



# BLOODS FOR LIFE

PREMIERS | 1881 | 1885 | 1888 | 1889 | 1890 | 1909 | 1918 | 1933 | 2005 | 2012

RUNNERS UP | 1880 | 1886 | 1896 | 1899 | 1907 | 1912 | 1914 | 1934 | 1935 | 1936 | 1945 | 1996 | 2006 | 2014 | 2016 | 2022 | 2024

## 2005 PREMIERSHIP REUNION



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**TROY LUFF  
STILL PLAYING!**

**THE MANGOS FAMILY  
AND THE SWANS**

**THE RESILIENT  
BARNABY HOWARTH**



# BLOODS FOR LIFE



*600 game milestone for the amazing Troy Luff*

## BLOODS FOR LIFE: PAST AND CURRENT PLAYERS & OFFICIALS OF THE SYDNEY SWANS FOOTBALL CLUB

### COMMITTEE

Andrew McMaster – Chairman  
Richard Colless  
Mike Coward  
Brett Kirk  
Harry McAsey

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Mike Coward

### HISTORIAN

Barb Cullen

### REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

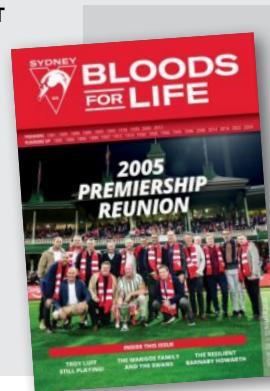
Joe Moore  
Mike Coward  
Brett Kirk  
Rod Gillett  
Chris Bracher  
Dave Warner

### SYDNEY SWANS SUPPORT

Loretta Johns  
Tom Chadwick  
Amanda Thompson  
Emily Jenik

### PRODUCTION AND TECHNOLOGY

Vicky Stavroulakis,  
Pintar & Associates



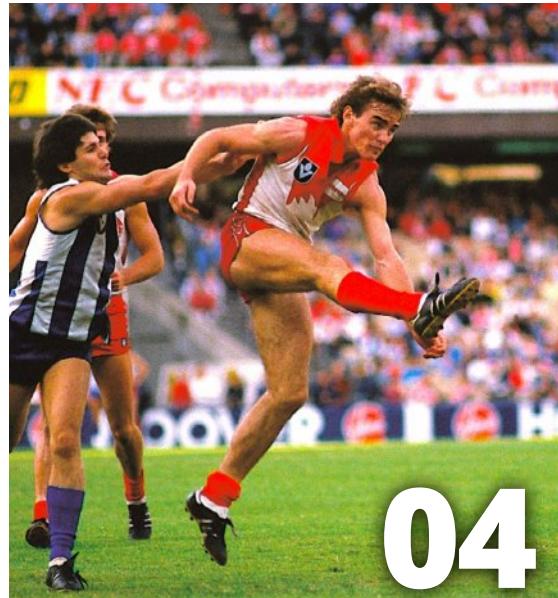
**FRONT COVER:**  
Our 2005  
Premiership  
heroes gather  
at the SCG

# Bloods For Life Magazine

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

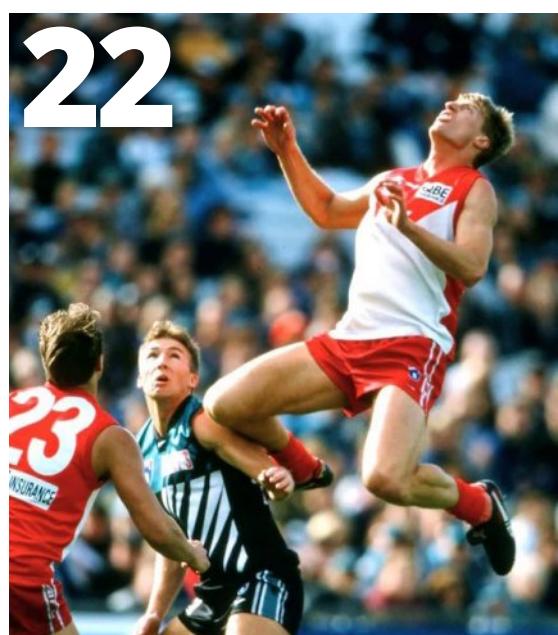
Summer Issue 2025

<b>20</b>	CLUB REPORT	→
<b>30</b>	HALL OF FAME AND LIFE MEMBERS	→
<b>35</b>	PAST PLAYERS FUNCTION	→
<b>38</b>	2025 PREMIERSHIP REUNION	→
<b>40</b>	VALE	→
<b>42</b>	AROUND THE GROUNDS	→
<b>43</b>	THE SWANS FOUNDATION	→
<b>46</b>	HOW FOOTY SAVED MY LIFE	→
<b>50</b>	COACH'S REPORT	→
<b>52</b>	NEW BLOODS	→
<b>58</b>	AFLW REPORT	→
<b>60</b>	<i>THE BLOODS OF OLD:</i> THE TRANSITION CUP	→
<b>66</b>	THE QUIZ: <i>HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW LUFFY?</i>	→
<b>68</b>	2025 YEAR IN REVIEW	→
<b>75</b>	AFL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION	→



**04**

**MITCH'S STORY – PART 2**  
BY BARRY MITCHELL  
WITH JOE MOORE



**22**

**HOW DOES LUFFY KEEP  
PLAYING FOOTY?  
BY ROD GILLETT**



**12**

**A SPECIAL  
FEATURE**  
The Mangos  
Family's amazing  
history with  
the Swans  
by John Mangos

*Barry Mitchell's journey with the Sydney Swans is one that speaks to dedication, passion, and a deep connection to the game.*

*For years, Barry poured his heart into football, building a career defined by hard work, skill, and an unshakeable commitment to his team.*



*By Barry Mitchell with Joe Moore*

*Joe Moore is a Hobart-based writer. He has been writing for the Sydney Swans since 2015*

# **MITCH'S STORY**

**PART 2**

*By Barry Mitchell (with Joe Moore)*

*A Swans Hall of Famer, Mitchell was a teammate and a competitor who gave his all, every time he stepped onto the field. Now, in this next chapter of his life, Barry has discovered a new passion in writing — a creative outlet that brings him joy and a chance to reflect on the stories and lessons that have shaped him.*

*In part one of Barry's story, we travelled back to his junior football days — a time when his love for the game was just beginning to take shape. It's a glimpse into the early moments that sparked his incredible career and the values that carried him forward, both on and off the field.*

*Part 2 of Barry's story encompasses his time in the AFL with the Swans, Collingwood and Carlton. Barry also shares some challenges he faced after departing the playing field.*

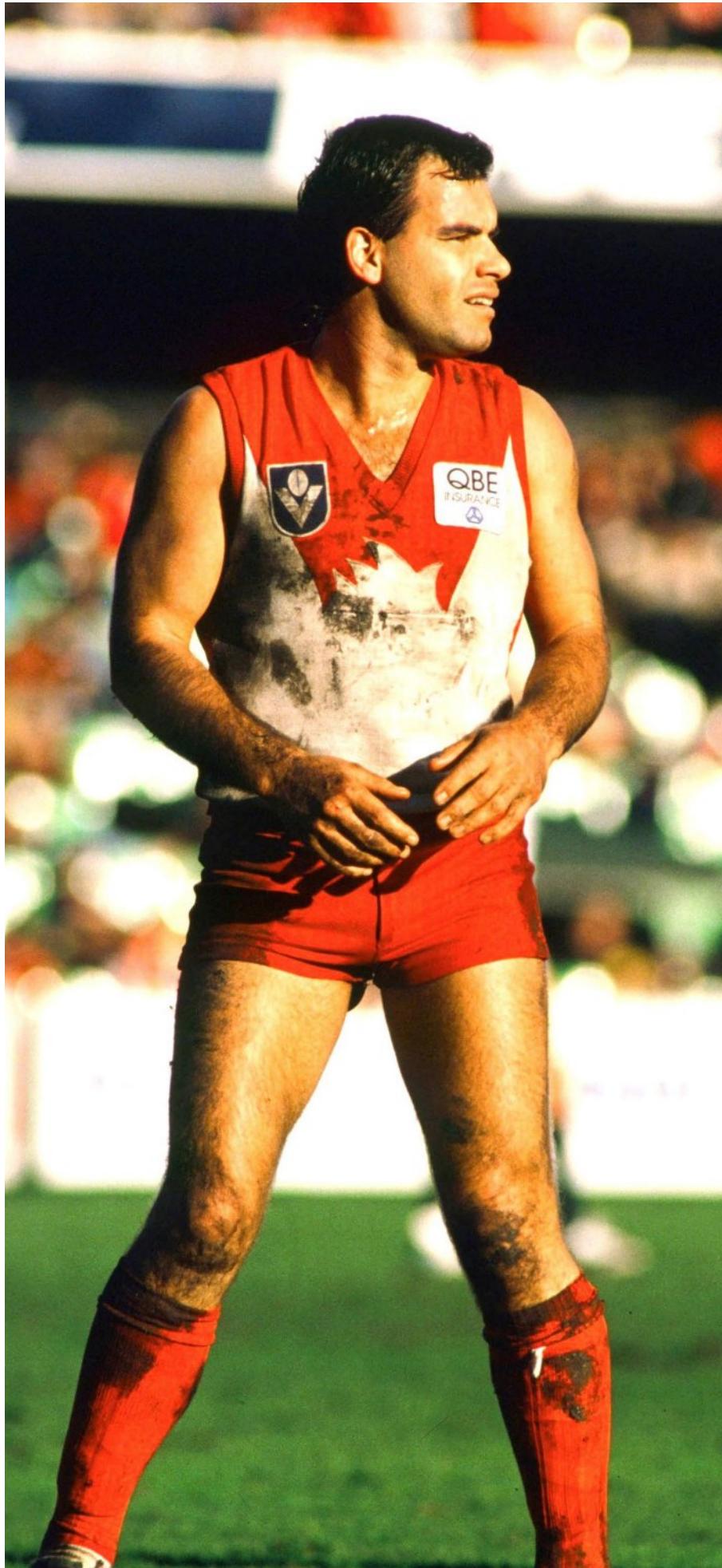
In 1986, Tommy Hafey took over as coach of the Sydney Swans, replacing John 'Swooper' Northey, who only got the one season, and would go on to coach Melbourne and then Brisbane.



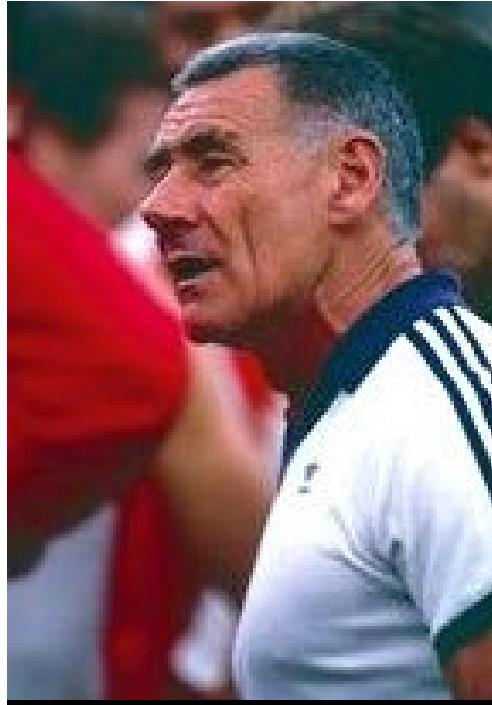
This particular year and the following year, we picked up a stack of players; a lot of them established, some champions, others just made us better: Greg Williams, Gerard Healy, Merv Neagle, Bernard Toohey, David Bolton, Glen Coleman, Wayne Henwood, Jim Edmond, Neil Cordy, and Tim Barling.

These players were added to already good and better players such as Dennis Carroll, Mark Browning, Stevie Wright, Ian Roberts, Warwick Capper, Rod Carter, Tony Morwood, David Murphy, Mark Bayes, Terry Thripp, Craig Holden, John Ironmonger, Jamie Duursma, Craig Potter, Brett Scott, and my favourite, Paul Hawke,

with apologies to others. Together, we turned the Swans from also-rans into a force to be reckoned with. We knocked a lot of teams over under the tutelage of Tommy, a hard taskmaster who got us fit and raring to go. But a couple got away who would have made us better again — Bernie Evans,



*Swans superstar Greg "Diesel" Williams*



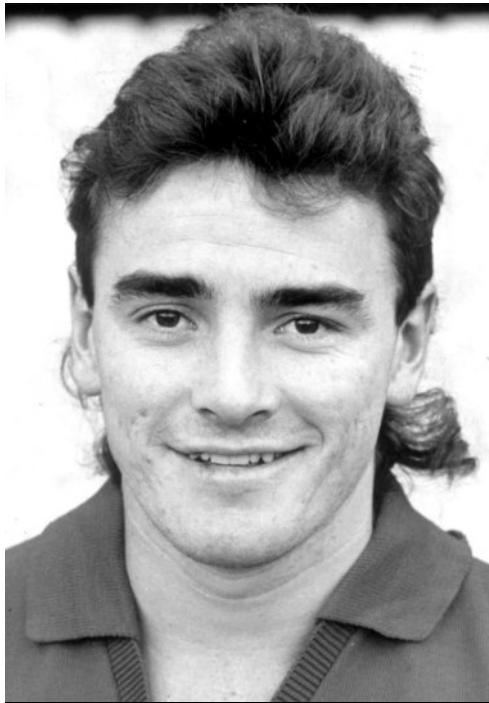
*Swans Coach Tom Hafey*

who I really looked up to, and David Rhys-Jones, who was highly talented and very competitive.

Greg Miller was the recruiter at the time and had Carey, Longmire, Crosista and others lined up. It was a real shame we couldn't hang on to all our players, as we might have gone close to winning the whole thing!

Greg "Diesel" Williams was a phenomenon. A brilliant ball-handler with vision and the ability to win the ball under pressure, and used all angles to put others into better positions. A tough, uncompromising competitor to boot, he gave a few and wore plenty.

Things had started going south for the Sydney Swans by the 1991 AFL season,



*A young Barry Mitchell.*

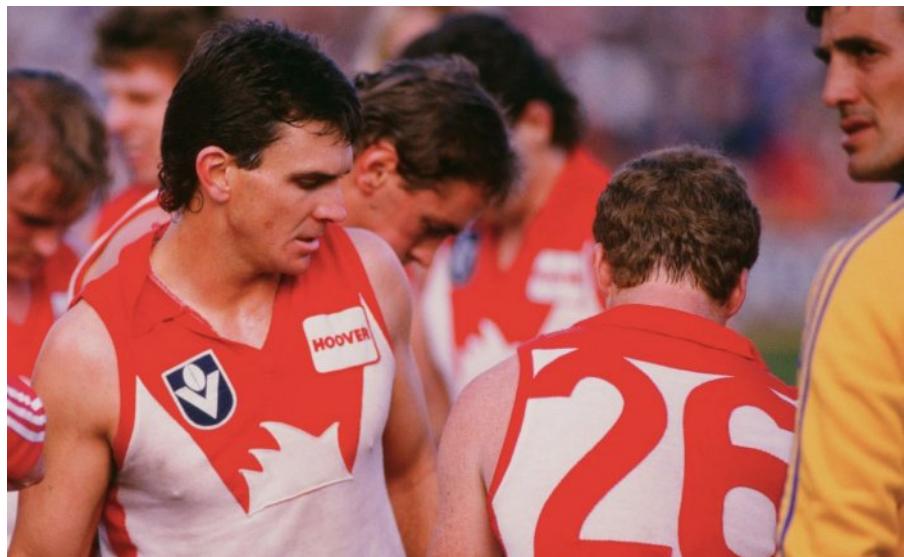


*Mitch with David Bolton and Greg Williams*

which was probably my best year on a personal level.

Late in the year, Player Manager Peter Jess came to Sydney to lay an offer on the table from Carlton for Greg Williams. It was labelled the 'Godfather offer', too good to refuse. Well, if that was the Godfather offer, I was getting the back-up deal. Carlton had finished 11th that year with eight wins, whilst we had finished 12th with seven wins and a draw. We had steadily gotten worse from the halcyon days of 1986 and 1987, when we finished second both years, bowing out in the finals in straight sets.

Unfortunately, there were no home finals in those days. Gone were Healy, Neagle, Ironmonger, Carter, Capper,



*Teammates Merv Neagle and Steve Wright, and Runner Craig Davis*

Coleman, Edmond, T. Morwood, Barling, who never got going due to horrific knee injuries, and Duursma. Our other good players had either got old or older, depending on how you wanted to describe it: Carroll 30, Wright 30, Roberts 34, Bolton 30 and Cordy 32.

