

# HEARTBEAT



A Newsletter For Past Players and Officials  
of the West Perth Football Club

## CELEBRATING THE WEST PERTH PREMIERSHIPS OF

# 1960

### In this Issue

A special four-part  
bumper edition

#### PART I

Your regular HeartBeat

#### PART II

Celebrating 1960

#### PART III

Celebrating 1969

#### PART IV

Celebrating the 1990s  
1990 Colts  
1995  
1999

*Welcome to Part Two of our bumper first edition of HeartBeat for 2020. Here we look back at the glory days of our 1960 premiership wins.*

You're welcome to provide feedback and suggestions for future issues to [heritage@falconsfc.com.au](mailto:heritage@falconsfc.com.au).

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# 1960: New Coach, New Approach

The second half of the 1950s was a barren time for West Perth in terms of on-field success.

The gradual retirement of the champions behind the swathe of grand final appearances between 1946 and 1953 demanded a rebuild and aside from 1954 (when the Club was defeated by eventual premiers, South Fremantle in the preliminary final), the Cardinals were to advance no further than the first semi-final.

Remarkably, West Perth failed to qualify for finals in just two of these seasons, in 1956 and 1959, finishing fifth in both years.

In 1960, West Perth appointed Arthur Olliver as non-playing coach. A former ruckman for Footscray and Victoria, Olliver had also coached the Bulldogs for seven seasons prior to heading to Leederville.

An imposing figure, Olliver was a strict disciplinarian and introduced a focus on physical fitness.

In a piece for the Football Budget on 16th April 1960, Arthur Olliver was profiled by Budget writer, Alan Ferguson. Olliver's approach to coaching and Ferguson's prediction as a consequence of his discussion with Olliver make for interesting reading.

**"A PLAYER MUST BE PREPARED TO 'EAT' A FOOTBALL" — OLLIVER**

(By Alan Ferguson)

In discussing the need for keenness and enthusiasm in training as well as playing football, former Footscray captain-coach, Arthur Olliver told me that a footballer must be prepared to 'eat' a football.

And Arthur Olliver, new coach of West Perth, has his charges (metaphorically speaking) eating that football; they're so keen and enthusiastic.

Like Marty McDonnell, who also played for Footscray and whose comments on training and football the "Football Budget" published last week, Arthur Olliver has definite ideas about football training.

He should know the answers for he has been a long time in the game.

**PRIME ASSET**

When I asked Arthur Olliver about fitness, he didn't pull any punches.

"Fitness," he echoed. "It's the prime asset of any footballer."

To illustrate his ideas on this point he said:—

"First a player must have ability. Then he has to show that ability. But that's not enough. He must attain physical fitness and possess enthusiasm combined with keenness to play football."

Such a player is still not good enough in Arthur Olliver's book.

"Having attained physical fitness a player must retain it," said Olliver. "He must be prepared to eat a football."

**PSYCHOLOGY**

In discussing players generally, Arthur told me that in his opinion one of the duties of a coach is to get "inside" his players. He said:—

"By that statement I mean a coach has to understand each man because each man is an individual, and some individuals need different training to others."

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**THE FOOTBALL BUDGET**

centre half-forward position before becoming a ruckman. He played ruck for most of his football career.

**RUCK WORK**

What he doesn't know about this aspect of football is nobody's business.

As he once said in Victoria, "The ruck starts the game, and the game pivots around the ruck from bell to bell."

He has West Perth's ruckmen on their toes, so opposition clubs' rucks will need to be sharp and well awake.

Arthur Olliver generally teamed with Norm Ware (1941 Brownlow Medallist). He was elected captain-coach of Footscray after returning from service with the R.A.A.F. He held these positions for eight years until retiring from Footscray in 1951.

In 1952 he set off for Tasmania where he coached New Norfolk for three years. New Norfolk made the first four in

**COMPETITIVE WORK**

Arthur Olliver, bred in the V.F.L. tradition, is a great believer in competitive training.

This type of training is aimed at making each player (in pairs) battle for possession of the ball on training nights to reach top physical condition.

Olliver reminded me that players play as they train.

This football adage applies to the players of today as it did to those who pulled on football guernseys 30 years ago.

**ARTHUR OLLIVER**

Arthur Olliver following 16 years in Victorian League football and three years in Tasmania is well qualified to talk on football and hand out advice. A trite piece of advice he once gave Victorian players is worth repeating:—

"There is danger for the young fellow, full of enthusiasm, who will chase the ball as a terrier chases a rat. Have a good look at that type of player at the half-time interval, and then profit by his misfortune and distress."

Arthur Olliver is now 41. He was born in December, 1918. Commencing his League football career in 1935 with Footscray, Olliver won renown as a ruckman, interstate player and captain-coach.

He was in the Bulldogs' League line-up for 16 years. A big fellow (6 ft. 2½ in. and scaling 13 st. 10 lb. in his football prime), Olliver commenced with Footscray at full-forward. From goalsneak he took over the

the first year Olliver coached the club.

**WEST A GRAND FINALIST?**

He captained Tasmania against Victoria in 1952, and in 1954 he retired from the football fray when 36.

As a big man and a follower he lasted longer than most Victorian players.

On retirement he devoted his attention to business interests.

Arthur Olliver became interested in West Perth last year. He transferred to this State toward the end of 1959 when he was elected coach of the Cardinals.

He is quietly confident that his charges will acquit themselves well this season.

In the opinion of many football judges, Arthur Olliver will make West Perth a power brigade to be reckoned with this season.

Although the 1960 football season is only a "pup" my prediction is that West Perth will play-off for the premiership.

# Flashback to 1960 with Ross Kelly

HeartBeat spoke to Ross Kelly and asked him about his memories of the 1960 premiership season.



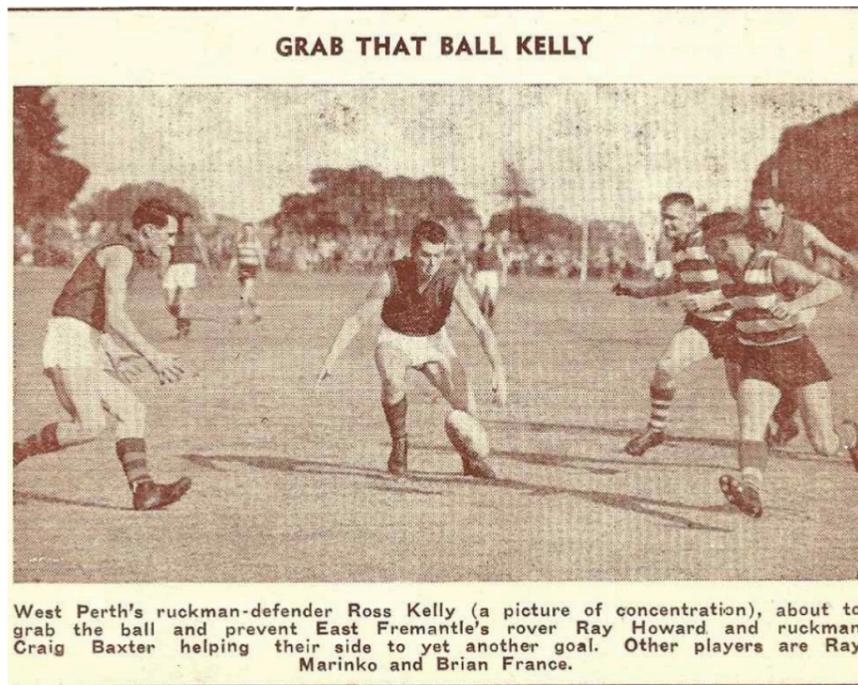
Ross Kelly played an instrumental role in the rebirth of the Club's fortunes, culminating in the 1960 premiership.

He debuted as a 20 year old in the opening round of the 1958 season, having initially questioned his ability to play at senior level. Incredibly, within three months he was chosen to represent Western Australia at the national carnival in Melbourne, wearing a state jumper for the first time against South Australia where he played off a half back flank in a three goal win to the Sandgroppers.

Ross was to make ten appearances for the state in addition to the 132 games he played for West Perth. He was also inaugural chairman of the Fremantle Football Club, has been a Commissioner of the Western Australian Football Commission and board member of our Club.



Ross Kelly tracks the bounce of the ball in the round 19 agame against East Perth at Perth Oval. Within close confines are Ted Kilmurray, Jack Sheedy, Graham Farmer and Roy "Lizard" Porter.



West Perth's ruckman-defender Ross Kelly (a picture of concentration), about to grab the ball and prevent East Fremantle's rover Ray Howard and ruckman Craig Baxter helping their side to yet another goal. Other players are Ray Marinko and Brian France.

Football Budget 27th August 1960

Arthur Olliver was appointed Club coach in 1960 (replacing Don Marinko who coached West Perth for one season in 1959, finishing the home and away season in fifth place, two games shy of the top four). Olliver had coached Footscray for seven seasons prior to coming to Western Australia. What were some of the changes and initiatives he introduced that transformed on-field fortunes?

In no particular order of importance, Arthur:

*Recruited Don Williams from Melbourne, John Towner from Essendon and Bill Armstrong from Carlton.*

Although Don was primarily a half back flanker (and a great one at that) he played most of the 1960 season as a ruck rover supporting "Big Blue", Brian Foley. However, with four or so home and away games to go, Don went to centre half forward and was an influential player for us in the finals.

John was an extremely versatile player who played 90 games or so for Essendon. He started on a half forward flank, then following John Coleman's career ending injury moved to full forward for half a season and, finally, played three or four seasons as a full back.

For most of the 1960 season John played in a variety of positions including full forward and centre half forward before moving permanently to full back when Don took over centre



Bill Armstrong, Arthur Olliver, T Edwards and Don Williams chat in the club rooms.



Coach Arthur Olliver talks tactics with rovers Peter Medhurst and Joe Fanchi

half forward.

Bill was recruited from Carlton where he played a couple of League games over two seasons. He took Ron Bewick's position on the wing, held it for eight or nine games before Ron reclaimed it.

From memory Bill then played three or four games for the reserves before leaving the Club and returning to Victoria. Don and John were influential players who held down key positions - Bill much less so.

*Placed greater emphasis on physical fitness*

Consistent with this, Geoff Christian was made responsible for the Club's physical fitness. Best known as a



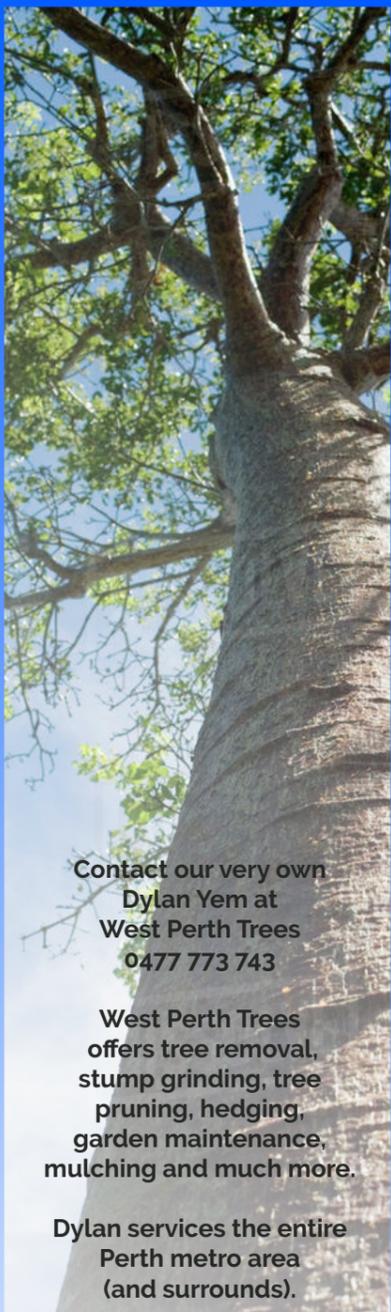
Geoff Christian demonstrating sprinting technique to players.

football writer and broadcaster, as a young man Geoff was also a champion sprinter and long jumper. He introduced a "circuit training" programme that required all players to complete a series of exercises in the change rooms before (or was it after?) each training session. Also my worst memories of the year are, at the end of training and under Geoff's watchful eye, being required to mindlessly charge up and down the steep bank in the north east corner of Leederville Oval.

During the year we came from behind to either win or draw a number of vitally important games. Our ability to do so was undoubtedly due to Geoff's great work.



Lizard Porter showing his teammates how it's done at circuit training.



Contact our very own  
Dylan Yem at  
West Perth Trees  
0477 773 743

West Perth Trees  
offers tree removal,  
stump grinding, tree  
pruning, hedging,  
garden maintenance,  
mulching and much more.

Dylan services the entire  
Perth metro area  
(and surrounds).



*Had the League and Reserves lists  
train together*

Until then the League side trained on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the Reserves on Mondays and Wednesdays. Training together engendered a spirit of "One West Perth". The celebrations after both sides won the premierships were something to behold.

*Placed great emphasis on players  
taking responsibility for themselves and  
their actions*

An example of this involved the matter of injuries. Arthur used to say that good players can play with injuries and are the best judges of whether they are fit to play or not.

In keeping with the time, there was no great emphasis on game plans. To a large extent, most clubs played more or less the same way - very much "man on man." Arthur paid great attention to this and before each game most of our key players were given a comprehensive briefing on how he wanted them to play their man.

Another interesting thing about 1960 (to me at least) is that it took about 16 home and away games to come up with the team that won the premierships.

Although the back line remained quite stable until just before the end of the season, the rest of the side was in a constant state of flux. It's too long ago for me to remember all of the details but what I can recall is:

Established players Ron "The Trout" Bewick and Roy "Lizard" Porter weren't in the team for the first eight games or so, Bill Armstrong and Tom Marinko respectively being preferred. Arthur then dropped both of them - neither played another League game for the rest of the season - and Roy and Ron played all of the remaining games.

