

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 Three of our bumper first edition of HeartBeat for 2020. Here we look back at our 1969 premiership win.

Included are several 1969 West Perth premiership players' WAFL player profile pictures discovered in old copies of *Saturday's Weekend News* (1967, 1968) for you to enjoy.

You're welcome to provide feedback and suggestions for future issues to heritage@falconsfc.com.au.





PART III

Celebrating 1969

	rage:
Polly Arrives	3
Disappointmentand redemption	5
'The Architect": Part One	6-15
Remember when:	
Nest Perth's future was on display at Subiaco?	
From the Vault Bill Dempsey	18
'The Architect": Part Two	
From the Vault: The Flying Cardies	
Remember when:	
Spectators camped out all night before the grand final?	30
'The Architect": Part Three	
Jpcoming Events	36
Team Photo	40
What the Papers Said	41 - 44
Heading West: Bryan Pleitner	
From the Vault: 1969 Season Gallery	54 - 57
Heading West: Barry McAuliffe	58 - 61
Acknowledgements	62
Player Business Advertisements	
West Perth Trees	25
Century 21 Real Estate	37
Lourey Electrical	62
Hammertime Automotive Service and Repairs	

HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV Issue 8, May 2020

Polly Arrives

The appointment of Graham Farmer as West Perth's coach for 1968 brought much excitement and anticipation. Through the mid-1960s, West Perth had seen the emergence of a crop of good young players and these players, blended with seasoned stars and some recruits presented the football club with a bright future. The team won 18 of their 21 games in 1968, including a sequence of eleven consecutive wins.

The Farmer influence extended beyond game day... the training regime he introduced was driven by a fierce desire to ensure players were as well prepared for the rigours of League football as they could be, physically and mentally.

Polly's methods were best captured in the Football Budget of 8th June 1968.

Footballers can and do become browned-off with the long grind of keeping fit for nine months of a year, but:

TRAINING NO DREARY ROUTINE UNDER GRAHAM FARMER

He has introduced training methods totally different from any previously seen at West Perth. There is great variety in the training methods Farmer employs.

Let's face it. Modern football with all the pre-season training, then training twice a week for six months — all of which will be totally inadequate if and when, Australian football becomes fully professional-demands that footballers concentrate on maintaining if not improving their stamina, fitness and playing ability for nine months of a year.

months of a year.

What has Farmer achieved to alter the outlook and approach of his players to training? Why are they keen to get on with their training and be on time?

Farmer trains his players as he expects them to play.

He introduces to training the many finer points of the game.

There is five to 10 minutes of hip and shoulder bumping.

Handball takes at least 20 minutes of training time.

In handballing his players cannot get by on the basis of near enough is good enough.

They must work at perfecting their handball.

The Farmer creed is keep striving to be better than one is, which amounts to hard work, practice and more practice. However, as Farmer has shown his charges, hard work and practice can be enjoyable.

THEY ARE KEEN TO GET ON THE TRAINING TRACK

Much of Graham Farmer's dedication to football has rubbed off on to his players, who are keen to get on to the training track.

Amongst his training routines is one where two players stand shoulder-to-shoulder. The ball is kicked up to them. However, there is a player in front of them ready to intercept the mark and another behind ready to pounce on the ball.

to pounce on the ball.

This aspect of training is something football fans see eccuring on numerous occasions in match play.

in match play.

His players are thus schooled to back-up. They must get to the ball quickly and play-on at all times.

The training emphasis placed on the general aspects of play, over a period of time must bear

Amongst his training routines one where two players stand houlder-to-shoulder. The ball players.

What was the reason for West Perth's players lapse against East Perth last Saturday?

West Perth had 80 per cent. of the play and won by two points.

According to Farmer it was carelessness and loss of concentration under pressure.

On training nights all West

On training nights all West Perth players must sign the training book. Those not on the track before 5 p.m., don't duck the full training programme. (Continued on page 21)

ACE DRIVE-INS — Tonight's Programmes on Page 6

THE FOOTBALL BUDGET

Page Thirteen

TRAINING AT W. PERTH

It's quite humourous to see West Perth players behind time trying to break even time endeavoring to get out on the training track.

Before training concludes a list of players' starting times is sent out to Farmer. The latecomers stop out on the oval with Farmer to complete their full training time schedule.

