

**FORMER CAPTAIN-COACH ANALYSES GLENELG'S HISTORY**

# Why Bays Are Cinderellas Of S.A. Football

It is hard to find any team that has had to battle so hard for recognition in South Australian football as Glenelg. The Bays have been the Cinderellas of the game ever since they were accepted as a league team in 1921—with the exception of 1934, when they became premiers for the first and only time—so far.

I often feel that the adage "a champion team will beat a team of champions" is particularly applicable to Glenelg.

FOR several reasons the Bays have always had an uphill fight. Their district is not densely populated like others, but extends over such a wide area that it is difficult for players to get to the oval on training nights in mid-winter early enough to put in intensive work.

For years Glenelg practised in three sections. There were those who could get to the ground by 5 o'clock; others could not be there until perhaps 5.30, while the late-comers arrived in darkness, and even though powerful electric lights were installed to illuminate the oval, their work consisted mainly of "kick to kick." So it was difficult to school them as a combination.

It has often been evident that Glenelg do better at the start and end of the season, when there is more natural light after working hours to enable the Bays to train as a team.

The Bays have had many good men—Jack Lloyd, Gordon Barbary, Jack Sexton, Len Sallis, "Blue" Johnson (a Magarey Medallist), Arthur Link, Roy Colyer, Wally Hill, Cyril Hoff, and, of course, the late Jack Owens.

They could always field at least 12 good men, who would hold a place in any team, but the last six did not have much quality.

Therefore, astute captains like Bruce McGregor (West), Vic Johnson (Port), Percy Furler (North), and Vic Bateman (Sturt) would always pinpoint our weaknesses and play through them.

Other teams would punch holes in our line-up quickly, and as soon as we'd plug one, another would open up. To win matches, we had to resort to all sorts of stratagems, which we would try to execute before the opposing captains could twig our plans.

In 1932 we started the season by winning our first three matches. In the fourth game we were up against Port at Alberton, and knowing that it was impossible to beat the magpies there without a pre-arranged plan, we decided to nullify their strong ruckwork by forbidding our chaps to go for the knock, but to shepherd the two Port followers off the ball.

This would allow Mick Murphy, our centreman, to come through and take the ball, alternating with our rover.

The move was successful, and we beat Port at Alberton for the second time in our history. Jack Owens proved himself one of the best forwards in the State by kicking 13 goals, and bagged another 13 in the match the week after, against South—26 for two games.

The first time we beat the magpies at Alberton, though, was when Port supporters had their ire raised so much that 2,000 supporters climbed the pickets and were on the ground for the last quarter.

I think it was in 1925. Actually, we didn't beat Port. They beat

themselves by kicking 4-17 to our 6-9.

In the last quarter the crowd poured over the fence on to the ground, and hooted, howled, and screamed at umpire Johnny Quinn. It was the maddest football crowd I've seen.

Jack Wade (Port) marked the ball near the end, and with only a goal needed, walked back to take his shot. But his own supporters put him off, as they screamed and yelled ferociously. "Don't miss it, Jack!"

I said to some, "Give him a go," but they kept urging him on. I think that Jack Wade that day was so nervous that he must have thought there were five sets of goalposts. His kick produced only a point.

Regarding interstate games, the 1925-6 seasons will always stand out in my memory. We met Victoria in Melbourne in 1925, with Frank Golding as skipper. In the first three terms we played fast, dashing football, with which the Vics could not cope. We worked wide, leading away from their men.

The Victorians were not allowed to swing into their hard-bumping

We did. As soon as a Victorian player moved we nudged him with elbows or barred his way or lunged against him—even though the ball might be 30 yards away. They couldn't make out what was going on for a while—but when they did it's not hard to imagine what went on.

In that hectic last quarter, every time the Vics tried to break through players went down like skittles in a bowling alley, and we eventually won by seven points.

"Snowy" Whitehead and Bill Oliver were two of our mainstays as knock-'em-down merchants, and Horrie Riley, Bruce McGregor, and "Bulls" Ryan were as pretty and effective a half-forward line as you could wish to see.

Two years later there came that sensational match on the Adelaide Oval when we drew with Victoria, after the scoreboard had shown a point win for the local team.

I can still see Horrie Riley marking right over the top of Alec Duncan, 6 ft. 3 in. 14½-stone Carlton centre half-forward.

That was the game when Syd Ackland punched the ball out of Gordon Coventry's hands in front of the Creswell Stand goal right on the bell. That match gave added interest to the return game in Melbourne.

