



2007 AFL ANNUAL REPORT



AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE





AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

111TH ANNUAL REPORT 2007

Principles and Outcomes	4	Marketing, Communications and Public Affairs	76	Concise Financial Report	122
Incorporating a farewell to the greats: End of an Era		The AFL in the media	78	Directors' report	124
Chairman's/CEO's Reports	14	AFL Foundation	83	Lead Auditor's Independence Declaration	126
Chairman's report	16	AFL SportsReady	85	Income Statements	127
CEO's report	23	Finance and Administration/ Legal and Business Affairs	86	Statements of Recognised Income and Expense	127
Corporate Governance	30	Finance and Administration	88	Balance Sheets	128
Broadcasting and Commercial Operations	34	2007 payments to clubs	90	Statements of Cash Flows	129
Attendance record	43	Legal and Business Affairs	91	Notes to the Concise Financial Statements	130
Strategic planning and club support	48	People and Culture	92	Directors' Declaration	132
Football Operations	50	2007 Awards, Results and Farewells	94	Independent Audit Report	132
Laws of the Game Committee	52	2007 premiers	96	10-year Financial Summary	133
Umpiring department	54	Jock McHale Medal	98	AFL Committees and Advisors	134
Match Review Panel and AFL Tribunal	56	Norm Smith Medal	99	2008 fixture	135
Total Player Earnings	59	Brownlow Medal	101		
National and International Development	60	Coleman Medal	102		
Participation	64	NAB AFL Rising Star	103		
NAB AFL Rising Stars program	66	Coca-Cola AFL			
Second-tier review	68	All-Australian Team	105		
International development	69	Premiership season	108		
AFL NSW/ACT	72	2007 results	109		
AFL Queensland	74	NAB Cup	110		
		Australian Football Hall of Fame	112		
		AFL Life Members	114		
		Retirees	116		
		Obituaries	118		

MAIN IMAGE: Kangaroos forward Aaron Edwards takes a spectacular pack mark against Hawthorn in a semi-final. Edwards beat teammate Drew Petrie and Hawthorn pair Stephen Gilham and Trent Croad, with Lachlan Hansen (26) in the foreground.

FRONT COVER: Geelong captain Tom Harley with the 2007 premiership cup.



END OF AN ERA JAMES HIRD

CLUB: Essendon 1992-2007; 253 games, 343 goals

James Hird is one of the greatest players of all time. Kevin Sheedy, his only coach at AFL level, rated Hird the best player he coached in his 27 years at Essendon. A silky skilled player who was equally dangerous in the midfield or at half-forward, Hird (here with son Alexander) was also an inspirational leader who often lifted his team in close games with passages of individual brilliance.

HONOURS: Brownlow Medal 1996 (equal); Champions of Essendon (No. 3); Essendon Team of the Century (half-forward flank); best and fairest 1994, 1995, 1996, 2003 (equal), 2007; 2nd best and fairest 2000; Norm Smith Medal 2000; All-Australian 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001 (captain), 2003; International Rules Series 2000 (captain), 2004 (captain); Jim Stynes Medal 2000; leading goalkicker 1995, 1996; AFL Rising star nominee 1993; premiership sides 1993, 2000; pre-season premiership sides 1993, 1994, 2000; Anzac Day Medal 2000, 2003, 2004; captain 1998-2005.

AFL CLUBS

Principles: To secure the future of the 16-club AFL competition; to make sure our clubs are financially secure and competitive – on and off the field.

Outcomes in 2007 – off-field:

- \$125.5 million distributed to AFL clubs.
- Through the Strategic Partnership Fund, a range of projects were developed in conjunction with AFL clubs to support the AFL industry across three main streams – commercial and finance; membership and ticketing, and fan development and community.
- Toyota AFL Premiership Season matches supported for the Kangaroos on the Gold Coast, Western Bulldogs in Darwin, Hawthorn in Launceston and Melbourne and the Western Bulldogs in Canberra.
- AFL committed funding to new training and administration facilities for various AFL clubs including:
 - The Western Bulldogs at Whitten Oval (Federal Government, Victorian Government and City of Maribyrnong also providing funding);
 - Carlton at MC Labour Park (Victorian Government and City of Melbourne also providing funding);
 - St Kilda at Frankston (Victorian Government and City of Frankston also providing funding);
 - Richmond at Punt Road Oval (Federal Government, Victorian Government and City of Melbourne also providing funding);
 - Essendon at Windy Hill (for the redevelopment of the Cookson Stand).
- Other proposed club facility developments include the Kangaroos at Arden Street and Melbourne at Olympic Park.

On-field:

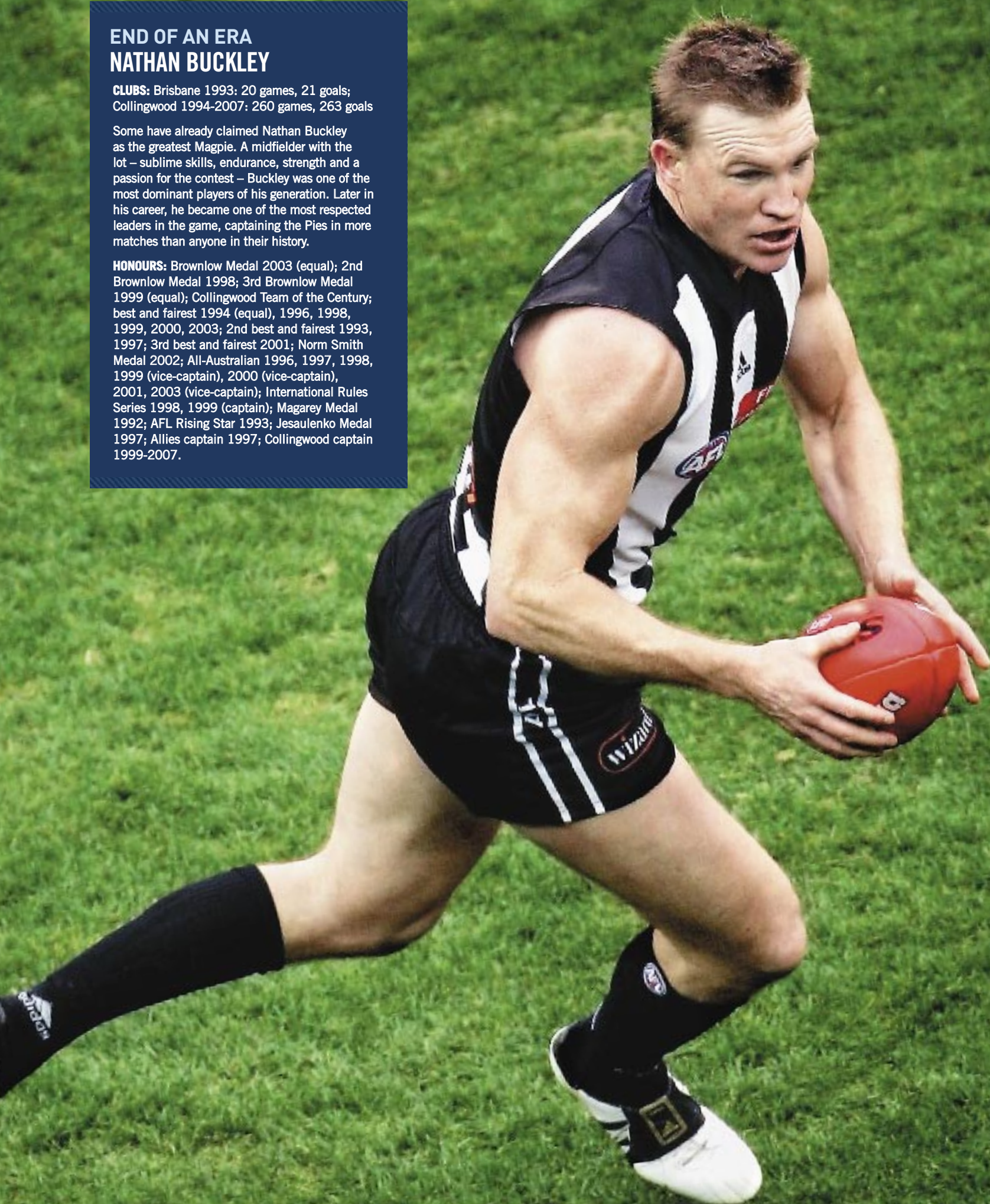
- Geelong won its first premiership in 44 years after finishing 10th in 2006.
- Port Adelaide was runner-up to Geelong after finishing 12th in 2006.
- The Kangaroos reached the preliminary final after finishing 14th in 2006.
- Hawthorn participated in its first finals series since 2001 after finishing 11th in 2006.

END OF AN ERA NATHAN BUCKLEY

CLUBS: Brisbane 1993: 20 games, 21 goals;
Collingwood 1994-2007: 260 games, 263 goals

Some have already claimed Nathan Buckley as the greatest Magpie. A midfielder with the lot – sublime skills, endurance, strength and a passion for the contest – Buckley was one of the most dominant players of his generation. Later in his career, he became one of the most respected leaders in the game, captaining the Pies in more matches than anyone in their history.

HONOURS: Brownlow Medal 2003 (equal); 2nd Brownlow Medal 1998; 3rd Brownlow Medal 1999 (equal); Collingwood Team of the Century; best and fairest 1994 (equal), 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003; 2nd best and fairest 1993, 1997; 3rd best and fairest 2001; Norm Smith Medal 2002; All-Australian 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 (vice-captain), 2000 (vice-captain), 2001, 2003 (vice-captain); International Rules Series 1998, 1999 (captain); Magarey Medal 1992; AFL Rising Star 1993; Jesaulenko Medal 1997; Allies captain 1997; Collingwood captain 1999-2007.



PLAYERS

Principles: To provide the best possible benefits for AFL players; to drive the next generation of elite athletes to choose our game.

Outcomes in 2007:

- Total Player Payments – \$111.1 million (\$6.94 million per club).
- \$12.1 million provided to the AFL Players' Association as part of Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Medical benefits provided to AFL players via the AFL grant to the AFLPA.
- An additional \$1.4 million provided to the AFLPA retirement fund.
- Players shared in some \$1.1 million in prize money provided by the AFL to clubs finishing in the top four.
- Additional benefits provided to rookies and players in the early stages of their careers, including a 16 per cent increase in the minimum payment for a rookie.
- Talented player pathway upgraded with key developments including:
 - Establishment in 2008 of an AFL Academy in each state and territory;
 - Establishment in 2009 of AFL Centres of Excellence linked to major state league clubs;
 - Revamped NAB AFL Under-16 Championships, with finals to be played on Toyota AFL Grand Final day.
- AFL partnership with Federal Government to establish two Indigenous Sporting Chance academies in Sydney and one in Cairns.
- AFLPA delivered programs to players in conjunction with clubs and AFL including:
 - Induction camp for newly drafted players;
 - Work placements;
 - Employment opportunities;
 - Financial education;
 - Career counselling;
 - Education and career guidance;
 - IT skills training;
 - Personal counselling;
 - Indigenous support program;
 - Education and training.



END OF AN ERA MARK RICCIUTO

CLUB: Adelaide 1993-2007; 312 games, 292 goals

Mark Ricciuto is most people's choice as the best-ever Adelaide Crow. A gamebreaker whether in the midfield or, later in his career, on the forward line, Ricciuto was the Crows' go-to player when the game was on the line. He was also a superb leader whose uncompromising attack on the ball showed the way for his teammates.

HONOURS: Brownlow Medal 2003 (equal); 2nd Brownlow Medal 2004; best and fairest 1994, 1997, 2000; 3rd best and fairest 1994, 1997, 2000; All-Australian 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 (captain), 2005 (captain); International Rules Series 1998, 2000; leading goalkicker 2006; AFL Rising Star nominee 1993; premiership side 1998; pre-season premiership side 2003; captain since 2001.

THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL COMMUNITY

Principles: To build a stronger relationship with our supporters at all levels; to continue to expand the national footprint of our game; to grow our existing supporter base; to develop new markets, and to provide more opportunities to participate in our game.

Outcomes in 2007:

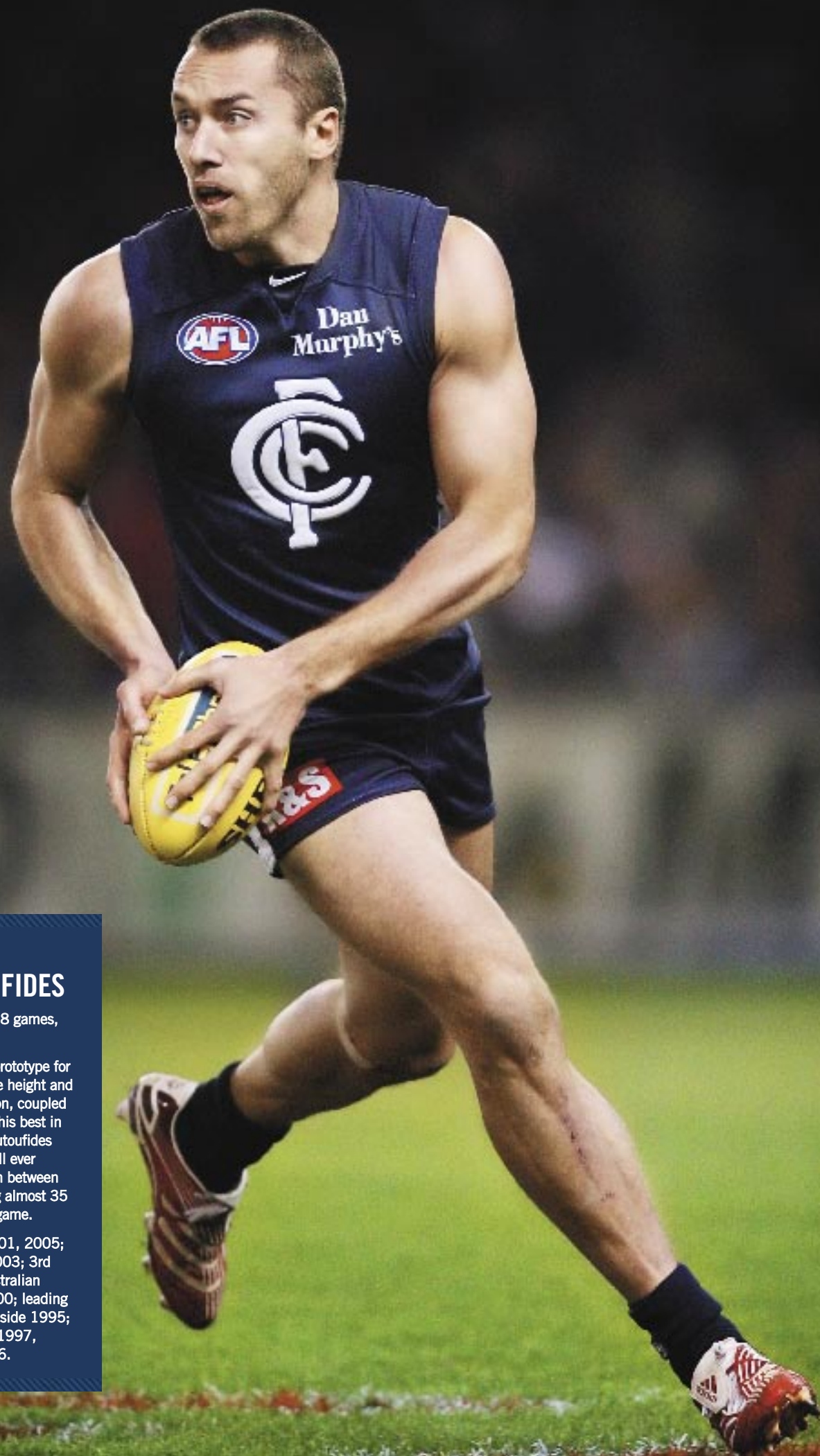
- Total participation up by 9.8 per cent or more than 56,000 participants to a record 638,000.
- Total participation includes a record 161,000 players in 2800 AFL Auskick community centres throughout Australia.
- Key participation growth in New South Wales and Queensland.
- New Indigenous programs secured in partnership with Federal Government:
 - AFL Club fostership program, with selected AFL clubs to adopt various Indigenous communities;
 - Ambassadors for Life program, with key Indigenous players to visit communities;
 - AFL Kickstart program expanded to include regular tours by under-18 Indigenous team to South Africa.
- AFL allocated \$35.9 million to support development including national programs and activities in a community network which consists of 2600 clubs fielding more than 11,600 teams each week of the season in 269 leagues throughout Australia, with 24,000 coaches, 10,000 umpires and more than 100,000 volunteers.
- AFL invested \$10 million in community facility projects valued at \$100 million.
- AFL Club Community Camps completed for the seventh year; 70 per cent of country regions have hosted camps since their inception in 2001.
- 34,000 participants in various countries throughout the world, including 7800 registered participants in South Africa where West Coast Eagles, Fremantle, Carlton and Collingwood are supporting development activities.
- Essendon supporting game development in Japan and Melbourne in China.

MANAGING THE AFL COMPETITION

Principles: To administer our game to ensure it remains the most exciting in Australian sport; to build a stronger relationship with our supporters by providing the best sports entertainment experience; to provide the best facilities, and to continue to expand the national footprint.

Outcomes in 2007:

- Attendances for the Toyota AFL Premiership Season reached an all-time record of 6.476 million, 3 per cent up on the previous record of 6.284 million set in 2005.
- Total attendance for the Toyota AFL Finals Series was 574,424, up 8 per cent on the 2006 total of 532,178.
- Total attendances for all official AFL matches (premiership season, finals, NAB Cup and regional challenge games) was a record 7,402,846 compared to the previous record of 7,188,585 set in 2005.
- AFL club membership reached 532,697, a record level for the seventh successive year.
- The national television audience on Network Ten for the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final was an average of 2.572 million people, making it the most watched TV program of any type in 2007.
- An average weekly national audience of 4.97 million people watched AFL matches on television throughout Australia.
- An average weekly audience of 3.33 million people watched AFL finals matches on television throughout Australia.
- Work started on a \$70 million upgrade of the SCG.
- Plans were developed by the West Australian Government to build a new \$800 million multi-purpose stadium in Perth.
- A masterplan for the redevelopment of the Gold Coast Stadium was completed.
- Geelong Football Club secured Federal Government funding of \$14 million and Victorian Government funding of \$6 million for the next stage of the redevelopment of Skilled Stadium.
- The SANFL drafted future plans for the redevelopment of AAMI Stadium.
- Premiership season matches scheduled in all states and territories including three home games for the Kangaroos on the Gold Coast.



END OF AN ERA ANTHONY KOUTOUFIDES

CLUB: Carlton 1992-2007; 278 games, 226 goals

Anthony Koutoufides was the prototype for the modern midfielder, with the height and strength to play in a key position, coupled with speed and endurance. At his best in his standout 2000 season, Koutoufides played some of the best football ever seen, in one remarkable stretch between rounds seven and 11 averaging almost 35 possessions and three goals a game.

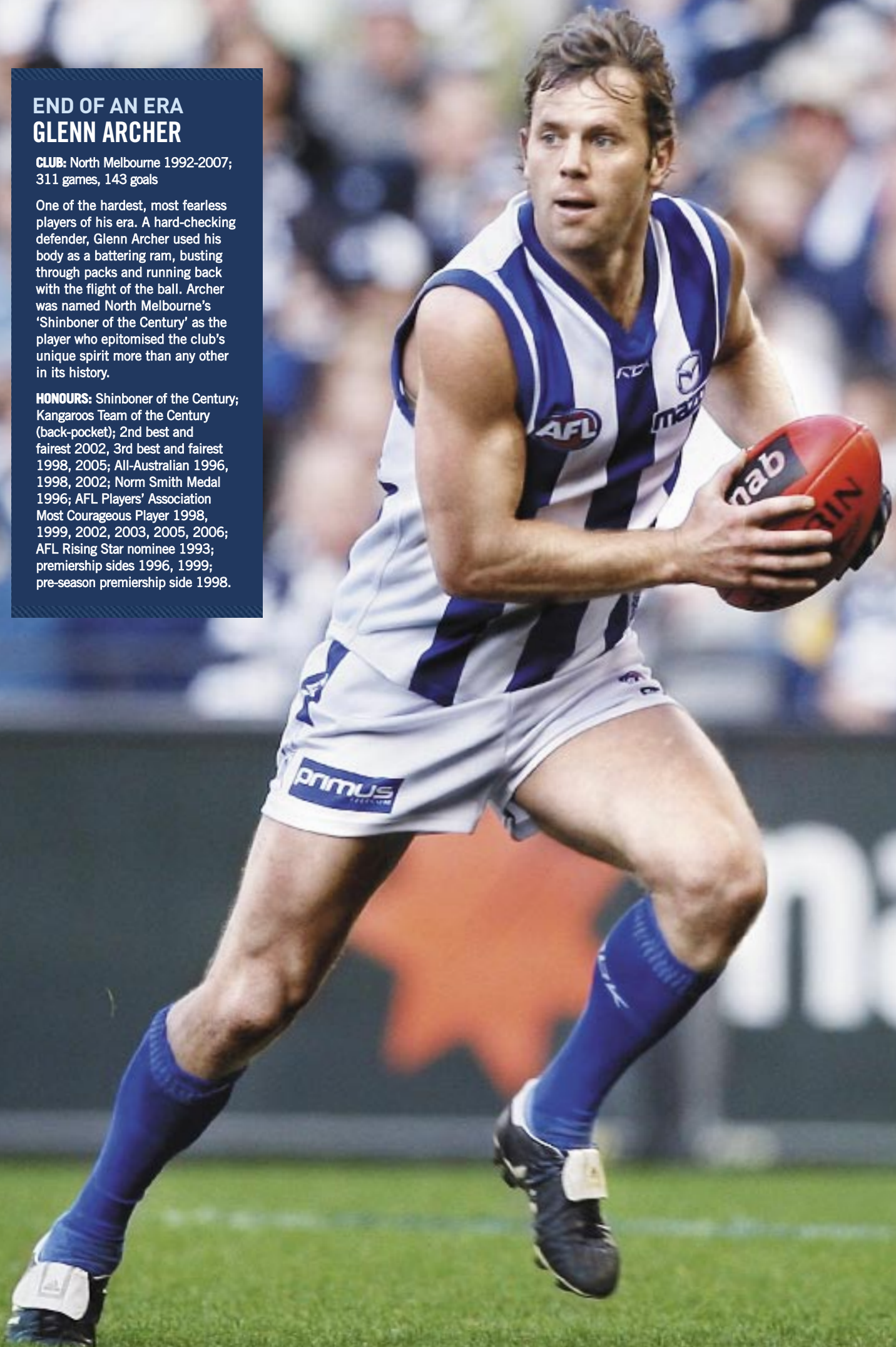
HONOURS: Best and fairest 2001, 2005; 2nd best and fairest 1999, 2003; 3rd best and fairest 2000; All-Australian 1995, 2000; AFLPA MVP 2000; leading goalkicker 1997; premiership side 1995; pre-season premiership sides 1997, 2005, 2007; captain 2004-06.

END OF AN ERA GLENN ARCHER

CLUB: North Melbourne 1992-2007;
311 games, 143 goals

One of the hardest, most fearless players of his era. A hard-checking defender, Glenn Archer used his body as a battering ram, busting through packs and running back with the flight of the ball. Archer was named North Melbourne's 'Shinboner of the Century' as the player who epitomised the club's unique spirit more than any other in its history.

HONOURS: Shinboner of the Century; Kangaroos Team of the Century (back-pocket); 2nd best and fairest 2002, 3rd best and fairest 1998, 2005; All-Australian 1996, 1998, 2002; Norm Smith Medal 1996; AFL Players' Association Most Courageous Player 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006; AFL Rising Star nominee 1993; premiership sides 1996, 1999; pre-season premiership side 1998.





END OF AN ERA CHRIS GRANT

CLUB: Western Bulldogs 1990-2007;
341 games, 554 goals

A champion key-position player who excelled at both ends of the ground. Chris Grant was one of the competition's best centre half-forwards in the early 1990s but then switched to centre half-back, where in 1997 he polled the most votes in the Brownlow Medal but was ineligible due to suspension. Fiercely loyal, Grant resisted several offers to leave the Dogs during his career, finally departing as their games record-holder.

HONOURS: Bulldogs Team of the Century; best and fairest 1994, 1996 (equal); 2nd best and fairest 1997, 1998, 1999; 3rd best and fairest 2001; 3rd Brownlow Medal 1996 (equal); All-Australian 1997, 1998, 1999; leading goalkicker 1990, 1994; captain 2000-04.





CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

MIKE FITZPATRICK

CEO'S REPORT

ANDREW DEMETRIOU

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

AFL Commissioners (back row from left) Graeme John, Chris Langford, Chairman Mike Fitzpatrick and Bob Hammond;
(bottom row from left) Colin Carter, Chief Executive Officer Andrew Demetriou, Sam Mostyn and Bill Kelty.

TAKING THE GAME FORWARD

Under the AFL's *Next Generation* strategy, the future focus remains to grow the game, particularly in key markets in New South Wales and Queensland.

The year began with great sadness with the death of Ron Evans, Chairman of the AFL Commission, a former Essendon Football Club President and an Essendon and West Perth player. The fitting celebration of his life and his contribution to the game united the football world.

The season itself opened with concerns about the health of Victorian-based AFL clubs relative to their counterparts in other states and with several disappointing off-field incidents.

By 5.30pm on Toyota AFL Grand Final day, a resurgent Geelong had won the AFL premiership by a record margin to climax a season in which the club captured the vast majority of individual and team awards, including Jimmy Bartel winning the game's most prestigious individual honour, the Brownlow Medal. Steve Johnson, suspended by Geelong's player leadership group early in the season, was the Norm Smith medallist.

The win was Geelong's first premiership since 1963 and also climaxed a complete turn-around in the off-field performance of the club under the leadership of President Frank Costa and CEO Brian Cook.

From a competition perspective, 2007 produced new records for attendances, club membership and participation. The quality of the football was exceptional and the clubs, players and coaches are to be commended for the way the game was played.

Next Generation

The future growth of the national competition and Australia's only Indigenous game were the major focus of the AFL Commission in the past year as the Commission's 2007-2011 financial strategy, *Next Generation*, was implemented.

Next Generation: Securing the Future of Australian Football was adopted by the AFL Commission in 2006 and \$1.4 billion was allocated to all levels of the game during the next five years.

A key component of that strategy is to have an AFL premiership season match played in south-east Queensland and Sydney each week by 2015.

In the past year our primary focus has been to implement plans to build all levels of the game in the Gold Coast region and to capitalise on the rapid growth of the game in Queensland. Since 2000, total participation in Australian Football in Queensland has increased by more than 173 per cent, from 30,120 registered participants to 82,400 registered participants in the past year.

The impact of the Brisbane Lions in winning three consecutive premierships (2001-2003) cannot be underestimated. The success of the Lions has raised the profile significantly and boosted the development of our game in Queensland.

To assist the AFL Commission, a Gold Coast advisory group was established among local business, community and government leaders to put forward the case for an AFL club to be based on the Gold Coast.

The case put forward by the Gold Coast group to establish an AFL club on the coast was compelling.

The Gold Coast region is Australia's premier tourist destination, attracting more than 10 million overnight and daytrip visitors each year.

More than 480,000 people live in the region and the Gold Coast population is expected to exceed 750,000 by 2021. It is Australia's second-fastest growing region, with between 13,000 and 16,000 people migrating to the region each year. The number migrating to the surrounding south-east Queensland region is even larger.

More than four million people are expected to live in south-east Queensland within the next 10 to 15 years, second only in size to the population of Sydney.

The AFL Commission believes it is critical to the long-term future of the AFL competition to have an increased presence in this region and it's an objective we will continue to pursue vigorously.

In 2007 the North Melbourne Football Club played three Toyota AFL Premiership Season matches at the Gold Coast Stadium as part of a three-year agreement to play 10 games on the Gold Coast from 2007-2009.

During 2007 the AFL Commission approved a \$100 million support package for the Kangaroos to relocate to the Gold Coast between 2010 and 2012, a package we believe would have secured the long-term future of the club in the national competition.

The AFL Commission respects the decision of the North Melbourne board to reject the package and to adopt an alternative plan for the Kangaroos to remain a Victorian-based club.

Our major responsibility rests with continuing to grow the game and the national competition and given the Kangaroos' decision, we will pursue the establishment of a new club on the Gold Coast. This work started in the past year and it will be a major focus of the AFL Commission in 2008.

Similar work – to assess the potential for an AFL club to be based in greater western Sydney – reinforced the potential of this market consistent with our objective of having an AFL premiership season match played in Sydney each week by 2015.

More than 1.8 million people live in greater western Sydney and the population is expected to grow by another 250,000 in the next 10 years.

If we are to achieve our goal in the Sydney market, our view is that this will be achieved by establishing a new club in greater western Sydney. We should not rely on a club based in Victoria being prepared to relocate.

FOCUS: Sydney Swan
Michael O'Loughlin has eyes
only for the ball against
Hawthorn's Campbell Brown.



The AFL Commission does not underestimate the significant challenge of establishing new AFL clubs on the Gold Coast and in greater western Sydney.

We are, however, in a rapidly developing and changing environment.

Australian Football has built its presence in the NSW and Queensland markets significantly, but we recognise we still have many challenges ahead to build further on the foundation that has been laid. The *Next Generation* policy has identified these markets as the next push for our game and the Commission is committed to investing in these markets to give our game an even stronger foothold.

Financial result

One of the most pleasing outcomes for 2007 was the fact that 15 of the 16 AFL clubs were profitable, compared with 12 in 2006. Aggregate club profitability was \$22 million, an increase of \$10 million on 2006. We congratulate each of the clubs for delivering this result.

Outlined are some of the key outcomes in the financial performance of the AFL in 2007:

- Total AFL revenue increased by \$70 million to a record \$284.8 million in 2007, an increase of 33 per cent on 2006.
- Our operating surplus before grants and distributions was \$202 million, an increase of \$62 million or 45 per cent on 2006.
- The net surplus before transfers to reserves was \$26.3 million.

Other highlights:

- Expenditure increased by \$9 million to \$81 million, up 12.5 per cent.
- Grants and distributions increased by \$43 million to \$176 million, up 30.1 per cent.
- The AFL became debt-free.

Broadcasters

The past year was the first under a new broadcast rights agreement for television coverage of the AFL competition by Network Ten, the Seven Network and Foxtel.

On behalf of the AFL Commission, I wish to acknowledge the positive contribution to the continued national growth of our game by Ten, Seven and Foxtel, coverage that provided an unprecedented level of exposure throughout metropolitan and regional Australia of each match played in the premiership season and finals.

The broadcast rights agreement, which is valued at \$780 million for the period 2007-11, was a fundamental building block for the AFL Commission's *Next Generation* strategy.

Corporate partners

I also wish to place on record our sincere appreciation of the continuing support provided to the AFL by our major corporate partners, led by our premier partner, Toyota, through its sponsorship of the premiership season, finals, Brownlow Medal and Mark and Goal of the Year.

Our corporate partners – headed by Toyota, Foster's Australia, National Australia Bank, Coca-Cola, Medibank Private, Australian Defence Forces and Qantas – are referred to in detail in the Broadcasting and Commercial operations section of this report.



PORT 6· 8· 44

Hankook

IT'S OURS!: Geelong's Josh Hunt and Paul Chapman share a special moment on the MCG with the 2007 premiership cup.





NEW LEADER: West Coast Eagles defender Darren Glass, here battling Richmond's Matthew Richardson at the MCG, was named Eagles captain at the end of the 2007 season. Glass enjoyed a wonderful year, capped by being named full-back in the Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team.

Football community

It is also important to recognise the army of more than 100,000 volunteers who, via the various state and territory bodies and community leagues and clubs throughout Australia, are critical to all levels of Australian Football. In 2007 the contribution of volunteers assisted the game to achieve the following:

- A record total of 638,000 registered participants.
- 2600 clubs fielding 11,600 teams each week in 270 leagues throughout Australia.
- 24,000 coaches and 10,000 umpires.
- 161,000 participants in 2800 AFL Auskick centres throughout Australia.
- Another 131,000 people engaged in other programs such as school clinics.
- Another 34,000 participants in various countries around the world.

This is the foundation upon which the AFL competition is built and we will continue to do all we can to nurture the Australian Football community via our National and International Development department.

AFL Commission

I was honoured to be appointed by my fellow Commissioners as Chairman in March, following the death of our previous Chairman Ron Evans.

It has been a privilege for me to serve in this capacity, although it has been quite daunting to be Ron's successor.

The past year was quite challenging for the AFL competition and the AFL Commission felt that challenge.

Our game is fortunate to have such high-calibre people prepared to serve on the AFL Commission and I wish to acknowledge the continuing first-class contribution of Sam Mostyn, Colin Carter, Bob Hammond, Bill Kely, Graeme John, Chris Langford and our CEO, Andrew Demetriou, as Commissioners in 2007.

During the year Colin Carter announced his intention to retire from the AFL Commission, effective from March 2008.

Colin, who was appointed to the AFL Commission in 1993, has made an outstanding contribution to the strategic direction of our game.

In the mid 1980s Colin was one of the driving forces behind a strategic plan titled 'Establishing the basis for future success' for the then VFL Commission, which laid the framework for the development of the national competition from the VFL structure.

That plan was based on a foundation of key issues such as a draft and salary cap and ground rationalisation to develop high-quality facilities for supporters at a small number of venues.

In the late 1980s when the Melbourne Cricket Club was contemplating a redevelopment of the MCG, Colin, who was then acting as a consultant to the MCC, facilitated discussions between

the Commission and the MCC, which led to the building of the Great Southern Stand and AFL membership being relocated from Waverley Park to the MCG.

Before joining the AFL Commission, Colin was a director of Geelong Football Club.

We are delighted that Colin will remain involved with us as Chairman of the AFL Foundation, but I wish to thank Colin for his contribution to the game as a key strategic thinker always prepared to challenge conventional thinking and the traditional way of doing business. We wish Colin and his wife, Angie, every success in the next phase of their life.

I am also pleased to welcome two new AFL Commissioners in

Justice Linda Dessau (left) and Chris Lynch (below left), who will be formally appointed at the Annual General Meeting on March 13, 2008.

Following the passing of Ron Evans and Colin's decision to retire, a sub-committee consisting of Adelaide Football Club Chairman Bill Sanders, Geelong Football Club President Frank Costa, AFL Commissioner Graeme John (and myself as Chairman) were appointed to identify candidates to fill the two positions.

The recommendation from the sub-committee to appoint Justice Dessau and Chris Lynch to the AFL Commission was unanimously endorsed at a meeting of club presidents in November, 2007.

Justice Dessau has wide experience in the law, as a barrister and prosecutor before working as a magistrate and Judge of the Family Court. She was also instrumental

in Essendon Football Club establishing the first women's network in the AFL competition.

Chris has worked extensively in several senior positions in the business world, including five years as Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director of BHP Billiton (2001-2006), since his time as a player at Geelong in the 1970s. In late 2007, he was appointed as CEO-elect of Transurban, a role which he will take up early in 2008.

The skills and experience of Linda and Chris will complement our current Commission and will ensure that we are able to continue to meet the challenges in front of us.

I also wish to thank the AFL executive led by Andrew Demetriou and all of our staff for their contribution to a very successful 2007 season – your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Congratulations as well to the boards, staff, coaches and players of the 16 AFL clubs for continuing to attract record levels of community support and interest which is so important our game.



Mike Fitzpatrick
Chairman, AFL Commission



PASSION: Geelong fans of all ages had reason to smile during 2007, when the Cats dominated the competition.

PRIDE AND PASSION IN THE GAME

The passion of AFL supporters contributed significantly to the growth of Australian Football in 2007, with the game set for key 150-year celebrations in 2008.

As we approach 2008 and the 150th anniversary of the founding of Australia's only Indigenous game, I have had an opportunity to read chapters from a book commissioned by the AFL titled *The Australian Game of Football*, to be published in early 2008 as a key part of our 150th birthday celebrations.

What struck me about the early beginnings of Australian Football was the game's capacity within a few years of being founded to attract crowds of many thousands to matches in its birthplace in Melbourne and, as the code spread, to South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania.

The game evolved quickly from 1858 and today continues to evolve at all levels as we start our next 150 years.

One key constant remains from the early years of Australian Football, and that is the passion for the game shown by supporters of not just AFL clubs and players, but for all levels of the game throughout Australia.

No partnership is more important than the one that exists with our supporters, who are fundamental to the continuing success of the AFL competition and the game itself.

Those who founded our game and participated in those early matches 150 years ago could not have envisaged that Australian Football would become one of the most popular spectator sports in the world.

Based on the average attendance per game for the premiership season and finals in 2007 of 38,107 people, the AFL is the second most popular professional sports competition in the world, with the top five being:

- National Football League (USA) – average attendance per game of 67,738.
- AFL – average attendance per game of 38,107.
- Bundesliga soccer (Germany) – average attendance per game of 37,644.
- Premier League soccer (England) – average attendance per game of 34,459.
- Major League Baseball (USA, Canada) – average attendance per game, 32,785.

This high level of public support in 2007 also drove the following key outcomes:

Attendances, club membership

- AFL clubs did an outstanding job in establishing an attendance record for the Toyota AFL Premiership Season of 6.476 million, up 3 per cent on the previous record of 6.284 million established in 2005.

- Total attendance for all official AFL matches (premiership season, finals, NAB Cup and regional challenge games) was a record 7.402 million, compared with the previous record of 7.188 million set in 2005.
- Membership of AFL clubs reached 532,697, a record level for the seventh consecutive year. One in every 39 Australians was a member of an AFL club in 2007.

Television audiences

- Network Ten's telecast of the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final between Geelong and Port Adelaide was the most watched television program of any kind in the past year, with an average national audience of 2.572 million people.
- On average, 3.29 million people per week watched the telecasts of Toyota AFL finals matches on Network Ten and the Seven Network.
- On average, 4.97 million people watched the broadcasts of premiership season matches each week on Network Ten, the Seven Network and Fox Sports.

Online, radio

- An average of 1.75 million unique browsers per month were attracted to the AFL /Telstra Network
- An average of 937,000 people per week listened to radio coverage of the AFL premiership season.

Participation

- The total number of registered participants in our game was a record 638,000, an increase of 9.8 per cent or 56,989 participants on the previous high in 2006.

We sincerely thank the Australian public for supporting our game in such large numbers and in so many different ways.

Future direction

As AFL Commission Chairman Mike Fitzpatrick pointed out earlier in this report, the future direction of the AFL competition and its continued growth in south-east Queensland and greater western Sydney were a major strategic focus for the AFL Commission and our executive in 2007.

Our primary focus, consistent with the *Next Generation* financial strategy adopted by the AFL Commission last year, was the development of a support package for the North Melbourne Football Club if it decided to relocate in the future to the Gold Coast from Melbourne.

The package approved by the AFL Commission for the Kangaroos was valued at \$100 million and was based on the following principles:

- Providing the club with a strong revenue base with committed levels of corporate support.
- Eliminating the club's debt and securing long-term financial viability.
- Providing the club with a commercially attractive stadium agreement.
- Establishing an administration and training base on the Gold Coast.
- Assisting the club to continue to field a competitive team.
- Ensuring that the history and tradition of the club was preserved.
- Seven away matches in Victoria per year for 10 years and six matches per year thereafter.
- Membership and broadcasting arrangements that recognise Kangaroos members and supporters based in Victoria while also maximising the exposure of the club throughout Queensland.

The North Melbourne board subsequently voted to continue as a Victorian-based club and rejected the support package offered by the AFL.

The AFL Commission remains committed to the longer-term objective of having an AFL premiership season match played every week in south-east Queensland and Sydney by 2015 and our executive team will continue to develop plans during 2008 for new clubs to be established to achieve this objective.

Gold Coast Stadium

Gold Coast City Council conducted a detailed assessment during 2007 of 10 potential sites for a stadium to host AFL matches and confirmed the Gold Coast Stadium at Carrara as the preferred option. During the past year a \$200 million master plan for the redevelopment of the stadium was completed, which would provide an ultimate capacity of 25,000 seats.

Australian Football Hall of Fame

Agreement was reached in 2007 to relocate the Australian Football Hall of Fame and AFL World from the QV complex in Melbourne to the National Sports Museum at the MCG. This agreement was made possible by the support of our partners in the Hall of Fame and AFL World at QV, the Grollo Group and Peter Rowland Catering.

Apart from the Australian Football Hall of Fame, the National Sports Museum will also house the Australian Gallery of Sport and Olympic Museum, the Sport Australia Hall of Fame and the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame. The Melbourne Cricket Club Museum will be next door.

The Federal Government has contributed \$25 million to the development of the National Sports Museum.

The Australian Football Hall of Fame is due to open in the National Sports Museum at the MCG in August, 2008.

Government support

Agreement was secured with the Federal Government and Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop, for the AFL to partner the Government to establish Indigenous 'Sporting Chance' academies in Sydney and Cairns.

Funded under the Federal Government's Sporting Chance program, the academies at high schools in Blacktown and Campbelltown in Sydney and Djarragun College at Gordonvale, Cairns,

will use sport as the vehicle to increase the level of engagement of young Indigenous people in school.

The high schools participating in Blacktown include Plumpton, Rooty Hill and Doonside, while in Campbelltown, the high schools participating are Macquarie Fields, Sarah Redfern, James Meehan and Ingleburn.

The support of the Federal Government was instrumental in the establishment of the Indigenous academies and built on the successful partnership and involvement of the government and the AFL in other Indigenous programs.

Agreement was also reached with the Federal Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Mal Brough, to establish two new programs.

The AFL Club Fostership program will promote the development of specific Indigenous communities and will be based on the successful partnership between Essendon Football Club and the Tiwi Islands community to enter a team in the Northern Territory Football League.

The Ambassadors for Life program will involve visits by leading Indigenous players to communities throughout Australia to promote key messages including the importance of education and a healthy lifestyle.

The Federal Government also allocated \$2.5 million over the next five years to fund a team from the Northern Territory playing in the West Australian Football League or South Australian National Football League. The new Federal Government led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, indicated that it, too, would support this program.

AFL clubs including the Kangaroos, Geelong, Adelaide and Port Adelaide also secured funding from the Federal Government and various state governments for facility development projects.

We place a great deal of importance on working with government at all levels, and in 2007, appointed Phil Martin as our Manager, Government Relations. He joined us after serving as chief of staff to Victoria's Minister for Planning (and former Minister for Sport and Recreation), Justin Madden.

Retiring champions

Six club captains who made outstanding contributions to our game – Collingwood's Nathan Buckley, Essendon's James Hird, Adelaide's Mark Ricciuto, the Western Bulldogs' duo of Chris Grant and Luke Darcy and Carlton's Anthony Koutoufides – and the Kangaroos 'Shinboner of the Century', Glenn Archer, headed a group of players who announced their retirements during 2007.

The combined career record of the six players consisted of 1660 games, 1471 goals, 26 All-Australian selections, three Brownlow Medals, six premierships, three Norm Smith Medals and 17 club best and fairest awards.

The 2007 season also marked the last in which Kevin Sheedy coached Essendon and Denis Pagan coached Carlton.

Kevin broke the all-time record for games played and coached (878) held by Collingwood legend Jock McHale, and now holds the record of 886 games. He coached Essendon in 635 games from 1981, including seven Grand Finals and four premierships. He has coached the most games at Essendon.

We were delighted when Kevin accepted a position as an AFL ambassador to promote a range of AFL programs including the

LOOKING SKYWARD:
Port Adelaide's Brendon
Lade and St Kilda's
Matthew Clarke had to
contend with driving
rain for most of their
round five match at AAMI
Stadium, which the Power
won by 53 points.





FLYING HIGH: Brisbane Lions co-captain Jonathan Brown got the better of Hawk Brent Guerra in this contest at the MCG.

150th anniversary of Australian Football in 2008 and national and international development activities.

The farewell to Kevin and James Hird after Essendon's round 21 game in front of 88,468 people at the MCG against Richmond and their final game in round 22 before a packed Subiaco Oval in Perth against the West Coast Eagles were two highlights of the year, when people stood regardless of which team they supported to recognise and applaud two of the finest contributors to Essendon and the game.

Denis coached the Kangaroos from 1993-2002, winning two premierships and leading the club to the finals in every season except one during his time in the job. He coached Carlton from 2003-07 and won two pre-season premierships.

Denis also had great success as coach of the Kangaroos' under-19s, leading the club into nine Grand Finals and winning five premierships at that level. In 1992 he coached Essendon to the reserves premiership.

We congratulate each of the retiring players, and Kevin and Denis, for their contributions to the game.

150th anniversary

Planning for a range of events in 2008 to mark the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Australian Football was completed during the past year. Activities were developed so that all levels of the football community would be able to participate.

Two key features of 2008 will be the publication in March of *The Australian Game of Football*, which the AFL commissioned three years ago to record the official history of the game, and a Hall of Fame match.

The book describes the beginnings of Australia's only Indigenous game, its early growth and development, the birth of the coach and his influence, the evolution of tactics, dominant figures in the game, the eternal role of women and the unique character of the club scene throughout the country.

On Saturday, May 10, 2008, the best 50 players in the AFL competition will assemble at the MCG for the Hall of Fame tribute game when the champions of today pay tribute to the champions of the past for their contribution to making Australian Football what it is today.

The match will be between Victoria, to be captained by Brisbane Lion Jonathan Brown with Geelong's Mark Thompson as coach, and the Dream Team, to be captained by Adelaide's Andrew McLeod with Port Adelaide's Mark Williams as coach and selected by players from all states and territories other than Victoria.

As we have scheduled a bye during this weekend, all other AFL players not participating in the Hall of Fame tribute match will be returning to their original local clubs to participate in community football weekend celebrations linked to the 150th anniversary.

The Hall of Fame game will be held two days after the 2008 Australian Football Hall of Fame dinner.

Ron Evans

One of the most satisfying periods of my working life was the more than three years I served in my current role with Ron Evans as Chairman of the AFL Commission.

Ron passed away in March, 2007, after a short battle with cancer and it was a privilege for me to not only work with Ron, but have him as a mentor and friend.

