

1977 GRAND FINAL LIFT-OUT

OUR
BEST
THREEPOWERHOUSE
PORT-BY 8
POINTS

1... BRIAN CUNNINGHAM (Port) ... a dynamic rover, he fired Port forward tirelessly, getting maximum value from his kicks and earning many of them the hard way.



2... RUSSELL EBERT (Port) ... he played the ultimate captain's game, bringing his teammates into the play with lightning handball and setting up attacking moves with his deadly footpasses.



3... KYM HODGEMAN (Glenelg) ... by far the most desperate Glenelg player and a prolific kick winner. He kept Glenelg running — even when winning looked impossible.

BY  GRAHAM FISCHER

"The WILL to win will win it", was emblazoned in bold letters on the blackboard in Port's dressing room before yesterday's centenary grand final ... and 100 minutes later it personified the Magpies' triumph.

In the dressing room the players wallowed in champagne as the realisation of their dream sank in.

Bruce Light, boots off and socks down, toasted ruckman Randall Gerlach by swamping himself in mouthfuls of bubbly.

Centre half-forward David Granger, who played a big role for Port, clenched his fist and said: "Up them, you bloody beauty."

Gerlach, the man mountain who broke up countless Glenelg attacks, smiled contentedly. He didn't mind copping a black eye.

Andy Porplycia, the dynamic ruck-rover who returned to the league side for the grand final after being troubled by a recurrent hamstring injury, wearily propped himself against a wall away from the mass of officials and players who were continually being given a bath from sprayed champagne.

And in the middle was John Cahill, red-eyed and "up in the clouds."

He was the target for everyone. He had em-

braced the players on the ground and he did it again in the rooms. All the officials and supporters made for him to shake hands, hug and gush congratulations.

Cahill, in a hoarse voice, said: "They played on courage. We were down to 17 men during the first quarter and for a while only had 16 after Tim Evans and Fred Phillis hit heads during the second term."

"When the legs ran out, I told them they had to run on guts. They did, and reaped the rewards. It was bloody fantastic."

The Magpies hushed as the burly frames of Glenelg coach John Nicholls and captain Wayne Phillis weaved into the rooms.

"The better side won on the day," Nicholls told them.

The Port camp was soon in uproar again as the celebrations gathered momentum ... back at the top after a gap of 12 years.

AT FOOTBALL PARK

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts.
Port	4-3	9-7	13-9	17-11	113
Glen.	5-2	8-3	12-6	16-9	105

BEST PLAYERS — PORT: Cunningham, Ebert, Gerlach, Light, James, Evans. GLENELG: Hodgeman, Voigt, Weston, Caldwell, Carey, Paech.

SCORERS — PORT: Evans 7.2, Eckerman 3.2, Granger 2.1, Cunningham 2.0, James 1.3, Blethyn 1.1, Sorrell 1.0, Belton 0.1, rushed 0.1. GLENELG: Paech 5.0, D. Phillis 3.0, Rady 2.1, Carey 2.0, Hodgeman 1.2, Farquhar 1.0, Holst 1.0, Jackson 1.0, Caldwell 0.1, D. Johnston 0.1, McInerney 0.1, W. Phillis 0.1, rushed 0.2.

INJURIES — PORT: Kinnear (concussion) in second quarter, Cahill (thigh) in first quarter, Eckerman (thigh) in second quarter. GLENELG: Holst (shoulder), D. Johnston (thigh), D. Rady (shin).

REPORTS — B. Light (Port) by umpire Mead in first quarter for striking David Johnston.

UMPIRES — Peter Mead, Robin Bennet.

ATTENDANCE — 56,717.



THE Magpies reached for the sky ... and got there by eight points. Max James soared high above Paul Weston and Kym Hodgeman to take this spectacular mark. Later coach John Cahill gave a victory salute after the final siren ...