Once again South Australia had to fight uphill, and when the last quarter began we were down 11-10 to 6-11. Then "Bulls" Ryan began kicking goals from everywhere on the half-forward line.

In the end "Bulls" was kicking goals from 60 to 65 yards out, to get seven goals in the last term—a feat which I believe has never been equalled in a State match.

We drew to within one goal of the Vics, and then their full back, Stockdale, took a slashing mark over a bunch. That put a little extra kick into the Vics, and they made a last fling, which got them another goal, to win by 13 points. The scores were: Victoria, 16-16; South Australia, 14-15.

Make no mistake, the Victorians are always hard to beat, but the match on the Adelaide Oval next Saturday could well prove to be a turning point in football in this State.

There is little doubt that in the past few years Victoria has not



JIM HANDBY Rises high in the middle of a bunch during the S.A.-Victoria game in Melbourne in 1928. Handby is immediately in front of Gordon ("Nuts") Coventry (No. 1). The other South Australian (No. 6, in sleeveless guernsey) is Percy Furler.

considered State games in the same light as their club matches.

But the thorough trouncing which our chaps gave the Vics last year and the splendid game in Melbourne recently have roused the Victorians from their complacency, and the view that they are the best football State in the Commonwealth.

If our boys can defeat them next Saturday, then Victoria will be forced to look at interstate games differently. Maybe it is thought that the Victorian teams are not up to the usual standard, but I have yet to see Victoria put a weak team in the field.

There is little doubt that our present State eighteen must be classed as one of the best South Australia has ever fielded. Only a first-rate team can give Victoria a seven-goal lead and draw with them, let alone be four goals ahead in the last quarter.

But I should like to sound a warning. Don't think the Vics will be uncomfortable on a hard, dry turf. They play an effective and telling game in dry conditions. Their natural game is long kicking and high marking, straight down the centre. This type of game conserves energy, and our game, played round the flanks, expends energy.

When we defeated them by seven points in 1928 in Melbourne we thought that when we met them on the Adelaide Oval under fine conditions we would flay them by about seven goals. Instead, they thrashed us—by about eight goals. Never underestimate a Victorian football team.

Lastly, I cannot support any contention that present-day players are in any way inferior to those of my day, and before.

I admit they do not train as hard as we did—I remember my early football training under Jack Tredrea, with South—but I doubt if the type of training we had would fit them for the style of football which is played today.

I saw the Torrens-Sturt match last week. Watching Colin McInnes perhaps the half-forwards I met were just as good and as fast—perhaps; but through my eyes the teams today are yards faster than in my day.

Twenty years ago there were very fast wingers and rovers, but the rest of the team had little pace to speak of; today, teams as a whole can gallop like racehorses, and I would not like to be opposed to some of the half-forwards in the game.

at centre half-forward for Torrens. I came to the conclusion that I'd have needed to leg-ropo him to keep in touch with him if I were his opponent.

## North Defender



IAN McKAY, 23-year-old North Adelaide centre half-back, who is playing his first season in league football, as seen by Coventry. McKay was chosen as a reserve for the State team which went to Victoria. He is 6 ft. 1 in., and weighs 12 st.

## Told by Jim Handby To Lawrie Jervis, Jun.

game. In the last quarter, when the Vics sensed defeat, they closed the game up and attacked incessantly straight down the field. Then we made the mistake of not countering their hard-hitting tactics and still tried to play the fast game.

In 1926, the South Australian team was practically the same as that defeated in 1925. Again, for three quarters, we held them with fast, open play.

But in the last term, when they began hitting hard, we changed our style and met them every inch of the way with hip and thigh. As well as taking all the Vics could give, we bounced them out of their game.

At three-quarter time Frank Golding had said to us: "It doesn't matter if you're seven yards or 70 from the ball, as soon as the Vics make a move go in and check them. Hit them with all you've got."

Jim Handby began his league football career with South in 1922, and played with the city team until 1924. He went to Glenelg then, and remained with the Bays until he retired at the end of 1932.

He played in three carnivals—1924 (Hobart), 1927 (Melbourne), and 1930 (Adelaide), and altogether represented the State in about 30 games. From 1924 until 1930, he was on the State half-back line with "Wat" Scott, a combination that had few peers.

He was captain-coach of Glenelg for five years—1926 and 1927, 1930, 1931, and 1932. In 1928, he won the Magarey Medal.