

**Flashback 1934**

# A grand link with the Tigers

If the Glenelg Football Club relied on grand finals as regular sustenance, it would be a skeleton.

In its 50 year history, Glenelg has won only two flags — in 1934 and 1973.

For a club so strong in tradition, patriotism and a producer of six Magarey Medallists, there is no explaining the mysteries of lack of success.

It has had many chances; often, in fact, in the past decade.

Because the path to grand final success has been so tenuous, those two pennant wins are held dearly.

And so to 1934, the link with something grand — Glenelg's first premiership and an important member of that side, Arthur Link.

Arthur, who turned 70 recently, played 170 matches for Glenelg as a rover for 11 years from 1929.

"We did it the hard way that year," Arthur remembered.

"After a loss to Port in the semi-final we won through to the final and had our revenge.

"The two teams met

*By Sporting Editor, Ian Daebeler*

four times that year and wins were even, but Glenelg took out the most important match.

"I will never forget the reception afterwards. The team was taken to the Glenelg Town Hall and presented to thousands of people gathered in Mcseley Square.

"That was a very emotional moment. It was so impromptu.

"While the team was at the celebration dinner in the city, a radio station appealed for the crowds to gather as a salute to the victory.

"When we arrived by bus the square was packed with jubilant supporters."

The Sunday Mail match report of that day, October 6, stated:

"For the first time since they entered league football in 1921, Glenelg won the premiership, defeating Port by nine points.

"By setting a crackling pace from the outset, Glenelg gained a



*Arthur Link*

lead which proved too much for Port.

"It was inspired football, which delighted the crowd of 25,000 at Adelaide Oval.

## Excellent

"Glenelg has never previously been higher than sixth on the premiership list, although it had a number of first class players in its ranks.

"Glenelg's combina-

tion today was excellent. Link was prominent in attack . . . outpacing the opposition, Link raced goalward."

Bruce McGregor was the coach of that first successful team.

And there were other great players in that side — the captain Len Sallis, Blue Johnston, Roy Colyer, Goldsworthy, who kicked four goals from centre half-forward, and Mel Brock.

It was Arthur's brilliance and speed which earned him a State guernsey in 1932, and again two years later.

In the 1932 match on the Melbourne Cricket Ground, he was pitted against the abundant skills of Haydn Bunton senior.

SA lost by only nine points.

In 1934 Arthur was in the team to play Western Australia in Perth.

"It took three days to travel by train. To make the arduous and tiring journey worthwhile, we had to play two matches then, after the return journey, play the club game on the Saturday — three matches in seven days," said Arthur.

## Survival

"The interstate games were as much a test of physical survival as on-the-field skills."

Arthur began his football career at 17, an age considered very young in that era, and one when match payments almost were not enough to cover the tram fare from home to the oval.

Initially Arthur received 2/6, but payments varied. His highest sum was £1/10/-, not even a handsome amount at

the end of the Depression.

Football, and general sporting interests, obviously have been the vitamins in a healthy life for Arthur.

Now, 57 years after his League debut, he is fit, alert and active.

Arthur's bias is now towards bowls

A life member of the SA Football League and the Glenelg Football Club, and a former selector and junior coach, Arthur has some interesting comments on the modern code.

"Players of the past trained only two days a week. It was the essence of personal enjoyment, without great financial influence," he said.

"But today the game is entirely different, although the fundamental skills, guts and determination are the same.

"The pace of the game has seen the majestic art of drop kicking booted off the oval. We had never heard of today's equivalent — the drop punt.