Farmer has always been the dedicated footballer. He sets the example at Leederville and with his players following in his footsteps, West Perth must eventually develop into a strong, topclass combination.

PAGE 2 PAGE 3

Polly Farmer contesting a ruck knock against Barry Chittleborough with Norm Knell in support. Nearly 21,000 spectators attended this Round 4 game at Leederville. Perth won by eight points.

Disappointment ... and redemption

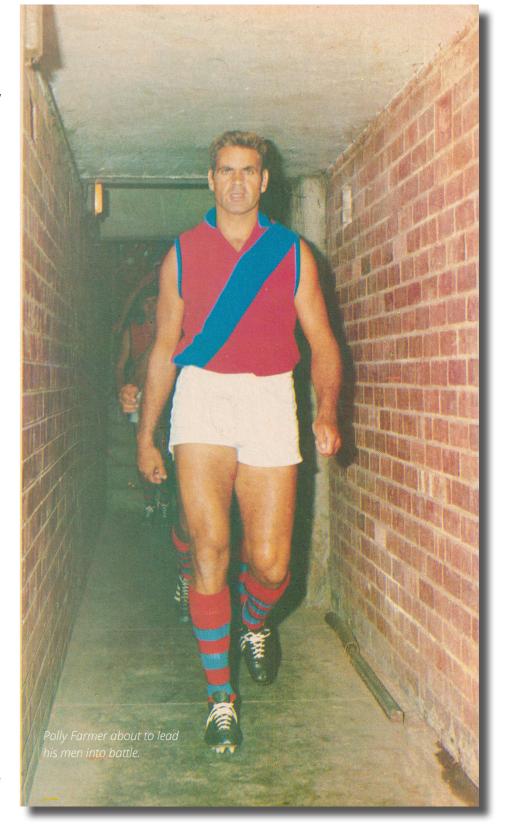
After finishing the 1968 season in second place, five games clear of third placed East Perth, and one game shy of ladder leader, Perth, the Cardinals performed poorly in the final series, losing the second semi-final to Perth by 27 points, and then preliminary final to arch rivals, East Perth by three points.

In his President's report, Len Roper wrote:

"Our League Team's performance in the Finals was a very disappointing conclusion to an otherwise quite successful season of football... These two matches *lead me to the conclusion that* we had in your team, players who have not the dedication or determination – or THE ABILITY to lift themselves and play football of the standard required for the pressures and tension of finalround matches. I believe it is vital we take stock of this state of affairs before the next season commences, for I am convinced -I'd have always maintained – only those players who are prepared to give of their best ALL THE TIME and develop an almost fanatical devotion to their Club and the guernsey, should be permitted the honour of representing West Perth."

At the Club's annual general meeting on 9th December 1968, Polly Farmer addressed members, expressing his satisfaction at winning 18 games while also contributing "pertinent commentary about commitments, desperation, desire and a physical approach". Polly indicated measures would be undertaken to "overcome the problem" while also suggesting members "would have something to be happy about at the end of 1969."

He delivered.



PAGE 4 PAGE 5

Below is an extract from Stephen Hawke's brilliant book, "Polly Farmer". Steve has kindly given permission for reproduction of the chapter "The Architect", which describes in great detail West Perth's 1969 season and premiership win.

THE ARCHITECT: Part One

The West Perth squad may have been waiting with some apprehension to see what their coach's remedial measures would be. No doubt many expected that the training regimen would become even harder, and the admonitions from the coach more fierce. But Mel Whinnen indicates that this was not the case:

"I think what really happened - Polly had some very strong ideas, and what he had to do was modify his ideas because we were down here with our standard, and he was up there with his ... Polly had to drop his standard a little bit and then lift us up a little bit further ... He found it hard because he knew what we had to do - he had done it by the time he came to us."

Dempsey recalls that: "over the summer we had a few golf days and social gatherings and the fellows all got to know one another a bit better." It cannot have hurt for the players to get to know their coach outside the confines of the dressing-room, training track and playing field either. He had acquired respect quickly; as the second year unfolded there is clearly a sense of a more comfortable relationship developing to complement this. He did gradually step up the training requirements, to the point where the players remember 1969 as a harder year on the track than 1968, but as a happier one, too, where all knew what was expected and where they were heading.