We had picked up some good young players, like Paul Kelly (who would become a star), Lewis, and several others, but there had been a mass exodus. The club had not planned for the future, had run out of money, and tougher times lay ahead.

Peter Jess had set up camp in



*Teammates Warwick Capper and Bernard Toohey*

the famous Ladies Stand at the SCG on a training night. Diesel had been in to see him and indicated to me that Peter wanted to see me as well.

"What for?" I wondered.

Well, the next 10 minutes would change my destiny. Carlton had tabled an offer for me, and Greg as well. I was the steak knives, but they were of the silver service variety! I can't recall the numbers, but they were jaw-dropping, and I had always followed Greg's lead as he was such a great player and a good clubman. He left, but as it was, I had to stay, since I had another year left on my contract.

The following year, in 1992, with a young Paul Kelly as captain, we finished 15th and last on the ladder with three wins and a draw, followed by wooden spoons again in 1993 and 1994, during a very tough

period for the club.

I finished up going to Collingwood at the end of 1992, had a poor season in 1993, then went to Carlton and played finals in 1994 before my knees gave out.

And that was about the end of the penny section.

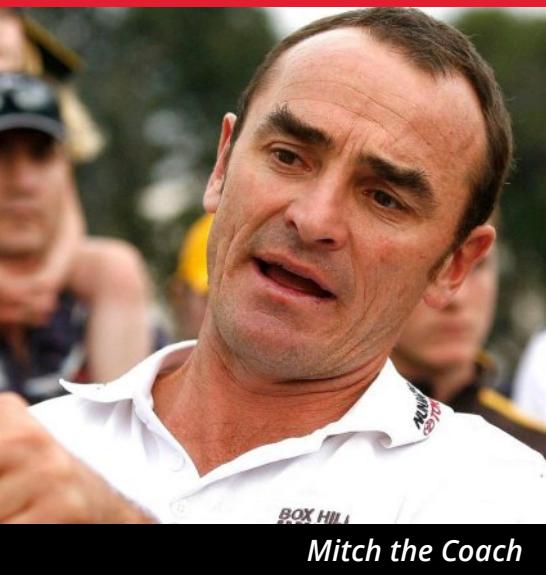
The move to Collingwood was an interesting one. I was all set up to get the Carlton deal, having rolled over from the previous year. But Collingwood gazumped the deal, saying that they were going to take me before the Blues. In those days, you could put a price on your head to scare off other teams, but Collingwood, which had a pick in the draft before Carlton, said that they would match the Carlton bid.

North Melbourne had a crack as well, through Denis Pagan and some of his staff. He came to my house and

worked me over, saying what a good fit I would be at North. At the time, they had Wayne Carey, Glenn Archer and many other good players. They were a very even side with midfielders like Anthony Stevens and Peter Bell.

Peter Bell, who had developed into a gun player, had a South Korean mother, and his father was a native American of Navajo Descent. He had been adopted by an Australian couple who were Christian missionaries.

North Melbourne also had Corey McKernan, John Longmire, John Blakey, and the list went on. Greg Miller, who had originally recruited me to South Melbourne, was at North from 1985 to 1989, and if he had still been there, I may have been persuaded. I always had time for him, as he was personable and friendly. He wasn't one of the hard-nosed administrators



*Mitch the Coach*

who would intimidate or manipulate you.

Pagan had told me that the senior players had conducted a meeting, and they were prepared to take pay cuts to fit me in. I didn't like the sound of that, as you would be starting off already indebted to them. I had a bit to do with Denis years later when he coached Carlton, and I was an assistant coach. I think I made the right decision not to go there.

St Kilda were next through Ken Sheldon and Peter Hudson. I remember I had moved back to Melbourne and was staying at my family's house. Ken was relentless, continually calling. I had to ask Mum and Dad to tell him I wasn't home!

It looked like I was going to the Blues. I had committed to them and to Diesel, who was a mentor on and off the ground. He was a brilliant,



*Wayne Henwood coming through!*

aggressive player whom I greatly admired. I was able to get into positions to receive off him through his brilliant disposal, particularly handball. We had developed a style in Sydney, really based on his play, where we would chain the ball, particularly via handball, before going deep to Capper. Warwick was a very underrated player, a tremendous contested mark, and he would often mark close to goal and convert with his double-handed ball drop.

During all of this, I felt very drained. My manager said that Collingwood were in and I'd better go to his office to talk about the deal. I drove

over and met with him to discuss the Collingwood deal. As we were doing this, Peter Gordon, the Western Bulldogs president, turned up. My manager got up and went out to see him, and five minutes later walked back in to nonchalantly advise that the Bulldogs were in and were prepared to pay whatever it would take. Although it was all somewhat flattering, I wasn't enjoying the pressure at all.

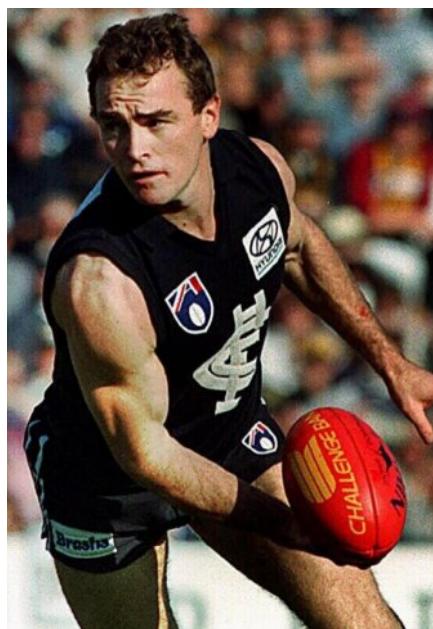
As it turned out, Collingwood picked me, and I was off to Victoria Park to join the Magpies. Interestingly, I was given the number 6 guernsey, the same number

my son Tom would wear as a Collingwood player 31 years later. He would go on to help the Magpies win a flag.

I floundered in my year at Collingwood for several reasons. The day after I was recruited, my worst fears came to fruition. The back page headlines in the Herald Sun labelled me the '*million-dollar man*'. I had been worried the figures would become public, even though my manager assured me they would remain private. I was naive enough to believe him.

The whole issue of player contracting was, and no doubt remains, an intriguing process. We, the players, didn't really know what was going on between the club and the manager, with the details and facts left somewhere out in the stratosphere. My manager, in fact, said (hopefully tongue-in-cheek!) that he had nude photos of a club CEO, and it was these photos that ultimately got me the big money; it had nothing to do with whether I could play or not! My manager was very good at manipulating the situation to get his client, and himself, the best deal.

Thus, when I got to Collingwood, it was in a blaze of publicity. I was very conscious of my deal - 1 million dollars plus, spread



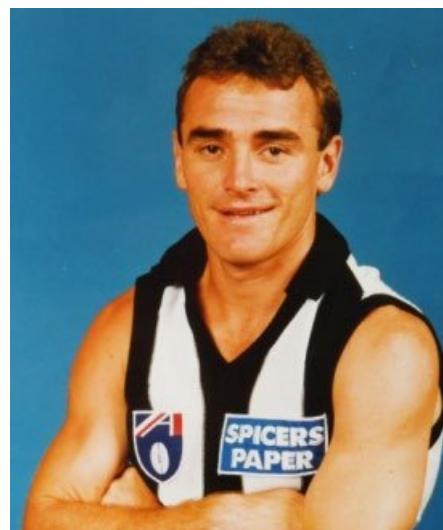
*In action as a Carlton Blue*

over what would be 5 years. This was very big at the time.

I was also a little underdone when I arrived at the Magpies, having had to train by myself, although I had a few nights at Dandenong, who were in the VFL at the time. I didn't really feel welcome, to be honest, and I wasn't sure the coach, Leigh Matthews, even wanted me there; he made little or no effort to make me feel comfortable.

I felt the pressure of the money but was befriended by Paul Williams (who I would later be Best Man for), Graham Wright, Mick McGuane, Peter Daicos and Gavin Brown. However, others were not so welcoming. I don't know if the money was a factor, but looking back, it is fair to say it probably was.

I had always been a hard-



*Magpie Mitch*



*Recovering after surgery*

working player with quick hands, which was my "No.1 wood". As my opponents tired, I could keep running from contest to contest or get into a position to receive from and was handy at the stoppages. There wasn't a lot of me, but I had an intensity about me. I loved training and became somewhat of a zealot. They said I was mad, and I think they were right.

I loved my teammates at Sydney, but didn't feel the same at Collingwood, which was probably fair enough as I needed more time to settle in. My footy at Collingwood,



*Son Tom Mitchell with Swans Coach John Longmire*



*Mitch with Richard Colless and Grant Bartholomaeus at a recent Past Players function*

however, didn't measure up, and I was left feeling unwanted. I believe they froze me out to get rid of me and the salary cap space that my contract required.

Thank God they did. I was able to move to the Blues, where I felt much more welcome and comfortable.

Years later, I would be diagnosed with a brain tumour. Was it a result of the constant pressure I put on myself? Maybe.

So, eventually, it was time to start again, leave all that had happened behind for good. There was no use talking about what had happened

and trying to convince others of your version of the story.

The past had somehow snuck up on me and made me bitter, not so much with what I had done, but more with how things and people had changed. Too many people had become selfish, would be the term I'd use to describe it.

As I moved forward, I wondered where I would end up. I had been wandering the last ten years, a life-threatening illness and a separation, more precisely, a divorce, had taken their toll. I had more or less fallen out of the workforce, and I battled for my place in the scheme of things.

I had once been there to favour others, but that changed once I gained significant standing within the Sydney Swans, a club I had represented many years before, first in the little league, then years later in the senior team.

Now, it's about the present and moving forward that matters. A new mindset of being thankful for what I have and could have in the future. To be grateful for being alive and being able to participate in life as I would like to. ♡

# A SPECIAL FEATURE

BY CLUB LIFE MEMBER AND SWANS AMBASSADOR JOHN MANGOS



*How Four Greek Brothers from a remote Greek island helped create the famous Swans culture more than a hundred years ago.*

**Our Club culture is famously and quite rightly attributed to the era of our first premiership in 72 years (2005) under the inspiring leadership of Paul Roos:**

**“For those who have waited 72 years here it is!”** he declared triumphantly while holding the cup aloft.

A lesser known but equally important historic fact is that a semblance of the Swans culture began as far back as the First World War on a tiny Greek Island called

Kastellorizo.

Four adventurous young Mangos brothers were courageously smuggled from the island during WW1 as refugees in 1918 and sent to a refugee camp in Port Said in Egypt because the Turks had occupied their home island and it was perilously unsafe.

The island, Kastellorizo, in the south eastern Aegean Sea, suffered profound devastation in both World Wars.

The brothers Mangos, Michael

(Uncle Mick), Arthur, Lefteris and John (my grandfather) were processed and came here to Australia looking for a better, safer and prosperous country where they could marry and raise their families with hard work.

Many Greeks lived in South Melbourne in those days and long before the South Melbourne Hellas Soccer Club was established they followed the local soccer matches. The Mangos brothers meanwhile set up ***The Swan Cafe*** metres





*Where it all began. The beautiful and picturesque island of Kastellorizo. At the turn of the 1900s population 10,000. Today a mere 400 residents.*

from the Lakeside Oval on Clarendon St and rallied behind Aussie Rules football and the local cry of "Up There Cazaly".

I grew up hearing my grandfather chant "Up There Cazaly" long before Mike Brady immortalized the song that would become the unofficial anthem for the AFL.

We were the South Melbourne Footy Club and the Mangos brothers embraced the code and the club.

They were anxious to



*This shot was taken on the day of departure: elder brother Michael with my grandfather John. They had their suits made especially for the voyage.*



*The times necessitated a sign on the window which declared us British subjects, otherwise the bricks kept getting thrown through the shop front. Once the sign went up, the bricks stopped.*

integrate and assimilate. Such was the White Australia Policy in those days, bricks would be thrown through the front window of their shops... until they put up a sign which said, "The proprietor of this establishment is a naturalised British subject, formerly of Greek nationality."

The players weren't professional at the time. They trained on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and were paid per match. Pubs closed at 6pm, so the local cafes were the only places to get a feed after the

gloriously Australian tradition of the 'six o'clock swill' where they would line up the beers for final consumption just before the strike of six.

Cafes always had a back room and the selectors would come with brown bags under their arms on Thursdays to eat, drink and select the team. The coach and head selector would then phone in the line-ups late on the Thursday night so as the morning newspapers would have them for Friday morning editions and the fans could learn who

was dropped from their team.

Meantime, the same was happening at a notorious cafe called Kanis's Cafe in Richmond on Bridge Rd, which was infamous because it was frequented by feared Melbourne gangster, 'Sqizzy' Taylor. Taylor was known to carry a firearm, never paid for a meal, and used his stand over tactics to 'influence' team selection. You may not be surprised he died by a gunshot at age 39.

I know this because, my mother fled the same island



*This is a very rare shot. It's the refugee camp in Gaza where my mother 'Diamanto' lived in squalor for six months for processing and dispatch. When she arrived at the Australian border control they changed her name to Dorothy because Diamanto was not a name recognised in this country in those days. She was called Dorothy or Dot ever since.*

as a refugee like Dad's father, but was instead taken to Gaza. It was the Second World War and as a 13 year she was held in tents for six months waiting to be processed for dispatch to Australia. When she arrived she had no choice but to work at Kanis's.

The English would reclaim Kastellorizo from the Italians and returned it to the Greeks (the same can't be said of the Parthenon marbles!).

The island was still beautiful, but most of their homes had been bombed and wrecked.

On their return to the island on a ship called The Empire Patrol carrying hundreds, a fire broke out. Thirty-three people and two crew perished, Mum had to tread water for 12 hours waiting to be rescued.

That 13 year old wouldn't have guessed in a thousand years that one day she would embrace Australian football with Richmond on her side of the family, and marry into a devoted Mangos army of Swans fanatics.

The rest of the population of

thousands of Kastellorizians returned to the island only to find their homes had been reduced to rubble and just few hundred homes survived the onslaught, so most of the Kastellorizians decided to join family and came to Australia.

These were desperate post depression times, so while tradies were going broke, they still had to eat so the Greeks and Italians managed to survive. The Greeks dominated seafood and cafes, the Italians went into fruit and vegetables.



*My mother Dorothy aged 17 on the far left with her three sisters.  
Two years later she was to marry my father, Con Mangos.*

So while Dad was feeding the Swans in South Melbourne, Mum was feeding the Tigers in Richmond.

My Grandfather befriended Roy Cazaly and they remained good mates for years thereafter.

The early Swans culture had begun through hospitality, generosity of spirit and loyal devotion to their local team.

By the 1960s Uncle Mick's son, Peter, had become a doctor. The club had no money so my cousin Dr Peter offered to become the club's honorary doctor. It was a post

he held for 30 years through the 1960s, 70s and 80s including the move to Sydney in 1982.

Around that time I had just returned from a 3 year stint in Los Angeles and started showing my face around the club which had now migrated to Sydney to save itself financially because the club's financial affairs were in a parlous condition.

Enter Michael Willesee and Peter Weinert who put their hands in their pockets and saved the club from financial ruin following the poor planning by the VFL and

the excesses of Dr Geoffrey Edelsten. Basil Sellers was also a generous benefactor who largely flew under the radar, without a lot of attention to his benevolence.

I was flattered that many of the old South players thought I was Dr Peter's son. It made sense but in fact we were cousins who shared red and white in our blood.