He always said that the main responsibility for any administrator was to hand the game to any successor in better shape than what he found it. His legacy, consistent with that principle, lives on via the AFL Commission's *Next Generation* strategy to secure the future of Australian Football, which was developed under his direction and implemented this past year.

In conjunction with Ron's successor as Chairman, Mike Fitzpatrick, the AFL Commission and key stakeholders including AFL clubs,



POISED: St Kilda's Robert Harvey, who in 2007 became the first Saint to reach the 350-game milestone, handballs to teammate Jason Gram against Richmond at Telstra Dome.



SUCCESS: Geelong CEO Brian Cook (left) and President Frank Costa embrace just before the final siren in the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final. The Cats' 1963 premiership full-forward Doug Wade is also standing.

players and the broader Australian Football community, we look forward to continuing to do all we possibly can to continue to nurture Australia's only Indigenous game.

Season to remember

Geelong completed a once-in-a-lifetime season, culminating in a win by 119 points over Port Adelaide in the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final, the greatest winning margin in Grand Final history.

One of the few major awards not won by Geelong or one of its players was the John Coleman Medal for the competition's leading goalkicker, which in 2007 was won by Jonathan Brown of the Brisbane Lions.

The 2007 Grand Final result broke a 44-year premiership drought for Geelong after the club was runner-up in the 1989, 1992, 1994 and 1995 Grand Finals. Other major awards won by the club in 2007 included:

- The Wm C. McClelland Trophy for finishing on top of the ladder at the end of the Toyota AFL Premiership Season with 17 wins.
- The Brownlow Medal for the competition's fairest and best player (Jimmy Bartel).
- The Norm Smith Medal for best player in the Grand Final (Steve Johnson).
- A record nine players in the Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team.
- The NAB AFL Rising Star Award and inaugural Ron Evans Medal (Joel Selwood).
- The AFLPA Most Valuable Player Award (Gary Ablett).

Geelong also won the VFL premiership and Tom Lonergan, who returned to football after suffering a serious kidney injury in 2006, was named best-on-ground in the VFL Grand Final.

Off the field the club secured Federal Government funding of \$14 million; \$6 million from the Victorian Government, and

\$2 million from the City of Greater Geelong for the next stage of the redevelopment of Skilled Stadium, to start after the 2008 season. The AFL has agreed to contribute \$3 million to this project.

The club has undergone a complete transformation since 1999, when Frank Costa was appointed President and Brian Cook CEO.

That year the club had a debt of \$7 million and finished 11th after finishing 12th in 1998. Since then, the club has eradicated that debt, completed the first stage of the redevelopment of Skilled Stadium and in 2007 announced a record profit of \$1.87 million, the eighth successive year of operating profitably.

We congratulate Frank Costa, Brian Cook, coach Mark Thompson, the players, staff and board for their collective efforts in 2007.

We also acknowledge Port Adelaide for reaching the 2007 Grand Final. Under coach Mark Williams, Port Adelaide has rebuilt its list quickly after several senior players retired following the club's 2004 premiership.

The club has an exciting group of young players and looks certain to be a regular finals contender in the seasons ahead. We congratulate President Greg Boulton, CEO John James, Mark Williams, the players, staff and board for the role they played in Port Adelaide's return to the finals.

Finally, a big thank you to the AFL executive and staff for their contribution to an outstanding season. I am fortunate to work with such high-quality people who have such a strong commitment and passion for Australia's only Indigenous game – Australian Football.

Andrew Demetriou
Chief Executive Officer



CONCENTRATION:
Fremantle's Aaron Sandilands and the Kangaroos' Hamish McIntosh battle for supremacy at a ruck contest, with Docker Josh Carr (No. 2) and Roos captain Adam Simpson waiting for the hit-out.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The AFL Commission acknowledges the importance of good corporate governance, which establishes accountability for the Commission and management and provides the policies and procedures for the equitable treatment of the 16 member clubs, recognition of the rights of other stakeholders and the Commission's role as the custodian of Australian Football.

The AFL's corporate governance policies and procedures remain under constant review to ensure they meet the expectation of our member clubs, stakeholders and the community generally.

The role of the AFL Commission

To enable the ongoing prosperity of Australian Football, the Commission is committed to act in the best interests of the AFL to ensure it is properly governed and managed.

To achieve appropriate direction and control, the key role of the AFL Commission is to:

- Protect and enhance the interests of member clubs in the context of the AFL Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- Protect and enhance the interests of the game through national and international development programs and the provision of grants to affiliated bodies to support Australian Football at all levels of the community.
- Through constructive engagement, review, add value to, approve and monitor the strategic direction and objectives.
- Appoint, delegate to, support, evaluate and reward the performance of the CEO and other executives.
- Review, approve and monitor the corporate plan, linked to the strategic objectives.
- Support, review and monitor member clubs' operational and financial performance.
- Oversee risk management and regulatory compliance.
- Monitor the integrity of financial reporting.
- Ensure ethical standards and appropriate behaviours are adhered to, and
- Have transparent reporting and communication with member clubs and other stakeholders.

AN ERA ENDS: Essendon coach Kevin Sheedy (with Adam McPhee and Dustin Fletcher) and former captain James Hird (with Scott Lucas and captain Matthew Lloyd) finished their illustrious careers against the West Coast Eagles at Subiaco Oval.

Board composition

The names of the AFL Commissioners (directors) in office at the date of this statement are given in the Financial Report contained in this document.

The AFL Commission currently comprises seven non-executive Commissioners and the CEO.

The minimum number of Commissioners is six and the maximum is nine and no more than one third of Commissioners can be Executive Commissioners (including the CEO).

Two Commissioners, except the CEO, retire by rotation each year, but may offer themselves for re-election for another term.

All Commissioners are expected to prepare fully for all Commission meetings and to attend as many Commission meetings as possible.

Chairman of the Commission

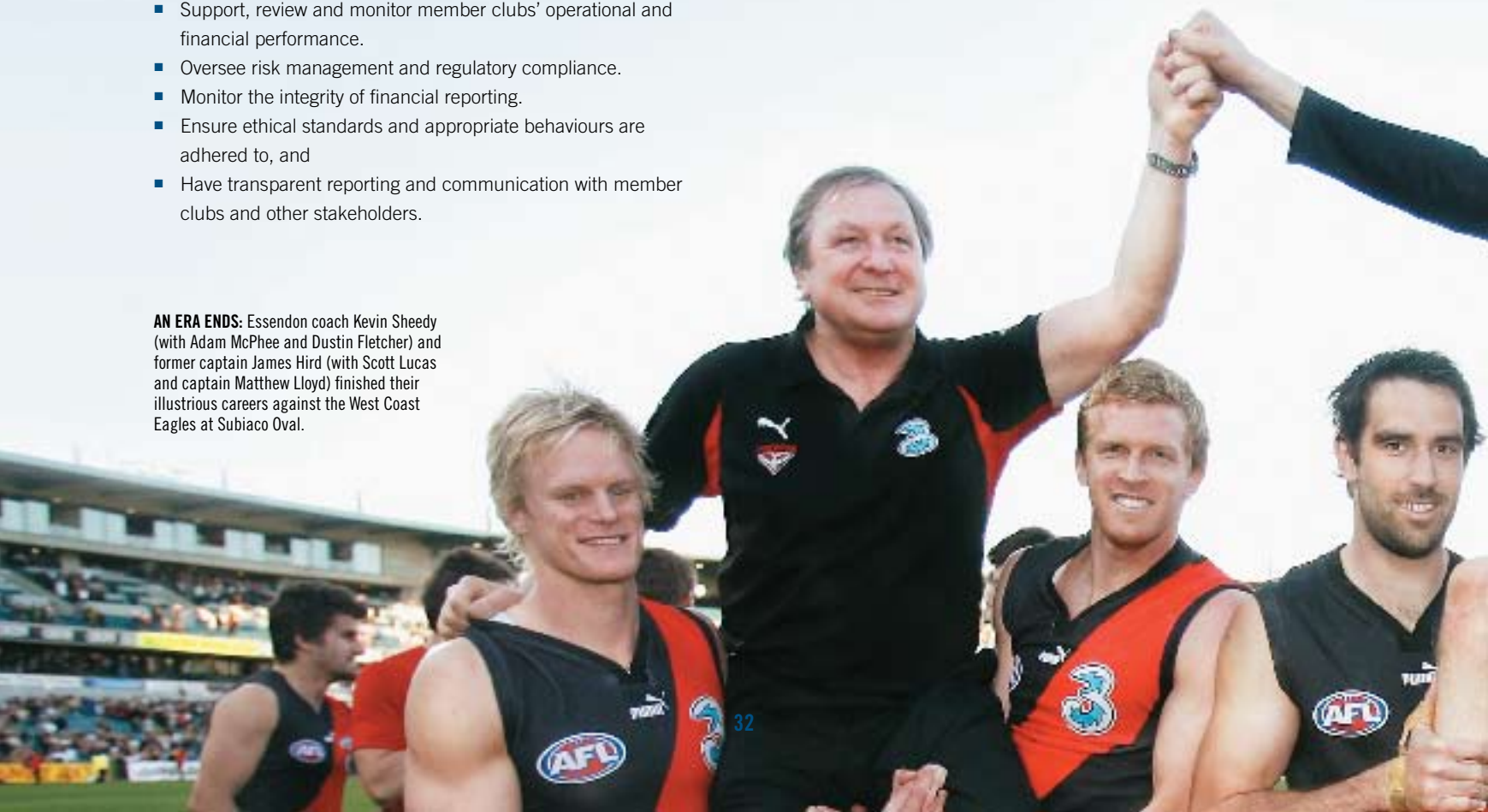
The Commissioners appoint one of the non-executive Commissioners as Chairman of the Commission.

Commissioners' conflict of interest

Commissioners are required to disclose all matters involving the AFL in which they have a material personal interest.

Where a matter that a Commissioner has a material personal interest and a matter relating to that interest is being considered at a Commission meeting, that Commissioner must not:

- Receive papers in relation to the subject.
- Be present while the matter is being discussed, or
- Vote on the matter.



However, the Commissioners who do not have a material personal interest in the matter can pass a resolution that:

- Identifies the Commissioner and details the Commissioner's interest, and
- States that those Commissioners are satisfied that the interest should not disqualify the Commissioner from voting or being present.

Independent professional advice

A Commissioner may seek external advice, at the AFL's expense, provided the Chairman is notified before advice is sought and the advice sought is in relation to the discharge of the Commissioner's responsibilities relating to the governance of the AFL.

Commissioner induction

The Commission has a process by which new Commissioners are provided with executive management briefings and materials and publications regarding the operation of the AFL.

Commission committees

The Commission has established two committees to assist it in the discharge of the Commission's role and responsibilities. However, the Commission has not delegated any of its authority to those committees.

The Commissioners who are members of these committees are outlined in the Financial Report in this document.

A Nominations Committee is also established as a joint initiative with the AFL clubs' chairmen and presidents when new candidates are being considered for the AFL Commission.

The key roles of the Audit and Remuneration committees are:

Audit committee

The audit committee assists the Commission with its responsibilities by monitoring and advising on the:

- Completeness and fairness of the view given by the financial statements of the AFL.
- Integrity of the AFL's accounting and financial reporting, and
- AFL's accounting policies, practices and consistency with accounting standards.

Remuneration committee

The remuneration committee assists the Commission with its responsibilities by monitoring and advising on the:

- Non-executive Commissioner remuneration.
- CEO and Executive remuneration.

Relationship with management

The ultimate responsibility for management and control of the AFL in its totality is vested in the Commissioners who may delegate any powers, under whatever conditions they consider appropriate, to management.

The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the AFL and the implementation of the Commission's strategies, in accordance with Commission delegations, policies and procedures.

One of the Commission's major objectives is to work with management in a professional, productive and harmonious manner for the ongoing prosperity of the AFL.

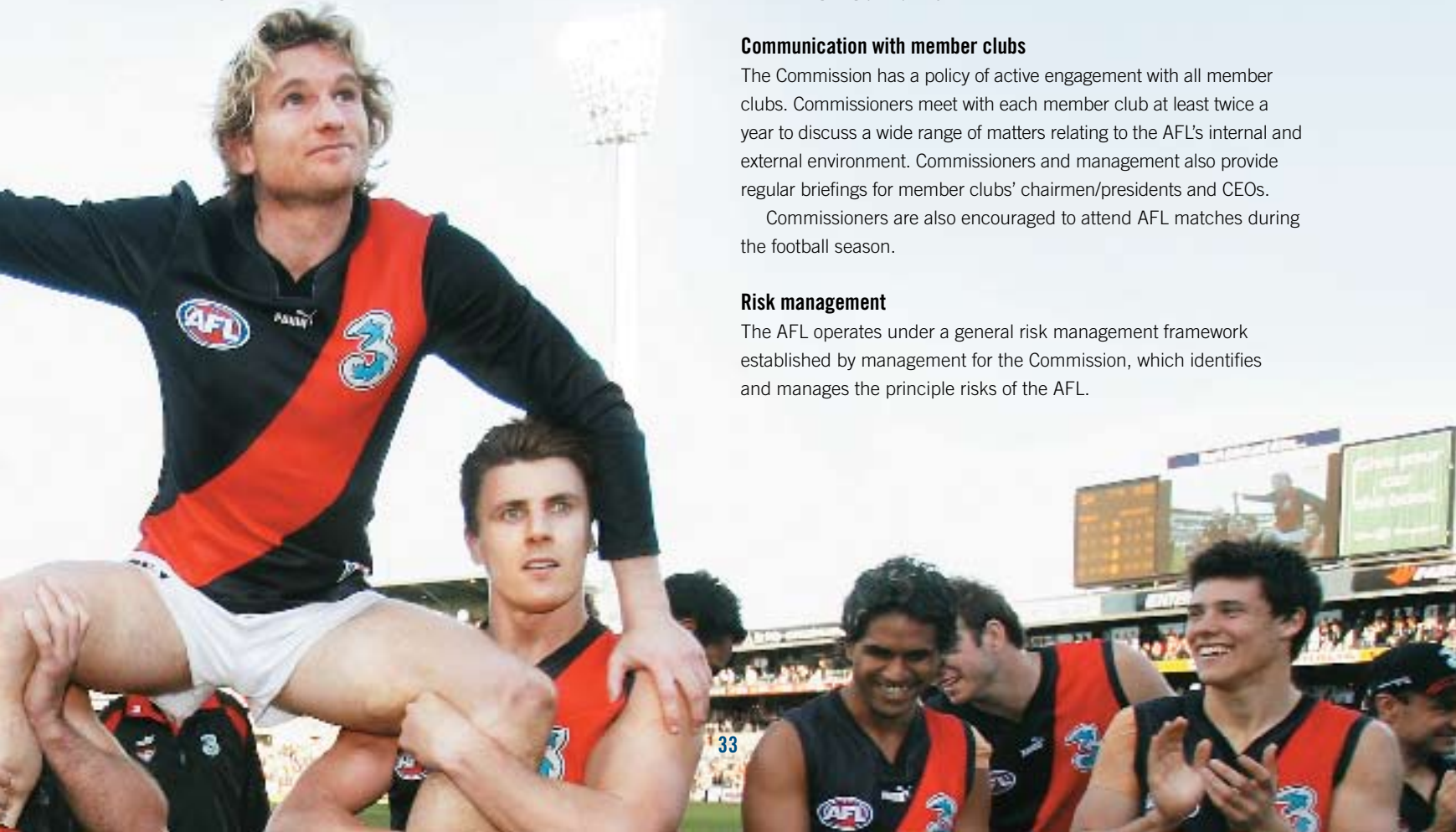
Communication with member clubs

The Commission has a policy of active engagement with all member clubs. Commissioners meet with each member club at least twice a year to discuss a wide range of matters relating to the AFL's internal and external environment. Commissioners and management also provide regular briefings for member clubs' chairmen/presidents and CEOs.

Commissioners are also encouraged to attend AFL matches during the football season.

Risk management

The AFL operates under a general risk management framework established by management for the Commission, which identifies and manages the principle risks of the AFL.



TACKLING DIFFICULT ISSUES

The AFL, in conjunction with the clubs, has a history of tackling major societal issues which impact on Australian Football, footballers, supporters and the wider community.

This philosophy is consistent with one of the key goals of the AFL and clubs, which is to ensure that young men who pursue a career at the elite level of the game not only maximise their potential on the field but also maximise their potential as people off the field.

The AFL competition has not resiled from difficult challenges as evidenced some time ago when the very real issue of racial and religious vilification was confronted in 1995 after Michael Long drew a line in the sand by lodging a complaint after he was racially abused during the Anzac Day match.

A similar stance was taken with the development of the AFL's Respect and Responsibility policy following allegations of sexual assault in 2004 against a few AFL players.

At its heart, the Respect and Responsibility message is about changing attitudes and changing cultures through education.

The work of the AFL and clubs in implementing the Respect and Responsibility policy was recognised this year when the AFL received a VicHealth award in the category 'Mental health and well being' for promoting the fundamental message that any form of violence against women is totally unacceptable.

No matter how many programs we have in place, individuals will still have to make the choices. And the vast majority of AFL players make the right choices.

It is also important to point out that being an AFL footballer does not provide a shield from all the stresses and strains that other young Australians face. It does not shield young men from family dysfunction, mental illness, depression, relationship strains, issues with health – and it doesn't shield them from issues with alcohol or drugs.

Personal conduct, individual responsibility

The off-field behaviour of a small number of players out of the more than 700 on AFL club lists was a challenge which confronted the AFL Commission and several clubs in 2007.

Unfortunately, the actions of a few detracted from the quality contributions of the vast majority of players to their clubs, their community and the game itself.

The development of a new policy to deal with the conduct of individuals began during 2007 at the direction of the AFL Commission and has included consultation with AFL clubs, the AFL Players' Association and a review of similar policies of professional sporting bodies around the world. Advice was also sought from Simon Longstaff, Executive Director of the Sydney-based St James Ethics Centre.

The aim is to have a new policy in place during the 2008 season to deal with the behaviour of all individuals who come under the AFL rules and regulations.

Key objectives identified for this policy include:

- To expand the definition of Conduct Unbecoming, in recognition that players' actions can damage the game and its relationship with supporters and the broader community, even if the action does not breach any criminal or civil laws. This would still allow the AFL to deal with repeated or damaging behaviour, for example inappropriate action during a post-match presentation ceremony or public comments that denigrated umpires.
- To ensure consistency across our competition in the way AFL clubs deal with unacceptable behaviour.
- To formally establish a reporting process for AFL clubs to advise the AFL via the General Manager, Football Operations of an incident which breaches the policy by personnel who come under the AFL Rules and Regulations.
- To upgrade the investigation and security aspects of the AFL by establishing a Professional Standards and Security unit.
- To put the emphasis on individuals to take personal responsibility for their behaviour and choices.

Illicit Drugs Policy

The AFL's Illicit Drugs Policy was also a heavily scrutinised off-field issue during 2007.

Many people did not understand that the AFL has two drug policies – the policy governing performance enhancing drugs which is compliant with the World Anti-Doping Authority, and a new policy aimed at tackling the issue of illicit drug taking by young people.

The AFL is one of the few organisations in this country that runs a policy where the employees, in our case, the players, by agreement with the AFLPA, volunteer to be tested for illicit drugs on non-match days.

This is a complex area requiring a complex response. There is no solution that can totally rid our game or the wider community of the problem of illicit drugs.

Although some critics believe the only solution to this problem is to name and shame players, experts in the frontline of fighting illicit drug use say that naming and shaming is counter-productive to the health and welfare of individuals.

We also believe the public does not support a name and shame approach because the community understands the complexity of the issue and the fact that illicit drug use impacts on a very large number of Australian families, not just sportsmen and not just AFL footballers.

At the time the AFL policy was developed, the AFL was one of only two sports in Australia that had a policy to deal with out-of-competition testing for illicit drugs and the only sport where such a policy was managed by the controlling body.

Whatever shape the Illicit Drugs Policy takes in 2008 and beyond will not mean that illicit drug use will be totally eliminated among

AFL players. Illicit drug use is a major social issue with which governments, police, health authorities and others throughout the world are grappling.

The AFL is committed to seeking the best available advice from health care experts who every day treat people who use illicit drugs and also committed to maintaining as a priority the health and welfare of players.

That is why the policy will continue to be built around the core themes of prevention and education about the dangers of illicit drugs and about providing an intervention when someone ignores the message.

AFL Commission meeting with Eagles

In April, the AFL Commission called a special meeting with representatives of the West Coast Eagles to discuss several incidents of poor behaviour by their players.

The Eagles were represented at the meeting by Chairman Dalton Gooding, CEO Trevor Nisbett, General Manager, Football Operations, Steve Woodhouse, coach John Worsfold and the player leadership group consisting of captain Chris Judd, Darren Glass, Tyson Stenglein, Dean Cox and Andrew Embley.

The AFL Commission accepted an apology from Mr Gooding on behalf of the Eagles to the AFL Commission and all sections of the football community for the behaviour in question.

The Eagles' representatives also outlined several steps taken by the club to address the behavioural issues and in November, 2007, the AFL Commission appointed former Victorian Supreme Court Judge, Justice Bill Gillard, as a special investigator to determine whether the club had undertaken the steps necessary to address the Commission's concerns about the conduct of the club and its players and to report back to the Commission.

Mr Gillard was also asked by the AFL Commission to make recommendations as to how the strategies and programs of the club might be improved to minimise the risk of any inappropriate behaviour.

In undertaking this investigation, Mr Gillard was asked, among other things, to:

- Give consideration to the culture and behaviour of the club's players.
- Make an assessment of the effectiveness of strategies and programs implemented by the club since April 29, 2007, to change the culture and behaviour of the club's players.
- Make an assessment of the effectiveness of the club's corporate governance and of the commitment of its board, senior management and the players, in addressing issues of player conduct.
- Make an assessment of the effectiveness of the club's player leadership group and its role and level of authority since April 29, 2007, in so far as those matters are relevant to the investigation.

Mr Gillard was due to report to the AFL Commission in early 2008.

The West Coast Eagles also conducted their own review and appointed former WA Deputy Premier Hendy Cowan and KPMG Chairman Stephen Scudamore to head the review.

The decision on Ben Cousins

Dealing with matters relating to the conduct of West Coast Eagles player Ben Cousins was a complex issue for the AFL Commission and executive in 2007, as it was for the club.

In March, 2007, the West Coast Eagles indefinitely suspended Cousins. He subsequently entered a drug rehabilitation clinic in the United States of America and after about a month in America, he returned to Perth and continued his rehabilitation.

The Eagles entered into a new contract with him containing various clauses relating to his behaviour and after 16 weeks, he returned to play for the Eagles against the Sydney Swans at Subiaco Oval. His return was supported by the AFL after taking advice from medical experts.

In October, 2007, the Eagles terminated the contract of Cousins for breaching conditions of his contract relating to his behaviour. In November, 2007, the AFL Commission convened to consider whether or not Cousins had breached AFL Rule 1.6 relating to conduct unbecoming.

After receiving submissions from Cousins and his representatives, the AFL Commission found as follows:

- That Cousins had been involved in conduct that was likely to prejudice the reputation and interests of the AFL and to bring the game of football into disrepute.
- That Cousins' entitlement to be a player in the AFL competition, or to be eligible to be drafted onto or included on a club's list, be suspended for 12 months from November, 19, 2007.
- That Cousins must apply in writing to the AFL Commission to be eligible to be drafted onto or included on a club's list in the draft for the 2009 season.
- When determining if Cousins' application is to be granted, the AFL Commission will consider the following:
 - The extent to which Cousins has consulted with, and acted in accordance with the advice of one or more medical experts nominated by the CEO of the AFL to advise in relation to a drug rehabilitation program and drug testing protocols appropriate for Cousins.
 - Whether there has been a relapse by Cousins to drug or substance abuse and the likelihood of any such relapse in the future.
 - Whether the lifting of the suspension is in the best interests of Cousins and/or the AFL.

The AFL hopes that Ben Cousins will continue his rehabilitation and be able to overcome his addiction. That outcome now rests with him.



BROADCASTING AND COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

CHIEF BROADCASTING AND COMMERCIAL OFFICER – GILLON McLACHLAN

Hawthorn vice-captain Luke Hodge in full flight against Adelaide's Brent Reilly in the elimination final at Telstra Dome.
Hodge was one of the Hawks' best in their thrilling win.



BUILDING ON PARTNERSHIPS

The merger of two divisions produced a stellar result with the implementation of new broadcasting arrangements, record pay-TV ratings and revenues and investment of \$14 million in club facilities.

In 2007 the commercial operations division was merged with the broadcasting and major projects division to form the Broadcasting and Commercial Operations Department.

This division has broad responsibilities, including the sale and management of the AFL broadcast and digital media rights, responsibility for all revenue and commercial operations of the AFL, overseeing all major projects including all elite and community-facility developments as well as south-east Queensland, government relations, management of the AFL's investment funds including the Future Fund and facility development reserve.

Highlights of 2007 included:

- Finalisation and implementation of new broadcast arrangements.
- Record ratings for pay-TV and unique online visits.
- Record AFL revenues that exceeded budget for the fourth consecutive year.
- Investment of \$14 million in facilities for AFL clubs.
- Establishment of the Future Fund.
- Finalisation of plans to locate an AFL club on the Gold Coast.
- Major media partnerships with the Seven Network, Network Ten, Foxtel (Fox Sports), News Limited and Telstra.

I thank all the AFL's corporate, government and broadcast partners for their support, in particular our premier partner Toyota. We rely on partnerships in sponsorship and broadcasting and we are fortunate to have the partners and the relationships we have.

Broadcasting

On February 8, 2007, the AFL's new domestic broadcasting rights agreement with Network Ten, the Seven Network and Foxtel was announced. As a result, more people in more locations throughout Australia than ever before had the opportunity to watch AFL matches live or on short turnaround. Under the agreement, Ten and Seven broadcast four Toyota AFL Premiership Season matches per round and had exclusive rights to the Toyota AFL Finals Series and Brownlow Medal count.

The rights to the remaining four Toyota AFL Premiership Season games per round were acquired by Foxtel and broadcast on subscription (pay-TV) platforms Foxtel and Austar via Fox Sports. These generally included the Saturday afternoon, Saturday night, Sunday afternoon and Sunday twilight games. The twilight game was a new timeslot introduced in 2007.

Other highlights of the agreement included:

- All matches involving Adelaide, Brisbane Lions, Fremantle, Port Adelaide, Sydney Swans and West Coast Eagles being broadcast live or on delay on free-to-air television in their home markets.
- Friday night football being televised live on Fox Sports into all metropolitan and regional markets in NSW, ACT and Queensland for the first time, and in prime time on free-to-air in key markets in those regions.
- Saturday night football being broadcast live or on short delay live throughout Queensland every week.
- All Saturday night matches involving the Sydney Swans being broadcast live or on short delay throughout NSW and the ACT.
- Three matches broadcast in full in Victoria on free-to-air television and subscription television on Sunday afternoons for the first time.
- New Sunday twilight timeslot being broadcast live nationally on Fox Sports every week.
- Finals on Friday night and Saturday night being broadcast on free-to-air television no later than 9.30pm in all markets, including NSW and Queensland for the first time.

Audiences

The telecast of the Toyota AFL Grand Final on Network Ten was the most watched television program of any kind in Australia in the five mainland capital cities during 2007, with an average audience of 2.572 million people. Other key ratings:

- The cumulative average audience watching AFL matches each week of the premiership season was 4.97 million people.
- The five most watched matches during the premiership season involved Essendon, Collingwood, Sydney, West Coast Eagles, St Kilda and Adelaide, as follows:
 - Essendon v Collingwood (round 5): average national audience of 1.57 million people.
 - Sydney Swans v Collingwood (round 12): average national audience, 1.3 million.
 - West Coast Eagles v Sydney (round 16): average national audience, 1.2 million.
 - St. Kilda v West Coast Eagles (round 21): average national audience, 1.2 million.
 - Essendon v West Coast Eagles (round 11): average national audience, 1.23 million.
 - Collingwood v Adelaide (round 22): average national audience, 1.18 million.





STRENGTH: St Kilda's Justin Koschitzke marks in front of Eagle Jaymie Graham and over the top of teammate Nick Riewoldt and Darren Glass (No. 23). The Saints won the superb round 12 contest by 23 points and the two teams drew a huge television audience when they met again in round 21.

- On average, 3.29 million people watched AFL finals matches during each week of September in the five mainland capital cities. Another 1.04 million people on average watched each week of the finals in regional Australia.
- A feature of the finals series was the national audience for the Geelong v Collingwood preliminary final which, excluding Grand Finals, was the second most-watched match since the introduction of a new ratings system in 2001. The match attracted an average audience of 1.88 million people in the five mainland capital cities and another 525,000 people in regional markets.

AFL/Telstra BigPond Network

The AFL/Telstra Network continued to be the most popular sports website in Australia with an average of 2.046 million unique browsers per month during the season, an increase of 12 per cent on 2006.

Features of the network in 2007 included full match replays available 12 hours after the final siren, in-quarter and post-quarter highlights, extended match highlights, text and video interviews with players and coaches, the largest online football fantasy competition in Australia (the Coca-Cola Dream Team), the popular NAB AFL tipping competition, the Army Award and the Toyota Mark and Goal of the Year competitions.

The official Collingwood website was again the most popular AFL/Telstra BigPond club website with an average of more than 70,000 unique browsers per month.

Radio audiences

For the first time every match of each club was broadcast live on radio into respective home markets to provide an improved service to supporters.

The ABC, 3AW, Triple M, K-Rock and SEN broadcast matches in Victoria while the ABC also broadcast matches nationally; Triple M broadcast Sydney Swans games into Sydney and Brisbane Lions games into Brisbane; 6PR continued to broadcast matches into the Perth market while 5AA continued as an AFL broadcaster in Adelaide; and the National Indigenous Radio Service provided important coverage into remote communities.

The cumulative average audience for AFL matches on radio each week of the premiership season was 937,000 people.

AFL fixture

The 2008 AFL fixture was the second prepared using software provided by Optimal Planning Solutions, a Canadian-based company specialising in sports scheduling, with clients including the National Football League, National Basketball League and Arena Football League. The company's proprietary software has reduced the amount of time it takes the AFL to prepare the fixture, from three months to about four weeks.

The software enabled the AFL to:

- Schedule the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final rematch (Port Adelaide v Geelong) as part of the opening round of the 2008 Toyota AFL Premiership Season.
- Base the opponent distribution on the ladder at the end of the home and away season, instead of round 15, as has previously been the case.
- Eliminate back-to-back trips involving travel to Perth or Darwin.
- Reduce the number of consecutive travel weekends to five in total, the lowest since Fremantle entered the competition in 1995.
- Remove the requirement for all AFL teams to play each other once by round 15. The only constraint is that no two clubs can play each other twice within seven rounds.
- Provide a minimum number of free-to-air matches for all Victorian clubs (10).

Corporate partners

The AFL was delighted to be associated with several leading companies in Australian business and industry in 2007, including:

- Toyota Motor Corporation Australia
- Foster's Australia
- National Australia Bank
- Coca-Cola
- Qantas
- Intercontinental Hotels Group
- Medibank Private
- Origin Energy
- Sony Computer Entertainment
- Caltex
- Rebel Sport
- Defence Force Recruiting
- Sherrin
- Kellogg's
- City of Melbourne
- Tabcorp
- Betfair
- Cadbury
- Hungry Jack's
- Smith's Snackfoods
- Campbell's
- Sony Electronics
- Tattersall's Limited
- Pedigree





RELIVING PAST GLORIES: Premiership players from previous years, including (left) Charlie Sutton (Bulldogs' 1954 captain-coach) and Jude Bolton and Paul Williams (Sydney Swans 2005) and (right) Drew Banfield (West Coast Eagles 1994 and 2006), Glen Jakovich (West Coast Eagles 1992 and 1994) and Jason Ball (West Coast Eagles 1994 and Sydney Swans 2005) were part of the pre-game entertainment at the Toyota AFL Grand Final.

Toyota Motor Corporation Australia

Toyota concluded its fourth year as title sponsor of the AFL Premiership Season, AFL Finals Series and Grand Final, Toyota AFL Mark and Goal of the Year, the Brownlow Medal function and key events in support of AFL Grand Final Week.

We look forward to this partnership extending and growing through the 2008 Toyota AFL Premiership Season. Toyota's partner integration and active leverage of the relationship was embodied through:

- The extension of the Great Moments in Football advertising campaign with two new commercials in 2007 featuring Tony Lockett and Francis Bourke.
- Ongoing development of the 'Good for Footy' program with all goals kicked during 'Toyota Time' on Friday night broadcasts raising more than \$300,000 for grassroots football clubs in country Victoria and southern NSW.
- Provision of vehicles to support major Grand Final Week activity including the Toyota AFL Grand Final Parade and Toyota AFL Grand Final Retiring Legends Motorcade.
- A growing commitment to engage and interact with AFL fans via the Toyota AFL Grand Final Week Live site at Federation Square.

Toyota has been an outstanding partner of the AFL in every sense.

Foster's Australia

As the longest-serving corporate partner of the AFL, it was encouraging to see this partnership extended in 2007, with confirmation of another five-year commitment to the AFL competition until the end of the 2011 season.

Carlton Draught is the beer behind footy and we look forward

to working with Foster's in coming years to maintain that brand association with our game at all levels nationally.

Key highlights of the Foster's-AFL partnership included:

- Carlton Draught leveraging the association by hosting the Carlton Draught Club Player of the Year award in the online environment.
 - Crown Lager sponsoring the 'Brownlow After Party', which continues to grow as an event on football's night of nights.
 - Carlton Draught presenting key musical act Jet on Grand Final Day.
- Foster's association with the code extended in 2007 with many AFL clubs benefiting from the company's continued support, as do many state affiliates and regional leagues.

Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola remained a strong supporter of football at all levels and it continued to support activities from grassroots through to the elite level. In 2007, Coca-Cola supported 15 of the 16 AFL clubs in addition to its partnership with the AFL.

Coca-Cola refocused its efforts in leveraging the Powerade brand via the AFL. Coke Zero maintained a relationship with the AFL by taking over the naming rights to the Dream Team property on afl.com.au.

Events highlights for 2007 included naming rights sponsorship for September's Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team and the Grand Final After-Match concert at Federation Square, attended by more than 10,000 people and featuring the band Evermore.

National Australia Bank

NAB continued its long association with the AFL in 2007 with an ongoing focus on identifying and developing the next generation of AFL players.



KEY EVENTS: Geelong coach Mark Thompson, flanked by former Cat Billy Brownless, hoists the 2007 premiership cup at the post-Grand Final function at Federation Square; the Brownlow Medal count; Hawthorn's Lance Franklin interviewed by Network Ten's Andrew Maher after helping the Hawks to an elimination final win over Adelaide, and Collingwood breaking its banner before the Anzac Day match against Essendon, the home and away season's highest rating television game.

This program starts in the earliest days via NAB AFL Auskick, through the successful NAB AFL Rising Stars program and culminates in young players making their AFL debut via the NAB Cup.

It was encouraging for the NAB and the AFL to see Auskick registrations exceed a record 161,000.

Key event activity for NAB in 2007 included:

- The launch of the successful 'Gimme dat thing' advertising campaign.
- Major signage and activation involvement with all games played at Gold Coast Stadium.
- A major pre-game focus on the NAB Cup Grand Final between Carlton and the Brisbane Lions.
- The annual NAB AFL Auskick celebrity match (played at the MCG in 2007).
- Delivery of the NAB AFL Auskick Grand Final program that brought 94 Auskick participants to Melbourne for AFL Grand Final Week.

Qantas

Qantas was again the official airline of the AFL and it continued as the principal partner of several AFL Indigenous programs, including the Qantas AFLPA Marn Grook Award and the Qantas AFL Kickstart Program.

The Qantas AFL Kickstart Camp is part of Qantas' community program – *Sharing the Spirit*. In 2007, this camp brought together 50 Indigenous footballers from around Australia to Melbourne in August to participate in a week-long series of activities including:

- Training sessions with AFL coaching staff.
- Tours of AFL World and the MCG.
- Playing a match on the MCG as a curtain-raiser to the Friday night match between Collingwood and Melbourne.
- Team-building and personal development activities with the involvement of AFL players and other Indigenous community role models including Qantas ambassador Cathy Freeman.

Defence Force Recruiting

The AFL was delighted to form an association with Defence Force Recruiting in 2007, which actively engaged with football fans, match attendees and viewers to highlight the career options with the Army, Air Force and Navy.

The creation of the AFL Army Award was a public recognition of a player who demonstrated the key elements of life in the Army – courage, teamwork and initiative.

We look forward to extending this partnership into the future.

Events and Hospitality

The AFL's Events and Hospitality Department enjoyed another successful year. The department is divided into four areas: match-day functions, major events, the Premiership Club and Grand Final week events.

Match-Day Functions

Official pre-match functions were held during the NAB Cup, Toyota AFL Premiership Season and the Toyota AFL Finals matches.

Some 1330 guests were entertained at seven functions in four different locations around Australia during the NAB Cup.

During the home and away season, some 3900 guests were entertained at Telstra Dome and the MCG. A Telstra Stadium match in Sydney was added to our schedule, which was well received.

The AFL held 31 official functions at each of the finals matches around the country, catering for 7500 guests.

Major Events

The AFL's season launch, Australian Football Hall of Fame induction dinner, NAB Rising Star, Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian and Brownlow Medal dinner were delivered at an extremely high standard and received extensive media coverage.

The Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian presentation dinner had a complete revamp in 2007 with a new logo and new format for selecting the team. These changes created more suspense and excitement around the event, which was broadcast live by Fox Sports. The new format will continue in 2008.

As always the Brownlow Medal dinner was a highlight of the year. Thanks to Crown and the Seven Network for their support in making the event an outstanding success.

In September, the department organised 29 functions and events for more than 16,000 guests.

Grand Final Week Events

The Toyota AFL Grand Final Week Live Site at Federation Square had unprecedented attendances despite the threat of bad weather. A total of 212,500 fans visited the site, up 31 per cent from 161,700 visitors in 2006.

This was due to an increase in the quality and quantity of activities and stage presentations, the addition of a Friday night dusk concert with The Cat Empire performing live, and an extension of the site to include Grand Final Day.

The department was responsible for the Grand Final Parade and the Grand Final pre-match entertainment. The parade has become a great tradition in the City of Melbourne and was no exception in 2007. An estimated crowd of 80,000 people turned out to see the two competing clubs, Geelong and Port Adelaide.

Grand Final day pre-match entertainment took a different direction. It was well received but we will continue to refine and improve the entertainment offered on Grand Final day.

The Seriously Party, a joint venture between the AFL and Network Ten, enabled footballers and TV personalities to come together for the great social night of the year. The mystery location of Melbourne Film Studios lent itself perfectly to the 'Cirque De Nuit' theme.

September Club, our corporate partners village, was the place to be on Grand Final day. Some 1500 guests attended this year, up 250 from the previous year. Guests enjoyed lunchtime hospitality, tickets to the big game and evening drinks after the game with entertainment from the band Birtles Shorrock Goble.

Centre Square was an AFL initiative in 2007 and we worked with the clubs to build a corporate hospitality village. More than 4000 guests enjoyed premium hospitality, tickets to the game and a post-match concert with Birtles Shorrock Goble and Jet.

Premiership Club

Memberships in The Premiership Club increased from 283 to 313 in 2007. The introduction of the new online booking system improved the booking process for members.

The Lounge Bar was added, giving members the opportunity to sit in a more relaxed atmosphere.

We continued to strengthen our relationship with Sanctuary Lakes and Sandhurst golf courses, which proved a popular addition

to the membership package. Most members took up the opportunity of exclusive reciprocal rights at both courses.

Consumer products

Retail sales of AFL licensed product in 2007 reached an estimated \$150 million through more than 20,000 unique products.

The strongest growth was in the apparel area, with sales of on-field apparel up 29 per cent and other supporter wear up 12 per cent.

More than 35,000 copies of a DVD featuring Geelong's win in the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final were sold, making it the leading sports DVD in Australia for the year.

Christmas decorations carrying AFL club logos were a new product line in 2007 and proved popular, with more than 20,000 packs being sold.

A new AFL Store opened at Karrinyup in Western Australia, bringing to 17 the number of stores in the group in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria.

Geoff Slattery Publishing

Geoff Slattery Publishing (GSP), the AFL's contracted publishing arm, produced a wide range of publications for the AFL throughout 2007. These included the AFL's weekly game-day publication, the *AFL Record*, and several special publications to commemorate farewells, achievements and milestones.

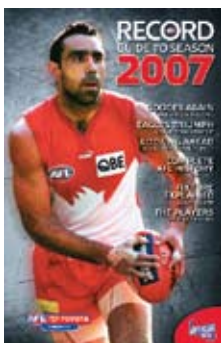
The flagship continued to be the *AFL Record*, which enjoyed solid sales and readership figures while advertising sales figures were at record levels.

Advertising grew with the 2007 figure a record, representing a 14.7 per cent increase on 2006.

The 2007 *AFL Grand Final Record* achieved a significant increase on game-day sales compared to 2006. Sales were up 19.7 per cent on the 2006 figure.

AFL JSquad, aimed at supporters aged 7-13, enjoyed another successful year, its third since being launched in 2005.

The biggest publication undertaken by GSP in 2007 was *The Australian Game of Football*, which will be released in March, 2008, to celebrate the game's 150th year. The book provides a complete account of the game's rich history and brings to life in words and pictures the influential figures who drove Australian Football in the early days.



IN DEMAND: Official AFL publications including the *AFL Record Guide to Season 2007*, *AFL JSquad* and the *AFL Record* were again well received by football fans.



DEDICATION: Collingwood fans responded to their team's strong season, with the Magpies attracting 603,881 people to their games, the most among the 16 clubs.

Attendances

An attendance record for the Toyota AFL Premiership Season of 6,475,521 people was set in 2007, up 3 per cent on the previous record of 6,283,788 established in 2005.

Compared with the 2006 total, the 2007 attendance increased 4.4 per cent, or 271,465 people.

Total attendance for the Toyota AFL Finals Series was 574,424, up 8 per cent on the 2006 total of 532,178.

Across all official AFL matches – NAB Cup, regional challenge games, Toyota AFL Premiership Season and Toyota AFL Finals Series – crowds totalled 7,402,846, an increase of more than 214,000 on the previous record of 7,188,585 set in 2005.

The top five clubs in terms of their average attendance per home game were:

- Collingwood 54,898
- Essendon 52,294
- Adelaide 41,992
- Carlton 41,583
- West Coast Eagles 40,791

The highlights of attendance by venue included:

- 45 premiership season games at the MCG attended by 2,123,400 people at an average of 47,187 per game.
- 46 premiership season games at Telstra Dome attended by 1,674,219 people at an average of 36,396 per game.
- Three Sydney Swans home games at Telstra Stadium drew 190,177 people at an average of 63,392 per game.
- 22 premiership season games at Subiaco Oval were attended by 860,916 people at an average of 39,133 per game.
- 22 premiership season games at AAMI Stadium were attended by 768,482 people at an average of 34,931 per game.

Ticketing

Nationally the AFL generates more than 6.4 million tickets per annum, across 12 key venues with multiple ticketing and membership programs. About 58 per cent of all ticket volume is delivered through the two major Victorian venues, the MCG and Telstra Dome.

For 2007, general admission prices did not increase and prices remained at \$18.50 for adults and \$11 for concessions, with juniors remaining at the 2004 price of \$2.20 (all including GST).

The AFL's strategic objective is to make games affordable to the community with a fast, efficient and easy process to obtain tickets.

Under the *Next Generation* strategy announced in 2006, the AFL has agreed to keep general admission prices as low as possible, ensuring the game remains affordable and accessible for supporters.

Club Membership

For the seventh consecutive year, AFL clubs secured a record level of membership with a total of 532,697, a 2.6 per cent increase on the previous record tally of 519,126 set in 2006. One in 39 Australians was a member of an AFL club in 2007.

Attendances by venue, 2006-2007

Venue	2007 games	2007 Attendance	2007 Average	2006 games	2006 Attendance	2006 Average
Telstra Dome	46	1,674,219	36,396	50	1,737,125	34,743
AAMI Stadium	22	768,482	34,931	22	766,831	34,856
Gabba	12	340,033	28,336	12	340,470	28,373
Manuka Oval	2	25,783	12,892	3	34,024	11,341
TIO Stadium	1	11,449	11,449	1	14,100	14,100
MCG	45	2,123,400	47,187	39	1,768,641	45,350
Gold Coast Stadium	3	33,958	11,319	2	20,573	10,287
SCG	8	201,776	25,222	9	273,617	30,402
Skilled Stadium	8	175,718	21,965	8	177,700	22,213
Subiaco	22	860,916	39,133	22	850,438	38,656
Aurora Stadium	4	69,610	17,403	5	85,539	17,108
Telstra Stadium	3	190,177	63,392	3	134,998	44,999
Total	176	6,475,521	36,793	176	6,204,056	35,250

Home game attendance by club, 2006-2007

Club	2007 Attendance	2007 Average	2006 Attendance	2006 Average	Variance
Adelaide	461,910	41,992	467,002	42,455	-1.09%
Brisbane Lions	317,325	28,848	314,929	28,630	0.76%
Carlton	457,418	41,584	370,495	33,681	23.46%
Collingwood	603,881	54,898	581,718	52,883	3.81%
Essendon	575,232	52,294	465,665	42,333	23.53%
Fremantle	412,213	37,474	402,255	36,569	2.48%
Geelong	347,016	31,547	301,703	27,428	15.02%
Hawthorn	365,052	33,187	308,204	28,019	18.45%
Kangaroos	308,850	28,077	262,355	23,850	17.72%
Melbourne	324,903	29,537	379,720	34,520	-14.44%
Port Adelaide	306,572	27,870	299,829	27,257	2.25%
Richmond	420,807	38,255	469,712	42,701	-10.41%
St Kilda	417,135	37,921	389,637	35,422	7.06%
Sydney Swans	391,953	35,632	376,859	34,260	4.01%
West Coast Eagles	448,703	40,791	448,183	40,744	0.12%
Western Bulldogs	316,551	28,777	365,790	33,254	-13.46%
Total	6,475,521	36,793	6,204,056	35,250	4.38%

Attendance summary, 2006-2007

	2007	2006	Variance	% Variance
NAB Regional Challenge	108,417	91,055	17,362	19.1%
NAB Cup	244,484	235,018	9,466	4.0%
Toyota AFL Premiership Season	6,475,521	6,204,056	271,465	4.4%
Toyota AFL Finals Series	574,424	532,178	42,246	7.9%
Total Attendances	7,402,846	7,062,307	340,539	4.8%



THE HANDOVER: Aerialist Lindsey Butcher from Brighton, England, about to pass the premiership cup to AFL Commission Chairman Mike Fitzpatrick during the pre-game entertainment on Toyota AFL Grand Final day.