A common standard was required in terms of effort from the squad, but he was able to drive those who would respond to being driven, give space to those who could be trusted to get

PAGE 6

on with it, and encourage where he felt it was worthwhile. Young Cometti was one of his problem players. He undoubtedly had potential, but admits: "I wasn't your dedicated footballer ... I was wanting to do other things, in broadcasting - I was a radio announcer at the time. The two things just weren't compatible."

He was exactly the sort of player Roper and Farmer had been referring to at the close of 1968, but Farmer's reaction was not to dismiss him out of hand:

"He would come around home and speak to my mother, and try to get me to go to training and all this sort of stuff ... Perhaps he was acting out of self-interest too, but it did give me an insight into the fact that he was prepared to do a fair bit of leg work to try to get people to do the right thing. What impressed me about Pol was his resolve to try to make it work for me, given that I wasn't doing the right thing."

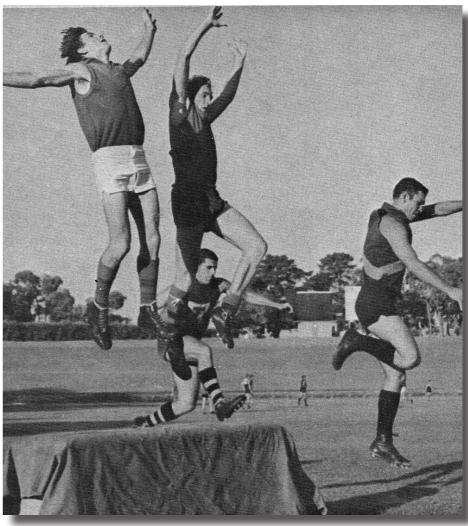


There were no big-name recruits to bolster the team in 1969. Cometti turned out to be a lost cause. He did not leave the Club, but lost his spot at full-forward and became a fringe player. A number of other local juniors emerged as League players, including defender Tony Dragun, winger Alan Watling, and rover Bill Valli, and country recruit Keith Miller settled into a forward flank position. Two fringe VFL players, ruckman defender Neil Evans, and defender Bryan Pleitner from Essendon and Hawthorn, were the only imports.

The first two games of the season were against teams with new coaches for 1969, but both were very familiar faces to Farmer. Denis Marshall left the VFL on the high note of a second-place finish in the 1968 Brownlow Medal to return to Claremont as captaincoach. At East Perth, Derek Chadwick had stepped down from the coaching position while continuing as captain. Moving in to take his place was none other than Jack Sheedy, back for the first time since 1964.

Farmer missed the opening game against Claremont with a leg injury. If Marshall was hoping that life might be a bit easier back home, he soon found otherwise when he had to leave the field in the second quarter. He was collected by John Wynne, and finished up with a bruised leg, and yet another head gash, this time requiring 13 stitches. His head was still clear enough to instigate a series of positional changes that sparked a third quarter surge that took Claremont to the lead, and it managed to hang on for a draw. The showing was a false

Dennis Cometti kicks long in a 1967 game at East Fremantle. West Perth won the Round 14 game by 53 points.





Issue 8, May 2020

RECRUIT

John Wynne clears a hurdle in acrobatic style during the 1969 pre-season. Behind John are Laurie Richards, Dave Dyson and Ray Margaria.

dawn for Claremont, with their first win not coming for another 10 games.