The Bobby Skiltons, Peter Bedfords, Graham Teasdales, Tony Morwoods, Barry Rounds, John Rantalls, and Herbie Matthews all approached me at some stage with the familiar refrain:



*The legendary Dr Peter Mangos. Honorary club doctor for 30 years and much loved by the players over the decades. In those days pain killing injections were administered more liberally. As many of the old timers have told me, they'd never have got through the games if it weren't for his expertise.*

*"Do you know how many needles your father stuck into me to get me through a game?"*

*"I would not have finished the game if he hadn't jabbed me at half time."*

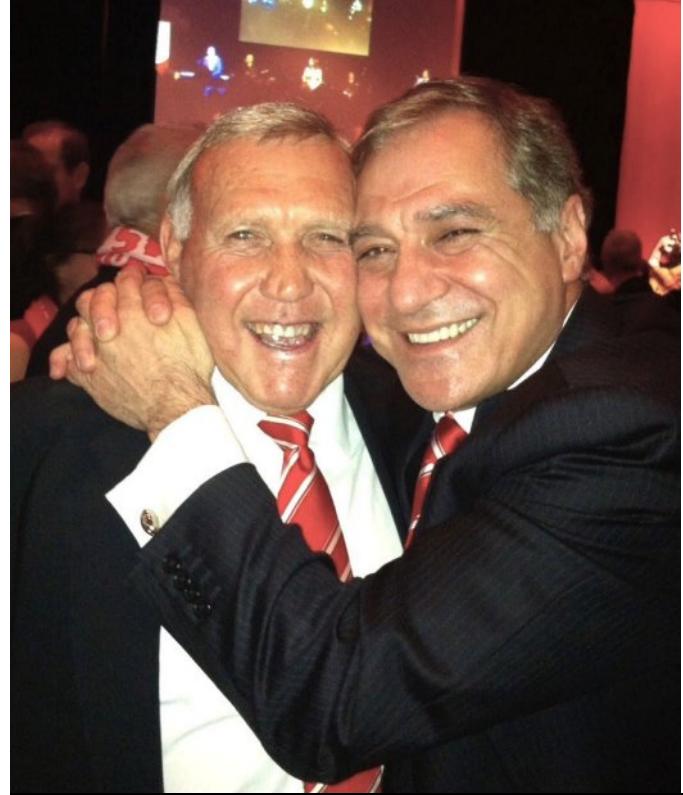
*"He was just brilliant on game day, he was a quick thinking physician who knew how to manage our injuries on the ground without all the fancy equipment we have today."*

Dr Peter had a special relationship with Bobby Skilton and they socialised together frequently. Dr Peter reveled in telling the joke they had one and a half Brownlows

between them. Peter was of particular support when 'Skilts' lost one of his young sons. To this day Bobby is grateful for the support he received from Peter during this tragic and personal loss.

As for Barry Round, it was impossible not to love the big bear, but Barry's rendition of "The Gambler" was no Kenny Rogers.

And it would be remiss of me not to mention Dr Peter's long and enduring friendship with Ricky Quade both as captain and coach. Theirs was a relationship built on honesty and trust. It had to be. There



*This is one of my favourite shots taken at a club function. Triple Brownlow Medal winner Bob Skilton always extended the affection he had for my cousin Dr. Peter Mangos to me. I am proud of the relationship Bobby has maintained with the Mangos family.*

were highs but many more lows. Their mutual respect never wavered which in this cut throat business is a testament to them both.

I have beautiful, lasting and proud memories of my cousin when he would run out onto the ground during the game with his black doctor's bag to assess a player's injury. He was a blood for life and dedicated more than 30 years of his professional expertise pro bono out of his love for the Swans. I am delighted that after so many seasons of disappointment he saw us win the flag in 2005.



*With Adam Goodes and Michael O'Loughlin at the launch the GO Foundation Interestingly the shot was taken by our current Governor-General, Her Excellency Sam Mostyn.*



*It's always understandably d from Tom Papley after the m Here he is with my second son*

Back in 1989 going to the game I love to watch the team I love, the sharp eyed Michael Willesee spotted me in the crowd. Although it was hardly lucky given we only attracted roughly 2000 to the games! Mike and Peter sent our then one and only office manager, Anne Woodman to find me in the crowd and invite me to join them at the club's pre match luncheon for sponsors as their guest the following Sunday.

I was flattered and honoured, but having said that, at the time, I was the only high profile media personality who cared about growing the sport in the Rugby League

dominated city of Sydney. We couldn't get one centimetre of column space in the press.

They asked if I'd be kind enough to MC the following week's event, for no money of course, and I readily accepted. An incredible 32 years later, I was still the MC for every pre and post home match function. With long losing streaks some of those gigs were pretty tough. I was rewarded in 2007 with a Life Membership.

Such was the Club's limited financial capacity, I also MC'd every guernsey night (even handed out the jumpers), and every Bob Skilton Best and Fairest Night and, you

guessed it, I handed out the medals too.

We could not even afford to fly Bobby up to attend the event which was his namesake, but he did reveal to me once his favorite recipient was Paul Kelly.

If you ever make it to the Greek island of Kastellorizo you won't help but be amused that these days our games are broadcast at several of the local tavernas. They too are now bloods for life which is hilarious when everyone else is watching the soccer.

That's three generations covered from a small Greek island to the SCG.



Difficult to get a smile  
atches we lose.  
n Apollo



*My boys Kosta and Apollo with Chad Warner  
post match in our new home facility.*

The fourth generation is  
already covered.

Most of the players have  
known my teenage sons  
Kosta and Apollo since they  
were toddlers. The players  
are always courteous and  
polite (except when you asked  
Tom Papley for a selfie when  
we lost!! lol).

And that's the story of how  
four young men from Greece  
107 years ago started the  
legacy of a Swans Fan Club  
on a small Greek island ...and  
how they set the foundation  
for the unique culture for  
which we are now famous.

These guys were  
Bloods for Life. ▼



*The only known photo of the four brothers together.  
It was at a family function. In order, Michael, Arthur, Lefteris  
and John (my grandfather).*



*Ollie Florent*



*Will Hayward*

# CLUB REPORT

**The final quarter of 2025 has marked a period of significant change at the Club – not the least of which is the departure of Tom Harley and my commencement as the Club's new Chief Executive Officer. I'm filled with great pride and excitement to be taking over the role, as the Sydney Swans is a Club I have long admired from afar. Tom leaves an incredible legacy after a tenure of more than 11 years, which included our move to the Sellers & Colless Centre - Sydney Swans HQ, and the establishment of our women's team.**

It's an honour to lead the Swans into the next chapter of a proud history spanning more than 150 years. I am deeply committed to creating an environment for our athletes to thrive, including nurturing the next generation

coming through our QBE Sydney Swans Academy. The Club is renowned for sustained success, and my goal is to build on that culture of high performance. Equally, I want our Club to remain a leader in inclusivity and community outreach.

We have also farewelled AFLW senior coach Scott Gowans. Scott called time on his role after four seasons at the helm. He played an instrumental role in building our inaugural AFLW team and has established solid foundations from which the team can build for future success. While our team fell just short of the finals this season, we witnessed some incredible highlights, including the return of Chloe Molloy, the rise of Zippy Fish, and a record-breaking crowd of 7,171 at Henson Park.



*New Bloods show their numbers: Liam Hetherton (39), Max King (31), Jai Serong (13), Billy Cootee (25), Charlie Curnow (35), Harry Kyle (32), Jevan Phillipou (18), Noah Chamberlain (42) and Malcolm Rosas Jnr (10).*

Since taking over it has been somewhat of a baptism of fire, with the AFL Trade period proving a busy and emotional time for the club. We farewelled two much-loved Life Members in Ollie Florent and Will Hayward, who both fittingly finished their careers with us on 184 games after being drafted together in 2016. Both players have been valued contributors and popular members of our team. We wish them both all the very best for the future – they will always be part of the fabric of our Club.

Through the trade and draft periods we welcomed nine fresh faces to the club, including Charlie Curnow, Jai Serong, Malcom Rosas Jnr, Jevan Phillipou, Billy Cootee, Liam Hetherton, and QBE Sydney Swans Academy athletes Harry Kyle, Max King, and Noah

Chamberlain. We have no doubt these players will help strengthen our men's football program.

If you haven't already, please get your diary out and mark next year's games. We have an exciting fixture commencing with the opening game of the season on Thursday, March 5 against Carlton at the SCG – I look forward to seeing you there.

Cheer, cheer! ▼



**Matthew Pavlich | CEO, Sydney Swans**

# HOW DOES LUFFY KEEP PLAYING FOOTY?



*By Rod Gillett*

---

**Troy Luff finished off last season playing his 609th game of football. Next season he will again pull the boots on for UNSW-Eastern Suburbs in the AFL Sydney competition. At age 56, it will be his 39th season.**

How does he do it?

Luff's story is remarkable. As his Swans coach Rodney Eade told me in an interview for this piece it is a story of "resilience and perseverance" viz:

- Recruited from the football outpost of Nelson Bay
- Played only 21 games in his first four seasons in the AFL
- Delisted and redrafted twice before the age of 26
- Played 155 games and a grand final for the Swans
- Played in 10 losing grand finals before winning a premiership
- Played over 600 games and is still playing footy

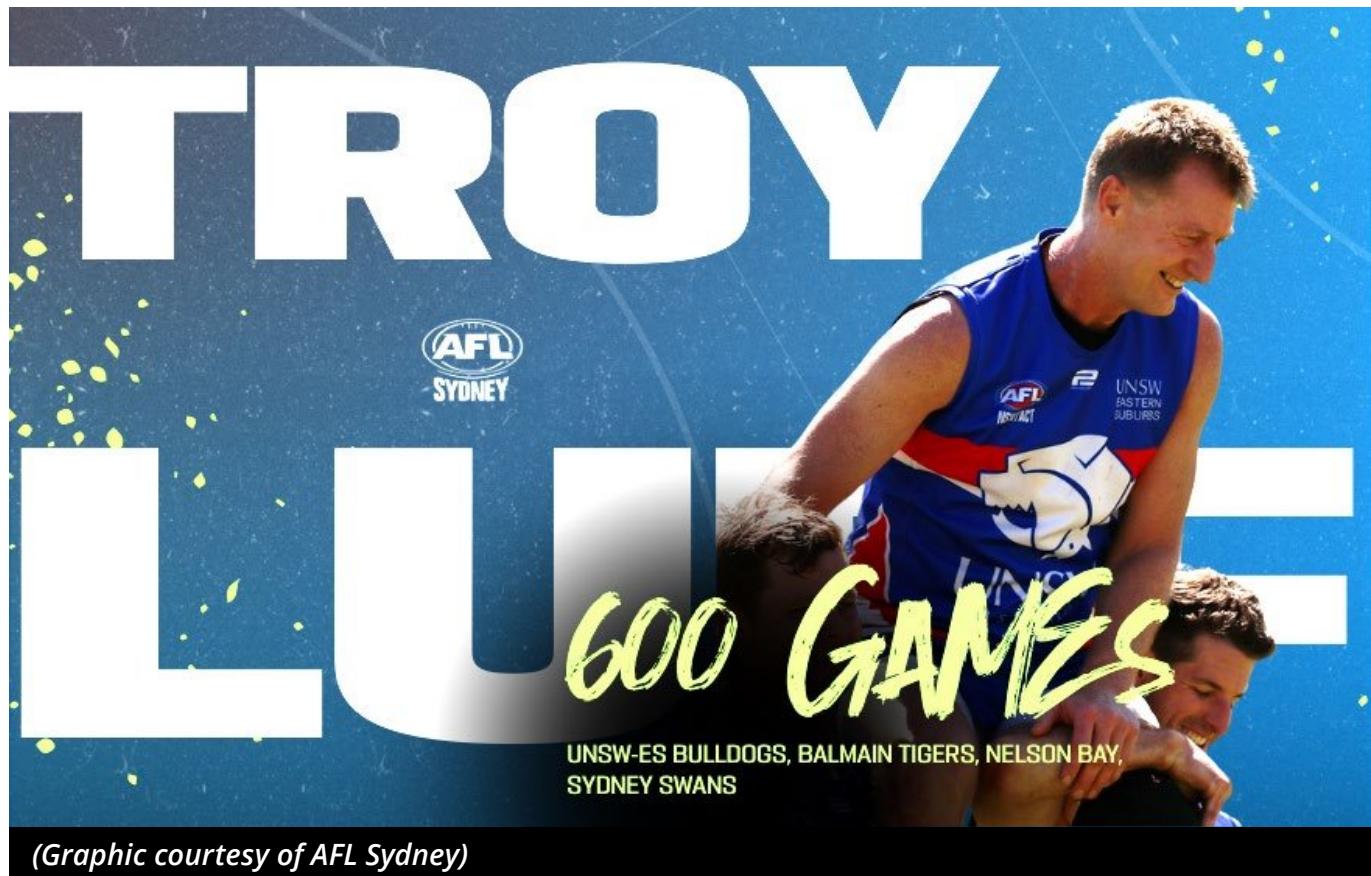
Speaking to him on the sidelines at this year's Swans Hall of Fame function at the SCG where he was presented with the John Yates Medal for outstanding service to the game for the Swans and NSW, he told me his story.

It all started for "Luffy" in the footy heartland of Traralgon in Victoria's Gippsland region. Luff grew up in Traralgon, playing junior footy including a season in the Under 18s for the Maroons in the Latrobe Valley Football League.

He attributes his love of football to being imbued in the culture of the game in Gippsland, "Footy was simply something everyone did in Traralgon so you start the commitment level at a young age".

The family moved to Nelson Bay on the mid-north coast of NSW. Fortunately, the town had a football club playing in the Newcastle league; it is the only club situated between Newcastle and Port Macquarie.

In his first season of playing open-age football as a 17-year-old Troy played under former Balmain player and Campbelltown coach



*(Graphic courtesy of AFL Sydney)*

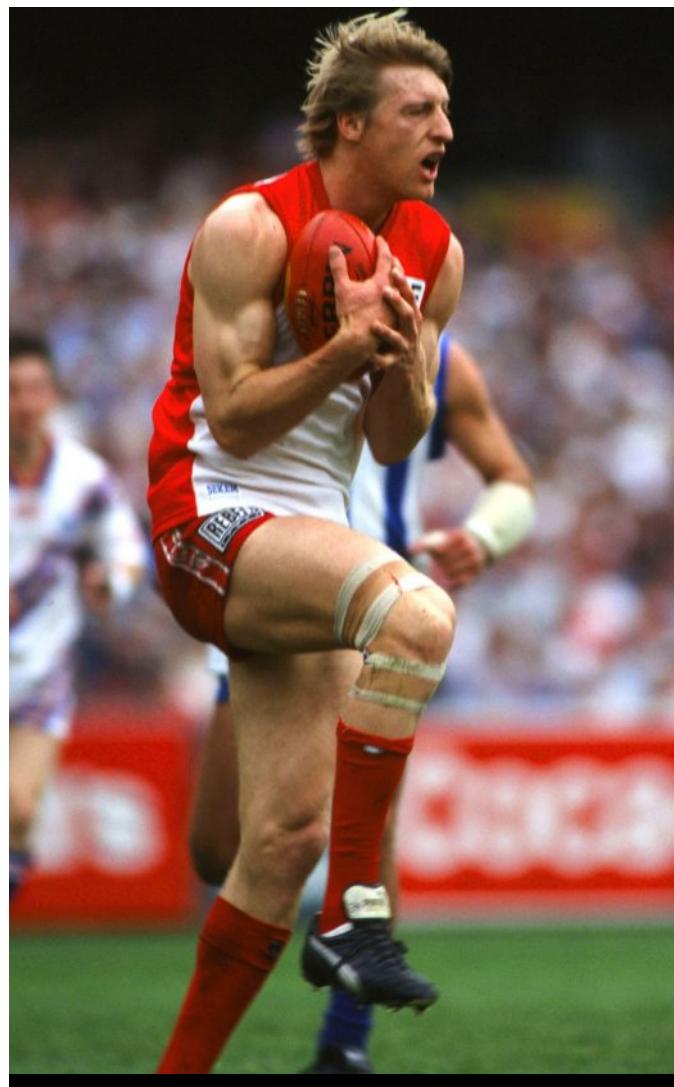
Steve Bird. Bird's son, Craig, who played in the Swans' 2012 premiership triumph, was also recruited from Nelson Bay.

"I learnt a lot about how to play the game in Nelson Bay from my coach Steve Bird. He was a very smart footballer and passed on some of his craft to me," he told me over a beverage in the Noble Stand dining room.

He kicked five goals in the 1987 grand final against RAAF and polled 12 votes in the competition best and fairest but it was the first of a staggering ten grand final losses.