We had great difficulty settling on who should be our full forward. We started with Ross Ayre. Then after the first round and a bit of games, Ross was dropped to the seconds and Lindsay Holland, John Towner and (if my memory serves me correctly even Billy Dempsey for a game) rotated through the position. We then reverted to Ross Ayre who kicked a match winning seven goals for us in the Grand Final.

Centre half forward was even more interesting. At various times Lindsay Holland, John Towner, Norm McDiarmid and Graham Edmondson played there before, with four or five home and away games to go, Don Williams was given the gig.

The move of Don Williams to centre half forward triggered a chain of changes. I was moved out of centre half back to replace him as ruck-rover. Brian "Bert" France replaced me at centre half back. John Towner went to full back. Ross Ayre returned to full forward. And whoever had been at centre half forward at the time (one of Graham Edmondson, Norm McDiarmid or Lindsay Holland) returned to the seconds.

I've never been sure whether the above was a result Arthur needing that long to make up his mind or whether it was another example of him picking players to beat particular opponents; probably a little bit of both!

*"... it took  
about 16  
home and  
away games  
to come up  
with the team  
that won the  
premiership."*



*Ron Bewick taking possession on the grandstand wing at Leederville in a 1960 game against East Fremantle. His opponent is Darryl Gore.*



*Brian France, Joe Fanchi and Graham Edmondson.*

**West Perth finished on top of the ladder at the end of the 1960 season, incredibly playing out three draws, including two in consecutive weeks (R19 against East Perth at Perth Oval and R20 against South Fremantle at Fremantle Oval). The draw against East Perth lives on in the memory of many, with the home side leading by 22 points at three quarter time. What are your recollections of that game?**

Would you believe not much? Except that I remember reading somewhere that during the game, a spectator had had a heart attack. By way of strange coincidence, the same thing happened the following week when we drew with South Fremantle.

Fremantle Oval was packed - ten thousand spectators at least, maybe even fifteen. (Ed. The crowd figure for that day was 14,460)

We trailed Souths all day, though not by a lot. There was never more than a kick or two in it. Half way through the second quarter something started to happen in the crowd - in the outer, right in front of the scoreboard. The crowd had started to press away from something, thereby creating a space. It was similar to the effect that occurs when a fight erupts in a crowd. However, it was patently clear that whatever was causing this wasn't a fight.

Then a policeman standing inside the fence on the outer wing started to sprint around the boundary towards the goals at the city end, then behind and around the goals at the city end and up towards the grandstand.

Stopping just before the grandstand, he hurdled the fence and ran towards an ambulance that was parked there; while all the time beckoning at the two attendants sitting in the front of it.

A minute or so later, the policeman, now accompanied by two ambulance men carrying a stretcher, emerged from the crowd, negotiated a fence crossing and ran towards the outer



*Umpire calls for the ball in the round 20 game against South Fremantle at Fremantle. West Perth players pictured (L-R) are Joe Fanchi, Barry Armstrong, Brian Foley, Frank Margaria and Brian France. The South Fremantle player kicking the ball is Jack Sumich.*



*Ken Ashdown leads his teammates onto the ground ahead of his 200th game, against East Fremantle at Leederville on 14th May 1960. A champion on and off the field, Ken played 218 games for West Perth.*



*Ron McBride having a kick at training*



*Ray Marinko marks at training*

wing - however this time not going round the boundary line but straight across the field.

By now, a fair proportion of the crowd and about half the players on both sides were watching as much of the developing saga as they were of the football, and given that the stretcher bearers led by the policemen were now charging through centre half forward, the umpire - possibly because he wanted to watch as well - stopped the game.

As the trio reached the boundary fence on the outer wing, the crowd parted, allowing them access to the body that could now be seen lying in an island of space within the tightly packed crowd.

The presumably unconscious person was loaded onto the stretcher which was then manhandled through the crowd and over the fence; carried back across the field and, eventually, deposited in the back of the ambulance. As the ambulance, siren blaring, was driving away, the umpire bounced the ball and all of us, footballers and spectators alike, refocused on the football.

That's my excuse for not being able to remember much else about this game either!

**Are there any other standout moments from the home and away season you're able to share?**

While by no means qualifying as a "standout moment" the Committee's decision taken two thirds of the way through the season to replace our captain Don Marinko with "Big Blue" deserves a mention if, for no other reason, than for the potential it had to derail our season and cost us a premiership.

Don was an acknowledged leader within the Club as evidenced by his being appointed captain/coach the previous season and then being retained as captain after Arthur took over as coach.

He was also a magnificent player, a player who made the exceptional things he was able to do look easy (maybe too easy) which could account for him not being recognised by history as highly as his ability deserves.

Don was a great overhead mark, an exceptional kick and he had an ability to read the play and anticipate where the ball was going that was second to none. His other great strength was his poise.

After winning the ball, he needed fewer strides to become balanced and kick than most players - even great players - did.



*Don Marinko*

While this made him extremely difficult to play on it also under-showcased the quality of his play. In an era with a number of great centremen - Todd, Sorrell, Everett and Clune to name a few - Don seldom had to lower his colours to anyone. Like many great players, he also had an independent streak and didn't always see eye to eye with authority. Although we were never told why he lost the captaincy, it was generally believed to be over a breach of discipline or a strong disagreement he had with either the coach and/or the committee.

The decision to remove him as captain shocked the team. At a hastily convened player meeting a number of players expressed their anger - some even suggesting that the team should refuse to play unless he was reinstated. Fortunately the counter arguments put forward by cooler heads prevailed and we eventually got back to business. Undoubtedly the team's respect and affection for Brian Foley helped with this. To his great credit, at no time did Don try to inflame matters, or even contribute to the discussion.

For the remainder of the season, he continued to play well and was a major factor in our ultimate success. At the end of the season Don sought, and was granted, a clearance to East Perth where he played a further 32 games before injuring his knee and being forced to retire.

There's another incident that I can recall vividly, and I'm certain Frank Margaria will be able to as well. When it first popped into my head I thought it occurred in 1960, but after giving it further thought I realised that it had taken place somewhat earlier.

However, because it was a truly "standout moment" that involved one of our 1960 premiership players, I've decided to include it anyway!



*Frank Margaria practices fending off a tackle at training*

It was half way through the second quarter at Leederville, we were kicking towards the Vincent Street end and Bertie France was playing a blinder.

"Must have had at least 20 kicks already," Frank said to me, "He'll be in the firsts next week for sure!" "And here comes another one," I answered, as Bert, streaming out of half back headed for a loose ball on the grandstand wing.

Suddenly neither of us could believe our eyes. Did this really happen? Instead of picking up the ball, he ran straight past it, headed for the boundary, hurdled the fence and disappeared through the crowd already streaming up the bitumen pathway from the entrance gates fronting Vincent Street.

Thoroughly bemused, and unable to stop talking about what we'd just seen, Frank and I headed for the change rooms to get ready for the main game.

In the bar after the game several of us headed straight for Bert. "What the hell happened to you in the second quarter?" One of us asked. "Well", Bert responded, "As usual I was working this morning but left work in rather a rush".

At that stage, Bert was a bank teller working at the Oxford Street branch of the National Bank and back then banks opened on Saturday mornings. "Just as I was running towards the ball," he continued, "I suddenly remembered that I'd left work without shutting the bloody front door!"

**Going into the second semi-final against East Perth, West Perth had a loss, a win and a draw to show for the three home and away games, and yet started as underdogs. Is this explained by East Perth being reigning premiers?**



*Ray Marinko, Joe Fanchi and Frank Margaria apply pressure on their East Fremantle opponent in a 1960 contest. Len Anderson is the East Fremantle player with his back to the camera.*



*Don Williams, Frank Margaria and Peter Medhurst in a training drill.*

The results going into the second semi-final were more even than the question indicates. They beat us by eight goals in the first game; we beat them by eight goals in the second and the third was a draw. Not only that, we finished two points ahead of them on the premiership table although they had a better percentage than we did. Had one of the sides we drew against (Perth, East Perth or South Fremantle) kicked an extra point, the Royals would

have topped the ladder and we'd have finished second. Clearly had the year's results been the sole criterion for granting favouritism we'd have been joint favourites.

However East Perth's results over the preceding four years (three premierships and a runner up) were far better than ours. This, along with them being the reigning premiers, caused the pundits to make them favourites.



*Brian Foley marks in the second semi-final win over East Perth*

Scores were level at quarter time of the second semi-final (4.3 apiece) but West Perth kicked away in the second quarter, opening up a 21 point lead at half time. The final winning margin was 24 points. What can you recall of that game?

Not much, and at the risk of being considered self-centred, all I can remember is that in the second quarter, "Big Blue" knocked the ball to me at the centre bounce down and me running ten metres towards the Subiaco end, kicking a very low drop kick with the wind and goaling.

Believe me - it was the longest kick of my life and unusual in the extreme.

For the next fifty years I tried to convince my great mate and fellow premiership player, Barry Armstrong that my drop kick wasn't a toey!

Unfortunately Barry's no longer with us. If he was, I'd gladly concede he was right!



In grand final week, supporter Jim McCook watches his team prepare.

East Perth easily accounted for East Fremantle in the preliminary final and went into the grand final as favourites. They opened up a 14 point lead in the first quarter of the grand final, only to be overrun in the second term. Can you share your memories of that game? Also, Brian Foley was awarded the Simpson medal. Can you tell us about Blue's game and his tussle with Polly Farmer?



Brian Foley takes a tumble in the semi-final win over East Perth. Looking on are West Perth teammates Joe Fanchi, John Towner and Brian France. In the vicinity for East Perth are (L-R) Graham Farmer, Ken Haley, Ted Kilmurray, Ray Rowles, Don Langdon and Reg Hall).

In essence, the game is summed up in the middle sentence of the first question. As was often the case at Subiaco in the "days before the three tier stand", there was a very strong wind blowing straight down the ground towards the city end and scoring at the Subiaco end was very difficult. East Perth won the toss and kicked with the breeze. We were winning on the ball, our back line played very well and as a result for much of the quarter we

were able to keep the ball locked in the dead pocket on the railway side of the ground. In fact, were it not for a couple of late East Perth goals, we would have finished the quarter about even.

Kicking with the wind in the second quarter, we had fifteen scoring shots to their two and at half time were six goals ahead. Both East Perth and ourselves each scored six goals in the second half, so our half time lead turned out to be the winning margin.

Who played well? Big Blue's Simpson Medal winning effort against Polly was particularly important. Polly was East Perth's engine. He could spring like a gazelle, and as often as not would try to take the ball out of the air at centre bounces and while still in the air, send a long hand pass out to Brian Ray or Paul Seal on either wing. They in turn would kick short to Don Langdon at centre half forward or longer to Neil Hawke at full forward. A lot of their

goals came this way but not when Polly played against Blue.

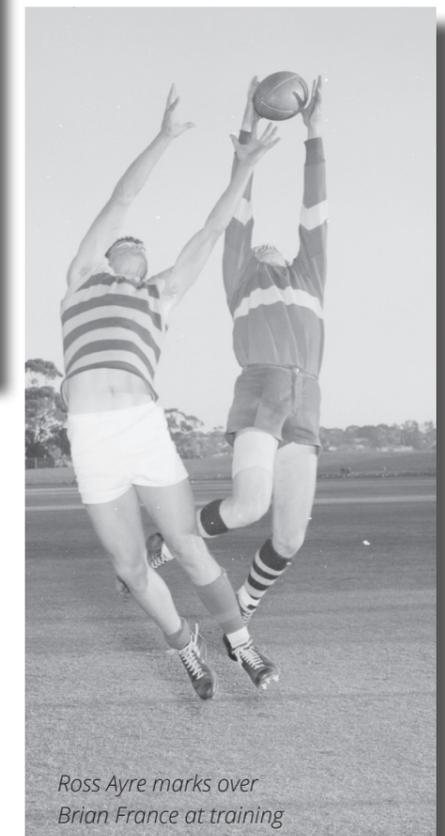
Blue was a couple of inches taller than Polly and had a longer reach than him as well. Most days he could reduce Polly's effectiveness and on some days beat him. This day Blue outplayed Polly convincingly and without clean ball coming into their forward line, East Perth's scoring opportunities when kicking with the wind were limited.

Ross Ayre kicking seven goals one playing on state full back Johnny Watts was also a match winning effort. "Rainbow", who got this nick name because he invariably wore a Footscray jumper at training, led well and kicked truly. As an aside, I've never seen anyone kick a better torpedo punt than Rainbow and that includes the legendary Bernie Naylor who I watched as a boy.

I could go on but won't. Some of us played better than others but there were no passengers. Everybody pulled their weight.

Other memories? Running onto the ground with our match winning Reserves team lined up on either side and applauding us! Richie Haddow was at the front of the line on my right. I can still see the look of sheer joy on his face!

Being greeted in the rooms after the game by our number one member, the Governor, Sir Charles Gairdiner. He was as pleased as if he'd been out there himself and gave most of us a huge hug!



Ross Ayre marks over Brian France at training



Brian Foley leads his charges onto Subiaco Oval for the grand final, flanked by victorious Reserves' premiership teammates



Brian Foley and Polly Farmer await the outcome of the toss. West Perth's number one ticketholder and Governor of Western Australia, Sir Charles Gairdner, looks on. Vice captain Eddie Wylde is standing behind his captain.



Polly Farmer leads his East Perth teammates onto the ground.



Peter Medhurst breaks away, aided by a Brian France shepherd.



The best seats in/on the house...



Tension on the bench just minutes before the final siren sounds.