Ten clubs posted increases on their 2006 figures: Adelaide, Carlton, Collingwood, Essendon, Fremantle, Hawthorn, Melbourne, Richmond, West Coast Eagles and the Western Bulldogs. Adelaide was the only club to have broken through the 50,000-member mark (as it did in 2006) with a total of 50,976.

Fremantle posted an increase of 21.5 per cent to 43,343 members, while Carlton increased its membership by 23.2 per cent to 35,431. Hawthorn, Melbourne and the Western Bulldogs enjoyed membership growth in excess of 10 per cent.

Eleven clubs – Adelaide, Carlton, Collingwood, Essendon, Fremantle, Geelong, Hawthorn, Port Adelaide, Richmond, St Kilda and the West Coast Eagles – recorded membership bases of more than 30,000.

AFL Membership

AFL Membership continued to grow in 2007 with a total membership of 46,871. The breakdown included 30,272 taking full membership, 14,162 silver membership and 2437 absentee members. AFL Members taking club support memberships now represent 7.4 per cent of the total club membership nationally.

The AFL Membership renewal rate for 2007 was 95 per cent, which was comparable with 2006. In addition, more than 3000 supporters became new AFL members in 2007.

In November, 2006, the AFL Membership Service Centre moved to a purpose-built facility within Telstra Dome. The move has proved successful, resulting in improvements in all areas of membership administration in 2007, including a membership service reception, inbound and outbound mail area handling 100,000 mail pieces, production facilities for 60,000 cards, integrated database management and a call centre managing more than 50,000 inbound calls per year.

Membership Shared Services

The Membership Shared Services operation continued to expand in 2007 with four clubs part of the initiative – the Western Bulldogs, St Kilda, Melbourne and North Melbourne. Each successfully converted to the Archtics membership system, which significantly improved their ability to manage and interact with members.

Stadium projects

Major stadium developments in Adelaide, Sydney, Perth and the Gold Coast with a combined investment of more than \$1 billion were key priorities for the AFL and the respective venue managers in 2007. The AFL continued to provide world-class facilities for AFL spectators, players, broadcasters, sponsors and other sections of the media.

The major project to emerge in 2007 was the proposed development by the West Australian Government of a new \$850 million multi-purpose stadium in Perth.

A task force appointed by the West Australian Government recommended development of the stadium.

Late in the year at a meeting convened in Perth by Western Australia Minister for Sport, John Kobelke, with the AFL including CEO Andrew Demetriou, representatives of the West Coast Eagles and Fremantle football clubs, the West Australian Football Commission and the West Australian Government, broad agreement was reached.

AFL Club Support Membership, 2007

Club	AFL Club Support Adults	AFL Club Support Concessions	AFL Club Support Juniors	Total AFL Club Supports	% of Total
Adelaide	368	45	36	449	1.14
Brisbane Lions	500	74	53	627	1.59
Carlton	4,060	646	712	5,418	13.73
Collingwood	6,875	920	1,310	9,105	23.07
Essendon	4,769	600	759	6,128	15.53
Fremantle	91	10	11	112	0.28
Geelong	2,253	370	283	2,906	7.36
Hawthorn	1,804	244	235	2,283	5.79
Kangaroos	1,316	162	216	1,694	4.29
Melbourne	1,376	214	177	1,767	4.48
Port Adelaide	135	13	16	164	0.42
Richmond	2,937	314	647	3,898	9.88
St Kilda	1,919	249	343	2,511	6.36
Sydney Swans	564	86	75	725	1.84
West Coast Eagles	244	17	31	292	0.74
Western Bulldogs	1,055	155	173	1,383	3.50
Totals	30,266	4,119	5,077	39,462	100.00

AFL Club Membership, 2007

Club	Adults	Concessions	Juniors	Total Members at 30/06/07	% variance on 2006
Adelaide	40,421	3,780	6,775	50,976	1.67%
West Coast Eagles	33,844	5,886	6,219	45,949	4.10%
Fremantle	30,777	3,978	8,588	43,343	21.52%
Collingwood	27,335	3,485	7,767	38,587	1.44%
Carlton	23,874	3,147	8,410	35,431	23.21%
Port Adelaide	27,378	1,995	4,700	34,073	-4.42%
Essendon	24,343	3,751	4,665	32,759	0.76%
Hawthorn	21,166	2,462	7,436	31,064	10.93%
St Kilda	20,566	3,185	6,643	30,394	-5.98%
Geelong	19,505	4,290	6,374	30,169	-6.57%
Richmond	18,346	3,153	8,545	30,044	2.17%
Sydney Swans	20,177	3,761	4,826	28,764	-5.33%
Western Bulldogs	18,575	3,490	6,660	28,725	10.30%
Melbourne	19,940	2,196	5,941	28,077	13.68%
Kangaroos	14,473	2,103	5,790	22,366	-9.17%
Brisbane Lions	17,089	2,219	2,668	21,976	-16.94%
Totals	377,809	52,881	102,007	532,697	2.60%

Major points of the agreement reached late in 2007 included:

- The best solution for sport and the community in Western Australia was to build a new 60,000-seat multi-purpose stadium.
- Football would be the primary user and would have priority access rights at the new stadium.
- The stadium would be governed by an independent trust appointed by the State Government, ensuring that the interests of sport were maintained.
- The decision on location rested with the State Government.
- A working group under the joint leadership of Alastair Bryant (WA Department of Sport and Recreation) and Gillon McLachlan (AFL) would convene to formalise a detailed agreement by March, 2008.

Adelaide

The SANFL is proposing to redevelop AAMI Stadium to ensure it remains the pre-eminent venue for football in South Australia. In 2007 the SANFL engaged consultants to develop a stadium master plan, which proposes several improvements to AAMI Stadium, including:

- Upgrade of public amenities.
- Improved access and egress in and around the stadium.
- Improved public transport.
- Better connectivity with adjacent West Lakes Mall.
- Upgrade of corporate dining facilities.

For the redevelopment to proceed, funding must be obtained, which is a key objective for the industry in South Australia in 2008.

Geelong

Geelong Football Club secured funding of \$14 million from the Federal Government, \$6 million from the Victorian Government and \$2 million from the City of Greater Geelong for the next stage of the redevelopment of Skilled Stadium.

The AFL agreed to contribute \$3 million to the project, which will have a total cost of \$28 million and include an additional 3500 seats, new administration facilities for Geelong, a high-performance gymnasium, additional spectator facilities for the disabled and new and expanded dining facilities.

Work on the next stage of the redevelopment is expected to start after the 2008 season.

Sydney

Work started on a \$70 million project by the SCG Trust to build a new multi-tiered grandstand, replacing seating on Yabba's Hill and the Doug Walters Stand at the SCG, home of the Sydney Swans.

The capacity of the SCG will be increased to 47,000 when the work is completed in November, 2008.

Up to 4800 new concourse seats will be available for Swans home games in 2008. When completed, the Hill Grandstand will also include a large food court, escalator entry and dining rooms.

The redevelopment will include extending the playing surface in length by three metres, taking the goal-to-goal length to 152 metres.

The upgrade of the SCG will also include \$2.5 million to replace the light towers and significantly upgrade the quality of lighting for players, spectators and television audiences.

The SCG Trust secured \$25 million from the Federal Government for the redevelopment, to which the AFL is also contributing.





MAJOR PROJECTS: Artists' impressions of proposed stadium projects in Perth (Subiaco), Sydney (SCG, which is under construction), Geelong (Skilled Stadium) and the Gold Coast (Carrara).
MAIN IMAGE: A wide shot of Subiaco Oval taken during the round five Fremantle-Adelaide match.

Gold Coast

A master plan for the redevelopment of Gold Coast Stadium at Carrara was completed during the past year by the Gold Coast City Council, in conjunction with the AFL and HOK sports architects.

Under the master plan, Gold Coast Stadium would have a capacity of 25,000 seats as well as new player, corporate, media and venue management facilities.

The design would also allow other sports and forms of entertainment to use the stadium, as well as the proposed AFL club to be based on the Gold Coast.

Estimated cost of the redevelopment is \$200 million.

Club facilities

Several AFL clubs are redeveloping their training and administrative facilities. The AFL is a funding partner for all clubs undertaking these projects and is working closely with all clubs to obtain a positive outcome. Following is a summary of the status of various club redevelopments:

- Carlton (MC Labour Park) – schematic design and planning documentation complete; expected completion in 2009.
- Richmond (Punt Road Oval) – schematic design phase currently being undertaken; expected completion in 2009.
- St Kilda (Frankston Oval) – recently announced the move of its training and administrative facilities to Frankston Oval; expected completion in 2010.
- Western Bulldogs (Whitten Oval) – construction has started and progressing well; expected completion mid-2008.
- Sydney Swans (SCG) – commenced renovation of change rooms; expected completion in 2008.



PLANNING FOR GROWTH

The AFL was involved in a host of major projects to build the code and support the clubs.

Major Projects

The AFL Commission and executive identified 19 major projects for 2007. The Strategic Planning and Club Support team played a key role in most of these projects, predominately new markets/national expansion, new business development and providing support for clubs and state bodies.

New Markets

In 2006, as part of the *Next Generation* strategy, the AFL allocated more than \$20 million to growing the game into new markets of south-east Queensland and greater western Sydney over the period 2007-11. The strategy team was heavily involved in driving the market development plans for these regions.

Gold Coast

The implementation of a broad market development strategy for the Gold Coast began in 2007. Three Toyota AFL Premiership Season matches and two NAB Cup games were held at Gold Coast Stadium, Carrara, as part of the agreement with the Kangaroos to play nine home games on the Gold Coast from 2007-09.

The games were well attended, with the average crowd exceeding 11,000 in a stadium with limited capacity. AFL Gold Coast memberships exceeded 1700 and TV audiences for Friday night free-to-air broadcasts increased. The AFL and Kangaroos jointly delivered significant community-based programs, and participation in Australian Football increased by 46 per cent to 11,744 in this region.

To assist the AFL in understanding the opportunities in south-east Queensland, a group of influential local business, football and government people formed the AFL Gold Coast advisory group. Chaired by prominent local businessman John Witherhiff, the advisory group presented an independent submission to the AFL Commission debating the case for a permanent AFL team on the Gold Coast. The advisory group reported that:

- The Gold Coast was a strong and growing economy and population centre.
- AFL on the Gold Coast was thriving, at participation and consumer level.
- The Gold Coast was right for the AFL, and the AFL was right for the Gold Coast.
- Local ownership was critical to success of a team.
- A redeveloped stadium was required.
- The Gold Coast market could sustain required revenue levels of a competitive AFL licence.

- Long-term engagement of the Gold Coast community was critical, including constructing a social, economic and environmental agenda.
- Establishing a new club required a heavily resourced, multi-year start-up phase.

A \$100 million package was offered to the Kangaroos to relocate to the Gold Coast in time for the 2012 season. The Kangaroos declined this offer, and will pursue a new strategy for success in Melbourne. The process for establishing a new 17th licence for the Gold Coast now begins, and will form a major body of work in 2008.

Strong relationships continued to be built with Gold Coast City Council, Queensland Government and local business and football communities.

Western Sydney

The department worked with AFL (NSW/ACT) and independent consultants to review the opportunity for the AFL to further grow into greater western Sydney.

The key findings of the review were that the region:

- Had a large and growing population – more than 1.8 million people currently reside in greater western Sydney, with that number predicted to grow by a further 250,000 over the next 10 years.
- Was a strong commercial market – more than 150 of the top 500 companies in Australia were located in greater western Sydney.
- Had existing infrastructure – Telstra Stadium, Showgrounds and Blacktown Olympic Park could provide required levels of stadium and club infrastructure.
- Had growing demand – there was increasing demand for AFL across Sydney at both consumer and participation levels.
- Presented significant opportunity for AFL industry in expanding into greater western Sydney.
- Required community affiliation.

A more detailed market development plan for Western Sydney is being prepared.

Competition Structure

The push for establishing new licences for the Gold Coast and western Sydney presents challenges to the AFL competition as it expands from 16 to 17 or 18 clubs. A major project for the strategy team was the development of the business case for this expansion, including implications for fixturing, finances, the NAB AFL Draft and player access rules, media and commercial considerations.

New Business Development

The department continued to work closely with the AFL's Commercial Operations Department to identify and analyse new business development opportunities.

Some of the major issues currently being addressed include:

- Future models for sponsorship and signage.
- Opportunities for new ticketing and membership models.
- Developing media assets and integration between media businesses.
- Major review of AFL finals business and growth opportunities.
- Major stadium developments.

Support for AFL clubs and State Bodies

The Strategic Planning and Club Support team worked closely with a number of AFL clubs and state bodies on specific major projects, including:

- Redevelopment options for AAMI Stadium with the SANFL.
- The second-tier review with AFL Victoria.
- A joint market development plan for Hawthorn and AFL Tasmania.
- Strategic planning for AFL Tasmania.
- Strategic planning for Port Adelaide and Melbourne.

Strategic Partnership Fund

The Strategic Partnership Fund exists to co-fund joint projects between the AFL and clubs that contribute to growth and improvement across the industry.

In 2007, the AFL Commission approved \$1.75 million in funding for more than 20 projects that involved all 16 clubs and were grouped into three broad streams:

1. Finance and commercial.
2. Membership and customer management.
3. Community and fan development.

Some of the highlight projects included:

Finance and Commercial

- Richmond worked with specialist fundraising consultant DVA Navion to develop new fundraising strategies that the club forecasts would significantly increase its fundraising revenue, and help finance Punt Road facility upgrades.
- The Victorian-based AFL clubs conducted a major benchmarking review of the performance of the 19 AFL club gaming businesses.
- A five-day course for senior AFL staff and for the next wave of AFL and AFL club leaders was developed with Mt Eliza Business School.
- The Gould Group worked with a number of Victorian-based AFL clubs to reduce water consumption by more than 25 per cent.



IMPORTANT MARKET: Kangaroo Josh Gibson outruns Carlton's Andrew Carrazzo in a game on the Gold Coast, where the AFL is implementing a broad development strategy.

Membership and Customer Management

Through a series of industry pilot programs involving 12 clubs, the AFL identified a model which would allow clubs to engage with their supporter bases and improve retention of members. Key programs included the following:

- St Kilda identified an avenue to engage with non-member supporters via a web-based program called Saints Central that will provide fans with unique content and networking experiences.
- Port Adelaide conducted a large-scale research program to challenge the traditional mix of membership products, with the recommendations being rolled out for the 2009 season. The aim will be to retain a greater amount of members via more tailored packages and by appealing to non-member supporters.
- Melbourne Football Club discovered a new way to segment and profile its membership database, leading to more targeted and successful marketing campaigns.
- Facing capacity constraints, West Coast Eagles developed new membership products to service more of their fan base.

Community and Fan Development

- The Western Bulldogs worked with local primary schools, AFL Victoria and the Victoria University of Technology to develop the Bulldogs Friendly Schools (BFS) program to take the Bulldogs and AFL to diverse school communities in Melbourne's western suburbs.
- Melbourne developed a program tailored for Chinese students studying in Melbourne.
- Essendon worked with the Centre for Adolescent Health to review and upgrade the 'On The Ball' youth leadership program for secondary school students.
- West Coast Eagles, Fremantle and the West Australian Football Commission developed a website to connect school teachers to a range of AFL programs.



FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

GENERAL MANAGER – ADRIAN ANDERSON

Carlton's Brendan Fevola won front position in this marking contest against Collingwood's Simon Prestigiacomo during their round seven match at the MCG, which the Magpies won by 24 points.



RULES MAKE THEIR MARK

More contested marks and possessions on show as the game retains the attraction so appealing to spectators.

The primary responsibility of the AFL Football Operations Department is the delivery of the elite AFL competition – across the pre-season NAB Cup and NAB Challenge, the Toyota AFL Premiership Season and our showcase matches in the Toyota AFL Finals Series.

The Football Operations Department has headed extensive research into the game in recent years, seeking to ensure the game is played in a continuous manner while retaining its traditional highlights.

Coaches and players are to be congratulated for the exciting and high standard of football they produced for the public in 2007.

In recent seasons, the Laws of the Game Committee, under the direction of the department, has recommended significant interpretation and laws directions, which have been successfully delivered by the AFL Umpiring Department after approval by the AFL Commission.

In 2007, there was an increase in the number of contested marks taken in AFL games, as well as an increase in contested possession, reversing the recent trend of this decade.

In 2008, no major changes were recommended to allow the game a period of consolidation, but the Football Operations Department will continue to monitor the key trends in the game.

Further research will be commissioned to investigate the impact of interchange use on fatigue and collision injuries, and the effect on the way the game is played.

The numbers of deliberate rushed behinds and trends in relation to backward kicking will continue to be monitored.

Laws of the Game Committee

One significant change to the Laws of the Game was enacted for 2007, with Rule 15.4.5 introduced to protect a player from forceful front-on contact when that player had his head down over the ball.

Contact under this rule could also be now subject to a report, with strict sanctions applicable.

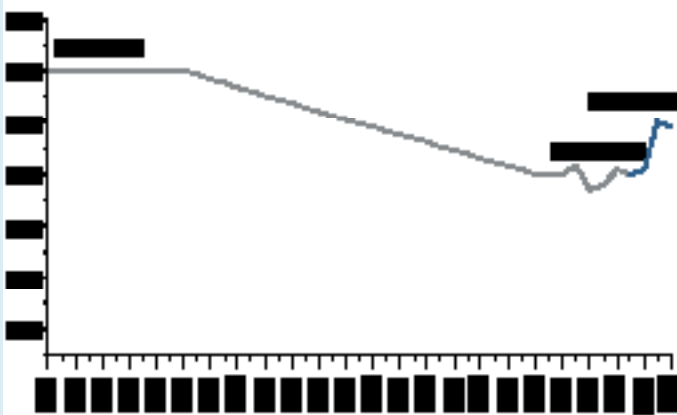
There were also stricter interpretations of two aspects of the Laws for the 2007 season; stricter policing of both hands in the back in marking contests and dangerous tackles such as by unnecessarily and dangerously driving an opponent into the ground with their arms pinned.

The review process followed after the 2007 season involved extensive consultation with all clubs, supporters, players and coaches. A detailed discussion paper was released in August leading up to the finals, seeking feedback on the interchange, deliberate rushed behinds and backward kicking, along with the 2007 changes detailed earlier and any other issues. Another meeting was held in October before the 16 club coaches were consulted during trade week.

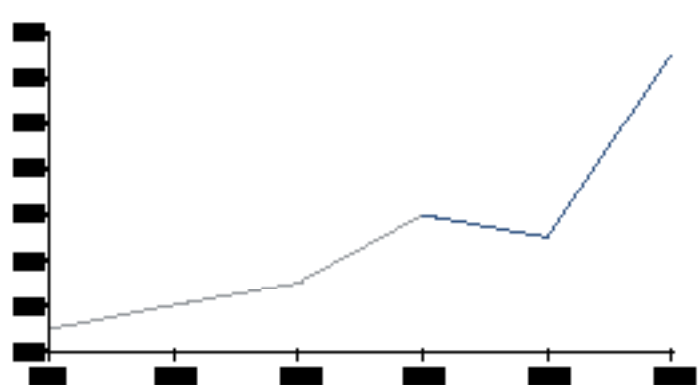
The hands in the back interpretation was designed to enhance the quality of marking contests by discouraging pushing, holding and blocking with the hands and encouraging players to take front position, resulting in a significant improvement to marking contests.

The new law relating to bumping a player with his head over the ball, and the interpretation for policing dangerous tackles received tremendous support and will continue in 2008.

Collingwood captain Nathan Buckley resigned from the Laws of the Game committee in 2007 and was replaced by former Western Bulldogs captain Luke Darcy.

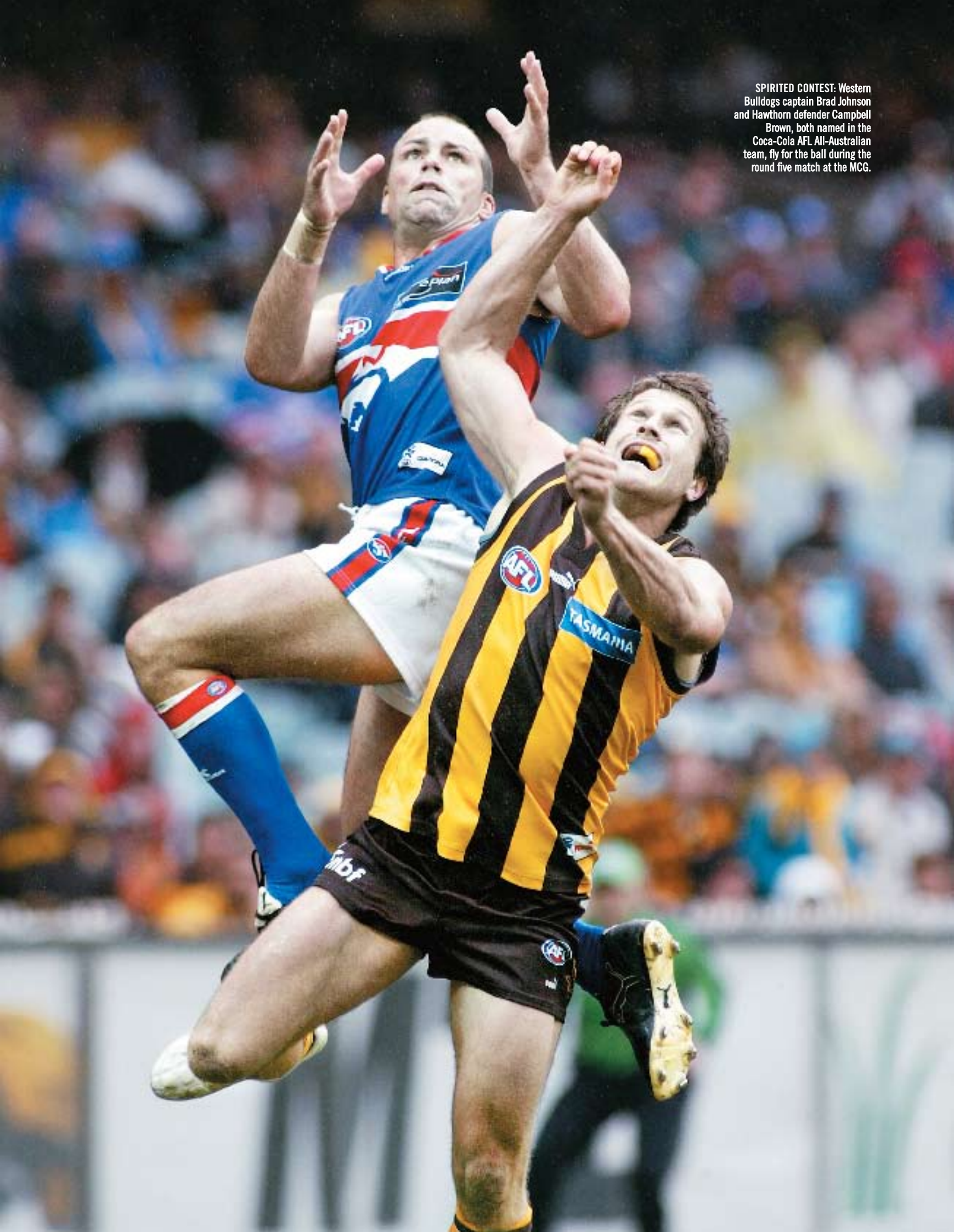


The game was significantly more continuous in 2006-07 than it was in 2004-05. In 2007, the ball was in play about 60 per cent of the time.



Although the game is more continuous, clubs have used the interchange to keep players fresh and the game speed high. Game speed confers an advantage in most team sports.

SPIRITED CONTEST: Western Bulldogs captain Brad Johnson and Hawthorn defender Campbell Brown, both named in the Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team, fly for the ball during the round five match at the MCG.



AFL Umpiring Department

Some key challenges for the AFL senior umpiring list in 2007 were to:

- Strictly police the new rule relating to head high contact to players with their head over the ball. This was to promote a safer environment for players in this situation.
- Enforce the stricter interpretation of pushing in a marking contest to improve the quality of those contests by discouraging pushing, blocking or holding by the use of hands. This was to encourage players to take front position, make the ball their sole objective and to make marking contests easier to adjudicate for umpires.

After a few weeks of adjustment in the early part of the year by umpires and players, these changes became ingrained. Stakeholders acknowledged cleaner marking contests with players focusing on the ball, while umpires found the interpretation to be clear-cut with no judgment required in the decision-making process.

The AFL umpire squad was under pressure in the opening rounds of the season with eight senior umpires missing games because of injury. This placed the group under much strain but provided some invaluable game experience for many younger umpires.

The performance of the umpires steadily improved, culminating in an outstanding finals series in which four games were decided by less than a goal with all officials performing to an extremely high standard.

Key achievements in 2007 were:

- A successful seminar conducted in February for all 200 key AFL umpiring personnel regarding preparation and reinforcement of the laws and to help develop a strong team culture.

- Distribution of 20,000 copies of a decisional DVD to all key stakeholders to help improve understanding of laws and interpretations. Presentations were conducted with coaches, clubs, umpires and the media across Australia.
- AFL goal umpires produced their most accurate season by making only five confirmed errors from about 10,000 scoring shots.
- Field umpire Hayden Kennedy became only the second AFL/VFL umpire to reach 400 games in the round 11 Essendon-West Coast match at Telstra Dome, then broke Rowan Sawers' 10-year record of 410 senior AFL matches in the opening week of the finals, again at Telstra Dome.
- The Grand Final umpires were Scott McLaren, Stephen McBurney and Shane McNerney (field); Darren Wilson, Glenn Sinclair and Justin Bennison (boundary), and Anthony Black and Steven Axon (goal).
- Stephen McBurney was named All-Australian umpire for 2007 (having been named previously in 2003).
- Seven-time Grand Final umpire Brett Allen retired at season's end after 347 games and four All-Australian appointments.
- AFL umpires were involved in a multi-skilling trial during the pre-season NAB Cup where boundary and goal umpires were required to make free kick decisions. This trial was to determine whether decisional accuracy and overall umpiring standards could be improved by using all umpire resources to adjudicate contests. This system will be trialled again in the 2008 NAB Cup.
- The introduction of the Match-Comm system for all AFL matches enabled AFL umpires to communicate on-ground which assisted their match-day performance.



- Agreement on a new CBA between the umpires and the AFL.
- AFL umpires continued with their involvement with the Down Syndrome Association and the Wesley Mission. Young people from both organisations were given the opportunity to work with or be mentored by, the AFL umpires, which proved to be an outstanding success.
- AFL timekeepers and interchange stewards' accreditation programs covering match-day roles were developed and delivered.

Milestones reached in 2007 included:

400 games – Hayden Kennedy (field).

300 games – Colin Hood (goal).

250 games – Stephen McBurney (field), Shane Jansen (boundary) and Anthony Black (goal).

200 games – Amin Chehade (boundary), Stuart Wenn (field) and Glenn Sinclair and Gordon Muir (boundary).

150 games – Jamie Giles and Adrian McDonald (boundary).

100 games – Brett Rosebury and Shaun Ryan (field) and Aaron Deckys, John Morris, Stephen Smith and John Wilson (boundary).

AFL field umpires' senior panel, 2007

Name	2007 Games	Total	Name	2007 Games	Total
Allen, Brett	21	347	McBurney, Stephen	26	262
Avon, Michael	17	131	McInerney, Shane	26	245
Chamberlain, Ray	23	64	McLaren, Scott	22	296
Donlon, Chris	19	44	Meredith, Simon	16	66
Ellis, Martin	20	224	Nicholls, Kieron	21	145
Farmer, Luke	16	16	Nicholls, Mathew	13	65
Fila, Gary*	6	6	Pannell, Troy	10	36
Fraser, Mark**	0	5	Quigley, Jason	0	48
Goldspink, Darren	12	371	Rosebury, Brett	25	122
Grun, Stefan	18	60	Sully, Damien	16	26
Head, Matthew	18	124	Ryan, Shaun	24	110
Hendrie, Craig	13	48	Schmitt, Justin	0	154
James, Mathew	13	167	Stevic, Matt	22	72
Jeffery, Scott	22	128	Vozzo, Michael	25	191
Kamolins, Chris	15	35	Wenn, Stuart	20	213
Kennedy, Hayden	23	412	Woodcock, Derek	11	124
Margetts, Dean	22	94	*Elevated during season **Retired during season		

IN CONTROL: Boundary umpire Ian Burrows executes a throw-in during the round one Kangaroos-Collingwood match at the MCG.



Match Review Panel/AFL Tribunal

The AFL Tribunal Review Committee's examination of the operation of the new system in the 2006 season resulted in some refinements for the third year of the system in 2007 and focused on protecting players further from serious head, neck and groin injuries.

From 2007, it was determined the main change would be to provide stronger penalties for those players who illegally bumped players front-on who had their head down over the ball, in line with the rule change outlawing such action which was also announced leading into the season.

Bumping or making forceful contact to an opponent from front-on would be reportable unless:

- The player was contesting the ball and did not have a realistic alternative way to contest the ball; or
- The bump or forceful contact was caused by circumstances outside the control of the player which could not reasonably be foreseen.

Any bump causing forceful contact to be made to an opponent's head or neck would be reportable for rough conduct if the player did not have a realistic alternative to:

- Contest the ball;
- Tackle, or
- Shepherd in a manner which was reasonable in the circumstances.

Other key changes, following feedback from the football community, included:

- Increased points allocation for rough conduct and charging.
- Behind the play was removed as one of the 'relevant factors' when categorising the level of offence.
- Contact to the groin to carry the same weighting as contact to the head.
- All attempts to strike/kick/trip to incur an automatic 80 points.
- Simplification of loading for prior offences.

Former Carlton captain Andrew McKay was Chairman of the Match Review Panel, replacing Peter Schwab who resigned to take up a post with AFL Victoria. Nathan Burke joined the Match Review Panel

for the 2007 season. He resigned at the conclusion of the season, to join the St Kilda board, and was replaced by Paul Broderick. On the Tribunal, former Sydney player Wayne Henwood was appointed an ex-player jury representative. Frank Costigan, QC, and Jeff Gleeson, QC, were appointed as Tribunal counsel to replace Will Houghton, QC, who resigned to join the North Melbourne Football Club board.

Illicit Drug Policy

The AFL Illicit Drug Policy operated for its third full year in 2007.

The results for the 12-month period from March, 2006, to February, 2007, revealed a drop in incidence from 4 per cent to 1.9 per cent compared to the 12 months to February 2006, an extremely encouraging result.

The operation of this policy has resulted in 25 players receiving intervention and treatment for use of illicit drugs.

Several changes were made to the policy, which is one of only three operating across all sports in Australia, for out-of-competition illicit drug testing.

The club medical officer is now notified of a test result at the first instance, while the numbers of tests were increased; target-testing was introduced in the holiday period and the day after matches.

The policy was renewed for another four years, in agreement with the AFLPA, with private operator Dorevitch now used to conduct all testing under the code for the period.

The AFL and AFLPA obtained a Supreme Court of Victoria injunction to prevent publication of private medical records, relating to the operation of the Illicit Drug Policy, and these remain subject to a permanent court injunction.

Anti-Doping Code

All AFL players are subject to testing for performance enhancing substances 365 days of the year.

In 2007, no AFL player tested positive for any performance-enhancing substance and the AFL has had just one such result since testing began in the early 1990s. The AFL is one of few sports in Australia that uses blood-testing to further widen the range of scrutiny for banned substances including EPO.

Responsible Use of Alcohol Policy

The AFL has begun the development of a Responsible Use of Alcohol Policy. This has arisen from research conducted by Associate Professor John Fitzgerald under the auspices of the AFL Research Board, and remains a work in progress. The working party committee is chaired by Adrian Anderson, with support from AFL Commissioner Colin Carter, Brendon Gale, Dr Pippa Grange, Associate Professor John Fitzgerald, Rod Austin, Professor Greg Whelan, Tom Harley and Shane McCurry.

Father Son Rule/Drafting Rules Review

A bidding system for Father/Son Draft Selections was introduced for the 2007 NAB AFL Draft.

- A club with an eligible father/son draftee is required to declare its intention to select that player at the upcoming NAB AFL Draft;

2007 AFL Tribunal: Key outcomes

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Charges	173	150	137	150
Tribunal hearings	123	26	32	42
Matches lost through suspension	117	77	71	71
Appeals	12	5	4	1
Financial sanctions	\$223,100	\$108,600	\$66,900	\$114,800
Cases involving victim player evidence	108	9	4	14
Hearings and appeals involving legal representation	0	15	21	30
Reprimands (includes offences < 100 points)	0	21	36	38

- Each other club in the competition then has the option to bid which round selection it may use on that player if they were to select him;
- The club with the father/son selection must then use its next available selection after the lowest-choice bid made by any rival club to confirm its choice of that player at the Draft.

All clubs which bid on a father/son selection were bound by the choice they nominated, and if no rival bid was made by any club, the father/son selection was chosen with the last pick of that club in the draft.

The rule provided a fairer way of ascertaining the value of father/son selections than simply assigning a third-round pick. It was also expected the rule would result in more father/son selections, where the son is regarded as later than a third-round selection.

Darcy Daniher (Essendon) was taken with his club's round three selection, after the Kangaroos bid their round two selection. Jaxson Barham (Collingwood) and Adam Donohue (Geelong) were both taken by their respective clubs' last selection after no rival bids were made.

Separately, the previous requirement that a club must use any draft selection it had received in a trade, at that year's draft, was removed.

This enabled a greater flexibility for clubs to trade, and increased player movement.

All-Australian Selection Format

The format for selection of the Coca Cola All-Australian team was altered in 2007. Under the new guidelines, the All-Australian selectors were required to provide the 40 leading players of the year in their playing positions at the conclusion to the home and away season, with the final team of 22 then announced in September.

- The leading 12 defenders were nominated, with six to be chosen in the final team.
- The leading 12 forwards were nominated, with six to be chosen in the final team.
- The leading 16 ruckmen and midfielders were nominated, with six to be chosen in the final team.
- The four interchange players then came from the remaining players of this group of 40.

Geelong dominated the final selection for the 2007 Coca-Cola All-Australian team, with a record nine players named in the final 22. Adelaide's Andrew McLeod was named All-Australian captain for the first time and the Brisbane Lions' Jonathan Brown as his deputy.

Honourary 200 Club Inductions

Triple Essendon premiership player Jack Jones and Geelong pair Joe Sellwood and Wayne Closter were inducted into the AFL 200 Club, after honorary membership was approved by the AFL Commission in 2007.

AFL Tribunal summary

Club	Players charged	No. of charges	Total points under 1 match	Suspended	Sanction	Not sustained
Adelaide	3	3	2			1
Brisbane Lions	7	8	3	2 (4 matches)	3 (\$4,200)	
Carlton	9	11	2		9 (\$19,400)	
Collingwood	10	16	2	2 (8 matches)	9 (\$21,100)	3
Essendon	5	6	1	4 (4 matches)	1 (\$900)	
Fremantle	15	26*	4	9 (17 matches)	9 (\$17,100)	2
Geelong	7	7		3 (7 matches)	4 (\$7,100)	
Hawthorn	10	17	5	5 (9 matches)	6 (\$10,100)	1
Kangaroos	4	4	1	1 (2 Matches)	1 (\$3,200)	1
Melbourne	9	9	5	1 (2 matches)	3 (\$4,800)	
Port Adelaide	8	9	5	1 (1 Match)	2 (\$1,800)	1
Richmond	6	7	2		4 (\$6,000)	1
St Kilda	6	8	1	5 (11 matches)	2 (\$3,300)	
Sydney Swans	4	4	3	1 (1 match)		
West Coast Eagles	6	8		2 (3 matches)	4 (\$6,900)	2
Western Bulldogs	6	7	2	1 (2 matches)	4 (\$8,900)	
Totals	114	150	38	37 (71 matches)	61 (\$114,800)	12

* Player found guilty under exceptional and compelling circumstances with no penalty

2007 types of reports

Charge	No.
Striking	39
Melee	24
Wrestling	19
Making contact with umpire	17
Rough conduct	15
Bumping or making forceful contact	13
Charging	5
Tripping	4
Attempt to trip	3
Eye gouging	2
Abusive language	2
Kneeing	1
Unreasonable & unnecessary contact to face	1
Stomping	1
Obscene gesture	1
Insulting language	1
Attempt to strike	1
Interfering with player kicking for goal	1
Total	150

(Does not include reports that were withdrawn).

Jones, Sellwood and Closter each suffered significant interruptions to their career due to war/active service, and had been denied the chance to qualify for the 200 Club as a result.

Sellwood played in 181 games for Geelong and Victoria from 1930-45, albeit that Geelong withdrew from the VFL competition for two full seasons in 1942-43. He also worked in essential industry during World War II, further reducing his playing availability in 1939-41 and 1944-45. At the time of his induction, he was the game's oldest living premiership player, before his passing in October, after Geelong's drought-breaking victory.

Jones had his VFL debut with Essendon delayed until 1946, after completing active service, but still went on to play 175 matches, with the 1946, 1949, and 1950 premierships among his seven Grand Finals.

Closter had his career interrupted by active service in Vietnam, playing 191 matches from 1964-75.

AFL Annual Injury Survey

The 15th annual AFL injury survey reported that the 2006 season was the lowest year on record for injuries, and continued a trend downwards over 10 and 15 years in the incidence of injury.

Hamstring strains remained the most common and prevalent injury at AFL level, with the category of shoulder injuries the only form of injury showing an increase in recent years.

The report indicated clubs could expect to lose an average of 139 senior games in a season, due to injury, with an average of seven players per list not playing each week due to injury.

Report authors Dr Hugh Seward and Dr John Orchard said the long-term examination of the reports over 15 years had shown several injuries were becoming less common, with concussion in particular taking a downturn.

The positive injury results from the 2006 season followed the 2005 report which detailed a drop in the number of PCL injuries occurring at centre bounce ruck duels, following changes to centre-bounce ruck rules.

Mental Illness Program

The AFL instituted a program in 2007 whereby all players were educated in regard to mental illness. The program was a joint initiative between the AFL, the AFLPA and beyondblue.

NAB Cup Trial Rules

The AFL trialled a 20-metre kick rule in the 2007 NAB Cup to examine its potential impact on contested marks, long kicking and contested possession. The rule was brought in as an experiment on the basis that player skills had improved under the 15-metre rule and the trial might encourage longer kicking and contested possession.

The NAB Cup trial rule on kicking backwards was also modified. Previously a mark could not be paid for any kick backwards outside the forward 50-metre arc and play-on was called. In 2007, players were prohibited from kicking backwards only in the back half of the ground and a mark was paid for any kick backwards in the front half of the ground.

The AFL Laws Committee has continued to look at this area of the game as part of its ongoing research, but no changes will be made to the 2008 home and away competition.

AFL Player Gambling Rules

The AFL investigated four players in the lead-up to the 2007 season for betting on AFL matches or events.

The investigation determined there was no suggestion any player had bet against his side winning, but the AFL treated the matter with the utmost seriousness, imposing a range of sanctions.

The AFL regulations and standard player contract both clearly outline all players' and officials' responsibilities in regard to gambling, as a core issue for the integrity of the game.

International Rules

The International Rules series was not played in 2007 after it was suspended at the request of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

The AFL and the GAA met in November to discuss future plans between the two organisations, and were due to meet again early in 2008.

Hall of Fame Tribute Match

A key component of the 2008 season – celebrating the 150th year since the first game of football in 1858 – will be a Hall of Fame Tribute match at the MCG on Saturday, May 10.

Victoria, to be coached by Geelong premiership coach Mark Thompson and captained by Jonathan Brown, will play a 'Dream Team', to be coached by Port Adelaide's Mark Williams and captained by Andrew McLeod.

The match will bring together 50 of the best players in the game. The 'Dream Team' will be selected from the 52 per cent of players originally from outside Victoria currently on AFL club lists.

Total Player Payments

The Football Operations Department, through the Investigations Department, has direct responsibility for the monitoring of clubs' Total Player Payments and enforcement of the TPP rules – a key equalisation plank of the competition.

The TPP limit increased 7.3 per cent in 2007 with almost the full extent of the increase being passed on to players by clubs, with gross player payments increasing 6.2 per cent from \$114.2 million in 2006 to \$121.3 million.

The additional services limit for the provision of marketing services by players also increased 7.3 per cent, however, the total spent by clubs on these services only increased 2.2 per cent, from \$6.58 million in 2006 to \$6.73 million.

The average payment for a listed player in 2007 was \$203,280, an increase of 5.35 per cent on 2006.

In 2007, no clubs were sanctioned for breaching the TPP rules in relation to the lodgement of player arrangements or exceeding the TPP limit.

2007 AFL Total Player Earnings

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2006-2007
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	Variance %
Gross Player Payments	62,186,000	71,985,000	80,951,208	88,957,912	97,701,770	101,843,018	108,645,462	110,960,485	114,215,259	121,340,818	6.24%
Deductions:											
Finals/Relocation & Living & other	1,093,000	1,073,000	844,209	812,883	1,478,536	1,657,728	1,660,839	2,096,184	1,816,889	2,242,291	23.41%
Retention and Cost of Living Allowances	991,000	838,000	1,112,500	1,178,125	1,390,625	1,484,375	1,406,450	1,291,500	1,175,574	680,488	-42.11%
Veterans' allowance 50% deduction	N/A	1,721,000	2,549,017	2,595,883	2,542,428	2,553,503	4,870,772	5,326,653	5,014,770	5,137,978	2.46%
Other deductions	—	—	646,799	703,427	837,984	237,500	1,098,720	338,705	941,007	2,082,388	121.29%
Total deductions	2,084,000	3,632,000	5,152,525	5,290,318	6,249,573	5,933,106	9,036,781	9,053,042	8,948,240	10,143,145	13.35%
Player payments less deductions	60,102,000	68,353,000	75,798,683	83,667,594	91,452,197	95,909,912	99,608,681	101,907,443	105,267,019	111,197,673	5.63%
Injury allowance	8,176,000	5,688,000	3,500,608	4,266,984	3,850,200	3,531,000	4,314,200	4,332,000	4,836,000	4,936,629	2.08%
Gross player payments less injury allowance	51,926,000	62,665,000	72,298,075	79,400,610	87,601,997	92,378,912	95,294,481	97,575,443	100,431,019	106,261,044	5.81%
TPP limit	52,400,000	68,000,000	76,000,000	83,000,000	89,000,000	95,000,000	97,840,000	100,800,000	103,564,992	111,100,000	7.28%
Gross Player Payments less Injury Allowance	51,926,000	62,665,000	72,298,075	79,400,610	87,601,997	92,378,912	95,294,481	97,575,443	100,431,019	106,261,044	5.81%
Margin/(Excess)	474,000	5,335,000	3,701,925	3,599,390	1,398,003	2,621,088	2,545,519	3,224,557	3,133,973	4,838,956	54.40%
Additional Services Agreements (ASA's)	N/A	N/A	3,413,383	4,186,233	5,311,316	5,176,700	5,840,950	6,071,450	6,579,394	6,725,773	2.22%
Average Gross Player Earnings (including ASA's)	\$101,957	\$117,398	Listed \$126,996 Played \$140,295	Listed \$149,749 Played \$165,062	Listed \$167,229 Played \$194,732	Listed \$176,019 Played \$201,924	Listed \$184,656 Played \$211,230	Listed \$187,251 Played \$213,952	Listed \$192,962 Played \$220,027	Listed \$203,280 Played \$234,554	

1990-2007 Summary of AFL Player Earnings

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played	Played
\$0-\$60,000	442	448	409	373	337	307	260	178	152	121	87	71	51	51	35	47	34	24
\$60,001-\$100,000	88	100	125	126	147	162	173	217	191	143	132	102	116	102	111	119	99	92
\$100,001-\$200,000	8	17	19	33	45	91	126	159	209	249	237	219	194	184	188	183	198	177
\$200,001-\$300,000	—	—	1	1	1	9	12	17	26	52	80	92	100	102	107	101	109	134
\$300,001-\$400,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	5	5	7	22	34	36	47	57	47	57	60
\$400,001-\$500,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	8	14	20	31	24	21	30	35
\$500,001-\$600,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	9	8	12	18	10	13
\$600,001-\$700,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3	3	4	4	7	7	5
\$700,001-\$800,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0	3
\$800,001+	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	3	5	3
TOTAL	538	565	554	533	530	569	573	576	583	576	568	539	529	530	542	547	549	546

NB: Details listed relate only to Players who participated in at least one senior match during the season. Schedule above shows Total Player Earnings including ASA's.



NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL MANAGER – DAVID MATTHEWS

Western Bulldogs midfielder Daniel Cross, who finished top ten in the club's best and fairest award in 2007, is a picture of concentration as he tracks the ball's trajectory.



RECORD COMMUNITY GROWTH

With record participation across Australia and the game expanding in Indigenous and multicultural communities and on the international stage, the growth of Australian Football hit new heights in 2007.

In the first year of the implementation of the *Next Generation* strategy, there was a big jump in investment which produced record growth at the grassroots level.

In 2007 there was a record 638,000 registered participants in Australian Football across the country representing 56,989 or 9.8 per cent more participants than in 2006, which was the previous biggest year of growth.

