

# The face of courage: Chris McDermott



The blood says it all ... sheer guts of a tenacious Tiger

**W**ATCH Glenelg champion Chris McDermott in the heat of battle and one gains the impression that had he served at Gallipoli he would have been one of the first over the trenches and into the firing line.

McDermott is that type of footballer — someone you could pick to play for your life.

No words really do justice to the determination of the Tiger skipper. He is courage personified, a severe critic of his own form and a young man who sets himself high standards few could equal.

With more than 250 league games to his credit, including numerous State appearances, "Bones" McDermott is the total footballer — a hard as nails competitor completely immersed in the game.

But what strikes you about him is his honesty. There are never any excuses from Chris McDermott.

He admits to being a little disappointed with his form this season, although many scribes considered him to be best afield in the Tigers' recent victory over Woodville.

And it is no secret around football corridors the Bay workhorse is carrying several niggling injuries.

**B**UT McDermott is philosophical.

"It's nothing that's affecting my performances," he says. "When you step on to the ground you declare yourself 100 per cent fit and you are responsible for your own performances."

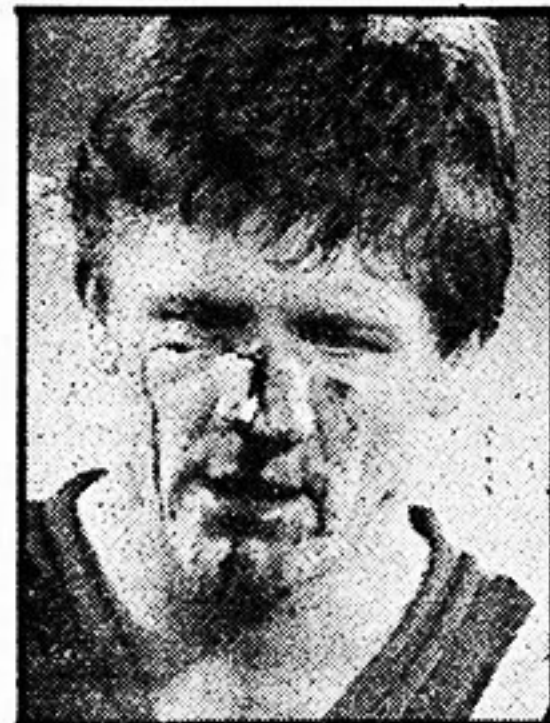
"I've come up against some good players and I've really struggled to find the footy."

"But it's getting better. I am playing and working a bit harder and hopefully it will all come together."

McDermott says that once a season gets fully under way, most players rarely go into a game 100 per cent fit — more like 95 per cent.

"I would guess most would carry some sort of legacy from the week before," he says.

: are all pretty well



## BLOOD

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professional now and any player that takes the ground or declares himself available must realise you are up to be judged for your performance. You have to perform for yourself and your side.

"If you can't do that carrying a slight injury, then you shouldn't be playing."

In the eyes of many, McDermott is not a flashy, spectacular player, but no one can question his ability, courage, determination and commitment.

He is a superb ball-getter who does the hard work — crashing into and through packs, winning the tough ball with "kamikaze" attacks, executing a bullet-like handpass, inspiring and intimidating.

And he has an incredibly sharp football brain, excellent vision and is highly skilled with hand or foot.

McDermott turned down a big offer last year to join

the much-maligned Brisbane Bears.

Today, he remains one of the hottest football properties in the game — a richly-talented player with a long list of glorious triumphs to his name.

**G**LENELG coach Graham Cornes puts it this way: "The courage and determination he showed to recover from his serious knee injury was typical of his approach to football."

"He is a guy who lives for his footy. He is loyal, and in this day and age when the old-fashioned football loyalties are almost a rarity, his loyalty to Glenelg and SA football is exemplary, almost inspirational."

"He relishes the big game and has been a superb contributor in State football. He is one of those reliable big-game players you always need in your side and who always rises to the occasion."

A three-time winner of Glenelg's best and fairest award; interstate captain in 1988; Fos Williams Medalist in 1987 for SA's best player in the interstate clash against Victoria at Football Park; Simpson Medallist 1987; All-Australian selection in 1986, 1987; All-Australian captain 1987; numerous media awards ... the list of achievements is endless.

Sadly however, he has not won a Magarey Medal, although few believe he hasn't deserved one.

And of the future?

McDermott says seeing so many talented youngsters come into the Glenelg side has given him a big boost.

"It certainly has. The older players are getting a lift and a real buzz about seeing the young blokes come in and the way they perform," he says.

**T**ALK with those in the know in Tiger territory and it's clear McDermott is happy with his lot.

He loves Glenelg and has no regrets about his decision not to pursue a career with the Brisbane Bears.

"I never really had a desire to play over there," he says.

"I always wanted to play with Glenelg and I'm happy with that."

"When I had the opportunity to captain Glenelg that was the pinnacle for me, apart from the premierships."

"Now, I'm really happy to spend the rest of my time at Glenelg."

"I just love the club and the blokes down there."

McDermott says it was always an ambition to captain the Tigers,

# The pain and the pinnacles

after working his way through the club's junior grades.

"It was always a dream, but as a kid I was a Woodville barracker," he says.

"But being in the Glenelg area, you start playing with the club. Kernas (former Glenelg and now Carlton skipper Stephen Kernahan) and I grew up together so we'd watch Glenelg games."

"I still barracked for Woodville, but I saw more Glenelg games so I guess your allegiances swing around a little bit."

McDermott, who made his league debut in 1981, says his enthusiasm for the game has not waned.

"I'm just loving my footy at the moment, especially after missing six months last year," he says. (McDermott seriously injured a

knee, which required major surgery.)

"If you're ever getting stale there is nothing like having an injury and sitting out for half the season to pump you up again."

"I guess every footballer goes through a stage where they are a bit flat or they think they've had enough."

"But as soon as you miss 10 weeks, it certainly fires you up."



McDermott after his knee reconstruction