The iconic Metters scoreboard, late in the second quarter of the grand final.



The siren's gone and West Perth are premiers for 1960.

**And the celebrations after the game?**

As I said when answering a previous question, the celebrations were monumental – starting with a beer or five out of the two or three babies' bath tubs full of beer in ice that appeared out of nowhere as we walked off the ground and down the race. And continuing at Leederville Oval where the bar was packed but where the real action was, was out on the ground. The area in front of the grandstand, from the boundary line to the centre circle, was jammed solid with partying people – people drinking, eating sausages cooked on numerous barbecues, reliving the game and, intermittently, bursting into the Club song.

Incidentally, the song we had then was different to the song we have now. Back then we sang one written by "Leederville Leo", a singer cum comedian who regularly entertained the large crowds that frequented the Leederville Hotel on weekends and Friday nights. Leo wrote it originally as the theme song for the Cardinals Show, a half hour radio show about the Club, its players and events, which featured on 6PR between 8.00pm and 8.30pm every Thursday night throughout the footy season. If you were a West Perth person you tuned into it without fail and, because of this, the song, which was catchy, became popular.

Its single drawback was that it was sung to the theme tune of a popular children's television show – the Mickey Mouse Club - and for this reason some of the players led by Trout Bewick considered the song itself to be pretty "Mickey Mouse" and hence, inappropriate. Trout mounted a campaign to replace it with the Melbourne Football Club's song with words modified slightly to suit West Perth. Eventually he prevailed, our Mickey Mouse version faded into oblivion and we started singing the song we have today. But I digress, back to the party.

The party continued almost to first light - albeit with dwindling numbers

- restarted the next morning and continued all day. To tell the truth, my partying wasn't all that hard. As I was leaving the change rooms at Subiaco Oval and about to head for Leederville, John Towner, who had been asked to appear on 6IX's and 6PR's football shows asked me if I'd accompany him. I said I would. We grabbed another couple of beers, leapt into a cab and headed for 6IX which in those days was above Musgrove's Store in Murray Street almost directly opposite Forrest Place.

A half hour's radio interview accompanied by beers – one of radio's advantages over TV – and then down to Hay St. East and 6PR.

Another chat – this time to Oliver Drake Brockman – again more beers and after the show more chat and still more beers.

Before we knew it was 9.30pm and we'd drunk considerably more than we needed.

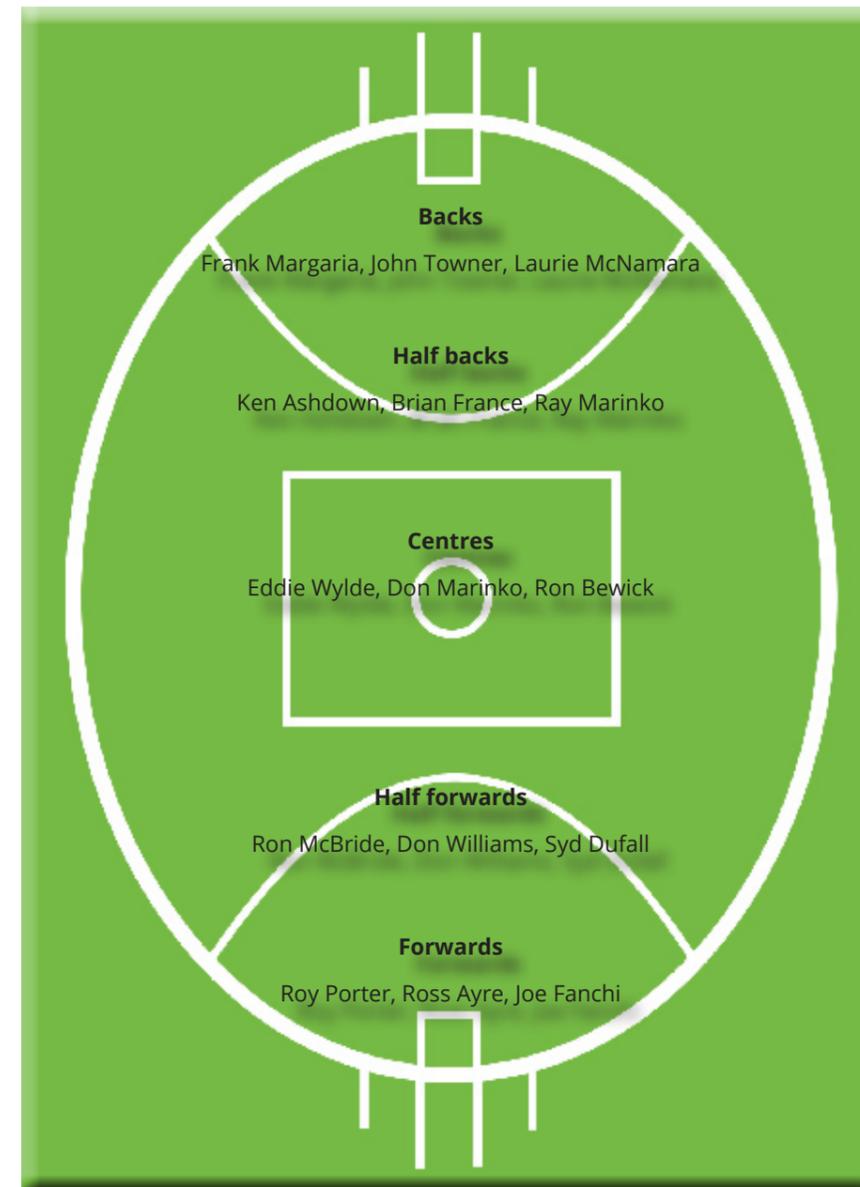
We headed back to Leederville and joined the fray. However after half an hour I suddenly came to my senses. I was in my final year of university and mid-way through my final exams. The last thing I needed was a bigger hangover than I'd bought myself already.

Saying goodnight to John and no-one else, I slipped away from the celebrations and wove my way home to bed.



Brian Foley and Arthur Olliver embrace in the rooms after the game.

**1960 GRAND FINAL TEAM LINE-UP**



**Backs**

Frank Margaria, John Towner, Laurie McNamara

**Half backs**

Ken Ashdown, Brian France, Ray Marinko

**Centres**

Eddie Wylde, Don Marinko, Ron Bewick

**Half forwards**

Ron McBride, Don Williams, Syd Dufall

**Forwards**

Roy Porter, Ross Ayre, Joe Fanchi

**Ruck**

Brian Foley, Ross Kelly, Peter Medhurst

**Reserves**

Mel Whinnen, Barry Armstrong

**GOALS**

**West Perth**

Ross Ayre (7), Brian Foley (3), Roy Porter (3), Peter Medhurst (2), Don Williams (1), Joe Fanchi (1)

**East Perth**

Graham Farmer (3), Ken Fisher (3), Kevin McGill (2), Reg Hall (2), Don Langdon (1), Brian MacGregor (1)

**BEST PLAYERS**

**West Perth**

Ray Marinko, John Towner, Ross Kelly, Brian Foley, Frank Margaria, Ross Ayre

**East Perth**

Graham Farmer, Laurie Kennedy, Tony Bellos, Paul Seal, Ned Bull, Kevin McGill

**UMPIRE**

Len Gardner

Free kicks – West Perth (27), East Perth (19)

**ATTENDANCE – 42,850**

East Perth won the toss and kicked with the breeze to the city end.



Brian Foley was awarded the Simpson Medal

**GRAND FINAL MATCH SUMMARY**

	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Total
West Perth	3.1	11.8	13.9	17.13	115
East Perth	5.3	6.5	10.10	12.11	83

Here's how the Club's premiership win was reported:



# FAST AND FURIOUS

◀ LEFT: West Perth half back Ken Ashdown seems to have sent East Perth centreman Tony Bellios reeling in this clash at Subiaco Oval today. West Perth centreman Don Marinko is already on the ground. RIGHT: Balancing on one hand is East Perth ruckman Ted Kil-murray after a hard knock.



## SPORT SECTION

Weekend News, Saturday, October 8, 1960. 47

### Toss was fatal, says

Guest writer



Charlie Tyson

# SKIPPER FOLEY INSPIRES GREAT TEAM EFFORT BY WESTS

## Ayre's 7 goals in grand final

By Geoff Worner

West Perth convincingly won the 1960 W.A.N.F.L. premiership by 32 points at Subiaco yesterday, with skipper Brian Foley setting a brilliant example to his men.

They won 17.13 to 12.11 after leading by 33 points at half time and showed decisively they were a five-goal better side than East Perth on the day.

The Cardinals played pennant-winning football right from the start and fully deserved the wonderful ovation the big crowd gave them when the siren left them clear winners.



# Graham Farmer sums up WEST PERTH WERE FAR BETTER TEAM



West Perth won the 1960 grand final yesterday because they were the better team for the whole four quarters of the game.

East Perth had no complaints. Nor did they have any excuses. They just were not up to holding the Cardinals in their great effort.

If East Perth had any real chance we threw it away in the first quarter when we started off so sluggishly with the wind. Whether we really made a mistake in kicking with the wind after winning the toss is a matter of conjecture.

**Strongest**

If we had shown any sort of form we should have raced away to a five or six goal lead instead of having only a 14 point advantage at the first changeover.

West Perth were the faster team and they backed up better. I thought their strongest features were their ruck and roving

divisions which were always on the move creating a loose man.

In addition they had a man to finish off their attacking moves at full forward.

Ross Ayre's seven goals for his team was a great contribution. He marked and kicked well and opened up the forward line to such an extent that our backs could not handle him.

In contrast East Perth had no one who could really tally up the goals for them and I think our main weaknesses were in the forward line.

The kicking in this area was particularly bad and we missed many shots which should have been certain goals.

Apart from our sluggish beginning, I thought the first quarter did not produce good football. It was congested with not a great deal of teamwork shown by either side.

In the second quarter, with the wind increased considerably, I thought East Perth settled down to some of their best football.

We controlled the game for about 10 minutes and it looked as though we would settle down.

Then West came at us strongly and ran us off our feet to pile up a 33-point lead at half time.

This was a comfortable lead with the wind but it was not an impossible one to watch.

West had 15 scoring shots to our three in that second quarter but I do not think that was a real indication of the difference at that stage.

When West opened up the third term with a sack goal things did not get too promising for East Perth but then three quick goals for us changed the outlook.

Then we struck a

drought and for a long period we remained scoreless.

We failed to keep the ball moving and slowed down the game.

**Held off**

This resulted in a kick for kick phase which played right into West's hands. They held us off and remained 17 points ahead at three-quarter time.

Again we lost numerous opportunities in the forward line. Kicks went astray, we scored five behinds in a row and there were some complete misses.

Summing up the second and third quarters West Perth kicked 8.7 when they had the wind but, with an equally strong breeze, we could only add 4.5.

In the final quarter we fought on grimly but West Perth's accuracy in their forward line and the way their nippy rovers kept

opening up the game made them virtually unbeatable.

**Deserved**

When the final siren went we trailed by 32 points and went down to a far better team.

West Perth deserved their premiership because they played a team effort and this was the difference between the two sides.

I thought West's owed a lot to Ross Kelly in the ruck. He caused a lot of damage by continually creating the loose man.

Ross Ayre's seven goals was a grand effort and the West Perth half back line must also take a major share of the honors.

Long clearing kicks from the half backs put West Perth into attack time and again.

Unfortunately, from my point of view, the East Perth half back line was not as penetrating as

**Alec Breckler celebrated his 60th birthday in 1960, the players gathering around him and singing happy birthday to him prior to the round 15 (34 point) win over Perth at Lathlain. The Club's best and fairest award was renamed the Breckler Medal in 1960 in his honour. Can you share some of your memories of Alec Breckler?**

I've known about Mr Alec Breckler and his involvement with the Club since I was a small boy. My father told me about him. About how he became President of West Perth in 1930 - three years after my father finished playing for the Club. About how a couple of years after that he was responsible for attracting champion Fitzroy and Victorian carnival team ruckman, Jack Cashman to the Club and making him captain/coach. Dad also spoke to me about the "Cashman Era" when the team that Cashman put together played in four consecutive final series and won three grand finals.

When I first went to West Perth, Mr Alec (most players referred to him in this way) was the Patron of the Club. He and his brother, Mr. Cecil Breckler were also two of the Club's staunchest supporters. In my time at West Perth I can't remember a home game when the Breckler brothers didn't occupy the same two front row seats, undercover, at the front of the grandstand, on the ground floor.

As well as being brothers and inseparable friends, Mr Alec and Mr Cecil were partners in a business that owned two of Perth's largest chains of shoe stores - "Betts and Betts" and "Cecil Brothers". Needless to say, the Brecklers supplied us with our footy boots. What young player could forget going into Cecil Brothers in Barrack Street, being greeted by store manager Max Tetley and having the great man kneel before you and fit you with boots? I say "great man" advisedly. Apart from being the Store Manager, Max was a footballer who played over 200 games at either full back or centre half back for West Perth; won



*Alec Breckler, one of the most important figures in the history of the WPF.*

the Club's Fairest and Best: captained it for two years and played in three premierships. He also played fourteen games for the State.

Mr Alec was a fitness freak. Every Sunday, rain, hail or shine, a member of his family would drive him to Armadale and drop him off. He would then walk home to Mt. Lawley. Thinking back, he, at the age of 60, was probably fitter than I was at the age of 22.