WHAT CAPTAINS, COACHES SAID



Port coach JOHN CAHILL: "It was a great effort. We were down to 17 players for the last three-quarters, and 16 for a while when Tim Evans got that hit on the head. But the boys played superbly and gave their all."

Port captain RUSSELL EBERT: "Both sides were very evenly matched, but our lads really buckled down and pulled it off. It was a very hard game but we just did that little bit more."



Russell Ebert



John Nicholls

Glenelg coach JOHN NICHOLLS: "The best side won on the day. We had our chances but Port were just a bit better and capitalised on their opportunities."

Glenelg captain WAYNE PHILLIS: "We were always in with a chance but Ivan Eckerman's goal right on the three-quarter time siren gave them a nine-point lead, and I thought it was that break which helped them."



Wayne Phillis

1977 GRAND FINAL STATISTICS

PORT
ADVANCE!

PLAYERS	1st Q.	2nd Q.	3rd Q.	Final Q.	Match Total	HIT OUTS	HAND BALL	FREE FOR	MARKS	GOALS	POINTS
A. BELTON	3	1	1	1	6	10	7	N	5	7	2
T. EVANS	3	1	1	1	6	10	7	N	5	7	2
D. CUNNINGHAM	3	1	1	1	6	10	7	N	5	7	2
T. SORRELL	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
D. GRANGER	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
A. PORPLYCIA	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
B. LIGHT	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
R. EBERT	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
K. KINNEAR	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
L. WARREN	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
R. VOIGT	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
I. ECKEMAN	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
A. HANNAH	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
G. PHILLIPS	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
R. GERLACH	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
J. SORRY	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
M. JAMES	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
B. CUNNINGHAM	1	1	1	1	4	10	7	N	5	7	2
A. GILES	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2	OFF ON/2
G. BLETHYN	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3	OFF ON/3
K. CURTIS	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID
TOTALS	59	49	55	59	222	30	73	E	75	17	11

ROBIN BENNETT

UMPIRE: PETER MEAD

ATTENDANCE: 56,717 OVAL: FOOTBALL PARK

CONDITIONS: GOOD

GLENELG
ADVANCE!

PLAYERS	1st Q.	2nd Q.	3rd Q.	Final Q.	Match Total	HIT OUTS	HAND BALL	FREE FOR	MARKS	GOALS	POINTS
D. PAECH	3	3	7	OFF	13	9	2	N	4	5	—
S. TIPPING	3	4	3	2	12	10	6	N	7	—	—
R. MCINERNEY	5	5	4	4	18	10	6	O	7	—	—
M. FARQUHAR	4	3	5	3	15	10	6	N	3	—	—
P. CAREY	5	3	—	2	10	10	6	T	4	—	—
D. RADY	3	OFF ON/5	2	1	6	10	6	T	4	—	—
R. CALDWELL	3	2	3	3	11	10	6	N	7	—	—
D. HOLST	3	2	4	2	11	10	6	A	3	—	—
D. JOHNSTON	3	2	4	2	11	10	6	N	3	—	—
J. IANIG	3	1	2	2	8	10	6	V	4	—	—
P. JOHNSTON	3	2	2	2	9	10	6	N	5	—	—
S. LYWOOD	3	2	2	OFF	7	10	6	A	4	—	—
R. VOIGT	6	2	3	3	14	10	6	N	4	—	—
D. PHILLIS	2	2	3	3	10	10	6	I	3	—	—
C. HERSCOCK	4	4	2	2	12	10	6	L	3	—	—
M. PHILLIS	4	2	2	1	9	10	6	L	6	—	—
G. CORRIE	3	3	3	4	13	10	6	A	10	—	—
R. HODGEMAN	8	7	11	7	33	10	6	A	7	—	—
S. JACKSON	ON/1	3 OFF	OFF ON/4	ON/4	7	10	6	B	2	—	—
D. JOHNSTON	OFF	OFF ON/1	2	3	5	10	6	B	2	—	—
J. MACFARLANE	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	DID	L	—	—	—
TOTALS	69	51	65	53	238	34	73	E	87	16	9

ROBIN BENNETT

UMPIRE: PETER MEAD

ATTENDANCE: 56,717 OVAL: FOOTBALL PARK

CONDITIONS: GOOD

GLADIATORS ALL

One of the truly great grand finals . . . that is what Port Adelaide won at Football Park yesterday.

