

Mick's heroes have come home to roost



By Geoff Roach

Call it The Slaughter at Sportsman's Drive, The Roosters' Revenge or even The Miracle Workers.

Call it a stunning triumph of power, skill, raw-boned courage and utter commitment.

Salute a North Adelaide football team which looked into the deepest, darkest pit ever dug and didn't even blink, which turned the humiliation of the past two years into a cavalcade of glory.

And understand that the incredible joy and celebrations which erupted and engulfed the North camp were as much for the way in which the war was won as the victory itself.

Who could blame them for such frenzy. Quite simply, the Roosters went into the grand final labelled chickens and came out absolute champions.

They stood up to, then stood over the tormentors who have made life a misery for them for the past 24 months.

They beat them at football and in the fights, tactically and physically, with unshakeable purpose and loyalty, mastering pain and doubt and turning it instead into a tidal wave of talent and desire.

And they not only repaid in spades the faith and trust coach Michael Nunan has showed in but vindicated in the most emphatic way the pattern of irresistible team football he expounds.

So many of them had come to North unwanted or at the end of their footballing tether.

Now Nunan has coaxed, stung and taught them how to become heroes.

Nobody more eloquently expressed their regard for the coach than the team captain, Darel Hart, who said: "After our Adelaide Oval loss six weeks ago Michael worked out a defensive pattern that won us the game. Give him total credit. He has turned us all into men. We only do what he says."

North Adelaide had 20 strong men yesterday and some who were quite plainly supermen.

The game's man mountain, Michael "Bristles" Parsons, a converted basketballer no less, bestrode it like a colossus to win the Jack Oatey Medal.

He kicked six fabulous goals, won 35 pitched fistic encounters, owned the sky and led the way.

Amazingly, afterwards, he was unmarked despite the battles.

"I am not a violent person by nature but sometimes you have to fight for what you want," he said, so aptly.

Steven Sims, not wanted at Torrens, was a

wonderfully skilled, committed rover who stung the Tigers with his pace, commitment and disposal all day.

Kim Klomp, long ago discarded by Sturt, was at his inspirational best, finding the football in every pack, farming it precisely to team-mates and tackling with ferocious effect.

Darren Jarman, he of the incredible talent, kicked the football like Van Gogh painted sunflowers, with breathtaking artistry and exquisite result.

And his brother Andrew, asked to sacrifice his normal role and to run at both ends of the ground until he could move his legs no more, was just what he always is, one hell of a footballer.

But don't stop. How about the fantastic farmer, Mick Redden, so exhausted at the end he could only sit and savor it all with that marvellous little boy grin.

And Hart, the most honest footballer there is, whose only blemish was missing a sitter at the 26-minute mark of the last quarter while composing his victory speech.

There was John Roberts kicking five goals and contesting every ball, Craig Burton using his winged feet to perfection, Peter Bennett dominating in the vital opening at centre-half forward, hirsute wingman Roger Carlaw setting the toughness standard with his chilling toe-to-toe encounter with

David Kernahan and his opposite, David Sanders proving, patching in his polished away.

Never has a grand final seen more devastating defensive skills than those displayed by the entire Rooster rearguard.

John Riley, as always, led the way with his astonishing calm and judgement, Trevor Clisby wore Tony Hall like a skin, David Tiller bruised and bemused his opponents, Stephen Riley and Paul Arnold destroyed and rebounded.

And how about Peter Simmons, the surprise selection, who did not lose a single encounter and whose checking, rebound and disposal was pivotal.

Against such virtuosity and ferocity, the Tigers were never able to summon any cohesion, balance or drive.

Only Allan Stringer, Peter Carey for a time, and the unceasingly gallant Scott Salisbury could establish some fleeting supremacy.

The others, fry as they did, were always a step too slow or simply not good enough and in the end their room was littered with lame and weary players who couldn't understand what went wrong.

Graham Cornes knew and he didn't hesitate to tell the jubilant North room.

"You were truly great, a credit to yourselves, your club and coach," he said.

"Savor it, enjoy it. But understand there will be a next year."

Plainly, though it was no contest on the scoreboard from midway through the second round, it was an absorbing game, made so by the white hot ferocity of the first quarter then by North's wondrous skills.

There was some sniping, some incidents more suited to street fighting than football and seven reports when there might have been 70.

