

THE GOLDEN ERA

The 1980s have been South Australia's greatest era.

The capturing of three NFL Championship titles and the three successive wins against Victoria are testimony to that.

The icing on the cake was the 10-goal thrashing of Victoria in the 1988 Bicentennial Championship Final at Football Park when few gave the home side any chance of winning.

It resulted in the first invitation to an SA team to play the Big V in Melbourne since 1971 and while the outcome of that match was disappointing, it should not be allowed to take the gloss off a marvellous period in SA's history.

Further proof of SA's golden era is in its record of five successive wins in State matches, first achieved between 1979-80, mostly against the minor states, and then again between 1987-88 which included two wins each against Victoria and WA and one against NSW.

Until 1980, SA had not won four successive State games since 1930.

SA's first match in 1980 was an incredible 198-point thrashing of Queensland 30-39 (219) to 3-3 (21).

It preceded a meritorious 81-point victory against WA before SA was narrowly beaten in the 1980 State-of-Origin Championship final by 17 points.

Victoria took the title but Graham Cornes won the Tassie Medal.

Little did he realise that he would become the only man to coach SA to three consecutive wins against Victoria before the decade had passed.

SA continued to lose narrowly to Victoria but defeat WA at Football Park while suffering

at the hands of the Sandgropers in the West.

Season 1982 was a prime example. SA's 116-point defeat of WA at home was soured by a 91-point loss at Subiaco just one month later.

If there was a turning point during the decade, it was 1983 when an independent coach, Bob Hammond, was appointed to one of football's toughest jobs.

He led SA to its first win against the Vics since 1965 as the Croweaters thrashed Victoria by 56 points with young stars like Bradley, Kernahan and Motley leading the way.

Kernahan's 10-goal haul the following season against Victoria was outstanding.

SA lost by four points and later lost to WA by one point in controversial circumstances but the ex-Glenelg forward's effort in the former game will be forever remembered by those who saw it.

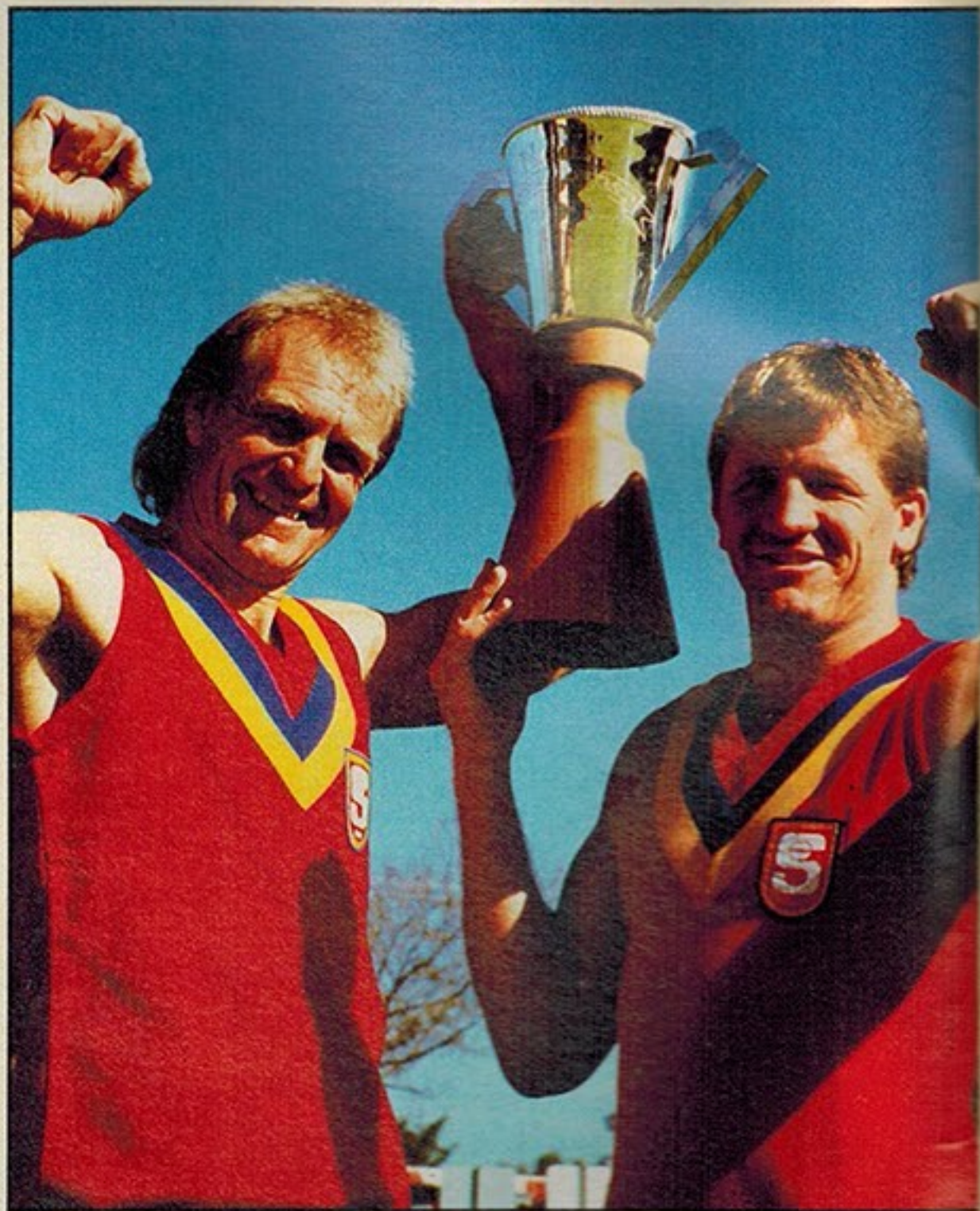
A 57-point loss to Victoria in 1985 was quickly forgotten when SA crushed WA at Subiaco by 87 points to win the Australian Championship by default because Victorian coach Kevin Sheedy had defied the rules and played too many interchange players.