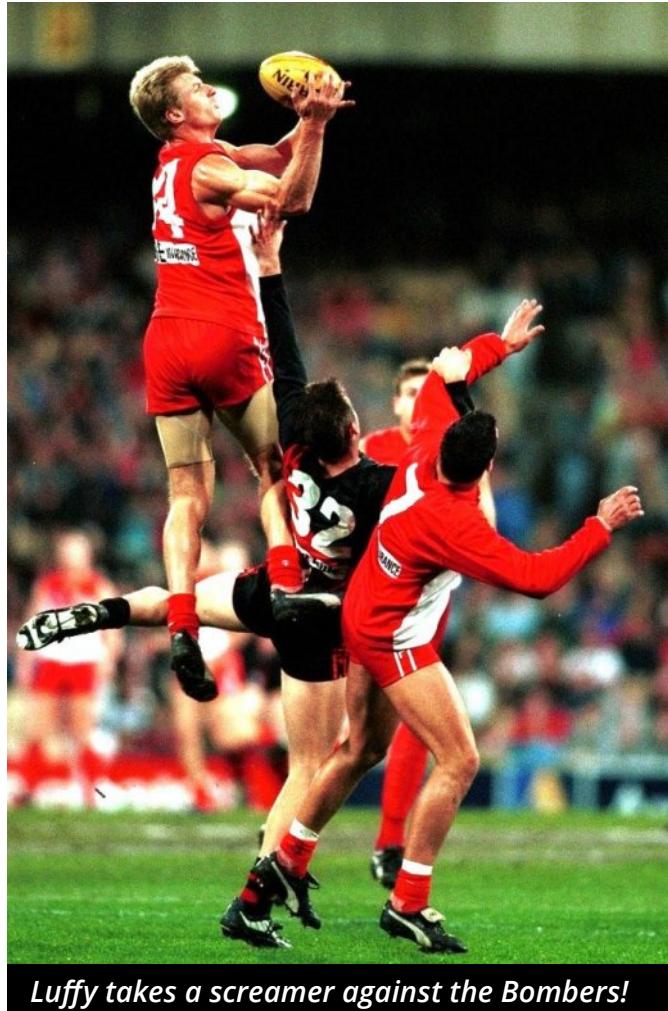
The next season was a "break-out" one for Luffy who booted 85 goals for the season and was runner-up in the Elliott-Davey medal just one vote astray of Mark Ridd (West Newcastle) who also topped the goalkicking with 102 majors. Alas, it was another grand final loss.

Luffy topped the league goalkicking list with 70 goals in 1989 and again was runner-up for the medal by just one vote. However, he got to play his first game on the SCG when representing the Newcastle league in the



*On fire in the 1996 Grand Final*

## HOW DOES LUFFY KEEP PLAYING FOOTY?



*Luffy takes a screamer against the Bombers!*

final of the country championships. His outstanding performance in this game bought him to the attention of the Sydney Swans.

"Back then, all of New South Wales was the Swans' recruiting zone, and after living in New South Wales for three years, I effectively became a New South Welshman, so they could just put me on the list (half-way through 1990)," he said.

Luffy debuted in Round 12, 1990 of the AFL season – a 45-point loss to Fitzroy at the SCG. He only played six games in his first year. In fact, he only played 21 games in his first four years at the club.

"When I started, there were some legends



*With teammates John Stevens and Jared Crouch after a Swans victory*

of the club like Dennis Carroll (the last South Melbourne player to retire), Merv Neagle, Greg Williams, David Murphy, Bernard Toohey, David Bolton, Gerard Healy, just to name a few," Luff said.

"They were all sort of getting towards the end of their careers when I first started, we didn't have a great year in 1990, and then slowly as those guys retired, the performance got worse."

It wasn't until the 1994 season that Luff began to break into the side more often – playing 11 games in 1994 and 10 games in 1995 under the great Ron Barassi.

However, it was under new coach Rodney Eade that Luffy really clicked, and he was a key player in the run into the club's first grand final for 51 years playing 23 games and kicking 20 goals in the 1996 season.

Playing as a forward in the grand final team Troy accumulated 18 disposals six marks and two goals – both kicked in the first quarter when the Swans raced to a 6.2.38 to 3.2.20 lead over North Melbourne.



*Fun loving family man who loves footy*



*Up close with Wayne Schwass in the 1996 Grand Final*

Coach Rodney Eade told me that he liked playing Luffy as a “loose forward” where he could utilise his marking strength, athleticism and accurate goal-kicking to advantage.

However, North stormed past the Swans late in the second quarter to take a 2-point lead at half-time and then went onto record a convincing 43-point victory.

That Grand Final day remains Troy’s biggest thrill in football and at the same time his greatest disappointment. “From the time we won the Preliminary final up until game day, it was just an exciting week. The parade through Melbourne was so exciting, I even took my own camera to capture the moment.”

Troy Luff played 155 games and kicked eighty-five goals for the Sydney Swans from 1990. He became a fan-favourite at the Swans and he fondly recalled his retirement game in 2001, “We had a huge 80 point win over St Kilda and I ended up with the ball in my hands when the siren went. The whole crowd was chanting “Luffy, Luffy” throughout the game.”

“I couldn’t stop smiling. But the biggest thrill of that day was walking a lap with my two

children, Mitchell and Olivia, and waving, high fiving and hugging the supporters who had all stuck around to say goodbye,” Luffy told me.

The coach that unearthed Luffy’s talent was Rodney Eade, and he readily talked to me about his “diamond in the rough” by phone from a river cruise down the Danube.

“His talent was underestimated and he was a tough, resilient character. He had belief in his ability to play at the highest level, and he would bounce back. He was a bit inconsistent at first (under me) but as he got more games under his belt he grew in confidence and developed into a fine player for us”, Rocket told me.

“Troy was also very versatile. We started him down back, played him on a wing, we even had him run with players like Matthew Richardson, he would just keep persevering. But he really found a niche down forward where he could “float” around and kick goals”, added Rocket. “He was a strong overhead mark that gave us another avenue to goal.”

Since his retirement from the AFL, Luff has split his time in the AFL Sydney league playing



*Savouring long awaited premiership glory*

## HOW DOES LUFFY KEEP PLAYING FOOTY?

alternatively for Balmain and UNSW-Eastern Suburbs.

In 2002 he took up the appointment as captain-coach of Balmain in the Sydney Football League. He had an outstanding season winning his first Phelan Medal, the competition's best and fairest award.

He crossed to coach UNSW-Eastern Suburbs in 2005, and then as a player won his second Phelan Medal in 2006. He went back to Balmain as a player in 2011-2012 where experienced two more grand final losses. It was then back to the Bulldogs, 2012-2014. Then back to Balmain from 2015-2018. He was named centre half-back in Balmain's Team of the Century.

Troy returned to the Bulldogs in 2019 where he finally played in that all elusive first premiership team. Playing for the third-grade

team he also topped the competition goal kicking with 69 majors and won the club best and fairest award at the tender age of 49!

"I came back to the Bulldogs at the start of 2019 and felt like I had regained some youth and was ready for a premiership tilt. We had a really good side with guys that showed a lot of commitment to the cause, we gelled well on the footy field and it ended up being one of my most enjoyable seasons of my career."

And he has continued to play on.

Last season the now 55-year-old played his 600th game in the AFL Sydney Division 5 competition against Sydney University, with Luff basking in the occasion with a bag of 10 goals in their 109-point victory.

"To be honest, I was overwhelmed," Luffy told me.



*Luffy being chaired off after the milestone game*

"I was humbled by the day itself, the players that came to watch from the other divisions, some of the old boys from the Bulldogs were there, (and) friends were there.

"I was just so overwhelmed by the support and I guess the love shown by everybody."

When I asked him how does he do it, he responded,

"To be honest, I think I must have good genes! The body is certainly ageing but for some reason I manage to get onto the field week after week. I think my work as a landscape gardener has contributed to keeping the body active as it is a physical job and I can walk up to 10kms a day pushing a lawn mower!"

However, he does limited training during the week once the season starts, "I am pretty sore after a game, so limiting training helps the

body heal for the next game".

"At the end of the day, footy's just a game, and if the body allows you to, why not keep playing?" he said. "I still feel as sore as I do today after a game as I did 10 years ago, so nothing much has changed.

"I might be a little bit slower or can't kick as far, but I still get around the footy field okay.

"I just enjoy the game, the whole social aspect of it, playing the game, the end of season trips and Mad Mondays, all that sort of stuff."

"It is where you build great friendships that last a lifetime. Footy has been a big part of my life for so long that I don't know when to stop. It has taken me many places that I wouldn't necessarily gone to."

Playing for the Bali Geckos on and off for the past 20 years, Luffy has played in the Asian

## HOW DOES LUFFY KEEP PLAYING FOOTY?

Championships in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Pattaya including a Championship title in 2018. This past season he played in all three age-groups for the Geckos at the Bali 9s – Over 35's, Over 45's and Over 55's.

"It's a great thrill to have played footy in so many different parts of Asia, not to mention I've played in the USA as well. I took Balmain there many years ago and played against the American national team," he said.

Troy's longevity in football is not just confined to playing football as he has been part of Sydney's Triple M radio commentary team alongside former team-mates Brad Seymour and Jude Bolton for the past twenty-one years.

Having been a landscape gardener before his Swans days he worked full-time throughout his AFL career, and now he owns his own



*A remarkable career spanning over 600 games...and still going!*

landscape gardening business.

He remains a fun-loving, knock-about bloke who loves life, his children and playing footy. And, of course, he's still wearing jumper #34.

### THE TROY LUFF FILE

CLUB	YEARS	GAMES	INDIVIDUAL AWARDS
Nelson Bay	1987- 1990*	55	1989 – League Leading Goalkicker 1989 – Club Best & Fairest
Sydney Swans	1990-2001	155 (Seniors) 84 (Reserves)	1998 – Best Clubman
Balmain	2002-2004	114	2002 – Club Best & Fairest 2002 – League Best & Fairest 2002 – Club Leading Goalkicker <i>Balmain Team of the Century</i>
	2011-2012		
	2015-2018		
UNSW Eastern Suburbs	2005-2010	201	2006 - Club Best & Fairest 2006 - League Best & Fairest 2019 – Club Best & Fairest (2 <sup>rd</sup> Div) 2019 – League & Club Leading Goalkicker (2 <sup>rd</sup> Div) 2025 – Club Best & Fairest (5 <sup>th</sup> Div) 2025 – League & Club Leading Goalkicker (5 <sup>th</sup> Div) <i>UNSW-Eastern Suburbs Team of the 2000s</i>
	2012-2014		
	2019-2025		

*\*Transferred to Sydney Swans mid-season*



With Michael O'Loughlin and Jason Saddington

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rod Gillett is a noted Australian Football historian, with an emphasis on the game in NSW. He has written extensively about the game in NSW for more than forty years including various country mast heads as well as the Sun-Herald and Inside Football. He has been a Swans supporter since moving to Sydney in 1984 from Wagga. Rod euphemistically "helped-out" Greg Harris with Under 19s from 1989-1992 and later served on the Sydney chapter of the Past Players' and Officials Association.

Visit the Swans Heritage List



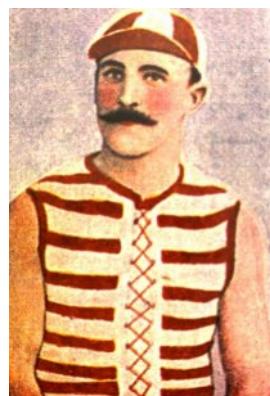
# HALL OF FAME AND LIFE MEMBERS

---

Several past players and officials received high honours from the Sydney Swans Football Club during 2025.

The Swans have elevated **Henry "Sonny" Elms** to **Bloods Champion** status, and inducted a further four past players as Hall of Famers at the Hall of Fame ceremony at the SCG on 17 July 2025. Also honoured were the winners of the **John Yates Award** and the Club's latest **Life Members**.

## BLOODS CHAMPION:



**Henry "Sonny" Elms**  
1882-1895  
215 games  
4 goals  
Captain 1885-1894  
Premiership Player  
1885, 1888, 1889, 1890

**CLICK HERE for the  
Hall of Fame: Henry Elms**



## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES:



*Past Premiership players Rhys Shaw, Ben Mathews and Nick Malceski inducted into the Sydney Swans Hall of Fame.*



*Rhyce Shaw*

**2009-2015**  
**143 games**  
**24 goals**  
**Premiership Player 2012**



*Nick Malceski*

**2005-2014**  
**176 games**  
**67 goals**  
**Premiership Player 2012**  
**All Australian 2014**

***CLICK HERE for the  
Hall of Fame: Rhyce Shaw***



***CLICK HERE for the  
Hall of Fame: Nick Malceski***



# HALL OF FAME AND LIFE MEMBERS

## Henry Purdy

**1886-1890; 1892;  
1895-1901**  
**196 games**  
**Premiership Player 1888, 1889, 1890**

***CLICK HERE for the  
Hall of Fame: Henry Purdy***



## Ben Mathews

**1997-2008**  
**198 games**  
**45 goals**  
**Premiership  
Player 2005**

***CLICK HERE for the  
Hall of Fame: Ben Mathews***



### JOHN YATES AWARD:

Former player Troy Luff and long-serving administrator Greg Harris were presented with the John Yates Award for their outstanding contributions to the Sydney Swans and the development of Australian Rules Football in New South Wales.

Troy Luff played 155 games for the Swans between 1990 and 2001 including the 1996 Grand Final. Still playing footy, this year notched up game number 600 while playing for UNSW-Eastern Suburbs Bulldogs.

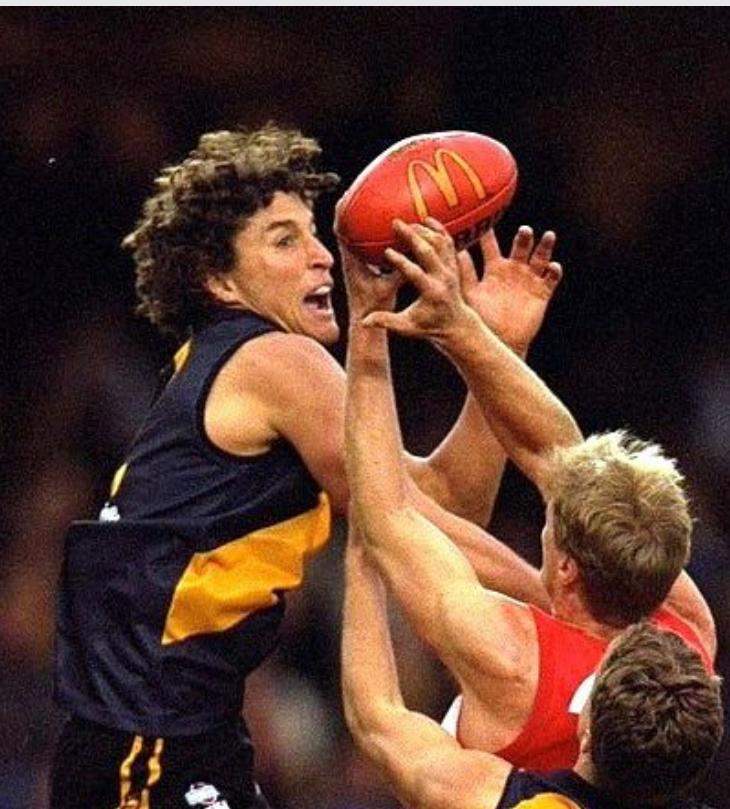
Greg Harris played three football codes — Australian Football, Rugby Union, and Rugby League — at a senior level on the SCG. He was Chairman of the Match Committee at the Swans under Ron Barassi.

### SWANS HERITAGE LIST:

Three moments were added to the Swans Heritage List:

- The iconic ***"Here it is!"*** moment after the 2005 Grand Final victory
- The 2005 Tickertape Parade, celebrating the end of a 72-year Premiership drought
- The documentary ***Shake Down the Thunder***, produced by Endemol Shine Australia and released this year to mark 20 years since that historic win.

## LIFE MEMBERSHIPS:



*Troy Luff in action against Richmond*



*Greg Harris in full flight for East Sydney back in the day*



**JAD MASEROW**, the club's current Head of Business Development has dedicated 15 years of service to the club and carried out various roles in the commercial department in that time



**BARB CULLEN**, the club's long-time historian, has dedicated more than 20 years to preserving Swans history. She was awarded an OAM in 2023 for her service to AFL heritage.

# HALL OF FAME AND LIFE MEMBERS

## LIFE MEMBERSHIPS CONTINUED



**GREG MILLER**, who played 52 games for South Melbourne, became the club's first full-time recruiting officer in 1979 and played a pivotal role in the Swans' relocation to Sydney.



**ERNIE SCOTT**  
was awarded Life Membership at the Club Champion Dinner in October for his outstanding contribution to the Club over many years, particularly in relation to the Melbourne past Players and Officials group, and their legendary functions at the Rising Sun Hotel in South Melbourne.