But nobody had expected a rose garden and neither team was complaining when, in the post-presentation minutes at Cornes' instigation, they exchanged handshakes on the ground.

It was a day for men and there were 40 there.

Fittingly, in the 29th minute of the final quarter, some unbelievable Jarman magic summed up the day.

As Darren Jarman took possession just over centre, Nunan screamed from the dugout "Give and go" as he noticed Andrew Jarman in space ahead.

Darren almost smiled, guided the ball precisely towards his brother and shook his head in satisfaction as Andrew balked one way and powered his left footer the other through the goals.

The torment was over. Now there are no more doubts. None at all. Only a glorious future.

League grand final

North	5.2	11.4	18.5	23.7	(145)
Glenelg	0.1	1.5	4.7	9.9	(63)

BEST— North: Parsons, Klomp, Redden, Sims, J. Riley, D. Jarman, Clisby, A. Jarman, Simmons, S. Riley. Glenelg: Salisbury, McDermott, Grenvold, A. Stringer, Murphy, Kornohon.

GOALS— North: Parsons 6.1, Roberts 5.0, Sims 4.1, D. Jarman 3.1, Burton 3.0, A. Jarman 2.1, Hart 0.1, Klomp 0.1, rushed 0.1. Glenelg: Seeborn 2.3, Woodlands 2.1, Murphy 2.0, Hall 2.0, Winton 1.0, McDermott 0.1, Maynard 0.1, Marshall 0.1, Gibbs 0.1, rushed 0.1.

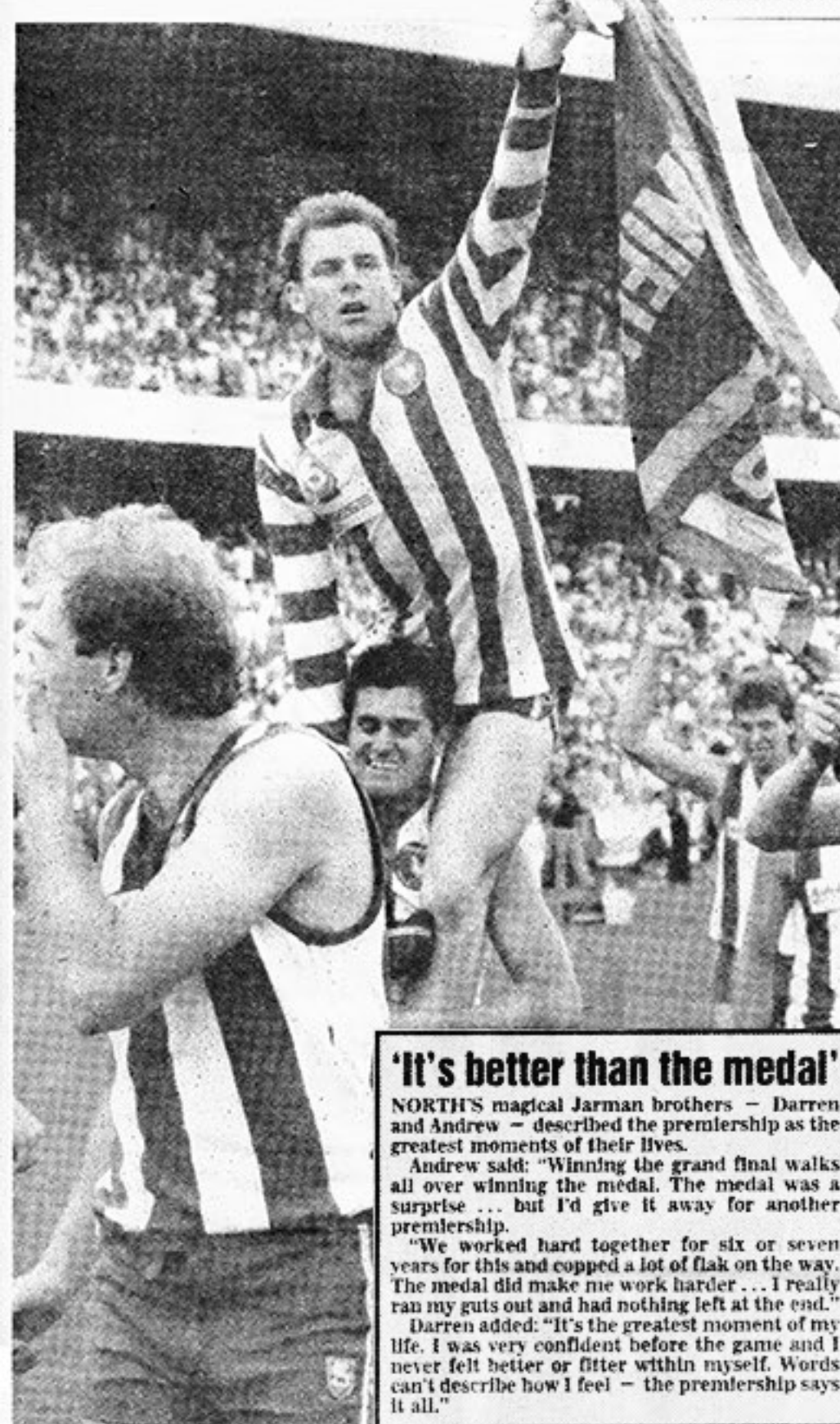
Reports — North: Mike Parsons (twice), Mike Redden. Glenelg: Max Kruse (twice), Chris McDermott, Wayne Stringer.

