of football's most revered identities. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the eight living legends: Ron Barassi jnr., Jack Dyer, Graham Farmer, Leigh Matthews, John Nicholls, Bob Pratt, Dick Reynolds, Bob Skilton. Representatives of the families of the other legends, Haydn Bunton snr., Roy Cazaly, John Coleman, and Ted Whitten snr. were also invited.

## SEPTEMBER

The long-awaited Coca-Cola AFL Team of the Century was announced at a gala evening attended by 450 of football's biggest names, past and present, at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne.

A selection panel comprising of Dr Allen Aylett, Percy Beames, Bob Davis, Gerard Healy, Greg Hobbs, Jack Irving, Bill Jacobs, David Parkin, with Ross Oakley the non-voting chairman, was charged with the responsibility of selecting 18 players in positions, plus three interchange players. In addition a coach and field umpire were chosen.

On September 10 the 1996 Norwich Rising Star award was announced at a luncheon at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Melbourne. The winner was Ben Cousins, of West Coast, from Sydney's Shannon Grant. ►►



►► allocated \$1 million to assist in the construction of a Hall of Fame and football museum.

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony, the Centenary Ball and the players and coaches party were the social highlights of the Centenary Season. To have (a) been invited and (b) survived all three, required the strength and constitution one normally needs to make it through four days of the Melbourne Spring Racing Carnival.

What appeared from the outside to be a logistical nightmare, turned out to be a smooth, efficient and well run operation. The Centenary Events Department at the AFL somehow managed to wine, dine and dance thousands of people into the wee hours. Even the League's most ardent critics were lavish in their praise.

For all football followers there was a greater awareness of the culture and history of the game. It became important that we just did not concern ourselves with how our team was performing each week – although that will always be the major focus of football life – but we took time out to study and learn from days gone by.

Clubs such as Essendon threw themselves right into the swing of the Centenary Season by opening

their own Hall of Fame. During their re-enactment match against Geelong on Wednesday, May 8, the Bombers' chests swelled with pride, as did the Cats, when they took the field on exactly the same date as the first round of VFL football back in 1897.

More re-enactment games were played on the following weekend (Collingwood v St Kilda, Melbourne v Sydney, Carlton v Fitzroy) but for sheer joy, drama and, sadly, tragedy, nothing surpassed the atmosphere of the Essendon-Geelong game. In one memorable night, we witnessed a see-sawing contest which produced 39 goals, the comeback of the season (Darren Bewick's nine goals) and a genuine attempt before the game to create an image of what football might have been like 100 seasons ago, even down to the players' uniforms and caps.

The game won't be forgotten by Essendon star Michael Long, who seriously damaged his knee in a simple mishap. Thankfully, modern-day medicine was kinder to Long than what it might have been when his club first started out and he will soldier on in 1997.

Fans found themselves enjoying parts of the game they had rarely seen before. Most of us have wandered into various art exhibitions but few could say they had



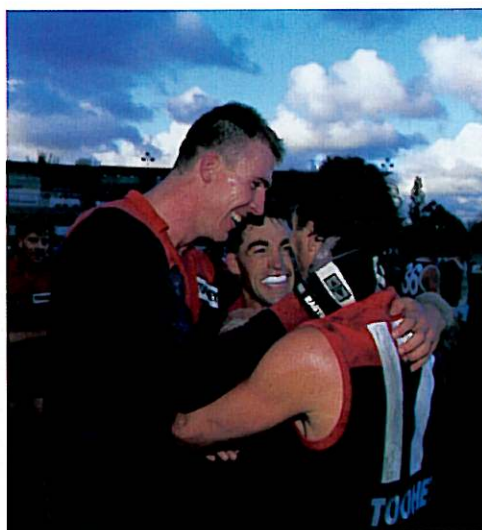
**CENTENARY ACTION:** THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY SEASON WAS A CELEBRATION OF ALL PARTS OF THE GAME, AND A FAREWELL TO THE LEAGUE'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE: (L-R) THE ENTERTAINMENT (FIREWORKS AT THE ANSETT AUSTRALIA CUP GRAND FINAL), HEROES (AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEGEND JACK DYER AT THE CENTENARY GRAND FINAL), STARS LIKE GARY ABLETT (WHO ENTERED THE 1000 GOAL CLUB DURING THE SEASON) AND JIM STYNES (WHO BROKE JACK TITUS'S LONG-STANDING GAMES SEQUENCE DURING THE YEAR), THE FOUNDATION CLUBS (ESSENDON AND GEELONG MET IN ROUND 7 AS PART OF THE RE-ENACTMENT OF THE FIRST ROUND, 1897); ROSS OAKLEY ANNOUNCED HIS IMPENDING RETIREMENT AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN JUNE.



been a show specifically designed for football. Inventive and creative local artists captured the spirit and soul of football and footballers. The AFL purchased one painting from each artist represented to hang in the Australian Football Hall of Fame and Museum when it is constructed.

In between art exhibitions, re-enactment games, gala balls and functions, football never lost sight of its real purpose. To entertain, to promote, to enrich, to delight and, occasionally, to frustrate.

Few things have changed over the course of 100 years. Supporters of 15 other clubs felt as flat as last week's beer when it became apparent their side was not going to win a premiership. We all believe our side is the best but somehow there's a wall and we can't quite climb over it. Denis Pagan, Wayne Carey and North Melbourne did and deservedly so. North Melbourne was clearly the champion team of the season, overcoming a great challenge by Sydney in the Grand Final to win easily in the end. The Finals series saw history made at just about every turn: first finals at the 'Gabba and the SCG did an enormous amount for football in the northern states, and finally the Swans taking part in a Grand Final at the MCG for the



first time since 1934, when Bob Pratt was the superstar full forward of the era. The Swans last Grand Final was in 1945, a losing final to Carlton, at Optus Oval. It was Pratt who presented the Norm Smith Medal to North Melbourne's Glen Archer, as best player afield in the Grand Final.

The Centenary Grand Final paid great tribute to the 12 Legends of the Game, and to the 100 seasons of history that has made football such an important part of so many lives.

During the season we lost a major player in Fitzroy, a founding member of the VFL. The tears flowed, particularly at the club's last match in Melbourne, round 21 at the MCG, against Richmond. The Lions last match was in Perth, against Fremantle. Vale Fitzroy, but not the Lions, re-born as part of the Brisbane Football Club.

The Centenary Season was argued and debated by some who felt that it was indeed the League's 99th birthday. While it will be the 100th birthday in 1997, there can be no doubt that 1996 was the 100th (read centenary) season of VFL/AFL football. The argument was trivial; the significance of the year was not.

**MICHAEL LOVETT,**  
EDITOR, FOOTBALL RECORD

► The Australian Football Media Association, in conjunction with the AFL, held its annual dinner at the Melbourne Cricket Club members' dining room on September 18. The AFLMA's Player of the Year was Essendon's James Hird. The AFL Life Members also conducted their annual dinner, in the Legends Room at the MCG.

The Grand Final umpires over several decades attended their annual dinner at the Wills Room at the MCG on September 22. Seventy six people attended the evening.

On Monday, September 23, the AFL held its Centenary Season Brownlow Medal Ball at the World Congress Centre in Melbourne. This special occasion, attended by 1560 club representatives and supporters, was a departure from the normal format with dancing making up part of the evening. But not before the most important business had been completed, the counting of the Brownlow Medal votes. It was a dual result with Essendon's James Hird and Brisbane's Michael Voss each polling 21 votes and each player received a medal. North Melbourne's Corey McKernan was the unluckiest player in Brownlow history. He too polled 21 votes, but was ineligible because of suspension.

The following day, the Carbine Club held its annual Grand Final luncheon in the ballroom of the Hotel Sofitel in Melbourne and welcomed both Hird and Voss. The Prime Minister Mr John Howard proposed the toast to football as Grand Final week continued to gain momentum.

On Wednesday, September 25 the Variety Club staged its Grand Final luncheon and throughout Melbourne breakfasts, luncheons and dinners marking the Grand Final in the centenary season were in full swing.

On September 27 the Grand Final parade featuring players and coaches from North Melbourne and Sydney took place in the centre of Melbourne.

The time-honored North Melbourne breakfast on Grand Final morning, September 28, again took place along with similar breakfasts conducted by other AFL clubs.

In the afternoon the Centenary Grand Final proved to be an historic event as North Melbourne and Sydney met for the first time in a match for the premiership. North Melbourne won the game, its first premiership since 1977, in front of a crowd of 93,102. There was magnificent pre-game entertainment featuring more than 2500 performers, 10,000 balloons, football legends, Olympians and a who's-who of singing stars including Barry Crocker, Glenn Shorrock, Slim Dusty, Diane Trask, Mike Brady, Daryl Somers, Noel Watson, John Farnham, Maroochy Barambah, Normie Rowe and Venetta Fields. These singers had all performed at previous Grand Finals and, for the centenary season, teamed up as an all-star group.

That night North Melbourne players, officials and supporters celebrated with gusto, truly saluting 100 seasons of the VFL/AFL.

#### DECEMBER

On December 16 at the Great Hall, National Gallery of Victoria 230 guests attended a farewell dinner for the retiring AFL Chief Executive Officer, Ross Oakley. One of the speakers was the new Chief Executive Officer, Wayne Jackson. ••



## THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL

### 1ST QUARTER

Sydney fired early with Tony Lockett kicking the first goal. North was taking a while to settle into the match. Greg Stafford's work in the ruck was dominant while North had Corey McKernan in the forward pocket. Troy Luff was providing a second option up forward to Lockett, playing the role of a mobile centre-half forward. He was in front and playing the percentages well, with two first quarter goals and a great assist to Mark Bayes. Glen Archer is moved on to him. Paul Roos was playing loose in defence and picking up stacks of possessions. He was ably assisted by Adam Heuskes and Michael O'Loughlin who looked cool and focussed. Paul Kelly's attacking run after marking on the outer win is a highlight. His body was at every tough encounter. For North Wayne Carey was the only player really winning his position. Standing up to take some great marks, his play was not stunning but allowed his teammates to gather their breath. Sydney took a three goal lead into quarter time, but it could have been more.

### 2ND QUARTER

An early goal to Jason Mooney put the Swans four goals up. Kelly's intensity at the ball remains unbelievable. Both captains are at their peak. A missed goal and a pass to Lockett which Rodney Eade describes after the game as a "possible turning point" falls short. North sweep the ball down to kick a goal. McKernan has been moved into the ruck and Stafford now has a real contest. North is moving back into the game through Anthony Rock, Dean Laidley and Archer, slowly but surely. Peter Bell, from the bench, provided pace and drill for North. Both sides are fighting for their lives. The supposedly laconic Dale Lewis throws himself everywhere. At the 24 minute mark Sydney still hold a 17 point lead but three goals in

four minutes to North, allow them to go into half time with a two point lead. Glenn Freeborn, with three goals in the quarter has set the North Melbourne train rolling.