Mr Alec was very generous. Having lost the first game of the year against East Perth by eight goals, and just before we were about to play the second game of the year against them at Leederville, their players sent us a message. They wanted to bet us 1000 pounds that they could beat us. At a time when a worker on the basic wage earned 650 pounds per year, that was a fair bit of money. We decided to take up their offer but, while we were thinking about how to raise the ante, Mr Alec came into the change rooms

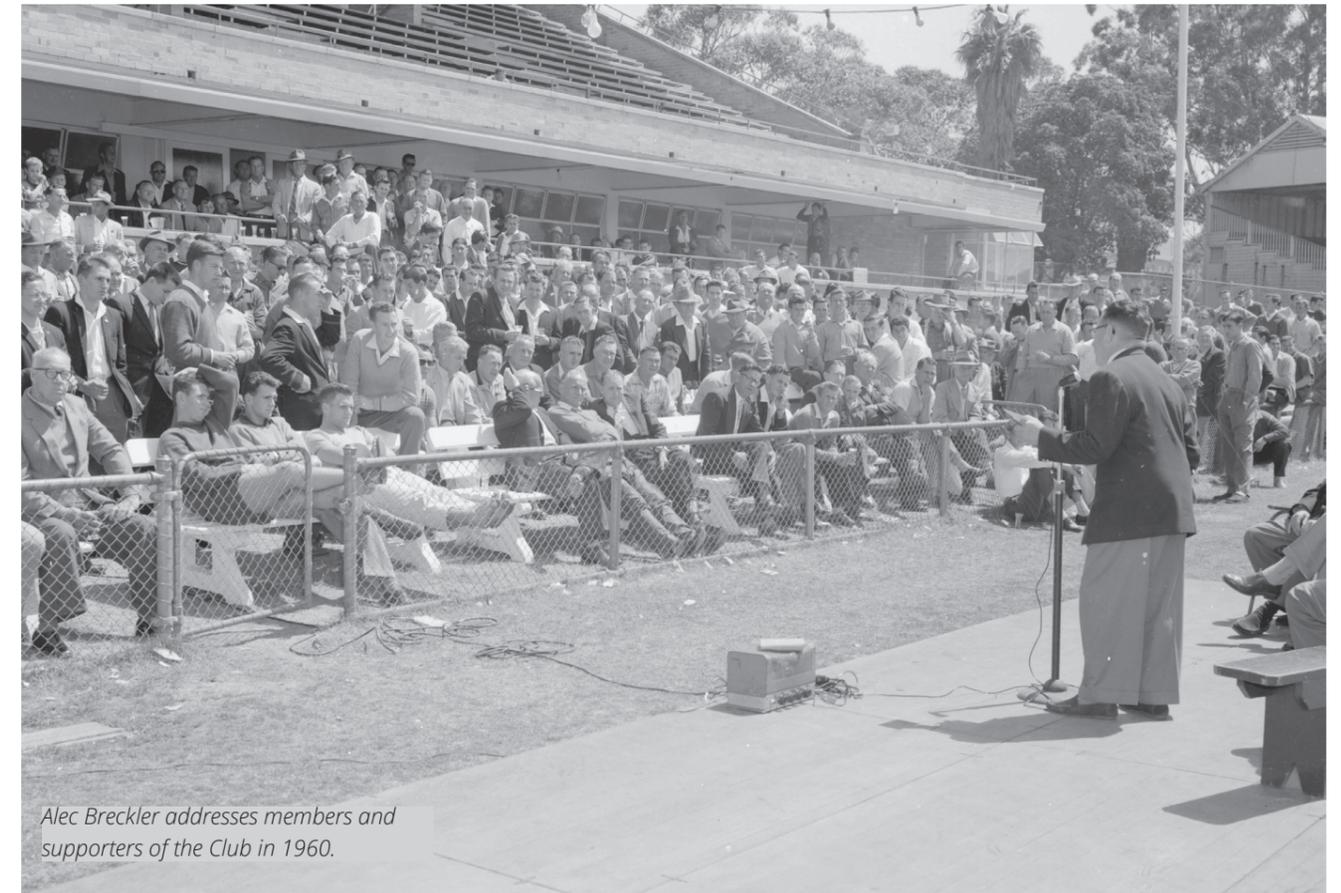
and intervened. "I hear you're thinking about having a bet", he said. "That's not a good idea. If you don't bet, but win," he added, "I'll give you the thousand pounds you would have won". We didn't take the bet, won and Mr. Breckler gave us fifty quid each. Later when asked whether he took the bet himself, Mr Alec said, "No", and added, "I was very happy to pay a thousand pounds for a Cardinal's win, but to do the same for a win by East Perth would be more than I could stand."

After we had won the premiership and I was sitting in the change rooms having my second or third beer before taking a shower, Mr Alec came up to me, pressed a roll of notes into my hand and thanked me for my game. He'd given me a hundred pounds! At a time when we were being paid seven pounds for a win and nothing for a loss or draw, he had handed me the best part of a season's wages. I was far from the only player to benefit from his generosity that day.

I was one of the players who sang 'Happy Birthday' to him on his sixtieth birthday, but, regrettably- and try as I might, I can't remember doing so. However, despite being unable to remember, and knowing how highly we players regarded Mr Alec, I am more than happy to assure you that we sang his birthday song with genuine gusto!



*Tyler Keitel proudly displaying his 2019 Breckler Medal*



*Alec Breckler addresses members and supporters of the Club in 1960.*



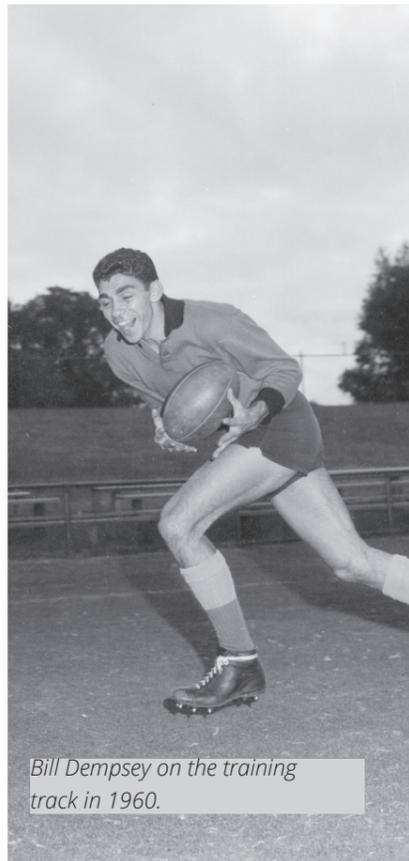
*Max Tetley (middle) during his playing days (1931 - 1941). Max played 210 games for the Club. With him are James Morgan (left) and Ernie McGuckin (right). James Morgan played 80 games for West Perth between 1932 and 1937 and was centreman in the premiership sides of 1932, 1934 and 1935. Ernie McGuckin, a back pocket specialist, played 115 games between 1929 and 1935 and was a member of our Club's 1932 and 1934 premiership teams.*

Two debutants in 1960, Bill Dempsey (first game on 28th May) and Mel Whinnen (first game on 20th August), emerged to become WAFL and Club legends. What can you recall about Bill and Mel as young players making their way into West Perth's senior team?

Well there are two parts to the answer to that question, on-field and off-field.

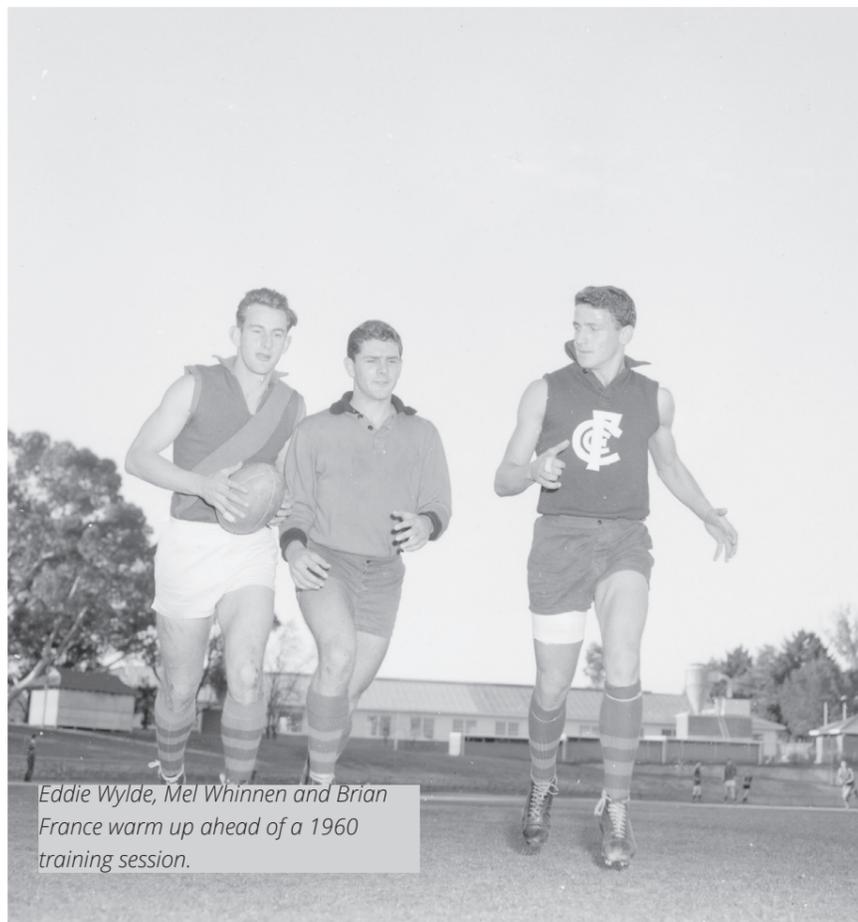
On-field, obviously both were hugely talented. Billy was a bit of a surprise packet and got his chance to play League earlier than Mel did - not that Mel wasn't playing well in the reserves but simply because he was primarily a centre line player and Don Marinko had a mortgage on centre as did Eddie Wylde on one wing. Bill Armstrong and then Ron Bewick were the favoured candidates for the other wing, so Mel had to wait for a while to get his chance. If my memory serves me correctly this came when Graham Edmondson, who'd held down one of the half forward flanks for most of the season, was injured early in the final round and Mel took his spot. (Then again, it was sixty years ago so I could be wrong about this). Mel kept his place in the League side for the rest of the year, was 19th man for the Grand Final and after replacing Don Marinko during the final quarter, played out the game on a half forward flank. Early the following year, Don obtained a clearance to East Perth, Mel took over the centre and made it his own for 17 seasons.

I say Bill was a surprise packet simply because he came down from Darwin with Jimmy Anderson and initially, Jimmy was considered to be the "main man". Jim only played one League game and two or three with the seconds before he became homesick and returned to Darwin. Billy stayed on, went about his business quietly, got to play half a dozen League games in the middle of the season and played in the winning Reserves grand final team. By the end of the next year Billy, like Mel, was a fixture in the League side and on his way to becoming a great champion.



Bill Dempsey on the training track in 1960.

Off-field, both were quiet - very quiet. In that first year neither of them said "boo to a goose." As they became established players (and ultimately champions) they gradually came out of themselves, Billy somewhat faster than Mel. As an example of this, I spent all of 1961 in England returning to Australia in 1962 - with a bit too much round my middle and no semblance of a sun tan. I was as white as a ghost. I battled my way through my first night at training and exhausted, staggered to the showers and got under one of them. Shortly after, Bill walked into the room and at his cheeky best, greeted me with, "Rosco, don't you Poms know about taking your singlets off before getting into a shower?" Even now, Mel would never say that.



Eddie Wylde, Mel Whinnen and Brian France warm up ahead of a 1960 training session.

## From the Vault ...

Ross Kelly paid tribute to Alec Breckler in his reflections on the 1960 season. In its 6th August issue (the week Mel Whinnen debuted for our Club), the Football Budget reflected on Mr Alec's 60th birthday and the tremendous contribution he made to our Club:

**Football's Postbag**

**ALEC BRECKLER (NOW 60) WEST PERTH'S GREATEST SUPPORTER FOR 50 YEARS**

In a simple goodwill gesture in the club rooms at Lathlain Park last Saturday, the players of West Perth gathered round Alec Breckler before the start of the match and sang happy birthday for him. They then gave him three rousing cheers.

It was obvious that Alec Breckler was touched by that simple gesture, which in itself meant more to him than verbose speeches and pats on the back. No man has done more for a club than Alec Breckler, who for 50 years has always been a West Perth supporter.

Well-known in Perth business circles with his brother Cecil, he is a difficult man to catch. The Breckler brothers of Cecil Bros. have worked diligently building a successful chain of shoe stores in the city and suburbs. Consequently as business executives their time is limited. However, Alec spared a few minutes to briefly recall his long association with West Perth.

**HIS STORY**

Here is his story. "From my tenth birthday for a decade I was a most enthusiastic West Perth barracker. "During the past 40 years I have filled various executive positions for West Perth. "In 1932 I was president. The club won its first premiership for 27 years. West Perth then went on and won the premierships of 1932-34-35. "Apart from being president of West Perth for six years I was also a vice-president and patron of the club for a number of years. (He is still the club's patron).

**KNEW THEM ALL**

"I have seen and personally known all the club's champions since 1912 and I've seen all the champions of our football play over the last 50 years." Mr. Alec Breckler admitted that he has been responsible over the years for bringing many of the champions to West Perth from the Eastern States and country districts. He personally selected many of his club's local junior players and had them brought up to West Perth's League side.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

For 40 years he has served West Perth, giving his time and although he did not say so, great financial support. I had to seek Alec Breckler at Cecil Bros. to draw from him his long association with West Perth.

**THE FOOTBALL BUDGET**

Page Twenty



**ALEC BRECKLER**  
"A gift from the Gods" to West Perth

At the age of 10 he stood behind the pickets and yelled himself hoarse urging on the Cardinals.

For 40 years he has served West Perth, giving his time and although he did not say so, great financial support.

