

# SPIRIT OF '86

## HEROES & HARDNUTS

It's been 22 long and frustrating years since Glenelg won their last premiership – with six of today's Grand Final team not even born in 1986. For those who played in that awesome Tigers' side that beat North Adelaide, the memories remain as vivid as yesterday.

**JOHN WHISTLER** and **SCOTT WALSH** spoke to five of them.

### THE CREAM-PIE FIGHT

**Peter Carey, 54**

Coca-Cola SA state manager

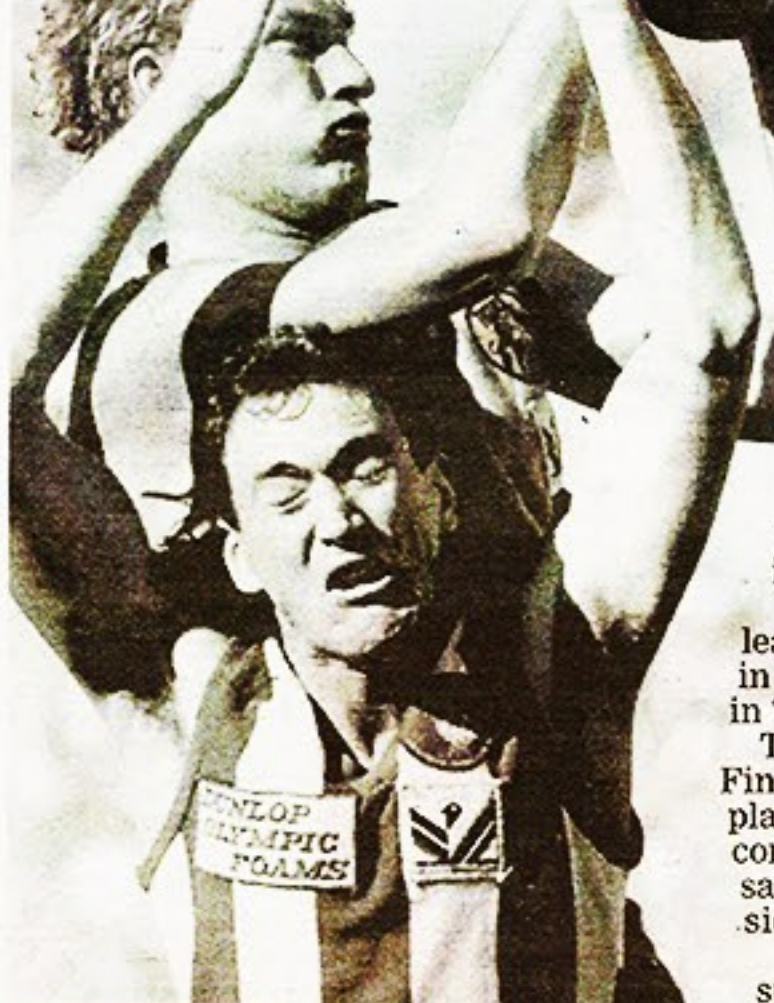


Peter Carey has revealed a pie fight on the eve of the 1986 finals campaign was among the secret sparks behind the Tigers' premiership.

Six years before coach Graham Cornes had Nigel Smart walking on hot coals at an Adelaide pre-season camp, the then Tigers mastermind was ordering players to hurl cream pastries at each other.

On a Tuesday night in early September, Cornes ended training with the unusual tactic, designed to ease the strain of the season and inject a sense of fun at the Bay.

Carey said it was one of several ploys used by Cornes in a bid to cure an early-season hangover; following the Tigers' drought-busting 1985 success.



**LAST LINE:** Full back Chris Duthy soars over Mike Poynton for a strong grab

"Cornesy tried a few tricks during the year to try to get our minds back on the job," Carey said.

"We certainly suffered a premiership hangover until halfway through the year, so we had a couple of activities to try to get the guys back in focus.

"I remember we had a cream bun fight, which was quite interesting. And we had a gentlemen's evening one night. We just got away from the club, had a few drinks and played eight-ball.

"Cornesy was very aware he had to get our minds back on the job, and from Round 6 or 7 we started to really focus again."

Carey was the undisputed best on the ground in that 1986 Grand Final.

Reports at the time hailed the peerless ruckman as the "sparkling gemstone in Glenelg's treasure trove of talent".