### 3RD QUARTER

As Stafford tires after his early brilliant work, McKernan begins to run, jump, kick around bodies and punch the ball over mountains. He is giving North the ascendancy out of the centre. After five consecutive points to North, Craig Sholl finally goals at the ten minute mark. Sydney answer with a Lockett slip catch and goal. The next ten minutes win the premiership for North. Craig Sholl goals again. Swan heads start to drop. Darren Crocker snaps a goal from a ball up and North lead by 27 points at the 23 minute mark. The Swans continue to attack just when they seem gone. Stuart Maxfield and O'Loughlin miss gettable goals. North's lead is 25 points.

### 4TH QUARTER

Jason Mooney goes into the ruck, with Stafford up forward, to try to run with McKernan. Sydney open up attacking. Kelly misses a goal and Lockett gives away a free to Mick Martyn. North start to make Sydney pay. Stevens goals, then a Heuskes pass is intercepted by Mark Roberts who goals from fifty metres. Sydney kicking the next two resuscitates the crowd as Sydney win the ball out of the centre. Then enter King Carey who wins a contest, and gives the ball to Rock who goals from outside 50. The crowd is now turning blue (and white).

The Kangaroos are playing with confidence. Carey kicks his first as a Carey chant goes up.

North supporters are beginning their celebrations even as Derek Kickett kicks a booming goal from outside 50. North by 43 points.

FROM THE FOOTBALL RECORD

YIPPEE: NORTH MELBOURNE'S WINNING GRAND FINAL TEAM GATHERS FOR THE TRADITIONAL ON-FIELD TEAM PHOTOGRAPH. ANYTHING GOES.





THE BIG MATCH: TOSSEING THE COIN, WAYNE CAREY AND PAUL KELLY; THE GOLD CUP; AND SHARING THE SPOILS; COREY MCKERNAN HAS FANS REACHING OUT IN PRAISE OF A GREAT MATCH, GREAT SEASON.



## THE SCORE

### 1996 FINALS: SCORES, ATTENDANCES, UMPIRES

#### FIRST QUALIFYING FINAL (SUBIACO OVAL)

WEST COAST	6.2	11.7	12.9	18.17 (125)
CARLTON	1.4	5.6	8.8	10.10 (70)
UMPIRES:	D. Goldspink, C. Mitchell, G. Scroop			
ATTENDANCE:	41,501			

#### SECOND QUALIFYING FINAL (GABBA)

BRISBANE	4.6	6.8	11.9	15.11 (101)
ESSENDON	2.1	8.2	10.5	15.10 (100)
UMPIRES:	B. Sheehan, D. Rich, G. Dore			
ATTENDANCE:	21,964 (AFL record for ground)			

#### THIRD QUALIFYING FINAL (MCG)

NORTH MELBOURNE	6.5	8.10	14.14	19.17 (131)
GEELONG	2.2	5.6	6.9	9.17 (71)
UMPIRES:	R. Sawers, H. Kennedy, G. Vernon			
ATTENDANCE:	69,323			

#### FOURTH QUALIFYING FINAL (SCG)

SYDNEY	3.4	4.8	8.11	13.12 (90)
HAWTHORN	2.3	6.5	9.8	12.12 (84)
UMPIRES:	M. Nash, P. Carey, J. Harvey			
ATTENDANCE:	37,010			

#### FIRST SEMI FINAL (MCG)

ESSENDON	5.4	9.6	15.10	22.12 (144)
WEST COAST	0.3	4.11	6.13	8.19 (67)
UMPIRES:	R. Sawers, A. Coates, G. Vernon			
ATTENDANCE:	85,656			

#### SECOND SEMI FINAL (GABBA)

BRISBANE	6.2	14.5	17.13	26.14 (170)
CARLTON	3.1	8.4	9.7	10.13 (73)
UMPIRES:	P. Carey, M. Nash, B. Allen			
ATTENDANCE:	21,767			

#### FIRST PRELIMINARY FINAL (MCG)

NORTH MELBOURNE	8.3	11.7	16.9	17.12 (114)
BRISBANE	3.1	3.5	7.8	11.10 (76)
UMPIRES:	H. Kennedy, A. Coates, G. Scroop			
ATTENDANCE:	66,719			

#### SECOND PRELIMINARY FINAL (SYDNEY)

SYDNEY	1.3	6.6	8.7	10.10 (70)
ESSENDON	4.4	4.6	8.6	10.9 (69)
UMPIRES:	G. Dore, B. Sheehan, D. Goldspink			
ATTENDANCE:	41,731			

#### GRAND FINAL

NORTH MELBOURNE	3.2	8.7	12.14	19.17 (131)
SYDNEY	6.2	8.5	9.7	13.10 (88)
BEST:	North Melbourne: Archer, McKernan, Carey, Schwass, Stevens, Rock, Sholl. Sydney: Roos, Lockett, Kelly, Heuskes, Cresswell, Luff, Stafford, O'Loughlin.			
GOALS:	North Melbourne: Freeborn 3, Crocker 3, Sholl 2, Roberts 2, A. Stevens 2, Allison 2, Rock, Fairley, Carey, Bell, Simpson. Sydney: Lockett 6, Luff 2, O'Loughlin 2, Cresswell, Mooney, Kickett.			
UMPIRES:	M. Nash, G. Dore, B. Sheehan			
CROWD:	93,102 At: MCG			
NORM SMITH MEDALLIST:	Glen Archer (NM).			

#### RESERVES

NORTH MELBOURNE	4.3	7.11	15.14	23.18 (156)
ESSENDON	1.0	2.5	2.9	7.10 (52)
BEST:	North Melbourne: Daniltchenko, Plain, Contessa, Smith, M. Stevens, Nichols, Armstrong, McFarlane. Essendon: Cransberg, Caracella, Lewfart, Watson, Banks.			
GOALS:	North Melbourne: Daniltchenko 4, M. Stevens, Cochrane 3, Lissendon, Geister, Nichols 2, Campbell, Armstrong, McFarlane, Harvey, Welsh, D. Stevens, Contessa. Essendon: Caracella 3, Wellman, Fraser, Ukovic, Dimattina.			
UMPIRES:	D Ackland, M. Ellis, J. Love			

#### VSFL LEARN & LIVE CUP

PRESTON KNIGHTS:	6.7	8.11	11.12	15.15 (105)
NSW/ACT RAMS	2.1	6.2	12.4	14.6 (90)
BEST:	Preston Knights: Plunkett, Milne, Raso, Wood, Flemming, Zorzi, Clarke, Whitnall.			
NSW/ACT Rams:	M. Harrison, Ioppi, Jackson, Chatfield, Woodward, Wooden.			
GOALS:	Preston Knights: Whitnall 5, Winther 3, Hoppner 3, Caracella, Fleming, Plunkett, Eccles.			
NSW/ACT Rams:	M. Harrison 7, Fuller 2, Hayes 2, Chatfield, Hogan, Wooden.			

#### GRAND FINAL TEAMS

##### NORTH MELBOURNE

BACKS: J. Blakey M. Martyn D. Laidley  
 HALF BACKS: W. Schwass I. Fairley D. King  
 CENTRES: G. Freeborn A. Stevens M. Roberts  
 HALF FORWARDS: G. Archer W. Carey (c)  
 B. Allison  
 FORWARDS: M. Capuano C. Sholl D. Crocker  
 FOLLOWERS: C. McKernan R. Scott  
 ROVER: A. Rock  
 INTERCHANGE: A. Simpson P. Bell S. Anderson  
 COACH: Denis Pagan

##### SYDNEY

BACKS: D. McPherson A. Dunkley B. Seymour  
 HALF BACKS: A. Heuskes P. Roos D. Lewis  
 CENTRES: T. Luff K. Dyson S. Maxfield  
 HALF FORWARDS: M. O'Loughlin J. Mooney  
 M. Bayes  
 FORWARDS: C. O'Brien T. Lockett S. Garlick  
 FOLLOWERS: G. Stafford P. Kelly  
 ROVER: D. Cresswell  
 INTERCHANGE: D. Kickett, W. Chapman, S. Grant  
 COACH: Rod Eade



## AWARDS

### BROWNLOW MEDAL



League football's Centenary Season produced an historic Brownlow Medal count. Three players headed the voting, but only two of them, James Hird and Michael Voss, received medals.

Corey McKernan of North Melbourne missed out because he had suffered a one-match suspension by the AFL Tribunal during the season on a kneeling charge. Unfortunately, McKernan was the first player to poll enough votes to win the Brownlow but to be ineligible after being found guilty of an offence by the AFL Tribunal.

The three players had polled 21 votes in a glittering evening at the World Congress Centre, Melbourne, five days before the Grand Final.

#### THE BROWNLOW 1996

##### THE VOTE WINNERS

- 21 M. Voss (Brisbane), J. Hird (Essendon)
- 20 C. Grant (Footscray), N. Burke (St Kilda)
- 19 G. Hocking (Geelong)
- 18 P. Salmon (Hawthorn)
- 17 J. Charles (Richmond), S. Loewe (St Kilda), R. Harvey (St Kilda), G. McKenna (WC)
- 15 J. Platten (Hawthorn), W. Carey (NM), M. Merenda (Richmond)
- 14 A. Fletcher (Brisbane), P. Kelly (Sydney), P. Roos (Sydney), T. Lockett (Sydney)
- 13 S. Russell (Collingwood), M. Richardson (Richmond)
- 12 F. Brown (Carlton), A. Koutoufides (Carlton), C. Mainwaring (WC)

##### INELIGIBLE

- 21 C. McKernan (NM)

Voss, 21, became Brisbane's first Brownlow Medallist and Hird, 23, was the second Essendon player to receive a medal in the 1990's – Gavin Wanganeen was successful in 1993.

James Hird played brilliantly during 1996 in a number of positions and again one of his great strengths was his marking. He also won Essendon's Club Champion award for the third successive year.

Voss was born in Victoria and moved with his family to Queensland to live when he was 11. He received much of his football education with the Morningside club in Brisbane

and has developed into one of League Football's most gifted on-ballers.



BROWNLOW: MICHAEL VOSS AND JAMES HIRD SHARED THE BROWNLOW MEDAL.



### COLEMAN MEDAL

Sydney full forward Tony Lockett won his third John Coleman Medal as the League's leading goalkicker for the Premiership Season, when he bettered

100 goals in a season for the fifth time.