Kernahan was joined by the magical Malcolm Blight in dominating the forward lines.

Blight, then 35, kicked six goals and Kernahan seven as SA grabbed the title for the first time since 1911.

But South Australians still felt uneasy about declaring their team as the best in the land.

They were prepared to accept the title without a qualm in 1986 when SA defeated Victoria by 10 points but WA ventured to



The 1988 Bicentennial Championship winning coach and captain... Graham Cornes and Chris McDermott.

Football Park and won by 39 points to stand between us and glory again.

But all the hard work put into junior programs, all the research painstakingly done on the opposition and all the ingredients that made SA footballers some of the most talented and exciting in the land finally bore fruit in 1987.

Mark Naley became only our third Tassie Medallist as SA clinched successive national titles by playing a brand of football that would overpower any other team the country could muster.

Perhaps that is why it hurt so much to lose by 86 points at the MCG in July – because for once, the State's players and supporters knew just how good it felt to win.

CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

1980	Adelaide	Victoria
1983	Adelaide/Perth	West Australia
1984	Adelaide/Perth	West Australia
1985	Adelaide/Perth	South Australia
1986	Adelaide/Perth	West Australia
1987	Adelaide/Perth	South Australia
1988	Adelaide	South Australia

STATE COACHES

D. N. Kerley (Torrens)	1980
J. Cahill (Port)	1981
J. Cahill (Port)	1982
R. Hammond	1983
D. N. Kerley (West)	1984
N. Balme (Norwood)	1985
G. Cornes (Glenelg)	1986
G. Cornes (Glenelg)	1987
G. Cornes (Glenelg)	1988
M. Nunan (North)	1988
J. Cahill (Port)	1989