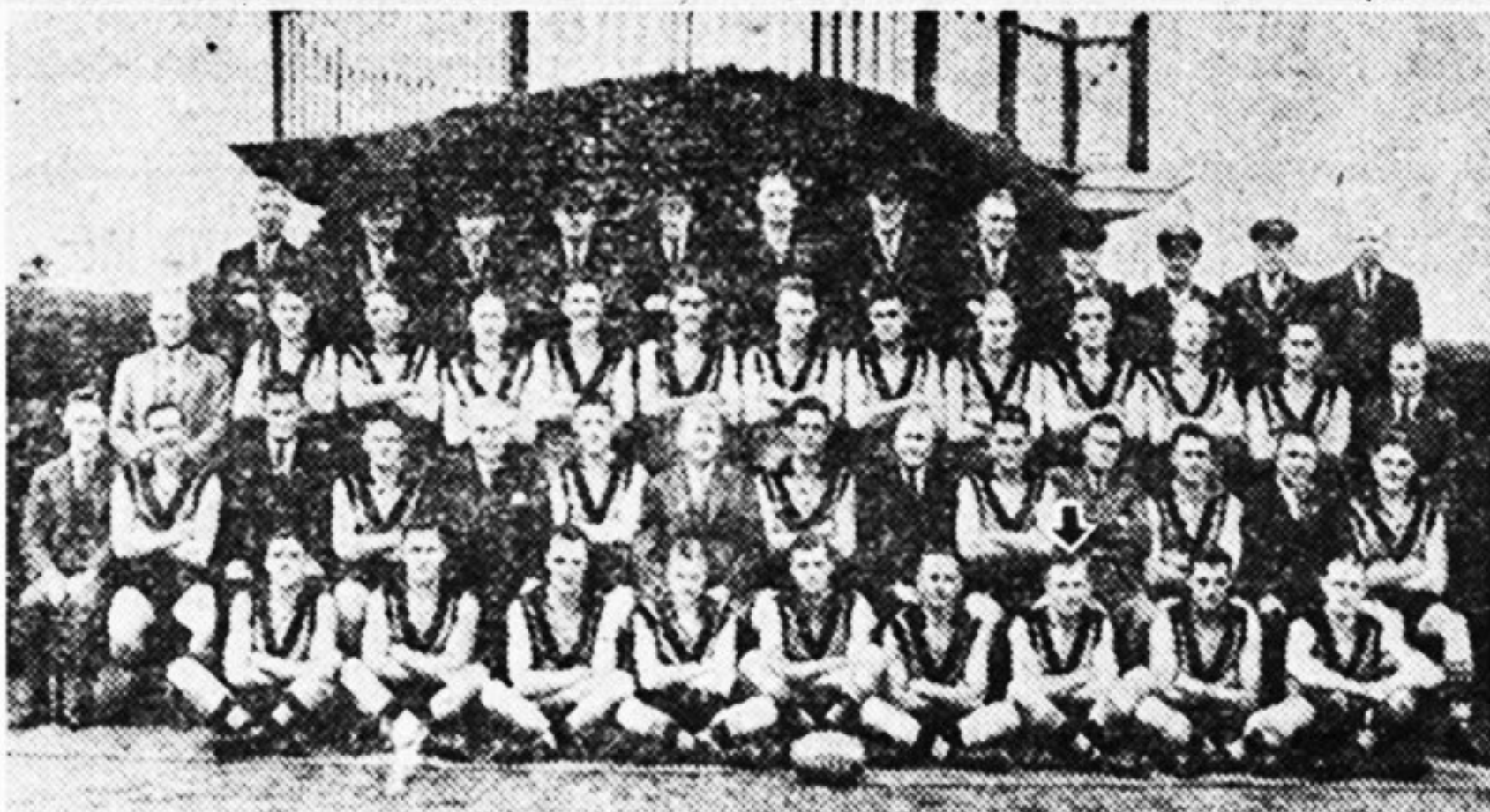
"Still, football has moved with the demand of time. It is a great sport, although I don't believe there is the same degree of traditional club loyalty from the players."

And this is how Arthur assesses the parade of talent over 50 years:

● **BEST FOOTBALLER**—Barrie Robran.

● **MOST SPECTACULAR**—Graham Cornes.

● **BEST GLENELG PLAYERS**—Len Sallis, centreman in the 1934 side; Marcus Boyall, ruckman and Magarey Medallist 1941; Paul Weston, current captain; Neil Davies, ruckman and former captain.



*The winning 1934 team*