It was a magnificent contest with everything a football supporter could possibly want.

It was close, it was fought out in gladiator fashion, and it was marked with brilliance as well as desperation.

And when jubilant Port Adelaide supporters hoisted coach John Cahill to their shoulders and paraded him around the ground at the end of the match, it was a moment few of the 57,000 spectators at the oval will forget.

For Cahill and the 20 men who wore the black-and-white so magnificently it must have been an emotional experience.

For John Nicholls and his 20 Tigers there was little else to do but be valiant losers.

Amends

In the bowels of the stadium Robin Bennet and Peter Mead agreed it was one of the finest games that they ever had the privilege of umpiring.

"It was a pity one team had to lose," said Peter Mead in a statement that truly reflected the sentiments of the thousands of football lovers at the ground.

It WAS a pity that Glenelg had to lose. But it would have been a gross injustice if Port had not been able to hold the Thomas Seymour Hill trophy at the end.

They were out to make amends for their failure last year and not even Glenelg — the second-best team in the competition — were going to stop them.

No one was trying harder than their captain, Russell Ebert. He had a lot to prove — to himself and to the "knockers" who have put the boots into him many times, labelling him a failure in big games.

Ebert led his team out onto the ground and he led them to the premiership. With two men shadowing him he started slowly, but ominously, choosing to bring his teammates into the game with handball.

As the game wore on Ebert became more of an influence, opening up the play with high lightning handball and ripping the Glenelg backlines apart with his deadly foot passes.

When the experts talk about hard-fought football matches in the years to come there will undoubtedly be a place for the 1977 grand final.

It started at a tremendous pace, with no quarter given or asked, and it was almost inevitable that there would be some heated exchanges as the afternoon progressed.

Bruce Light was reported . . . others could have been as the pressure of the match brought out the Irish in one player after another.

But Port were good enough to go on with the job of cutting down Glenelg, and they did it every time the Bays looked a threat.

Report

They had Ebert in control at centre, Brian Cunningham picking up kicks at will, Randall Gerlach taking telling marks as he followed the play from one end of the oval to the other, Max James pulling down some spectacular marks, and Tim Evans providing them with a spearhead.

There was Bruce Light in dynamic touch on his wing, Andy Porpocia making a memorable comeback from injury, and that rookie defence showing great maturity to plug the gaps at critical moments.

When Ivan Eckerman left his half-back flank in the second quarter to have a thigh injury treated off the ground, Tony Giles took over with considerable aplomb.

Later, when given the task of going back on to

Truly superb footy combat



by **STEPHEN MIDDLETON**

the field with a pressure bandage on that thigh, Eckerman forgot all about his injury in true Port fashion.

It was because of the efforts of diminutive Bay rover, Kym Hodgeman, that Port found themselves in tight spots several times during the afternoon.

Hodgeman and co-rover Peter McInnerney were never ready to concede defeat.

It had been too long a football season to let it slip away in the last 100 minutes.

Rex Voigt obviously felt the same sentiments as he valiantly tried to stem the Port flow. He did it more than 20 times, backed up by Neville Caldwell who was given the job of cutting Tim Evans out of the match.

Paul Weston, slightly further upfield, capped off a great finals series for himself with another grand performance, but it was to no avail.

Port had nullified the effect of the Bay big men who swept the Tigers into the finals.

Wayne Phillis, Peter Carey and Bob Paech were not the influence they had been in other matches leading up to yesterday.

The Bays also lost some of their sting across half-forward and were less effective mid-field.

None of these lines was cut right out of the game . . . they were merely overshadowed by Port.