Considering the impact on many football competitions of the ongoing drought and related issues of access to facilities, the results put Australian Football well on track to achieve the goal of 700,000 participants before the original target date of 2011.


The result was a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the state and community league and club administrators and the more than 100,000 volunteers who support 2618 clubs fielding 11,673

Australian Football teams in 269 leagues across the country. The AFL and state bodies invested more than \$40 million in development in 2007, with an infrastructure including more than 300 staff in 91 regions across Australia.

Much of the growth in 2007 came via a 9.4 per cent rise in the number of NAB AFL Auskick participants and a 25 per cent rise in the number of school children involved in Australian Football competitions and programs.

There are 3000 AFL Teacher Ambassadors involved in the schools program and that figure is expected to grow significantly in 2008. In 2007 there were a record 168,122 primary and secondary school participants in our game.

The game also grew in NSW and Queensland, with the biggest growth recorded in NSW/ACT (up 22,005) and Queensland (up 12,641),



INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
Michael Voss and fellow AIS-AFL
Academy assistant coach Jason
McCartney (left) lead young South African
players during a clinic in Cape Town.

while there was extremely strong growth in Western Australia where the number of participants rose by 13.3 per cent.

When you consider that Australian Football also engaged 130,000 people in promotional programs (e.g. clinics), the game has a huge footprint across the country.

The Australian Football footprint continued to expand in Indigenous communities. While the number of Indigenous players at the elite AFL level is 10 per cent (compared with only .06 per cent in 1977), the number of Indigenous people engaged in AFL programs is more than 89,000 and the number of Indigenous academies around Australia grew to 15 in 2007.

The international development of the game also expanded to more than 34,000 participants in 32 countries. In South Africa the game is growing at a rapid pace and in only six months the FootyWild program (South Africa's version of NAB AFL Auskick) has attracted 5500 participants while almost 2000 more are involved in school competitions.

The growth of the game has also resulted in a more analytical approach to the way money is invested in regions to promote participation and ensure those wanting to play our game have access to community facilities.

In 2007 the AFL conducted the first complete audit of all football facilities in Australia covering 2639 clubs using 2186 grounds to aid in planning for the future. In a sophisticated plan to underpin growth, the AFL has \$10 million invested in community facility projects valued at \$100 million.

Other highlights included:

- The AFL National Schools program was launched to also expand the reach of Australian Football into school curricula.
- There were 21 AIS-AFL Academy graduates drafted at the 2007 NAB AFL Draft, including 13 of the first 16 players selected.
- The AFL and states have an infrastructure of more than 300 staff in 91 regions across Australia.
- AFL players provided almost 60,000 hours of promotion and development work.
- Community camps have reached 70 per cent of country regions in five years.
- The Multicultural Football Schools Program has been implemented in 84 schools and exposed 8311 students to Australian Football. About 21,000 people from migrant communities attended an AFL game, most for the first time.



Participation

The growth of Australian Football hit new heights in 2007 with 9.4 per cent increase in the number of people participating in official competitions and programs in 2007, taking the total number of participants to 638,878 across Australia.

That total takes in men, women, boys and girls who are registered in competitions or programs of six weeks duration or more.

The growth in participation of 9.8 per cent or 56,989 is the biggest annual leap in participation in the past 15 years and follows a rise of almost 8 per cent the previous year.

The major highlights of participation in Australian Football in 2007 were:

- Growth in schools of 25 per cent.
- Growth in community football participation of 1.33 per cent (drought impact).
- Growth in NAB AFL Auskick of 9.4 per cent.
- Growth in multicultural participants of 7000.

The breakdown of participation in Australian Football in 2007 was:

- 283,255 club participants (at junior, youth and senior levels).
- 168,122 primary and secondary school participants.
- 161,159 NAB AFL Auskick participants.
- 12,276 female participants in women's or girls' competitions.
- 8493 AFL Recreational Football participants.
- 5523 veteran participants.

NAB AFL Auskick

NAB AFL Auskick continues to be the cornerstone of the development strategy for Australian Football and a program that each year introduces more families to the game.

A record 161,159 children took part in NAB AFL Auskick programs across the country, representing a jump on the previous year of 9.4 per cent. Thanks to the amazing support of the network of volunteers and family members who supervise the program, the number of NAB AFL Auskick centres also increased. In 2007 there were 2828 NAB AFL Auskick centres around the country, hosting an average of 60 children each week.

The NAB AFL Auskick program is recognised as one of the best introductory programs in Australian sport because of the high quality coaching, the value for money and the fact that it is a safe way for boys, girls and parents to exercise and have fun while focusing on the development of fundamental movement and game specific skills.

The NAB AFL Auskick Grand Final competition is the largest children's competition in Australia, with 94 Auskick participants selected from each of the development regions around the country. Similar to previous years, the winners flew to Melbourne to join NAB AFL Auskick ambassador Robert DiPierdomenico, participating in the Toyota AFL Grand Final parade, the Toyota AFL pre-match entertainment and then playing at half-time during the Toyota AFL Grand Final. Twenty-two children were then selected to present Geelong players with their premiership medals. For the first time an international participant was included, with a boy from AFL South Africa's FootyWild program, Tshepo Raphiri from the township of Alexandra, selected to join the other winners in Grand Final activities. Tshepo was accompanied by his teacher Peter Margaton.

The annual NAB AFL Auskick celebrity match at the MCG on April 20 included notable participants Jennifer Keyte from Channel Seven and former Australian marathon runner Steve Moneghetti, as well as former AFL champions Garry Lyon, Danny Frawley and Tony Liberatore and their children. In 2007 the Dipper Roadshow rolled through every state promoting NAB AFL Auskick to more than 10,000 children. NAB AFL Auskick coordinators were recognised on a larger scale with each state rewarding their three hardest-working volunteers.

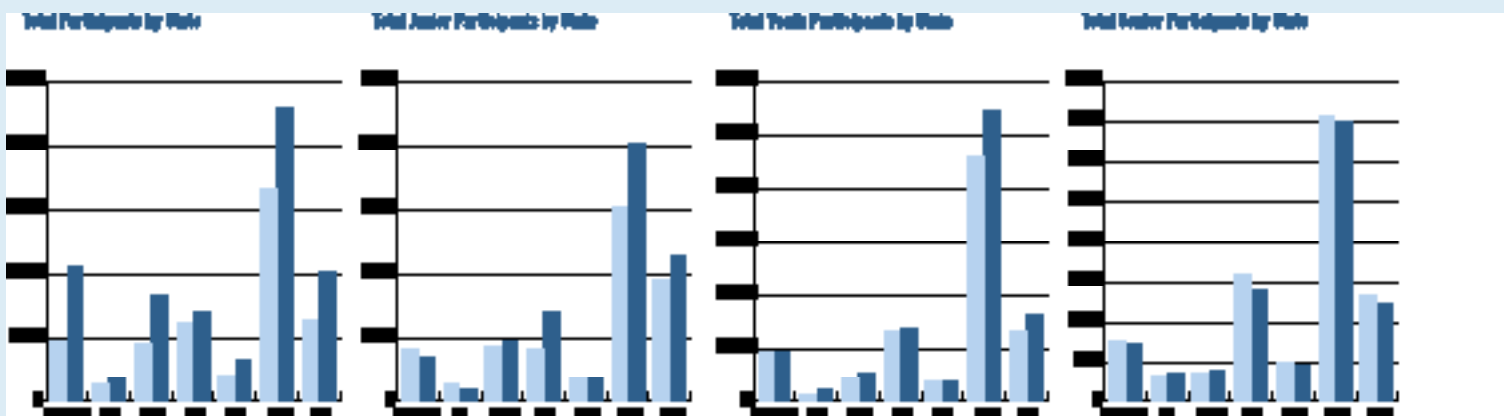
A revised national junior policy was developed because of the need to retain participants from Auskick and encourage them to continue through to junior community football.

School football

One of the key planks of the push to expand our game has been to increase the number of school children learning about Australian Football and participating in our game. In 2007 there was a 25 per cent growth in participation in inter-school teams and the implementation of intra-school competitions using the AFL Sport Education model.

PARTICIPATION LEVELS 2002-2007

2002 2007





ON THE MOVE: Australian Football participation is increasing: South Africa has a youth representative team that played Australia in April; more than 12,000 women and girls took part in organised competition; the NAB AFL Auskick program again had record numbers, and Medibank Private 1Seven ambassador Robert Harvey helped spread the word to school children.

In 2007 there were 8671 school teams (6225 primary school teams and 2416 secondary school teams), an increase of almost 2000 more teams than the previous year.

The AFL National Schools program was launched in 2007 to expand the reach of Australian Football into school curricula.

A new AFL Schools website was developed as a central portal for all school programs and activities and the number of AFL school ambassadors acting as promoters and supporters of our game increased to 3000. A school communications program, school-friendly ticketing offers, a school grants scheme, AFL player appearances and an increased number of AFL-themed resources across all key learning areas also helped expand our game's reach into primary and secondary schools.

AFL clubs also now offer more than 40 school-based programs to the education sector.

Medibank Private 1Seven

Since launching in 2006, 950 schools across Australia have registered in the Medibank Private 1Seven program. Players from the AFL and the country's cricket and netball competitions have promoted the message of 'Move More, Eat Well' to more than 200 schools across the country and distributed more than 80 sports kits.

By the end of the year, the 1Seven website had received more than 100,000 visits. The website houses curriculum lessons, health articles and healthy eating guides.

Community Club football

The drought had a major effect on community clubs in many parts of Australia, affecting availability of grounds and in some cases causing a delay in the opening of the 2007 season.

Given the difficulty – and the issues with access to enough facilities – the increase of 1.33 per cent in the number of community football players was a positive result, with 283,255 playing club football in 2007.

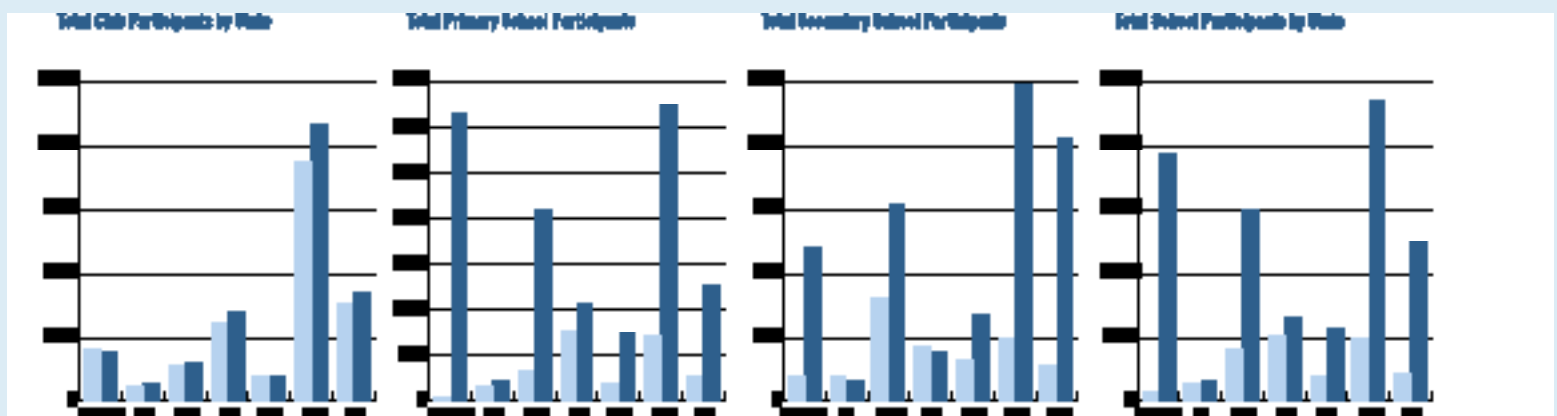
Across the country there were a total of 2618 Australian Football clubs fielding 11,673 teams in 269 leagues.

The number of people playing senior football was down slightly, but increases in youth players (up 4.05 per cent) and juniors (up 1.75 per cent) resulted in a rise across the board.

Female Participation

The number of women and girls participating in Australian Football also continued to climb in 2007 with 12,275 taking part in competitions – an increase of 1859 players or 17.8 per cent on 2006.

A total of 28,980 young girls also took part in the NAB AFL Auskick program, making up 18 per cent of the total of 161,000.



AFL Recreational Football

One of the fastest growing areas of football participation has been in AFL Recreational Football, the modified version of the game that allows men and women to play in a fun, relaxed environment.

The number of people playing AFL Recreational Football in 2007 was 8493, an increase of 160 per cent, or an extra 5236 players on the previous year.

NAB AFL Rising Stars program

The NAB AFL Rising Star Program provides recognition and a clearly identifiable pathway for a player's career, and comprises the following:

- NAB AFL Rising Star
- NAB AFL Draft
- NAB AFL Draft Camp
- AIS-AFL Academy
- NAB AFL Under-18 Championships
- NAB AFL Under-16 Championships

NAB AFL Rising Star award

The NAB AFL Rising Star award continues to grow in prominence and the number of articles and mentions of the program expanded again in 2007 with the weekly winner featured in newspapers, on radio and on television.

The winner of the 2007 NAB AFL Rising Star was Joel Selwood of Geelong. The 19-year-old midfielder from Bendigo was presented with the inaugural Ron Evans Medal by Mrs Andrea Evans, in honour of the former AFL Chairman who passed away in March, 2007. He also won a personal investment portfolio and a dedicated personal banker, courtesy of National Australia Bank. Joel won the medal with 44 votes, followed by Collingwood's Scott Pendlebury, Melbourne's Nathan Jones and Port Adelaide's Justin Westhoff.

NAB AFL Draft

The NAB AFL Draft is now one of the biggest events on the AFL calendar with the draft being broadcast on television through Fox Sport, on radio on SEN 1116 and through the afl.com.au website.

2007 NAB AFL Draft selections (first round)

1	Matthew Kreuzer	Northern U18	U18 VMFL	Carlton
2	Trent Cotchin	Northern U18	U18 VMFL	Richmond
3	Chris Masten	East Fremantle	WAFL	West Coast Eagles
4	Cale Morton	Claremont	WAFL	Melbourne
5	Jarrad Grant	Dandenong U18	U18 VMFL	Western Bulldogs
6	David Myers	Perth	WAFL	Essendon
7	Rhys Palmer	East Fremantle	WAFL	Fremantle
8	Lachie Henderson	Geelong U18	U18 VCFL	Brisbane Lions
9	Ben McEvoy	Murray U18	U18 VCFL	St Kilda
10	Patrick Dangerfield	Geelong U18	U18 VCFL	Adelaide
11	Patrick Veszpremi	Northern U18	U18 VMFL	Sydney Swans
12	Cyril Rioli	St Marys (NT)	NT	Hawthorn
13	Brad Ebert	Port Adelaide (SANFL)	SANFL	West Coast Eagles
14	Jack Grimes	Northern U18	U18 VMFL	Melbourne
15	Robbie Tarrant	Bendigo U18	U18 VCFL	Kangaroos
16	Matthew Lobbe	Eastern U18	U18 VMFL	Port Adelaide
17	Harry Taylor	East Fremantle	WAFL	Geelong

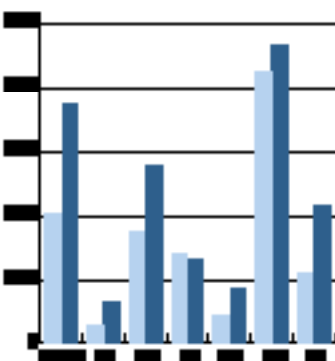
2007 NAB Drafts: where drafted players came from

Origin	National Draft	Rookie	Total
Victoria	37	22	59
South Australia	4	10	14
Western Australia	15	10	25
Queensland	2	5	7
NSW/ACT	3	6	9
Tasmania	1	3	4
Northern Territory	2	2	4
Ireland	0	4	4
Total	64	62	126

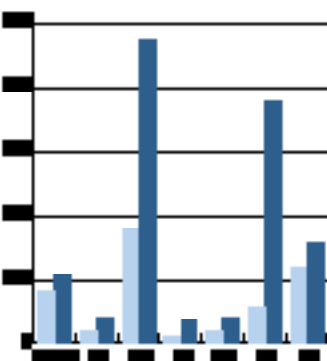
PARTICIPATION LEVELS 2002-2007

2002 2007

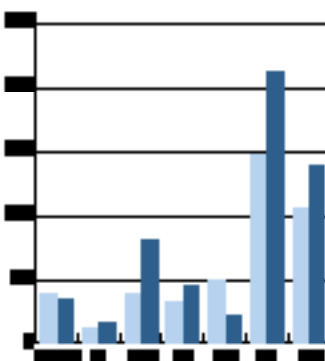
Total NAB AFL Draft Participants



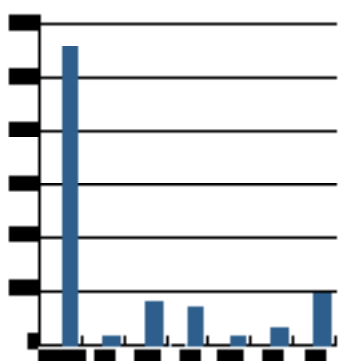
Total National Football League Participants



Total National Football League Participants by State



Total Recreational Football Participants by State





SKILL DEVELOPMENT: AIS-AFL Academy High Performance coach Alan McConnell with potential draftees at the NAB AFL Draft Camp held at the AIS in Canberra in October.

The draft was held at Telstra Dome on Saturday, November 24, and generated an enormous level of publicity before, during and after the draft.

More than 1000 media items were generated and by the time of the draft, the top two or three potential draftees were well known to football supporters across Australia.

Carlton again had the first pick in the NAB AFL Draft and selected the Northern Knights' Matthew Kreuzer. In all, 64 players were added to AFL lists.

AIS-AFL Academy

In its 11th year and under the direction of AIS-AFL High Performance coach Alan McConnell, the AIS-AFL Academy continued to grow in stature as an initiative that provides young talent with development on and off the field. There were 21 Academy graduates drafted at the 2007 NAB AFL draft, including 13 of the first 16 players selected.

Another highlight of 2007 was the first tour of South Africa by an Academy team and the first representative game between Australian and South African teams.

The importance of the Academy in terms of developing talent and improving the elite talent pathway was demonstrated by two key initiatives. The first was the addition of former AFL captains and Brownlow medallists Michael Voss and Nathan Buckley and former Bulldog skipper Luke Darcy to join Jason McCartney as Academy assistant coaches and mentors to scholarship holders.

The other highlight was the development of the state academy concept to ensure the best practice approach of the AIS-AFL Academy will be extended in a consistent manner from the 30 boys

at the Academy through to the members of the state and territory academies at under-16 and under-18 levels.

NAB AFL Under-18 Championships

The NAB AFL Under-18 Championships were played from June 23-July 11 at venues in Victoria, NSW, Western Australia and South Australia for the first time under a revised format.

Western Australia won its third Division One title and NSW-ACT secured its fourth Division Two title. Both teams were undefeated during the championships. Cale Morton (Western Australia) won the Larke Medal as best player in Division One and Craig Bird (NSW-ACT) was awarded the Hunter Harrison Medal for being the best player in Division Two.

NAB AFL Under-16 Championships

The NAB AFL Under-16 Championships were held in Coorparoo, Southport and Zillmere in Queensland, from July 29-August 4. Victoria Metro remained undefeated throughout the championships to claim its third consecutive Division One title. Queensland won its fourth Division Two title and was undefeated throughout the championships.

Tom Scully (Victoria Metro) and Michael Walters (Western Australia) tied for the Kevin Sheehan Medal for the best and fairest in Division One and Declan Bevan (Queensland) was awarded the Alan McLean Medal for being Division Two's best and fairest player.

Telstra Community Camps

Telstra AFL Community Camps were held in every state and territory. After the 2007 camps, 70 per cent of all football regions across Australia have hosted a camp.

Second-tier Review

During 2007, the AFL consulted with AFL clubs and state affiliates on a second-tier review project with a primary focus to enhance the structures and pathway for second-tier football and talent.

Three major recommendations were adopted nationally for the talented player pathway:

1. Transfer the philosophy/curriculum of the AIS-AFL Academy through a structure of AFL Academies, AFL Centres of Excellence and AFL Sports Schools across Australia
2. Enhance the NAB AFL Under-16 Championship by player screening and modifying the fixture to include divisional finals on Toyota AFL Grand Final day.
3. Enhance the NAB AFL Under-18 Championship by fixturing Division Two as a 'qualifying series' with the top two finishers qualifying to enter the Division One draw that follows later in the year.

Following is a summary of state-specific recommendations in relation to second-tier structures:

- It has been previously noted that the major second-tier complexities are being managed in Victoria. The AFL Commission and AFL Victoria Board have so far endorsed five recommendations that support the future of the VFL competition if it can evolve to play a more substantial role in Victorian football. This is the preferred model to a stand-alone AFL reserves competition if it can be delivered. In the first instance, it was agreed to seek an integration of VFL clubs and TAC Cup clubs to form one, regionally-based, talent development entity. It is anticipated that alignments between AFL clubs and VFL clubs will continue to be a key component of the second-tier structure in Victoria.
- The review supported that the Tasmania Devils should continue to participate in the VFL. The Devils' participation in the VFL is viewed as vital to the talent pathway in Tasmania.
- In South Australia, the AFL assisted the SANFL in a review of its under-17 and under-19 competitions that underpin the SANFL reserves and seniors. No change was made for the 2008 season.
- The West Australian Football Commission and WAFL clubs will work with the AFL to pilot Centres of Excellence in 2008.
- AFLNT has developed a plan for a territory state league team that has attracted significant support from federal and territory governments and corporate interest. AFLNT is currently working through the alternative competitions that could accommodate such a team.
- The pathway in NSW/ACT requires ongoing work. It was decided to immediately invest further to upgrade the talent pathway in greater Sydney, particularly in relation to Academy development. The Sydney Swans reserves will continue playing in the ACTAFL competition in 2008.
- In Queensland, the Western Magpies, currently in Division Two and located in a major growth region of Brisbane, have been offered a Division One place in 2009.

Since the first camps in 2003:

- 1882 primary and secondary schools have been visited.
- 421,668 students have participated in school clinics.
- 40,103 children have attended AFL Auskick Superclinics.
- 15,357 people have been visited in hospitals and aged care facilities.
- 13,770 people have attended official functions.
- 15,202 people have attended community football forums.
- Official club functions have raised more than \$264,000 for junior football/community.

Indigenous Development

Australian Football continues to expand its footprint in Indigenous communities, reaching 89,000 Indigenous people through either competitions or school and community visits.

The percentage of Indigenous footballers on AFL lists has reached 10 per cent, a five-fold increase on 2 per cent in 1987.

The AFL's Indigenous development plan has five key pillars:

- Qantas AFL Kickstart – reached 87,000 people through broad-based participation opportunities promoting the value of education, health and leadership.
- Youth academies – there are 15 Indigenous academies, most managed by the Clontarf Foundation, dotted across Australia.
- AFL club fostership program – partnering with AFL clubs to foster the development of targeted communities (Essendon supporting the Tiwi Islands is one example).
- AFL player programs – the use of AFL Indigenous role models as ambassadors.
- AFL SportsReady – creating employment opportunities through Indigenous traineeships. There are 94 Indigenous traineeships, or 17 per cent of all traineeships.
- AFL Foundation – focusing on Indigenous leadership to complement and enhance existing programs.

Qantas AFL Kickstart Program

The Qantas AFL KickStart program was conducted for the third year with 51 indigenous boys aged 14-15 selected from across Australia to attend a three-day camp in Melbourne offering a unique football and educational experience. Using Australian Football as a vehicle to promote healthy lifestyles in Indigenous communities, the program works with state governments to tailor messages for different regions and communities.

Participants attended an Essendon training session and had an educational and life skills session with former Bombers champion Michael Long and Olympic gold medallist Cathy Freeman and played in a curtain-raiser to a Friday night match at the MCG.

AFL Multicultural Program

Along with the work the AFL is undertaking in NSW and Queensland, multicultural communities are the third significant opportunity to broaden the game's participation and supporter base.

The Multicultural Football Schools Program has been implemented in 84 schools and exposed 8311 students to Australian



SPREADING THE WORD: (From left) the AFL sponsored a visit to Samoa by the Helping Hands Across the Pacific program; Jason McCartney with Qantas AFL Kickstart Indigenous program participants, and Hawthorn's Robert Campbell at a clinic in Tasmania during the Telstra Community Camps.

Football. A total of 21,000 people from migrant communities have visited an AFL game, most for the first time.

Other highlights included:

- Multicultural Development Officers working with the Western Bulldogs, Hawthorn, Essendon, Collingwood and Richmond in Victoria and with Fremantle and Adelaide.
- 350 children from the program participating in half-time Auskick Rules and grid games on the MCG and Telstra Dome including a curtain-raiser game, while 5450 students visited AFL World.
- The establishment of two new NAB AFL Auskick centres catering for young people from high-rise housing estates.
- AFL media accreditation organised for *Turkish Report*, *Sameway* newspaper and *Infoway* magazine (China), the Melbourne-based Greek newspaper *Neos Kosmos* and *Ambassador* newspaper (published in African and Arabic languages).
- The establishment of a partnership with Sports Without Borders, providing grants for young people to play Australian Football.

International Development

The AFL implemented a strategic approach, tailoring a plan for each market according to its potential. The strategy also:

- Encouraged AFL clubs to develop markets.
- Built partnerships with clubs, governments and the business sector, with programs tailored to suit local conditions.
- Promoted an international scholarship scheme.
- Created awareness through marketing and public relations.
- Broadened exposure of the game through broadcasts.
- Helped secure funding to leverage the AFL's financial contributions.

There are now more than 34,000 participants in Australian Football programs in 32 countries, with the five biggest in South Africa, Papua New Guinea, England, Denmark and the United States of America.

The approach reaped immediate results in South Africa, where the game has grown rapidly. In six months, 5500 children were involved in FootyWild, the South African version of NAB AFL Auskick at more than 80 centres. More than 1000 youths and adults received training as teachers and volunteers to run the centres. Costa Logistics, the company owned by Geelong FC President Frank Costa, also was secured as a sponsor of the FootyWild program. The secondment of

Joel Kelly from AFL Northern Territory to AFL South Africa provided further significant support to the program.

Another 1984 players competed in 116 primary school teams in the four provinces, which are supported by AFL clubs: Western Cape (Collingwood), Kwa Zulu Natal (West Coast Eagles), North West (Fremantle) and Gauteng (Carlton).

There was also significant growth in China where the game is being played in three regions (Suzhou, Tian Jin and Beijing) with senior matches also being played in the university sector. Melbourne took a major role in promoting the game in China and strengthening the links between China and Melbourne.

Footyweb

In 2007, Footyweb, an online national participation system that registers all football players, NAB AFL Auskick participants, umpires, coaches and volunteers involved in grassroots football across the country was expanded.

Footyweb provides a total competition management system for all leagues and clubs, incorporating fixtures, ladders, online results and clearances; websites with full content management capabilities, and online registration and maintenance for NAB AFL Auskick participants, umpires, coaches and volunteers.

The system not only saves the football industry up to \$1 million a year and provides an easy tool for clubs and leagues to use, it also consolidates for the football industry a national database of all participants that can be used to build club supporter bases.

It is hoped 100 per cent of participants will be listed on the Footyweb system by 2009.

Community Facilities

One of the key planks of the *Next Generation* strategy was to provide investment into community football facilities around Australia.

In 2007 the AFL conducted the first complete audit of all football facilities in Australia covering 2639 clubs using 2186 grounds to aid in planning for the future.

The AFL Community Facility Fund also supported the development of community football facilities. More than 230 projects have been approved for funding by leveraging the AFL's funding. The value of community facility projects is in excess of \$104 million. The highlights

of the program included new facilities at Thuringowa in Townsville, Maroochy Sports Complex in Maroochydore, North Dalton Park in Wollongong and North Narrabeen oval in NSW and Noranda Sports complex in Western Australia. The AFL has committed \$18 million over five years to facility development at a community level.

One of the other key areas of the Community Facility Fund was to promote initiatives that supported solutions to the issue of grounds being affected by the ongoing drought across Australia.

The AFL supported the Victorian Government drought assistance program, which helped 166 clubs across Victoria take up initiatives to deal with the impact of the drought. Those projects are valued at \$6.7 million. The AFL has also commissioned a synthetic turf project with Ballarat University.

Umpire Development

In 2007 there was 42 per cent growth in the umpires' 'Green Shirt' program, which is Australia's leading recruitment and development program for young and inexperienced officials. The Umpire Mentoring Program connects new and inexperienced umpires with an umpiring mentor to assist them with their early development. A new umpire is identified by a coloured shirt to signify he or she recently started umpiring.

In its second year the Umpire Mentoring Program saw more than 700 experienced umpires trained as mentors and supporting the development of nearly 1500 new umpires across Australia.

There was 14 per cent increase in umpire recruitment in 2007, reversing the downward trend recorded in the previous year. A total of 3188 umpires were recruited in 2007, indicating umpiring programs were having an overall positive impact on developing umpires.

The AFL National Umpire Coach program supported the development of more than 100 community coaches through workshops, teleconferences and a national conference contributing to

the growth of umpire coaches, with a 3.4 per cent increase in 2007. This took the total number of registered umpire coaches to 421.

In 2007 there was 25 per cent growth in registered female umpires, increasing the overall number to 611. This growth was seen as a major factor in the overall success of female participation in the game. Twenty-four young women aged 14-17 who have completed the AFL Basic Umpiring Course, umpired NAB AFL Auskick matches or officiated on a regular basis with a local umpiring group, along with the youth girl umpire ambassadors, were seen as major contributors to the large recruitment and retention growth rate.

A women's forum was facilitated by AFL and Football Victoria umpire development staff, with teachers from three secondary schools (Our Lady of Sacred Heart College, Melbourne Girls College and Our Lady of Sion College) and the umpires' coach from the Moorabbin Saints Junior Football League.

Coaching and community development

Coaching development

The AFL is strongly committed to coaching development and accreditation as part of an overall philosophy of improving the environment in which the game is conducted. In 2007, more than 5000 coaches (from levels 1, 2 and 3) attended coach accreditation courses.

AFL National Coaching Conference

The AFL's fifth National Coaching Conference, conducted in Melbourne from February 2-4, was attended by 475 participants, including 45 presenters, from all levels of the game. Significantly 80 participants came from Queensland and more than 50 from NSW/ACT. The conference is well established on the AFL's calendar and will be conducted on the Gold Coast in 2008.



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS: AFL Multicultural Development Officer Peter Romaniw with students from the Australian International Academy school in North Coburg in Melbourne's northern suburbs.

Special Courses

The AFL High Performance (Level 3) Coaching Course was conducted at the AIS in Canberra from October 1-6 in association with the NAB AFL Draft Camp. Twenty-two invited coaches, representing each state and territory, participated in the week of presentations and challenging development activities. The candidates will complete the remaining course requirements and assessments in 2008. A high proportion of graduates from recent Level 3 courses have coaching roles at AFL clubs.

Twenty participants attended a Level 2 Coaching Accreditation Course designed specifically for retired and experienced players conducted by the AFL, in partnership with the AFLPA, in January.

Programs and Resources

The AFL's Level 1 coaching courses were revised by the AFL and state and territory coaching managers during the year and submitted to the Australian Sports Commission for approval under the Australian Government's National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

The AFL coaches' database was redeveloped and transferred to Footyweb in November. This will result in improved administrative procedures for state and regional development staff and better services to accredited coaches and leagues and clubs seeking information about accredited coaches. The Club Coaching Coordinator program was implemented in most states, with a national resource created from material developed by AFL Victoria.

AFL Coaching Ambassadors

AFL coaching ambassadors Stan Alves, David Parkin and Peter Schwab, along with David Wheadon, presented at most Level 2 coaching courses around Australia and participated in several other AFL Development coaching activities, including playing key roles in the National Coaching Conference. Neale Daniher was included in similar activities later in the year, particularly the High Performance Course.

Community Development

The AFL Development department provides quality programs and resources to assist local community football clubs and leagues to continue to be strong and sustainable.

The AFL, in consultation with state football bodies, has developed a network of community development managers to work collectively in resolving issues related to community football. The AFL hosted a community development forum on May 10-11 at Telstra Dome to plan for the future. The group identified key areas of community development to focus on in coming years.

Telstra AFL Assistance Fund

The Telstra AFL Assistance Fund provided community football clubs and centres with much needed equipment for the 2008 season. Some \$250,000 was provided to 250 clubs around Australia.

Volunteer Recognition and AFL Merit Awards

The AFL again conducted its Volunteer Recognition program using a club-accessible database to provide community volunteers who had achieved one year, five years, 10 years, 25 years or 50 years of service

to the game with recognition through a certificate (and special polo shirt for those with 25 years service). This program provided certificates to more than 2100 community volunteers throughout Australia.

The AFL also continued its Merit Award program, which provides recognition to two people from each state who have made an outstanding contribution to their local club or league. Several award recipients from 2007 had achieved more than 50 years of service to football as a volunteer. A revamped AFL Volunteer Recognition program will be a key feature of the 150th anniversary of Australian Football celebrations in 2008 and continue into the future.

AFL Kids First

The AFL Kids First Program is designed for leagues and associations and their clubs to guide parents so that they and their children obtain maximum benefit and enjoyment from their participation in junior programs and matches. The program, developed initially from an AFL Queensland initiative, was implemented nationally in 2007.

Australian Sports Commission

The AFL continued to build its strong partnership with the Federal Government and work with the Australian Sports Commission. The ASC supports initiatives such as the AIS-AFL Academy, which continues to shine in producing talented players at the elite level of the game.

Following is a letter from the CEO of the ASC, Mark Peters:

Australia, for its small population and remoteness of location, continues to confound the world with its achievements on the sporting stage. This position has been reached by the development of a comprehensive and effective national sport system that encourages sport and physical activity for all Australians and creates opportunities to enable those who are talented and motivated to reach their potential. This system has evolved with the strong support of the Australian Government, state, territory and local governments, the private sector and sporting organisations at all levels.

At the national level primary responsibility for developing and directing sport lies with national sporting organisations. On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Sports Commission plays central leadership, coordination, funding and advocacy roles in the operation of the Australian sport system, largely through the national sporting organisations. Indeed the Australian Government, through the Commission, is the major investor in Australian sport.

In 2006-07 the Australian Government, through the Commission, provided the Australian Football League with funding of approximately \$481,000 for the development of the sport and the continued enhancement at the grassroots and elite levels.

The Australian Sports Commission recognises that the AFL has continued to work to build its membership base and has provided significant financial support to its member associations. The AFL has also enhanced its key development programs, particularly in the area of Indigenous participation and coaching and umpire development.

On behalf of the Commission, I look forward to working with the AFL in future for the betterment of Australian sport.



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

AFL NSW/ACT

Strong increases in participation in primary and secondary inter-school competitions and junior and youth clubs in greater Sydney, plus various facility upgrades totalling more than \$11.5 million, were among the major achievements for AFL (NSW-ACT) in 2007.

The facility upgrades are in addition to the Bruce Purcer Reserve project in Kellyville (\$6.5 million) and Blacktown Olympic Park (\$28 million).

These outcomes are consistent with the focus of the AFL in building the game in NSW/ACT around key areas including participation growth (school, club, community), fan development (attendance, membership and TV ratings), talent development (drafted and rookie-listed players) and improved football environment (facilities, coaching quality, umpiring, parental behaviour and administrative practices).

The primary objective is to grow AFL participation and fans through a two-fold strategy that builds:

- Game development (participation in schools, community and clubs supported by development in coaching, umpiring, facilities and ambassadors); and
- Market development (marketing and fan development) and relationships (government/community/media and corporate relations).

Much of the work is complementary, including promoting game-day experiences to families who have developed an interest in AFL through club or school participation programs.

More than 16,000 of the 190,000 spectators who attended Sydney Swans home games at Telstra Stadium in 2007 were part of AFL NSW/ACT's 'Welcome to AFL' program run in conjunction with the Sydney Swans.

Those activities included:

- Sydney v West Coast Eagles: Up to 2000 first-year club registrants received a family pass as part of their club registration to introduce families to an AFL game with a pre-game experience for the kids on Telstra Stadium.
- Sydney v Collingwood: Up to 2000 families of children participating in primary inter-school program (PSSA) were welcomed to AFL. The PSSA inter-school program has grown from 36 teams in greater Sydney at the end of 2004 to 360 teams in 2007.
- NAB night: 930 employees and their families from the NAB were involved in NAB night that showcased NAB AFL Auskick and promoted closer connections with the NAB family to push our game through the NAB network.



EMERGING STARS: Belmore North Primary School won the 2007 Paul Kelly Cup after downing Holbrook and St Patrick's Primary Schools in the Grand Final held at the SCG. The victorious team, pictured above, included twin brothers from Sierra Leone, as well as players with Indigenous Australian, Arabic and Samoan heritage. More than 11,000 children from 500 primary schools fielding 880 teams participated in the Paul Kelly Cup.

The number of Sydney Swans three-match passes to Telstra Stadium grew from 2500 in 2006 to 8700 in 2007 and – importantly – 46 per cent of the purchasers of those passes came from western Sydney, demonstrating the importance of the development of the game in the wider western Sydney region.

The increase in school participation and the growth in club participation in greater Sydney from 5500 to about 9300 in junior and youth clubs over the last three seasons is feeding interest in AFL games.

Other highlights of 2007:

Participation

A strong increase in participation in our game continued at both club and school level. The growth at the junior ages is important but more work is being done on retaining participants through the youth ages to build a long-term connection with the game.

- Overall participation numbers in NSW/ACT grew from 84,109 to 106,218 – a 26 per cent increase from the previous year and 75 per cent up on the numbers in 2005.
- Features of the statewide increases included NAB AFL Auskick (16 per cent increase to 37,330); primary inter-school competitions (19 per cent increase to 6090); secondary inter-school competitions (169 per cent increase to 3872) and AFL Recreational footy (236 per cent increase to 1820).

Talent

The NSW/ACT talent program showcases the best talent across six regions of NSW/ACT from age 13-18. It promotes a highly visible pathway for youth age boys while also promoting the game more broadly through local media coverage. The scholarship program, which completed its first year, enables AFL clubs to invest in the market to identify, attract and develop youth from regions of NSW where AFL is growing as a sport.

The following from NSW/ACT were drafted or rookie-listed in 2007:

Primary List: Craig Bird (Sydney Swans)*, Taylor Walker (Adelaide)*, Tony Armstrong (Adelaide). Kieran Jack and Ed Barlow were upgraded from the rookie list to the Sydney Swans' primary list.

Rookie List: James Wilsen (Kangaroos)*, Khan Haretuku (St Kilda)*, Ryan Davis (West Coast Eagles)*, Aaron Bruce (Sydney Swans), Dean Terlich (Sydney Swans), Matt Beckmans (Sydney Swans).

* Five of the 12 NSW/ACT scholarship-listed players were listed in the first year of the scholarship program becoming 'age eligible for the NAB AFL Draft and NAB AFL Rookie Draft.

The NSW/ACT RAMS won the Division Two title at the NAB AFL Under-18 Championships, winning their three games by an aggregate of 150 points.



ON TRACK: Plans for a joint football and cricket development at Blacktown Olympic Park.

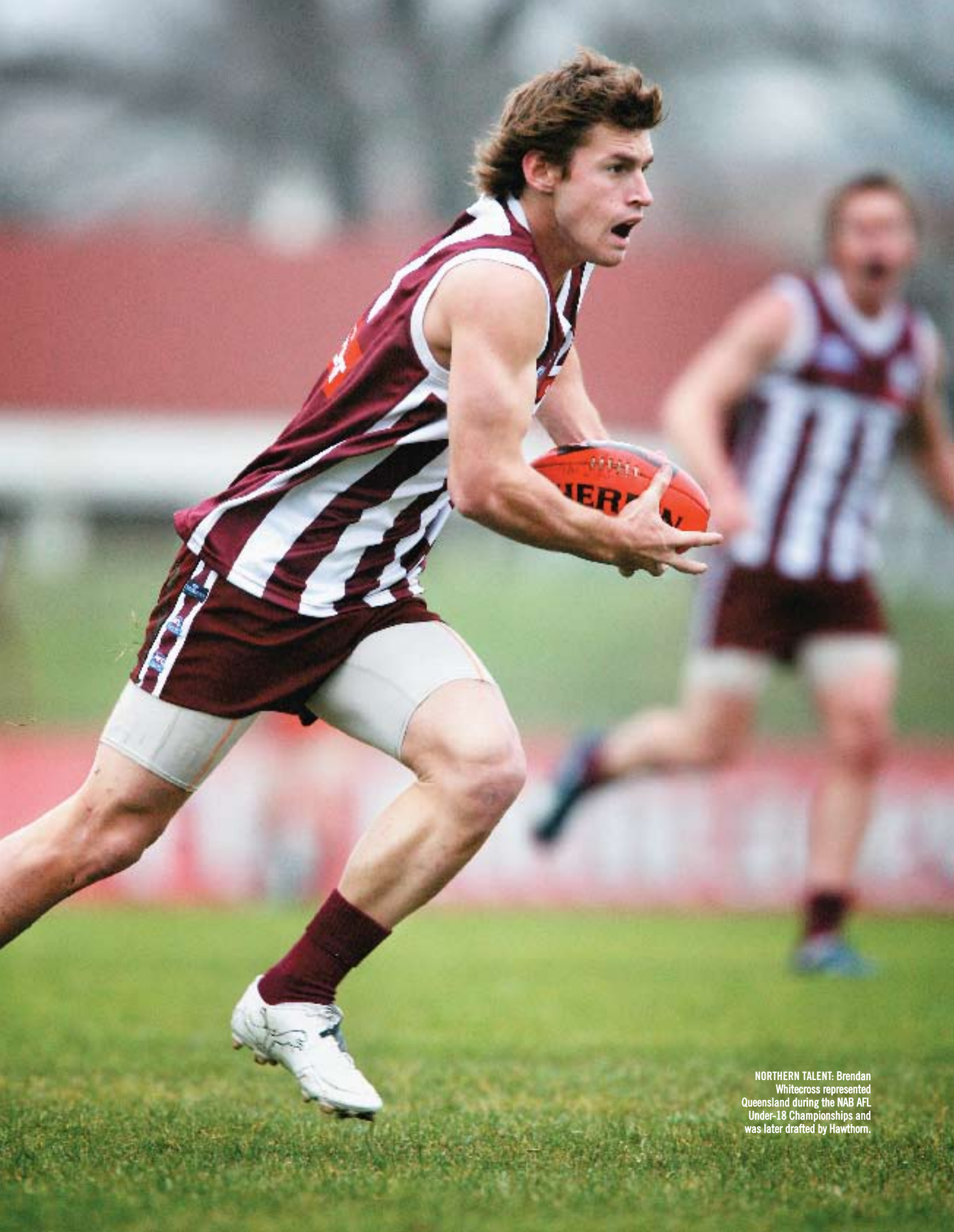
Facilities

In 2007, significant improvements, valued at more than \$11.5 million, were secured for a number of facilities across the state. Those developments included:

- Lighting upgrades – Greygums Oval, Acron Oval, Dick Burwell Oval, Hanging Rock Reserve, North Dalton Reserve, Jubilee Oval, Rofe Park and Rosedale Oval.
- New amenity buildings – Hanging Rock Reserve, Jubilee Oval, Picken Oval, Hollymount Park and North Narrabeen Reserve.
- Playing surface upgrades – North Dalton Reserve, Gwawley Oval and Tom Hunter Park.
- New grounds obtained – Harris Creek Oval, Greenway Park and Mahoney Park.
- Goal posts at three schools and seven clubs.
- Bruce Purcer Reserve (\$6.5 million) and Blacktown Olympic Park (\$28 million) developments on track for 2008 and 2009 seasons respectively.

Other programs

- Incentives introduced for clubs and players to recruit and retain players.
- Increased focus on club development in regional areas.
- Secondary school programs introduced.
- 680 school ambassadors registered in first year of program.
- Opening of the two Indigenous academies in western Sydney.
- AFL club community camps held in Terrigal (Collingwood), Carlton (Merimbula) and Western Bulldogs (Canberra).
- Pre-season NAB regional challenge match at Narrandera played before a sell-out crowd of 11,000.
- National Women's Championships held in Canberra.



NORTHERN TALENT: Brendan Whitecross represented Queensland during the NAB AFL Under-18 Championships and was later drafted by Hawthorn.

AFL QUEENSLAND

There was another year of solid growth in participation rates in Queensland, particularly in the NAB AFL Auskick program and primary school competitions.

NAB AFL Auskick registrations hit 27,771 in 2007. This figure represents a staggering growth rate of 509 per cent from 1998 when the AFL significantly increased its investment in this developing market.

Total participation rates across all program sectors including NAB AFL Auskick, primary and secondary school competitions, open-age football, women's football and recreational football has now reached 82,437 participants. There were 30,120 participants in 2000, with that number increasing 173 per cent since.

With additional investment in the Gold Coast market in game development activities to support AFL games at Gold Coast Stadium, total participation for the region grew from 8066 in 2006 to 11,774 in 2007, an increase of 45.9 per cent. Seeding the Gold Coast market through development initiatives in schools and clubs is a key strategic priority for the AFL in creating a market to support an AFL club and further investment in 2008 and beyond will mean even greater interest and awareness levels reflected in strong participation growth in years to come.

With one NAB Cup game and a NAB Regional Challenge match in the pre-season followed by three Toyota AFL Premiership matches, AFL Queensland was delighted with the response from the Gold Coast community with the average attendance across all games reaching 11,500.

Talent development remains a key focus for AFL Queensland and in 2007 with AFL support the Michael Voss Scholarship Scheme was launched. Eight boys received scholarships from as far north as Hopevale and south of the Tweed. These boys will participate in the AFL Queensland talented pathway program while completing their education in Brisbane.