# PAST PLAYERS & OFFICIALS FUNCTION

*Past Players and Officials gathered at Swans HQ for a function prior to the AFL match between Sydney and Essendon at the SCG on 2 August 2025. Club Chairman, **Andrew Pridham**, welcomed everyone to the function where a few beers and embellished past glories were enjoyed before seeing the Swans prevail over Essendon by 14 points.*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Bloods For Life are pleased to announce a function for Past Players & Officials will be held at **Swans HQ prior to the Round 1 match against Brisbane at the SCG on Saturday 14 March 2026.**

Stay tuned for further details in the preseason.



*Club Chairman Andrew Pridham makes the welcoming address*



*Greg Lambert and Richard Colless*



*Mike Pyke, Rob Spurrs and Andrew McMaster*



*Bernard Toohey, Barry Mitchell and David Murphy*



*Neil Cordy, Troy Luff and Matt Lloyd*



*Ernie Scott and Garry Rowan*



*Michael O'Loughlin, Sheryl and Bill Macartney and Jude Bolton*



*Fiona and Gavin Rose with Troy Luff*



*Garry and Ashley Rowan  
with Barnaby Howarth and  
nephew Oscar*



*Tim Barling, David Pearlman and Ian Weeding*



*Ann and Mark Lockie with  
Craig and Flynn Davis*



*Scott Byrnes, Grant Bartholomaeus,  
Matt Lloyd, and Charli and Max Kruse.*



*Keith Newton, Neil Brunton, David Gledhill and Rod Gillett*



2005 Premiership players gather on the SCG

# 2005 PREMIERSHIP REUNION

The Club's first Premiership in 72 years was celebrated on 31 May 2025 when the players and coaches gathered at the SCG to mark 20 since the historic 2005 Premiership. Led by Coach Paul Roos, the players and the Premiership Cup did a lap of honour of the SCG.



"Here it is!" Coach Paul Roos with the 2005 Premiership Cup



*Jason, Ball, Adam Goodes and Jarrad McVeigh*



*A few theories being exchanged!*

# VALE

The Sydney Swans Football Club and the football world in general have been greatly saddened by the passing of some great past players and officials in recent times and it is remiss not to pay tribute to all individually.

There are, however, several that at we would like to make special mention of in this edition.

## JULIE PASH

All associated with Bloods For Life and the broader Sydney Swans Football Club were deeply saddened by the loss of the much-loved Julie Pash, who passed away on 14 October 2025 at the age of 88.

Julie and her family were long term supporters and generous benefactors of the Swans for many years. They hosted the famous Swans Christmas party for players and their families at their residence for many years.

Julie's husband Graeme had a long term association with the Swans and was the Club's Deputy Chairman from 1993 until 2002. He passed away in 2008 after a long battle with illness.

All at Bloods For Life extend our deepest condolences to Julie's family, especially her children David, Alison, Michael and Anthony.

## BLOODS FOR LIFE PAYS OUR RESPECTS TO

### PETER RICE



*Peter Rice with fellow No.42 Robbie Fox*

Peter played 39 games for South Melbourne and kicked 6 goals between 1959 and 1962 and passed away on 6 June 2025.

***CLICK HERE for a tribute  
written by the Mayne family,  
friends of Peter***



## THE FOLLOWING PAST PLAYERS.

### **VIC AANENSEN**

Vic "Stretch" Aanensen passed away on 17 June 2025 at the age of 72 after a long illness. He played 40 games and kicked 30 goals for South Melbourne from 1973-1976.

Playing for Port Melbourne in the VFA, Vic won the 1979 and 1981 JJ Liston Trophy, which is awarded to the VFA's Best and Fairest Player, was a three time best and fairest for Port Melbourne and was a premiership player for Port Melbourne in 1977, 1980 and 1981. In 2004, he was named in Port Melbourne's Team of the Century.

Bloods For Life extend our deepest condolences to Vic's family and friends.

### **PETER CHARLESTON**

Peter Charleston passed away at the age of 94 on 19 August 2025. He played two games for South Melbourne in 1954, after six games for Hawthorn in 1951-53.

Bloods For Life extend our deepest condolences to Peter's family and friends.

### **GERALD CROUGH**

Gerald Crough passed away on 27 September 2025 aged 87. A tall winger from Ballarat, he wore the number 9 and played 56 games for South Melbourne during his tenure of 1956 – 1962. Gerald's teammates included Bob Skilton and Bob Pratt.

Bloods For Life extend our deepest condolences to Gerald's family and friends.

### **BRIAN BENNET**

Brian Bennett passed away on 20 October 2025 at the age of 88. Brian wore the number 15 guernsey and played 40 games for South Melbourne between 1960 and 1962. His teammates included Bob Skilton and Ron Clegg.

Bloods For Life extend our deepest condolences to Brian's family and friends.

# AROUND THE GROUNDS

Old South Melbourne teammates from the 1980-82 era got together recently at the Limerick Arms Hotel in South Melbourne.



*The group included Brendan Pola, Ian Quarrier, Shane Jorgensen, Peter Hinds, Tony Pastore, Gary Frangalas, Andrew Fairbanks, Michael Ahern, Paul Warren, Trevor Mustey, Patrick Foy, Luci Manfra, Michael Garland, Keith Robinson, and Michael Denittis.*



*Pictured at their recent annual catch-up are some of the pioneers of the early Sydney days with several guests. From left: Tony Franklin, Ray Ball, Greg Miller, Dean Moore, Barry Lyons, Mike Sheahan, Richard Colless, Rick Quade, Rodney Eade, Ian Stewart and John Phillips*



*Kane Murphy, son of Hall of Famer David Murphy, pictured receiving the Player of the Match Award from big Mason Cox after the recent US AFL Division 1 National Championship Grand Final.*

*Kane plays for the Austin Crows, coached by Mason's brother Nolan Cox. Austin is the most successful Club in the history of the USAFL with 10 Division 1 Championship wins.*

# SYDNEY SWANS FOUNDATION REPORT

*20th Anniversary Edition –  
Sydney Swans Foundation Impact Report*



*By Amanda Thompson*

**What began as a targeted investment in youth development has grown into something far greater. Over the past two decades, the Foundation has become a driving force behind the long-term success of the Sydney Swans, both on and off the field.**

This year's impact report celebrates 20 years of achievement: from building the Sellers & Colless Centre, including the Peter Weinert Museum, investment in the QBE Sydney Swans Academy, and now the ARA First Nations Academy, as well as important funding for PhD research and innovation.

Two decades on, our mission remains the same: developing the future stars of the game, preserving the rich traditions of our club, and investing in innovation that secures our competitive edge for generations to come.

***CLICK HERE to read more about the Foundation's lasting impact on and off the field.***



# SYDNEY SWANS FOUNDATION REPORT

---



## BARRY ROUND'S BROWNLOW MEDAL FINDS A HOME IN THE PETER WEINERT MUSEUM

The Sydney Swans Museum is proud to announce the addition of a priceless piece of club history – Barry Round's 1981 Brownlow Medal. This treasured award, now on display at our Moore Park headquarters, celebrates one of the most influential figures in the Swans' story.

Barry Round was more than a champion footballer; he was a leader who guided the club through one of its most defining eras. As captain during the historic relocation from South Melbourne to Sydney, Round embodied resilience and loyalty. His Brownlow Medal win in 1981 – shared with Bernie Quinlan – remains a landmark moment in AFL history and a testament to his brilliance on the field.

Round's legacy extends beyond his playing career. Inducted into the Australian Football Hall of Fame and named in the Swans' Team of

the Century, he is remembered as a player who gave everything for the red and white.

Now, fans and members have the rare opportunity to see his Brownlow Medal up close. This display is more than an exhibit – it's a chance to connect with the spirit of the Bloods and celebrate a man who helped shape the club we love today.

### Plan your visit:

The Sydney Swans Museum is open Monday to Friday, 10am–4pm, and on SCG home game days. Entry is free. Come and explore 150 years of history and stand in the presence of greatness.

***Don't miss this special piece of Swans heritage. Bring your family, bring your passion, and relive the moments that made us who we are.***



## YOUR LEGACY LONG AFTER THE FINAL SIREN - RELAUNCHING INFINITY CLUB IN 2026

Leaving a gift in your Will (also known as a bequest) is a lasting way to support the club's future, funding youth development programs, facility upgrades and honouring our club's tradition and heritage.

Legacy is not just what we leave behind - it's what we set in motion. Every bequest helps us to plan boldly, act decisively, and invest in long-term initiatives that transform lives. It is through these legacies that we can champion the causes that matter most to us.

No matter the size, your bequest helps create a legacy that endures long after the final siren.

If you're considering leaving a gift in your Will, we're here to assist you.

Contact **Amanda Thompson** from the Sydney Swans Foundation for a confidential conversation about how you can make a lasting impact on the future of the Sydney Swans. ▼

*My late brother Frank Burton was a passionate Swans supporter. In addition to supporting other charities in his will, he left the Sydney Swans Foundation a substantial bequest. I know he wanted to support aspiring young footballers, and I think his legacy has done that. He'd be so happy to know that his bequest is helping promising young players to pursue their football dreams - and hopefully result in some of them helping the Swans achieve another premiership!*

*Suzan Burton,  
Sister of Frank Burton,  
former Club CFO and Bequestor*

*This article recounts, in his own words, Barnaby Howarth's journey from a young football player to overcoming life-threatening challenges, emphasising the impact of camaraderie and resilience.*

*Barnaby reflects on the importance of football in his youth, highlighting lessons in teamwork, perseverance, and camaraderie.*

# HOW FOOTY SAVED MY LIFE

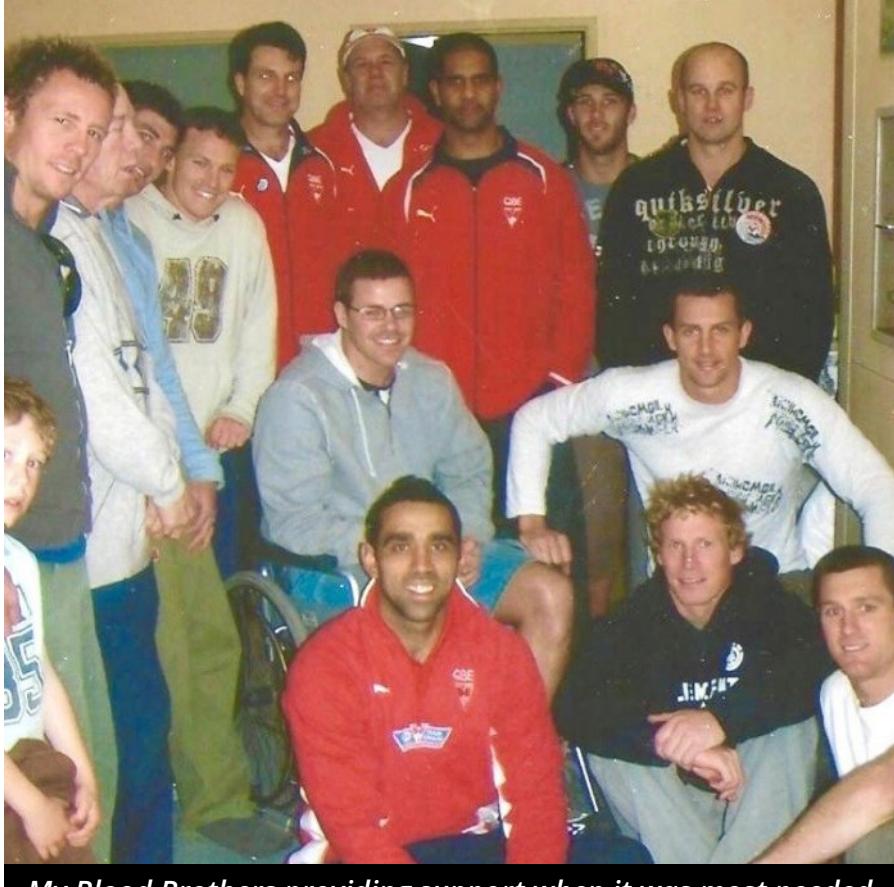
*By Barnaby Howarth -  
1998 Supplementary List Sydney Swan*



**I really enjoyed playing footy when I was a kid – the camaraderie, being a part of a team, trying your hardest whether you win, lose or draw, focusing on the game plan and having faith the result will take care of itself - I thought they were important lessons at the time, but didn't realise just how important footy and the people I have met through the game would become when I grew into a man...**

When Rodney Eade called me into his office at the end of the 1998 season to let me know my services wouldn't be required the following year, I had no idea how important that season would become in helping shape how I bounced back from several adversities and go on to live a life I am incredibly proud of. Some of my teammates in 1998 went on to become legendary figures in the history of the South Melbourne/Sydney Swans football club – **Adam Goodes, Leo Barry, Ben Mathews, Jared Crouch, Brett Kirk** and plenty of others, and when Rocket dropped me I was really disappointed that I wasn't going to make an AFL career alongside these blokes, but what I did get was so much more important.

This photo was taken in August 2005 – this is the entire Sydney Swans team



*My Blood Brothers providing support when it was most needed*

in my hospital room shortly after I had a stroke after being bashed in an alcohol fuel gang attack and tearing my basilar artery.

I wasn't best mates with any one of these blokes when I played for the Swans in 1998 – we were just good, solid friends- we would chat and say g'day when we saw each other in the change rooms, looked out for each other on the field or if we saw each other in town, but we didn't have each other's phone numbers. I didn't go out for beers or dinner with them or their families...but seven years after we played together and they heard one of their old club mates was in a spot of bother, they dropped everything to come

and get around me just to pat me on the back and let me know they hoped everything was okay.

In September 2005, that very team won the Sydney Swans first AFL premiership in 72 years – thanks largely to a mark the guy leaning on my wheelchair – Leo Barry - took in the last quarter.

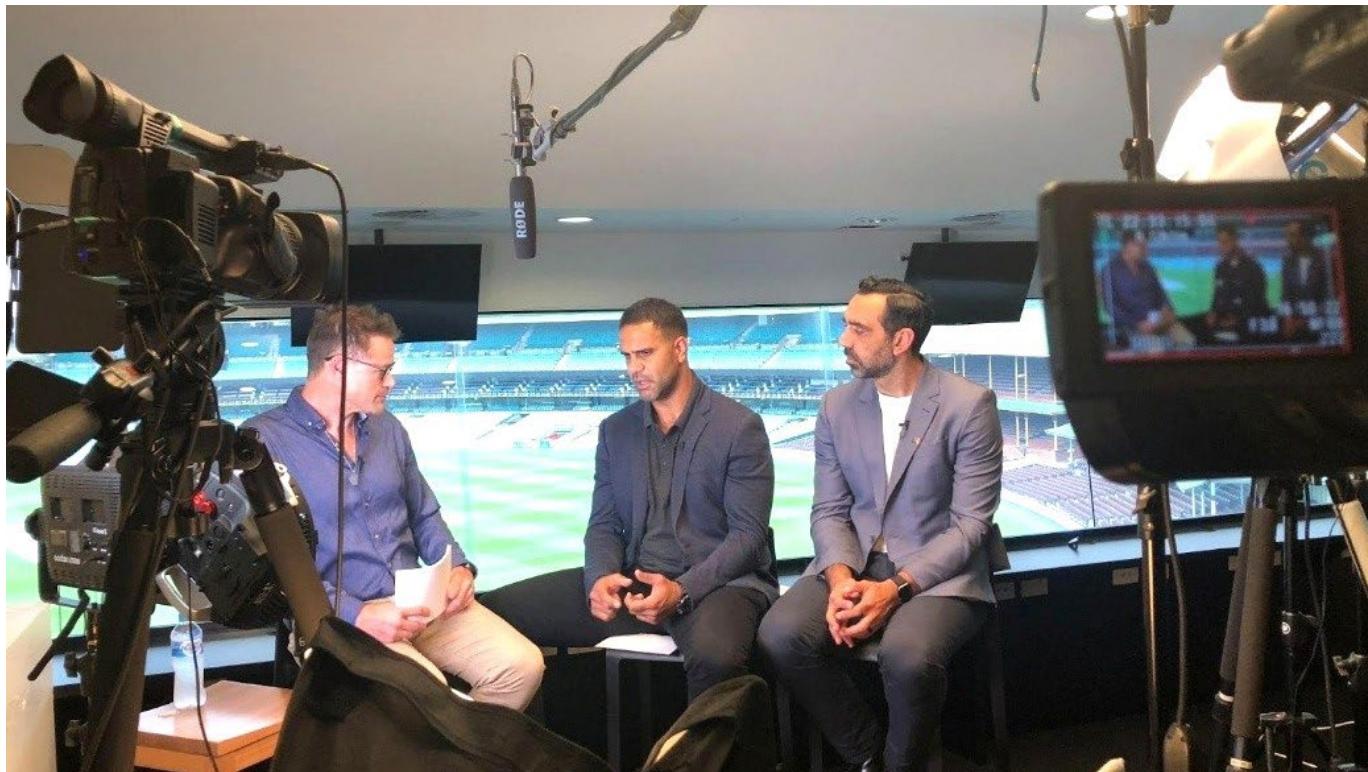
I faced a lot of doubts as I got a grip on the reality of my situation after the stroke – I discovered that if you just damage your basilar artery there is a 96% fatality rate – I was placed on life-support for four days and my parents were told they might have to turn it off. When I regained consciousness, a doctor told us that the only reason I had survived was because I was

only 25 years old, and still really fit from playing footy – so that is how footy saved my life.