#### LEADING 1996 GOALKICKERS

(HOME AND AWAY GAMES - FULL SEASON'S TOTAL IN BRACKETS)

Tony Lockett (Sydney)	114	(121)
Jason Dunstall (Hawthorn)	101	(102)
Matthew Richardson (Rich)	91	(91)
Stewart Loewe (St Kilda)	90	(90)
Wayne Carey (NM)	75	(82)
Tony Modra (Adelaide)	75	(75)
Gary Ablett (Geelong)	68	(69)
Saverio Rocca (Collingwood)	66	(66)

#### COLEMAN MEDAL

(HOME AND AWAY GAMES ONLY)

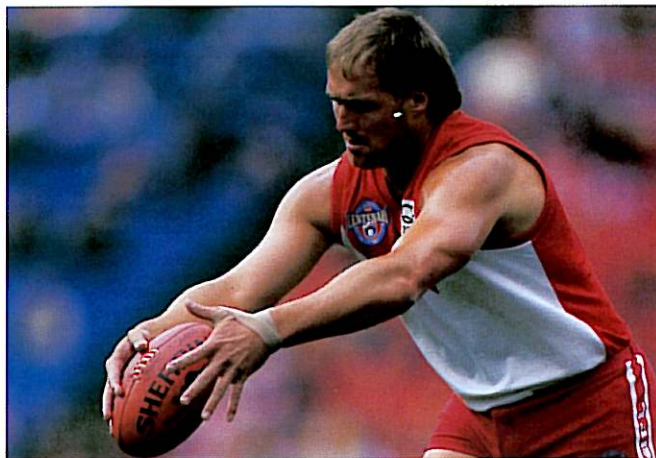
1981: Michael Roach (Richmond)	86
1982: Malcolm Blight (NM)	94
1983: Bernie Quinlan (Fitzroy)	106
1984: Bernie Quinlan (Fitzroy)	102
1985: Simon Beasley (Footscray)	103
1986: Brian Taylor (Collingwood)	100
1987: Tony Lockett (St Kilda)	117
1988: Jason Dunstall (Hawthorn)	126
1989: Jason Dunstall (Hawthorn)	126
1990: John Longmire (NM)	98
1991: Tony Lockett (St Kilda)	118
1992: Jason Dunstall (Hawthorn)	139
1993: Gary Ablett (Geelong)	124
1994: Gary Ablett (Geelong)	113
1995: Gary Ablett (Geelong)	118
1996: Tony Lockett (Sydney)	114

At the end of round 22 Lockett had kicked 114 goals, 13 clear of Jason Dunstall of Hawthorn. Lockett also played in two finals and his season's total swelled to 121. Dunstall, who scored 101 goals in the 22 rounds, is the only player to have kicked six 100 goal tallies in a season.

Lockett won previous Coleman Medals as a St Kilda player with 117 goals in 1987 and 118 in 1991. His best performances in 1996 were 12 goals against Richmond, 11 against Brisbane, 10 against North Melbourne, nine against Fitzroy and eight against Essendon and Collingwood.

It was the first Coleman Medal win for a Sydney player and in South Melbourne/Sydney history, dating back to 1897, only three players have reached 100 goals in a full season – South Melbourne's

Bob Pratt: 109 in 1933, 150 in 1934 and 103 in 1935, Sydney's Warwick Capper with 103 in 1987 and Lockett with 110 and 121 in 1995-96.



GOALS: TONY LOCKETT TOOK THE COLEMAN MEDAL FOR THE THIRD TIME.

## AWARDS

### NORM SMITH MEDAL



Glen Archer became the first North Melbourne player to win a Norm Smith Medal with a brilliant display in the Grand Final against Brisbane.

The medal was first presented in 1979 and in 1996 North Melbourne had its first chance to win the medal as its previous Grand Final appearance was in 1978.

#### NORM SMITH MEDAL

1979: Wayne Harmes (Carlton)  
 1980: Kevin Bartlett (Richmond)  
 1981: Bruce Doull (Carlton)  
 1982: Maurice Rioli (Richmond)  
 1983: Colin Robertson (Hawthorn)  
 1984: Bill Duckworth (Essendon)  
 1985: Simon Madden (Essendon)  
 1986: Gary Ayres (Hawthorn)  
 1987: David Rhys-Jones (Carlton)  
 1988: Gary Ayres (Hawthorn)  
 1989: Gary Ablett (Geelong)  
 1990: Tony Shaw (Collingwood)  
 1991: Paul Dear (Hawthorn)  
 1992: Peter Matera (West Coast)  
 1993: Michael Long (Essendon)  
 1994: Dean Kemp (West Coast)  
 1995: Greg Williams (Carlton)  
 1996: Glen Archer (North Melbourne)

Archer is only 23 and he won the medal in his fourth season of senior AFL football.

Apart from the excitement of being a member of the 1996 premiership team, the medal victory was Archer's biggest windfall in football. He is yet to finish in the top three in North's Club Champion voting and in 1996 came in fifth.

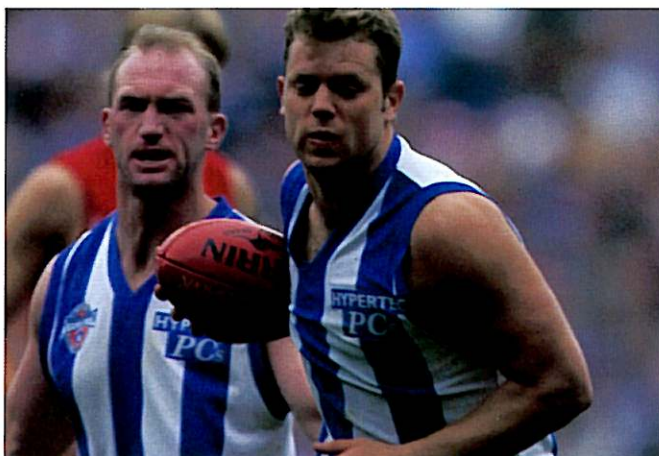
But he was selected in the 1996 Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team for the first time.

In the Grand Final Archer had 14 kicks, eight marks, eight handballs

and a generous supply of all the other Archer knocks, stops, blocks and bumps so typical of his play.

In 1997 Archer needs only four games for his century.

The panel of judges who selected Archer were Ross Oakley, Ron Barassi, Leigh Matthews and Mike Sheahan.



**NORM SMITH MEDAL:** GLEN ARCHER TOOK THE MEDAL AS BEST AFIELD IN THE COCA-COLA AFL CENTENARY GRAND FINAL.

### NORWICH RISING STAR



Ben Cousins, the son of a former Geelong and Perth footballer, is the 1996 Norwich Rising Star. He was announced the winner from a hot field of

other AFL youngsters at a lunch at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Melbourne in September.

Cousins, 18, was born in Geelong when his father Bryan, a West Australian, was playing with the Cats. West Coast snapped up Ben Cousins under the father/son rule which allowed the Eagles access to the offspring of WAFL players. He could also have gone to Fremantle under a WA zone rule or to Geelong.

He made his debut with West Coast in Round 4, 1996 and played superbly in a roving capacity around the forward line. He kicked 34 goals for the season and stamped himself as a star of the future.

Conditions of the award were that a player had to be under 21 at January 1, 1996 and not have played more than 10 senior games before the start of the 1996 season.

#### 1996 NOMINATIONS

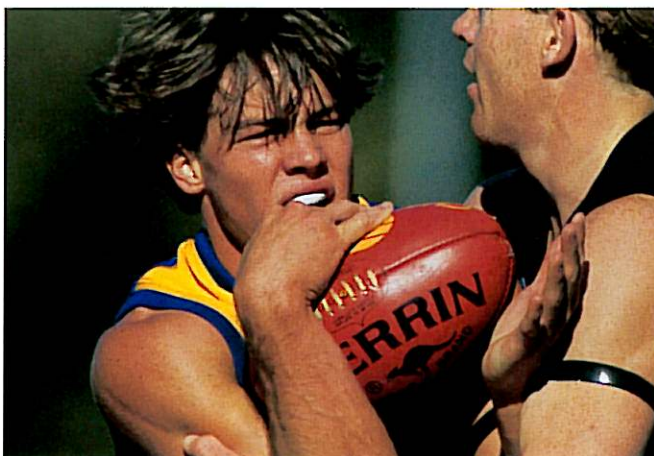
WEEK 1: Matthew Primus (Fitzroy)  
 WEEK 2: Daniel Bandy (Fremantle)  
 WEEK 3: Luke Darcy (Footscray)  
 WEEK 4: Greg Harding (Fremantle)  
 WEEK 5: Adam Simpson (NM)  
 WEEK 6: Shannon Grant (Sydney)  
 WEEK 7: Andrew Schauble (Collingwood)  
 WEEK 8: Nick Carter (Fitzroy)  
 WEEK 9: Jarrad Schofield (West Coast)  
 WEEK 10: Daniel Chick (Hawthorn)  
 WEEK 11: Adem Yze (Melbourne)  
 WEEK 12: Ben Cousins (West Coast)  
 WEEK 13: Craig Biddiscombe (Geelong)  
 WEEK 14: Kingsley Hunter (Fremantle)  
 WEEK 15: Steven King (Geelong)  
 WEEK 16: Chad Morrison (West Coast)  
 WEEK 17: Peter Bell (North Melbourne)  
 WEEK 18: Daniel McPherson (Sydney)  
 WEEK 19: Matthew Lloyd (Essendon)  
 WEEK 20: Luke Toia (Fremantle)  
 WEEK 21: Jeff Farmer (Melbourne)  
 WEEK 22: Craig Callaghan (Fremantle)

#### PREVIOUS WINNERS

1993: Nathan Buckley (Brisbane)  
 1994: Chris Scott (Brisbane)  
 1995: Nick Holland (Hawthorn)

After each round a player was nominated and finally Cousins was named the winner from a field of 22. The star-studded judging panel consisted of Malcolm Blight, Ross Glendinning, Kevin Bartlett, Gerard Healy, Leigh Matthews and Ian Collins. Ross Oakley was the non-voting chairman.

His father Bryan played 67 games and kicked 46 goals for Geelong from 1975-79 and, like his son, was a rover/forward. He also played in the finals with Geelong.



**NORWICH RISING STAR:** BEN COUSINS WAS THE FOURTH WINNER OF THE AWARD FOR THE GAME'S BEST YOUNG TALENT.



## AWARDS

### TEAM OF THE CENTURY

To mark the AFL's Centenary Season a panel of experts was given the tough assignment of choosing the Coca-Cola AFL Team of the Century.

#### TEAM OF THE CENTURY

**BACKS:** Bernie Smith (Geelong) Stephen Silvagni (Carlton) John Nicholls (Carlton)  
**HALF BACKS:** Bruce Doull (Carlton) Ted Whitten (Footscray - capt.) Kevin Murray (Fitzroy)  
**CENTRES:** Keith Greig (NM) Ian Stewart (St Kilda/ Richmond) Francis Bourke (Richmond)  
**HALF FORWARDS:** Alex Jesaulenko (Carlton/St Kilda) Royce Hart (Richmond) Dick Reynolds (Essendon)  
**FORWARDS:** Leigh Matthews (Hawthorn) John Coleman (Essendon) Haydn Bunton (Fitzroy)  
**FOLLOWERS:** Graham Farmer (Geelong) Ron Barassi (Melbourne/Carlton)  
**ROVER:** Bob Skilton (South Melbourne)  
**INTERCHANGE:** Gary Ablett (Hawthorn/Geelong) Jack Dyer (Richmond) Greg Williams (Geelong/ Sydney/Carlton)  
**COACH:** Norm Smith (Fitzroy/Melbourne/South Melbourne)  
**FIELD UMPIRE:** Jack Elder

When the side was finally assembled most of the living members were presented on stage at a gala AFL evening at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne in September.

There was strict criteria that had to be observed in the selection of the great team.

- ▶ Selected players had to be a member of the Football Hall of Fame – players chosen by another panel, also marking the Centenary Season, in 1996.
- ▶ A player would be judged on his VFL/AFL form only
- ▶ He could be a current AFL player.
- ▶ He could be a retired AFL player who did not qualify for the Hall of Fame because he had not been out of the game for three years.
- ▶ There was no minimum games requirement and players were assessed on their impact and ability in their eras.
- ▶ The side was to be selected on conventional lines, concentrating on rucks, ruck-rovers and rovers which operated for much of the League's history.