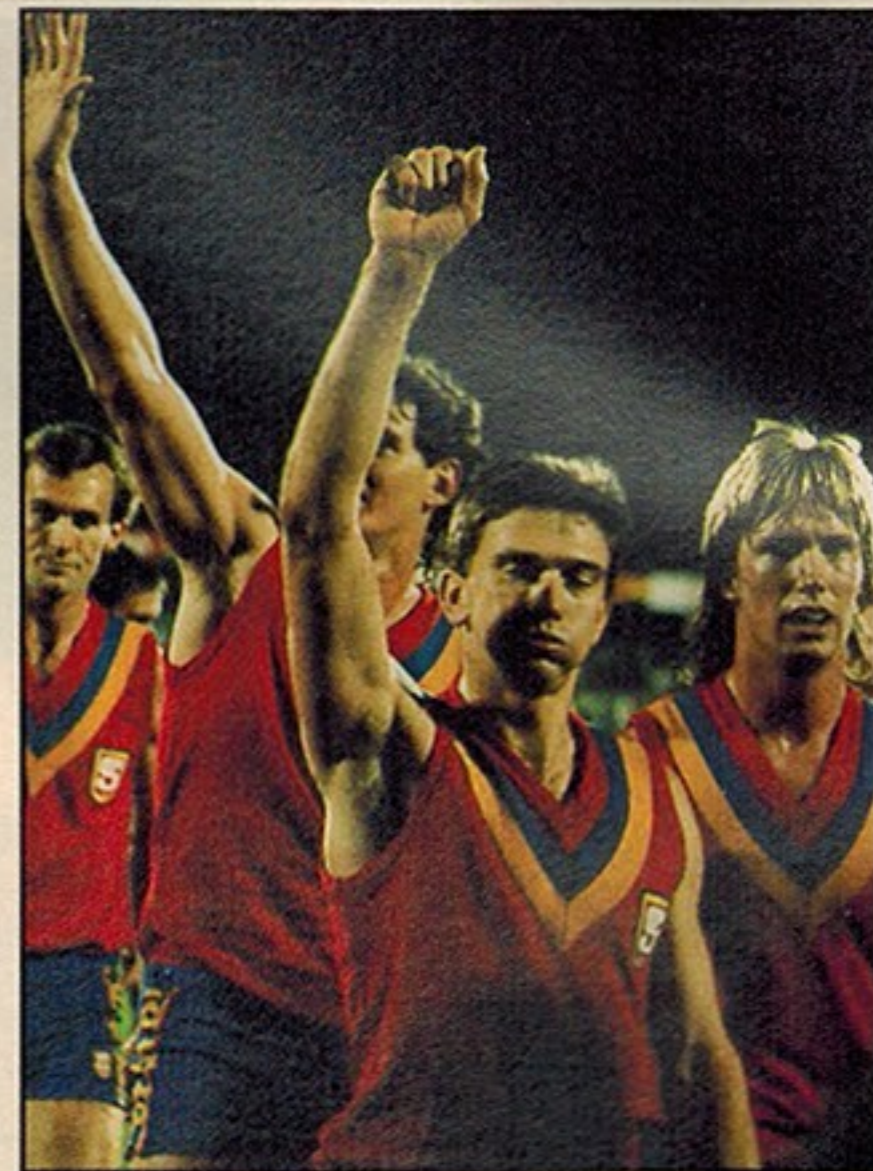
STATE CAPTAINS

R. Davies (Sturt)	1980
P. Weston (Glenelg)	1981
P. Weston (Glenelg)	1982
R. Ebert (Port)	1983
N. Craig (Sturt)	1984
N. Roberts (Norwood)	1984
N. Roberts (Norwood)	1985
M. Blight (Woodville)	1985
M. Aish (Norwood)	1986
B. Lindsay (Torrens)	1987
C. McDermott (Glenelg)	1988
M. Aish (Norwood)	1989

FOS WILLIAMS MEDALLISTS

(Best on ground for South Australia in interstate matches.)

P. Carey (Glenelg) v WA (Subiaco)	1981
S. Copping (Essendon/Glenelg) v Victoria (F/Park)	1982
P. Weston (Glenelg) v WA (Football Park)	1982
G. Phillips (Port) v WA (Subiaco)	1982
M. Aish (Norwood) v Victoria (Football Park)	1983
C. Williams (West) v WA (Football Park)	1983
S. Kernahan (Glenelg) v Victoria (Football Park)	1984
G. McIntosh (Norwood) v WA (Football Park)	1984
P. Motley (Sturt) v Victoria (Football Park)	1985
C. Bradley (Port) v WA (Subiaco)	1985
C. Bradley (Carlton/Port) v Victoria (F/Park)	1986
A. Jarman (North) v WA (Football Park)	1986
C. McDermott (Glenelg) v Victoria (F/Park)	1987
A. Jarman (North) v WA (WACA)	1987
M. Mickan (Brisbane/West) v NSW (F/Park)	1988
S. Kernahan (Carlton/Glenelg) v Victoria (F/Park)	1988
M. Redden (North) v WA (Football Park)	1988
A. Jarman (North) v Victoria (MCG)	1989



CROWEATER ALL-STARS

Selecting South Australia's best team of the 1980s was always going to be difficult.

Several players could feel well justified to be selected in the same position.

How do you fit similar type players Ebert, McDermott, Bradley, Aish, the Jarmans and McIntosh into one team?

Not easily!

The first problem was selecting a full-forward where Malcolm Blight just got the nod ahead of Tim Evans because of his greater versatility and better performances at State level.

Another specialist goalkicker fills one forward pocket, the mercurial Neville Roberts, while rover Mark Naley starts in the other pocket.

Stephen Kernahan had no challenger for centre half-forward and is flanked by the brilliant Andrew Jarman who could change in the centre with Russell Ebert and Chris McDermott, changing on the ball with Michael Aish.