Jack Oatey Medallist — Mike Parsons (North).

Umpires — Rick Kinnear and Neville Thropo.

Crowd — 50,617.

Footvaunt — Tab No. 9, 81-90 points, \$29.70.



'It's better than the medal'

NORTH'S magical Jarman brothers — Darren and Andrew — described the premiership as the greatest moments of their lives. Andrew said: "Winning the grand final walks all over winning the medal. The medal was a surprise ... but I'd give it away for another premiership. "We worked hard together for six or seven years for this and copped a lot of flak on the way. The medal did make me work harder ... I really ran my guts out and had nothing left at the end." Darren added: "It's the greatest moment of my life. I was very confident before the game and I never felt better or fitter within myself. Words can't describe how I feel — the premiership says it all."

Paul Arnold (left) and Andrew Jarman with the flag on Craig Burton's shoulder

Relief and respect all Nunan feels

By Lawrie McCauley and Paul Dowling

Triumphant North coach Mike Nunan was struck by two things immediately after his side's massive 82-point win in yesterday's grand final against Glenelg.

"Firstly I'm immensely relieved and secondly, enormously respectful for a group of boys who have got themselves off the canvas," he said.

"We have been criticised by all quarters for a long time and to come back like this, you've got to admire their character.

"While we had achieved things all through the year, people still had their doubts — and we had to win the big one.

"Our game plan worked well against the Bays and you can see why we wanted to play them after our last two humiliations.

Feel comfortable

"I guess I started to feel comfortable when I could see the players working.

"Even though we were 10 goals up at half-time, we had to keep pushing on for the times we had suffered."

For Nunan the celebrations will be a release of the pain he has endured after the last two grand final losses.

But unlike some of his players he will wake up this morning with a clear head.

"I don't drink but I will be staying as close to the players as possible. It will be a big night," he said amid the jubilant scenes in the North changerooms.

In his after-match speech in the Glenelg change-rooms Nunan praised the Tigers' efforts in helping to create a new level of rivalry in SA football.

"The important thing to come out of today is that SA now has a new competitive aspect to its football which will bring people to the games," he said.

"The rivalry and competitiveness which exists between Glenelg and North Adelaide is fantastic.

"These two clubs have created a standard in the SA competition which will be around for some time to come."

North captain Darel Hart echoed

Nunan's thoughts when he spoke to Glenelg's players, officials and supporters.

"It is great to see two new genuine top sides rather than the top four which has been around for so long," he said.

"It is a credit to both clubs."

Glenelg was not embarrassed or disappointed by its crushing defeat according to coach Graham Cornes.

Speaking immediately after the game, Cornes said his side had done exceptionally well to reach the grand final and hopefully would learn from the loss.

"We need not feel any embarrassment about being beaten by such a superior side," he said.

"Certainly it doesn't feel good looking at that scoreboard.

"But you have to give credit where credit's due and North was fantastic."

Cornes said Glenelg was fully prepared for North's fierce, aggressive attack on the ball which, combined with sure ball-handling and accurate kicking, won it the game.

"The game was always going to be physical — we were ready for that," Cornes said.

"North won the game with its quick movement of the ball."