The selection panel consisted of Dr. Allen Aylett, Percy Beames, Bob Davis, Gerard Healy, Greg Hobbs, Jack Irving, Bill Jacobs and David Parkin. The AFL's Chief Executive Officer, Ross Oakley, was the non-voting chairman.



**TEAM OF THE CENTURY:** THE TEAM WAS ANNOUNCED AT A LAVISH FUNCTION AT THE PRINCESS THEATRE IN SEPTEMBER. PICTURED ARE (L-R): FRANCIS BOURKE, KEITH GREIG, BRUCE DOULL, BOB SKILTON, ALEX JESAULENKO, LEIGH MATTHEWS, JACK DYER, GREG WILLIAMS, JOHN NICHOLLS, DICK REYNOLDS, STEPHEN SILVAGNI, ROYCE HART, GRAHAM FARMER AND RON BARASSI.

### ALL AUSTRALIANS

Sydney, North Melbourne and West Coast had the heaviest representation with three players each in the 1996 Coca-Cola AFL Team of the Year, announced at a gathering of football greats at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne in September.

Sydney also provided the captain, Paul Kelly, who was selected in the top 18 for the first time. In 1995 he was an All-Australian interchange player.

#### THE TEAM

**BACKS:** Nathan Burke (St Kilda) Stephen Silvagni (Carlton) Michael Sexton (Carlton)  
**HALF BACKS:** Nathan Buckley (Collingwood) Paul Roos (Sydney) Peter Matera (West Coast)  
**CENTRES:** Chris Mainwaring (West Coast), Paul Kelly (Sydney - capt.) Shane Crawford (Hawthorn)  
**HALF FORWARDS:** James Hird (Essendon) Wayne Carey (North Melbourne - vc) Mitchell White (West Coast)  
**FORWARDS:** Michael Voss (Brisbane) Tony Lockett (Sydney) Darren Jarman (Adelaide)  
**FOLLOWERS:** Corey McKernan (North Melbourne), Robert Harvey (St Kilda)  
**ROVER:** Craig Lambert (Brisbane)  
**INTERCHANGE:** Glen Archer (North Melbourne), Matthew Richardson (Richmond), Garry Hocking (Geelong)  
**COACH:** Rodney Eade (Sydney)  
**UMPIRE:** Mark Nash

Wayne Carey was selected vice-captain, an honor he also held in 1995. In 1993 he was the captain.

Stephen Silvagni received dual honors in 1996. Not only did he gain the full back post for the third successive year and his fifth All-Australian berth, he was also picked in the AFL Team of the Century in 1996 to mark the AFL's Centenary Season.

Four clubs were not represented: Melbourne, Fremantle, Fitzroy and Footscray.

There was a fresh coach, Sydney's Rodney Eade (his first season as a senior coach) and field

umpire, Mark Nash. They replaced David Parkin and David Goldspink.

The selection panel was: Gerard Healy, Kevin Bartlett, Ian Collins, Malcolm Blight, Ross Glendinning and Leigh Matthews with Ross Oakley the non-voting chairman.



**ALL AUSTRALIANS:** SEVEN'S SANDY ROBERTS WAS THE HOST OF THE TEAM OF THE YEAR FUNCTION, HERE WITH ALL AUSTRALIAN VICE CAPTAIN WAYNE CAREY.

## AWARDS

### HALL OF FAME

In 1996 the AFL announced 136 initial inductees into the Australian Football Hall of Fame. Those selected included players who made their name in the AFL/VFL, South Australia and Western Australia.

Among the inductees were 12 'Legends of the Game', the highest honor which can be bestowed on a player elected to the Hall of Fame.

The induction ceremony took place at a black tie dinner at the Melbourne Park Function Centre on August 14 attended by almost 950 guests. Most of the country's leading football personalities were in attendance.

The inductees were made up of 100 players, 10 coaches, 10 umpires, 10 administrators and six media representatives.

The AFL Commission appointed a committee to make the selections. It was headed by AFL Commission Chairman, John Kennedy, and consisted of Max Basheer (SA Football Commission Chairman); Tom Reynolds (Victoria's Minister for Sport, Recreation and Racing); Joan Kirner (former Victorian Premier); Peter Nixon (former AFL Commissioner); Lou Richards (former Collingwood captain and media commentator); Kevin Bartlett (403-games player for Richmond); Michael Moncrieff (former Hawthorn player and former President of the AFL Players' Association); Mike Sheahan (Melbourne sports journalist); Caroline Wilson (3AW broadcaster and journalist); Harry Gordon (former newspaper executive, journalist and

author); Percy Beames (former Melbourne captain and sports journalist) and Geoff Christian (WA sports journalist).

Various conditions relating to the Hall of Fame included:

- ▶ To recognise and enshrine players, coaches, umpires, administrators and media representatives who have made a most significant contribution to Australian football since its inception in 1858
- ▶ A candidate's individual record, ability, integrity, sportsmanship and character to be considered
- ▶ The number of games played, coached or umpired, or the years of service, to be only be a consideration and not determinative in assessing eligibility
- ▶ A player, coach, umpire, administrator or media representative involved at any level of Australian football to be eligible for induction
- ▶ A player to be eligible for induction only after a minimum period of three years retirement from the game
- ▶ Coaches, umpires, administrators and media representatives to be eligible for induction upon retirement

When determining the initial inductees the committee decided on the following spread throughout football's 140 year history:



LEGENDS: THE INAUGURAL HALL OF FAME OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL INCLUDED 12 LEGENDS OF THE GAME. THE PRESENTATION TO THE EIGHT LIVING LEGENDS WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF A MOVING CEREMONY AT MELBOURNE PARK ON AUGUST 14. THE LEGENDS, PICTURED (L-R) ARE JACK DYER, GRAHAM FARMER, BOB PRATT, LEIGH MATTHEWS, JOHN NICHOLLS, BOB SKILTON, RON BARASSI AND DICK REYNOLDS.

#### THE LEGENDS

Ron Barassi jnr., Haydn Bunton snr., Roy Cazaly, John Coleman, Jack Dyer, Graham Farmer, Leigh Matthews, John Nicholls, Bob Pratt, Dick Reynolds, Bob Skilton, Ted Whitten snr.

#### MEMBERS

##### ERA 1858-1900

MINIMUM TWO PLAYERS, MAXIMUM 10  
Peter Burns, David Christy (WA), George Coulthard, Vic Cumberland, John Daly (SA), Charlie Pannam snr., Jack Reedman (SA), Albert Thurgood, John Worrall, Henry Young.

##### 1901-1930

MINIMUM 10 PLAYERS, MAXIMUM 30  
Vic Belcher, Percy Bentley, Roy Cazaly, Horrie Clover, Sir Albert Chadwick, Albert Collier, Harry Collier, Gordon Coventry, Syd Coventry, Tom Fitzmaurice, Wells Eicke, Edward Greeves, Reg Hickey, Allan Hopkins, Dick Lee, Johnny Lewis, Tom MacKenzie (SA), Rod McGregor, Dave McNamara, Dan Minogue, Dan Moriarty (SA), Walter Scott (SA), Mark Tandy, Vic Thorp, Jack Titus, George Todd, William Truscott (WA), Harry Vengeance, Ivor Warne Smith, Colin Watson.

##### 1931-60

MINIMUM 15 PLAYERS, MAXIMUM 30  
Dr. Allen Aylett, Ron Barassi jnr., Percy Beames, Haydn Bunton snr., Jack Clarke, Ron Clegg, John Coleman, Bob Davis, Jack Dyer, Len Fitzgerald (VFL & SA), Les Foote, Lindsay Head (SA), Bill Hutchison, Phonsie Kyne, Allan LaFontaine, Merv McIntosh (WA), Bill Mohr, George Moloney (VFL & WA), Jack Mueller, Laurie Nash, Bob Pratt, Bob Quinn (SA), Jack Regan, Dick Reynolds, Lou Richards, Bob Rose, Bernie Smith, Charlie Sutton, Ted Whitten snr., Roy Wright.

##### 1961-1995

MINIMUM 15 PLAYERS, MAXIMUM 30  
Graham Arthur, Darrel Baldock, Kevin Bartlett, Malcolm Blight, Francis Bourke, Barry Cable, Gary Dempsey, Bruce Doull, Russell Ebert (SA), Graham Farmer,

Robert Flower, Keith Greig, Royce Hart, Peter Hudson, Alex Jesaulenko, Peter Knights, Simon Madden, Leigh Matthews, Graham Moss, Kevin Murray, John Nicholls, Bernie Quinlan, John Rantall, Barrie Robran (SA), John Schultz, Bob Skilton, Ian Stewart, Michael Tuck, Doug Wade, Bill Walker (WA).  
\* VFL/AFL players unless indicated otherwise. Some players listed as VFL/AFL played in other states as well but were chosen predominately for their play in Victoria. A small group are listed in two states because their dominance was almost equally divided in the VFL/AFL and SA or WA.

#### COACHES

##### 1901-1930

Frank 'Checker' Hughes, Jim 'Jock' McHale.

##### 1931-1960

John Leonard (WA), Norm Smith, Fos. Williams (SA).

##### 1961-1995

Haydn Bunton jnr. (SA & WA), Tom Hafey, Allan Jeans, John Kennedy snr., Jack Oatey (SA).

#### UMPIRES

##### 1901-1930

Ivo Crapp, Jack Elder, Jack McMurray snr., Bob Scott.

##### 1931-1960

Ken Alpin (SA), Jack McMurray jnr.

##### 1961-1995

Jeff Crouch, Bill Deller, Ian Robinson, Ray Scott (WA).

#### MEDIA

##### 1901-1930

R.W.E. Wilmott.

##### 1931-1960

Norman Banks, Hugh Buggy, Hec DeLacy.

##### 1961-1995

Alf Brown, Ron Casey.

#### ADMINISTRATORS

##### 1858-1900

Henry Harrison, Tom Wills.

##### 1931-1960

Bruce Andrew, Thomas Hill (SA), Like McBrien, Dr William McClelland.

##### 1961-1995

Jack Hamilton, Sir Kenneth Luke, Eric McCutchan, Pat Rodriguez (WA).



## RESULTS

### LIGHTNING PREMIERSHIP

To help launch the Coca-Cola AFL Centenary Season, a Lightning Premiership among the 16 clubs was staged over three days – February 9-10-11. Essendon

emerged the winner – beating Brisbane 6.2 (38) to 2.9 (21) in the final at Waverley Park.

It was the first time since 1953 the League had staged a Lightning Premiership. All matches were televised live on the Seven Network.

The 15 games in the series, sponsored by Coca-Cola, were played at Waverley Park and unfortunately much of the quick-fire entertainment was marred by atrocious weather and this severely cut attendances.

There was total prizemoney of \$170,000 – first round losers received \$5000, quarter final losers \$10,000, semi final losers \$15,000, the runner-up \$20,000 and Essendon, the victors, \$40,000.

The games were of two halves of 17 minutes, 30 seconds, plus time on; players had a five minute half-time break but did not leave the field and if scores were level at full time

the siren was not sounded until the next score was recorded.