I had to seek Alec Breckler at Cecil Bros. to draw from him his long association with West Perth.

Page Twenty

Football Budget  
6 August 1960

Asked how he had enjoyed his long association with West Perth and football in this State, Alec Breckler with a twinkle in his eyes said:—

**GREAT PLEASURE**

"I've derived a terrific amount of pleasure from football; watching it, meeting and associating with a host of players over the years.

I've found football a great relaxation from my many business commitments.

Alec Breckler and his brother Cecil have given many footballers jobs or found them jobs.

Max Tetley, a former West Perth captain and State captain, has worked for the Breckler brothers for 30 years. He is still on active service with them.

**HE MISSED SAYING—**

The story of Alec Breckler would not be complete unless mention was made that one of the most noteworthy happenings in the long history of West Perth — veteran amongst the League clubs — occurred with his accession to the presidency in 1932.

He galvanised the Cardinals into action and at the same time provided a welcome infusion of fresh blood and enterprise into the game generally.

Always a man of deeds and few words, Alec Breckler set about the re-organisation of the side with one aim — win the 1932 premiership.

He chose Jack Cashman, a former Fitzroy champion to end a 27 years premiership drought the club had suffered.

Cashman was appointed captain-coach of the side, and with the aid of other good players and even more because of Alec Breckler's inspiring influence, the premiership was won. Other premierships came West Perth's way with Johnny Leonard as coach.

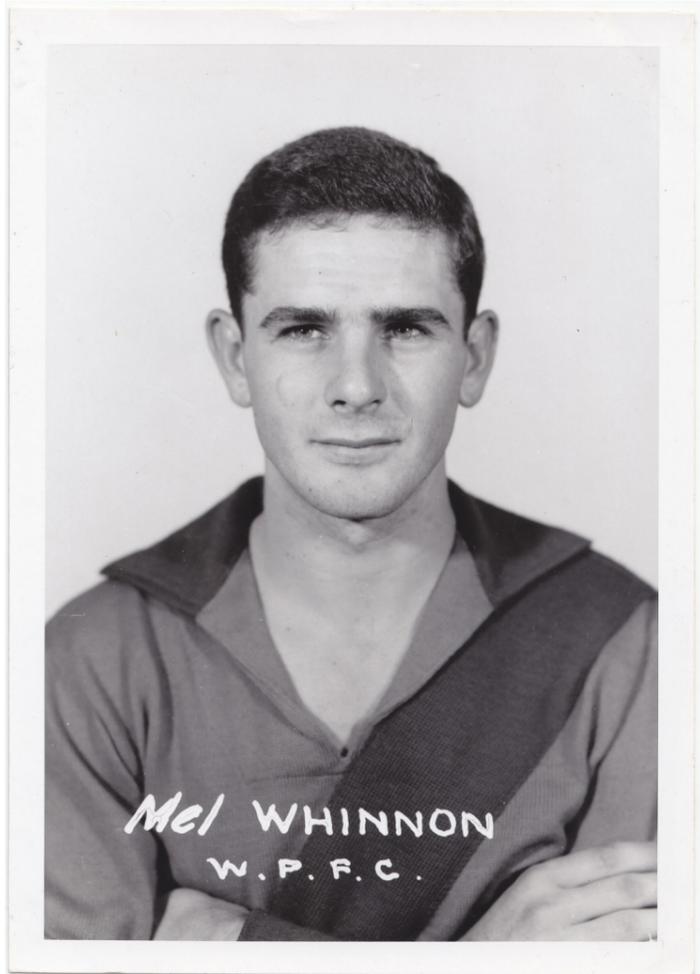
**"GIFT FROM GODS"**

No club has had a more enterprising or energetic leader than Alec Breckler, while his brother Cecil, content with a more modest executive role, was nevertheless a great worker for West Perth.

Half-a-century and always red and blue in both eyes in addition to financial support (an extremely generous sum over the years and his secret) makes Alec Breckler a gift from the football "Gods".

Lucky West Perth.  
... Alan Ferguson.

# My First Game with Mel Whinnen



*A young Mel Whinnen in his first season for our Club. It wouldn't take long before scribes were accurately spelling Mel's surname...*

**Debuting in 1960, Mel represented our Club with distinction in 371 games. He is a nine-time Breckler Medallist, won four premierships as a player, captained the Club and has been inducted into the Western Australian and Australian football halls of fame.**

**Superlatives do not adequately cover the contribution Mel Whinnen has made to our football Club. A player of the highest class, his fair play beyond reproach, Mel is simply a legend. Mel played his first game for our cCub on 6th August 1960, a 32 point win over Claremont at Leederville.**

**Here Mel shares recollections of his first game for West Perth, and memories of his time playing under Polly and premierships won.**



*Mel Whinnen in the change rooms with Barry Armstrong (middle) and Laurie McNamara (right).*

### *On my first game and the 1960 premiership:*

The 1960 season was like a dream for me. I was playing for West Perth in the Under 18s in 1959 and I'd followed West Perth since the age of five or six. Mum used to take me to Leederville Oval whenever she could and so I'd followed the Club since then. We used to play our Under 18s games early on Saturday mornings and after the game, when West Perth were playing at Leederville, a few of us used to jump into the back of our team manager's Austin A40 and we'd go to the football and barrack for West Perth. We knew everything there was to know about Brian Foley, Frank Margaria, Joe Fanchi and other players. They were my idols. In 1960, I went down to West Perth to play thirds and by the end of the year I was training and playing with these idols of mine. I had expected to be playing thirds all year and so when I was promoted to the reserves, I trained with the players I had supported from across the boundary line for many years.

In those days, league team line-ups would be announced on radio on a Thursday night and I'm sure I would have heard about my selection then. On being picked in the league side, I would have been both over the moon and petrified. I don't recall Arthur Olliver telling me I was going to be (or



*Mel Whinnen*

*Photo of Mel taken for the 1971 Mobil Footy Photo Album*

likely to be) selected for the league side, it more so came out of the blue. I hadn't occurred to me that I would be playing league at all that season. I thought that if I was lucky, I might win a league berth at some stage, though. To be playing with my idols was a wonderful experience. My new teammates in the league squad looked after Bill (Dempsey) and me as if we were family. You look back now and think you might have been considered a threat to some of the players and their positions in the team but they never acted that way. The senior players looked after us... I guess they may have thought we were part of the future of West Perth, and they would talk to you and help you on and off the training track.

Unfortunately, I don't recall a lot about my first league game. I've often wondered if I used to make a point of saying to myself "well, that's the game gone now, you don't need to think about it too much, you just need to think about what you've learned about the game, and think about the next one." I played in the centre in the reserves but on being promoted to the league team, I knew I wasn't going to

displace Don Marinko, who occupied that position. That meant I played as a rover, on Les Mumme. I'm reasonably sure I started on the bench, which I did for three or four of the six games I played in 1960. Sitting on the bench wasn't a lot of fun back then... on occasions you would see a teammate go down injured, you'd take off your West Perth dressing gown and jog on the spot for a couple of minutes only to find Roy Ennis had worked his magic with a wet towel and smelling salts, and your teammate was fit to resume... and you might do that six or seven times in a game! Sometimes, in the rooms after a game you didn't feel like you'd had a run.

I do recall kicking a goal not long after I came onto the ground. It was a shot in the course of play rather than a set shot, and may have even been the first kick I'd had... I'm not 100% sure, but I was tickled pink by booting that goal.

I had some difficulty adjusting to the faster pace of the game each time I moved up a grade... it always seemed to take me a few games to adjust. In hindsight, I can't believe I was lucky enough to get through to the reserves, then league, and to play in a grand

final in 1960.

There is so much at stake in a grand final... the game is tougher and the intensity lifts again from what you're accustomed to in the home and away season. Even though it was close to the end of the game when I came on and the players were quite tired, they seemed to be a lot faster than I was.

By the time I thought about whether or not I could get the ball it was gone! Such was the speed of the game. Syd Dufall reportedly came off the ground in the final quarter with a wrist injury, but I've always had a feeling Syd came off to give me a run. That's what my teammates just seemed to do over the course over the latter part of the season, to come off the ground just to give Bill and me a run.

I'm not sure if that was preordained with Arthur Olliver or whether the players decided that for themselves. I'd been part of an under-age grand final but I was almost dumbfounded when the siren went while the supporters streamed onto the ground ecstatic. That continued on for the next few hours back at the Club and it was wonderful being part of the group that night.

Premierships do so much to bring clubs together. The spirit within the Club over the next few days... well, you were on cloud nine. At the beginning of the season I had never expected to be training with my idols let alone playing alongside them in a grand final.

Arthur Olliver was a towering commanding man. I learned a lot from

him. On Thursday nights at training, he would often send me off early. He'd say "you've done enough tonight, off you go". The problem was I didn't want to go off! I thought Arthur was a clever coach...we had a team of champions and so the challenge for him was getting the team to play together as a champion team.

He was able to do that in 1960 but not in his subsequent years. As a club between 1961 and 1964, we'd often be fighting it out for fourth spot on the ladder as the seasons drew to a conclusion. In 1966 that started to change as a young group of players began to emerge.



Brian Foley leaves the field towards the end of a state game flanked by highly respected West Perth trainer, Roy Ennis. One of our Club's great servants, Roy commenced at the Club in 1933, serving for 54 seasons, retiring in 1986.



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**On Polly and the 1969 premiership:**

I don't recall there being much in the way of change to training or preparation routines among coaches I played under before Polly arrived in 1968. At training we'd run a few laps, do some kick to kick for a while, and then follow that with some circle work. Polly however, introduced radical change. He brought in a range of exercises that simulated game situations. I think the player group initially struggled to digest the extent of the changes Polly introduced.

Polly used to say that what he wanted us to do in playing a game of football was a bit like getting out of bed in the morning, and cleaning your teeth without remembering you'd done it. At training, he wanted us doing exercises incorporating running into tackle bags, and bumping, essentially simulating a game. It meant that in a game, there was nothing new, we all knew we were going to be hit and tackled but we were far better conditioned and ready for it. You knew what you had to do to get out of the tackle or get a handball away. Training sessions were competitive and serious, and there was no longer the joking on the track that had occurred in prior years. It did take us quite a while to get used to Polly's new training regime and I'm not even sure we had really settled down as a team in the 1968 season, we were still getting used to the change. It must have had some benefit for us because we did have a good year, making a preliminary final, but by 1969 we had matured as a team. Also, and I'm not 100% sure about this, but I did wonder if Polly might have dropped some of his standards a little to enable us to get used to the ideas he had. We settled down in 1969 and accepted the way Polly wanted us to play, rather than in 1968 when we would do all the things Polly would ask us to do but weren't necessarily happy about doing them!

Polly put a tremendous amount of thought into what needed to be done to be prepared for a game of football. I'm not sure we were adopting tech-



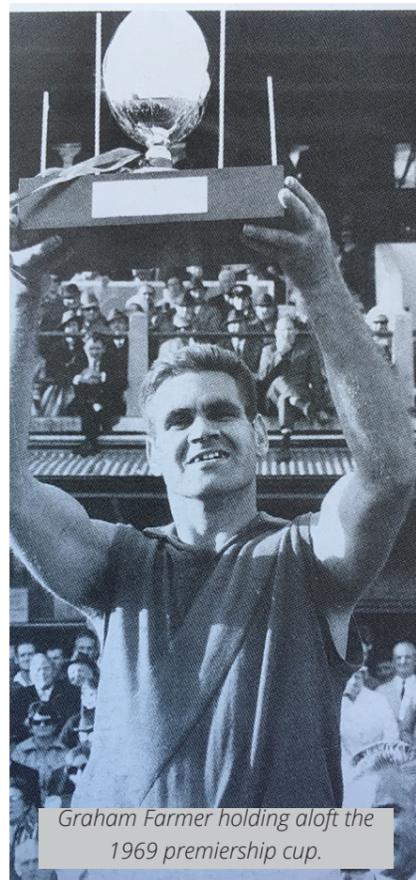
*Polly Farmer on the training track.*

needed to happen to win a game and he would then leave it to himself and whoever was required (Bryan Pleitner in the case of the second semi-final) to get involved to get the job done. The rest of us would be left to concentrate on our own games. Polly was also quite happy to hand out physical treatment to opposition players.

The grand final was pretty competitive. We were focused on getting off to a good start. East Perth finished ahead of us on the ladder and they started favourites. We needed to get on top early and that's how we won it. In 1968, we'd been through a dry spell since 1960 and we'd forgotten the pressure of finals football was different to that of home and away games. We just didn't seem to be prepared for the finals, but Polly had us better prepared for 1969 and I feel he may well have done a few things different himself. We seemed to go into the finals with confidence in 1969 as opposed to perhaps a level of over confidence in 1968. Polly had us

niques Polly learned in Victoria, I think Polly just thought about the game and he knew what needed to be done to have an edge over other teams. You were conditioned for a game, and you were better conditioned and ready for physical play than any other side. Polly was a man who thought about football more than anyone I have ever met. The things he would tell us, not just about football but life more generally. He just seemed to know how people ticked and how to get the best out of every player. I don't know if he undertook other study but he understood people and he knew about football and those two attributes combined created the team's success over Polly's four years at West Perth.

I recall the second semi-final and remember it being a physical game although I suspect I must have kept clear of the worst of it! Polly would often decide on a few things that



*Graham Farmer holding aloft the 1969 premiership cup.*

**THE MAGIC OF MEL**



The pictures on these pages reveal the balance and fine playing techniques of West Perth centreman Mel Whinnen, one of football's most accomplished players. Whinnen, a master craftsman of the footballers' art, will be making his fifth grand final appearance today and will be playing in his 323rd league game. Whinnen has had a great season. He has been West Perth's regular centreman since 1961, taking over the role from Don Mariniko who, in turn succeeded John Loughridge. It is remarkable that, in the 30 years since the end of World War 11 West Perth have had only three regular centremen.