The centreline is a beauty.

All from Port Adelaide and all Magpie centremen but two of them, Bradley and Anderson were also fine wingmen, designating where they should start.

Greg Phillips and Martin Leslie vied for centre half-back.

It really is academic who starts there as either is worthy of the position.

We chose Phillips with Leslie to start in the back pocket.

Peter Motley and John Riley were two outstanding half-back flankers for SA in the '80s and deserve their position in this all-star team.

Danny Hughes plays full-back as SA's most consistent player in that position while Greg Whittlesea provides some extra toughness to the back-line.

Peter Carey, who was still playing State football in his final season last year aged 34, was our choice to lead the rucks.

Follower Michael Aish and the tearaway John Platten combine to form a first ruck to match it with the best.

Left on the interchange bench are four players who we desperately tried to slot into the starting 18 but could not.

Here, we select South Australia's best team of the '80s. Assisting me in the selection process are Budget columnist Gordon Schwartz and SA State team and Football Administration Manager, Murray Tippett. I hope it provides for some thought-provoking discussions as we remember an exciting decade of League football and its players.

Note: When players or coaches were at more than one club in the '80s, they are only eligible for the club where they played the most games during the decade
— Dion Hayman.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA IN THE 80s

	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn
v NSW	1	1	0	0
v Queensland	1	1	0	0
v Tasmania	1	1	0	0
v VFA	1	1	0	0
v VFL	9	4	5	0
v WA	10	5	5	0
Total	23	13	10	0

Garry McIntosh, Rick Davies, Paul Weston and Scott Salisbury certainly form the most formidable interchange bench seen this decade.

Then there are the ones who missed out.

To leave out players the calibre of Neil Craig, Bruce Lindsay, Tony McGuinness, Tony Giles and the likes really emphasises just how successful South Australia has been in the 1980s.

One other who has not been mentioned, Graham Cornes, was ruled ineligible to play because he is the coach.

HIGHEST SCORES OF THE 80s

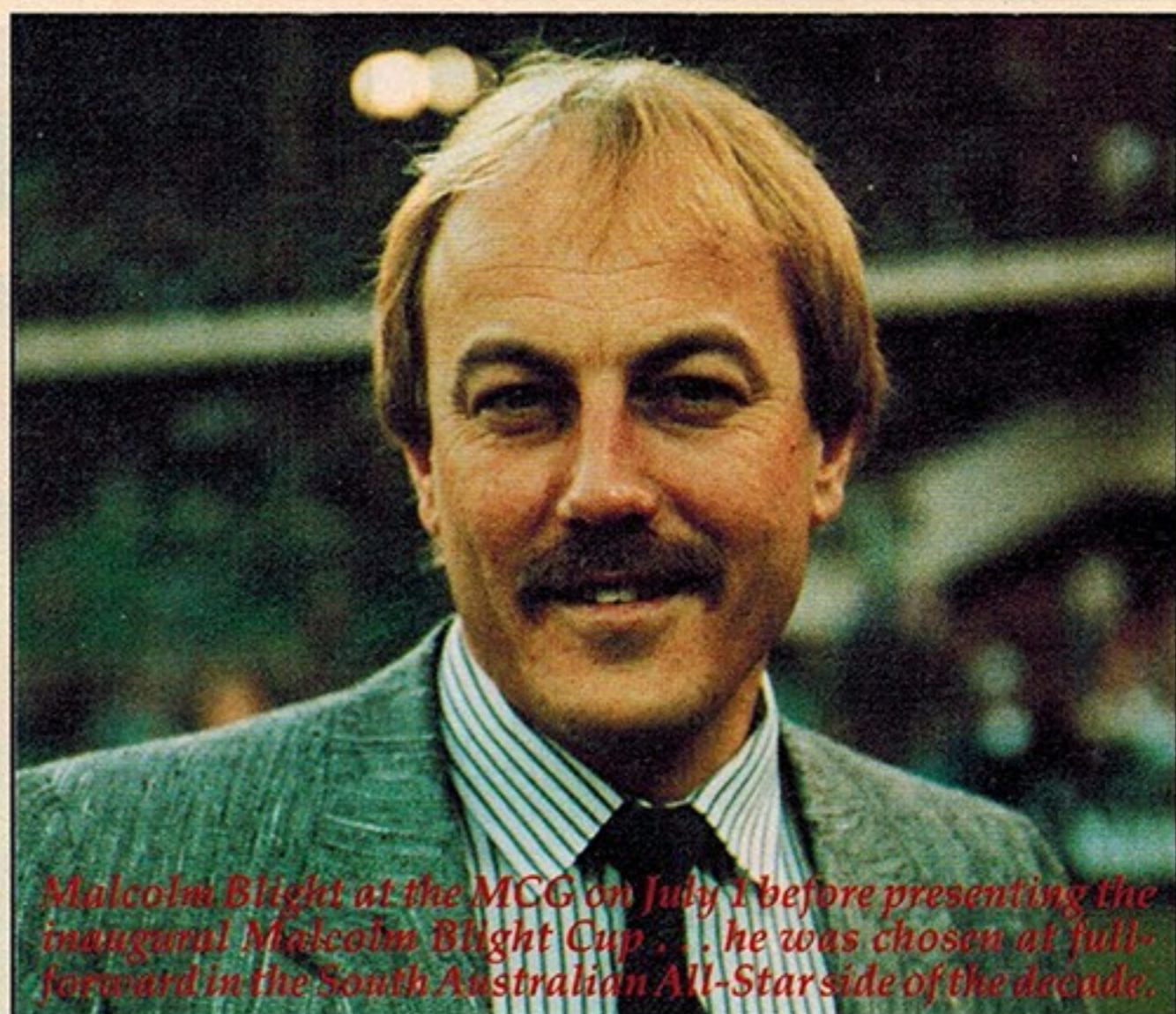
30-39 (219)	v	Queensland	Football Park	1980
30-18 (198)	v	WA	Subiaco	1985
29-23 (197)	v	WA	Football Park	1982
26-16 (172)	v	VFL	Football Park	1983
22-18 (150)	v	Tasmania	Football Park	1980