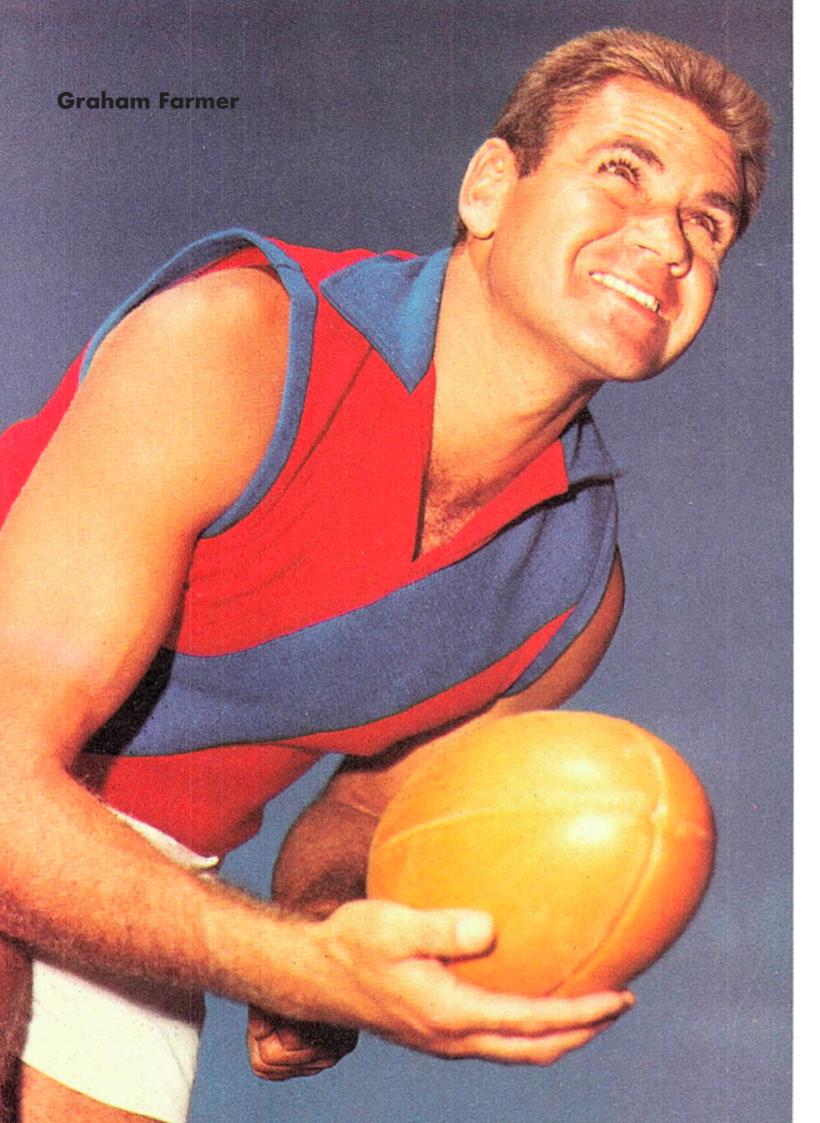
One player who made his debut in the game was an 18-year-old ruckman, Graham Moss, who would emerge as the west's next ruckman of real quality.

When Sheedy brought his East Perth charges to Leederville Oval for the second game of the season, it was the first time Farmer had opposed him since 1955, when Farmer was with the Royals, and Sheedy with East Fremantle. Farmer was still far from fully fit, and it appears to be the only game in his career when he did not actually play as a ruckman, spending the game at full-forward. A loss left West Perth in sixth place on the ladder, but it was still waiting on clearances for Pleitner and Evans, had Farmer playing on one leg, and six others on the injury list.



In March 1969, North Melbourne travelled to Perth and played West Perth in a pre-season hit-out. Here Joe Merillo gets his kick away under pressure from his North Melbourne opponent as Craige Baker looks on.

PAGE 7



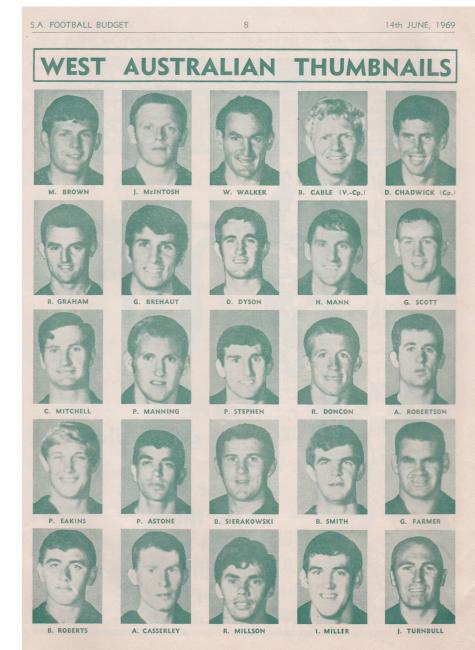
In the third week, the Royals emerged as the season's trendsetters when they defeated Perth. They were the only undefeated side, and their scalps had been the other three finalists of 1968. They were getting great drive on the ball, with Keith Doncon lured back from a year's retirement roving to Mal Brown. Brown seemed to be relishing Sheedy's decision to play him as a ruckman, recording best-on-ground votes from the media in all three games.