Carey prefers to remember the exploits of the man he calls Mr Cool, Ross Gibbs, the rugged physicality of Scott Salisbury and the Stringer brothers, Wayne and Alan, and the courage of Steve Copping, who spent the two days before the Grand Final in traction at Burnside Hospital to ease his back pain.

"In terms of premiership, '86 is the most enjoyable," Carey said.

"When I won a premiership in '73 it was my first finals series. I was 19 and I thought 'this is pretty good' and I didn't realise the enormity of it until I'd played in a few losing ones.

"In '85 I felt like it was a release of the pressure of playing in five losing Grand Finals and in '86 I just enjoyed it."

Today is Glenelg's first Grand Final in 16 years and Carey, who played an Australian league record 448 games for the Tigers, said he would not miss the occasion "for the world".

"It's been an absolute pleasure watching them play, and I haven't been able to say that for a number of years," Carey said.

"I'd expect we're going to be around and be a competitive side for a number of years to come. It's pretty exciting."

### THE WOUNDED WARRIOR

**Wayne Stringer, 50**

Real estate sales executive with Brock Harcourts, Mt Barker



IT WAS the best-kept secret of the Grand Final but almost robbed Wayne Stringer of his moment of glory.

Just days before, he had been diagnosed with two broken bones in his right hand – a legacy of falling awkwardly in the preliminary final against Woodville.

Aware of coach Cornes' take-no-risks approach, Stringer was subject to an intensive 30-minute session at Thursday training.

"He had me marking, punching the ball away repeatedly and tackling to see how bad the hand was, but I didn't want to give anything away," he recalled.

"What was worse, he wouldn't let me have any painkillers because he reckoned they'd affect my performance on the day.

"But I ignored him and had them before training and got through it okay. Only (fitness director) Trevor Jaques knew I'd taken them."

"After that I pleaded with Cornesy 'don't leave me out, I won't let you down'."

And Stringer was true to his word. Despite the unbearable pain in his hand, he was an inspiration on the half-back line, hitting bodies hard and tackling ferociously, a Glenelg trademark in the mid-'80s.

In fact, such was their relentless attack on the player – often barely within the laws of the game – that the Tigers were hated by opposing fans, especially Stringer and his younger brother, Alan, who had crossed over from North in 1983.

"There's no doubt that, in those few years, we had players who intimidated with voice and body and we used that to good effect against North," Stringer said.

"There was a bit of history with them so we wanted to make a statement very early about our intentions.

"Cornesy had told us to forget all the hype about people saying it was North's time, because they hadn't won a flag for so long (1972). We'd won the previous year and he wanted this to be the start of something special for us, the start of an era like Port had done."

So the strategy on grand final day was simple: hit 'em hard and hit 'em often.

"We had the blokes who loved to do that, who just loved a contest and loved to intimidate," Stringer said.

"Right from the start, (Chris) McDermott was getting stuck into Tony Antrobus because we knew he had a short fuse and might give away a few frees.

"(David) Robertson was the same so he got a lot of attention.

"And they had a few kids like Maty Campbell and Darren Jarman that we ripped into as well. So, in the end, they were always looking sideways and weren't totally focused.

"They were scared – simple as that. We set the tone straight away that we meant business, and that's what Glenelg will have to do on Sunday with Central because they're a lot like we were."

### THE GIANT-KILLER

**Chris Duthy, 47**

Self-employed builder



HE WAS a bear of a man with legs like the *Bismarck's* guns.

The only problem was Chris Duthy was up against an equally-big bloke nicknamed "The Keg" and it wasn't hard to see why.

After all, Grenville Dietrich was a big unit – very big. And he loved a pint or 10.

It was no secret his Thursday training for North Adelaide continued at the Wellington Hotel on Friday nights, which is why the red-and-white stripes of his jumper had a glorious S-shape.

For whatever reason, big Grenville defied the law of physics and gravity and, in 1986, was a potent force in front of goal.

After all, he had become a goal-kicking phenomenon after leaving Mildura to join the Roosters in 1982 and booting 55 goals.

That was a taste of what was to come. In the next three years he became the bane of full backs, kicking 109 goals in 1983, 101 in 1984 and 71 in 1985. He was on a roll until the 1986 Grand Final – until he ran into Duthy.

Until then, Dietrich had notched up 64 goals but his season had been hampered by a serious knee injury.

He'd had the measure of the Bays' custodian earlier in the season, kicking six against him, but this day was about retribution.

"He was a funny bastard, Grenville, but that day we were pretty fired up and desperate to make it two flags in a row," said Duthy.