Brendan Whitecross (Hawthorn) and Sam Reid (Western Bulldogs) from the Zillmere Eagles found their way to AFL clubs via the NAB AFL National Draft while John Williams from Morningside was selected by Essendon in the pre-season draft. Another three Queenslanders were selected in the NAB AFL Rookie Draft: Rhys Magin from the Zillmere Eagles (by Essendon), James Mulligan from Southport (Western Bulldogs) and Jake Spencer from Redland via Townsville (Melbourne), while Jake Orreal found his way to the Sydney Swans as a rookie under the AFL's non-club participant rule. Another seven Queenslanders were retained as AFL club rookie list players for 2008. Currently there are 51 Queenslanders on AFL lists.

Other highlights for AFL Queensland:

- AFL Community Camps were held for the Kangaroos on the Gold Coast and the Brisbane Lions in the greater Brisbane area.
- AFL Queensland again hosted the NAB AFL Under-16 Championships.
- The Queensland representative team beat Tasmania in Launceston, while the Queensland Under-21 team defeated the Victorian Amateur Under-19 team at Elsternwick Park in Melbourne.
- Mt Gravatt won its second AFL Queensland State League premiership, defeating reigning premier Southport at Carrara.
- A \$14 million AFL and cricket stadium was opened at Thuringowa in Townsville in December. The stadium will host key AFL Queensland events and will be the headquarters for AFL Townsville.
- Significant AFL investment in community facilities including the Maroochy multi-sport complex, Jimboomba and the Murray Reserve in Townsville totalled \$450,000 out of more than \$3.7 million of facility development.
- AFL Queensland hosted more than 100 Indigenous boys and girls from remote communities at the Gabba during the AFL's Indigenous round, participating in activities before and during the half-time break of the Brisbane Lions-Collingwood match.



JOINT VENTURE: Australian Football and cricket will share the new \$14 million stadium at Townsville. The venue will host AFL Queensland events and is the new home of AFL Townsville.



MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

GENERAL MANAGER — COLIN McLEOD

Collingwood's Marty Clarke, chased here by Carlton's Andrew Carrazzo, had a sensational debut season. The Irishman was elevated from the club's rookie list and became one of its most skilled players.



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The AFL connected effectively with football fans and the broader community during a record-breaking season.

The Marketing, Communications and Public Affairs Department is responsible for the AFL's marketing of the game, public relations, media relations, issues management and community relations.

It works closely with other AFL departments, the 16 AFL clubs, state leagues, broadcasters, the media generally, venue operators, AFL corporate partners, community organisations and charities, educational institutions, all levels of government and external marketing agencies – a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in the AFL, the AFL brand and the game of Australian Football.

In 2007, the AFL's ability to connect with football fans and the broader community saw records set in several key indicators, including attendance, AFL membership and AFL club membership, junior participation and internet usage.

It was also a year when there was unprecedented public interest in the AFL and the issues of the game on and off the field.

The AFL in the Media

The AFL accredited more than 1600 media personnel who represented 153 media organisations across eight states and territories. Some 81 organisations were at the Toyota AFL Grand Final, including more than 300 working journalists, plus the production crews for the Ten Network, the Grand Final broadcaster.

The growth in interest from Australians from a multicultural background was also reflected in the number of local non-English language media that the AFL accredited. These included the *Turkish Report*, *Sameway* newspaper (Chinese), *Neos Kosmos* newspaper (Greek), *Infoway* magazine (Chinese) and *Ambassador* newspaper (African and Arabic).

The fact that the AFL has become an annual phenomenon is perhaps best shown by the fact that in November and December the number of mentions of the AFL in the media ranked the AFL in the top 10 items discussed in the media in those months. This was in a period in which the country had a federal election.

Major media events through the year included:

- Briefings on Laws of the Game, the Illicit Drugs Policy, mid-year report, meeting with the new Chairman, Gold Coast strategy and end-of-year review on key performance indicators.
- The organisation and coordination of more than 400 press conferences and media interviews in all states and territories.
- More than 49,000 AFL stories were generated in metropolitan media, excluding match reports, training reports and/or injury stories.

- One of the areas of massive growth in media interest in the past four years is the NAB AFL Draft. The draft now generates more than 1000 media articles and hundreds of pages of preview, coverage and analysis. More than 80 journalists attended the draft, which was broadcast on Fox Sports, SEN and on afl.com.au, providing significant coverage in every state.
- There has been in recent years a similar rise in the amount of coverage of the NAB AFL Rising Star award. The winner of the award receives the Ron Evans Medal, named in honour of the AFL's late chairman. The Rising Star award has developed as a major media event that generates considerable media coverage each week of the season and the day itself has developed extensively in media terms.
- The AFL media and public relations team also generated extensive media coverage during the finals, including working with Port Adelaide to develop a strong media campaign in the lead-up to the preliminary final at AAMI Stadium.
- The AFL's media and marketing team promoted initiatives including the South African youth tour, the first Indigenous themed round, multicultural activity, AFL Green, Centre Square, expanding KickStart Camp media, Army Award and the AFL Foundation Ladder project.
- Members of the AFL Commission and Executive were also in public demand to talk about AFL matters, and the media team prepared more than 40 major speeches for AFL executives and officials to speak at several major functions and media opportunities, including the Dame Elisabeth Murdoch oration for the Australian Drug Foundation, White Ribbon Day launch and the American Chamber of Commerce.
- Members of the AFL Media and Marketing team were in demand at educational institutions and addressed groups at Monash University and the Melbourne Business School and hosted a visiting group of 30 MBA students from the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University.

The AFL also provided an advisory service to AFL clubs and state leagues and associations on a range of public relations activities and issues that generated significant media interest.

Key Marketing Programs and Initiatives

As the AFL brand continued to expand and grow, major changes to our national market research program were implemented to better understand the drivers of customer value and, most

RAISING AWARENESS: More than 13,000 women and men helped form a pink lady at Telstra Stadium before the round 19 Sydney Swans-St Kilda match. The Field of Women event was the major highlight of the AFL's partnership with the Breast Cancer Network.





BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER: Thousands participated in The Long Walk, headed by former Essendon champion Michael Long. The walk kicked off pre-game activities for the Richmond-Essendon Dreamtime at the 'G match, the centrepiece of Indigenous Round. Performers including Peter Garrett entertained the crowd.

importantly, to find out what was important to AFL and general sports fans in relation to:

- Game attendance.
- Membership.
- Participation.
- Television viewing.

In 2006, we introduced several marketing initiatives in the important growth markets of New South Wales and Queensland, which, combined with several exciting new concepts in 2007, culminated in one of the most successful years for the AFL.

2007 Season Launch

The AFL season kicked off with a revamped national campaign that focused on the innovative approach that the AFL clubs and the AFL take to the pre-season competition, to support the AFL NAB Cup and regional challenge, together with the AFL Telstra Community Camps, all of which generated record attendance and participation in 2007.

The impact of taking our game to regional communities through community camps and the NAB Regional Challenge was best shown by the regional challenge match in Narrandera in NSW, where a town of just over 5000 had a crowd of more than 11,000 at the game.

To launch the 2007 Toyota AFL Premiership season in the established markets of Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, we joined with the AFL clubs to develop a joint campaign to demonstrate to fans the benefits of becoming a club member. The tongue-in-cheek campaign was a great hit and contributed to a 3.7 per cent increase in membership across Victorian clubs, the most competitive market, compared with a 1.7 per cent increase overall. In round one, 364,544 people attended AFL games, the highest attendance of the season in a record-breaking year.

Themed Rounds

Themed rounds remained key pillars of our Toyota AFL Premiership Season and evolved to not only drive attendance but to provide a terrific platform to deliver the AFL values and broader social messages. Rivalry Round and Heritage Round were embraced strongly again by fans, clubs and media, and continued to drive growth in attendance. In 2008 Heritage Round will celebrate 150 years of Australian Football and has been named Tom Wills Round.

ANZAC Round is now more than the game on ANZAC Day itself, with all clubs and fans fully embracing the ANZAC spirit in all games. Similarly, Women's Round continued to celebrate the role all women play in Australian Football at all levels.

The AFL again partnered with the Breast Cancer Network and the Sydney Swans to deliver the Field of Women event before the Sydney Swans-St Kilda game in round 19 at Telstra Stadium in Sydney. More than 13,000 women and men walked onto the stadium to form a pink lady logo, an outstanding response from people in the Sydney market.

In 2007, the successful Dreamtime at the 'G event, evolved into a new themed round – Indigenous Round – in which we used the entire round to celebrate the unique contributions of all of Indigenous Australia to Australian Football. It was timely in a year when the representation of Indigenous players grew to 11 per cent of the total playing group (versus a total Indigenous population of about 3 per cent).

Key activities included:

- Dreamtime at the 'G – marquee annual event centred around Richmond-Essendon match.
- The Long Walk – community event integrated into Dreamtime at the 'G.
- Nowalenko Award – recognising the contribution of an Indigenous AFL player.
- Official launch – held in Perth with local Indigenous group and Fremantle players.
- Fremantle activity – pre-game activity before the club's match on the opening Friday night.
- Curtain-raisers – Indigenous curtain-raisers at five matches.
- NAB AFL Auskick – Indigenous Auskick participants at half-time in all AFL matches.
- AFL Queensland tour – more than 90 Auskickers from across remote Queensland travelled to the Gabba.
- Welcome to Country – held before each match acknowledging traditional owners.

Summary of Results:

- Outstanding community feedback – particularly from the Indigenous community.
- Significant government support – \$135,000 in sponsorship and attendance at three games.

- Significant and highly visible media coverage and public response.
- Total attendance – 250,000.

Finals campaign

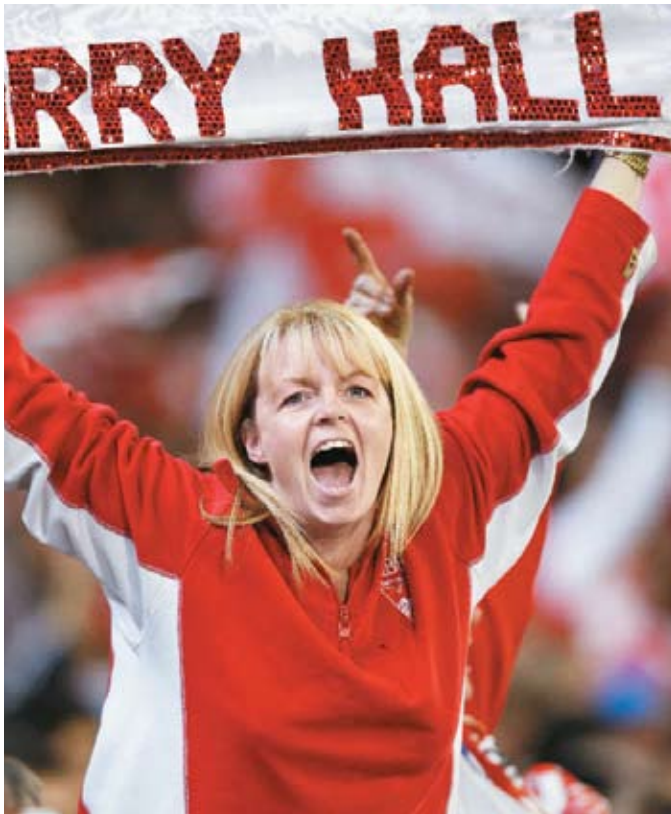
The AFL broke with traditional finals promotion and introduced a finals campaign based around an imaginary destination – ‘Septopia’.

There is always a risk in breaking with tradition, especially when dealing with a sport that is more than 100 years old. However, Septopia was created to represent the ultimate place that houses finals football. More than just a time of the year, the concept saw footy through the eyes of not just the competing clubs and players, but also those of the fans.

The aim of the campaign was to capture the heightened emotion we all feel during the month and quantified not just the excitement of September but also the quality of football on offer.

The campaign was launched nationally on September 2 and permeated all the key AFL consumer marketing activity, culminating with Grand Final week at Federation Square and the capital of Septopia, the MCG on Grand Final day.

In terms of results, the AFL achieved its second highest finals attendance in history during the 2007 Toyota AFL Finals Series. The consumer research undertaken by the AFL after the finals also showed the campaign had been effective in communicating with its target audience, as reflected in high public awareness of the campaign and strong recognition of the key messages of September, finals and excitement.



HE'S OUR HERO: Sydney Swans fans embraced the cheeky advertising campaign led by Swans co-captain Barry Hall.

Sydney initiatives

Building on the success of the 2006 launch of the ‘Barry Hall Hall’ – a fun, quirky series of television advertisements and a dedicated website with the aim of engaging and educating Sydneysiders into the rules and nuances of AFL and Australian Football, a new series of commercials was launched in July, expanding on the game’s rules and physical attributes. The subscriber database also doubled from 3000 to 6000 due to dedicated activities including university orientation week and junior club registration days.

Working collaboratively with the Sydney Swans, the Telstra Stadium administration and AFL media partners, an ambitious target was set to achieve attendances of 55,000 at the three games and sell 5000 three-match pass mini-memberships. The result was an average attendance of more than 63,000 at each of the games, with 8674 people taking up the three-match pass.

The AFL also established stronger working relationships with the Sydney media and the strong attendance results were, in part, a direct result of the increased coverage provided by the media. The Sydney media should also be congratulated for the excellent support it showed for the Field of Women event.

South-east Queensland initiatives

A similar strategic approach to efforts in the Sydney market was adopted with AFL Queensland, the Brisbane Lions and the Kangaroos to further elevate the presence of AFL in the region. Two campaigns focused on driving participation and attendance to AFL matches in south-east Queensland were launched, featuring Jonathan Brown and Simon Black from the Lions, and Daniel Wells and Nathan Thompson from the Kangaroos.

One of the key initiatives in south-east Queensland was to establish a Queensland marketing committee with key media partners and local football administrators to identify opportunities to promote football in the area. This was modelled on a similar initiative in Sydney undertaken a few years earlier that provided the AFL with better insight into the market and the opportunity to approach the market in a much more coordinated way.

One of the outcomes was expanded media coverage in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast. This increased coverage was instrumental in driving increased attendance at games resulting in strong crowds for Gold Coast Stadium games, which averaged around 11,000 per game. After a concerted media and promotional campaign aimed at the Brisbane Lions’ last three home games of the season, the Lions recorded two of their three biggest crowds of the year – 33,077 in round 20 and 34,107 in the final round.

In addition to helping drive attendance at AFL games and junior participation, it meant football fans in south-east Queensland were better informed about all aspects of football – on and off the field – than they had been previously. In a year in which the AFL’s plans to establish a team on the Gold Coast was one of the most significant issues in sport, this level of coverage was invaluable to all the local supporters of the game.

LEADER: Essendon's Nathan Lovett-Murray, active in the Indigenous community, during the Bombers' Telstra Community Camp in Darwin.



AFL FOUNDATION

During 2007 the AFL Foundation continued to move beyond conventional philanthropic activities of giving grants. Increasingly the Foundation understands its role as one of identifying opportunities for AFL personnel to become engaged practically in addressing important social issues.

The Foundation believes it can contribute to and support the AFL's wider contribution, in addressing some of our society's most challenging problem areas: racism, sexism, homelessness, domestic violence, violence against women, alcohol and drug abuse, and the social exclusion of people with physical and intellectual disabilities.

South Africa Trip

In October four AFL players took part in an end-of-season trip with a difference. Jason Johnson, Nathan Lovett-Murray, Kris Massie and Mark Bolton accompanied AFL Foundation CEO Derek Linsell and World Vision CEO Tim Costello on a trip to South Africa to gain a first-hand insight into extreme poverty. Arriving in Durban the players were taken to rural areas where they saw the desperate poverty in which so many South Africans live.

As the AFL explores game development in South Africa, there are opportunities for the AFL community to be directly involved in making a difference in communities that have inadequate health services, educational opportunities and employment prospects.

The Ladder Project

As a direct result of several AFL players working with Melbourne's homeless, the AFL Players' Association and the AFL Foundation decided to work together on a project to address youth homelessness in Australia.

The Ladder Project, as it has become known, aims to provide integrated housing, employment and education, and mentoring services for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, in order for them to develop independent living skills and community connections. A purpose-built facility for homeless youth will be constructed in inner-suburban Melbourne. More than just a 'roof over the head', the Ladder Project will provide opportunities for homeless youth to build healthy relationships and gain skills to help them avoid the downward spiral of homelessness and unemployment.

Work has already commenced on an interim business plan to guide the project through to its completion. A service model has also been developed and the role of service provider will be put out to tender soon.

Fundraising for the project has already commenced through several innovative ideas. About 30,000 premiership cup pins were sold during Pin and Win during the 2007 finals series and all proceeds from the upcoming 'Signature of M' project in 2008, a high-profile art competition, will be donated to the Ladder Project.

The Foundation believes that by involving committed AFL players and staff and entering into strategic partnerships with government,

corporate sponsors and organisations with experience and resources in this area, the Ladder Project will make an important contribution to combating youth homelessness in Australian cities.

Youth Mentoring Program

The program offers young people the chance to meet regularly with a team of AFL umpires and learn from their experience. The program was designed, with Wesley Central Mission, to provide opportunities for the umpires and the boys, aged 11-17, to get to know each other and begin to build mutual trust and respect.

The Youth Mentoring Program grew during 2007 so that now seven umpires are involved with 12 young people. The program has also been expanded and more activities are now offered including a camp.

Kris Massie's 'Eat and Leap into Life' Program

Following consultation, Adelaide player Kris Massie implemented 'Eat and Leap into Life', a program providing mentoring and life skill opportunities for socially disadvantaged Indigenous young people in Adelaide. The program revolved around breakfast each Thursday morning for six weeks during which nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices were discussed, followed by creative activities designed to build trust and rapport with those in attendance. The young people were encouraged to identify their life goals and aspirations and then assisted in identifying steps they can take towards achieving their goals. Other Crows including Andrew McLeod were involved in this breakfast program and have participated in regular monthly follow-up meetings with the young people who attended.

Paul Licuria's Life Skills Program

In association with the AFL Foundation and The Salvation Army in Melbourne, Collingwood player Paul Licuria conducted two more Life Skill seminars this year for disadvantaged young people. The objective of these seminars is to encourage young people to acknowledge and harness the skills and resources they have, and to explore ways of developing additional skills and building habits that will better equip them for life's challenges and opportunities.

Nathan Lovett-Murray's Indigenous Leadership Program

During July a group of Indigenous young people from the Heywood district in Victoria came to Melbourne as guests of the Foundation and the Unity Foundation. This visit, initiated by Essendon player Nathan Lovett-Murray, who hails from Heywood, provided opportunities for this group to catch a glimpse of new possibilities for their futures.

In Melbourne they attended events at which they heard leaders such as Kevin Sheedy and Anthony Mundine speak about the importance of leadership in the community. The group also participated in the presentation of a cultural awareness program at Essendon Grammar School.

AFL FOUNDATION

Following this trip Lovett-Murray paid a return visit to Heywood, where a dinner was held and the participants had the opportunity to speak about their experiences. Participants are working on community projects that will help the Heywood community. It is anticipated this will be the first of many opportunities for Indigenous young people to be involved in leadership programs with the AFL.

One in Five

The complex issue of domestic violence was identified by the AFL and Geoff Slattery Publishing staff as being a key social concern to them. This complements the AFL's Respect and Responsibility Policy, which aims to promote respectful attitudes and behaviour towards women and is focused on addressing sexual assault and violence against women across the community.

The objective of this program is to engage AFL staff members in a constructive response to the problem of domestic violence, working closely with respected community partners such as Mercy Care, Elizabeth Hoffman House, and No To Violence.

One in Five worked with Mercy Care to redesign its logo and branding, assisted with the volunteer weekend in Sorrento, and worked to support an annual cocktail party to raise funds for the organisation.

Staff members worked closely with Elizabeth Hoffman House to launch the MAYA Healing Service, which focuses on Indigenous men and is the first of its kind in Victoria. The service was launched in November.

In partnership with No To Violence, a video was produced for Father's Day 2007. It was played at many venues, emphasising the positive role that many AFL identities play in the community.

Down Syndrome

This was the second year of the Foundation's program of involving young people with Down Syndrome in Friday night AFL matches played in Melbourne. Working in conjunction with the AFL Umpires' Department, the AFL Umpires' Association and the Down Syndrome Association of Victoria, the Foundation is seeking to make a positive contribution to the lives of disabled people and to improve community attitudes towards people with disabilities.

The program involves young people with Down Syndrome working with the umpires' trainers on match day. They are provided with official AFL umpires' tracksuits and meet the umpires in the rooms before the game. They enter the ground with the umpires and join them during breaks and after the game.

It is hoped that programs such as this will contribute to the broadening of acceptance of disabled people in the community.

Plans are in place to expand this program nationally so that it becomes an integral part of all Friday night matches.

The Foundation worked with the Down Syndrome Association of Victoria and a mentoring program called Mentoring Connections has been developed. The aim of this program is to provide young people with Down Syndrome with mentors who will help them explore appropriate employment opportunities. Young people with Down Syndrome were also given the opportunity to attend the Umpires' Community Camp.

Sports Without Borders

The AFL Foundation recently made a grant of \$5000 to Sports Without Borders for its work providing support for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds who are involved or want to become involved in sport.

Sports Without Borders provides funding assistance to alleviate the barriers and impediments children from migrant and refugee communities face when trying to participate in community club sports.

The Green Team

The Foundation was influential in establishing the Green Team to engage AFL House and Geoff Slattery Publishing staff with issues facing our environment and how they affect them. The aim is to enlist staff in devising and implementing ways to reduce their impact on the environment.

The team was established in June and meets at AFL House every fortnight. The group has put together several initiatives that aim to engage all staff with the issue.

The Australian Conservation Foundation will also conduct three training sessions for all staff to learn how they can become more environmentally responsive in the home and office.

AFL Community Leadership Award

The award highlights the selfless behaviour and exemplary leadership of players who devote their time for the betterment of those less fortunate. This year's winner was Sydney defender Craig Bolton for his work with homeless people in Sydney through the organisation Street Swags, which received \$10,000 from the Foundation. The runners-up were Nathan Bassett (Adelaide), Michael Johnson (Fremantle) and Mark Bolton (Essendon). Each of these players will receive \$2000 from the Foundation for their favourite charity.



HELPING OTHERS: The Sydney Swans' Craig Bolton with AFL Foundation CEO Derek Linsell. Bolton won the AFL Community Leadership Award for his work with homeless people in Sydney.

AFL SPORTSREADY

In its 12th year of operation, AFL SportsReady continued its excellent work in sourcing and facilitating meaningful employment for young Australians dreaming of working in the sports industry. Trainee numbers increased throughout Australia by about 8 per cent, from 507 in October, 2006, to 550 in October, 2007. However, as AFL SportsReady expands, many new areas of achievement are gaining attention.

In 2007, many exciting initiatives were launched across all areas, including the Inspiring Futures Program, a vital addition to AFL SportsReady's Indigenous Employment Program. This is a mentoring program to assist Indigenous Australians find and retain employment nationally. It is part of AFL SportsReady's involvement with young Indigenous job seekers in all states and territories. A significant portion of AFL SportsReady's staff and trainees are Indigenous Australians.

A major new program was also developed in conjunction with Group Training Australia and the Department of Education, Science and Training. Known as 'Sporting Trade Skills', the program has been specifically created to support retiring elite athletes find employment in traditional trades.

In conjunction with the AFLPA, the Next Goal Program continues to assist retired or retiring AFL players gain 30-day work placements in various industries. However, the Next Goal Program now assists current players with a program for work exploration over 10 days.

In 2007, AFL SportsReady had 17 players apply for the Next Goal 30-day program and 60 players for the Next Goal 10-day program. Players participated in work placements with police, in the sports industry and in real estate, finance and various trades. This program continues to benefit players in gaining work experience away from the game to make a smoother transition into an industry they hope to pursue post-football.

AFL SportsReady again conducted a marketing campaign to attract trainees and host employers. This included a major advertising push in September, attendance at career expos and the launch of a new, interactive website – aflsportsready.com.au. As a result, online applications surged in September (about 7000) and the website received more than 400,000 hits in one month alone.

The organisation continues to assist those in our community who are dispossessed or disadvantaged. AFL SportsReady supports two groups of individuals. Firstly, young people in society who are disconnected from the community due to abuse and neglect, drug addiction and poverty. This support is achieved through the help of Whitelion. Secondly, AFL SportsReady also supports Heartwell Fitness, devoted to the physical development of youngsters with physical or intellectual disabilities.

AFL SportsReady staff also contribute to supporting these programs.



HELPING YOUTH: The AFL SportsReady program finds young people meaningful employment in the sports industry. Damian Iannazzo did his traineeship at Paul Sadler Swimland in Essendon.



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER – IAN ANDERSON

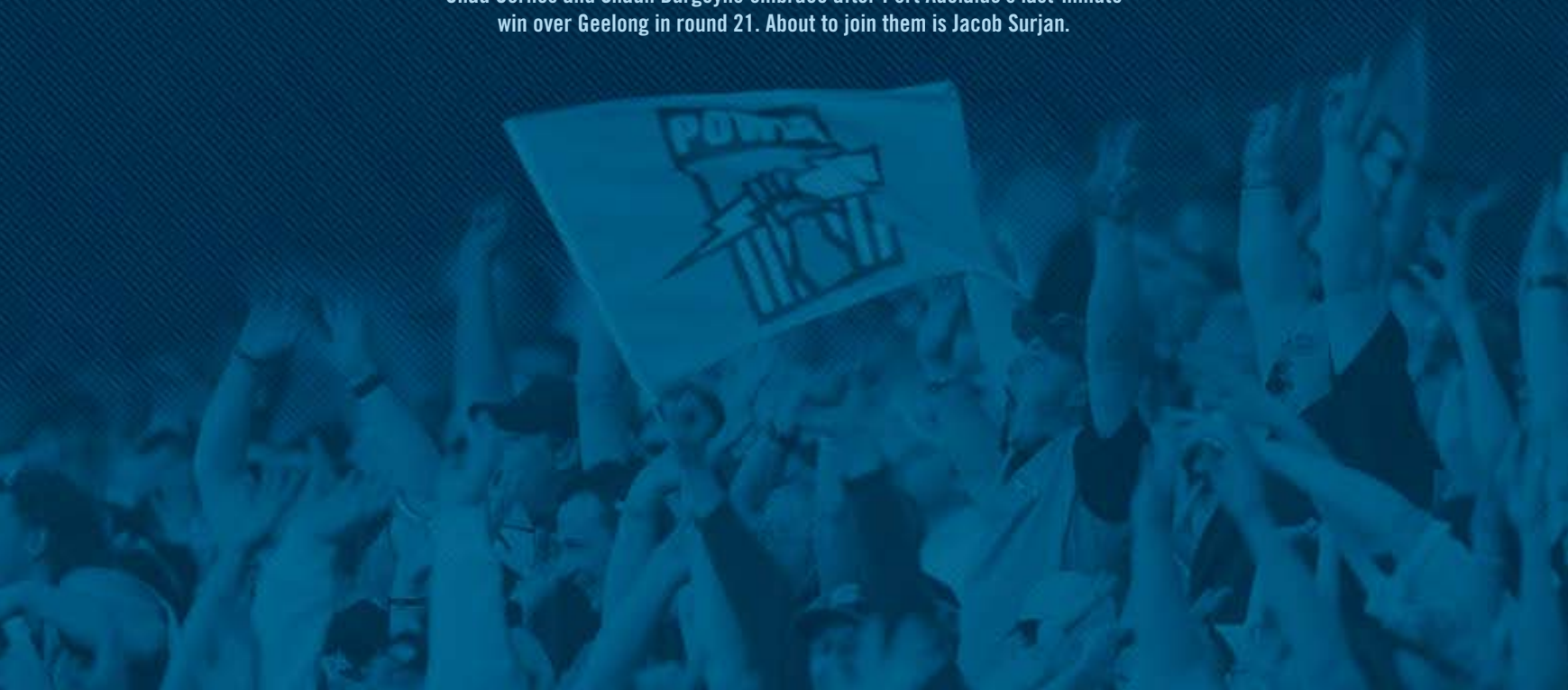
LEGAL AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS

GENERAL MANAGER – ANDREW DILLON

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

MANAGER – JANE HOLLMAN

Chad Cornes and Shaun Burgoyne embrace after Port Adelaide's last-minute win over Geelong in round 21. About to join them is Jacob Surjan.



GAME ON SOLID GROUND

The AFL continued its recent financial growth and is operating debt-free for the first time in a decade.

The key financial highlights for 2007 were:

- AFL revenue increased in all areas of the business to reach a total of \$285 million.
- A net surplus of \$26 million before transfers to reserves.
- The AFL became debt-free for the first time in 10 years.
- Net assets increased by \$26 million to \$84 million.

The following amounts were allocated from the operating surplus to reserves:

- \$16 million to the Future Fund Reserve to be used to invest in football-related opportunities.
- \$9 million to the Facilities Development Reserve to be used to invest in football-related facility developments.
- \$2 million to the New Markets Reserve to be used to invest in developing AFL markets, specifically on the Gold Coast and in western Sydney.
- \$1 million to the Strategic Partnership Reserve to be used on joint initiatives involving clubs which can provide industry-wide solutions and benefits.

Financial Performance of AFL Clubs

The AFL continued to work closely with all clubs to help them to improve their financial performances. A combination of increased distributions from the AFL, together with further improved financial management by the clubs led to the best year ever in terms of the aggregate profitability of all clubs. Fifteen of the 16 AFL clubs recorded a surplus, up from 12 in 2006.

Shared Services Initiatives

The AFL continued to work on a number of initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the AFL industry. Progress was made in the following areas:

- Payroll processing – the AFL now handles the processing for eight clubs, three state football bodies and AFL SportsReady.
- Financial processing – the AFL handles the accounting responsibilities for two clubs, three state football bodies and AFL SportsReady.
- Membership processing – the AFL now handles the membership processing of four clubs.

National Insurance and Risk Protection Program

The AFL continues to manage the insurance activities for the Australian Football industry, covering the AFL competition through to

local community football. In 2007, costs were again contained, and in some areas reduced even further, following the excellent results achieved in prior years.

The AFL Club insurance program has the full support of all AFL clubs and this year we worked hard to document all assets being covered in order to provide our insurers with very detailed information on which to assess exposures.

The community football insurance program, likewise, had the full support of all state football bodies and we worked closely with them, and the insurance broker Jardines, on a range of initiatives, which reduced the risk of injuries and claims.

An initiative driven in 2007 was the completion of a crisis management plan for use by the AFL. To test this plan, the AFL ran a mock disaster exercise, with the assistance of our insurance broker, Marsh.

Borrowings

For the first time in 10 years the AFL is debt-free. This target was an initiative that was agreed to as part of the five-year plan from 2002-06. It is pleasing that this goal was achieved within the timeframe set five years ago.

The AFL is now in the pleasing position of having surplus cash available for investment. This cash will be used to invest in a range of football-related businesses as part of the Future Fund investment program, which started in 2007.

Corporate Governance

In 2006, the AFL completed a review of its corporate governance practices, resulting in a number of new policies being introduced.

In 2007, the AFL rolled out these policies to all AFL clubs as a set of minimum standards. It was pleasing to see the clubs embrace these standards of corporate behaviour, a positive reflection on the industry's continued growth in professionalism.

Information Technology

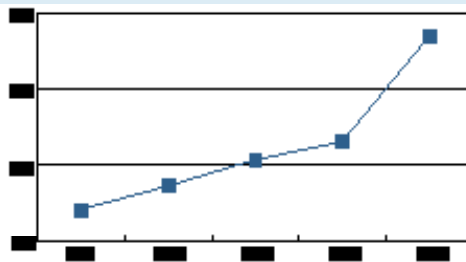
In recent years, the AFL has been investing in a number of IT-related projects to support the growing needs of the AFL industry. Some of the major projects that have been undertaken recently include:

- Upgrading all the core infrastructure at the AFL.
- Upgrading the communication infrastructure across Australia.
- Implementing a new events and sponsorship system.
- Implementing a new retail management system at AFL clubs.
- Identifying the core business systems required by the AFL industry.

KEY FINANCIAL INDICATORS

REVENUE

Up 33 per cent
to \$285 million

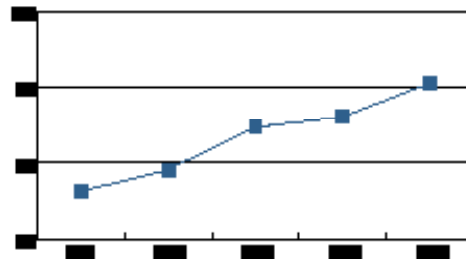


Revenue grew by \$70 million with the major areas of change being:

- Broadcasting up \$54 million
- Corporate hospitality up \$5 million
- Corporate partners up \$5 million
- Finals series up \$1 million

EXPENDITURE*

Up 12.5 per cent
to \$81 million

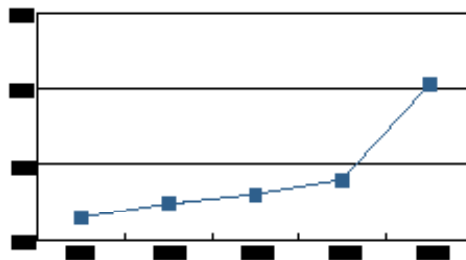


Expenditure grew by \$9 million with most of that driven by increased revenue (sponsorship costs, finals series costs, etc). Other increases related to increased expenditure in Football Operations (finals, drug testing, umpires, etc)

* Expenditure excludes interest costs on borrowings

OPERATING PROFIT

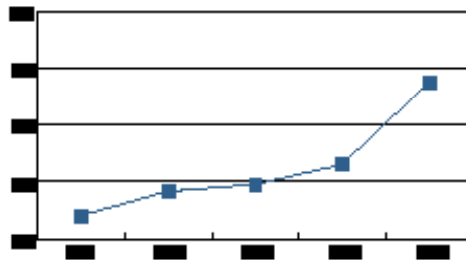
Up 45 per cent
to \$202 million



The AFL's operating surplus increased by \$62 million to \$202 million. This increase in surplus enabled greater distributions to all stakeholders.

DISTRIBUTIONS

Up 30 per cent
to \$176 million

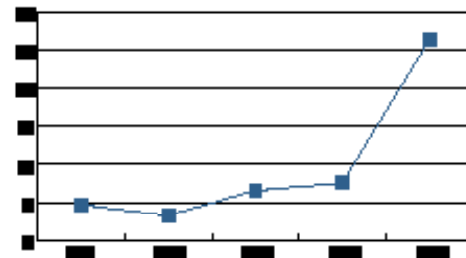


Distributions increased by \$43 million as follows:

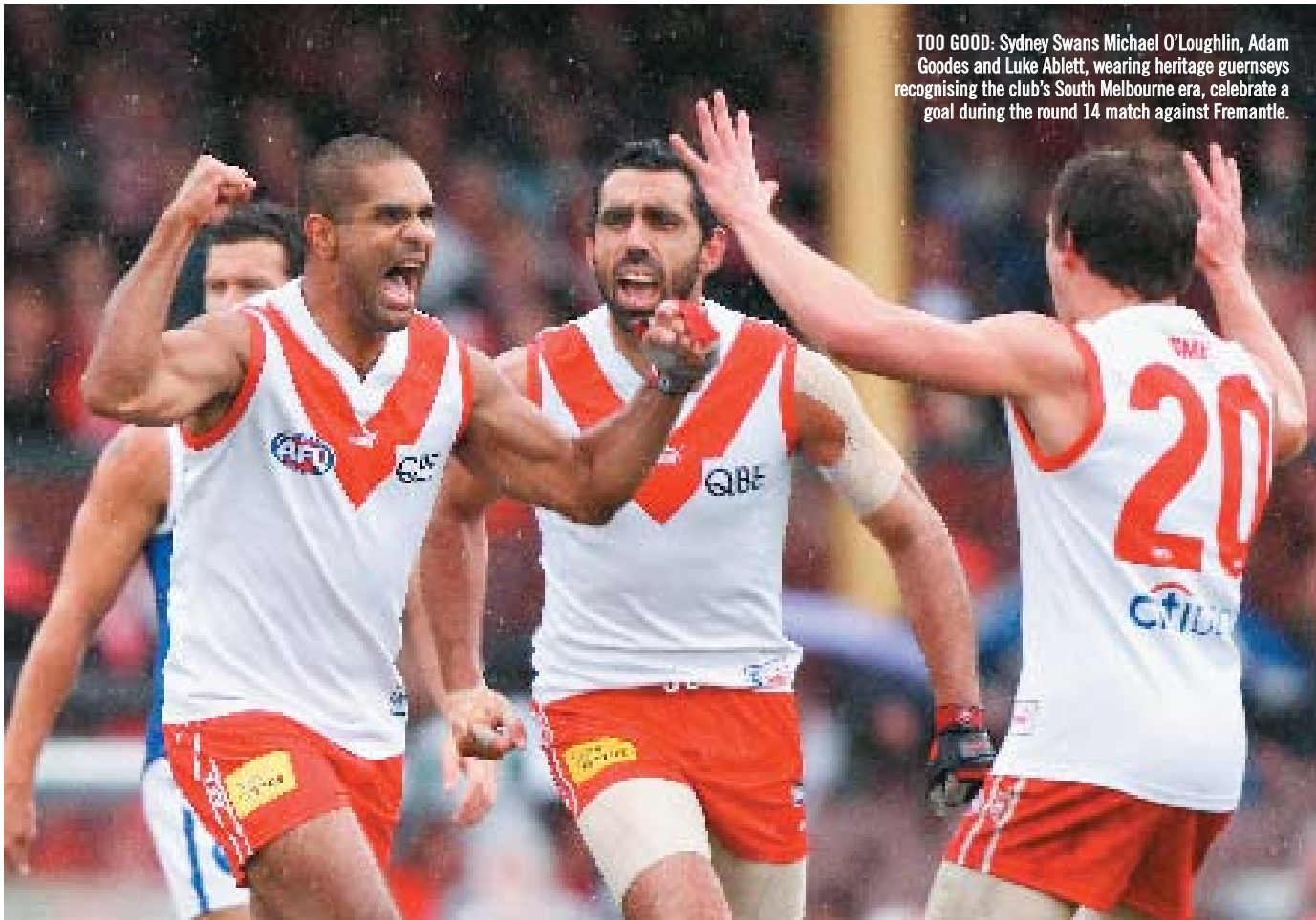
- Payments to clubs (up \$29 million)
- Payments to AFLPA (up \$3 million)
- Game Development grants (up \$4 million)

NET SURPLUS

Up 249 per cent
to \$26 million



The AFL's net profit increased by \$19 million to \$26 million. This was before the transfer of \$21 million to a number of financial reserves.



TOO GOOD: Sydney Swans Michael O'Loughlin, Adam Goodes and Luke Ablett, wearing heritage guernseys recognising the club's South Melbourne era, celebrate a goal during the round 14 match against Fremantle.

Payments to clubs

The AFL provided significant payments and financial support to AFL clubs in 2007. These payments included the following:

- A base distribution to all clubs which totalled \$78.6 million, an increase of \$7.5 million (10.5 per cent).
- A bonus distribution of \$1.2 million to all clubs from the broadcast rights proceeds.
- Another payment from the proceeds of the sale of Waverley Park to the clubs totalling \$4.8 million. The payment of \$0.25 million per club brings the total paid to date of \$1.75 million per club. A further \$0.25 million per club is due to be paid next year.
- A total of \$6.3 million was paid from the AFL's Annual Special Distribution fund to the Western Bulldogs (\$1.7 million), the Kangaroos Football Club (\$1.4 million), Melbourne Football Club (\$1 million), Sydney Swans Football Club (\$0.7 million), Richmond Football Club (\$0.4 million), Hawthorn Football Club (\$0.25 million), and Port Adelaide Football Club (\$0.25 million), with \$0.6 million paid to Telstra Dome to assist clubs playing at this venue.
- Other payments to clubs include distribution of the AFL's signage rights at Telstra Dome, prizemoney, travel subsidies and to help clubs develop the game around Australia.

2007 payments to clubs

Club	Base	Other	Total
Adelaide	4,913,256	1,872,325	6,785,581
Brisbane Lions	4,913,256	1,909,383	6,822,639
Carlton	4,913,256	3,667,898	8,581,154
Collingwood	4,913,256	3,293,892	8,207,148
Essendon	4,913,256	2,754,565	7,667,821
Fremantle	4,913,256	2,012,985	6,926,241
Geelong	4,913,256	3,258,771	8,172,027
Hawthorn	4,913,256	2,458,330	7,371,586
Kangaroos	4,913,256	4,103,769	9,017,025
Melbourne	4,913,256	3,326,069	8,239,325
Port Adelaide	4,913,256	2,614,680	7,527,936
Richmond	4,913,256	2,914,996	7,828,252
St Kilda	4,913,256	3,021,030	7,934,286
Sydney Swans	4,913,256	2,865,009	7,778,265
West Coast Eagles	4,913,256	2,231,128	7,144,384
Western Bulldogs	4,913,256	4,570,340	9,483,596
Total	78,612,096	46,875,169	125,487,265

SUPPORT ACROSS BOARD

The AFL's Legal and Business Affairs Department left its mark in many areas in 2007.

This year was productive for the Legal and Business Affairs Department with continued provision of legal services, commercial advice and support to all departments across the AFL, while also working with AFL clubs and affiliated state bodies on various projects.

The department had significant involvement in the negotiation of several sponsorship agreements and renewals with the commercial operations department in 2007, including new agreements with the Australian Defence Force, Cadbury, Campbell's, Sony Australia and Tissot.

Involvement by the department with the growing consumer products division of the commercial operations department continued, particularly in relation to licence agreements, AFL Store licences, protection and compliance monitoring of the AFL's intellectual property portfolio and involvement with the AFL's commercial arrangements with Geoff Slattery Publishing, AFL Photos and with News Limited as our print media partner.

An audit of the AFL's trademark, design and intellectual property portfolio was also undertaken, resulting in a comprehensive update of the portfolio including a significant amount of new trademark and design applications and the renewal of existing trademarks and designs.

The department played a major role, and will continue to do so, in the implementation of the television and radio broadcast agreements for the first year of the new arrangements, and the new media rights agreement with Telstra.

We again worked closely with the National and International Game Development Department across the NAB AFL Auskick program, multiple funding grant applications and agreements, the International Game Development Committee, the introduction and implementation of the NSW and International Scholarship Schemes, commercial and venue arrangements for South Africa and Dubai and agreements in relation to coaching courses, curriculum and online applications of these programs.

As well as supporting the Major Projects/Strategy Department with commercial and legal advice and documentation in relation to strategic partnership fund activities, we also continued working with it on various venue arrangements for Gold Coast Stadium and Manuka Oval, as well as assisting with negotiations with the AFL's long-term football and commercial plans for south-east Queensland.

Implementation of the terms of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement with the AFL Players' Association and AFL Umpires' Association was another important role in support of the Football Operations Department, as well as forming part of the working parties into player movement, player injury payments and the illicit drugs policy.

The AFL's shared services unit, which provides payroll, finance and membership services to several AFL clubs, has continued with the department drafting and finalising appropriate agreements between the AFL and AFL clubs in relation to the provision of those services.

The department performed its usual support role within the Marketing and Communications Department, providing assistance



IN CLOSE: Richmond's Nathan Foley and the West Coast Eagles' Tyson Stenglein lock horns.

with protection of the brand and use of AFL intellectual property in marketing initiatives by the AFL, AFL clubs and sponsors, keeping the AFL's commercial operations guidelines current and effective and advising on terms and conditions for the AFL's wide range of competitions, promotions and other brand initiatives.

Involvement with AFL NSW/ACT increased in relation to multiple facility arrangements with Blacktown City Council, as well as negotiating and advising on multiple funding grants and related agreements. The department also increased its legal and commercial involvement with AFL NT in its new and renewing sponsorship arrangements and its television broadcasting rights deal. The department provided amendments to the AFL Queensland constitution, helping facilitate a change from an independent board to an advisory board in line with the AFL's move towards a national organisation.

Other major issues dealt with by Legal and Business Affairs in 2007 included:

- Continued assistance to the corporate hospitality and events department with establishment of successful and expanded Toyota AFL Grand Final Week activities including Centre Square and September Club.
- Successful implementation and compliance with 2007 Grand Final ticketing scheme in conjunction with the Victorian Government.
- Litigation: Supreme Court injunction over stolen AFL player medical records.

MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES

The AFL's People and Culture team was established at the start of 2006 to provide a strategic framework for the AFL and the broader football industry in relation to managing its human resources.

As an industry we face many of the same challenges that other organisations do, including how to attract, develop and retain the best people to work for us. While the AFL brand makes it easier in many ways to attract candidate interest, we still need to ensure we continue to have a workplace that encourages staff to do their best to help drive our industry forward.

Where possible, we have implemented industry-preferred arrangements with recruitment firms and training companies, and most recently implemented an online recruitment system to help manage our recruitment process more efficiently and professionally. This system will be offered to all clubs and state bodies in 2008.

Development

The department continued to develop and implement programs that focused on attracting and retaining the best people. We partnered with the Melbourne Business School to develop a week-long residential program for industry staff that focused on the business of sport. This program was important in bringing staff together to share their experiences and build networks, as well as exploring key business issues and how they relate to sport.

Additionally, participants were asked to work together in syndicate groups at the end of the program to explore current issues facing our industry, including the drought and its impact on the game, leadership and corporate social responsibility. They were asked to report back to the AFL, the business school and their respective clubs on their findings.

The partnership with the school will be expanded in 2008 to include a broader array of development programs for the future leaders of our industry.



COMMITTED: Players including (back row from left) Russell Robertson, Adem Yze and Clint Bizzell (Melbourne), David Hale (Kangaroos), Danny Jacobs (Hawthorn), Adam Cooney (Western Bulldogs), Leigh Fisher (St Kilda), Brian Harris (Western Bulldogs), Jayden Attard and Andrew Thompson (St Kilda) and (front row) Rick Ladson (Hawthorn), Jason Johnson (Essendon), Andrew Swallow (Kangaroos) and Andrew Raines and Jack Riewoldt (Richmond) pledged their support to the White Ribbon campaign aimed at preventing violence against women.

Work Environment

In order to get a clearer understanding of how staff viewed the organisation, the AFL participated in the Hewitt Best Employer Survey.