West Perth got on the winning list with a mammoth 21-goal win over Swan Districts. Laurie Richards, who had been alternating with Cometti in the full-forward position, finally came good with 12 goals in the slaughter. He followed up with another seven in a win against Perth that took the Cardinals into third place ahead of the reigning premiers, but was coming under notice for his spectacular aerial skills as much as his goal scoring. Another victory over Subiaco continued its climb up the ladder to second place.

The following week against South Fremantle, Farmer played his 300th game of senior football. With the milestone he shrugged off the effects of the injury and began to show that there was life in the old legs yet. His form got better and better as West Perth continued to rack up wins leading up to the return meeting with East Perth.

This top-of-the-ladder clash for the 'Perth Derby' drew a record crowd of 26,760, that still stands as the best ever attendance at a WANFL qualifying game. They were treated to a high standard of football, with the game fluctuating through the first three quarters, until Farmer engineered a strong final term that saw the Cardinals kicking five goals to nil, for an impressive victory.

This left them only half a game adrift of the Royals, with a thirty point advantage in percentage. This was the last round of domestic games before the 1969 interstate championships in Adelaide. "... [Farmer] was able to drive those who would respond to being driven, give space to those who could be trusted to get on with it..."



Graham Farmer, Dave Dyson and John Wynne were West Perth's representatives in the 1969 national carnival in Adelaide. John's thumbnail was not included in this feature by the South Australian Football Budget.



"... Farmer
believed he had
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of performance,
and especially of
attitude..."

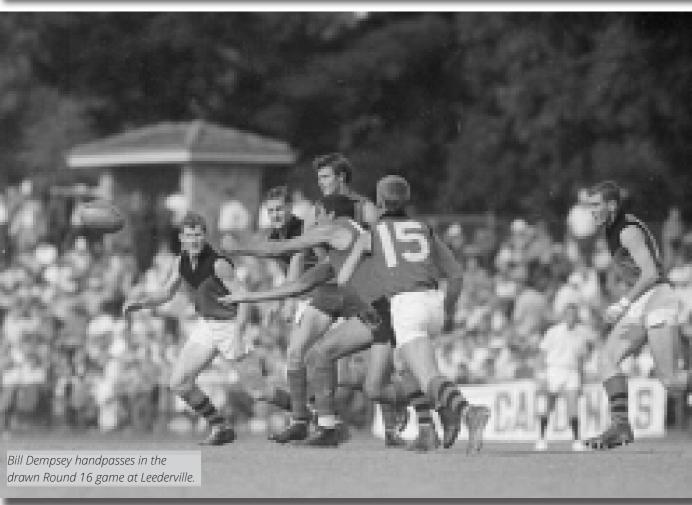
With his slow start to the season Farmer had not been named in the original squad for the carnival, but came in after a reshuffle caused by injuries, along with Derek Chadwick, who was named captain. It was Farmer's fourth appearance in the national championships. His first in 1956 had seen his emergence as a star player. Of the other players who had participated in that Perth carnival, only Ted Whitten and Haydn Bunton were still playing senior football, and neither was appearing in Adelaide. His longevity is emphasised by the fact that Mal Atwell, who had made his debut with East Perth five years after Farmer, was now his non-playing coach.

Atwell showed no deference to his seniors when he named Farmer as a reserve for the opening game against South Australia. In his 17th season of football, it was the first time he had started the game on the bench-and he was not impressed. He was brought onto the ground late in the third quarter, too late to have any impact on a game that the Sandgropers lost by two goals. Four days later he was in the starting line-up for a head-tohead clash with Nicholls. The West was never in the hunt, down two goals to nine after one quarter, and six to 15 at half-time. They recovered a little ground in the second half, but Victorian coach Ron Barassi claimed he had told his players to ease up in

does #HEART beat true?

HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV







Polly Farmer celebrates his 300th game with League and Reserve teammates.

the last quarter and save themselves for the decider against the home state. The press had Nicholls as Victoria's best player, and Farmer as the West's second best after Bill Walker.