The stroke had completely wiped clean all of the signals from my brain to the left side of my body – so I was going to have to relearn how to use my left side again like a newborn baby... I found myself drowning in a sea of doubt and uncertainty-I thought I needed something more than what I was to live a life I was proud of – I was looking for something extra – I didn't think what was inside me was enough, but after becoming part of the Bloods Culture story with that photo and the visit from the team, I instantly felt like everything was going to be okay

When I had the stroke, I was on 96 games at my local footy club - the Pennant Hills Demons in the Sydney AFL, but I literally couldn't stand still in one position without falling over early on, so I put a line through my footy career thinking I'd been forced into an early retirement 4 games short of my 100th. After getting back on my feet though, the club's 4th grade coach offered me to play 4 more games in 4th grade so

# HOW FOOTY SAVED MY LIFE



*With the greats Adam Goodes and Michael O'Loughlin*

that I could reach my 100th – I was still doubting myself and didn't know if I could play footy again, but one of my old coaches used to say ***"focus on the game plan and the result will take care of itself"*** so even though I had no idea if I could play footy again, I just went down to training, gave it the best crack I could, and had faith it would all work out.

**Tom Harley** was the General Manager of NSW/ACT AFL at the time and he sent a film crew down to capture my 100th game, & my coach told me I could play any position I wanted, so I asked him to put me in the guts! My little sister had flown out from England

for one night just to watch me play so it was already monumentally emotional, but about 20 minutes into the game neither team had kicked a goal, so I floated down to our forward line and just seagulled around for awhile to see what happened. I took a mark inside our forward 50, went back and kicked the goal which is one of the most memorable moments of my life!

I ended up being the leading goal scorer on the day after kicking a second goal late in the game-so I thought I had conquered my adversity and that my challenges were all over, but then my first wife was diagnosed with advanced

breast cancer and I found myself back at square one and doubting everything I had done in life.

I thought more than once that I should throw out my game plan because it just wasn't working (I was also diagnosed with diabetes when I was 14) and start again with a fresh approach, but like the Swans in the late 90s when they were looking down the barrel of bankruptcy, I decided to back myself and have faith that the game plan would take care of itself.

My late wife and I had the most beautiful married life imaginable - we went on 19 legs of our honeymoon – including going to Disneyland



*Barnaby Howarth and the Governor General of Australia, Sam Mostyn*

and all over the world. A week after 19th leg, Angela joined her father in heaven. I was so proud of the life I was able to provide for her, and it made me realised that what was inside me WAS good enough after all.

As a sole trading Keynote speaker & resilience coach I have given speeches for **Google, Nestlé, Linfox** and the **Sydney Swans**, and I created and host the Everyday Greatness podcast where I have interviewed

**Adam Goodes, Michael O'Loughlin, Jude Bolton, Brett Rose, Troy Luff, Ryan Fitzgerald, Brett Kirk, Paul Roos, Alana Woodward, Kate Maloney, Liz Pontika, Anita Murphy, Diane Williams-Harapin, Ben Mathews, Richard Colless, Tom Harley and Drew Arthurson** – I have hosted 2 seasons of Everyday Greatness from **Swans HQ**, and last year the **Governor General of Australia (and former Sydney Swans board**

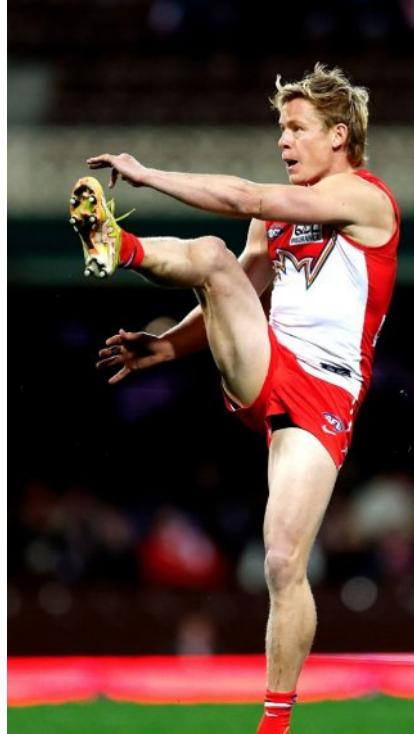
**member) Sam Mostyn** invited herself to be a guest on Everyday Greatness in an interview recorded at Admiralty House.

It is one of the great privileges of my life that I can call myself a “Blood”, but being a Blood goes far beyond the title – it has given me an inner confidence and belief that the strength I have inside me is enough, and I am going to be okay whether I win, lose or draw. ▼

**To get in touch with Barnaby about booking him as a speaker for your next function, for one of his powerfully unique resilience coaching programs or to enquire about being a guest or sponsor of Everyday Greatness, get in touch via email or give him a call: [barnaby@barnabyhowarth.com.au](mailto:barnaby@barnabyhowarth.com.au) • 0404 851 203**



*The Club welcomed new CEO Matthew Pavlich and his family, wife Lauren, daughter Harper and sons Will and Jack*



*2025 Bob Skilton Medallist Isaac Heeney*

# COACH'S REPORT

**As I look back on my first season as Senior coach, I do so with a sense of pride. A 10th placed finish is clearly not what we were after from an on-field perspective, but we feel we made some strides forward.**

Off the field we said goodbye to Tom Harley and welcomed Matthew Pavlich as our new CEO. Tom had a profound impact on this footy club, and I wish him well at the AFL.

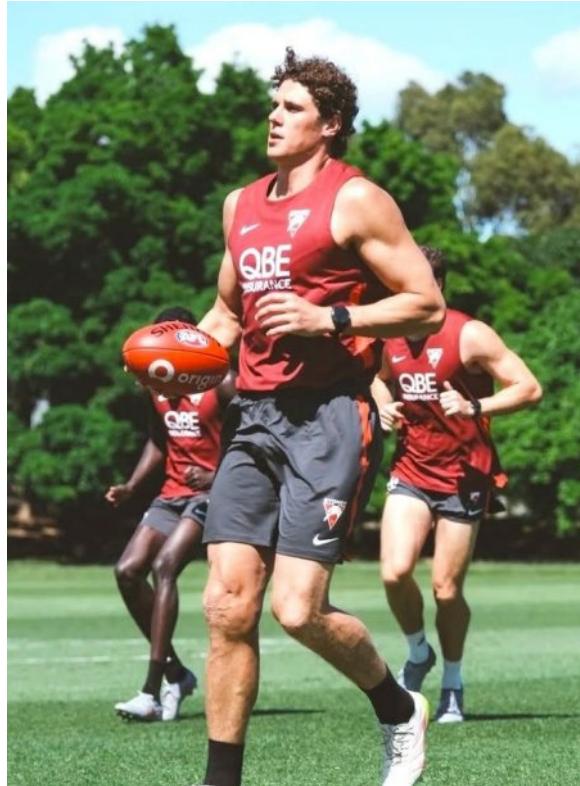
On the field, after a difficult first half of the season (with inconsistent form and injuries) we went on a nice run towards the end of the season to give ourselves a shot of playing finals. Ultimately, we left it too late and fell short of what this club aspires to. So, it's clear, we need to get better.

The development and growth of the younger players in the squad was pleasing in 2025.

Riley Bice, Jesse Dattoli and Tom Hanly made their AFL debuts during the season, while a host of mid-tier players also continue to develop well. To the more senior boys, Isaac Heeney had another incredible season and was awarded with another All-Australian selection. Brodie Grundy was a workhorse in the ruck all year and James Jordon worked hard all season and was fantastic for us.

Over the trade period, we had to say goodbye to some much-loved people. Will Hayward, Ollie Florent and Jack Buller all found new clubs, and we wish them well in their next adventure. To Will and Ollie especially, thank you for being such great servants for this footy club. Life members, over 150 games each in the Swans jumper and excellent people who added so much. Go well.

Having said that, we also made some valuable



New recruit Charlie Curnow



*Debuts in 2025;  
Jesse Dattoli [top left]  
Riley Bice [top right],  
and Tom Hanily [left]*

additions to the squad during the trade period, which we believe will make our team better. We welcome Malcolm Rosas Jr, Jai Serong and Charlie Curnow to the Swans family, and I can't wait to see what they will produce on the SCG next season.

At draft time, we welcomed a host of new talent we are really excited about. Harry Kyle, Jevan Phillipou, Billy Cootee, Max King, Noah Chamberlain and Liam Hetherton are all now part of the Bloods family and I look forward to seeing how they will add to the squad.

Which of course brings us to look ahead to 2026. We want to be a club that consistently plays finals and is in contention for Premierships. We owe it to our members, our staff, the players and our fans to always be competing. With that in mind, the boys have hit pre-season full of gusto and a determination to be better.

We feel we have a list ready to compete with the best. However, when the siren sounds to start our 2026 campaign we will need more than a solid playing list. Talent only gets you

so far. I can assure you, on behalf of the coaching group, that we will leave no stone unturned to make sure we are fully prepared for the challenges of another season.

Finally, to our loyal members, thank you for again turning up at the SCG in full voice. You really are the best fans in the competition. We smashed through our all-time membership record of 77,000 and that is something to be extremely proud of. We are even more excited about seeing you all decked out in the red and white next season.

Looking forward to catching up in the New Year. Have a wonderful Christmas and bring on 2026. ▼



**Dean Cox**  
**Senior Coach, Sydney Swans**

NEW BLOODS

# THE 2025 TRADE PERIOD & NATIONAL DRAFTS



*By Chris Keane*

*Head of List Strategy and Player Personnel, Sydney Swans*

## 2025 TRADE PERIOD

**We were very targeted leading into the trade period with the types of players we were after. The three boys all chose our football club which speaks volumes of the direction and vision our Club portrayed given they were certainly in demand at other clubs too.**

Where possible we wanted to add some firepower both in the air and at ground level in the front half as well as adding to talent in the back half that can play on multiple types of players. We feel as though that flexibility is becoming more paramount in the modern

game as teams constantly throwing different looks and types of players at you.

We wanted to walk away from trade period being able to bring in talent that added to and improved our list whilst also protecting our draft hand in the future and allowing us to achieve the outcomes we did at the 2025 National Draft.

It is also important to acknowledge **Will Hayward, Ollie Florent and Jack Buller** who all contributed enormously to our football club over the journey. We wish them nothing but success at their new clubs.

## CHARLIE CURNOW:



We prioritised Charlie through the trade period and were rapt to be able to secure him. Not often are you in a position to add a player of his calibre; a two-time All-Australian and Coleman medallist. We acknowledge the complexities around getting this deal done and the reality of Carlton's needs for players in return. These decisions are carefully considered given the profound impact both Will Hayward & Ollie Florent have had on our football club both on and off the field and we wish them well at Carlton.

We feel like Charlie will bring a new dimension to our attack with his presence and athleticism and we look forward to what he can deliver over the coming years.

**[CLICK to see Charlie Curnow](#)**

## JAI SERONG:



Jai was a player we targeted to add to our hybrid defender stocks and feel as though he has attributes to play consistent AFL footy. He has had a taste of senior footy over the 4 years he spent at Hawthorn including playing in their semi-final v Port Adelaide in 2024.

Jai has been an extremely consistent performer at VFL level for Box Hill winning back to back Best & Fairest awards as well as being named in the VFL team of the year in 2025.

At just 22 years of age we feel like Jai has some great footy ahead of him and has the athleticism required to play on a range of different types behind the ball.

**[CLICK to see Jai Serong](#)**

## NEW BLOODS

## THE 2025 TRADE PERIOD & NATIONAL DRAFTS

### MALCOLM ROSAS JR:



We have been tracking Malcolm for a couple of years at the Gold Coast Suns. He brings a point of difference in the front half of the ground for us with his elite speed and creativity ball in hand. It's a great result for the footy club, given our rich history, that we are able to add further Indigenous talent to our list.

We feel confident he will be able to complement our existing smalls ahead of the ball and have an impact at senior level.

**CLICK to see Malcolm Rosas Jr**

### 2025 NATIONAL DRAFT

#### SELECTION 14:

#### HARRY KYLE



**CLICK to see Harry Kyle**

**CLUB | QBE Sydney Swans Academy**

**DOB | 16 July 2007 HEIGHT | 188cm**

**Allies U18 Champs 2025**

Harry is a great story and a credit to the hard work by all involved at the QBE Sydney Swans Academy. Harry has a basketball and rugby background and has come a long way in the space of 12 months from relatively unknown prospect to a 1st round selection in the National Draft. It is a testament and a credit to the QBE Sydney Swans Academy and highlights precisely why they are so crucial in developing talent and providing a pathway into the AFL system for athletes who otherwise may be lost to the game.

Whilst the bidding system is largely out of our control, we were very comfortable matching a bid on Harry where he was called out at Selection 14. He is athletically gifted and suits the requirements of the modern game with his speed, power and endurance profile. He can move in and out of traffic, take the game forward with his run and carry and we felt his understanding of the game grew as the year went on. Harry will likely start his AFL journey across half back and wing with the hopes of transitioning into a midfield role in time.

## SELECTION 35:

### JEVAN PHILLIPOU



**CLICK to see Jevan Phillipou**

**CLUB | Woodville-West Torrens Eagles**  
**DOB | 30 March 2007 HEIGHT | 183cm**  
**South Australia U18 Champs 2024**

In this part of the draft, you are often exploring a list-need selection as the talent starts to flatten out. With that said, we anticipated Jevan getting drafted on Night 1, so we were rapt to have a player we rated as high as we did still there at our selection on Night 2.

Jevan is a talented footballer with a heptathlon background. He can go both sides of the body and fundamentally is quite strong which will allow him to play in a few different roles over time. Unfortunately for Jevan a forearm injury meant he didn't feature at the U18 Championships for South Australia, but he was able to experience some senior football for WWT Eagles at the back half of the year. Jevan is extremely driven and we believe possesses the on and off-field traits required to perform and thrive at the next level.

## SELECTION 42:

### BILLY COOTEE

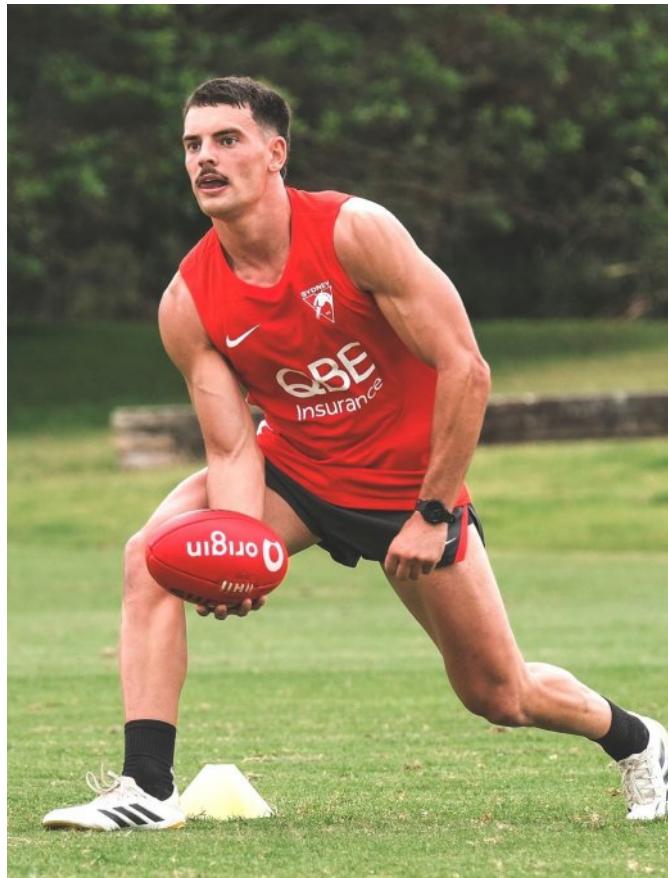
**CLUB | Norwood**  
**DOB | 18 December 2002 HEIGHT | 178cm**  
**5th Magarey Medal 2025**  
**SANFL Team of the Year**

Much like Riley Bice last year, we balanced our draft group by selecting a mature-aged prospect. Billy is a great story about persistence and determination and the different avenues a player can take to get their opportunity in the AFL.