A number of radical new rules were tested and they included:

- ▶ Six interchange players
- ▶ Three points awarded to the opposition when a player took or forced the ball across the opposing scoreline as a defensive tactic
- ▶ Three points instead of the normal six when a kick for goal hit the post
- ▶ A free kick awarded against the player who last touched the ball before it was called out of bounds
- ▶ After the goal umpire signalled the score by hand the backman was allowed to kick in immediately – he did not have to wait until the flags had been waved
- ▶ Four goal umpires.

None of these rules were used in the premiership season.



**LIGHTNING STRIKES:** ESSENDON WON THE FIRST AFL LIGHTNING PREMIERSHIP SINCE 1953.

### ANSETT AUSTRALIA CUP

The second biggest ever crowd to watch a night series game – 66,888 – saw St Kilda win the Ansett Australia Cup in perfect conditions at Waverley Park on March 23.

St Kilda played magnificently in the pre-season competition and in the Grand Final was far too accomplished for Carlton, winning 20.10 (130) to 10.12 (72). It was St Kilda's first night title since 1958, and the club's first senior premiership since 1966 when the Saints won their one and only major season flag.

The only bigger night series crowd was 75,533 who were at the Richmond-Essendon Grand Final at Waverley Park in 1993.

Fifteen games made up the 1996 series and the aggregate attendance was 279,200. Games were played at Waverley Park (9), Football Park (2), the Gabba, Q (2), Marrara, NT (1) and Bruce Stadium, ACT (1).

#### ROUND BY ROUND

##### ROUND ONE

Adel 18.16 (124) d Melb 10.5 (65) - at Football Park, SA  
St Kilda 19.13 (127) d Haw 9.19 (73) - at Waverley Park  
WC 10.11 (71) d Fre 7.15 (57) - at Marrara, NT  
Footsc 16.15 (111) d Fitzroy 12.15 (87) - at Waverley Park  
Coll 14.10 (94) d Richmond 8.14 (62) - at Waverley Park  
NM 22.18 (150) d Syd 20.8 (128) - at Bruce Stadium, ACT  
Carlton 14.12 (96) d Ess 7.12 (54) - at Waverley Park  
Brisbane 14.25 (109) d Geelong 9.9 (63) - at the Gabba

##### QUARTER FINALS

St Kilda 18.11 (119) d Adel 11.10 (76) - at Football Park, SA  
West Coast 11.6 d Footscray 8.10 (58) - at Waverley Park  
Carlton 16.8 (104) d Coll 15.9 (99) - at Waverley Park  
NM 15.15 (105) d Brisbane 13.12 (90) - at the Gabba

##### SEMI FINALS

St Kilda 10.13 (73) d WC 8.9 (57) - at Waverley Park  
Carlton 10.12 (72) d NM 5.14 (44) - at Waverley Park

##### GRAND FINAL

St Kilda 6.5 10.7 17.8 20.10 (130)  
Carlton 2.3 6.6 8.9 10.12 (72)

**BEST:** St Kilda: Winmar, Loewe, Everitt, Daniels, Sziller, Harvey, Jones. Carlton: Ratten, Pearce, Camporeale, Pearce, Christou, M. Sexton.

**GOALS:** St Kilda: Loewe 6, Everitt 3, Smith 2, Brown, Burke, Winmar, Sziller, McLaren, Jones, Traianidis, Daniels, Beveridge. Carlton: Kernahan 4, Pearce 3, Heaver, Hogg, B. Sexton.

**UMPIRES:** P. Carey, B. Sheehan, M. Nash

**CROWD:** 66,888 at Waverley Park

**MICHAEL TUCK MEDAL:** Nicky Winmar (St Kilda)

##### THE TEAMS

St Kilda: J. Peckett, T. Brown, N. Burke, J. Smith, N. Winmar, L. Vidovic, P. Everitt, D. Sierakowski, K. Bardsley, D. Wakelin, R. Neill, S. Sziller, S. Loewe, J. McLaren, L. Beveridge, J. Elliott, A. Jones, J. Shanahan, J. Traianidis, I. Daniels, R. Harvey, A. McLean.  
Carlton: S. Silvagni, S. Kernahan, B. Ratten, B. Sexton, M. Sexton, S. Camporeale, C. Devonport, A. Hickmott, E. Spalding, T. Lynn, B. Heaver, J. Murphy, B. Pearce, F. Brown, G. Manton, D. Rice, M. Allan, A. Whitehead, M. Hogg, A. Christou, A. Koutoufides, J. Madden.



**ANSETT FLIES:** ST KILDA WAS THE ANSETT AUSTRALIA CUP CHAMPIONS, THE SAINTS FIRST PREMIERSHIP SINCE THE 1966 VFL GRAND FINAL.

## RESULTS

### STATE OF ORIGIN

Two Coca-Cola AFL State of Origin games were played in 1996 – Victoria played the Allies at the MCG on Saturday, June 1 and the following day at Football Park, South Australia played Western Australia.

The games resulted in wins to Victoria and South Australia.

The Allies was made up of players from Queensland, Tasmania, NSW, ACT and the Northern Territory. After their win in 1995 over WA they found Victoria too strong, losing 11.18 (84) to 20.17 (137).

In the game in Adelaide, SA was too accomplished, winning 20.6 (126) to 13.13 (91).

The four medallists from the two games were:

E.J. Whitten Medal (best player for Victoria): Robert Harvey (St Kilda)

Alex Jesaulenko Medal (best player for the Allies): Matthew Richardson (Richmond)

Graham Moss Medal (best player for WA): Derek Kickett (Sydney)

Fos Williams Medal (best player for SA): Tony Modra (Adelaide).

Modra was the chief goalkicker from the two games, kicking eight against WA.



BATTLE: STATE OF ORIGIN MATCHES WERE PLAYED IN MELBOURNE AND ADELAIDE IN JUNE. ABOVE WEST AUSTRALIA'S ASHLEY MCINTOSH IS ATTACKED FROM ALL ANGLES BY FRIEND AND FOE. SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND VICTORIA WERE EASY WINNERS.

#### JUNE 1, MCG

Victoria 4.5 11.6 13.9 20.17 (137)

Allies 0.5 2.11 9.16 11.18 (84)

BEST: Victoria: R. Harvey, G. Hocking, J. Barnes, P. Riccardi, G. Williams, A. Stevens, M. Mercuri.

Allies: M. Richardson, N. Buckley, M. Voss, S.

Crawford, D. Fletcher, M. Roberts, J. Akermanis.

GOALS: Victoria: M. Mercuri 4, S. Loewe 3, G. Archer

3, S. Grant 2, C. McKernan 2, N. Burke, P. Riccardi,

L. Colbert, G. Hocking, R. Harvey, G. Williams.

Allies: M. Richardson 3, N. Buckley 2, R. Burns 2,

S. Chisholm, M. Roberts, D. White, S. Crawford.

UMPIRES: D. Goldspink, C. Mitchell, M. Nash

CROWD: 35,612 At MCG

VICTORIAN COACH: Rod Austin

VICTORIAN CAPTAIN: Stephen Silvagni

ALLIES COACH: Neale Daniher

ALLIES CAPTAIN: Jason Dunstall

E.J. WHITTEN MEDAL: Robert Harvey.

ALEX JESAULENKO MEDAL: Matthew Richardson.

#### THE PLAYERS

VICTORIA: S. Silvagni, G. Williams, C. Grant, M. Mercuri, J. Barnes, B. Ratten, G. O'Donnell, N. Burke, L. Pickering, P. Riccardi, A. Stevens, N. Lappin, M. Mansfield, M. Sexton, S. Loewe, D. Kellaway, L. Colbert, G. Archer, C. McKernan, G. Hocking, R. Harvey, A. Christou.

ALLIES: C. Bond, J. Shanahan, G. Crosisca, S. Chisholm, D. White, G. Wright, S. Crawford, N. Buckley, M. Ashcroft, C. Cockatoo-Collins, M. Febey, M. Richardson, M. Gale, J. Dunstall, J. Akermanis, G. Stafford, M. Voss, B. Doolan, R. O'Connor, A. Fletcher, R. Burns, M. Roberts.

#### JUNE 2, FOOTBALL PARK

South Australia 2.1 10.3 14.3 20.6 (126)

Western Australia 3.5 5.5 10.8 13.13 (91)

BEST: South Australia: T. Modra, S. Russell, S. Kernahan,

R. Champion, A. Jarman, N. Holland, J. Platten. Western

Australia: Derek Kickett, Laidley, G. Jakovich, G. Mitchell.

S. Cummings, G. McKenna.

GOALS: South Australia: T. Modra 8, S. Kernahan 4,

A. Jarman 2, T. Francis, M. Robran, M. Rogers, M. Liptak,

S. Russell, J. Platten. Western Australia: S. Cummings 5,

J. Ball, G. Mitchell, M. Merenda, M. Connell, M. White,

Dale Kickett, Derek Kickett, D. Bandy.

UMPIRES: B. Allen, A. Coates, D. Howlett

CROWD: 16,722 At Football Park, SA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA COACH: Russell Ebert

SOUTH AUSTRALIA CAPTAIN: Stephen Kernahan

WEST AUSTRALIA COACH: Ross Glendinning

WEST AUSTRALIA CAPTAIN: Guy McKenna

FOS. WILLIAMS MEDAL: Tony Modra

GRAHAM MOSS MEDAL: Derek Kickett

#### THE PLAYERS

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: B. Hart, R. Champion, G. Wanganeen, M. Ricciuto, N. Holland, N. Smart, D. Wakelin, A. Jarman, S. Camporeale, S. Russell, M. Robran, M. Rogers, T. Francis, T. Modra, S. Kernahan, M. Clarke, M. Bickley, J. Platten, L. Darcy, J. Tape, S. Burns, M. Liptak.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: A. McIntosh, S. O'Reilly, D. Hart,

D. Laidley, G. Jakovich, G. McKenna, M. Merenda,

M. Connell, M. Prior, M. Clape, J. Ball, M. White, D. Hall,

S. Cummings, Dale Kickett, Derek Kickett, D. Bandy, D.

Banfield, G. Mitchell, A. Jones, J. Schofield, A. Donnelly.

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CELEBRATIONS: FIREWORKS PLAYED A  
BIG PART IN THE 1996 SEASON PROVIDING  
NEW LEVELS OF ENTERTAINMENT AND  
EXCITEMENT TO A NIGHT AT THE FOOTBALL.





## AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE FINANCE REPORT

Total income from the League's operations during the year to 31st October 1996 amounted to \$74.274 million (1995 - \$67.536 million). In addition during 1996, Centenary Season revenue of \$6.351 million and other revenue of \$4.216 million (including \$4 million from Port Adelaide's licence fee) resulted in total revenue for the year of \$84.841 million.

The operating profit before distributions/payments to Clubs and allocations for development, umpiring and promotional grants and ground rationalisation amounted to \$38.700 million compared with \$36.405 million in 1995.