**BLACK RUSSIAN**  
"The Curtain Raiser"

cherry ripe for that 1969 finals series. Polly became an idol amongst us players, too. When we went into the 1971 season we knew he was going to retire and there was no way we were going to lose that premiership without a fight. We were going to do everything we could to send him off in the right way. I had utmost respect for Polly. As you mature, you appreciate more what Polly did for you. He was just a master, a man who thought about life a lot more than most. He knew people and footy, but he thought about things you hadn't thought about before, how

**After Polly**

All of the grand finals I played in were just a bit different to one another. In 1960 it was all new to me, and by 1969 we'd had that period without success and we needed a premiership. In 1971 we just had to win for Polly. In 1975, we'd come off a tough period. We were

a bit cocky going into the 1973 grand final and Subiaco were smart and they cleaned us right up. We were on the bottom of the ladder in 1974, stone motherless last, and that was one of my most difficult years in footy. So we went from top in 1973 to bottom in 1974 then Graham Campbell took us back to the top again.

In 1973, all credit must go to Subiaco. Ross Smith had done his homework picking out West Perth players he felt he needed to nullify, and this approach paid off. I think we had in our minds that we'd beaten Subiaco five times

**The champions get with the full of fitness food!**  
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through the season, including a practice match and the second semi-final, and we felt we'd won the game before we ran onto the ground.

I think Dennis Jones might have felt the same way. I recall at half time thinking things just didn't feel right... it was just a strange feeling. We led by a point when we would normally be five goals up at half time.

At three quarter time, we weren't down by much, only around three goals, but it was almost as if we felt we were beaten then. We always seemed to have the wood on Subiaco but Ross Smith worked his magic.

It was as if we were behind but without being able to do anything about it. We didn't go into the game well prepared and Subiaco, having been beaten by us each time we'd played

them, knew they had to do something different and that's what they did.

Graham Campbell was a great motivator and very good tactician. I recall in 1975 we suffered a few bad losses, but we never suffered two bad losses in a row. Graham could pick us up after a loss. We would often have a meeting on a Sunday morning and prior to having a run, we would talk about the game the day before, and the game the next week and what we needed to work on. He would then write the game off and concentrate on the next week. Graham was really quite inspirational.

I felt from 1975 that it was all starting to get a bit hard, and I wasn't sure I was fully pulling my weight. Bill retired at the end of the 1976 season and I considered giving it away then, too. I

was battling away a bit but didn't want the team to lose so much experience in one go and so I decided I'd keep going for a little bit after Bill.

We were both 34-35 years old at that stage but I wanted to stay on to help the Club through transition. In hindsight I'm not sure I made a lot of difference. Also, I just loved playing and even though it was getting harder from 1975, I enjoyed being around the team and around the Club.

The Club has just done so much for me and I didn't really want to leave the Club. In fact, after I gave it away, I used to come down and have a run at training... I was mad!



*"The West Australian"*  
article by Geoff Christian,  
prominent football writer,  
reflecting on Mel's career.

# The game is the poorer

**Mel Whinnen, West Perth's matchless centreman, made his farewell to football on Saturday and gave a final reminder of the qualities that has made him a sporting champion.**

It was typical of Whinnen that his 371st—and last game—was one of his best in a career that has flourished without blemish since his introduction to league football on August 6, 1960.

Whinnen was the man of the match. This honour was not based on sentiment but on the sheer quality of the football he produced.

In many respects it was unfortunate that Whinnen's farewell fell one game short of his being able to make his exit as a player in a grand final.

But 23,193 people on Saturday saw Whinnen become a part of football history—and they must have been impressed by what they saw.

## Dedication

Whinnen, 18 days short of his 35th birthday, played with the exuberance of a youth long gone and with the dedication and skill that have

always been the hallmarks of this football.

For Whinnen, it would have been unthinkable that he would be a losing player on a day such as this.

That is how it worked out.

He outplayed Leigh Brenton, was an inspiring influence in West Perth's third-quarter fightback, and was still coming on at the finish.

The Whinnen style has been on display for 18 seasons. All the speed, balance, side-steps and ball control that make up his football kit were there on Saturday.

So was the character—the fierce competitive spirit, the total commitment to the cause, and the qualities of leadership.

There will be no curtain calls.

Whinnen gave everything to one final season. It was a magnificent farewell.—**Geoff Christian.**

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# Celebrating our Reserves' 1960 premiership win

The senior team's premiership victory was made all the sweeter by the Reserves winning a premiership flag earlier in the day, defeating East Fremantle by 18 points.

## 1960 RESERVES' GRAND FINAL TEAM LINE-UP



**Reserves**  
Pat Rogan, Peter Goss

### GOALS

#### West Perth

Warren Roper (5), Lindsay Holland (1), Ernie Cooley (1)

#### East Fremantle

Des Barfield (1), Nelson Rodgers (1), John Rowan (1), Wilson Onions (1), Graham Wendt (1)

### BEST PLAYERS

#### West Perth

Warren Roper, Mel Dragicevich, Mannix Heal, Bill Dempsey, Phillip Kirkham, Lindsay Holland, Norm McDiarmid

#### East Fremantle

Nelson Rodgers, Harry Bovell, Graham Wendt, Wilson Onions, John Rowan, Des Barfield

West Perth won the toss and kicked against the breeze to the Subiaco end.

## GRAND FINAL MATCH SUMMARY

	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Total
West Perth	2.2	5.6	6.10	7.12	54
East Fremantle	2.2	2.3	4.6	5.6	36



Ron Mumme was a member of our Reserves' premierships team in 1960. Ron played ten games for the Club across two seasons, 1956 and 1960.



Richie Haddow and Graham Edmondson in the change rooms sharpening their table tennis skills

**Cardinals get first leg in**

# SECONDS TO WEST

West Perth held a lead throughout the Seconds grand final to beat East Fremantle 7.12 to 5.6 after Easts got to within 10 points in the last quarter at Subiaco yesterday.

West Perth went away with a handy goal from Warren Roper, who had played a champion game.

Several melees occurred in the final minutes when Wests had it won.

In the first quarter Wests gave Easts first use of the breeze but it did not help them much. Wests taller men were very strong in defence and Easts could not break through.

West evened the score for the quarter.

In the second quarter Wests used the wind much more intelligently and forged to a goal lead by the half-time bell.

**Brilliant**

Wests ruck and centre-line dominated the play and forced the ball forward where sneak Warren Roper was in brilliant marking form.

His three goals for the quarter gave Wests a handy lead in the game.

After half-time, Easts Graham Wendt was their only force in the

rack but he could not carry the burden alone.

Captain Wilson Onions was always noticeable in the forward line and Easts third goal for the match came from a 60-yarder from Onions.

The general standard of football could have been better with so many league players in the teams.

Wests forced the pace but Easts full-back Harry Bovell held them up time and time again.

**Challenge**

East broke away and their fourth goal came from nice play by Des Anderson to Barfield and a good kick finished off the move.

East got within 10 points but West again goaled before the quarter ended to hold a 16-point margin at the last change.

The breeze strengthened in the last quarter but Wests could not get down to their forward line.

John Rowan goaled for Easts and put them right back in the game.

Wests hung on grimly to their 11-point lead and with their stiffening defence kept the ball in attack.

Roper added his fifth goal to put Wests three goals in front with as many minutes to go.

Several incidents occurred in the final few minutes, but they did not affect the result.

W.P. . 2.2 5.6 6.10 7.12 (54)  
E.F. . 2.2 2.3 4.6 5.6 (36)

**GOALS:** West Perth: Roper 5, Holland, Cooley. East Fremantle: Barfield, Rodgers, Rowan, Onions, Wendt.

**Best:** West Perth: Roper, Dragicevich, Heal, Dempsey, Kirkham, Holland, McDiarmid. East Fremantle: Rodgers, Bovell, Wendt, Onions, Rowan, Barfield, Davies.

**Medal won by Foley**

Last year's Sandover Medal winner and captain of West Perth, giant ruckman Brian Foley yesterday won the Simpson Medal awarded for the fairest and best player in the grand final.

He was personally congratulated by the Governor, Sir Charles Gardner, in the dressing rooms after the game.

"The Weekend News" on how the Reserves' premierships was won.

## My First Game with Bill Dempsey

Bill Dempsey arrived at West Perth from Darwin in 1960 with his best mate, Jimmy Anderson. He was to play 343 games for our Club and appear for Western Australia on 14 occasions. A player who maintained the highest standards of integrity and fair play, Bill was a fan favourite who transcended club loyalties. He was simply everyone's favourite.

Bill produced some of his very best football on the big stage and was awarded a Simpson Medal for his best-on-ground performance in the 1969 Grand Final. This was the first of his three premierships. Bill also won a Breckler Medal in 1966 plus countless media awards, and he captained our Club from 1973 to 1976, when he hung up his boots. He retains a strong interest in West Perth and frequently attends games.

Here Bill remembers his first game for West Perth and premiership successes.

Jimmy Anderson was a brilliant footballer and sportsman in Darwin, and he was recruited by West Perth in 1960. We were playing for the Buffaloes Football Club in the Northern Territory Football League at the time, and it was Jack Larcombe, a great player for West Perth who was part of their 1942, 1949 and 1951 premierships who recommended I also come down to Perth with Jimmy. Arthur Olliver had just been appointed coach and had come from Footscray in the VFL after coaching there for seven years.

My feeling was that even though West Perth wanted me as a player, I was also there to accompany Jimmy and keep him from returning to Darwin. As for me, it was an exciting time and I just wanted to see what life was like away from Darwin. I would have gone to



Bill Dempsey in 1960

China to play ping-pong had I been asked.

I seriously wanted to play basketball when I arrived in Perth, but I had made the commitment to play footy. Then one day Jimmy came to me and asked me to lend him a fair amount of money, which I did. He used it to go back home, and the footy club was frantically trying to contact him but he never came back, and years later when I caught up with him I asked why he took my dough and left me in the lurch. He said "You owe me, I knew you could make it in Perth, and if you had the money you would have followed me back to Darwin, so I've done you a big favour". And he added, "That Simpson Medal you have at home really belongs to me". How could I argue with that, so I just let it be. Jimmy was widely renowned as the



Two newcomers to West Perth, Jimmy Anderson and Bill Dempsey

'King' in Darwin, a title he got from the Retta Dixon Mission where I met him. So being the 'King' you did what the 'King' requested, but there was truth in what he said, so thanks Jimmy, I do owe you. He sadly passed away in 2017 and I went to his funeral service which was so big they had to hold it at the Marrara Oval, the main stadium in Darwin.

Mel Whinnen (Winnie) and I started together at West Perth, but I sat on the bench for the first six games of 1960. I did all the warm-ups and never got on the ground. The rule then was unless an injured player had to be replaced you remained on the bench. Then on 28th May I got a run against Swan Districts at Leederville which we won by 39 points. I was so bloody nervous when I ran onto the ground in front of a 10,000 crowd, I still can't recall who I played on, but it was a big thrill to be playing league footy at 18 years old. I was recruited as a centre-half-forward, but over 343 games I only played three games in that position.

Finals time came around in 1960, and the League and Seconds (Reserves) made the Grand Final. I thought I might be a chance to play in the Grand Final, but the club had a lot of depth, so I played Seconds. I was so happy for Winnie when he got the nod to play in the league grand final, what a great moment for him at 17 years old. The Seconds had a wonderful win, and there was going to be great celebrations, but the league side buggered it up for us by winning their grand final which shifted the focus to them. Kidding, of course, it was a magic day and the league side were fantastic in beating East Perth who many pundits thought would win. The Reserves premiership was the last the club would see until 2014, a span of 54 years.

The club had its ups and downs after 1960, Clive Lewington coached for one year (1964), and Bob Spargo coached for the next three years until 1967. Then in a surprise announcement, the

club appointed East Perth and Geelong great, Graham Polly Farmer, as playing coach in 1968.

Polly completely changed the way we approached and played the game. The normal pre-season training sessions were thrown out the window, and it was nothing like we had ever experienced in any grade of football. At the beginning of pre-season training, and being a sticky-beak, I wanted to hear what Polly had to say, so I positioned myself near him and strength and running coach Bill DeGruchy. I overheard Bill say "how do you want me to run them Poll? Polly's answer was, "Run 'em till they spew,

and make a note of any person who keeps running while they're spewing". I thought he was joking, but he wasn't. The one thing that we all respected about Polly was that he didn't issue instructions from the sidelines, he was in there with you, and never told anybody to do something that he wouldn't do himself. He led by example and we followed.

We were introduced to punching bags, which we would hold, while about 50 blokes took turns in charging full pelt at you. I used to hate it, but it gave us a hard edge, and Polly being a playing coach was



The high mark has been a trademark of Bill Dempsey's football since the start of his career. This picture provides a perfect example of Dempsey's precise control in a tight marking situation.

Bill Dempsey marking in a game against East Perth at Leederville in the late 1960s. Flying from behind is Laurie Richards. The East Perth player in the foreground is Gary Martin.

THIRTY



Bill Dempsey marks in a game against East Perth at Leederville

never backward in coming down the ground during a game to hand out a verbal spray, so it goes without saying that he and I had a few run-ins from time to time. Polly was a perfectionist and expected the same from his players, it was his way or the highway, but he was a football genius, earning him the respect of the players and the title of "the greatest player in the history of the game".

In Polly's first season in 1968, we were going really well and won 18 games, but for some unknown reason we were put out of grand final contention in straight sets, losing the second-semi and preliminary finals. I can't explain why that happened after being so dominant during the year. I can only put it down to just "one of those things" that happen in football when play doesn't go your way.