The executive team made a commitment to addressing issues raised in the survey and implemented a number of initiatives including ensuring we remain as flexible as we can in terms of hours worked, improving communication and engaging Mercer Consulting to conduct a review of compensation practices to ensure the AFL remains a competitive employer.

Industry Support

The department continued to provide support to the 16 clubs and state bodies during 2007. This included producing a club remuneration survey that provided benchmark salary data to the industry on both football and non-football related roles.

We also provided regular advice to the industry about the management of human resource strategies at club level.

Respect and Responsibility

The *Respect and Responsibility Policy* represents the AFL's commitment to addressing violence against women and creating safe, supportive and inclusive environments for women and girls across the football industry, as well as in the broader community.

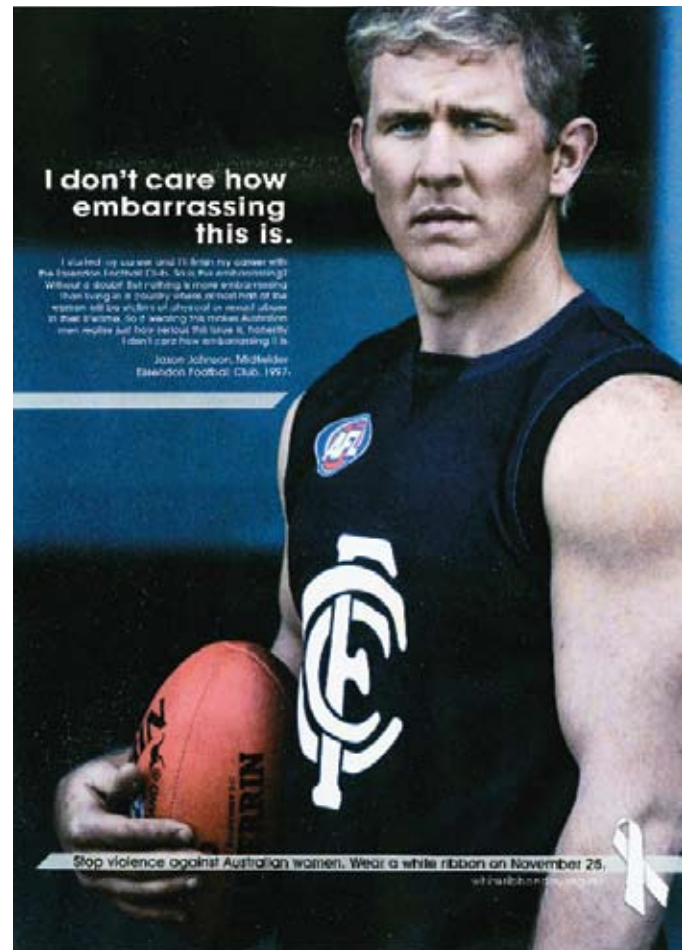
The policy framework outlines a strategy for prevention with components that include:

- The education and training of players across the national and state-based competitions;
- The building of community club-based resources that promote a safe and supportive environment for women and girls, and
- The introduction of policies and procedures that support organisational and cultural change.

To this end, a partnership was established with VicHealth to implement programs across the football community.

Players from the 16 AFL clubs took part in education sessions designed to build on their understanding of how they must each play a role in preventing violence against women, and in promoting respectful and responsible behaviour towards women. Former players Mark Bickley and Jason McCartney assisted industry experts to deliver the training sessions. Pilot sessions were also adapted for players in state leagues and talent competitions and will start in early 2008.

At community level, consultations with women and girls participating in local clubs assisted the development of Respect and Responsibility resources that will be piloted across an entire



SPOKESMAN: Essendon's Jason Johnson donned a Carlton jumper in a media advertisement for the White Ribbon campaign.

league. Clubs will be assisted to implement a program that aims to foster a quality environment that is respectful and inclusive of all participants.

The AFL will consolidate these measures through the development of an education campaign that will strengthen the community's capacity to recognise and promote the building of healthy and respectful relationships, and to prevent violence from occurring in the first place.

The AFL again hosted its White Ribbon 'Footy and Food' breakfast to mark the global effort made on November 25 annually to address violence against women. With the support of AFL players and clubs (headed by Essendon's Jason Johnson, above, who fronted a media campaign in a Carlton jumper), more than \$30,000 was raised for the White Ribbon Foundation.



AWARDS RESULTS & FAREWELLS

Geelong's Cameron Mooney climbed the MCG fence to show the 2007 premiership cup to fans.





THE PREMIERS

After waiting 44 years and losing its past five Grand Finals, Geelong was not about to let the year's premiership slip, winning by a record 119 points.

Many of the Geelong fans who travelled to the MCG on September 29, 2007, were not alive when the Cats last tasted premiership glory in 1963. However, most could recall the heartbreak of four Grand Final losses between 1989 and 1995 – and they were hoping, praying that recent history would not repeat itself against a dangerous Port Adelaide.

Geelong did little to allay its supporters' fears in the opening minutes, with Port's Brett Ebert squandering two golden opportunities and Mathew Stokes carried from the field with a seemingly serious knee injury.

Big Cat Cameron Mooney then settled his side with a strong mark and conversion in the goalsquare at the eight-minute mark, before Steve Johnson booted an ice-cool goal from 45 metres.

Geelong's intensity began to tell on Port, with full-back Matthew Scarlett running off young opponent Justin Westhoff to set up another scoring opportunity and ensure that the Cats were dictating the terms. Captain Warren Tredrea finally put Port on the board following a free kick at the 17-minute mark, but Gary Ablett hit back immediately with an intercept and goal in front of the adoring Geelong cheer squad.

The Cats, running in waves off half-back, dominated the final 10 minutes of the term, with the team's morale boosted further by the return of Stokes and an inspired play from ruckman Brad Ottens, who ran down Port speedster Michael Pettigrew after a 30-metre chase.

The Cats went into quarter-time with a 23-point lead but opened the second quarter with goals to Johnson, Max Rooke and Paul

Chapman, and consecutive majors to Nathan Ablett – the second coming after a spectacular one-handed grab – to go 53 points up.

Mid-way through the quarter, Chad Cornes tried valiantly to spark the Power, pushing forward to mark and goal. And when teammate Tom Logan followed three Geelong behinds with another goal, the Power had pulled the margin back to 44 points to give some hope to their many fans who had made the trip from Adelaide.

But Geelong, through Chapman, kicked the only other goal of the first half to go into the main break with a 52-point lead.

If any Cats fans remained nervous at half-time, they were soon put out of their misery when their team kicked the first three goals of the second half to quash any chances of a Port comeback.

In this period, Chapman put an exclamation mark on the Cat's dominant display, soaring over Tredrea to take one of most spectacular marks seen in a Grand Final.

And when Brett Ebert missed an easy shot for goal on the three-quarter time siren, the Cats led by an even 15 goals.

As the Geelong procession continued in the final term, it surpassed the record for the greatest Grand Final winning margin, and the only interest left was who would take home the Norm Smith Medal. The final siren signalled a 119-point victory for the Cats, and saw Johnson narrowly edge out Chapman and Scarlett for best-on-ground honours.

For the long-suffering Cats, 44 years' worth of celebrations had just begun.

2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final

GEELONG	5.7	11.13	18.17	24.19 (163)
PORT ADELAIDE	2.2	4.3	5.5	6.8 (44)

BEST: Geelong – S. Johnson, Chapman, Scarlett, Ottens, King, Mooney, Corey, Enright.
Port Adelaide – C. Cornes, P. Burgoyne, K. Cornes.

GOALS: Geelong – Mooney 5, Chapman 4, S. Johnson 4, N. Ablett 3, J. Bartel 2, Ottens, Byrnes, G. Ablett, Rooke, Ling, Mackie.
Port Adelaide – Tredrea 2, S. Burgoyne 2, C. Cornes, Logan.

Umpires: Stephen McBurney, Scott McLaren, Shane McNerney.

Attendance: Crowd: 97,302 at the MCG.

Norm Smith Medal: Steve Johnson (Geelong)



DESPERATE: Geelong's Mathew Stokes is about to feed the ball to a teammate during the 2007 Toyota AFL Grand Final. Offering encouragement is fellow Cat Joel Corey, while Port Adelaide players Peter Burgoyne and Kane Cornes (middle) attempt to spoil Stokes' efforts, with Steven Salopek and Shaun Burgoyne also in the vicinity.



GEELONG

BACK ROW: James Kelly, Josh Hunt, Matthew Scarlett, Nathan Ablett, Brad Ottens, Steven King, Steve Johnson, Andrew Mackie, Joel Corey, Cameron Mooney, Corey Enright, Jimmy Bartel, Darren Milburn.
FRONT ROW: David Wojcinski, Paul Chapman, Gary Ablett jnr, Shannon Byrnes, Tom Harley (captain), Mark Thompson (coach), Cameron Ling, Max Rooke, Joel Selwood, Matthew Stokes.



PORT ADELAIDE

BACK ROW: Jacob Surjan, Michael Pettigrew, Travis Boak, Brendon Lade, Dean Brogan, Shaun Burgoyne, Justin Westhoff, Domenic Cassisi, Toby Thurstans, Peter Burgoyne, Troy Chaplin, Brad Symes, Chad Cornes. **FRONT ROW:** Tom Logan, Danyle Pearce, Daniel Motlop, Darryl Wakelin, Mark Williams (coach), Warren Tredrea (captain), Brett Ebert, David Rodan, Kane Cornes, Steven Salopek.



JOCK McHALE MEDAL

Mark Thompson's perseverance was rewarded when he won his first premiership as a coach in his eighth year at the helm of the Cats.

While he had not had to suffer through 44 years of heartbreak like some Geelong supporters, this year's premiership was still a long time coming for coach Mark Thompson, who joined an elite club of men who have captained and then coached a premiership team (Percy Bentley, Reg Hickey, Ron Barassi, David Parkin, Leigh Matthews and John Worsfold).

When he took the helm of the Cats in 2000, Thompson inherited an aging list and faced the impending retirements of club legends such as Garry Hocking and Barry Stoneham.

Despite guiding the side into the finals that season, Thompson committed to rebuilding his list, blooding youngsters like Gary Ablett jnr, Jimmy Bartel, Corey Enright and Steve Johnson over the next two years.

By 2004, Thompson had assembled one of the most exciting young sides in the competition and, after finishing fourth that year and fifth in 2005, it seemed the Cats would be a genuine premiership contender for many seasons to come.

But Thompson's men slipped to 10th in a disastrous 2006 and it was only after much post-season soul searching that coach and club committed to each other for 2007.

Both will be forever grateful they did. Despite a patchy start to the season, Thompson soon had his side playing some of the most attacking football seen in recent years, winning 15 straight games between rounds six and 20 and finished three games clear on top of the ladder at the end of the home and away season.

They then overwhelmed the Kangaroos in the qualifying final by 106 points before surviving a dog-fight against Collingwood in the preliminary final.

But in the Grand Final, the Cats put on the type of display that encapsulated their dominance in 2007, downing Port Adelaide by a record 119 points.

Speaking soon after the Grand Final, Thompson reflected on how far he and the club had come in their eight-year journey together.

"(In 2000) we had no money and we had a really old list and to slowly develop it was always going to be a tough ask and I didn't know whether I was going to see the end of it or not," he said.

"But I'm so happy that the club has persevered and given us coaches the opportunity to do it and I think we've proven to them we can do it."



THE EYES HAVE IT: Geelong coach Mark Thompson, Cameron Ling, Max Rooke and Paul Chapman embrace moments after the final siren in the Toyota AFL Grand Final. With them is first-year Cat Nathan Djerrkura.



NORM SMITH MEDAL

After a tumultuous off-season, Steve Johnson turned his football career around in 2007, culminating in his Norm Smith Medal win.



STERLING: Steve Johnson's outstanding effort netted him the Norm Smith Medal.

Steve Johnson's talent has never been in question. Since debuting with Geelong in 2002, the mercurial forward has always had a freakish ability to turn a match in a matter of minutes, chiming in with pieces of individual brilliance that leave other mere mortals floundering in his wake.

But Johnson's dedication to football has not always been so apparent. So much so that, despite his star quality, the Cats nearly traded him at the end of 2006 season, and then were forced to suspend him for the first five games of the season after a Christmas Eve misdemeanour in his home town of Wangaratta.

But in a turnaround mirroring Geelong's own improved fortunes in 2007, Johnson took the lessons of his suspension on board, giving up alcohol and applying himself to his fitness like never before.

When Johnson returned to the Cats' side in round six, he was the fittest he had ever been and produced the best football of his career, playing every game for the remainder of the season and winning his first All-Australian selection.

His form helped spark the Cats on a 15-game winning streak that saw them finish three games clear on top of the ladder at the end of the home and away season.

Johnson was then among the Cats' best players in its first two final wins against the Kangaroos and Collingwood, but saved his best for the Grand Final against Port Adelaide. Particularly good in the first half when the game – for the most part – was still alive, Johnson was a major headache for the Power backline all day, finishing with 23 possessions, nine marks, four goals, four goal assists – and three opponents.

And while few would have predicted it just six months earlier, there were even fewer arguments when Johnson was voted the winner of the Norm Smith Medal as the best player of the Grand Final.

2007 Norm Smith Medal voting

13	Steve Johnson	Geelong
10	Paul Chapman	Geelong
7	Matthew Scarlett	Geelong

Judges: Danny Frawley (*Triple M*; chairman), Steve Butler (*West Australian*), Josh Francou (5AA), Jake Niall (*The Age*), Darryl Timms (*Herald Sun*).

FAIREST AND BEST: Jimmy Bartel ran away with the 2007 Brownlow Medal, winning by seven votes.





BROWNLOW MEDAL

A Geelong star was tipped to win this year's Brownlow Medal. And, like most AFL awards in 2007, a Geelong star duly won it ... just not the star most had expected.

Cats favourite son Gary Ablett jnr had entered this year's Brownlow count as a warm favourite after a new-found work ethic saw him take his game to another level in the midfield in 2007.

But Ablett's teammate and fellow midfielder Jimmy Bartel had also enjoyed a standout 2007 season and, ultimately, it was his bullocking work in the centre and around stoppages that caught the umpires' attention most often.

Despite missing the season's final two rounds because of a burst appendix, Bartel ran out a comfortable 2007 Brownlow winner, polling 29 votes to win by seven from the Brisbane Lions' 2002 winner Simon Black, the Kangaroos' Brent Harvey and ineligible West Coast Eagles midfielder Daniel Kerr.

Hawthorn midfielder Sam Mitchell was next best with 21 votes, while Ablett finished equal sixth on 20.

Bartel did not have things all his own way early in the count, though. West Coast skipper Chris Judd was a runaway leader after the first eight rounds on 16 votes, having polled in every match – the first time any player had polled Brownlow votes in eight consecutive matches.

Judd's mid-season groin injury meant he did not poll another vote for the night but Black took up where he left off, bolting to the lead with 22 votes after 15 rounds.

At that stage, Bartel trailed by five votes, but when he strung together four three-vote games between rounds 16-20, he could not be beaten with two rounds still to be counted.

The Cats' night got even better when Bartel and Ablett broke the record for the most votes polled by two players from the same club in a Brownlow count (49), and combined with Joel Corey to poll the highest tally for three players at the same club (61).

Bartel became the fifth Geelong Brownlow Medal winner, joining Edward 'Carji' Greeves (1924), Bernie Smith (1951), Alistair Lord (1962) and Paul Couch (1989).

And just five days later, his win became even sweeter when he became the 12th player to complete the Brownlow-premiership double in the same season, joining players like Brisbane's Jason Akermanis (2001) and Black (2002) and Essendon's Gavin Wanganeen (1993).

2007 Brownlow Medal placings

Player	Team	Count
Jimmy Bartel	Geelong	29
Simon Black	Brisbane Lions	22
Brent Harvey	Kangaroos	22
Daniel Kerr*	West Coast Eagles	22
Sam Mitchell	Hawthorn	21
Dane Swan	Collingwood	20
Gary Ablett jnr	Geelong	20
Adam Goodes	Sydney Swans	20
Scott Thompson	Adelaide	18
Jonathan Brown	Brisbane Lions	17
Luke Hodge	Hawthorn	16
Shaun Burgoyne	Port Adelaide	16
Nick Dal Santo	St Kilda	16
Chris Judd	West Coast Eagles	16

2007 Brownlow Medal club vote tallies

Geelong	106	St Kilda	68
Port Adelaide	88	Fremantle	65
West Coast Eagles	82	Collingwood	55
Hawthorn	78	Essendon	53
Kangaroos	78	Western Bulldogs	48
Sydney Swans	77	Melbourne	43
Adelaide	73	Carlton	39
Brisbane Lions	70	Richmond	33



COLEMAN MEDAL

Spearhead Jonathan Brown was a colossus on the Brisbane Lions' forward line in 2007, capping his most consistent season by winning the club's first Coleman Medal.



COLOSSUS: Brisbane Lions co-captain Jonathan Brown started the season slowly but finished it in terrific form to win the Coleman Medal.

Jonathan Brown won one of the few awards missing from the Brisbane Lions' trophy cabinet when he booted 77 goals to claim the club's first John Coleman Medal.

After joining the competition as the Brisbane Bears in 1987, the club's all-conquering teams of 2001-03 ensured the club had won nearly everything there was to win – premierships, Brownlow Medals, Norm Smith Medals and AFL Players' Association Most Valuable Player awards. But never a Coleman Medal.

Brown took it upon his own broad shoulders to right that wrong in 2007 and, in doing so, became just the second Lion to win the award (Fitzroy great Bernie Quinlan won consecutive Coleman Medals in 1983-84).

Brown had a relatively slow start to the 2007 season, kicking 26 goals in the first 12 rounds, but then exploded with 51 goals in the last 10, with the highlight his club record 10-goal haul against Carlton in round 16.

Brown's nearest challenger was Fremantle skipper Matthew Pavlich, who had some chance to overhaul Brown when he headed into the final round of the season just three goals behind the big Lion.

But Pavlich could manage only four goals in the Dockers' loss to Port Adelaide, while Brown was outstanding in the Lions' loss to minor premier Geelong, kicking seven.

Pavlich could take some consolation though when he joined Brown (centre half-forward) in the All-Australian team at full-forward.

2007 leading goalkickers*

Jonathan Brown	Brisbane Lions	77	(77)
Matthew Pavlich	Fremantle	72	(72)
Lance Franklin	Hawthorn	63	(73)
Matthew Lloyd	Essendon	62	(62)
Scott Lucas	Essendon	61	(61)
Brendan Fevola	Carlton	59	(59)
Fraser Gehrig	St Kilda	59	(59)
Brad Johnson	W Bulldogs	59	(59)
Cameron Mooney	Geelong	55	(67)
Matthew Richardson	Richmond	53	(53)
Brett Ebert	Port Adelaide	52	(56)

*Home and away goal tallies; full season totals in brackets.



NAB AFL RISING STAR

Geelong midfielder Joel Selwood played like a five-year veteran in his debut season to become the Cats' first NAB AFL Rising Star.



WHAT A DEBUT: Geelong's Joel Selwood was a popular winner of the inaugural Ron Evans Medal as the NAB AFL Rising Star.

Geelong midfielder Joel Selwood's debut AFL season was up there with the best. Despite playing just three TAC Cup games in 2006 because of a knee injury, Selwood stepped straight into AFL action in round one and looked like he'd been there all his life.

He also joined a Geelong side that had assembled one of the deepest and most talented midfields ever, but his form simply demanded he be picked.

By the end of the season, Selwood, 19, had played 21 games, averaged 19 possessions, kicked seven goals and been an integral part of the Cats' first premiership team since 1963. His season was also compared favourably to the debut year of the AFL's benchmark for all outstanding youngsters – Chris Judd. So it was no surprise when Selwood walked away with the inaugural Ron Evans Medal as the 2007 NAB AFL Rising Star.

In hindsight, Selwood had both the junior playing record and pedigree to make an immediate impact – he was selected in the All-Australian Under-18 team in 2005 and his elder twin brothers Adam (West Coast Eagles) and Troy (Brisbane Lions) were Rising Star nominees in 2005.

The fact he was selected at No. 7 in the 2006 NAB AFL Draft was partly due to doubts about how his knees would stand up long-term.

Selwood won a personal investment portfolio and a dedicated personal banker, courtesy of National Australia Bank.

2007 NAB AFL Rising Star Medal voting

Joel Selwood	Geelong	44
Scott Pendlebury	Collingwood	37
Nathan Jones	Melbourne	17
Justin Westhoff	Port Adelaide	10
Shannon Hurn	West Coast Eagles	9
Jesse Smith	Kangaroos	7
Bryce Gibbs	Carlton	6
Tom Williams	Western Bulldogs	2
Patrick Ryder	Essendon	2
Martin Clarke	Collingwood	1

2007 NAB AFL Rising Star Medal nominees

Rd 1	Patrick Ryder	Essendon	Rd 12	Robert Gray	Port Adelaide
Rd 2	Cameron Wood	Brisbane Lions	Rd 13	Martin Clarke	Collingwood
Rd 3	Tom Hawkins	Geelong	Rd 14	Scott McMahon	Kangaroos
Rd 4	Scott Pendlebury	Collingwood	Rd 15	Justin Westhoff	Port Adelaide
Rd 5	Joel Selwood	Geelong	Rd 16	Sam Gilbert	St Kilda
Rd 6	Ricky Petterd	Melbourne	Rd 17	Nathan Jones	Melbourne
Rd 7	Jesse Smith	Kangaroos	Rd 18	Tom Williams	Western Bulldogs
Rd 8	Shaun Higgins	Western Bulldogs	Rd 19	Travis Boak	Port Adelaide
Rd 9	Mitchell Clark	Brisbane Lions	Rd 20	Mark LeCras	West Coast Eagles
Rd 10	Bryce Gibbs	Carlton	Rd 21	Tyson Goldsack	Collingwood
Rd 11	Shannon Hurn	West Coast Eagles	Rd 22	Will Thursfield	Richmond

SELECTORS: Andrew Demetriou (chairman), Adrian Anderson, Rod Austin, Mark Bickley, Kevin Bartlett, Gerard Healy, Chris Mainwaring, Kevin Sheehan and Robert Walls.

BRILLIANT: Adelaide's Andrew McLeod was named All-Australian for the fifth time, and was given the honour of being named captain of the 2007 Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team.





COCA-COLA AFL ALL-AUSTRALIAN TEAM

Geelong's dominance during the 2007 season was reflected when it had a record nine players picked in the Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team.

Geelong was superior to most teams on its way to the 2007 premiership, so it was no surprise it fared well in the Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team.

What was surprising was the level of its dominance, with a record nine Cats making the AFL's best 22.

This smashed the previous record of six players jointly held by Hawthorn (1986 and 1988), Collingwood (1990) and the Brisbane Lions (2002) since AFL teams of the year were first selected in 1982.

Geelong's record-breaking nine this year were backs Matthew Scarlett, Darren Milburn and Matthew Egan; midfielders Jimmy Bartel – the 2007 Brownlow medallist – Gary Ablett jnr, Joel Corey and Cameron Ling, and forwards Steve Johnson and Cameron Mooney.

The West Coast Eagles and Port Adelaide were the next best teams with three selections, with Power midfielders Chad and Kane Cornes the first brothers to be selected in the same AFL team of the year since Simon and Justin Madden in 1987.

There were 11 first-time All-Australians this year – Ablett, Milburn, Egan, Bartel, Mooney, Steve Johnson, Corey, Ling, Hawk Campbell Brown, Eagle Daniel Kerr and Brisbane Lions powerhouse Jonathan Brown.

But just six players – Darren Glass and Dean Cox (West Coast), Andrew McLeod (Adelaide), Brendon Lade (Port Adelaide), Brad Johnson (Western Bulldogs) and Matthew Pavlich (Fremantle) – returned from last year's team.

Six teams did not have a player selected: Carlton, Collingwood, Melbourne, Richmond, St Kilda and Sydney.

McLeod's fifth All-Australian selection was made even sweeter when he was named skipper for the first time. The Crows' backline general enjoyed another stellar season in 2007, averaging 24 possessions

and winning his third Adelaide best and fairest, an equal club record.

Many were surprised Brown had never made an All-Australian side before this year, but no one was surprised when he was named vice-captain after a standout season which saw him win the Coleman Medal (77 goals) and his first Brisbane Lions best and fairest.

At the other end of the spectrum, Bulldogs skipper Johnson made his sixth All-Australian team. Fremantle captain Pavlich was picked for the fifth time, at just 25, while Cox, the Kangaroos' Brent Harvey and Scarlett were each selected for the third time.

Geelong's Mark Thompson was named All-Australian coach and veteran whistleblower Stephen McBurney was named All-Australian umpire for the second time.

2007 AFL All-Australian team

B: Matthew Scarlett (Geel), Darren Glass (WCE), Darren Milburn (Geel)

HB: Andrew McLeod (Adel), Matthew Egan (Geel), Campbell Brown (Haw)

C: Chad Cornes (PA), Jimmy Bartel (Geel), Kane Cornes (PA)

HF: Steve Johnson (Geel), Jonathan Brown (Bris), Brent Harvey (Kang)

F: Cameron Mooney (Geel), Matthew Pavlich (Frem), Brad Johnson (WB)

Foll: Dean Cox (WC), Daniel Kerr (WC), Gary Ablett (Geel)

IC: Joel Corey (Geel), Dustin Fletcher (Ess), Brendon Lade (PA), Cameron Ling (Geel)

Captain: Andrew McLeod **Vice-captain:** Jonathan Brown

Coach: Mark Thompson **Umpire:** Stephen McBurney

Selectors: Adrian Anderson, Rod Austin, Kevin Bartlett, Mark Bickley, Gerard Healy, Chris Mainwaring, Robert Walls and Andrew Demetriou (non-voting chairman).

BACK ROW: Brendon Lade, Dean Cox, Chad Cornes, Cameron Ling, Joel Corey, Cameron Mooney, Matthew Pavlich, Dustin Fletcher, Darren Milburn, Matthew Scarlett, Matthew Egan and Darren Glass.

FRONT ROW: Gary Ablett jnr, Brad Johnson, Brent Harvey, Campbell Brown, Andrew McLeod, Jonathan Brown, Daniel Kerr, Jimmy Bartel, Steve Johnson and Kane Cornes.



UP THERE: Melbourne's Michael Newton took the Toyota AFL Mark of the Year against the Kangaroos in round 16 at Telstra Dome.





SKILL AND COURAGE PERSONIFIED

Some spectacular individual efforts were recognised with awards.

Melbourne's Michael Newton took Toyota AFL Mark of the Year, Essendon's Matthew Lloyd booted the Toyota AFL Goal of the Year and his teammate Alwyn Davey won the inaugural AFL Army Award.

Newton's mark came in the second quarter of Melbourne's round 16 match against the Kangaroos at Telstra Dome. The ball was kicked to the Demons' half-forward line where Newton climbed high over teammate David Neitz and Kangaroos defenders Glenn Archer and Leigh Brown to take the spectacular mark.

Lloyd's goal was in the third quarter of the round 20 match against Carlton at the MCG. Angus Monfries had booted the ball into the Bombers' goalsquare, with Lloyd locked in a marking contest with Carlton's Jarrad Waite. The ball spilt to the ground, Lloyd gathered it and with his back to the goals, back-heeled it through for a remarkable goal.

Each week of the home and away season, three nominations for the Toyota AFL Mark and Goal of the Year were posted on the AFL website for fans to vote for the weekly winners. At the end of the season, the AFL All-Australian selection committee – comprising Andrew Demetriou

(chairman), Adrian Anderson, Rod Austin, Kevin Bartlett, Mark Bickley, Gerard Healy, Chris Mainwaring and Robert Walls – voted on the overall winner in each award from the list of weekly winners.

Davey was presented with the inaugural AFL Army Award Medal by the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, at the 2007 Coca-Cola All-Australian dinner.

He also received a travel voucher and a \$10,000 Army experience.

Alwyn received 21 per cent of the public votes, which in turn was endorsed by the All-Australian committee.

The young Bomber secured three of the final six nominations which were short-listed by the All-Australian committee from the 22 weekly winning acts. It was his round six nomination, where he applied a brilliant diving smother and backed it up with second and third efforts against Hawthorn – that secured him the award.

The AFL Army Award recognises match-day acts that demonstrate courage, initiative and teamwork. The award aims to reward the 'one per cent' acts, such as game-breaking smothers, tackles and shepherds.

Newton and Lloyd received:

\$5000 for their grassroots club. The use of a Toyota Kluger for 12 months. The Alex Jesaulenko Medal (mark) and Phil Manassa Medal (goal). A crystal replica of the official perpetual Toyota AFL Mark of the Year and Toyota AFL Goal of the Year trophies.



WINNER: Essendon's Matthew Lloyd kicked the Toyota AFL Goal of the Year.

Toyota AFL Mark of the Year Nominations

Round 1	Ted Richards (Sydney Swans)
Round 2	Beau Waters (West Coast Eagles)
Round 3	Mark McVeigh (Essendon)
Round 4	Patrick Ryder (Essendon)
Round 5	Luke McGuane (Richmond)
Round 6	Beau McDonald (Brisbane Lions)
Round 7	Nick Riewoldt (St Kilda)
Round 8	Brent Stanton (Essendon)
Round 9	Jonathan Brown (Brisbane Lions)
Round 10	Leon Davis (Collingwood)
Round 11	Josh Fraser (Collingwood)
Round 12	Anthony Rocca (Collingwood)
Round 13	Shane Edwards (Richmond)
Round 14	Ben McGlynn (Hawthorn)
Round 15	Paul Chapman (Geelong)
Round 16	Michael Newton (Melb)/Brent Staker (WCE) – tied
Round 17	Aaron Edwards (Kangaroos)
Round 18	Nick Riewoldt (St Kilda)
Round 19	Trent Croad (Hawthorn)
Round 20	Adam Hunter (West Coast Eagles)
Round 21	Matthew Lloyd (Essendon)
Round 22	Russell Robertson (Melbourne)

Toyota AFL Goal of the Year Nominations

Round 1	Russell Robertson (Melbourne)
Round 2	Mark McVeigh (Essendon)
Round 3	Leon Davis (Collingwood)
Round 4	Dustin Fletcher (Essendon)
Round 5	Alwyn Davey (Essendon)
Round 6	Des Headland (Fremantle)
Round 7	Nathan Eagleton (Western Bulldogs)
Round 8	Lance Whitnall (Carlton)
Round 9	Daniel Jackson (Richmond)
Round 10	Mark McVeigh (Essendon)
Round 11	Chris Newman (Richmond)
Round 12	Andrew Walker (Carlton)
Round 13	Daniel Motlop (Port Adelaide)
Round 14	Aaron Davey (Melbourne)
Round 15	Danyle Pearce (Port Adelaide)
Round 16	Leon Davis (Collingwood)
Round 17	Brendan Fevola (Carlton)
Round 18	Jarrad Waite (Carlton)
Round 19	Dean Cox (West Coast Eagles)
Round 20	Matthew Lloyd (Essendon)
Round 21	Gary Ablett (Geelong)
Round 22	James Hird (Essendon)



TOYOTA AFL PREMIERSHIP SEASON

Geelong took all before it in the Toyota AFL Premiership Season, finishing three games clear on top of the ladder to win the McClelland Trophy for the first time since 1992.

The Cats' season was highlighted by a 15-game winning streak that was kick-started by their 157-point mauling of the Tigers in round six, and only came to an end when Port Adelaide snatched a five-point win in round 21 courtesy of a last-second Domenic Cassisi goal. In a year when they could seemingly do no wrong, the Cats also provided the Brownlow medallist (Jimmy Bartel), the NAB AFL Rising Star (Joel Selwood) and a record nine members of the Coca-Cola AFL All-Australian team.

Just as the Cats' stellar year came after a disappointing 10th place finish in 2006, fellow 2006 cellar dwellers Hawthorn (11th), Port Adelaide (12th) and the Kangaroos (14th) also roared up the ladder in 2007.

The young Port side was the biggest revelation, clinching second spot, but the Kangaroos, who recovered after losing their first three games of the season, and the Hawks also exceeded most judges' expectations to finish fourth and fifth respectively.

Reigning premiers, the West Coast Eagles, opened the season with six straight wins but a mounting injury count eventually took its toll and they finished third, crucially missing out on home ground advantage in the first week of the finals.

The year also saw the retirement of some of the game's all-time greats, including Adelaide's Mark Ricciuto, Carlton's Anthony Koutoufides, Collingwood's Nathan Buckley and the Kangaroos' Glenn Archer, but the side-by-side exit of Essendon coach Kevin Sheedy and former skipper James Hird was the most memorable.

The two Bomber greats' farewell stretched out over rounds 21 and 22, as first Victorian fans and then Western Australian fans flocked to say goodbye.

The 2007 best and fairest winners were:

Adelaide: Andrew McLeod

Brisbane Lions: Jonathan Brown

Carlton: Andrew Carrazzo

Collingwood: Travis Cloke

Essendon: James Hird

Fremantle: Matthew Pavlich

Geelong: Gary Ablett

Hawthorn: Brad Sewell

Kangaroos: Brent Harvey

Melbourne: James McDonald

Port Adelaide: Kane Cornes

Richmond: Matthew Richardson

St Kilda: Nick Riewoldt

Sydney Swans: Brett Kirk

West Coast Eagles: Darren Glass

Western Bulldogs: Brian Harris

Official 2007 ladder (after round 22)

	For				Against						Home		Away		Streak	Scores		Av. margin		W<	L<	Plrs	R22
	P	W	L	D	G.B	Pts	G.B	Pts	%	Pts	W	L	W	L	W/L	High	Low	W	L	7pt	7pt	used	2006
1 GEELONG	22	18	4	0	370.322	2542	240.224	1664	152.76	72	9	2	9	2	1W	222	69	51	11	0	2	31	10
2 PORT ADELAIDE	22	15	7	0	337.292	2314	295.268	2038	113.54	60	8	3	7	4	4W	163	60	32	30	3	0	34	12
3 WEST COAST EAGLES	22	15	7	0	313.284	2162	281.249	1935	111.73	60	8	3	7	4	4W	158	62	31	34	1	1	34	1
4 KANGAROOS	22	14	8	0	314.299	2183	285.288	1998	109.26	56	6	5	8	3	2W	161	40	30	29	2	1	33	14
5 HAWTHORN	22	13	9	0	305.267	2097	266.259	1855	113.05	52	7	4	6	5	1L	180	31	39	29	1	1	34	11
6 COLLINGWOOD	22	13	9	0	284.307	2011	288.264	1992	100.95	52	7	4	6	5	1L	122	56	19	25	1	0	38	5
7 SYDNEY SWANS	22	12	9	1	297.249	2031	246.222	1698	119.61	50	8	3	4	6	1W	162	44	39	15	0	2	33	4
8 ADELAIDE	22	12	10	0	270.261	1881	244.248	1712	109.87	48	6	5	6	5	3W	110	57	28	17	0	2	34	2
9 St Kilda	22	11	10	1	267.272	1874	282.249	1941	96.55	46	7	4	4	6	1W	126	43	23	32	1	0	35	6
10 Brisbane Lions	22	9	11	2	283.288	1986	266.289	1885	105.36	40	5	5	4	6	2L	163	35	50	31	0	0	38	13
11 Fremantle	22	10	12	0	333.256	2254	317.296	2198	102.55	40	7	4	3	8	1L	173	58	38	27	1	1	40	3
12 Essendon	22	10	12	0	320.264	2184	351.288	2394	91.23	40	6	5	4	7	2L	127	56	17	31	3	1	39	15
13 Western Bulldogs	22	9	12	1	308.263	2111	358.321	2469	85.50	38	5	5	4	7	4L	141	57	23	47	1	0	36	8
14 Melbourne	22	5	17	0	273.252	1890	349.324	2418	78.16	20	4	7	1	10	1W	139	57	25	38	0	4	39	7
15 Carlton	22	4	18	0	312.295	2167	433.313	2911	74.44	16	4	7	0	11	11L	141	39	17	45	1	0	35	16
16 Richmond	22	3	18	1	285.248	1958	370.317	2537	77.18	14	2	8	1	10	1L	124	65	32	37	0	0	37	9



2007 RESULTS

ROUND 1 (Season Launch)

Friday, March 30

Melb 9.8 (62) v **St K 13.15 (93)** (MCG) *(N)*

Saturday, March 31

Kang 10.19 (79) v **Coll 12.10 (82)** (MCG)

Frem 16.9 (105) v **PA 19.7 (121)** (S)

BL 9.15 (69) v Haw 6.8 (44) (G) *(N)*

Syd 10.13 (73) v **WCE 11.8 (74)** (TS) *(N)*

Sunday, April 1

Adel 10.14 (74) v **Ess 16.9 (105)** (AS) *(E)*

WB 17.11 (113) v Geel 13.15 (93) (TD)

Carl 15.25 (115) v Rich 15.8 (98) (MCG) *(T)*

ROUND 2 (Easter)

Thursday, April 5

BL 15.12 (102) v St K 7.8 (50) (G) *(N)*

Saturday, April 7

Rich 11.6 (72) v **Syd 13.10 (88)** (MCG)

Geel 24.18 (162) v Carl 12.12 (84) (TD) *(N)*

WCE 12.15 (87) v Coll 11.9 (75) (S) *(N)*

Sunday, April 8

PA 17.20 (122) v Kang 15.14 (104) (AS) *(E)*

Ess 19.8 (122) v Frem 17.10 (112) (TD)

WB 11.6 (72) v **Adel 16.14 (110)** (MCG) *(T)*

Monday, April 9

Haw 17.14 (116) v Melb 14.10 (94) (MCG)

ROUND 3 (Rivalry Round)

Friday, April 13

Coll 17.13 (115) v Rich 13.12 (90) (MCG) *(N)*

Saturday, April 14

Carl 18.17 (125) v Ess 17.20 (122) (MCG)

PA 8.15 (63) v **Adel 13.9 (87)** (AS)

St K 17.14 (116) v WB 9.12 (66) (TD) *(N)*

Frem 11.4 (70) v **WCE 14.17 (101)** (S) *(N)*

Sunday, April 15

Syd 13.18 (96) v BL 10.9 (69) (SCG) *(E)*

Melb 8.9 (57) v **Geel 15.19 (109)** (MCG)

Kang 10.10 (70) v **Haw 13.13 (91)** (TD) *(T)*

ROUND 4

Friday, April 20

Rich 14.16 (100) v **WB 20.12 (132)** (MCG) *(N)*

Saturday, April 21

Coll 9.12 (66) v **PA 12.12 (84)** (MCG)

St K 9.14 (68) v **Ess 15.9 (99)** (TD)

Kang 12.15 (87) v BL 8.15 (63) (C) *(N)*

Adel 9.7 (61) v Syd 5.14 (44) (AS) *(N)*

Sunday, April 22

Haw 10.16 (76) v Geel 9.18 (72) (AU) *(E)*

Melb 13.14 (92) v **Frem 21.11 (137)** (MCG)

WCE 14.16 (100) v Carl 4.15 (39) (S)

ROUND 5 (Anzac Day)

Wednesday, April 25

Ess 11.13 (79) v **Coll 12.23 (95)** (MCG)

Friday, April 27

PA 14.12 (96) v St K 6.7 (43) (AS) *(N)*

Saturday, April 28

Rich 11.10 (76) v **WCE 14.15 (99)** (MCG)

Carl 18.16 (124) v **BL 21.10 (136)** (TD) *(N)*

Syd 17.7 (109) v Melb 8.12 (60) (SCG) *(N)*

Sunday, April 29

Haw 13.15 (93) v **WB 16.14 (110)** (MCG) *(E)*

Geel 15.12 (102) v **Kang 18.10 (118)** (SS)

Frem 7.16 (58) v Adel 8.9 (57) (S)

ROUND 6

Friday, May 4

St K 18.17 (125) v Carl 11.16 (82) (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, May 5

Ess 15.6 (96) v **Haw 20.11 (131)** (MCG)

WCE 10.17 (77) v WB 9.8 (62) (S)

Kang 16.15 (111) v Syd 14.11 (95) (TD) *(N)*

Adel 9.8 (62) v **Coll 11.20 (86)** (AS) *(N)*

Sunday, May 6

BL 17.18 (120) v Frem 10.15 (75) (G) *(E)*

Melb 9.17 (71) v **PA 10.16 (76)** (MCG)

Rich 9.11 (65) v **Geel 35.12 (222)** (TD) *(T)*

ROUND 7 (Mothers' Day)

Friday, May 11

Kang 18.9 (117) v Ess 13.17 (95) (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, May 12

Coll 17.17 (119) v Carl 14.11 (95) (MCG)

PA 16.19 (115) v Rich 10.15 (75) (AS)

BL 9.15 (69) v **Adel 14.16 (100)** (G) *(N)*

St K 15.7 (97) v Syd 11.5 (71) (TD) *(N)*

Sunday, May 13

Geel 16.13 (109) v WCE 10.10 (70) (SS) *(E)*

WB 16.16 (112) v Melb 16.10 (106) (TD)

Frem 14.12 (96) v Haw 11.14 (80) (S)

ROUND 8

Friday, May 18

Adel 14.15 (99) v Rich 14.6 (90) (AS) *(N)*

Saturday, May 19

Ess 18.19 (127) v BL 8.15 (63) (TD)

Geel 14.10 (94) v Frem 10.9 (69) (SS)

Haw 10.12 (72) v St K 6.8 (44) (MCG) *(N)*

Kang 22.15 (147) v Carl 20.10 (130) (C) *(N)*

Sunday, May 20

Syd 17.16 (118) v PA 13.9 (87) (SCG) *(E)*

WB 20.15 (135) v Coll 14.18 (102) (TD)

WCE 19.23 (137) v Melb 9.6 (60) (S)

ROUND 9 (Indigenous Round)

Friday, May 25

Frem 15.11 (101) v St K 6.19 (55) (S) *(N)*

Saturday, May 26

Carl 12.14 (86) v **Adel 15.15 (105)** (TD)

Haw 15.9 (99) v WCE 8.16 (64) (AU)

BL 13.9 (87) v **Coll 18.12 (120)** (G) *(N)*

Rich 12.12 (84) v **Ess 12.20 (92)** (MCG) *(N)*

Sunday, May 27

WB 8.9 (57) v **Syd 15.10 (100)** (MO) *(E)*

Melb 11.12 (78) v **Kang 10.19 (79)** (MCG)

PA 8.12 (60) v **Geel 16.20 (116)** (AS) *(T)*

ROUND 10

Friday, June 1

Coll 15.13 (103) v Frem 13.16 (94) (MCG) *(N)*

Saturday, June 2

Melb 13.11 (89) v **Adel 10.12 (72)** (MCG)

WCE 18.13 (121) v Kang 7.13 (55) (S)

Rich 10.13 (73) v BL 10.13 (73) (TD) *(N)*

Syd 11.7 (73) v **Ess 11.8 (74)** (SCG) *(N)*

Sunday, June 3

PA 10.15 (75) v **Haw 17.7 (109)** (AS) *(E)*

Carl 21.12 (138) v WB 19.14 (128) (MCG)

St K 9.11 (65) v **Geel 19.11 (125)** (TD) *(T)*

ROUND 11 (Queen's Birthday)

Friday, June 8

Ess 15.5 (95) v WCE 14.10 (94) (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, June 9

Haw 9.12 (66) v **Syd 11.9 (75)** (MCG)

BL 10.12 (72) v **WB 13.17 (95)** (G) *(N)*

Carl 22.9 (141) v PA 14.18 (102) (TD) *(N)*

Sunday, June 10

Adel 9.8 (62) v **Geel 9.15 (69)** (AS) *(E)*

St K 8.10 (58) v **Kang 11.14 (80)** (TD)

Frem 18.15 (123) v Rich 15.12 (102) (S)

Monday, June 11

Melb 13.16 (94) v Coll 11.15 (81) (MCG)

ROUND 12 (Split Round)

Friday, June 15

Carl 12.8 (80) v **Haw 27.18 (180)** (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, June 16

Kang 7.12 (54) v **Adel 15.10 (100)** (C) *(N)*

WB 22.9 (141) v Frem 16.19 (115) (TIO) *(N)*

Sunday, June 17

Geel 12.13 (85) v BL 5.5 (35) (SS) *(E)*

PA 19.12 (126) v Ess 13.17 (95) (AS) *(T)*

Friday, June 22

Rich 18.16 (124) v Melb 11.9 (75) (MCG) *(N)*

Saturday, June 23

Syd 8.9 (57) v **Coll 10.16 (76)** (TS) *(N)*

Sunday, June 24

WCE 11.10 (76) v **St K 15.9 (99)** (S)

ROUND 13

Friday, June 29

Ess 19.11 (125) v Melb 18.15 (123) (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, June 30

Geel 13.9 (87) v Syd 10.9 (69) (SS)

Frem 27.11 (173) v Carl 13.18 (96) (S)

BL 15.15 (105) v **PA 17.10 (112)** (G) *(N)*

St K 17.15 (117) v Rich 15.10 (100) (TD) *(N)*

Sunday, July 1

Adel 10.14 (74) v **WCE 14.11 (95)** (AS) *(E)*

Kang 17.9 (111) v WB 11.19 (85) (MCG)

Coll 12.15 (87) v **Haw 15.5 (95)** (TD) *(T)*

ROUND 14 (Heritage Round)

Friday, July 6

Ess 12.11 (83) v **Geel 19.19 (133)** (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, July 7

Coll 12.17 (89) v St K 12.8 (80) (MCG)

WB 20.13 (133) v PA 17.11 (113) (TD)

Adel 15.12 (102) v Haw 4.7 (31) (AS) *(N)*

WCE 9.10 (64) v **BL 13.13 (91)** (S) *(N)*

Sunday, July 8

Syd 11.23 (89) v Frem 9.7 (61) (SCG) *(E)*

Carl 14.17 (101) v **Melb 19.10 (124)** (MCG)

Rich 11.13 (79) v **Kang 14.20 (104)** (TD) *(T)*

ROUND 15

Friday, July 13

St K 11.16 (82) v Adel 12.8 (80) (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, July 14

Geel 11.14 (80) v Coll 9.10 (64) (MCG)

PA 22.21 (153) v WCE 9.8 (62) (AS)

Ess 14.14 (98) v **WB 20.11 (131)** (TD) *(N)*

Melb 12.10 (82) v **BL 18.18 (126)** (G) *(N)*

Sunday, July 15

Syd 25.12 (162) v Carl 15.10 (100) (SCG) *(E)*

Haw 19.15 (129) v Rich 11.10 (76) (MCG)

Frem 11.12 (78) v **Kang 12.10 (82)** (S)

ROUND 16

Friday, July 20

Geel 20.18 (138) v WB 9.9 (63) (TD) *(N)*

Saturday, July 21

Coll 18.14 (122) v Ess 14.9 (93) (MCG)

Adel 15.11 (101) v **Frem 20.6 (126)** (AS)

St K 14.11 (95) v Haw 11.12 (78) (TD) *(N)*

WCE 16.16 (112) v Syd 15.10 (100) (S) *(N)*

Sunday, July 22

BL 25.13 (163) v Carl 6.10 (46) (G) *(E)*



NAB CUP

Carlton was confident better days were ahead after it started 2007 with its second NAB Cup win in three seasons.