From this amount the League provided distributions and other payments to Clubs as follows:

	1996 \$'000	1995 \$'000
Annual Distribution	23,680	22,426
Prizemoney	1,506	1,243
Club Support Packages	2,069	1,752
Contributions to gate in respect of AFL members	2,050	1,831
Compensation - Fremantle Players	107	93
	<u>29,412</u>	<u>27,345</u>

Comments on the results for 1996 and other related matters are as follows:-

1. The increase in revenue from the operations of the League from \$67.536 million in 1995 to \$74.274 million in 1996 resulted from further increases in income from sponsorship, T.V. rights, licensing, *Football Record* and membership.
2. The distributions to Clubs amounted to \$23.680 million or \$1.480 million per Club which was in line with our budget forecasts and provided an increase of 6% per Club over the 1995 distribution of \$1.402m per Club.
3. The operating profit for the year before abnormal items amounted to \$2.160 million compared with \$1.855 million in 1995 and during 1996 abnormal items amounting to a net of \$2.105 million were charged against profits.

The abnormal items comprised \$6.105 million associated with the Brisbane/Fitzroy merger off-set by the licence fee of \$4 million in respect of Port Adelaide which is payable over 6 years.

4. Debt was reduced by a further \$3.4 million during the year and this repayment arose from licence fee instalments received from WAFC and SANFL and the proceeds from the sale of AFL House which was completed this year.

This reduction was still achieved after paying \$4.35 million of the merger costs referred to earlier. A final payment of \$1.750 million is due in June 1997 and it is expected that this payment will also

be funded from our cash flows and will not result in any increased borrowings.

Our current debt is \$10.620 million which compares with debt of \$16.220 million in 1993.

5. The Directors/Commissioners carried out a valuation of the Waverley Park land and buildings as at 31st October 1996 as required under Schedule 5 of the Corporations Regulations which resulted in the complex being revalued to \$38.200 million. The book value of Waverley Park as at 31st October 1996 was \$38.454 million and the net write down of \$254,000 was charged against previous increments in the asset revaluation reserve.
6. During the year the Administration continued to provide Clubs with comprehensive information on all aspects of AFL operations including AFL Finances and four Information Meetings were held during the year.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking our Finance staff for their support during the year. They have continued to play an important role in the administration of the AFL.

The financial information on the following pages has been extracted from the Statutory Accounts of the Australian Football League, which have been duly audited by KPMG. The accounts have been rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars for presentation purposes.

KEVIN LEHMANN  
AFL FINANCE MANAGER

**PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT**

	NOTE	1996 \$'000	1995 \$'000
Operating profit before abnormal items and income tax		2,160	1,855
Abnormal items	2	<u>(2,105)</u>	<u>-</u>
Operating profit before income tax		55	1,855
Income tax attributable to operating profit	3	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Operating profit after income tax		55	1,855
Retained profit at the beginning of year		7,885	6,385
Adjustment to retained profits at the beginning of the financial year due to initial adoption of Accounting Standard AASB1028, Accounting for Employee Entitlements		-	(72)
Aggregate of amounts transferred from reserves	4	<u>-</u>	<u>1,117</u>
Total available for appropriation		7,940	9,285
Aggregate of amount transferred to reserves		<u>-</u>	<u>1,400</u>
Retained profits at the end of the financial year		<u>7,940</u>	<u>7,885</u>

**BALANCE SHEET**

	NOTE	1996 \$'000	1995 \$'000
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash	5	313	6,271
Receivables	6	9,671	4,273
Other	7	601	637
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>10,585</b>	<b>11,181</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Receivables	6	6,900	4,350
Property plant & equipment	8	41,971	44,532
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>48,871</b>	<b>48,882</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>59,456</b>	<b>60,063</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors and borrowings	9	8,825	7,522
Provisions	10	4,191	4,707
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>13,016</b>	<b>12,229</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors and borrowings	9	9,370	10,520
Provisions	10	836	881
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>10,206</b>	<b>11,401</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>23,222</b>	<b>23,630</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>36,234</b>	<b>36,433</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>			
Reserves	11	28,294	28,548
Retained profits		7,940	7,885
<b>TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>		<b>36,234</b>	<b>36,433</b>

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

	1996 \$'000	1995 \$'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Cash receipts in the course of operations	76,252	66,884
Cash payments in the course of operations	(79,623)	(64,006)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	(3,371)	2,878
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Interest received	216	522
Payments for property, plant & equipment	(1,053)	(949)
Proceeds from sale of non-current assets	2,502	165
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash used in investing activities	1,665	(262)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Interest paid	(836)	(1,326)
Repayment of borrowings	(3,416)	(750)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash used in financing activities	(4,252)	(2,076)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net (decrease)/increase in cash held	(5,958)	540
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	6,271	5,731
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash at the end of the financial year	313	6,271
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**EXPLANATORY NOTES OF PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT AND BALANCE SHEET**

	1996 \$'000	1995 \$'000
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**NOTE 1 - OPERATING PROFIT**

Operating profit has been arrived at after including:-

▶ **OPERATING REVENUE**

Revenue from trading operations	74,274	67,536
Centenary Year revenue	6,351	-

▶ **OTHER REVENUE**

Interest received or due and receivable from

▶ other persons	216	522
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Abnormal items

▶ licence fees receivable	4,000	-
	<u>84,841</u>	<u>68,058</u>

▶ **OPERATING EXPENSES**

Dividend received from

de-registered controlled entity	-	6
---------------------------------	---	---

Depreciation of property,

plant & equipment	831	1,752
-------------------	-----	-------

Amortisation of leasehold

improvements	54	44
--------------	----	----

Bad debts written off

2	46
---	----

Auditors' remuneration

▶ Audit services	40	43
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▶ Other services	16	9
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Interest paid or due and payable to

▶ Other persons	836	1,326
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Amounts set aside to provision for

▶ Employee entitlements	221	528
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▶ Grants to clubs	24,816	23,926
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Lease rental expenses

▶ operating leases	1,880	1,856
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Profit/(loss) on sale of property,

plant & equipment	27	(60)
-------------------	----	------

Write down in value of inventories

-	15
---	----

Abnormal items

▶ Club merger costs	6,105	-
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Centenary year expenses	6,814	-
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**NOTE 2 - ABNORMAL ITEMS**

Club merger costs	(6,105)	-
-------------------	---------	---

Licence fees receivable	4,000	-
-------------------------	-------	---

	<u>(2,105)</u>	<u>-</u>
--	----------------	----------

**NOTE 3 - INCOME TAX**

Prima facie income tax expense calculated

@ 36% (1995 - 36%) on the operating profit	20	668
--	----	-----

Exemption from income tax	(20)	(668)
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Income Tax Expense	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
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**NOTE 4 - AMOUNTS TRANSFERRED FROM RESERVES**

Amount transferred from capital profits reserve	-	1,123
---	---	-------

Retained earnings of two controlled entities

de-registered during 1995	-	(6)
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	<u>-</u>	<u>1,117</u>
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**NOTE 5 - CASH**

Cash on hand	2	2
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Cash at bank	311	3,469
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At call deposit with bank	-	2,800
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	<u>313</u>	<u>6,271</u>
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	1996 \$'000	1995 \$'000
<b>NOTE 6 - RECEIVABLES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Trade debtors	8,486	3,638
Provision for doubtful debts	(65)	(65)
	<u>8,421</u>	<u>3,573</u>
Other debtors	1,250	700
	<u>9,671</u>	<u>4,273</u>
<b>NON CURRENT</b>		
Other debtors	<u>6,900</u>	<u>4,350</u>

**NOTE 7 - OTHER CURRENT ASSETS**

Prepayments	<u>601</u>	<u>637</u>
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**NOTE 8 - PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**

<b>LAND</b>			
► At directors' valuation 1985	-	6,422	
► At directors' valuation 1996	27,000	-	
► Additions - at cost	-	42	
	<u>27,000</u>	<u>6,464</u>	
<b>BUILDINGS</b>			
► At directors' valuation 1985	-	32,795	
► At directors' valuation 1995	--	2,216	
► At directors' valuation 1996	11,200	-	
► Additions - at cost	-	3,273	
	<u>11,200</u>	<u>38,284</u>	
Less accumulated depreciation	-	(3,761)	
	<u>11,200</u>	<u>34,523</u>	
Plant & equipment at cost	5,095	4,621	
Less accumulated depreciation	(3,691)	(3,310)	
	<u>1,404</u>	<u>1,311</u>	
Leasehold improvements at cost	1,992	1,946	
Less accumulated amortisation	(179)	(125)	
	<u>1,813</u>	<u>1,821</u>	
Motor vehicles at cost	775	629	
Less accumulated depreciation	(221)	(216)	
	<u>554</u>	<u>413</u>	
	<u>41,971</u>	<u>44,532</u>	



# EXPLANATORY NOTES OF PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT AND BALANCE SHEET

## DIRECTORS' VALUATION - WAVERLEY PARK

The directors' valuation of Waverley Park - Land and Buildings was carried out as at 31st October 1996. The valuation amounted to \$38,200,000 comprising:

	\$'000
Land	\$27,000
Buildings	\$11,200
	<u>\$38,200</u>

The valuation of the land is on the basis of the open market value of the property concerned in a use other than as a football stadium.

The valuation was carried out by Philip I Cramer F.V.L.E. and Gavin Bourke F.V.L.E. of Herron Todd White Valuers Victoria.

The valuation of the buildings was based on the written down value of the historical cost of improvements at Waverley Park as at balance date. The directors are of the opinion that these valuations provide a reasonable estimate of recoverable amount.

The book written down value of Waverley Park as at 31st October 1996 was \$38,454,000 and the net write down of \$254,000 to the directors' valuation has been charged against previous increments in the asset revaluation reserve.

## AFL HOUSE

During the previous year the Company entered into a conditional contract of sale in respect of AFL House and the directors decided to write the asset down to its market value based on the selling price included in the contract.

During the current financial year this contract was settled and the proceeds of the sale applied to debt reduction.

## NOTE 9 - CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS

### CURRENT

Trade creditors	7,575	4,006
Bank loans - secured	1,250	3,500
Other loans	-	16
	<u>8,825</u>	<u>7,522</u>

### NON-CURRENT

Bank loans - secured	<u>9,370</u>	<u>10,520</u>
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## NOTE 10 - PROVISIONS

### CURRENT

Employee entitlements - including on costs	731	520
Grants to AFL Clubs	3,460	4,187
	<u>4,191</u>	<u>4,707</u>

### NON-CURRENT

Employee entitlements - including on costs	227	217
Waverley Park seat replacement	165	220
Australian Football Foundation		
► Development funds	444	444
	<u>836</u>	<u>881</u>

## NOTE 11 - RESERVES

Asset revaluation reserve	24,914	25,168
Asset replacement reserve	3,380	3,380
	<u>28,294</u>	<u>28,548</u>

During 1996 an amount of \$254,000 was charged against the Asset Revaluation Reserve in respect of the directors' valuation of Waverley Park. During 1995 an amount of \$1,400,000 was transferred to the Asset Replacement Reserve.