LOWEST SCORES OF THE 80s

8-5 (53)	v	WA	Subiaco	1982
9-9 (63)	v	VFL	MCG	1989
10-9 (69)	v	WA	Subiaco	1981
11-10 (76)	v	VFL	Football Park	1985
12-8 (80)	v	NSW	Football Park	1988

THE ALL-STARS

F	N. Roberts	Blight	Naley
HF	A. Jarman	S. Kernahan	McDermott (C)
C	Bradley	Ebert	Anderson
HB	Motley	Phillips	Riley
B	Leslie	Hughes	Whittlesea
	Ruck Carey Aish (VC) Platten	Interchange Weston McIntosh Salisbury Davies	Coach Cornes



Malcolm Blight at the MCG on July 1 before presenting the inaugural Malcolm Blight Cup... he was chosen at full-forward in the South Australian All-Star side of the decade.

	CAREER	CLUB	SA LEAGUE GAMES	SA LEAGUE GOALS	STATE GAMES	STATE GOALS	ALL-AUSTRALIAN
1 RUSSELL EBERT	1968-85	Port	392	294	29	8	—
2 PETER MOTLEY	1982-85	Sturt	92	104	6	7	2
3 JOHN PLATTEN	1981-85	Central	107	259	12	19	4
4 STEPHEN KERNAHAN	1981-85	Glenelg	136	295	11	43	3
5 PETER CAREY	1971-88	Glenelg	448	521	19	10	2
6 MARK NALEY	1979-86	South	162	185	14	20	2
7 NEVILLE ROBERTS	1973-87	Torrens/Norwood	204	613	5	9	—
8 MICHAEL AISH	1979-	Norwood	239	345	14	12	2
9 GREG WHITTLESEA	1981-	Sturt	210	67	8	1	1
10 CHRIS MCDERMOTT	1981-	Glenelg	241	166	8	6	2
11 JOHN RILEY	1977-	North	234	31	5	—	—
14 GARRY MCINTOSH	1982-	Norwood	186	89	9	2	—
15 MALCOLM BLIGHT	1968-85	Woodville	163	359	7	11	2
17 MARTIN LESLIE	1981-88	Port	150	21	6	—	1
19 DANNY HUGHES	1981-83	Port	71	3	7	—	1
20 GREG PHILLIPS	1976-	Port	234	80	18	3	1
21 CRAIG BRADLEY	1981-85	Port	98	104	12	9	3
24 RICK DAVIES	1970-86	Sturt	350	781	20	20	1
26 GREG ANDERSON	1983-87	Port	121	68	8	1	1
27 ANDREW JARMAN	1983-	North	161	99	8	2	2
28 PAUL WESTON	1974-	Glenelg/Torrens/ Norwood	265	203	13	2	—
36 SCOTT SALISBURY	1983-	Glenelg	190	41	7	—	1