"We kicked six or seven in the first quarter and it just went from there. The confidence was up and, even then, the boys knew we might have had them."

While Duthy was the field marshal in defence, he had willing allies with the likes of the high-flying Ross Gibbs, former Sydney Swans bulwark Max Kruse and Wayne Henwood, who gave as many air-gasping hip and shoulders as he did handpasses.

"After the '85 flag, we lost 'Sticks' (Stephen Kernahan) and (Tony) McGuinness to Victoria, and there were a few people who thought we couldn't do it again," Duthy said.



### THE VFL RECRUIT

**Max Kruse, 49**

CEO Success Matrix tourism consultancy



HE WAS the accidental Tiger, arriving in town unheralded and still keen to have a kick.

It was the start of 1986 and Max Kruse was settling into his new job as state sales manager for Budget Rent-a-Car.

At just 27, the key position player – renowned for his marking and booming kick – had plied his craft in 88 games for South Melbourne and its reincarnation, the Sydney Swans.

He was there when flamboyant and controversial multimillionaire medico Dr Geoffrey Edelsten bought the ailing Swans in 1985, along with a host of high-profile players including Carlton's Greg Williams and Melbourne's Gerard Healy.

He was there when the mullet-haired Warwick Capper was forging a reputation, not just for his spectacular marking but also his almost obscenely tight shorts.

But not even star players – and dancing girls on a stage behind the goals – could revive the club's fortunes.

While Kruse has fond memories of those years with the Swans, his only taste of success was a night premiership in 1982.

So being part of the '86 Glenelg premiership remains his greatest footballing thrill.

"I was really fortunate to end up playing with them, actually," said Gold Coast-based Kruse.

"I'd heard a bit about how strong both Norwood and Glenelg were, and I knew the code in SA was very strong."

"It got down to making a few phone calls and, in the end, it was Glenelg's structure, their success and (general manager) Harry Kernahan's persistence."

"As it turned out, it was the right decision. I was made welcome right from the start. Being an outsider wasn't an issue."

"They were a fantastic bunch of blokes who were absolutely committed to each other and to winning."

Such was the closeness of the competition that year, Kruse recalls coach Cornes called a meeting on the eve of the finals to implore his players to stay focused.

"All the other teams that had made it (to the finals) were playing great footy and had a lot of quality players so Cornesy wanted to make sure we were right on our game," Kruse said.

"North had done a job on us in the second semi but in the final we were at them right from the start."

"In those first 10 minutes we hit them with everything. We hit the ball hard and caught them off guard."

"As the game wore on you could see we were better prepared and we executed the job perfectly."

"Big Super' (Carey) was outstanding in the ruck and manipulated the ball to where our smaller players were, and it just went from there."

"He might not have had the perfect body shape but, jeez, he knew how to position himself. His work-rate was huge."

"He set us for that win but everyone put in. It was terrific to be part of that."

After two more unsuccessful Grand Final campaigns – against North Adelaide (1987) and Port Adelaide (1988) – Kruse gave the game away, playing several games for Pultney Old Scholars in the Amateurs.



**DEFYING GRAVITY:** North's Grenville Dietrich tumbles over Glenelg's Peter Carey while attempting to mark

### 1986 SCOREBOARD

GLENELG V NORTH ADELAIDE FOOTBALL PARK					
GLENELG	7.2	12.4	17.5	21.9	135
NORTH ADELAIDE	3.2	6.7	9.11	12.15	87

**GOALS: GLENELG** – Tony Hall 6, Tony Symonds 3, Peter Maynard 3, David Marshall 2, Stephen Copping 2, John Seebom 2, Kym Hodgeman, Robin Kidney, Alan Stringer. **NORTH ADELAIDE** – Darel Hart 3, Mike Poynton 3, David Robertson 2, Mike Parsons 2, Tony Antrobus, Peter Bennett. **BEST: GLENELG** – Peter Carey, Maynard, Hall, Symonds, David Kernahan, Alan Stringer, Hodgeman, Chris McDermott, Max Kruse. **NORTH ADELAIDE** – Hart, Robertson, John Riley, Poynton, Paul Arnold.



**BAYS' DAY:** Glenelg coach Graham Cornes and players including Ross Gibbs accept the 1986 Premiership Cup. **INSET:** Kym Hodgeman pumps his arms after booting a goal. **TOP RIGHT:** North's Darel Hart manages to get a kick away as Hodgeman applies the pressure.