## 1996: THE RESULTS

### ROUND 1

**FRIDAY, MARCH 29**  
Melb. 8.6 (56) v Geel. 27.21 (183) MCG  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 30**  
Rich. 15.14 (104) v Ess. 19.8 (122) MCG  
StK. 12.13 (85) v NM 15.19 (109) P  
Fitz. 11.5 (71) v Haw. 13.14 (92) WO  
Bris. 21.15 (141) v Foots. 7.12 (54) G  
**SUNDAY, MARCH 31**  
Carl. 16.13 (109) v Coll. 12.15 (87) MCG  
Fre. 6.9 (45) v WC 9.13 (67) S  
Adel. 20.10 (130) v Syd. 6.4 (40) FP

### ROUND 2 (EASTER)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 6**  
NM 26.12 (168) v Foots. 5.7 (37) MCG  
Geel. 26.8 (164) v StK 20.14 (134) KP  
Haw. 6.15 (51) v Rich. 14.14 (98) P  
Fitz. 15.11 (101) v Adel. 21.7 (133) WO  
WC 11.11 (77) v Bris. 16.7 (103) WACA  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 7**  
Ess. 10.12 (72) v Carl. 15.11 (101) MCG  
Syd. 9.17 (71) v Fre. 13.22 (100) SCG  
**MONDAY, APRIL 8**  
Coll. 27.11 (173) v Melb. 11.13 (79) MCG

### ROUND 3

**FRIDAY, APRIL 12**  
Adel. 21.16 (142) v Geel. 12.6 (78) FP  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 13**  
Foots. 17.19 (121) v Fitz. 10.10 (70) WO  
Haw. 12.8 (80) v NM 22.21 (153) P  
Bris. 13.12 (90) v Rich. 15.18 (108) G  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 14**  
Fre. 15.12 (102) v Carl. 6.13 (49) S  
Syd. 15.17 (107) v Coll. 10.13 (73) SCG  
Ess. 16.13 (109) v WC 6.14 (50) P  
Melb. 14.14 (98) v StK 13.10 (88) OO

### ROUND 4

**FRIDAY, APRIL 19**  
Bris. 18.17 (125) v NM 14.11 (95) G  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 20**  
Carl. 21.7 (133) v Melb. 12.14 (86) OO  
Coll. 14.14 (98) v Fre. 8.13 (61) VP  
StK 24.16 (160) v Fitz. 11.9 (75) WP  
Foots. 8.9 (57) v Haw. 8.9 (57) WO  
Adel. 23.23 (161) v Ess. 9.11 (65) FP  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 21**  
WC 12.16 (88) v Geel. 16.10 (106) S  
Rich. 9.16 (70) v Syd. 10.11 (71) P

### ROUND 5 (ANZAC)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 25**  
Ess. 16.9 (105) v Coll. 17.15 (117) MCG  
**FRIDAY, APRIL 26**  
Fre. 13.18 (96) v Melb. 8.11 (59) W  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 27**  
Carl. 12.14 (86) v WC 12.13 (85) OO  
Geel. 13.13 (91) v Rich. 12.16 (88) KP  
NM 23.14 (152) v Adel. 17.11 (113) MCG  
Syd. 13.10 (88) v Haw. 11.10 (76) SCG  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 28**  
Bris. 24.14 (158) v Fitz. 6.13 (49) G  
StK 16.20 (116) v Foots. 13.12 (90) P

### ROUND 6

**FRIDAY, MAY 3**  
Syd. 14.6 (90) v Ess. 12.18 (90) SCG  
Geel. 13.15 (93) v NM 15.14 (104) MCG  
**SATURDAY, MAY 4**  
Coll. 23.14 (152) v Adel. 12.8 (80) VP  
Melb. 7.8 (50) v WC 24.12 (156) OO  
Fitz. 9.8 (62) v Rich. 23.16 (154) WO  
Haw. 9.11 (65) v StK 13.8 (86) P  
**SUNDAY, MAY 5**  
Foots. 9.10 (64) v Carl. 12.8 (80) MCG  
Fre. 12.13 (85) v Bris. 17.8 (110) S

### ROUND 7

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 8**  
Ess. 22.11 (143) v Geel. 17.12 (114) MCG  
**FRIDAY, MAY 10**  
Coll. 14.11 (95) v StK 18.10 (118) MCG  
**SATURDAY, MAY 11**  
Carl. 18.17 (125) v Fitz. 8.14 (62) OO  
Melb. 5.8 (38) v Syd. 12.10 (82) MCG  
Bris. 15.14 (104) v Haw. 5.11 (41) G  
**SUNDAY, MAY 12**  
Rich. 17.11 (113) v Foots. 9.8 (62) MCG  
Adel. 20.12 (132) v Fre. 5.6 (36) FP  
WC 19.11 (125) v NM 7.16 (58) S

### ROUND 8

**FRIDAY, MAY 17**  
Bris. 15.18 (108) v Coll. 14.14 (98) G  
Carl. 12.14 (86) v Geel. 15.8 (98) MCG  
**SATURDAY, MAY 18**  
Haw. 19.8 (122) v Melb. 10.11 (71) P  
Fitz. 16.11 (107) v Fre. 10.16 (76) WO  
NM 20.24 (144) v Rich. 14.5 (89) MCG  
WC 14.16 (100) v Syd. 9.10 (64) W  
**SUNDAY, MAY 19**  
Foots. 13.6 (84) v Ess. 23.13 (151) MCG  
Adel. 13.19 (97) v StK 11.7 (73) FP

### ROUND 9

**FRIDAY, MAY 24**  
NM 25.20 (170) v Fitz. 9.11 (65) MCG  
**SATURDAY, MAY 25**  
Ess. 11.23 (89) v Melb. 12.5 (77) MCG  
Foots. 18.11 (119) v Adel. 11.13 (79) WO  
Haw. 8.8 (56) v WC 14.6 (90) P  
**SUNDAY, MAY 26**  
Fre. 17.18 (120) v Rich. 10.6 (66) S  
Syd. 21.6 (132) v Bris. 10.14 (74) SCG  
StK 9.15 (60) v Carl. 13.13 (91) P  
**MONDAY, MAY 27**  
Coll. 11.10 (76) v Geel. 21.13 (139) MCG

### STATE OF ORIGIN

**SATURDAY, JUNE 1**  
VIC 20.17 (137) d Allies 11.18 (84) MCG  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 2**  
SA 20.6 (126) d WA 13.13 (91) FP

### ROUND 10 (QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY)

**FRIDAY, JUNE 7**  
Foots. 10.9 (69) v NM 12.17 (89) MCG  
**SATURDAY, JUNE 8**  
Carl. 15.11 (101) v Rich. 13.12 (90) MCG  
Geel. 14.14 (98) v Bris. 15.8 (98) KP  
Fitz. 10.7 (67) v Syd. 21.11 (137) WO  
StK 9.13 (67) v Ess. 13.11 (89) P  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 9**  
Fre. 7.11 (53) v Haw. 17.8 (110) S  
Adel. 11.10 (76) v WC 19.16 (130) FP  
**MONDAY, JUNE 10**  
Melb. 17.12 (114) v Coll. 10.16 (76) MCG

### ROUND 11

**SATURDAY, JUNE 15**  
Rich. 21.13 (139) v StK 15.15 (105) MCG  
Geel. 20.9 (129) v Foots. 12.13 (85) KP  
Haw. 16.12 (108) v Adel. 14.15 (99) P  
NM 10.13 (73) v Syd. 24.8 (152) OO  
Bris. 5.8 (38) v Carl. 9.8 (62) G  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 16**  
WC 16.19 (115) v Coll. 9.8 (62) S  
Ess. 13.12 (90) v Fre. 12.17 (89) MCG  
Fitz. 8.8 (56) v Melb. 18.11 (119) WO

### ROUND 12

**FRIDAY, JUNE 21**  
Rich. 19.14 (128) v Adel. 13.4 (82) MCG  
**SATURDAY, JUNE 22**  
Coll. 14.11 (95) v Carl. 17.14 (116) MCG  
Geel. 17.10 (112) v Fre. 13.15 (93) KP  
Haw. 17.12 (114) v Fitz. 12.11 (83) P  
Bris. 18.15 (123) v Melb. 6.10 (46) G

**SUNDAY, JUNE 23**  
Syd. 18.15 (123) v Foots. 11.11 (77) SCG  
NM 16.11 (107) v Ess. 14.11 (95) MCG  
WC 22.9 (141) v StK 17.6 (108) S

### ROUND 13

**FRIDAY, JUNE 28**  
Coll. 10.9 (69) v Rich. 14.8 (92) MCG  
**SATURDAY, JUNE 29**  
Carl. 13.13 (91) v Syd. 15.12 (102) OO  
Fitz. 6.3 (39) v Geel. 25.16 (166) WO  
StK 14.12 (96) v Bris. 7.8 (50) P  
Ess. 18.13 (121) v Haw. 15.10 (100)  
Fre. 8.10 (58) v NM 9.20 (74) WACA  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 30**  
Foots. 9.5 (59) v WC 11.5 (71) WO  
Adel. 10.12 (72) v Melb. 19.9 (123) FP

### ROUND 14

**FRIDAY, JULY 5**  
NM 21.18 (144) v Carl. 13.11 (89) MCG  
**SATURDAY, JULY 6**  
Haw. 17.12 (114) v Coll. 11.15 (81) WP  
Fitz. 7.10 (52) v Ess. 17.16 (118) OO  
Rich. 7.9 (51) v WC 10.8 (68) MCG  
Adel. 15.12 (102) v Bris. 14.10 (94) FP  
**SUNDAY, JULY 7**  
Melb. 14.10 (94) v Foots. 10.7 (67) MCG  
Syd. 18.17 (125) v Geel. 11.8 (74) SCG  
Fre. 11.11 (77) v StK 15.10 (100) S

### ROUND 15

**FRIDAY, JULY 12**  
WC 20.11 (131) v Fitz. 9.9 (63) WACA  
**SATURDAY, JULY 13**  
Carl. 19.17 (131) v Adel. 9.10 (64) OO  
Coll. 22.12 (144) v NM 12.11 (83) MCG  
Geel. 10.12 (72) v Haw. 11.8 (74) KP  
StK 11.13 (79) v Syd. 14.12 (96) WP  
**SUNDAY, JULY 14**  
Bris. 15.13 (103) v Ess. 10.8 (68) G  
Melb. 12.9 (81) v Rich. 18.19 (127) MCG  
Foots. 18.9 (117) v Fre. 15.9 (99) WO

### ROUND 16

**FRIDAY, JULY 19**  
NM 17.16 (118) v StK 4.5 (29) MCG  
**SATURDAY, JULY 20**  
Ess. 15.18 (108) v Rich. 13.10 (88) MCG  
Foots. 3.4 (22) v Bris. 4.12 (36) WO  
Geel. 13.10 (88) v Melb. 4.6 (30) KP  
Haw. 15.8 (98) v Carl. 7.7 (49) P  
**SUNDAY, JULY 21**  
Syd. 16.14 (110) v Adel. 12.16 (88) SCG  
WC 12.10 (82) v Fre. 7.6 (48) S  
Coll. 17.14 (116) v Fitz. 10.16 (76) VP

### ROUND 17

**FRIDAY, JULY 26**  
Melb. 11.4 (70) v NM 28.15 (183) MCG  
**SATURDAY, JULY 27**  
Carl. 13.13 (91) v Ess. 11.16 (82) MCG  
StK 14.16 (100) v Geel. 11.10 (76) P  
Rich. 17.12 (114) v Haw. 11.7 (73) OO  
Bris. 25.13 (163) v WC 17.14 (116) G  
**SUNDAY, JULY 28**  
Foots. 16.12 (108) v Coll. 17.12 (114) MCG  
Adel. 26.10 (166) v Fitz. 9.13 (67) FP  
Fre. 15.14 (104) v Syd. 12.6 (78) S