The edge Port found there, however, was enough to enable them to take out the flag.

YOU COULD FEEL THE ELECTRICITY!

What a game! If ever I've seen a grand final that had everything, this was certainly it.

Congratulations Port. Glenelg — you were magnificent in defeat.

In typical grand final atmosphere, the tension that was built up during the week by both sides was carried on to the ground.

You could feel the electricity in the players' bodies as they hit the oval.

I don't think I've played in, or watched, a grand final where in the opening minutes both sides showed such supreme confidence.

Both Port and Glenelg marked cleanly, needed only one grab and kicked accurately to position.

There were certainly niggling tactics applied by both sides. But I don't think anyone was prepared for the second quarter eruption of individual clashes.

Players stood toe-to-toe and traded punches as if it was going out of style.

One could have been excused for thinking he was at Madison Square Gardens instead of Football Park when Fred Phillis and Tim Evans almost knocked each other out while the ball was at the other end of the ground.

Glenelg coach John Nicholls immediately shifted Fred Phillis to full forward and it proved a

blessing in disguise.

Nicholls then put Neville Caldwell on to Evans and he certainly stopped the Port goal-kicker.

There must have been some harsh words said by both coaches at half-time, because in the second half the two sides produced tremendous football and forgot about the individual clashes.

When Glenelg appeared rattled during the game Nicholls brought Carey on to the ball to steady them. I thought this was a good move.

Neither side made many switches because they weren't needed. The game was tight all day and Port got the breaks.

On top

I thought Port's forward play, with Evans as a spearhead, had them on top.

Glenelg kicked high into their forward line and relied too much on the big mark.

Grand finals are certainly a team effort, but individual performances can turn the tide of a game.



BOB SHEARMAN SAYS . . .

with Mike Pilkington

Port's Ivan Eckerman, to me, produced two goals that won the premiership for the Magpies.

Coach John Cahill must be proud of him.

Eckerman's effort, when he was virtually on one leg, was nothing short of magnificent.

Glenelg's hard game against West the previous week began to show in the last quarter and Nicholls could do nothing to get more run into his team.

It was Port's experienced players, Max James, Russell Ebert, Brian Cunningham and Peter Woite, who teamed together and did not let the premiership slip away.

Nicholls, I thought, had a big problem in the last quarter. His players were obviously leg weary and he could not make any switches to counter Port's pace.

AROUND THE GROUND

Hodgeman gets vote

The Magarey Medal is Trevor Grimwood's, but who would you have picked as best players yesterday if you had been the umpire?

Robin Bennet and Peter Mead thought the honors went to Kym Hodgeman, from Brian Cunningham and Rex Voigt.

And they both talked enthusiastically about the game's "bad boy," Bruce Light.

"He did a lot of hard work," said Peter Mead—the man who reported him.

"So did Russell Ebert," he added as an after thought. Jack Spry and Tim Evans also rated a mention.

That made six players, and they only wanted three! —STEPHEN MIDDLETON.

"It had everything," said Peter Mead of the 1977 grand final.

"There was tremendous pressure, it was tough, hard and there was nothing in it all day."

"It was what grand finals are all about."

For Mead it was his second premiership match. For Robin Bennet it was his first.

"It was fantastic," he said. "It was a hard game, but it wasn't hard to umpire. Once the two teams settled down after half-time it was just a fantastic game of football."

—STEPHEN MIDDLETON

CHAMPION Glenelg youngsters Paul Weston and Kym Hodgeman reckon they ought to retire.

Hodgeman said it was the fifth consecutive grand final he and Weston have played in and lost. "I reckon we must be jinxed," he said.

"We lost one in the Under 17s, one in the Under 19s, and now three league grand finals."

—GRAHAM FISCHER

THERE were fights both on and off the ground. Police had most trouble behind the northern goals, where the Bay cheer squad was.

They had to break up at least five brawls that occurred during the first half of the game and several people were escorted from the ground.

—MIKE PILKINGTON