Carlton's 25-point win against the Brisbane Lions in the 2007 NAB Cup gives them some hope that better days are ahead.

While the traditional league powerhouse has fallen on hard times in recent premiership seasons – winning three wooden spoons from 2002-06 – the pre-season has been a different story for the Blues.

Their fighting win against the Lions was their second pre-season premiership in the past three seasons, and Blues fans would have enjoyed seeing their young side shine in front of a crowd of 46,094.

The Lions had come out firing at the opening bounce, opening up a 14-point lead just before half-time, thanks largely to a dominant midfield led by Simon Black and young ruckman Cameron Wood.

Carlton's defence had kept it in the match to that point with Setanta O'hAilpin keeping a tight rein on Brisbane's go-to forward Jonathan Brown.

But the Blues' midfield, led by Nick Stevens and Kade Simpson, then started to get on top, and kicked the next seven goals of the game, going to the final break with a 22-point lead.

The Lions rallied to get to within 12 points mid-way through the last quarter, but the young Blues' side regrouped and kicked two goals to seal an impressive victory.

Stevens was outstanding and won the Michael Tuck Medal for the best player on ground, while Andrew Walker, O'hAilpin, Marc Murphy and Brendan Fevola (four goals) were also good.

The Lions' best included midfielders Black and Cheynee Stiller (two goals), and half-back Jared Brennan.

As was the case after their 2005 pre-season win, the Blues could not maintain their good form into the 2007 premiership season, recording just four wins to finish 15th.

But with a young list that contains such talent as Murphy, Bryce Gibbs, Andrew Carrazzo and Walker, the Blues may yet look back at this year's NAB Cup win as the first step in their long climb back up the AFL ladder.

Carlton's NAB Cup premiership team:

Cain Ackland, Adam Bentick, Eddie Betts, Andrew Carrazzo, Cameron Cloke, Brendan Fevola, Brad Fisher, Bryce Gibbs, Adam Hartlett, Ryan Houlihan, Josh Kennedy, Anthony Koutoufides, Matthew Lappin, Marc Murphy, Setanta O'hAilpin, Jordan Russell, Heath Scotland, Kade Simpson, Nick Stevens, Bret Thornton, Jarrad Waite, Andrew Walker, Lance Whitnall, Simon Wiggins.

2007 NAB Cup

Round 1

Port Adelaide 2.9.17 (89) d Adelaide 2.10.8 (86) at AAMI Stadium
Kangaroos 1.15.18 (117) d Collingwood 1.8.9 (66) at Carrara
Western Bulldogs 1.12.16 (97) d Sydney 1.9.7 (70) at Manuka Oval
Carlton 1.10.14 (83) d Essendon 1.9.16 (79) at Telstra Dome
Brisbane Lions 0.7.10 (52) d St Kilda 1.5.6 (45) at Cazaly Stadium
Geelong 3.17.10 (139) d Richmond 1.14.3 (96) at Skilled Stadium
Hawthorn 3.11.17 (110) d Melbourne 2.9.14 (86) at Telstra Dome
Fremantle 4.11.10 (112) d West Coast 0.10.15 (75) at Subiaco

Quarter-finals

Brisbane Lions 2.12.12 (102) d Western Bulldogs 2.7.10 (70) at Telstra Dome
Carlton 1.9.12 (75) d Hawthorn 2.7.8 (68) at Aurora Stadium
Geelong 0.9.6 (60) d Port Adelaide 0.7.15 (57) at TIO Stadium
Kangaroos 1.14.7 (100) d Fremantle 0.13.13 (91) at Telstra Dome

Semi-finals

Brisbane Lions 3.8.10 (85) d Geelong 0.10.13 (73) at Telstra Dome
Carlton 1.13.13 (100) d Kangaroos 1.12.4 (85) at Carrara

Grand Final

Carlton	1.2.1	1.4.3	2.9.3	2.12.7 (97)
Brisbane Lions	0.2.2	0.6.7	0.7.11	0.10.12 (72)

BEST: Carlton – Stevens, Walker, Murphy, O'hAilpin, Carrazzo, Fevola.

Brisbane Lions – Black, Stiller, Brennan, Wood, Harding, Brown.

GOALS (nine points): Carlton – Carrazzo, Fisher. **Brisbane Lions** – Nil.

GOALS (six points): Carlton – Fevola 4, Fisher 3, Koutoufides, Russell, Scotland, Stevens, Whitnall.

Brisbane Lions – Brown 2, Johnson 2, Stiller 2, McGrath, Moody, Sherman, Wood.

Umpires: Jeffery, Ryan, Stevic, Vozzo.

Attendance: 46,094, at Telstra Dome.

Michael Tuck Medal: Nick Stevens (Carlton).





ATTACK: Carlton's Nick Stevens chased by the Brisbane Lions' Simon Black during the NAB Cup Grand Final.



AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

Eight new members were inducted into the Australian Football Hall of Fame in 2007, with six-time Melbourne premiership coach Norm Smith elevated to Legend status.

AFL coach of the century and six-time Melbourne premiership coach Norm Smith was made a Legend of the Australian Football Hall of Fame on July 19.

The new inductees were former players Robert DiPierdomenico, Darren Jarman, Frank Johnson, Paul Kelly, Murray Weideman, Dean Kemp and Michael Long, and former administrator and player Bob McLean.

The Australian Football Hall of Fame was established in 1996 and serves to recognise players, coaches, umpires, administrators and media representatives who have made an outstanding contribution to Australian Football – at any level – since the game's inception in 1858.

Players are eligible only after they have retired from the game for at least three years. Coaches, umpires, administrators and media representatives must also be retired.



HONOURED: The 2007 Australian Football Hall of Fame inductees. Back row (from left): Peter Smith (son of Legend Norm Smith), Michael Long, Darren Jarman, Frank Johnson, Murray Weideman, Robert DiPierdomenico and Dean Kemp. Front row: Paul Kelly, flanked by Janine Jackson (left) and Sue Doyle, daughters of the late Bob McLean.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



ROBERT DIPIERDOMENICO

Born: May 5, 1958

No overnight sensation, Robert DiPierdomenico made his senior debut with Hawthorn in 1975, but did not play another game until 1978. But with his strong build and fearless attack on the ball, he would become one of the most feared wingmen the game has seen. A big-game expert, 'Dipper' played in five premiership sides (1978, 1983, 1986 and 1988-89) in 240 games at Hawthorn to 1991. He also shared the 1986 Brownlow Medal with Sydney's Greg Williams, was a regular Victorian representative, and was named All-Australian in 1984 and 1986-87. Enormously popular with all supporters, he is now synonymous with the NAB AFL Auskick junior program.



DARREN JARMAN

Born: January 28, 1967

Darren Jarman was a silky-skilled forward or midfielder who could turn a game with his freakish goalkicking ability. Jarman played with North Adelaide and Norwood in the SANFL before joining Hawthorn in 1991. He played 109 games with the Hawks, was a member of their 1991 premiership team and won their 1995 best and fairest. He then crossed to Adelaide in 1996, where he played 121 games before retiring in 2001 with 386 AFL goals. Jarman was a crucial player in the Crows' 1997 and 1998 Grand Final wins – with respective six and five-goal hauls – a three-time All-Australian (1992, 1995 and 1996), and runner-up in the 1995 Brownlow Medal.



FRANK JOHNSON

Born: July 3, 1932

Raw-boned ruckman Frank Johnson was a star long before he made his VFL debut with South Melbourne at almost 28 years of age. Playing in the VFA for Port Melbourne, he won All-Australian blazers at the 1953 and 1956 Carnivals, and a club record five best and fairest awards. When he joined South in 1960, Johnson was an instant sensation, representing Victoria and winning the club's best and fairest in his debut season. Although he played just 64 games with the Swans before his retirement in 1964, in that time he established himself as one of the club's greatest ruckmen.

**PAUL KELLY****Born:** July 28, 1969

With a rugby league background, Kelly had plenty of chinks in his game when he debuted with the Swans in 1990. But in one of the club's bleakest on-field periods, he quickly showed strong leadership qualities and, after winning the club's 1992 best and fairest, was appointed captain in 1993 – just his fourth AFL season. Kelly proved the Swans' decision a masterstroke, becoming one of the most inspirational leaders in the club's history and winning the 1995 Brownlow Medal. A four-time Sydney best and fairest winner, he played 234 games, kicked 200 goals and was named vice-captain to Bob Skilton in the Swans' Team of the Century.

**DEAN KEMP****Born:** February 17, 1969

One of the all-time great West Coast Eagles, Kemp played a vital role in their early years with 243 games from 1990-2001. Wonderfully skilled, a hard runner and a deceptively strong mark, he could play anywhere from half-forward to half-back. A noted big-game player, Kemp was one of the Eagles' best in its first Grand Final win against Geelong in 1992, then won the Norm Smith Medal in their 1994 win, again against the Cats. A best and fairest winner (1992), All-Australian (1992) and West Australian State of Origin representative, Kemp shared the Eagles' captaincy with Ben Cousins in his final season of 2001.

**MICHAEL LONG****Born:** October 1, 1969

When thinking of Michael Long's distinguished playing career, his exceptional 1993 finals series always stands out. During Essendon's four finals that year, the dashing centreman tapped into a vein of spell-binding form that saw him win the Norm Smith Medal and guide the 'Baby Bombers' to the flag. Long joined Essendon from the

St Mary's club in Darwin, playing 190 games from 1989-2001, and was a member of its 1993 and 2000 premiership teams. A natural leader, Long captained Essendon through most of the 1999 season in James Hird's absence through injury. Just as importantly, he proved himself a leader off-field, leading the fight against racism in football.

**BOB McLEAN****Born:** February 1, 1914**Died:** November 9, 1989

One of the biggest names in South Australian football, Bob McLean played 221 games for the Port Adelaide Magpies (147) and Norwood (74), then served his beloved Magpies for 41 years as an administrator. McLean was a fearless ruckman/forward, who booted 471 goals in the SANFL, topping Port's goalkicking four times and the SANFL goalkicking list in 1947. He was also a key member of the 1939 Port premiership side. McLean was also a state selector for 17 years, an SANFL director for 29 years, and was awarded an OBE for his services to football. He was inducted into the SANFL Hall of Fame in 2002.

**MURRAY WEIDEMAN****Born:** February 16, 1936

Murray Weideman was one of football's most ferocious competitors, a burly forward whose imposing physical presence in 180 games with Collingwood from 1953-63 ensured every one of his teammates walked taller. After playing in Collingwood's 1953 premiership side (as a reserve) in his debut season, 'The Weed' was stand-in skipper in the Magpies' 1958 Grand Final win over Melbourne, captained the Pies from 1960-63, won the club best and fairest in 1957 and 1961-62, and topped the Magpies' goalkicking in 1959-60 and 1962. Recruited from the Preston and District Junior Football Association, Weideman left Collingwood at just 27, but returned as coach for the 1975-76 seasons.

**HALL OF FAME LEGEND****NORM SMITH****Born:** November 21, 1914**Died:** July 29, 1973

Norm Smith vies with Collingwood's Jock McHale – already an official Legend of the Australian Football Hall of Fame – for the title of the greatest coach in League history. From 1954-64, Smith guided Melbourne to eight grand finals for six premierships, including a record five in six years from 1955-60. After starting his coaching career at Fitzroy (1949-51), Smith returned to Melbourne, where he had been a star full-forward in the 1939-41 and 1948 premiership sides. His much-anticipated return did not result in immediate success, however, and in 1953, Smith's second season at the helm, the Demons slumped to second-bottom. But in 1953 and 1954, he blooded 21 players, among them several future champions – Ron Barassi, Brian Dixon, Ian Ridley, Bob Johnson and Frank Adams. Smith developed the fittest and meanest team in the competition, and a game plan that encouraged fast, play-on football and long kicking. His career was closely intertwined with that of his 'foster son', Barassi, who was the big-game performer Smith turned to in a crisis. In mid-1965, Smith was sensationally sacked and reinstated by Melbourne after a dispute with the club's committee, eventually retiring as Demon coach in 1967 after suffering heart problems. In 1970, he coached South Melbourne to its first finals appearance in 25 years. He died in 1973.

AFL LIFE MEMBERS

Nine new AFL Life Members are to join the elite few who have provided great service to Australian Football.

After the 2007 season, 12 new AFL Life Members were to be honoured. The group has collectively won 16 premierships, three Norm Smith Medals and one Brownlow Medal. Players and field umpires automatically qualify for Life Membership having reached 300 senior games, which includes premiership season matches, finals, International Rules, State of Origin and pre-season games. A sub-committee consisting of AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou, former AFL Commission Chairman John Kennedy and *Herald Sun* journalist Mike Sheahan considered nominations for Life Membership and the Jack Titus Award, making recommendations to the AFL Commission.



JASON AKERMANIS

One of the most colourful AFL identities of the past 15 years, Jason Akermanis stands out in everything he does. But he will be best remembered as a member of the Brisbane Lions' 'Fab Four' midfield division – along with Michael Voss, Simon Black and Nigel Lappin – that powered the Lions to three consecutive premierships from 2001-03. A classy player with speed and a keen goal sense, Akermanis won the 2001 Brownlow Medal, was a two-time Lions' best and fairest winner, a four-time All-Australian and kicked five goals in the 2003 Grand Final win. He moved to the Western Bulldogs at the end of 2006.



PETER BELL

Delisted by Fremantle after just one season, Peter Bell has spent the past 12 seasons proving his detractors wrong. Bell moved to the Kangaroos in 1996 where, as a hard-working midfielder, he played in the club's 1996 and 1999 premiership teams and won the 2000 best and fairest award. By then the Dockers realised they had seriously underrated Bell

and lured him back west in 2001. He has become one of Fremantle's most decorated players, winning three best and fairest awards and captaining the club from 2002-06.



BRIAN COOK

Brian Cook has been one of the AFL's leading administrators for nearly 20 years. As CEO of the West Coast Eagles (1990-99) and Geelong (since 2000), Cook led both clubs to on-field and off-field success. In his time at the Eagles, the club won its first two premierships (1992 and 1994) and established itself as a financial powerhouse. Cook led Geelong to its first premiership in 44 years in 2007 and transformed its once dire finances. Cook also served as general manager of the WA Football Development Trust, CEO of the West Australian Football Commission from 1983-89, and was a player in the VFL, VFA and WAFL.



NEVILLE CROWE

Few have served their club with more distinction and devotion than Neville Crowe has Richmond. Joining the Tigers in 1957, Crowe played 150 games as a fearless ruckman, captaining the club from 1963-66, winning its best and fairest award three times and representing Victoria seven times. Crowe also served the Tigers as club president from 1987-93, when he led the 'Save our Skins' fundraising campaign that helped keep the club from folding. Today, he continues to serve his beloved club as a senior executive.



PETER EVERITT

The much-travelled big man has been an outstanding player over 15 seasons, providing excellent service to St Kilda, Hawthorn and, now, the

Sydney Swans. One of the competition's best tap ruckman, Everitt has also given opposition teams headaches when resting on the forward line. While team success has largely eluded him, Everitt's individual honours include two best and fairest awards (St Kilda's in 2001 and Hawthorn's in 2004) and three All-Australian selections, while he represented Australia in the International Rules series in 1998.



DUSTIN FLETCHER

As a schoolboy in his debut season, Dustin Fletcher had seven goals kicked on him by Carlton great Stephen Kernahan in the 1993 Grand Final. But he has since grown into one of the competition's most stingy defenders. Tall with exceptionally long arms, Fletcher has a remarkable ability to make late spoils on opponents who seem clear to take regulation marks. He beat a star-studded field to win the Bombers' best and fairest in 2000 – when the club dominated the competition – and is also a two-time premiership player and All-Australian.



SHANNON GRANT

Shannon Grant's 1999 Norm Smith medal win was the best comeback to critics who doubted his ability to perform on football's biggest stage. After the disappointment of playing in two losing Grand Final teams – Sydney in 1996 and the Kangaroos in 1998 – and of playing well below his best on both occasions, Grant was not about to let himself, or his team, be beaten again in the 1999 Grand Final, slamming on four goals in a best-on-ground performance. A classy midfielder and dangerous half-forward, Grant won the Kangaroos' best and fairest award in 2001 and All-Australian selection in 2005.

**ANTHONY KOUTOUFIDES**

Anthony Koutoufides revolutionised Australian Football, becoming the prototype for the modern midfielder. At 191cm, Koutoufides had the height and strength to play in a key position, but also the speed to play on the ball, where he outmarked smaller opponents and outran anyone else. And it was as a midfielder in 2000 that he produced football that was as good as, if not better than, anything produced by any player of his era; he was named that year's AFL Players' Association Most Valuable Player. Koutoufides was also a two-time Carlton best and fairest winner, a 1995 premierships player and Carlton skipper from 2004-06.

**NIGEL LAPPIN**

Another member of Brisbane's 'Fab Four' midfield, Nigel Lappin played a key part in the Lions' 2001-03 premierships hat-trick. Lappin's list of achievements is impressive – three-time premierships player, four-time All-Australian, 2004 best and fairest winner, three-time Victorian State of Origin representative and two-time Australian International Rules representative. A hard-running midfielder with good pace and skills, Lappin missed all of the 2006 season with a severe ankle injury, but rebounded in 2007 with a strong season.

**ANDREW MCLEOD**

Andrew McLeod's pace, skill and ability to run rings around close-checking opponents have not only electrified crowds but made him a two-time premierships player (1997 and 1998), two-time Norm Smith medallist, five-time All-Australian, three-time Adelaide best and fairest winner and the Indigenous Team of the Century's ruck-rover. McLeod is one of the most respected players in the AFL today, a fact reflected by his selection as captain of the 2007 All-Australian team and as co-captain of the 2005 Australian International Rules team. Most commonly played at half-back, he can also be moved to the midfield or forward line with devastating effect.

**BILL SANDERS**

Bill Sanders has been a passionate supporter of South Australian football for almost 50 years as a player, official and administrator. He will be most remembered for overseeing Adelaide's entry to the AFL in 1991, when as the club's inaugural CEO from 1990-2001, he helped establish it as one of the competition's powerhouses with its strong membership, sound finances and early on-field success with its 1997 and 1998 premierships. Sanders continues to serve the Crows as their chairman and was previously a SANFL player, team manager and chairman with Woodville.

**ADAM SIMPSON**

Adam Simpson personifies the Kangaroo's never-say-die attitude in a time when the club has remained extremely competitive despite regular predictions it would fall to the bottom of the ladder. Starting his career as a tight-checking run-with player, Simpson has developed into one of the competition's most consistent midfielders, winning the Roos' best and fairest award and All-Australian selection in 2002. A two-time premierships player (1996 and 1999), Simpson has been the club's skipper since 2004, providing much-needed leadership as the club attempts to rebuild for another successful era.

2007 JACK TITUS AWARD

KEN WHIFFIN

The longest-serving staff member at St Kilda, Ken Whiffin was recruited to the club by former coach Allan Jeans in 1964 and has been its devoted servant ever since. For the past 43 years, he has worked tirelessly for the Saints as a runner, trainer and head trainer, while he continues to serve as a member of the club's support staff.

**Jack Titus Award recipients**

2006	Bill Sutherland	WCE	1995	Greg Sewell	Ess	1984	Newton Chandler	Carl
2005	Brian Le Brocq	AFL	1994	Bill McMaster	Geel	1983	Graeme Richmond	Rich
2004	Brian Coleman	Haw	1993	Keith McKenzie	Carl/NMelb	1982	Roy McConnell	Rich
2003	Tony Jewell	Rich	1992	Allan Cooke	Rich	1981	Ian Drake	St Kilda
2002	Con Regan	Frem	1991	Ron Richards	Coll	1980	Max Elmer	Haw
2001	Wes Lofts	Carl	1990	John Dugdale	N Melb	1979	Jim Cardwell	Melb
2000	Andy Angwin	Haw	1989	Bruce Comben	Carl	1978	Jack Adams	N Melb
1999	Laurie Dwyer	N Melb	1988	Sef Dunn	Haw	1978	Bill Cookson	Ess
1998	Ken Goddard	Haw	1987	George Coates	Fitz	1977	Jack Titus	Rich
1997	Bill Stephen	Fitz/Ess	1986	Jim Hannan	N Melb			
1996	Rick Quade	Syd	1985	Ian Ridley	Melb			

The late Jack Titus was a champion Richmond forward who kicked 970 goals from 1926 to 1943. He played 294 games and for many years held the consecutive games record with 204. Titus was also a committeeman and senior coach at Richmond. The award is presented annually in recognition of outstanding service to football.

RETIREEES

A host of the game's modern greats ended their careers in 2007.

Rarely has a season seen a more decorated group of players say goodbye than 2007. Essendon's James Hird, Collingwood's Nathan Buckley and Adelaide's Mark Ricciuto, who were all among their generation's best handful of players. Each was a Brownlow medallist, a multiple best and fairest winner, and a virtual automatic selection in the All-Australian team when fit.

Hird and Ricciuto were also premiership players and, while a flag proved elusive for Buckley, he joined Hird as a Norm Smith medallist in the Pies' 2002 Grand Final loss.

Just beneath this footballing royalty, you had another star-studded trio – Anthony Koutoufides, Glenn Archer and Chris Grant.

At his best, Koutoufides sat comfortably alongside Hird, Buckley and Ricciuto, but injury cruelled the latter part of the Blue's career. In his standout 2000 season, he played some of the best football seen, ripping opposition teams apart with his unique mix of height, strength and speed.

Archer and Grant also had considerable talent. Both were three-time All-Australians, Archer the 1996 Norm Smith

medallist, and Grant, though ineligible because of suspension, was the leading vote-getter in the 1997 Brownlow Medal.

But their revered standing in the game had as much to do with their passion for their clubs – Archer was voted the Kangaroos' Shinboner of the Century and Grant famously turned his back on a lucrative contract offer from Port Adelaide in 1996 after a young Bulldogs fan begged him to stay.

The talent exodus did not end here, though. This year's group of retirees won a total of 33 best and fairest awards, 44 All-Australian selections and three AFL Rising Star awards, and included 12 premiership players who won a total of 18 flags.

Some of the group's other notable names were former Bulldog skipper Luke Darcy, two-time Copeland Trophy winner James Clement, and 2004 Norm Smith medallist and 1998 AFL Rising Star Byron Pickett.

Brisbane Lions premiership heroes Chris Johnson and Chris Scott were others to say goodbye. In doing so, Johnson became the last former Fitzroy player to retire, while Scott exited as the 1994 AFL Rising Star and the Lions' 1998 best and fairest winner.



POPULAR PIE: Collingwood captain Nathan Buckley celebrates with fans after his team beat the Sydney Swans in round 21 at the MCG.

Departing players (more than 100 games)

Player	Team	Games	Goals
Glenn Archer	Kangaroos	311	143
Clint Bizzell	Geelong/Melbourne	163	79
Mark Bolton	Essendon	124	50
Nathan D. Brown	Melbourne	146	36
Nathan Buckley	Collingwood	280	284
Scott Camporeale	Carlton/Essendon	252	205
Matthew Clarke	Brisbane Lions/Adelaide/St Kilda	258	38
James Clement	Fremantle/Collingwood	230	51
Troy Cook	Sydney Swans/Fremantle	193	77
Luke Darcy	Western Bulldogs	226	183
Ben Dixon	Hawthorn	203	282
Darren Gaspar	Sydney Swans/Richmond	228	23
Aaron Hamill	Carlton/St Kilda	190	239
Chris Grant	Western Bulldogs	341	554
Jonathan Hay	Hawthorn/Kangaroos	157	12
Chris Heffernan	Essendon/Melbourne	170	56
James Hird	Essendon	253	343
Chris Johnson	Fitzroy/Brisbane Lions	264	172
Rowan Jones	West Coast Eagles	158	70
Kent Kingsley	Kangaroos/Geelong/Richmond	125	239
Anthony Koutoufides	Carlton	278	226
Matthew Lappin	St Kilda/Carlton	251	247
Paul Licuria	Collingwood	192	72
Brett Montgomery	Western Bulldogs/Port Adelaide	204	119
Shane Parker	Fremantle	238	11
Byron Pickett	Kangaroos/Port Adelaide/Melbourne	204	177
Mark Ricciuto	Adelaide	312	292
Matthew Robbins	Geelong/Western Bulldogs	146	135
Chris Scott	Brisbane Lions	215	79
Joel Smith	St Kilda/Hawthorn	221	90
Andrew Thompson	St Kilda	221	93
Richie Vandenberg	Hawthorn	145	64
Brett Voss	Brisbane Lions/St Kilda	170	67
Darryl Wakelin	St Kilda/Port Adelaide	261	12
Lance Whitnall	Carlton	216	348



Glenn Archer



Clint Bizzell



Mark Bolton



Nathan D. Brown



Nathan Buckley



Scott Camporeale



Matthew Clarke



James Clement



Troy Cook



Luke Darcy



Ben Dixon



Darren Gaspar



Aaron Hamill



Chris Grant



Jonathan Hay



Chris Heffernan



James Hird



Chris Johnson



Rowan Jones



Kent Kingsley



Anthony Koutoufides



Matthew Lappin



Paul Licuria



Brett Montgomery



Shane Parker



Byron Pickett



Mark Ricciuto



Matthew Robbins



Chris Scott



Joel Smith



Andrew Thompson



Richie Vandenberg



Brett Voss



Darryl Wakelin



Lance Whitnall

OBITUARIES

Several key football industry personnel sadly passed away.

Ronald Barry Evans, AM

The football world mourned the loss of Ron Evans (right) just before the start of the 2007 season. He died on March 9, 2007, aged 67, after losing a seven-month battle with cancer.

Evans had resigned as Chairman of the AFL Commission three weeks before his death. He is remembered as a distinguished businessman, a top footballer and administrator and loving family man.

Tributes poured in, from the then Prime Minister John Howard, down. Mr Howard said: "Ron was a friendly and engaging man who had an infectious love of Australian Football ... he taught me a great deal about the game." Extracts from other tributes included: "He was an excellent mentor... obviously just a beautiful person" from Essendon coach Kevin Sheedy ... "I unashamedly say Ron was a mentor but in many ways a football hero to me" from Collingwood President Eddie McGuire and "Everything Ron did was marked with his own personal integrity, dignity, sense of fairness and humility... he will be missed but will never be forgotten" from AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou.

For almost 50 years, Evans rode across the summit of the game, first as a player with Essendon and West Perth and later as President of the Essendon Football Club and Chairman of the AFL. Above all, he was a great lover of the game and helped shape its destiny and the 10 years before his death had been the chief architect of monumental change. It was a time when the AFL built Telstra Dome, helped finance major development at the MCG, clinched lucrative broadcast deals and lifted crowds, club memberships and TV audiences to record levels.

Evans was a man of utmost integrity with an almost shy demeanour. But he knew football, knew what football wanted and he got the job done. He listened, he thought and he acted and left the game in rock-solid shape. He didn't seek the limelight, but when he had to stand under it and present a case that might have seemed sometimes

unfavourable to some, he stood firm. Evans was also a brilliant businessman and is best known as managing director of a major conglomerate, Spotless Group Ltd.

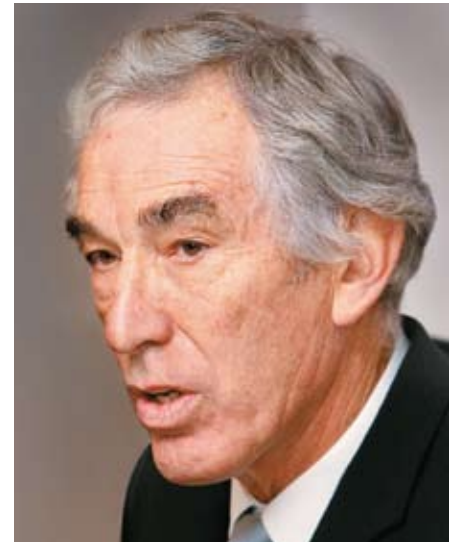
Evans played 64 games and kicked 210 goals with Essendon from 1958-62. He joined the club with his great friend Ken Fraser and the pair were winners on the Essendon forward line, Fraser at centre half-forward and Evans at full-forward. Evans twice topped the VFL goalkicking – in 1959 with 69 goals and 1960 with 67. From 1963-65 he played 60 games and kicked 271 goals with West Perth and topped the WAFL goalkicking in 1963. Evans represented the VFL in 1959 and 1960 and WA five times.

From 1988-92 Evans was Essendon president and was instrumental in moving the club's home ground from Windy Hill to the MCG in the early 1990s. He was appointed to the AFL Commission in 1993 and became Chairman in 1998, a position he held until just before his death. He was to be inducted as a Life Member of the AFL at the league's general meeting on March 22, 2007.

Evans also played District cricket with North Melbourne. Away from sport, he was also a director of Healthscope and a director of Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. He was honoured with the Order of Australia for his contribution to football, business, commerce and the community.

His funeral service on March 16 at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne was conducted by the Dean of Melbourne, the Very Reverend David Richardson who was assisted by The Precentor, The Reverend Canon Anne Wentzel. Chief mourners were Ron's wife, Andrea, sons David and Richard and daughter Deanna. "It was the day football royalty turned out in force to say goodbye to its favorite prince," said one report. More than 1200 seats were filled, with many more mourners standing. Readings and tributes were delivered by his wife Andrea, daughter Deanna, sons David and Richard, grandson James, Ken Fraser, Andrew Demetriou and

Bill Kelty. After the service mourners gathered in the Long Room at the MCG where the celebration of Ron's life continued.



Following is an edited extract of the eulogy given by AFL Commissioner Bill Kelty at Ron's funeral:

There are lots of things I could say about Ron Evans and lots of conversations I had with him, but the one thing you could never do with Ron was actually talk about him. You could never say how good he was, or what he did, because he'd always pass on to the next subject.

The one exception was during a recent conversation we had about the Super Bowl. Ron asked what I found most interesting about it and I told him how I was struck by what the commentators had said about one of the coaches.

Apparently, when this coach walked in to talk to his team for the first time, he told them: "You must understand me. I don't talk too loud, I don't abuse players and I don't swear because I respect you for what you've done so far to get here."

The coach went on to tell his players how his task was to build a team capable of winning and that his players must understand one thing – they should not mistake his quietness for a lack of determination and will. I looked at Ron

and said: "Ron, that reminds me of you."

"Bill, your parents teach you these things," he told me. "My mum, my dad, they taught me this: if you look for the best in people you will always find the best."

Ron Evans was quiet but determined; he was strong and caring. He was a person of integrity, dignity, and kindness.

As an Essendon supporter at the age of 10, I remember picking up *The Sporting Globe* and reading about two young players from this obscure football team, Essendon Baptist St John, who were going to play for Essendon. One was a full-forward, one was a centre half-forward: Ron Evans and Ken Fraser. As an Essendon supporter in 1958, you looked to the future. I remember them playing. I remember the joy they gave me. I remember Ron kicking 10 goals against Hawthorn. I could hardly wait to get to school the next day to talk about Ron Evans kicking 10 goals.

I picked up a poem by Rupert Brooke, a sad poem, about two young people going to war. He wrote: "They were so supple, so tall, modest and brave. Thirsty for good, they were fired by a purer flame than youth." To me, this was Ron Evans and Ken Fraser. They meant something other than football; they meant quality and integrity.

It was years and years later that I got to meet them. In 1978 or '79 I got this call from Ken Fraser. He said: "Would you like to have lunch with Ron and I?"

I could hardly wait. I was nervous all day waiting to meet Ron and Ken. And when we had lunch, I could never get either of them to talk about themselves. They were there to talk about Essendon Football Club and what could be done – as if they hadn't given enough. They were there to make it a better club. And a better club they did make it.

They took an inward-looking, boys-own football club and made it into a community football club, which cared about women, and cared about supporters, and cared about Indigenous Australians. They wanted to take it out of the confines of Essendon as a suburb and make it a national club.

Aside from the list of magnificent structural achievements at the AFL, Ron touched the spirit of football. Now, spirit is something you can't measure, you can't weigh it, and most of the time you can't see it. But what Ron Evans

did was touch the soul of football and change the spirit in a way that made it better.

He impregnated his own values on the culture of this game, hopefully forever.

He did it by having regard for the players, having regard for the supporters, giving opportunity for people to play the game, opportunity for them to be well paid; opportunity for people to see the game. He changed the nature of this game. He changed the nature of the AFL in the same way he changed Essendon.

I said to him in hospital: "Whatever you think, Ron, there's one great legacy that you will have that few people will have. Every time a young player learns to kick the ball for the first time, there's a bit of you in him. Every time an Essendon player pulls on his jumper, there's a bit of you. And when a Bulldog, Melbourne or Kangaroo player plays the game, there's a bit of Ron Evans, for without you it's unlikely their clubs would have survived in this way."

Ron Evans was simply one of the most wonderful people I have ever met. His contribution to this society and football and business is, I think, without parallel.

Ron, I loved you as a kid, I admired you as a man, and was inspired by you as a leader. And the inspiration of good people doing good things is, in my judgment, without peer.

Peter Allen

Peter Allen died on June 24, 2007, aged 68. Allen did much to improve the conditions of AFL players and coaches as CEO of the AFL Coaches' Association and, before that, as the first CEO of the AFL Players' Association. AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou, a former CEO of the AFLPA, described Allen as "a thorough gentleman who was completely dedicated to the job". AFLPA CEO Brendon Gale said: "Peter made a significant and lasting contribution to the conditions of employment enjoyed by AFL players today." Allen was awarded life membership of the AFLPA in 2005.

Stan Booth

Former Essendon rover/half-forward Stan Booth died on August 30, 2007, aged 73. Booth made his senior debut in 1952 and finished in 1959 after playing 102 games

and kicking 118 goals. He was a member of the losing 1957 Grand Final side and was a member of the Essendon reserves premiership side in 1952. Booth worked his way up from the Essendon thirds after coming from Moonee Imperials. After leaving Essendon, Booth was captain-coach of Sandy Bay in Tasmania from 1960-62 and he coached Aberfeldie junior sides in Victoria.

Alan Dale

Alan Dale, who died on April 21, 2007, aged 77, was the first winner of the Morrish Medal in 1947, which was awarded to the best and fairest player of the VFL Thirds. Dale went on to play senior football for two League clubs – Essendon and St Kilda. A strong centreman, he was a member of Essendon's 1950 premiership side. He played 45 games from 1950-53 and 1956, and managed 17 games with St Kilda in 1956-57. After leaving Essendon the first time, he coached Wangaratta Rovers in the Ovens and Murray League. After his VFL career Dale coached Belgrave, Oakleigh and Mount Waverley.

Ted Ellis

Ted Ellis died on August 5, aged 94, after complications from a fall. Ellis played 150 games – 85 for North Melbourne from 1933-39 and 65 with Footscray from 1940-44. In 1937, he represented Victoria in a carnival in Perth. In 1942, Ellis won further acclaim when he won Footscray's best and fairest award. He also played in the finals with Footscray that year, as a back pocket in the losing first semi-final team against South Melbourne. Ellis, who played in defence and attack, was a fine all-round sportsman, excelling in running, boxing, cricket and billiards.

Len Fitzgerald

Len Fitzgerald, who made his debut for Collingwood in 1945 aged 15 years and 349 days, died in South Australia, aged 77, on April 17, 2007. He was the sixth youngest player to make his debut in VFL/AFL history. While Fitzgerald was a star in Victoria in his 96 games with Collingwood (1945-50), he made an even bigger impact in SA where he played 125 games with Sturt (1951-55, 1959-62) and won the Magarey Medal three times (1952, 1954, 1959). Fitzgerald was an

All-Australian in 1953, and played 20 state games for SA and two for Victoria. He was a noted half-forward and a foundation member of the Australian Football Hall of Fame.

Alec Gillon AM OBE

Alec Gillon, who died, aged 97, on August 25, 2007, was a great promoter of the now-defunct Victorian Football Association and a central figure in many of the VFA's biggest decisions. He was the VFA's longest-serving president, unopposed from 1954-1980. Gillon played with Brunswick and was a member of the 1938 premiership side. He became a Brunswick committeeman and, as a club delegate, it took him to the roles of vice-president and then president of the VFA. Gillon also had many years on football's controlling body, then known as the Australian National Football Council.

George Grljusich

George Grljusich died on November 6, 2007, aged 68, after a short battle with lung and bone cancer. The controversial and colourful Grljusich made his final broadcast on Perth radio station 6PR on October 17, a few weeks before his death. During his 47 years at the microphone, he covered six Olympic Games, was a legend in WA football and harness racing, and commentated on 93 different sports. He started with the ABC when still playing football with South Fremantle.

Clinton Grybas

The death of respected 3AW and Fox Sports broadcaster Clinton Grybas on January 5, 2008, sparked a stream of tributes from the media, the AFL, players and clubs for the likeable 32-year-old. More than 1000 people attended his funeral service in Melbourne's outer eastern suburbs, and were touched by tributes from his family, friends, colleagues and his partner Laureenna Toulmin. Grybas regularly hosted AFL functions such as the All-Australian team announcement and his death at came as a great shock.

George Harris

George Harris, the man behind Carlton's rise in the 1960s and '70s, died, aged 84, on November 26, 2007. Harris swept into office as president in 1965 and at the same

time engineered Ron Barassi's switch from Melbourne to coach and play for Carlton. Harris was president from 1964-74 and 1978-80 and during that time Carlton won the premierships in 1968 (the club's first since 1947), 1970, 1972 and 1979 and finished runner-up in 1969 and 1973. Harris, who was born in St Kilda, survived the horrors of Changi during World War II. A stroke left Harris mute in 1991, but he remained an ardent fan.

Ern Henfry

Ern Henfry, captain of Carlton's 1947 premiership team, died in WA on January 13, 2007, aged 85. In 1939 Henfry was a star centreman with Perth and represented WA against Victoria after only six matches. He played two games with Carlton in 1944 during a brief transfer to Melbourne in the RAAF and, after World War II, he returned to Melbourne as a bank officer. He was best on ground in the 1947 Grand Final and shared Carlton's best and fairest award with Bert Deacon, that year's Brownlow medallist. In 1949, he captained Victoria against WA and SA. Henfry returned to WA in 1953 and had another season with Perth. He played 84 games for Carlton.

Allan Hird

Allan Hird snr died on May 16, 2007, aged 88. Hird played 14 games for Hawthorn (1938-39), 102 with Essendon (1940-45) and 38 as captain-coach of St Kilda (1946-47). He was on the half-back flank when Essendon won the flag in 1942. Hird became a member of the Essendon committee in 1955 and after several roles rose to the presidency from 1969-75. Hird was a Life Member of Essendon and the AFL and a grandstand was named after him at Windy Hill. He was one of the original legends inducted into Essendon's Hall of Fame.

Ray Julier

Ray Julier, a Port Melbourne and Richmond stalwart, died on June 1, 2007, aged 96. Julier played 200 games for Port Melbourne in the Victorian Football Association and was a trainer at Richmond. He served on Richmond's committee for 22 years and was a board member in the 1960s and 1970s when the Tigers won premierships. Julier played in Port Melbourne's 1940-41

premiership sides. He held life memberships with the VFA, Port Melbourne, Richmond and the Port Melbourne Lawn Bowls Club. He was twice Mayor of Port Melbourne. Julier died of pneumonia at Caulfield General Hospital following a broken hip after a fall.

Chris Mainwaring

Everyone in football was shocked to learn of the sudden death of West Coast Eagles great Chris Mainwaring in Perth on October 1, 2007, aged 41. Mainwaring joined the Eagles in their foundation year in the VFL in 1987, and played 201 games and kicked 84 goals until his retirement in 1999. Apart from his stellar on-field career, he was an All-Australian selector, a NAB Rising Star selector and a Channel Seven sports reporter in Perth. The determined wingman/half-forward played in the Eagles' 1992 and 1994 premiership sides. Mainwaring was an All-Australian in 1991 and 1996 and represented WA eight times.

Ron McIntosh

Much-loved North Melbourne identity Ron 'Macca' McIntosh died, aged 79, on October 31, 2007. He spent half his life with the Kangaroos after joining the club from the Footscray Amateurs. McIntosh spent many years as a trainer and became legendary at Arden St for his unusual medical treatments and for 'conducting' the club song. Kangaroos general manager (football operations) Donald McDonald said 'Macca' had left an indelible mark at the club. "In many years, he was the heart and soul of the place," McDonald said.

Jim Mooring

Jim Mooring died in Bendigo, Victoria, on October 20, 2007, aged 90. The former rover was one of the few remaining members of Carlton's winning 'Bloodbath' Grand Final against South Melbourne in 1945. Recruited from Creswick in country Victoria, Mooring started with the Blues in 1940 and finished after 126 games in Carlton's losing Grand Final in 1949. He won the club best and fairest award in 1942, was captain for part of 1943, served as vice-captain, was the club leading goalkicker in 1944 with 42 and a Life Member. Mooring was also a brilliant tennis player, cricketer and golfer in his youth.

Barry Pascoe

Barry Pascoe died on June 23, 2007, aged 63. Pascoe was a ruck-rover/utility who sparked VFL interest as a hard, tough player and a prolific ball-winner when playing with SANFL club North Adelaide. He hit a clearance hurdle when he sought a transfer to join brother Bob at North Melbourne and was forced to stand out of football for a season. He had only one season at North – in 1967 for 15 games and one goal – before switching to St Kilda in 1968 with Bob. Barry had three solid seasons at St Kilda, playing 41 games and kicking 35 goals.

Clive Philp

Clive Philp, one of Hawthorn's best players in the 1940s and 1950s, died on August 24, 2007, aged 81. Philp played 112 games and kicked 23 goals from 1948-55. He joined Hawthorn from Box Hill as a forward and was noted for his glorious kicking. Philp, who represented the Big V three times, seldom played a bad game, whether at centre half-back, full-back, full-forward or in the ruck. Philp was a former CEO, president and life member of the Kyneton District Racing Club.

Con Regan

Con Regan, who died aged 72 while on holiday in Canada in May 2007, was a football legend in Western Australia. Regan played 261 games for East Fremantle between 1953 and 1965. In that time, East Fremantle made the finals every year and won the premiership in 1957 and 1965. He played in nine state games for WA and in 1961 was a member of WA's winning side at the National Carnival in Brisbane. In 1963 he was made a life member of the East Fremantle Football Club and a member of the WAFL 200 Club. Regan was the first team manager of the Fremantle Football Club and in 2002 was the first WA recipient of the AFL's Jack Titus Award.

Bill Rose

Bill Rose, a part of the Rose family dynasty at Collingwood, died on October 10, 2007, aged 77. He was a brother of Bob Rose, one of Collingwood's greatest players, and Kevin and Ralph Rose, who also played for the Magpies.

Bill Rose played 40 games from 1950-55 and was the second oldest (behind Bob) of the four senior players. Bill Rose was a member of the ruck division in the winning 1953 Grand Final team against Geelong.

Des Rowe

Des Rowe, who died on May 12, 2007, aged 81, was one of Richmond's most prominent identities. Rowe played 175 games from 1946-57 after coming from VFA club Coburg. Rowe went on to captain the Tigers (1952-57) and coach them between 1961-63. In 1956 he was captain of Victoria and picked in the All-Australian team. He made his name across half-back where he was a fearless, dashing, long-kicking and strong competitor. Rowe shared Richmond's best and fairest award with Roy Wright in 1951 and won it outright in 1955. Rowe was a Life Member of Richmond and in the club's Team of the Century. After football, Rowe was a publican in several Melbourne hotels.

Stan Rule

Stan Rule, who wore the No. 31 guernsey at Melbourne before Ron Barassi jnr made it famous, died on August 12, 2007, aged 83. Rule played in the drawn Grand Final against Essendon in 1948 and the winning replay team a week later. Rule was recruited to Melbourne in 1946 from Brighton Technical School Old Boys and played in the Demons' losing Grand Final side (against Essendon) in his first season. He played 74 games and kicked 13 goals in his VFL career. His last match was the losing 1950 semi-final against Geelong.

Joe Sellwood

Joe Sellwood was the VFL/AFL's oldest-living premiership player before his death, at 96, on October 18, 2007. Sellwood was a member of Geelong's 1937 premiership side and lived long enough to see a new generation of Cats players claim the premiership less than a month earlier. Sellwood played 180 games for Geelong and one for Victoria in two separate stints (1930-41 and 1944-45). As his career suffered significant interruption during World War II, he was given honorary induction to the AFL 200 Club in 2007.

Roslyn Smorgon

Roslyn Smorgon, wife of Western Bulldogs president David Smorgon, died in January, 2008, aged 59, after a courageous five-year battle with cancer. Roslyn spent much of her life assisting community organisations with a particular focus on education, fundraising and women's health issues. In January, 2006, Roslyn was awarded an AM for her services to the community. She was also the chairperson of the Footscray Community Arts Centre appeal, as well as the inaugural chairperson of the Bulldogs Belles, now known as Women of the West.