### ROUND 18

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 2**  
NM 19.16 (130) v Haw. 15.9 (99) MCG  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 3**  
Carl. 23.7 (145) v Fre. 11.18 (84) OO  
StK 13.10 (88) v Coll. 11.12 (72) P  
Geel. 15.14 (104) v Adel. 10.9 (69) KP  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 4**  
WC 14.15 (99) v Ess. 14.9 (93) S  
Syd. 17.13 (115) v Melb. 6.16 (52) SCG  
Fitz. 6.9 (45) v Foots. 8.12 (60) WO  
Rich. 7.11 (53) v Bris. 9.16 (70) OO

### ROUND 19

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 9**  
Fre. 15.16 (106) v Coll. 11.16 (82) W  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 10**  
Melb. 20.9 (129) v Carl. 17.8 (110) MCG  
Ess. 21.17 (143) v Adel. 16.11 (107) OO  
Geel. 18.19 (127) v WC 12.10 (82) KP  
Fitz. 5.5 (35) v StK 13.10 (88) WO  
Haw. 20.12 (132) v Foots. 10.5 (65) P  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 11**  
Syd. 20.10 (130) v Rich. 12.10 (82) SCG  
NM 8.11 (59) v Bris. 11.11 (77) OO

### ROUND 20

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 16**  
Melb. 13.14 (92) v Fre. 10.11 (71) MCG  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 17**  
Rich. 19.18 (132) v Geel. 9.13 (67) MCG  
Haw. 7.7 (49) v Syd. 9.18 (72) P  
Fitz. 14.16 (100) v Bris. 29.13 (187) OO  
Adel. 10.10 (70) v NM 10.16 (76) FP  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 18**  
Foots. 14.11 (95) v StK 8.9 (57) OO  
WC 19.13 (127) v Carl. 10.8 (68) S  
Coll. 9.10 (64) v Ess. 11.11 (77) MCG

### ROUND 21

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 23**  
NM 14.12 (96) v Geel. 16.13 (109) MCG  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 24**  
Carl. 13.18 (96) v Foots. 9.12 (66) OO  
Ess. 14.16 (100) v Syd. 12.10 (82) MCG  
StK 9.9 (63) v Haw. 12.8 (80) P  
Bris. 10.11 (71) v Fre. 10.10 (70) G  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 25**  
Adel. 14.12 (96) v Coll. 24.9 (153) FP  
WC 24.7 (151) v Melb. 11.12 (78) S  
Rich. 28.19 (187) v Fitz. 5.6 (36) MCG

### ROUND 22

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 30**  
Ess. 11.13 (79) v Foots. 11.10 (76) MCG  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 31**  
Geel. 9.11 (65) v Carl. 16.11 (107) KP  
Coll. 15.10 (100) v Bris. 6.15 (51) VP  
StK 20.24 (144) v Adel. 11.9 (75) P  
Melb. 15.11 (103) v Haw. 15.12 (102) MCG  
Syd. 12.13 (85) v WC 6.14 (50) SCG  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1**  
Fre. 24.13 (157) v Fitz. 10.11 (71) S  
Rich. 16.13 (109) v NM 21.15 (141) MCG

### FINALS

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6**  
2nd Qualifying Final  
Bris. 15.11 (101) v Ess. 15.10 (100) G  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7**  
1st Qualifying Final  
WC 18.17 (125) v Carl. 10.10 (70) S  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7**  
4th Qualifying Final  
Syd. 13.12 (90) v Haw. 12.12 (84) SCG  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8**  
3rd Qualifying Final  
NM 19.17 (131) v Geel. 9.17 (71) MCG  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14**  
1st Semi Final  
WC 8.19 (67) v Ess. 22.12 (144) MCG  
2nd Semi Final  
Bris. 26.14 (170) v Carl. 10.13 (73) G  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21**  
1st Preliminary Final  
NM 17.12 (114) v Bris. 11.10 (76) MCG  
2nd Preliminary Final  
Syd. 10.10 (70) v Ess. 10.9 (69) SCG  
**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**  
Grand Final  
NM 19.17 (131) v Syd. 13.10 (88) MCG



## 1997: THE FIXTURE

### ROUND 1 (EASTER)

**THURSDAY, 27TH MARCH**  
NM v Melb MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 29TH MARCH**  
(EASTER SATURDAY)  
Coll v Port MCG  
WB v Fre OO  
StK v Haw WP (Night)  
WC v Syd S (Night)\*  
\* Daylight saving finishes - 3 hour variation.

**SUNDAY, 30TH MARCH**  
(EASTER SUNDAY)  
Rich v Geel MCG  
Adel v Bris FP (Early Start)  
**MONDAY, 31ST MARCH**  
(EASTER MONDAY)  
Ess v NM MCG

### ROUND 2

**FRIDAY, 4TH APRIL**  
Melb v Coll MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 5TH APRIL**  
Rich v Adel MCG  
Geel v WC KP  
Syd v WB SCG (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 6TH APRIL**  
Bris v StK G (Early Start)  
Port v Ess FP  
Fre v Haw S  
**MONDAY, 7TH APRIL**  
(FIRST MON NIGHT GAME)  
NM v Carl MCG (Night)

### ROUND 3

**FRIDAY, 11TH APRIL**  
Syd v Melb SCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 12TH APRIL**  
WB v Rich OO  
StK v Coll WP  
Port v Geel FP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 13TH APRIL**  
WC v Fre S (Early Start)  
Local Derby  
Ess v NM MCG  
Carl v Adel OO  
Haw v Bris WP  
**ROUND 4**  
**FRIDAY, 18TH APRIL**  
Melb v WB MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 19TH APRIL**  
Coll v Carl MCG  
Rich v Fre OO  
StK v Syd WP (Night)  
WC v Haw S (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 20TH APRIL**  
Bris v NM G (Early Start)  
Adel v Port FP Local Derby  
Geel v Ess MCG

### ROUND 5 (ANZAC)

**FRIDAY, 25TH APRIL**  
(ANZAC DAY)  
Ess v Coll MCG  
Fre v StK S (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 26TH APRIL**  
Melb v WC MCG  
WB v Adel OO  
Haw v Syd WP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 27TH APRIL**  
Port v Bris FP (Early Start)  
NM v Rich MCG  
Carl v Geel OO

### ROUND 6

**FRIDAY, 2ND MAY**  
WC v WB WACA (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 3RD MAY**  
Ess v Bris MCG  
Coll v Adel VP  
Geel v Fre KP  
Haw v NM WP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 4TH MAY**  
Syd v Carl SCG (Early Start)  
StK v Melb WP  
Port v Rich FP (Delayed Start)

### ROUND 7

**FRIDAY, 9TH MAY**  
NM v Coll MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 10TH MAY**  
Rich v Carl MCG  
WB v Haw OO  
Geel v Syd KP  
StK v Port WP (Night)  
Fre v Melb WACA (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 11TH MAY**  
Bris v WC G (Early Start)  
Adel v Ess FP (Delayed Start)

### ROUND 8

**FRIDAY, 16TH MAY**  
Coll v WB MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 17TH MAY**  
Melb v Geel MCG  
NM v Port OO  
Adel v Syd FP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 18TH MAY**  
Ess v StK MCG  
Carl v Haw OO  
Fre v Bris S (Early Start)  
**MONDAY, 19TH MAY**  
(2ND MON NIGHT GAME)  
Rich v WC MCG (Night)

### ROUND 9

**FRIDAY, 23RD MAY**  
Port v Melb FP (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 24TH MAY**  
Carl v Fre OO  
Haw v Adel WP  
Syd v Coll SCG (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 25TH MAY**  
Bris v Geel G (Early Start)  
WB v NM MCG  
StK v Rich WP  
WC v Ess S (Early Start)

### ROUND 10

**FRIDAY, 30TH MAY**  
Port v Carl FP (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 31ST MAY**  
NM v WC OO  
Haw v Coll WP  
Geel v StK KP  
Rich v Melb MCG (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 1ST JUNE**  
Ess v WB MCG  
Bris v Syd G

**MONDAY, 2ND JUNE**  
(FOUNDATION DAY WA)  
(3RD MON NIGHT GAME)  
Fre v Adel S (Night)

### ROUND 11 (QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY)

**FRIDAY, 6TH JUNE**  
Coll v Rich MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 7TH JUNE**  
Ess v Haw MCG  
WB v Geel OO  
Port v Syd FP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 29TH JUNE**  
Haw v Melb WP  
Syd v NM SCG  
Bris v Coll G (Night)

**MONDAY, 9TH JUNE**  
(QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY)  
NM v Fre MCG  
Carl v Bris OO

### ROUND 12

**FRIDAY, 13TH JUNE**  
Syd v Rich SCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 14TH JUNE**  
WB v Port OO  
Coll v WC VP  
Geel v Haw KP  
**SUNDAY, 15TH JUNE**  
Fre v Ess S (Early Start)  
StK v Carl WP  
Adel v NM FP (Delayed Start)

**MONDAY, 16TH JUNE**  
(4TH MON NIGHT GAME)  
Melb v Bris MCG (Night)

### STATE OF ORIGIN

**SATURDAY, 21ST JUNE**  
SA v VIC FP (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 21ST JUNE OR**  
SUNDAY, 22ND JUNE  
Allies v WA  
WP/MCG/Interstate  
(Venue still to be decided)

### ROUND 13

**FRIDAY, 27TH JUNE**  
WC v Carl S (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 28TH JUNE**  
Rich v Ess MCG  
StK v WB WP  
Geel v Adel KP  
Port v Fre FP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 29TH JUNE**  
Haw v Melb WP  
Syd v NM SCG  
Bris v Coll G (Night)

### ROUND 14

**FRIDAY, 4TH JULY**  
Adel v WC FP (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 5TH JULY**  
Geel v Coll MCG  
Carl v WB OO  
StK v NM WP  
Fre v Syd WACA (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 6TH JULY**  
Ess v Melb MCG  
Haw v Port WP  
Bris v Rich G

### ROUND 15

**FRIDAY, 11TH JULY**  
NM v Geel MCG (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 12TH JULY**  
Melb v Carl MCG  
WB v Bris OO  
Coll v Fre VP  
Adel v StK FP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 13TH JULY**  
Syd v Ess SCG (Early Start)  
Rich v Haw MCG  
Bris v Haw G (Night)  
WC v Port S (Early Start)

### ROUND 16

**FRIDAY, 18TH JULY**  
Bris v Adel G (Night)  
**SATURDAY, 19TH JULY**  
Carl v Ess MCG  
Haw v StK WP  
Geel v Rich KP  
Syd v WC SCG (Night)  
Port v Coll FP (Night)  
**SUNDAY, 20TH JULY**  
Fre v WB S (Early Start)  
Melb v NM MCG

### ROUND 17

**FRIDAY, 25TH JULY**  
Ess v Port MCG (Night)  
No MCG games Sat due to A.R.U. Bledisloe Cup - Australia



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