Polly hated losing, he was ruthless and always adopted a win at all costs approach, so the 1969 preseason training, and training during the year was intense. We won 16 games during the qualifying rounds and finished second, East Perth were on top. Polly was still simmering from the previous year's loss, and absolutely adamant that this was not going to be a repeat of the 1968 finals series.

It turned the 1969 second semi-final against East Perth into arguably the hardest hitting final ever seen in WAFL footy, and we won our way into the grand final by 26 points after a fierce contest. The 1969 grand final against East Perth turned out to be a very one-sided affair where all the hard work we had put in during the year paid off with a 73 point victory, and laid to rest the disappointment of the previous year.

I was fortunate enough to win the Simpson Medal, but it really belongs to the whole team who were just fantastic during the year and on the day, and to those who contributed during the season but missed the Grand Final team selection.

By far and away the biggest highlight and thrill for me from that day was my

mum coming from Darwin to watch me play, courtesy of West Perth who flew her down, and I am eternally grateful to the club for that lovely gesture.

It was just tremendous to have her there, as she had never been outside the Northern Territory before, with the exception being when Darwin was bombed by the Japanese and she was moved to South Australia while pregnant with me.

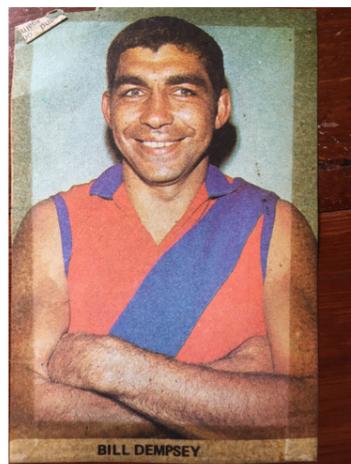
Having her at the game was such an inspiration for me. I gave her my Simpson Medal, which to her friends she called it the 'Simpson Desert Medal'. I said to her, "That's not right, it's the Simpson Medal", to which she replied, "Be quiet, I know what I'm talking about".

My medal was lost during cyclone Tracy in 1974 which flattened Darwin, and my mum felt embarrassed about it. Later, two prospectors operating out of Andamooka in South Australia came across an object encrusted with dirt and clay, they chipped it away and it was my Simpson Medal. I took it to my mum, who was surprised, and she asked where it was found. I said, "The Simpson Desert", she looked at me with a wry smile and said, "I told you it was the Simpson Desert Medal". Believe it or not it's a true story, and one that still gives me a spooky feeling.

It's no secret that the move from Leederville to Joondalup has always been a sticking point with me. Leederville Oval will always be a sacred site to me with so many happy memories and great people. It's where all my footy memories lie during my playing days, but wherever West Perth go, I go.

I consider myself very privileged to have been able to play 343 games and captain the club I love. I've been honoured with life membership, represented the state 14 times and met so many great people from inside and outside the football world. It's been a fantastic journey.

Now, I'm not as mobile as I used to be, but I love this football club and the people in it, both past and present, for giving me the opportunities that have come my way. The bonds forged over the years are still strong. I go to the games as well as catch up with my teammates and friends at the Cardinals Coffee Club every second Monday. The best thing that happened to me was coming to Perth and being part of the West Perth Football Club family. Long may it live. Up the Cardies!!



A pen pic taken of Bill taken in the lead-up to the 1969 grand final.



Bill Dempsey with "Uncle Ben" Re after the 1975 grand final win. Uncle Ben, a prominent West Perth supporter and personality around the club, purchased Bill's grand final jumper for \$200, two-thirds of his winnings from backing the Cardinals to beat South Fremantle the previous day. The extended Re and Perroni families continue to support the Club.

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## THE LEGEND OF A DEMPSEY NAMED BILL

By GEOFF CHRISTIAN



Bill Dempsey, the boy from Darwin who became a man of distinction in Perth, will play in his 300th league football match on Anzac Day for West Perth—the club that became his home in 1960 and his headquarters for success.

Dempsey, whose 15-year trek along the hazardous football trail has led him into football's hall of fame will play his historic game against Subiaco at Subiaco Oval.

His name goes into the record book alongside those of Graham Farmer, Jack Sheedy and his football twin, Mel Whinnen, as the only West Australians who have played in 300 league games.

Dempsey has long walked tall among WA's football greats, having kept in tune with his superb marking skills, his subtle use of timing at the hit-outs and his mastery of the oft-ignored art of the tackle.

The Dempsey marking technique is unique. He makes hard marks look simple; his long arms stretch to places that rivals think they have covered; and the one-handed mark is part of his aerial acrobatics.

Those two wonderful one-handed marks in rapid succession in the 1973 second semi-final against Subiaco bear adequate testimony to Dempsey's superb reflexes.

When it comes to ruckwork he is not endowed with great height. At 1.88m (6ft. 2in) he is on the short side of some of his great rivals.

But what Dempsey lacks in inches he more than makes up for in his sense of timing and the expert use of his body in the struggle for the hit-out.

The influence of Farmer, football's greatest ruckman, is evident in the Dempsey touch at the bounce-downs and throw-ins.

Farmer was Dempsey's coach between 1968 and 1971 and they formed one of the most formidable ruck batteries assembled in Perth.

Dempsey perfected a Farmer ploy of taking off early for the hit-outs. This technique enables him to leap slightly before his rival and come down early but with his body between his rival and the ball.

It is a frustratingly effective manoeuvre, specially useful in battle against the tall followers who have sprung up in football during the past 10 years.

Few players are remembered for their ability to tackle, but in this case only a gentle reminder is needed to bring back memories of the Dempsey tackle.

The only people he knew in Perth were Darwin rover Jim Anderson and West Perth committeeman Les Day.

The passing years have changed all that. Today Dempsey's friends are numerous; his reputation is impeccable; he has married and is now set for life.

Football gave Dempsey his chance in life. Many others have had this chance and spoiled it, but it is a measure of this man that he has gone from strength to strength.

He has hardly put a foot wrong in his climb up the ladder of success. His rise from obscurity has been achieved with a minimum of fuss and a maximum of effectiveness.

### Long arms

It was more spectacular a few years back when, as a lighter player, Dempsey used his agility and long arms to trap opponents, and it formed a vital part of his football make-up.

I learnt another of the keys to Dempsey's make-up on a plane trip to Melbourne in 1970 in a reply to a question on how he would react to playing Victoria on the MCG.

"Never let it be said that your mother raised a squib," was his way of saying that neither the Victorians nor the occasion would lessen his resolve.

With this in mind, it was no wonder that when West Perth brought his mother from Darwin, for the 1969 grand final it was Dempsey who won the Simpson Medal on a day when West Perth produced some of the best football seen at Subiaco Oval.

Mrs Dempsey sen. will not be at Subiaco on Friday, but the strong link between mother and son will be one reason that Dempsey will produce a game worthy of the occasion.

Friday's match will be played under a blaze of publicity, but there were no fanfares when Dempsey arrived at Leederville Oval as a long, slim 17-year-old.

Dempsey is a tough but fair competitor. Footballers do not play in the ruck for 300 games and not learn the art of self-protection.

But in these games, Dempsey has never been reported—a record of discipline that is hard to match by ruckmen who are involved in the game's hardest and most consistent clashes.

So Dempsey, the lad who came to Perth for only two years, stayed to become a football hero, and an example to all sportsmen.

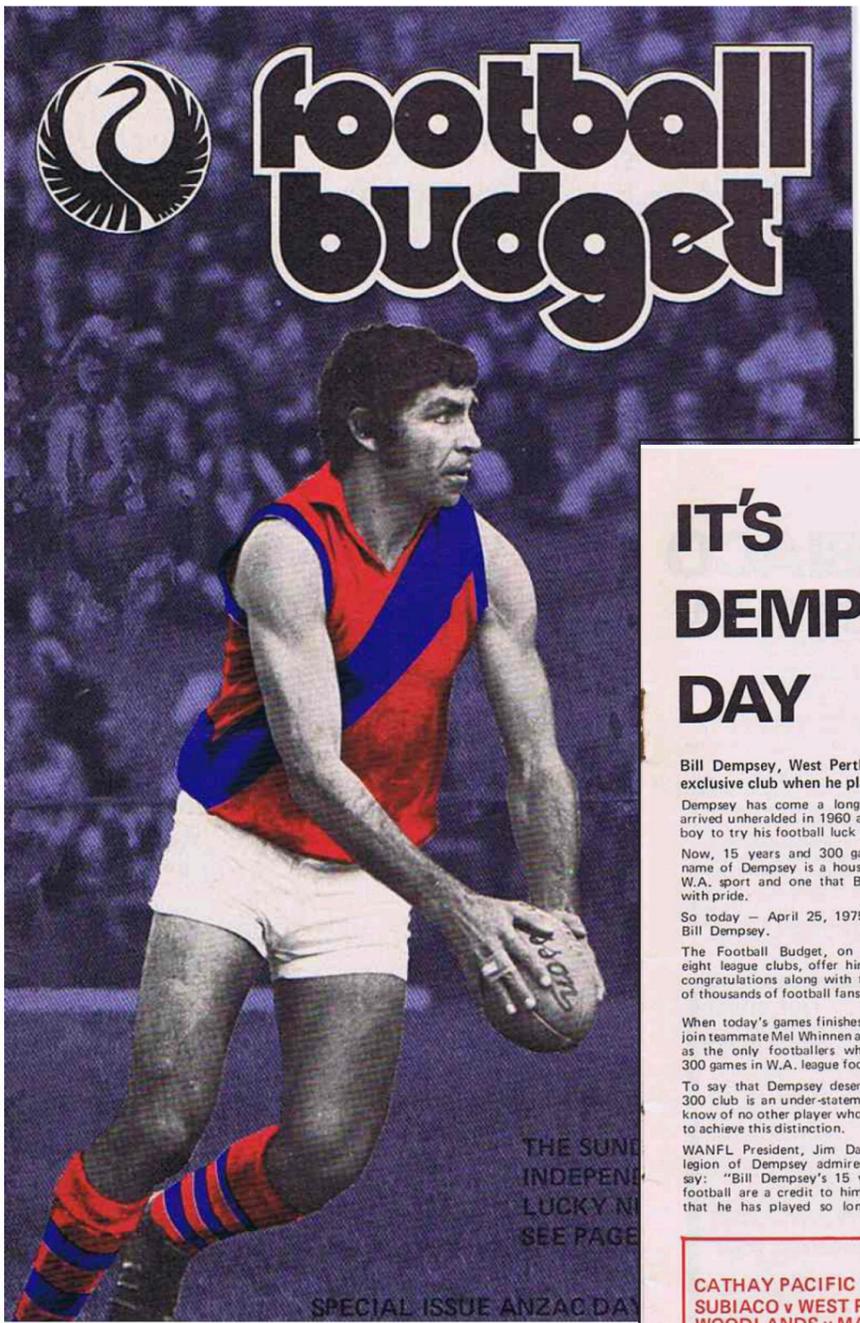
Football will provide no counter-attraction to the Dempsey main event at Subiaco Oval on Friday.

The occasion is worthy of the football world's exclusive attention, and there is an onus on 19 other West Perth players to see that Dempsey can celebrate the day with a victory drink.

## From the Vault ...

In a standalone fixture played on 25th April 1975, Bill Dempsey played his 300th game for our Club. Here's how the Football Budget commemorated Bill's achievement. For the record, West Perth enjoyed a comfortable 22 point win over Subiaco at Subiaco Oval.

There were 15,889 spectators in attendance to honour Bill's milestone game.



## IT'S DEMPSEY DAY



Bill Dempsey, West Perth's perennial ruck champion, will join football's most exclusive club when he plays his 300th League game today.

Dempsey has come a long way since he arrived unheralded in 1960 as a 17-year-old boy to try his football luck in the big city.

Now, 15 years and 300 games later, the name of Dempsey is a household word in W.A. sport and one that Bill should bear with pride.

So today — April 25, 1975 — belongs to Bill Dempsey.

The Football Budget, on behalf of the eight league clubs, offer him our heartiest congratulations along with the best wishes of thousands of football fans.

When today's games finishes, Dempsey will join teammate Mel Whinnen and Jack Sheedy as the only footballers who have played 300 games in W.A. league football.

To say that Dempsey deserves to join the 300 club is an under-statement because we know of no other player who deserved more to achieve this distinction.

WANFL President, Jim Davies, one of a legion of Dempsey admirers, had this to say: "Bill Dempsey's 15 years in league football are a credit to him and the game that he has played so long and so well.

To me the name of Dempsey is synonymous with exceptional marking ability.

They may have been more brilliant high marks but none so safe and reliable under pressure".

The Dempsey mark is his stock in trade but his football skills cover a far wider spectrum.

Not many players can get free of the famous Dempsey tackle; he has mastered the art of the drop kick and no-one knows more about the art of competing for a hit-out.

Dempsey's ruck talents were perfected under Graham Farmer who coached West Perth from 1968 till 1971.

The Dempsey-Farmer ruck combination was one of the most experienced and formidable ever to represent a club team in W.A.

So Bill Dempsey, who has provided W.A. football fans with hundreds of great moments during the last decade, today reaches a great moment in his distinguished career.

In recognition of this achievement, The Football Budget produced a special cover featuring an action shot of Dempsey. A mounted enlargement of this cover will be presented to Dempsey.