Len Thompson

Collingwood players wore black armbands in the 2007 preliminary final against Geelong as a mark of respect to club legend Len Thompson, who died, aged 60, after a heart attack on September 18, 2007. Thompson was a towering ruckman who won the Brownlow Medal in 1972 and took out five Copeland Trophies at Collingwood. Thompson played 301 games – 268 with Collingwood (1965-78), 20 with South Melbourne (1979) and 13 with Fitzroy (1980) – and kicked 275 goals. Thompson captained Collingwood in 1978, was vice-captain from 1973-77, was a Life Member of the club, served on the club committee in 1982-83, was in Collingwood's Hall of Fame and a member of Collingwood's Team of the Century. He was a member of the AFL Hall of Fame, a Life Member of the AFL and an All-Australian player in 1972.

Phil Zampogna

Phil Zampogna, who died on February 1, 2007, aged 65, was one of the best-known figures in the function rooms of the MCG and VFL Park for many years. The AFL, in an obituary in the *Herald Sun*, described Zampogna as 'our favourite barman'. Over two decades he served a wide range of dignitaries from prime ministers down. In the football season, Zampogna also kept one eye on the scoreboard, hoping his beloved Essendon would win. Zampogna was employed by Spotless and his last duty was at the cricket in the MCG Olympic Dining Room the day before his death.

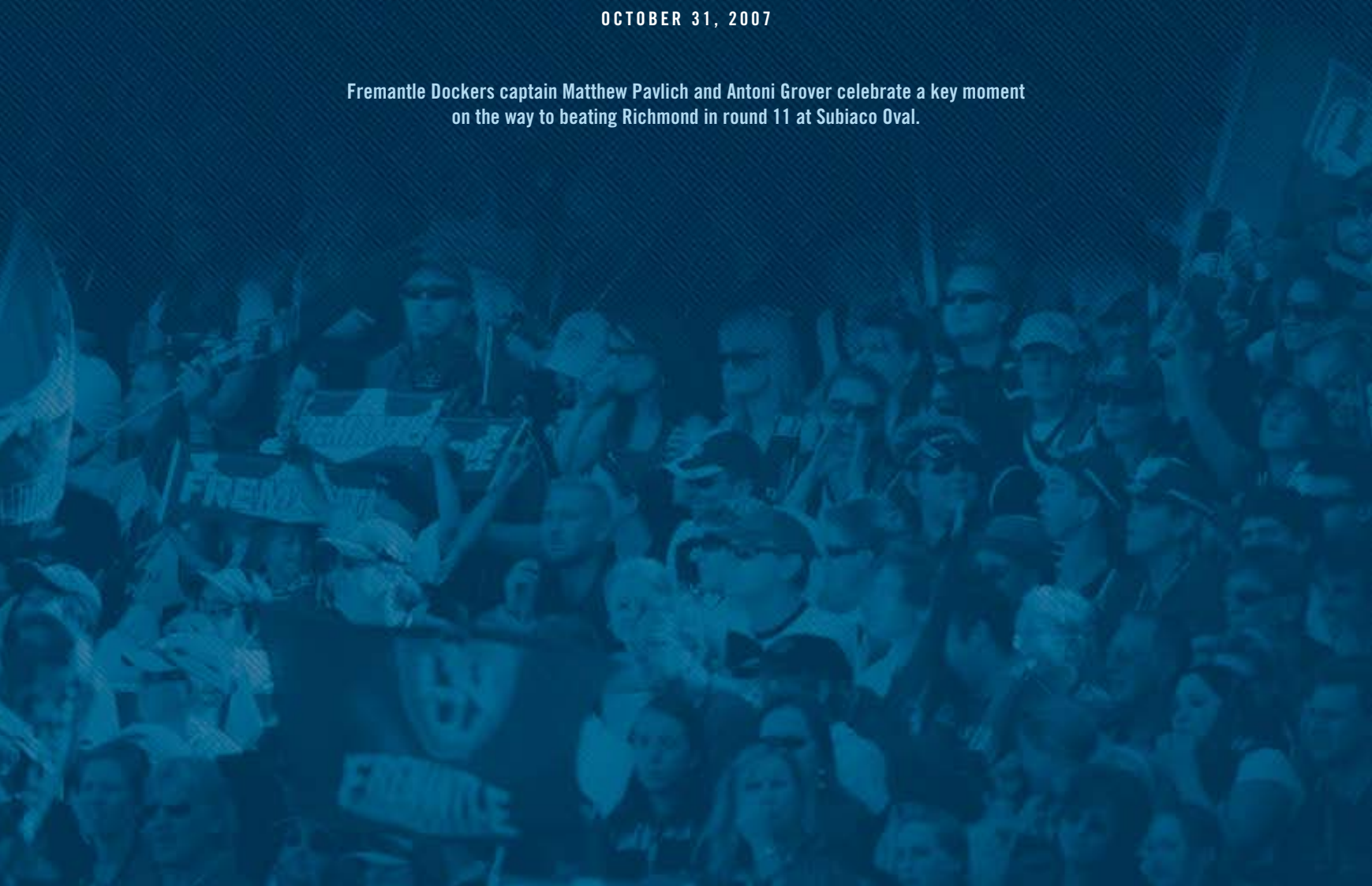


CONCISE FINANCIAL REPORT

AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE
AND ITS CONTROLLED ENTITIES

OCTOBER 31, 2007

Fremantle Dockers captain Matthew Pavlich and Antoni Grover celebrate a key moment
on the way to beating Richmond in round 11 at Subiaco Oval.



DIRECTORS' REPORT

The Directors present their report together with the financial report of the Australian Football League (“the Company”) and consolidated entity, being the Company and its controlled entities, for the year ended 31 October, 2007, and the auditor’s report thereon.

Directors

The Directors of the Company at any time during or since the end of the financial year are:

Mr M C Fitzpatrick

Chairman – Appointed Commissioner 2003, Chairman from March, 2007; Chairman Remuneration Committee.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) (University of Western Australia); Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Oxford University, UK).

Experience: Chairman, Victorian Funds Management Corporation; Director, The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research; Chairman, Treasury Group Limited; Director, Rio Tinto Limited; Director, Rio Tinto plc; Player, Carlton Football Club 1975-83; Director, Carlton Football Club 1989-95; Chairman, Australian Sports Commission 1995-98; Player, Subiaco Football Club 1970-74; Founder and Former Managing Director, Hastings Fund Management Ltd, 1994-2005.

Mr R B Evans, AM

Chairman – Appointed Commissioner 1993, Chairman from 1998; deceased March, 2007; Member of Audit and Remuneration Committees.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Science (Melbourne University); Master of Business Administration (Monash University).

Experience: Director, Spotless Group Limited; Director, Healthscope Limited; Player, Essendon Football Club 1958-62; President, Essendon Football Club 1988-92.

Mr A Demetriou

Chief Executive Officer – Appointed 2003.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts (La Trobe University); Diploma of Education (La Trobe University).

Experience: Player, North Melbourne (Kangaroos) Football Club 1981-87; Player, Hawthorn Football Club 1988; Former Managing Director and Chairman Ruthinium Group, now Board Member; Chief Executive Officer, AFL Players’ Association 1998-2000; Director, Ashe Morgan Winthrop; Board Member, Robert Rose Foundation; Public Appeal Chairman, Olivia Newton John Cancer Centre; Director, AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission.

Mr C B Carter, AM

Non-Executive Commissioner – Appointed 1993; Chairman of Audit Committee.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Commerce (Melbourne University); Master of Business Administration (Harvard University).

Experience: Former Director, Geelong Football Club and Geelong Football Club representative on Australian Football League Board

1987-93; Director, Wesfarmers Ltd; Director, SEEK Ltd; Chairman, Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships; Director, Cape York Institute; former Director, Foster’s Ltd; former Director, Origin Energy Ltd; Senior Advisor, The Boston Consulting Group.

Mr R A Hammond, AM

Non-Executive Commissioner – Appointed 2001; Member of Audit and Remuneration Committees.

Experience: Former Managing Director, Rail Road Recyclers of Australia Pty Ltd; Player, North Adelaide Football Club and Norwood Football Club 1960-75; Coach, Norwood Football Club 1974-79; Coach, Sydney Swans Football Club 1984; Chairman, Adelaide Football Club 1991-2000; Managing Director, Rail Road Services Pty Ltd; Director, Festival City Broadcasters Pty Ltd; Director, Nova 919 Pty Ltd; Chairman, Churchill Warehouse Pty Ltd; Former Chairman, Half Case Warehouse Group, SA.

Mr G T John, AO

Non-Executive Commissioner – Appointed 2000.

Qualifications: Fellow of Chartered Institute of Transport.

Experience: Managing Director, Australia Post 1993-current; Member, Committee for Melbourne; Member, Business Council of Australia; Member, Australian Institute of Company Directors; Councillor, Australian Business Arts Foundation; Director and Alternate Chairman, Australian Air Express; Director and Alternate Chairman, Startrack Express Holdings Pty Ltd; Former Trustee, Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust; Player, East Perth Football Club 1959-63; Player, South Melbourne Football Club 1964-69; All Australian Player 1966; Coach, South Melbourne Football Club 1973-75 ; President, South Melbourne Football Club 1978-80.

Mr W J Kely

Non-Executive Commissioner – Appointed 1998.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Economics (La Trobe University).

Experience: Director, Linfox Group; Director, Hotel Leisure and Tourism Trust of Australia; Director, Bank of Queensland; Chairman, Virtual Communities Pty Ltd; Chairman, AFL SportsReady Limited; Member, AFLPA Education and Training Board; Member, Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal; Member, Australians for Just Refugee Program; Trustee, Linfox Classic Car Collection; Chairman, Ethical Clothing Trades Council of Victoria; Former Director, Australian Retirement Fund; Former Secretary, ACTU; Former Director, Reserve Bank of Australia; Former Chairman, Commonwealth Government Regional Development Taskforce; Former Member, National Employment & Training Taskforce; Former Director, Superannuation Trust of Australia.

Mr C D Langford

Non-Executive Commissioner – Appointed 1999; Member of Audit Committee.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Architecture (Melbourne University).

Experience: Director, Spyglass Property Pty Ltd; Director, Babcock and Brown Residential Land Partners; Director, NSW Cultural Management; Former CEO Retail Projects, Mirvac Group; Player, Hawthorn Football Club 1980-97; Former Member, AFL (NSW/ACT) Commission 1998-2004.

Ms S J Mostyn

Non-Executive Commissioner – Appointed 2005; Member of Remuneration Committee.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts (Australian National University); Bachelor of Law (Australian National University).

Experience: Group Executive Culture and Reputation, Insurance Australia Group Limited; Governor, Centenary Institute; Director, Sydney Festival; Director, Sydney Theatre Company; Director, Redfern Waterloo Authority; Trustee, Australia Museum.

Directors' meetings

The number of directors' meetings (including meetings of committees of directors) and number of meetings attended by each of the directors of the Company during the financial year were:

Director	Directors' Meetings		Audit Committee Meetings		Remuneration Committee Meetings	
	No of meetings attended	No. of meetings held*	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held*	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held*
Mr R B Evans	1	3	1	1	1	1
Mr M C Fitzpatrick	11	11	1	1	1	1
Mr A Demetriou	11	11				
Mr C B Carter	9	11	1	2		
Mr R A Hammond	11	11	1	1	2	2
Mr G T John	9	11				
Mr W J Kelty	11	11				
Mr C D Langford	10	11	1	1		
Ms S J Mostyn	10	11			1	1

* Reflects the number of meetings held during the time the director held office during the year.

The role of the Audit Committee is to give the Board of Directors additional assurance regarding the quality and reliability of financial information prepared for use by the Board in determining policies or determining items for inclusion in the financial statements.

The role of the Remuneration Committee is to review the remuneration packages and policies applicable to senior executives of the Company.

As well as the above meetings, the Directors also attended numerous other meetings including meetings with the boards of all AFL clubs, as well as the boards of state football bodies.

Principal activities

The principal activities of the consolidated entity during the course of the financial year were to promote, control, manage and encourage Australian Football.

There were no significant changes in the nature of the activities of the consolidated entity during the year.

Review and results of operations

The operating surplus of the AFL and its controlled entities amounted to \$26.3 million, compared with an operating surplus of \$5.8 million in 2006.

State of affairs

In the opinion of the Directors there were no significant changes in the state of affairs of the consolidated entity that occurred during the financial year under review not otherwise disclosed in this report or the consolidated financial statements.

Events subsequent to balance date

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction, or event of a material and unusual nature likely, in the opinion of the directors of the Company, to affect significantly the operations of the consolidated entity, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the consolidated entity in future financial years.

Likely developments

The directors do not anticipate any major changes in the basis of operations of the consolidated entity and the future results of those operations in subsequent financial years.

Insurance premiums

Since the end of the previous financial year, the Company has paid insurance premiums of \$48,901 (\$57,489 in 2006) in respect of Directors' and Officers' liability and legal expenses insurance contracts, which include cover for current officers, including executive officers of the Company. The insurance premiums in respect of the officers of the Company relate to:

- costs and expenses that may be incurred by the relevant officers in defending proceedings, whether civil or criminal and whatever their outcome; and
- other liabilities that may arise from their position, with the exception of conduct involving a wilful breach of duty or improper use of information or position to gain a personal advantage.

Directors' benefits

Since the end of the previous financial year no Director of the Company has received or become entitled to receive any benefit (other than the fixed salary of a full-time employee of the Company or of a related body corporate) by reason of a contract made by the Company, its controlled entities, or a related body corporate with a Director or with a firm of which a Director is a member, or with an entity in which a Director has a substantial interest other than as disclosed in notes 21 and 22 of the annual financial report.

Lead Auditor's Independence Declaration under Section 307C of The Corporations Act 2001

The lead auditor's independence declaration is set out below and forms part of the Directors' report for the year ended 31 October, 2007.

Rounding Off

The Company is of a kind referred to in ASIC Class Order 98/100 dated July 10, 1998, and in accordance with that Class Order, amounts in the financial report and Directors' report have been rounded off to the nearest thousand dollars, unless otherwise stated.

Dated at Melbourne this 29th day of January, 2008.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:



Mr M C Fitzpatrick
Director



Mr A Demetriou
Director

LEAD AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001

To: the directors of Australian Football League.

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit for the financial year ended 31 October, 2007, there were:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contravention of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



KPMG



DM Waters
Partner, Melbourne
29 January, 2008

INCOME STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER, 2007

	Note	Consolidated		The Company	
		2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000
Revenue	3	308,876	232,287	301,766	225,220
Financing costs		(1,297)	(3,004)	(1,272)	(2,982)
Expenses from operating activities		(281,287)	(223,436)	(274,153)	(217,059)
Surplus from operating activities before related income tax expense		26,292	5,847	26,341	5,179
Income tax expense relating to operating activities		—	—	—	—
Surplus for the year		26,292	5,847	26,341	5,179

Discussion and analysis of the Income Statements

Consolidated revenue increased by \$76.6 million to \$308.9 million. There were four main areas of increased revenue that contributed to this movement:

- An increase in television rights in the first year of the new broadcast agreement totalling \$46.2 million;
- An increase in sponsorship revenue totalling \$10.6 million;
- An increase in corporate hospitality revenue totalling \$5 million; and
- An increase in finals series revenue due to increased attendances totalling \$1.4 million.

The consolidated operating surplus was \$26.3 million, compared with an operating surplus of \$5.8 million in 2006.

There were four main areas of increased expenditure that contributed to this result:

- An increase in distributions to clubs totalling \$25.0 million;
- An increase in commercial operations expenditure totalling \$9 million;
- An increase in contra advertising of \$7.5 million; and
- An increase in development grants to state football bodies totalling \$4.1 million.

The income statements are to be read in conjunction with the discussion and analysis above and the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 130-132.

STATEMENTS OF RECOGNISED INCOME AND EXPENSE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER, 2007

	Consolidated		The Company	
	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000
Net income recognised directly in equity	—	—	—	—
Surplus for the year	26,292	5,847	26,341	5,179
Total recognised income and expense for the year	26,292	5,847	26,341	5,179

The statements of recognised income and expense are to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 130-132.

BALANCE SHEETS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER, 2007

Discussion and analysis of the Balance Sheets

The consolidated entity's total assets increased by \$15.3 million to \$128.0 million.

The movement in total assets principally comprised:

- an increase in cash and cash equivalents of \$31.5 million resulting primarily from operating surplus for the year; and
- a decrease in non-current trade and other receivables of \$20.5 million resulting primarily from the payment of \$18.5 million of debt owing from Mirvac from the sale of Waverley Park.

The consolidated entity's total liabilities decreased by \$11 million to \$43.4 million over the year. The movement in total liabilities principally comprised:

- a decrease in interest-bearing loans and borrowings of \$15 million due to a reduction in the bank bill facility;
- a decrease in non-current trade and other payables of \$4.2 million representing the transfer of the current year payments of amounts owing to the clubs from the sale of Waverley Park;
- a decrease in non-current deferred interest of \$1.2 million representing the bringing to surplus of deferred interest revenue on the amount to be received from Mirvac for the sale of Waverley Park; and
- an increase in current trade and other payables of \$11 million representing pre-paid income of the 2008 broadcasting rights.

	Consolidated		The Company	
	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000
Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	36,966	5,475	35,681	4,817
Trade and other receivables	44,695	41,077	43,874	39,353
Inventories	207	192	—	—
Other	3,194	1,411	3,170	1,778
Total current assets	85,062	48,155	82,725	45,948
Trade and other receivables	—	20,547	—	21,047
Property, plant & equipment	12,911	13,769	11,856	12,855
Other	30,000	30,244	30,000	30,244
Total non-current assets	42,911	64,560	41,856	64,146
Total assets	127,973	112,715	124,581	110,094
Liabilities				
Trade and other payables	36,100	24,968	34,808	24,223
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	80	75	—	—
Provisions	4,477	2,669	3,771	2,093
Deferred interest	1,185	2,298	1,185	2,298
Total current liabilities	41,842	30,010	39,764	28,614
Trade and other payables	—	4,187	—	4,187
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	227	15,234	—	15,000
Provisions	1,368	3,855	561	3,193
Deferred interest	—	1,185	—	1,185
Total non-current liabilities	1,595	24,461	561	23,565
Total liabilities	43,437	54,471	40,325	52,179
Net assets	84,536	58,244	84,256	57,915
Equity				
Reserves	30,447	9,328	30,447	9,328
Retained earnings	54,089	48,916	53,809	48,587
Total equity	84,536	58,244	84,256	57,915

The balance sheets are to be read in conjunction with the discussion and analysis above and the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 130-132.

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER, 2007

Discussion and analysis of the Statements of Cash Flows

There was a net increase in cash holdings of the consolidated entity during the year totalling \$31.5 million. The major movements in cash during the year included the following:

- funds from the operating surplus for the year totalling \$26 million;
- a decrease in other debtors totalling \$18.5 million due to the instalment paid by Mirvac from the sale of Waverley Park;
- a decrease in borrowings of \$15 million due to repayment of interest-bearing liabilities;
- a decrease in other liabilities totalling \$2.3 million due to the amortisation of deferred interest revenue on the receivable from Mirvac from the sale of Waverley Park; and
- an increase in pre-paid income of \$10.3 million due to receipt of 2008 broadcasting rights.

	Consolidated		The Company	
	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities				
Cash receipts in the course of operations	316,360	235,328	310,309	219,175
Cash payments in the course of operations	(268,101)	(214,353)	(263,015)	(198,653)
Net cash provided by operating activities	48,259	20,975	47,294	20,522
Cash flows from investing activities				
Interest received	332	537	291	504
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(1,075)	(1,650)	(698)	(1,246)
Proceeds from sale of non-current assets	274	614	249	481
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	(469)	(499)	(158)	(261)
Cash flows from financing activities				
Interest paid	(1,297)	(3,004)	(1,272)	(2,982)
Repayment of borrowings	(15,002)	(24,910)	(15,000)	(25,000)
Net cash used in financing activities	(16,299)	(27,914)	(16,272)	(27,982)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	31,491	(7,438)	30,864	(7,721)
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	5,475	12,913	4,817	12,538
Cash at the end of the financial year	36,966	5,475	35,681	4,817

The statements of cash flows are to be read in conjunction with the discussion and analysis above and the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 130-132.

NOTES TO THE CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER, 2007

1. Basis of preparation of the concise financial report

The concise financial report was prepared in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports. The financial statements and specific disclosures required by AASB 1039 were derived from the consolidated entity's full financial report for the financial year. Other information included in the concise financial report is consistent with the consolidated entity's full financial report. The concise financial report does not, and cannot be expected to, provide as full an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the consolidated entity as the full financial report.

It was prepared on the basis of historical costs, and except where stated, did not take into account changing money values or fair values of non-current assets.

The accounting policies were consistently applied by each entity in the consolidated entity and, except where there was a change in accounting policy, were consistent with those of the previous year.

Where necessary, comparative information was reclassified to achieve consistency in disclosure with current financial year amounts and other disclosures.

A full description of the accounting policies adopted by the consolidated entity may be found in the consolidated entity's full financial report.

2. Segment reporting

The Company's activities were entirely the administration and promotion of Australian Football and were confined to Australia except for the sale of television rights to various overseas countries and conduct of exhibition matches overseas from time to time, in support of television rights in overseas countries.

4. Contingent Liabilities

- (i) The Company entered into an agreement with the AFL Players' Association Inc. for a period of five years commencing on 1 November, 2006, whereby the Company has an obligation to assume liability for all amounts due to players of a club where the club has lost its license to compete in the AFL competition and is suspended from or loses its right to representation on the League. The amounts payable in these circumstances will be offset by any amounts payable to the players in respect of future employment as a player.
- (ii) The Company entered into an agreement with National Australia Bank whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Carlton Football Club Limited to National Australia Bank to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$500,000.
- (iii) The Company entered into an agreement with Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited ("ANZ Bank") where the Company guarantees the obligations of Sports Facilities Management Limited ("Sports") to the ANZ Bank with respect to Sports borrowings of \$5 million in relation to the reconfiguration of Stadium Australia.
- (iv) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac Banking Corporation Limited ("Westpac") whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the North Melbourne Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.

3. Revenue

	Consolidated		The Company	
	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000	2007 \$'000	2006 \$'000
Revenue from operating activities				
Trading operations	289,260	218,382	282,205	211,373
Contra advertising revenue	17,500	10,000	17,500	10,000
Interest revenue on discounted Waverley Park proceeds	2,298	3,343	2,298	3,343
Interest received	332	537	291	504
Net gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(514)	25	(528)	—
Total	308,876	232,287	301,766	225,220

- (v) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Sydney Swans Limited to Westpac to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (vi) The Company entered into an agreement with Commonwealth Bank of Australia Limited ("CBA") whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of Port Adelaide Football Club to CBA to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (vii) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Richmond Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (viii) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Footscray Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (ix) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Melbourne Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (x) The Company entered into an agreement with Bendigo Bank Limited ("Bendigo Bank") whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Geelong Football Club Limited to Bendigo Bank to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (xi) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Hawthorn Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum as at 31 October, 2007, of \$250,000.
- (xii) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Carlton Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum of \$5 million. The guarantee expired on 31 October, 2007. A new annual guarantee was entered into on 1 November, 2007, for \$5 million.
- (xiii) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Melbourne Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum of \$5 million. The guarantee expired on 31 October, 2007. A new annual guarantee was entered into on 1 November, 2007, for \$5 million.
- (xiv) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the North Melbourne Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum of \$5 million. The guarantee expired on 31 October, 2007. A new annual guarantee was entered into on 1 November, 2007, for \$5 million.
- (xv) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the St Kilda Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum of \$5 million. The guarantee expired on 31 October, 2007. A new annual guarantee was entered into on 1 November, 2007, for \$5 million.
- (xvi) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Richmond Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum of \$5 million. The guarantee expired on 31 October, 2007. A new annual guarantee was entered into on 1 November, 2007, for \$5 million.
- (xvii) The Company entered into an agreement with Westpac whereby the Company guarantees the obligations of the Footscray Football Club Limited to Westpac to a maximum of \$5 million. The guarantee expired on 31 October, 2007. A new annual guarantee was entered into on 1 November, 2007, for \$5 million.

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

In the opinion of the directors of the Australian Football League, the accompanying concise financial report of the consolidated entity, comprising the Australian Football League and its controlled entities for the year ended 31 October, 2007, set out on pages 124-131:

- (a) was derived from or is consistent with the full financial report for the financial year; and
- (b) complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports.

Dated at Melbourne this 29th day of January, 2008.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors:



Mr M C Fitzpatrick
Director



Mr A Demetriou
Director

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT ON CONCISE FINANCIAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Report on the financial report

The accompanying concise financial report of the Australian Football League ("the Company") which comprises the balance sheets as at 31 October, 2007, the income statements, statements of recognised income and expenses and cash flow statements for the year then ended and related notes, derived from the audited financial report of the Group comprising the Australian Football League and the entities it controlled at the year's end or from time to time during the financial year for the year ended 31 October, 2007, and the discussion and analysis. The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by Australian Accounting Standards.

Directors' responsibility for the concise financial report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the concise financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports and the Corporations Act 2001. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation of the concise financial report; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the concise financial report, including the discussion and analysis, based on our audit procedures. We have conducted an independent audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, of the financial report of the Australian Football League for the year ended 31 October, 2007. Our audit report on the financial report for the year was signed on 30 January, 2008, and was not subject to any modification. The

Australian Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report for the year is free of material misstatement.

Our procedures in respect of the concise financial report include testing that the information in the concise financial report is derived from, and is consistent with, the financial report for the year, and examination on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts, discussion and analysis and other disclosures which were not directly derived from the financial report for the year. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the concise financial report complies with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Auditor's opinion

In our opinion the concise financial report, including the discussion and analysis, of the Australian Football League and its controlled entities for the year ended 31 October, 2007, complies with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports.



KPMG



DM Waters
Partner, Melbourne
29 January, 2008

THE AFL 1998-2007

Profit & Loss (\$ millions)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Revenue	92.420	108.447	110.736	116.562	159.700	170.912	186.260	203.695	215.220	284.794
Operating Expenses	42.855	47.493	46.708	46.229	47.843	52.453	58.112	69.430	72.141	81.047
Interest Expense	0.002	0.002	0.110	1.337	1.766	3.757	4.138	3.861	2.982	1.272
Operating Surplus	49.563	60.952	63.918	68.996	110.091	114.702	124.010	130.404	140.097	202.475
Payments to Clubs	36.019	42.153	50.230	61.873	71.228	79.635	89.563	91.964	96.559	125.488
Payments to AFLPA	0.750	3.000	4.000	5.744	6.329	7.656	7.653	7.767	8.701	12.131
Game Development Grants	8.617	12.124	15.156	16.510	17.715	16.505	18.492	18.997	21.495	25.852
Ground Improvements	2.055	2.300	1.760	1.631	5.995	6.241	5.110	5.148	5.591	4.951
AFL Foundation	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.200	0.231
Facilities Development	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4.665
Strategic Partnership	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.198
New Markets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.618
Net Profit before Transfers to/(from) Reserves	2.122	1.375	(7.228)	(16.762)	8.824	4.665	3.192	6.528	7.551	26.341
Facilities Development Reserve	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.500	3.000	3.600	4.535
Strategic Partnership Reserve	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.800	1.800	(0.198)
New Markets Reserve	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.382
Future Fund Reserve	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16.400
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	2.122	1.375	(7.228)	(16.762)	8.824	4.665	1.692	1.728	2.151	5.222
Balance Sheet (\$ mill)										
Total Assets	64.323	71.237	74.903	110.312	166.862	162.798	146.649	142.353	110.094	124.581
Total Liabilities	12.180	17.719	28.613	80.784	128.510	119.781	100.440	89.617	52.179	40.325
Net Assets	52.143	53.518	46.290	29.528	38.352	43.017	46.209	52.736	57.915	84.256
TPP & Club Distribution Statistics (\$ mill)										
Total Player Payments (TPP)	52.400	68.000	76.000	83.000	89.000	95.000	97.850	100.813	103.565	111.100
TPP per Club	3.275	4.250	4.750	5.188	5.563	5.938	6.116	6.301	6.473	6.944
Base Distribution per Club	1.870	2.220	2.720	3.157	3.532	3.907	4.084	4.270	4.442	4.913
Base Distribution as a % of TPP	57.1%	52.2%	57.3%	60.9%	63.5%	63.5%	66.8%	67.8%	68.6%	70.8%
Attendance Statistics (mill)										
Home & Away Season Attendance	6.119	5.771	5.740	5.921	5.644	5.873	5.910	6.284	6.204	6.476
Finals Series Attendance	0.573	0.472	0.567	0.526	0.449	0.478	0.458	0.480	0.532	0.574
Total Premiership Season Attendance	6.692	6.243	6.307	6.447	6.093	6.352	6.368	6.764	6.736	7.050
Pre-Season Attendance	0.299	0.274	0.326	0.398	0.338	0.266	0.259	0.307	0.235	0.244
Total Attendance	6.991	6.517	6.633	6.846	6.431	6.618	6.627	7.071	6.971	7.294
Membership Statistics										
Total of Club Members*	422,815	441,711	438,504	447,359	449,353	463,171	494,311	506,509	519,126	532,697
No. of Clubs in the AFL	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Average No. of Members per Club	26,426	27,607	27,407	27,960	28,085	28,948	30,894	31,657	32,445	33,294
Total AFL Members	52,034	52,020	52,187	50,660	47,511	45,174	45,129	44,866	44,726	46,871

* Includes AFL Club Support Members
 2002 & 2003 Profit and Loss figures exclude amounts related to the sale of Waverley Park
 Revenue figures exclude contra advertising received from TV broadcasters

AFL COMMITTEES AND ADVISORS

AFL Executive



ANDREW DEMETRIOU,
Chief Executive Officer



ADRIAN ANDERSON,
General Manager
– Football Operations



IAN ANDERSON,
Chief Financial Officer



ANDREW CATTERALL,
General Manager
– Strategic Planning
and Club Support



ANDREW DILLON,
General Manager
– Legal and
Business Affairs



DALE HOLMES,
General Manager
– NSW/ACT



DAVID MATTHEWS,
General Manager
– National and
International
Development



GILLON McLACHLAN,
Chief Broadcasting and
Commercial Officer



COLIN McLEOD,
General Manager
– Marketing,
Communications
and Public Affairs



TONY PEEK,
Assistant to the CEO

AFL Audit Committee

Colin Carter (chairman), Bob Hammond, Chris Langford

AFL Remuneration Committee

Mike Fitzpatrick (chairman), Bob Hammond, Sam Mostyn, Colin Carter

AFL Investment Committee

Gillon McLachlan (chairman), Mike Fitzpatrick, Andrew Demetriou, Graeme John, Chris Langford, Ian Anderson

AFL Broadcasting

Sub-committee

Mike Fitzpatrick (chairman), Andrew Demetriou, Bill Kelty, Sam Mostyn, Gillon McLachlan

AFL Football Operations

Sub-committee

Adrian Anderson (chairman), Rod Austin, Jeff Gieschen, Patrick Keane, Jill Lindsay, Dean Moore, Kevin Sheehan, Ken Wood, Tess McManus, Scott Taylor, Brooke Nicholson, Thea Salter, Darren Birch, Tony Abate, Shane McCurry

AFL Match Review Panel

Andrew McKay (chairman), Peter Carey, Nathan Burke, Scott Taylor (secretary)

AFL Tribunal

David Jones (chairman), John Hassett (deputy chairman), Emmett Dunne, Michael Sexton, Stewart Loewe, David Pittman, Wayne Schimmelbusch, Richard Loveridge, Wayne Henwood, Scott Taylor (secretary)

AFL Legal Counsel for AFL Tribunal

Will Houghton QC, Andrew Tinney, Frank Costigan QC

AFL Appeals Board

Peter O'Callaghan QC (chairman), Brian Collis QC (deputy chair), Brian Bourke, John Schultz, Michael Green, Scott Taylor (secretary)

AFL Mediators (trade week)

Jack Rush, QC, Michael Hennessy

AFL Investigations Officers

John Coburn, Bill Kneebone, Allan Roberts, Graeme McDonald, Gary Ayres

AFL Grievance Tribunal

Jack Rush QC (chairman), Darren Baxter, James Dowsley, Kevin Power, Michael Moncrieff, Shane McCurry (secretary)

AFL Laws of the Game Committee

Adrian Anderson (chairman), Kevin Bartlett, Brendon Gale, John Halbert, Rowan Sawers, Michael Sexton, Luke Darcy, Shane McCurry (secretary)

AFL Research Board

Dr Ross Smith (chairman), Brian Cook, Dr Peter Harcourt, Prof Mark Hargreaves, Paul Lew, David Parkin, Dr Hugh Seward, Lawrie Woodman, Shane McCurry (secretary)

AFL Umpiring Selection Panel

Jeff Gieschen, Peter Howe, Rowan Sawers

AFL Medical Officers

Dr Peter Harcourt, Dr Harry Unglik

AFL All-Australian and AFL Rising Star Selectors

Andrew Demetriou (chairman), Adrian Anderson, Rod Austin,

Gerard Healy, Mark Bickley, Kevin Bartlett, Robert Walls, Chris Mainwaring (deceased October, 2007), Kevin Sheehan (Rising Star only) Scott Taylor (secretary)

Australian Football Hall of Fame Selection Committee

Mike Fitzpatrick (chairman), Brian Atkinson, Kevin Bartlett, Brendon Gale, Harry Gordon, Tim Lane, Mike Sheahan, Patrick Smith, Tom Reynolds, Leigh Whicker, Caroline Wilson, Shane McCurry (secretary)

AFL International Development Committee

David Matthews (chairman), Colin McLeod, Kevin Sheehan, Simon Lethlean, Dean Moore, Dean Warren, Mike Palmer, George De Crespigny, Phil Martin, Josh Vanderloo

AFL Group Training Company Board

Bill Kelty (chairman), Adrian Anderson, Graeme Billings, Brendon Gale, Michael Green, Beverly Knight, David McKay, David Matthews, Marilyn Morgan, Philip Wallbridge (CEO), John Kennedy (secretary)

AFL Respect and Responsibility Advisory Group

Prof Jenny Morgan (chairman), Deb Bryant, Donna Griffin, Fiona Sharkie, Lyn Walker, Michael Daniher, Patrick Tidmarsh, Dr Angela Williams, Michael Flood, Assistant Commissioner Leigh Gassner, Inspector Sue Clark, Tony Peek, Dr Melanie Heenan, Jane Hollman, Andrew Dillon

AFL Legal Advisors

Browne & Co.



2008 FIXTURE

ROUND 1

Season Launch

Thursday, March 20

Carlton vs. Richmond (MCG) (N)
Port Adelaide vs. Geelong (AS) (N)

Saturday, March 22

Collingwood vs. Fremantle (MCG)
St Kilda vs. Sydney (TD) (N)
West Coast vs. Brisbane Lions (S) (N)

Sunday, March 23

Western Bulldogs vs. Adelaide (TD) (E)
Hawthorn vs. Melbourne (MCG) (T)

Monday, March 24

Kangaroos vs. Essendon (TD)

ROUND 2

Friday, March 28

Brisbane Lions vs. Collingwood (G) (N)

Saturday, March 29

Melbourne vs. Western Bulldogs (MCG)
Adelaide vs. West Coast (AS)
St Kilda vs. Carlton (TD) (N)
Fremantle vs. Hawthorn (S) (N)

Sunday, March 30

Sydney vs. Port Adelaide (SCG) (E)
Geelong vs. Essendon (TD)
Richmond vs. Kangaroos (MCG) (T)

ROUND 3

Rivalry Round

Friday, April 4

Western Bulldogs vs. St Kilda (TD) (N)

Saturday, April 5

Kangaroos vs. Hawthorn (TD)
West Coast vs. Fremantle (S)
Essendon vs. Carlton (MCG) (N)
Brisbane Lions vs. Sydney (G) (N)

Sunday, April 6

Geelong vs. Melbourne (SS) (E)
Richmond vs. Collingwood (MCG)
Adelaide vs. Port Adelaide (AS) (T)

ROUND 4

Friday, April 11

Essendon vs. Western Bulldogs (TD) (N)

Saturday, April 12

St Kilda vs. Geelong (TD)
Kangaroos vs. Melbourne (MCG)
Sydney vs. West Coast (ANZ) (N)
Port Adelaide vs. Brisbane Lions (AS) (N)

Sunday, April 13

Hawthorn vs. Adelaide (AU) (E)
Carlton vs. Collingwood (MCG)
Fremantle vs. Richmond (S)

ROUND 5

Friday, April 18

St Kilda vs. Essendon (TD) (N)

Saturday, April 19

Geelong vs. Sydney (SS)
Adelaide vs. Fremantle (AS)
Brisbane Lions vs. Hawthorn (G) (N)
Collingwood vs. Kangaroos (MCG) (N)

Sunday, April 20

Melbourne vs. Carlton (MCG) (E)
Western Bulldogs vs. Richmond (TD)
West Coast vs. Port Adelaide (S)

ROUND 6

Anzac Day Round

Friday, April 25

Collingwood vs. Essendon (MCG)
Fremantle vs. Geelong (S) (N)

Saturday, April 26

Carlton vs. Adelaide (MCG)
Western Bulldogs vs. West Coast (TD) (N)
Port Adelaide vs. St Kilda (AS) (N)

Sunday, April 27

Brisbane Lions vs. Melbourne (G) (E)
Kangaroos vs. Sydney (TD)
Hawthorn vs. Richmond (MCG) (T)

ROUND 7

Friday, May 2

West Coast vs. Carlton (S) (N)

Saturday, May 3

Geelong vs. Brisbane Lions (SS)
Hawthorn vs. Collingwood (MCG)
Richmond vs. St Kilda (TD) (N)
Adelaide vs. Kangaroos (AS) (N)

Sunday, May 4

Sydney vs. Western Bulldogs (SCG) (E)
Melbourne vs. Fremantle (MCG)
Essendon vs. Port Adelaide (TD) (T)

ROUND 8

Friday, May 16

St Kilda vs. Collingwood (TD) (N)

Saturday, May 17

Hawthorn vs. Port Adelaide (AU)
Richmond vs. Geelong (MCG)
Carlton vs. Brisbane Lions (TD) (N)
Kangaroos vs. West Coast (GCS) (N)

Sunday, May 18

Adelaide vs. Melbourne (AS) (E)
Sydney vs. Essendon (ANZ)
Fremantle vs. Western Bulldogs (S)

ROUND 9

Indigenous Round

Friday, May 23

Collingwood vs. Geelong (MCG) (N)

Saturday, May 24

Carlton vs. Fremantle (TD)
Port Adelaide vs. Sydney (AS)
Essendon vs. Richmond (MCG) (N)
West Coast vs. Adelaide (S) (N)

Sunday, May 25

Brisbane Lions vs. St Kilda (G) (E)
Melbourne vs. Hawthorn (MCG)
Western Bulldogs vs. Kangaroos (TD) (T)

ROUND 10

Friday, May 30

Adelaide vs. Essendon (AS) (N)

Saturday, May 31

Collingwood vs. West Coast (MCG)
Hawthorn vs. Western Bulldogs (AU)
Brisbane Lions vs. Kangaroos (G) (N)
Geelong vs. Carlton (TD) (N)

Sunday, June 1

Sydney vs. Richmond (SCG) (E)
St Kilda vs. Melbourne (TD)
Fremantle vs. Port Adelaide (S)

ROUND 11

Queen's Birthday

Friday, June 6

Kangaroos vs. Geelong (TD) (N)

Saturday, June 7

Richmond vs. Adelaide (MCG)
Essendon vs. Hawthorn (TD) (N)
West Coast vs. Sydney (S) (N)

Sunday, June 8

Brisbane Lions vs. Fremantle (G) (E)
St Kilda vs. Western Bulldogs (TD)
Port Adelaide vs. Carlton (AS) (T)

Monday, June 9

Melbourne vs. Collingwood (MCG)

ROUND 12

Friday, June 13

Essendon vs. West Coast (TD) (N)

Saturday, June 14

Western Bulldogs vs. Brisbane Lions (MCG)
Fremantle vs. Kangaroos (S)
Sydney vs. St Kilda (SCG) (N)
Adelaide vs. Hawthorn (AS) (N)

Sunday, June 15

Geelong vs. Port Adelaide (SS) (E)
Collingwood vs. Carlton (MCG)
Richmond vs. Melbourne (TD) (T)

ROUND 13

Friday, June 20

St Kilda vs. Fremantle (TD) (N)

Saturday, June 21

Hawthorn vs. Kangaroos (MCG)
Port Adelaide vs. Richmond (AS)
Brisbane Lions vs. Adelaide (G) (N)
West Coast vs. Geelong (S) (N)

Sunday, June 22

Melbourne vs. Sydney (MO) (E)
Carlton vs. Essendon (MCG)
Collingwood vs. Western Bulldogs (TD) (T)

ROUND 14

Split Round

Friday, June 27

Hawthorn vs. West Coast (MCG) (N)

Saturday, June 28

Richmond vs. Carlton (MCG)
Kangaroos vs. St Kilda (GCS) (N)
Western Bulldogs vs. Port Adelaide (TIO) (N)

Sunday, June 29

Melbourne vs. Brisbane Lions (MCG) (E)
Fremantle vs. Essendon (S)

Friday, July 4

Adelaide vs. Geelong (AS) (N)

Saturday, July 5

Sydney vs. Collingwood (ANZ) (N)

ROUND 15

Friday, July 11

Carlton vs. St Kilda (MCG) (N)

Saturday, July 12

Collingwood vs. Adelaide (MCG)
Geelong vs. Fremantle (SS)
Essendon vs. Brisbane Lions (TD) (N)
Port Adelaide vs. Kangaroos (AS) (N)

Sunday, July 13

Hawthorn vs. Sydney (MCG) (E)
Western Bulldogs vs. Melbourne (TD)
West Coast vs. Richmond (S)

ROUND 16

Friday, July 18

Kangaroos vs. Collingwood (TD) (N)

Saturday, July 19

Geelong vs. Western Bulldogs (SS)
Richmond vs. Essendon (MCG)
Brisbane Lions vs. West Coast (G) (N)
St Kilda vs. Hawthorn (TD) (N)

Sunday, July 20

Carlton vs. Sydney (TD) (E)
Port Adelaide vs. Adelaide (AS)
Fremantle vs. Melbourne (S)

ROUND 17

Friday, July 25

Hawthorn vs. Geelong (MCG) (N)

Saturday, July 26

Essendon vs. Collingwood (MCG)
West Coast vs. St Kilda (S)
Richmond vs. Brisbane Lions (TD) (N)
Sydney vs. Adelaide (SCG) (N)

Sunday, July 27

Port Adelaide vs. Fremantle (AS) (E)
Melbourne vs. Kangaroos (MCG)
Western Bulldogs vs. Carlton (TD) (T)

ROUND 18

Friday, August 1

Collingwood vs. Hawthorn (MCG) (N)

Saturday, August 2

Essendon vs. Melbourne (MCG)
Adelaide vs. Carlton (AS)
Geelong vs. Richmond (TD) (N)
Kangaroos vs. Brisbane Lions (GCS) (N)

Sunday, August 3

Western Bulldogs vs. Sydney (MO) (E)
St Kilda vs. Port Adelaide (TD)
Fremantle vs. West Coast (S)

ROUND 19

Tom Wills Round

Friday, August 8

Melbourne vs. Geelong (MCG) (N)

Saturday, August 9

Carlton vs. Port Adelaide (TD)
Hawthorn vs. Brisbane Lions (AU)
Collingwood vs. St Kilda (MCG) (N)
Sydney vs. Fremantle (SCG) (N)

Sunday, August 10

Kangaroos vs. Western Bulldogs (TD) (E)
Adelaide vs. Richmond (AS)
West Coast vs. Essendon (S)

ROUND 20

Friday, August 15

Port Adelaide vs. Collingwood (AS) (N)

Saturday, August 16

Essendon vs. Adelaide (TD)
Melbourne vs. West Coast (MCG)
Brisbane Lions vs. Western Bulldogs (G) (N)
Sydney vs. Geelong (ANZ) (N)

Sunday, August 17

Richmond vs. Hawthorn (MCG) (E)
Carlton vs. Kangaroos (TD)
Fremantle vs. St Kilda (S)

ROUND 21

Friday, August 22

Western Bulldogs vs. Essendon (TD) (N)

Saturday, August 23

Richmond vs. Fremantle (MCG)
Port Adelaide vs. Melbourne (AS)
Brisbane Lions vs. Carlton (G) (N)
Collingwood vs. Sydney (TD) (N)

Sunday, August 24

Geelong vs. Kangaroos (SS) (E)
St Kilda vs. Adelaide (TD)
West Coast vs. Hawthorn (S)

ROUND 22

Friday, August 29

Fremantle vs. Collingwood (S) (N)

Saturday, August 30

Kangaroos vs. Port Adelaide (MCG) (E)
Geelong vs. West Coast (SS)
Adelaide vs. Western Bulldogs (AS)
Carlton vs. Hawthorn (TD) (N)

Sunday, August 31

Sydney vs. Brisbane Lions (SCG) (N)
Melbourne vs. Richmond (MCG)
Essendon vs. St Kilda (TD) (T)

TOYOTA AFL FINALS SERIES

SEPTEMBER 5, 6, 7

Week 1 – Qualifying & elimination finals (4)

SEPTEMBER 12, 13

Week 2 – Semi-finals (2)

SEPTEMBER 19, 20

Week 3 – Preliminary finals (2)

SEPTEMBER 27

Week 4 – Toyota AFL Grand Final

©COPYRIGHT 2007 – AFL (Reproduction of the program of matches in whole or part is permitted only with prior written approval of the AFL)

(E) Early game
(T) Twilight game
(N) Night game

(AS) AAMI Stadium, Adelaide
(AU) Aurora Stadium, Launceston
(GCS) Gold Coast Stadium, Carrara
(G) Gabba, Brisbane
(MO) Manuka Oval, Canberra
(MCG) Melbourne Cricket Ground
(S) Subiaco Oval, Perth
(SCG) Sydney Cricket Ground
(SS) Skilled Stadium, Geelong
(TD) Telstra Dome, Melbourne
(TIO) TIO Stadium, Darwin
(ANZ) ANZ Stadium, Sydney