Originally from Mount Beauty in Victoria, Billy played for Essendon's VFL program and was elected captain in 2023 as a 20-year-

## NEW BLOODS

# THE 2023 FREE AGENCY, TRADE PERIOD & DRAFTS



old, such is his outstanding character and his willingness to drive standards. Billy then chose to move to South Australia and spend a couple of years at Norwood where we continued to track his progress.

Billy had a breakout year in 2025, finishing 5th in the Magarey Medal and being a catalyst behind Norwood turning an 0-5 start to the season into a Preliminary Final appearance.

He comes to the club with a great athletic profile and great character traits that will allow him to play a few different roles including high forward and wing.

**[CLICK to see Billy Cootee](#)**

## SELECTION 49:

### MAX KING



**[CLICK to see Max King](#)**

**CLUB | QBE Sydney Swans Academy**

**DOB | 9 January 2007 HEIGHT | 191cm**

**Allies U18 Champs 2025**

It was great to add another QBE Sydney Swans Academy prospect to our list with Max getting called out at Selection 49. We have been tracking Max for quite some time, and we are really excited by the upside he brings to the football club.

Another very gifted athlete, Max has the ability to do the spectacular on the football field with his rare speed and power combination. Living in Newcastle, Max has had a big year with his football and schooling commitments including many hours in the car driving too and from training and games.

Max has worked extremely hard for his opportunity, and we can't wait to see how he develops over the coming years.

## CATEGORY-B ROOKIE:

### NOAH CHAMBERLAIN



[CLICK to see Noah Chamberlain](#)

**CLUB | QBE Sydney Swans Academy**  
**DOB | 21 March 2007 HEIGHT | 191cm**  
**AFL Academy 2025 Allies U18 Champs 2025**

Noah is the third QBE Sydney Swans Academy prospect listed which is a great result for our football club.

Noah represented and performed well for the Allies in the U18 Championships as well as the AFL Academy playing in a variety of different positions on the field.

We feel as though Noah has great football fundamentals that will hold him in good stead along with his aerobic base. He is competitive in the air and at ground level and we look forward to watching his journey unfold at the Sydney Swans.

## CATEGORY-B ROOKIE -

### LIAM HETHERTON



**CLUB | Murray Bushrangers**  
**DOB | 2 June 2007 HEIGHT | 198cm**  
**AFL Academy 2025**

Growing up and living in Glenroy (NSW), Liam was eligible to join the club as a NSW Zone Selection.

Liam represented the AFL Academy early in the year and kicked 11 goals in 3 Coates Talent League matches before injuring his back and missing the rest of the year.

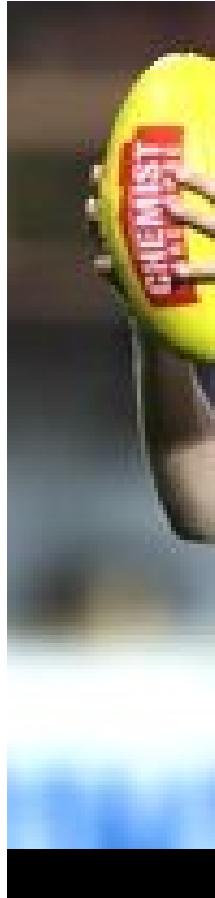
Standing at 198cm, Liam has great athletic traits and moves well for his size making him a difficult matchup to defend against.

We were really pleased to add to our key forward stocks and look forward to seeing how Liam develops over the coming years.

[CLICK to see Liam Hetherton](#)



*Coach Scott Gowans addresses his team*



# AFLW REPORT

**Season 2025 was a year of learning for our young side, with plenty of ups and downs. We set our ourselves high expectations and to fall short of making finals was extremely disappointing, however we know progress isn't always linear and it is part of the journey.**

I'd like to thank Scott Gowans for his incredible contribution to our AFLW program and club, after he called time on his role as senior coach at the conclusion of the season. Scott was instrumental in building our AFLW program from scratch and under his leadership the team has established solid foundations for future success. We wish Scott and Jodie all the

very best for the future.

The growth of some of our younger players this season has been really pleasing. Zippy Fish had an outstanding first year, while Holly Cooper, Montana Ham, Ally Morphett and Cynthia Hamilton also showed great improvement, with all five being recognised with selection in the AFLPA's 22under22 squad.

We also said goodbye to some of our favourites who have been with our team since the inaugural season in 2022. Maddy Collier and Rebecca Privitelli announced their retirements at the end of the season. Both were a big part of building our program into



*Rising Star Zippy Fish*



*Retired favourite Rebecca Privitelli*

what it is today, and we thank them for their contributions.

Off the field our AFLW program was the benchmark of the competition, with our members and fans leading the way. We finished the regular season with the highest average crowd attendance, pulling nearly 4,500 fans to every home game. This included a record-breaking derby in Round 6, when we had 7,171 fans through the gates at Henson Park. We are so lucky to have such a wonderful fanbase who turn up to support our female athletes and are invested in the growth of the competition.

We look ahead to 2026 with a great sense of

excitement and enthusiasm. We firmly believe we have the foundations of a consistent finals team. We fell at the final hurdle this season and the lack of a finals birth will drive our players and staff to improve next season. We will return to pre-season hungry for success.

Onwards to 2026. ▼



**Amanda Turner**  
**Executive General Manager - AFLW**

# *The Bloods of Old*



## **THE TRANSITION CUP**

*The 1982 Escort Cup Premiership*



By *Chris Bracher*

Relationship transition is hard. Supporter relationships with a footy club can run deep, with an intensity that sometimes rivals family love. When an adored lifetime companion departs, uncertainty thrives. Despair and a longing to turn back time can become an unwelcome, yet familiar bedfellow. For many of the South Melbourne faithful this was the sombre backdrop to a memorable night at VFL Park, when in the depths of a cold Melbourne 1982 winter the red and white triumphed for its first silverware in over two

decades. Just months earlier their team had departed far north of the Murray river and entered a period of shaping an identity over which nervous South supporters had no control.

Nevertheless, for the success-starved Bloods brethren the chance of witnessing a premiership of any kind was tantalizing and well worth a drive to VFL Park on a freezing July 20 evening. I was one of them, leaving footy training early in the northern suburbs to make the trek to "Arctic Park". The crowd of around 20 028 on that night felt sparse,

but red and white colours held sway in the attendance stakes.

For those who experienced "Waverley" at night from outside the boundary line, the memory of the cold arising from the damp (but colourful!) wooden slat seats and the concrete underfoot may still trigger chattering teeth and frozen feet. The elevation of the outer was dwarfed by the brutalist architecture of the Sir Kenneth Luke stand; the scale of which was intended to be a template for the balance of the ground, to eventually



*VFL Park, Waverley – “Arctic Park”*



*Bernie Evans in action against the Blues*

accommodate 157 000 patrons. The back rows of the outer were a long way from the action.

Inevitably, the ground surface would be damp and a fog layer regularly descended across the vastness of the arena at night, shrouding the light yield from the unique “V” electronic scoreboard. The sepia tones of the scores and videos on that scoreboard seemingly reflecting a technology pause phase, between hand-operated scoreboards and the looming digital age. Technology in transition, as a parallel to the northward transition of our club.

Transition can feel like no-mans-land, in the absence of a defining moment. On that Tuesday night our supporters were hungry for victory, perhaps as “told you so” validation that if South had

stayed at South they were on the cusp of success, or maybe as a comforting glimpse into genuine promise for the future, as the Swans of Sydney.

The club hierarchy also recognised the symbolic and practical importance of a grand final win and approached the entire series with intent and with our best team on the field. It clearly meant something to South and it meant something to Sydney. Aligned in purpose (if not emotion), with the prospect of a fractured original supporter base and a relocated, distant club being nudged a little closer together by team triumph on the night.

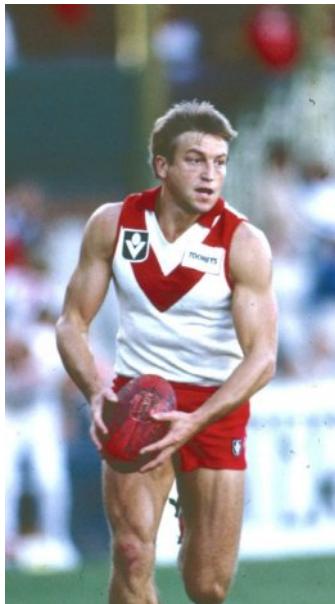
In reality, the Escort Cup was a poor cousin to the day premiership. However, unlike its “Consolation Cup” forerunner (an end of season competition for those clubs

that failed to make the VFL finals), this night competition included each of the twelve VFL teams, three from the SANFL and three from the WAFL. As a knockout tournament, the luck of the draw was an obvious factor in success or otherwise. Nevertheless, when you are in the Big Dance, the details of “how” are quickly forgotten.

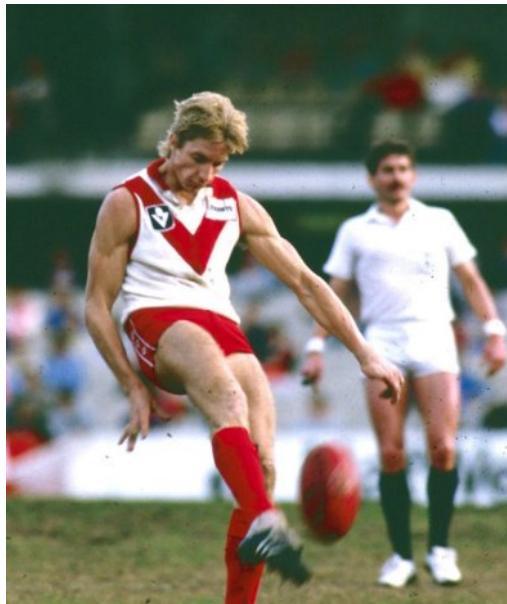
The Escort Cup comprised four rounds only. En route to the Grand Final, we defeated South Fremantle in our opening round, St.Kilda in the quarter-final and Richmond in the semi-final. Only North Melbourne stood between us and the flag on that frosty July evening.

Of notable historic significance, is that the club played its opening round as South Melbourne and its quarter-final as The Swans, after the VFL approved

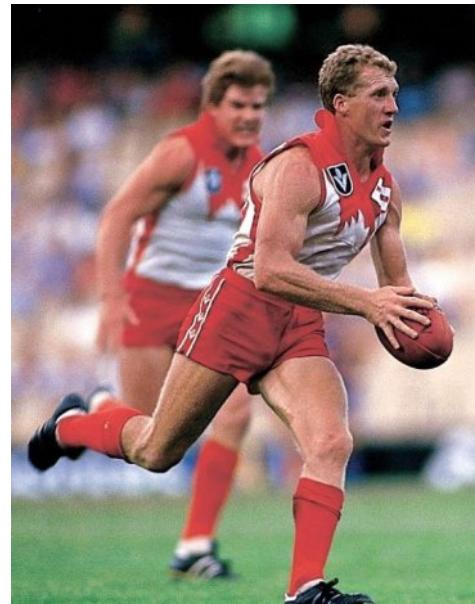
# THE BLOODS OF OLD THE TRANSITION CUP



*Colin Hounsell  
on the burst!*



*The mercurial David  
Rhys-Jones*



*Favourite Son Steve Wright*

the change of name in the intervening days. Another step in the club's transition.

Fine details of that landmark match and the Escort Cup competition are eloquently told in ***"On This Day: Escort Cup Premiership"*** at [sydneysswans.com.au](http://sydneysswans.com.au), published on July 20 2019. Video snippets can be found on YouTube. Readers are encouraged to visit those resources to rekindle fading 43 year-old memories, or to create a new understanding of the transition times for the club.

In short, we were the better team for most of the match, although challenged in the third quarter to hold a slender 7-point advantage at the last change. Our skilled

ground-level players such as Silvio Foschini, Bernie Evans and Colin Hounsell revelled in the conditions and Tony Morwood contributed three majors along with Foschini and Evans. The final margin of 32 points reflected a steely last quarter resolve to get the job done, reversing the momentum that the Kangaroos took to three-quarter time.

However piecemeal, recollections from the outer on that cold night paint a memorable picture:

In any final, it is a rare supporter treat to luxuriate in emotional calmness for much of the final stanza. That feeling enveloped our mob as it became apparent that the game was out of

the opponent's reach. Four beautiful final quarter goals came early, as a bookend to four in a spirited first quarter performance.

Imminent triumph triggered an over-exuberant red and white throng to spill onto the playing surface with minutes still to play, which required policemen on horseback to clear the field, delaying the final siren. That thrill of impending victory for the true believers could not easily be contained. South may have officially gone north that year, but for the throng of fans surging onto the ground this moment felt joyously local and personal.

Whether the on-ground celebrations included our theme song on repeat as

per footy 2025-style, is beyond memory. This win was achieved in a transition era for the VFL and a musical celebratory backdrop was generally not yet in vogue. The Swans transition theme song "Up there for Sydney" may have been played, but if so, it was - unsurprisingly - unmemorable!

If ever there was a time for "Cheer Cheer", it was as Roundy raised the trophy in front of an adoring local flock and a national TV audience. I clearly recall the big No.25 with his powerful arm aloft and cup in hand. That magnificent shoulder to shoulder Red V on the guernsey exaggerating the barrel chest and axeman dimensions of the "big fella". For the TV audience he proclaimed: "to all those watching in Sydney, we won this for you too". An appropriate nod to the new era, but for those of us standing below the dais, the reception was muted. A reality check that our team was undergoing an identity transition. The mood was momentarily dampened for many.

The rooms were open to all who wished to soak up the joy. For those of us that attended, a sense of raw, local celebration enveloped



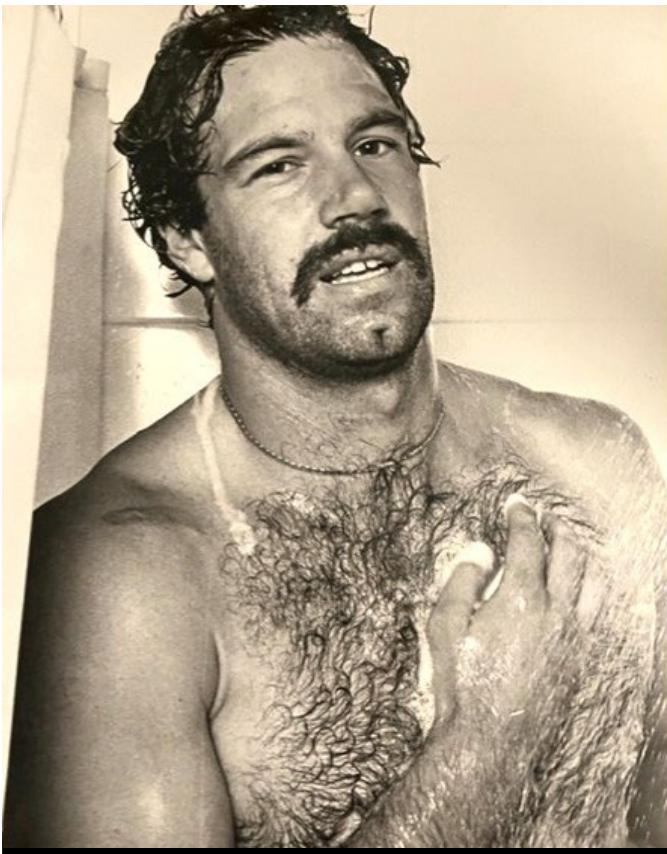
*Captain Barry Roundy with the 1982 Escort Cup*

the room with a party that reflected the long wait for red and white team glory of any kind. "Cheer, Cheer" was belted out with gusto, with Rhys (David Rhys-Jones) the effervescent cheer-leader conducting the joyous rendition from a bench above the playing group. What a night!