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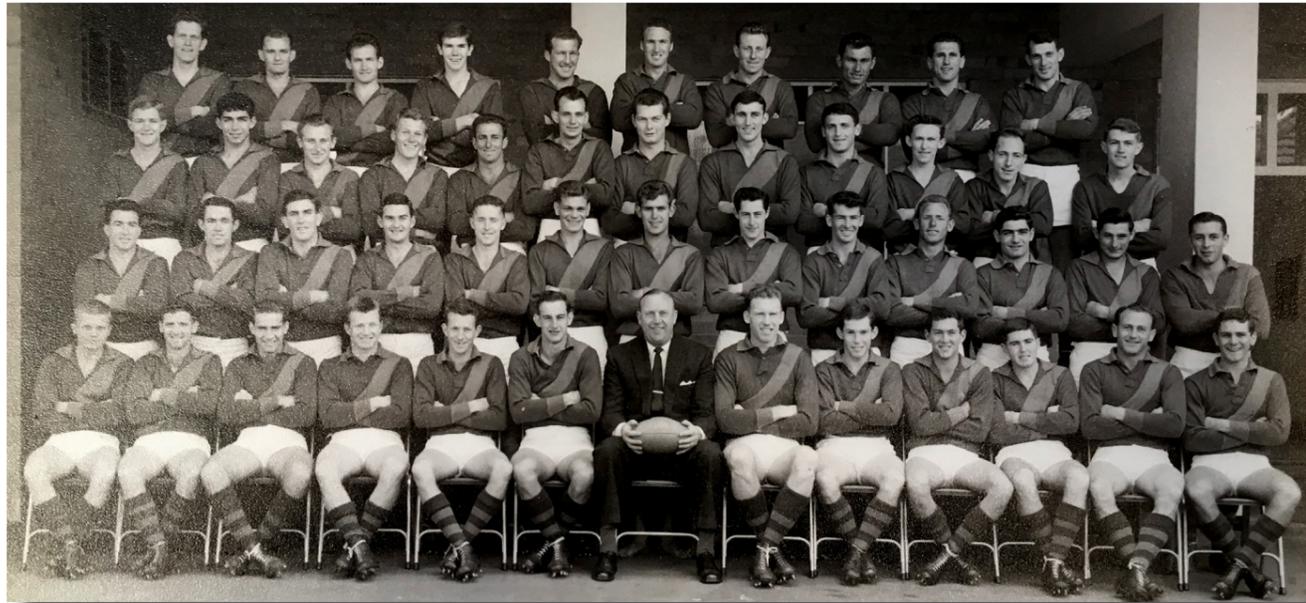
SPECIAL ISSUE ANZAC DAY

Football Budget  
25 April 1975

The Official Publication of the Western Australian National Football League Inc. C 1974.  
Volume 40, No. 4

FOOTBALL BUDGET Page One

## Team Photo - 1960



*In keeping with Arthur Olliver's desire to keep the League and Reserves' lists together, we have included here a team photo taken of the two lists combined.*

**Back row:** Brian Buttsworth, George Kerr, Pat Rogan, Warren Roper, Norm Smith, Barry Armstrong, Don Williams, Frank Margaria, Ken Ashdown, Ray Marinko

**Third row:** Norm McDiarmid, Bill Dempsey, Herb Lane, Murray Leeder, Mannix Heal, Roy Porter, Ross Kelly, Tom Marinko, Brian France, Wally Walsh, Phillip Kirkham, Peter Goss

**Second row:** Bob Graham, Ernie Cooley, Graham Edmondson, Neil Rotham, Geoff Hamel, Lindsay Holland, Mel Dragicevich, John Towner, Ross Ayre, Laurie McNamara, Joe Fanchi, Mick Marinko, Bill Armstrong

**Front row:** Richie Haddow, Ron Mumme, Syd Dufall, Ron McBride, Ron Bewick, Eddie Wylde (Vice-Captain), Arthur Olliver (Coach), Brian Foley (Captain), Peter Medhurst, Fred Margaria, Jimmy Jones, Don Marinko, Mel Whinnen

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## Future Past Player Sam Rotham



**Sam Rotham debuted for West Perth in 2015 and has played 13 games for our Club. A local product and grandson of past player Neil Rotham, Sam was a member of our 2019 Reserves' premiership team, coincidentally wearing the number 19 as his grandfather did. We asked Sam about his time at our club.**

**You played your first senior game for the Club in 2015. Can you tell us about your junior football pathway to Joondalup?**

As a junior I played my footy at Whitfords Junior Football Club from Auskick through to 17s or Year 12s as it is now called. At the time there were three Whitfords teams. By Year 12 we ended up all merging as one team and went on to win the Northern Conference Year 12 Premiership which was a highlight.

There was a really healthy crop of players coming through my year group at the time not only at Whitties but at all the junior clubs we competed against, so it made for a healthy

learning platform. My transition to West Perth happened during 15s and 16s where I did both years of development squads. I then had a year off to play with my friends during my last year of high school down at Whitfords then came back up to West Perth in my final Colts year and have been up here pretty well ever since.

**Can you tell us a little about your debut game? Who was it against and who did you find yourself up against?**

My debut came in round 4, 2015 against Subiaco when I was 18. I was matched up against Brad Stevenson throughout the day. I'm pretty sure he gave me a bath and kicked four or something. To say it was premature



and unexpected is an understatement. We were riddled with injuries to our tall stocks at the time, Jordy (Jones) was coming off surgery, Marcus (Adams) had broken his hand and Tyler (Keitel) hadn't had his clearance approved yet. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall during selection that week when my name got thrown forward. I was actually mucking around at the back of the group with my good mate Zach Saunders when it was announced the Thursday before the game. I thought I was getting told off for messing around not getting told I was going to debut. All that aside, I felt I was able to hold my own and kept my spot a fair chunk of the season after that date. Bill and the coaching staff threw me an opportunity which I like to think I made the most of and it was one I will remember for the rest of my life.

**Most players have people around them who have significantly influenced their football. Who are those who have most helped you?**

Early on it was definitely my mates from school, we lived in the same area, went to the same school and played in the same juniors' team. We used to have games on the oval at recess and lunch which got super-heated! There were definitely some guys within that group that could have gone on to bigger things in footy but life choices meant they decided to focus more on work and their trades. Nowadays it's definitely my family, they come to every game they can and support me whenever possible. They're great to have in my corner.

**Who were your football heroes growing up?**

I didn't really have any heroes as such but the same as most kids my age in Perth, Ben Cousins was the man we

all idolised. I also loved Beau Waters from an AFL perspective. My football heroes were probably my old man, my brothers and my mates. I would get more stoked playing with my mates and seeing one of them take a big hang than going to HJs to see West Coast players. Then I would love loading up Dad's car with the boys after playing and going to watch him or my brothers.

**It seems the West Perth Football Club is in the Rotham blood with your grandfather Neil having played four games for the Club in 1960 and 1961. What memories of his time at the Club has Neil shared with you?**

Pop keeps pretty quiet and humble about his footy and doesn't share too much about it. Nan has told all us grandkids that he had the nickname 'shags' during his footy career so I'd love to get a bit more dirt on him about how all that came about because he keeps pretty quiet about it all.

**Has Neil shared any specific memories of that 1960 reserves premiership win?**

Nothing really, he keeps pretty quiet about it all. I need to pick his brain about it because I reckon he would have some epic stories!

**You've recently started working in the football industry. Can you tell us a bit about your role at the WA Football Commission?**

Yeah so I've recently started in the role of Development Officer of the Claremont district at the Footy Commission. This sees me work in a lot of different areas to do with junior footy and the growth of the game at grass roots level. So far it's been really great and I'm really enjoying it. The team is a bunch of really good people who are all very supportive of each other and passionate about what they do so it makes it a great environment to be a part of. Kris Shannon works in the same role within the West Perth District. We spend a fair bit of time together learning the role, brainstorming ideas and chatting garbage which is always fun.



**What are some of your career highlights so far?**

My debut was definitely a highlight however it feels that long ago! Other than that, definitely, the Reserves' flag last year was unreal! We had such a good group and were hard underdogs so it made the win all the better!

**And obstacles you've had to overcome?**

My journey to this point hasn't been easy, I think I have had a different injury every year I have been at the Club since I was 18. This has made it really difficult to find consistency and form, and showcase my best footy. I've put a fair bit of work into my body to try to move past it all so hopefully it's an upwards trend from here.

**A house system was introduced as an initiative by Geoff Valentine and Steve Trehwella this season. You're a member of the Tyson House. Can you tell us a little about what you've learned about Ted Tyson and the importance of his contribution to the Club?**

Yeah I think it's a great thing what the Club has done this year. To be honest I didn't know a lot about Ted Tyson other than seeing his name on the lockers. Getting to do some homework on him as a player with my house group was pretty awesome. Kicking just under 1,200 goals in his 228 game career is crazy!

*Below: Sam Rotham and Terrell McKenzie displaying the Reserves' premiership cup in the rooms immediately after the game*



# Remember when... Ted Tyson had a day out?



Ted Tyson played 228 games for our Club across 13 seasons (1930 - 1941 and in 1945) kicking 1,197 goals. He was named at full forward in the Club's Team of the Century.

The year was 1933 and star of stage and screen, Gracie Fields, released her rendition of "My Lucky Day". Ted Tyson didn't need much luck, but he did have big a day out in booting 13 goals in round three of the season against Perth at Leederville.

### An excerpt from The WA Footballer:

"Ideal weather conditions prevailed for the third series of matches on last Saturday. Results in two games caused no surprise, but in that at the Port, Subiaco upset most calculations decisively defeating Souths. At Leederville Wests, producing their best form, inflicted a very severe defeat on the redlegs, and at Perth Oval Claremont played well to lead for three quarters and then were beaten to a frazzle by young Easts' snappy work.

At Leederville Perth fielded its best available side and it was thought that the redlegs would at least extend the Cardinals. The game opened up with Perth putting plenty of vim into their work and early were all over the opposition in general play. Their forward work however, was of the poorest.

The kicking for goal was wretched and players within scoring range would persist in attempting short passes. Had Perth's forwards made the most of their opportunities, the first changeover should have been made with the redlegs comfortably in front. As it was they were a goal in arrears. 3.2 to 2.2.

For half of the second quarter Perth flattered its supporters and it seemed that despite the forward work, which was still bad, they would come good. Wests meanwhile were settling down and hitting their best form had the ascendancy. They kicked long, and set Perth a good example that was wasted. At half time the scores were 10.4 to 5.3 in favour of the Leederville lads.

The third quarter was a slaughter of the innocents, and Wests delighted all but the Perthies, with a brilliant display of football. When the final bell rang, giving relief to Perth, the Westerners were 92 points to the good, 24.9 to 9.7 and in addition to its beating West's highest score against Perth, it was also the biggest defeat the Cardinals have ever inflicted on the redlegs from the WACA ground."

The "Happy Ending" Gracie sang about later in 1933 didn't quite eventuate for the Leederville lads. A preliminary final appearance against Subiaco for the right to play East Fremantle in the grand final was lost by just four points.

Subiaco had been defeated by West Perth in all three home and away games in 1933 and were not expected to be any match for the Cardinals in the preliminary final.

The favourites were jumped at the outset, Subiaco leading 9.6 (60) to 2.0 (12) at quarter time. The Cardinals waged a brave fightback but ultimately went down by four points, 13.12 (90) to 13.8 (86).

Ted Tyson later (in the 1980s) suggested he'd kicked a goal in the dying minutes of that game but for a poorly positioned goal umpire, could have booted West Perth into the 1933 grand final, ultimately won by East Fremantle.



Front page of The WA Footballer, 13 May 1933

### Upcoming Events

At the time of going to print, and reflecting uncertainty around commencement of the 2020 WAFL season, only two events are currently planned.

**Dominish Medal and Awards Dinner**  
Friday 2nd October, 2020

**Breckler Medal and Awards Dinner**  
Saturday 3rd October, 2020

Please refer to the club's website for updates as they are subject to change.

## Acknowledgements

A special thanks to the following contributors to this edition of HeartBeat [Part II]:

Sean Cowan  
Ross Kelly  
Bill Spittles  
Mel Whinnen

Bill Dempsey  
Sam Rotham  
Steve Trehwella

# UPNEXT

## HEARTBEAT PART III

### Celebrating 1969

THE W.A. FOOTBALLER		11
West Perth v. Perth, at Leederville.		
Field: PETERKIN.		
Boundaries: Menner & Howson.		Goals: Davies & Langdon.
<b>WEST PERTH.</b>	<b>PERTH.</b>	
Colours—Cardinal and Blue.	Colours—Red and Black.	
1 CASHMAN, J. (captain)	3 THITCHENER, E.	
2 McGUICKIN, E.	4 MATSON, G.	
3 HOPKINS, F. S.	5 KEIGHTLEY, C.	
4 TETLEY, M.	6 TRAINOR, R.	
5 TYSON, E.	8 HUNGERFORD, H.	
6 O'REILLY, I.	9 DAVEY, H.	
7 DALZIELL, R. J.	10 DEWAR, L. (Capt.)	
8 O'CONNOR, M. J.	12 CROOKS, B.	
9 EDMONDSON, B.	13 GRIGG, H.	
11 FLEMMING, E. J.	14 FITZGERALD, W.	
12 RAINOLDI, W.	15 FITZGERALD, P.	
14 JEFFERY, F.	16 SCHRADER, W.	
15 MORGAN, J. W. (vice-capt.)	17 GOOK, A.	
16 ROBERTS, J.	19 DONOGHUE, A.	
19 SANDERSON, R.	20 LUCAS, R.	
22 McDIARMID, J.	21 JOHNSTON, A.	
24 GREGG, S.	22 OLIPHANT, D. (vice-capt.)	
26 MARINKO, D.	23 LOCKYER, L.	
27 WALSH, P.	24 BROWN, A.	
	25 SHEPHERD, A.	
	26 LOVE, R.	

Team listing from The WA Footballer, 13 May 1933