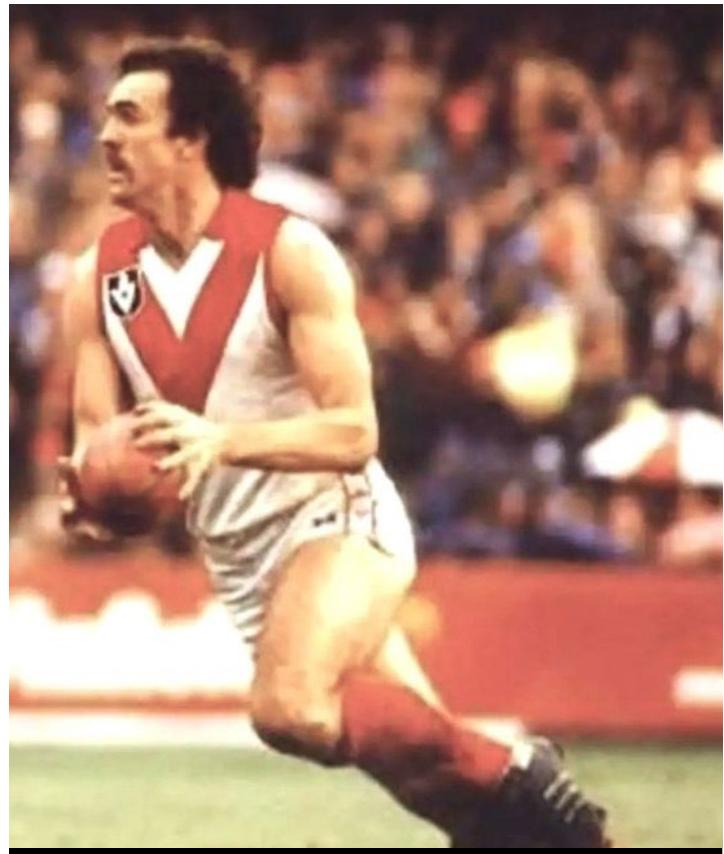
Granted, in fantasy reflection we over-elevated the status of the title relative to the VFL premiership, but in the moment for a success-starved

red and white community it felt like the last weekend in September. This wonderful team was still with us. Fingers crossed that - albeit shared - it would be so forever.

Unfortunately, a marker of the transition underway in our club and the dawn of a new era of player mobility was the departure of six of our premiership twenty, later that year or in ensuing seasons. Four of those players - Bernie Evans, Silvio Foschini, David Rhys-Jones



*Steve Taubert enjoying the win!*



*Favourite Son Mark Browning*

## THE BLOODS OF OLD THE TRANSITION CUP

and Paul Morwood - were listed amongst our Escort Cup Grand Final best.

On the flip-side, four of the premiership team made significant, long term contributions to our club off the field, beyond their playing careers. Steve Taubert, John Reid, Tony Morwood and Dennis Carroll will forever remain important in the club's transition and the interstate expansion of the code. Noteworthy as it may be, "Taubo" is not just remembered for having the (unsuccessful) last shot at goal with a bootless right foot, on that memorable July

night at VFL Park!

Favourite sons "Stevie" Wright and Mark Browning also played in that Escort Cup premiership team. Both have been influential contributors for the greater AFL community, in assisting with the transition and expansion of the code.

Clearly, subsequent AFL Premiership success for our club supersedes achievements such as the Escort Cup title. However, that night flag may well have been a defining transition event that re-energised flagging South Melbourne spirits, whilst encouraging

fledgling NSW "Aussie Rules" enthusiasts to believe.

That glorious achievement on a cold Waverley night may just have helped turn the tide of southern resentment and build a preparedness to embrace the promise of a new beginning and shared future prosperity and success. Few would be disappointed with how it has turned out.

Escort Cup Premiers 1982 - we salute you!

**REFERENCE: "ON THIS DAY:  
ESCORT CUP PREMIERSHIP"**

## OUR 1982 ESCORT CUP PREMIERSHIP TEAM

**B:** David Ackerly, Rod Carter, John Reid

**HB:** Mark Browning, Max Kruse, Paul Morwood

**C:** David Rhys-Jones, Brett Scott, Colin Hounsell

**HF:** Tony Morwood, Stephen Allender, Dennis Carroll

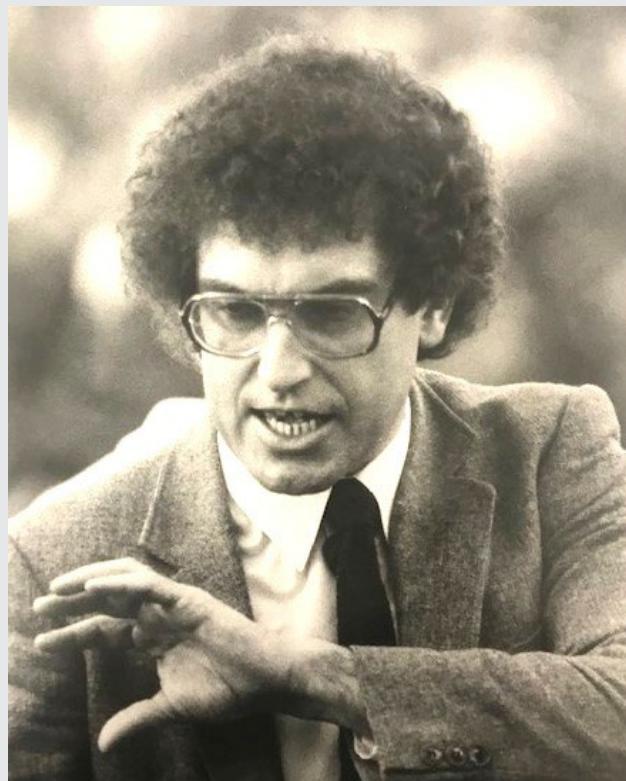
**F:** Bernie Evans, Steven Taubert, Silvio Foschini

**Followers:** Barry Round (capt), Greg Smith, Stevie Wright

**Interchange:** Anthony Daniher, Shane Morwood

**Emergencies:** Craig Braddy, Michael Oaten, Jack Lucas

**Coach:** Rick Quade



*Coach Rick Quade*

### **Match Details:**

Swans	4.3	6.4	9.8	13.12.90
Kangaroos	1.1	4.3	8.7	8.10.58

**Swans Goals:** Foschini 4, Evans 3, T Morwood 3, Smith, Hounsell, Wright.

**Swans Best:** Evans, Foschini, Hounsell, P Morwood, Kruse, Rhys-Jones, Carter, Browning.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Bracher has written for The Footy Almanac since 2011. He has been a rusted-on Blood for almost six decades.



### QUESTION 1.

Which country Victorian town did Troy Luff grow up in?

### QUESTION 2.

What was his junior footy club before moving with the family to Nelson Bay in NSW?

### QUESTION 3.

In 1995 standing in at full forward for the injured Tony Lockett, how many goals did Luffy kick against Geelong?

### QUESTION 4.

Against which Club was he awarded 3 Brownlow Medal votes in 1999?

### QUESTION 5.

How many Brownlow Medal votes did Luffy accumulate over his AFL career?

### QUESTION 6.

How many games and goals in senior footy for Luffy with the Sydney Swans?

### QUESTION 7.

What number did he play in all of his senior games for the Swans?

### QUESTION 8.

In what year did Luffy play his most games of senior footy in a season for the Swans?

### QUESTION 9.

How many senior Finals games did Luffy play in for the Sydney Swans?

### QUESTION 10.

How many of those Finals games were wins?

# Quiz:

*The amazing story of the playing longevity of Troy Luff features in this Magazine (refer page xx).*

*This edition of The Quiz asks:*

# HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW LUFFY?

**QUESTION 11.**

Which AFL club/clubs did he play the most senior games against?

**QUESTION 12.**

As of today, how many games of Australian Rules footy has Troy Luff played?

**QUESTION 13.**

With which two clubs in the Sydney Football League did Luffy win the Phelan Medal as the Best & Fairest Player in the Premier Division in 2002 and 2006?

**QUESTION 14.**

In what year did Luffy win his first Premiership?

**QUESTION 15.**

And how many games did it take for Luffy to win that elusive Premiership?

**QUESTION 16.**

Who was the future teammate that Luffy famously tangled with in the first Quarter of the 1996 AFL Grand Final?

**QUESTION 17.**

How many goals did Luffy kick in his milestone 600th game?

**QUESTION 18.**

What is the name of Luffy's AFL Masters team?

**QUESTION 19.**

What senior award did Luffy win at the Swans in 1998?

**QUESTION 20.**

On which Sydney radio station has Luffy been providing AFL coverage for many years?



Check your answers by clicking on the icon

# 2025 THE SYDNEY SWANS YEAR IN REVIEW

## AFL CLUB AWARDS CLUB CHAMPION

### 1. Bob Skilton Medal

Isaac Heeney (253 votes)

### 2. Adam Goodes Trophy

Brodie Grundy (238 votes)

### 3. Peter Bedford Trophy

James Jordon (188 votes)

4. Chad Warner (186 votes)

5. Tom McCartin (169 votes)

6. Sam Wicks (165 votes)

7. Nick Blakey (162 votes)

8. James Rowbottom (151 votes)

9. Justin McInerney (146 votes)

10. Jake Lloyd (138 votes)

11. Braeden Campbell (132)

12. Dane Rampe (127)

13. Matt Roberts (115)

14. Will Hayward (113)

15. Callum Mills (104)

16. Gus Sheldrick (100)

17. Errol Gulden (94)

18. Lewis Melican (88)

19. Hayden McLean (87)

20. Tom Papley (83)



*[Voting: The Bob Skilton Medal is determined by the Sydney Swans match committee, who each award up to five votes to players based on their performance in each game. There is no restriction on the number of players who can be awarded votes in any given round.]*

## OTHER AWARDS

### PAUL KELLY PLAYER'S PLAYER AWARD:

Brodie Grundy



### BARRY ROUND BEST CLUBMAN AWARD:

Lewis Melican



### DENNIS CARROLL MOST IMPROVED AWARD:

Sam Wicks



## RISING STAR AWARD:

Riley Bice



## VFL PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Indhi Kirk



## VFL DEVELOPMENT PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Matt Lloyd



## MARN GROOK MATCH GOODES-O'LOUGHLIN MEDAL:

Isaac Heeney



## SYDNEY V GWS GIANTS:

### BRETT KIRK MEDAL:

GAME XXIV - Chad Warner



## PLAYER MILESTONES

### 250 GAMES:

Jake Lloyd



## 2025 THE SYDNEY SWANS YEAR IN REVIEW

---

### 150 GAMES:

Nick Blakey



Tom McCartin



### 100 GAMES:

Lewis Melican



Errol Gulden



Justin McInerney



Chad Warner



James Jordon  
(65 with Melbourne)



Joel Hamling  
(23 with Western Bulldogs  
and 68 with Fremantle)



## AFLW CLUB AWARDS

### CLUB CHAMPION:

1. Laura Gardiner (279 votes)



2. Tanya Kennedy (231 votes)



3. Montana Ham (230 votes)



4. Zippy Fish (217)

5. Chloe Molloy (160)

6. Alice Mitchell (136)

7. Lucy McEvoy (130)

8. Ally Morphett (118)

9. Cynthis Hamilton (101)

10. Laura Hausegger (96)

### PLAYERS PLAYER:

Laura Gardiner

### RISING STAR AWARD:

Zippy Fish

### BEST CLUB PERSON:

Jasmine Grierson



### AFLW ALL-AUSTRALIAN SQUAD:

Zippy Fish

Montana Ham

Laura Gardiner

*[ Voting: The Club Champion is determined by the coaching panel, with each of the four coaches awarding up to ten votes, with no restriction on the number of players that can be awarded votes. The player with the most votes at the conclusion of the season is named the AFLW Club Champion.]*

## 2025 THE SYDNEY SWANS YEAR IN REVIEW

---

### 2025 TELSTRA AFLW RISING STAR AND AFLW BEST FIRST YEAR PLAYER WINNER:

Zippy Fish



### 2025 NAB AFLW GOAL OF THE YEAR:

Montana Ham – Winner



Chloe Molloy - Finalist

### AFLW MOST VALUABLE PLAYER AWARD NOMINATIONS:

Laura Gardiner



Montana Ham

Tanya Kennedy

### AFLW BEST CAPTAIN AWARD NOMINATIONS:

Chloe Molloy and Lucy McEvoy



### MOST COURAGEOUS PLAYER AWARD NOMINATION:

Tanya Kennedy



## AFL AWARDS

### BROWNLOW MEDAL:

Chad Warner (21 votes)

Isaac Heeney (17)

Nick Blakey (7)

Brodie Grundy (6)

Errol Gulden (6)

Will Hayward (3)

James Rowbottom (3)

Hayden Mclean (1)

### ALL AUSTRALIAN TEAM:

Isaac Heeney  
(Half Forward)

## NSW PLAYERS

### 2025 CAREY-BUNTON MEDAL:

**Awarded to the Best NSW Player in the AFL based on AFLCA Votes**

**Winner** – Isaac Heeney (66 votes; original club Cardiff)



**2nd** – Nick Blakey (35 votes; UNSW-Eastern Suburbs)

### 2025 BILL MOHR MEDAL:

**Awarded to NSW player Leading Goalkicker in the AFL:**

**Winner** – Isaac Heeney (37 goals); tied with Taylor Walker, Adelaide.



*All Australian Team*

## 2025 THE SYDNEY SWANS YEAR IN REVIEW

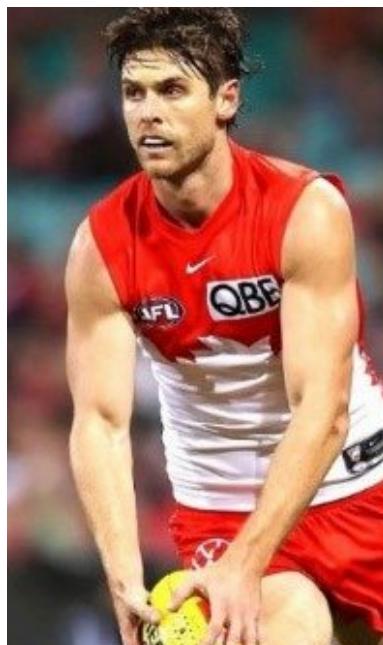
---

### NSW AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL HISTORY SOCIETY STATE OF ORIGIN TEAM 2024:

---

**Selected by Gerard Healy, Mike Sheahan, Wayne Carey, John Longmire, Rod Gillett, Richard Colless (Convenor)**

Dane Rampe  
(Original Club:  
UNSW-Eastern Suburbs)



Nick Blakey  
(UNSW-Eastern Suburbs)



Braeden Campbell  
(Pennant Hills)



Sam Wicks  
(Manly Warringah)

Errol Gulden  
(UNSW-Eastern Suburbs)

**SENIOR COACH:**  
Mark McVeigh

**ASSISTANT COACHES:**  
Jarrad McVeigh  
Ben Matthews

# AFL PLAYERS' ASSOCIATION ALUMNI INJURY AND HARDSHIP FUND

Established in 2017, the AFL Players injury & Hardship Fund provides ongoing support for the health and wellbeing of past players. The injury & Hardship Fund has various payments and benefits which may be applicable to past players.

## LIFETIME HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

AFLPA Alumni members may be eligible for reimbursement of medical costs and expenses for any joint surgery. Medical costs and expenses for a dental injury incurred whilst training or playing with an AFL / VFL club may also be reimbursable under the program. Members with private health insurance are eligible for reimbursement of up to \$8,000, while those without private health insurance can access up to \$6,000. Hardship support may be available to members who do not have private health insurance due to financial hardship.

## HARDSHIP FUND

As life doesn't always work out the way it was intended, support may be available to Alumni members in financial hardship. The Hardship Fund has assisted over 160 past players with more than \$2 million since the launch of the Alumni Program in 2007.

## HOSPITAL EXCESS REIMBURSEMENT

AFLPA Alumni members can apply for reimbursement of any excess paid for a hospital stay or procedure conducted in a hospital up to \$500. Note, these procedures do not have to be football related.

**VISIT AFLPLAYERS.COM.AU**

For lifetime health care, past player hardship support,  
hospital excess reimbursement and the AFLPA Alumni program in general,  
contact Tim Harrington, Chris Smith or Luisa Meoli

### Tim Harrington

Head of Alumni

0419 152 411 | 03 8651 4380  
tharrington@aflplayers.com.au

### Chris Smith

Alumni Programs Manager  
0400 019 391  
csmith@aflplayers.com.au

### Luisa Meoli

Regional Manager - NSW  
0407 391 898  
lmeoli@aflplayers.com.au