Farmer bruised his back against Victoria, and missed the final game against Tasmania, in which the West scored its only win of the carnival. When team officials cast their votes for the squad's best player, he did well enough from his one full game to score nine votes, the same as rovers Cable and Walker. He and Cable could not be separated on count back, and so shared the Simpson Medal, giving them four each.

West Perth's performance through the second half of the season was patchy, largely due to injury problems. At the worst point, when the Cardinals went down to East Fremantle, they had 14 players on the injured list. It had started in the game after the

championships, where they finished a game against Perth with only 16 men on the field. The only constant, as they staged a seesawing battle with Perth for second place and the double chance, was the form of their captain-coach. In the last 11 weeks he was not out of the best player lists, and at one point was listed by the Football Budget as West Perth's best player for five successive weeks.

One of these games produced a classic battle between the veteran and the angry young man of the League, in which both Farmer and Mal Brown showed their leadership qualities:

"Farmer lifted himself for the final drive for victory after three quarters of fiery ruck duels against East Perth's big, virile followers, Mal Brown and Bradley Smith. The clashes in the packs were fierce - Farmer received eight free-kicks and gave away as many ... [His] value

to the team was increased by his steadying influence and his ability to channel play coolly in a desperate *quarter when tempers flared under* mounting pressure. Brown and Smith lack Farmer's knowledge and skill, but were of great value to East Perth in the general play where their strength and energy had a profound influence on the game. It was Brown's sheer power and competitive spirit that played a major role in keeping the scores locked together for the closing minutes of the game. His value to East *Perth at this stage was comparable* to Farmer's influence on the game earlier in the quarter."

Brown was still only 22 years old at this stage, but already in his fifth season of senior football. He was certainly well past the Neil Balme stage of the soft body which Farmer would treat with caution, as the report quoted above shows. Whether Brown felt aggrieved by something Farmer had done, or

PAGE 12 PAGE 13

whether it was just the impetuosity of the young bull eager to knock the old bull off his pedestal, he had overstepped the mark earlier in the game, as the same report notes, in qualifying the compliments: "It was disappointing to see Brown fell Farmer from behind in a third-quarter incident that was a throwback to Brown's immature days in League football."

It was as a result of this tie that the Cardinals slipped behind Perth on the ladder. When poor kicking saw them lose to Perth by two points a fortnight later the gap widened to a game plus percentage. Then they succumbed to Subiaco, and only stayed in touch because Perth went down to fifthplaced East Fremantle on the same day. Nevertheless, with only two games to go to the finals, a second semi-final berth looked an unlikely prospect. Even more worrying was that in the space of four weeks they had faced the three other teams who would appear in the finals, and their best result was a draw.

West Perth did all that it could by winning the last two games against South and East Fremantle. The first of these was a crushing 19-goal win that lifted its percentage above Perth's but left it a game behind. Farmer must have felt the gods were smiling on him when Perth collapsed against bottomplaced Claremont in its last game. The Claremont win enabled Marshall to escape the indignity of the wooden spoon but, more importantly, allowed West Perth to slip into second place at the death-knock.

They finished two and a half games behind East Perth. It was seen as an open final round, with East Perth favoured, but at far from unbackable odds. The Royals' top-of-the-ladder finish had been due largely to the brilliant form of Brown throughout the season. This was reflected in his clean sweep of the media awards that netted him cash, holiday trips and a new car. Runner-up in all but one case was none other than Farmer, who had steadily worked his way up the lists

as the season progressed. He also finished second behind Brown in the Sandover Medal count.

As the final round approached the events of 12 months earlier were uppermost in Farmer's mind, and he was absolutely determined to prevent a repetition of his team's inglorious performance. He was not unhappy with the situation as it stood. He

believed that the qualifying round was played with the objective of reaching the second semi-final and that had been achieved, if only just. The Cardinals played from here on level terms, with East Perth gaining no reward for its extra 10 points, and there was something to be said for being the underdogs and having the attention and flattery focussed on their rival.

West riddled with injuries still redoubtable

Last week West Perth was riddled with injuries. It fielded its weakest side for the season and went down by three points to Old Easts. With half of its 14 injured players fit it will be a redoubtable combination. And this week watch out—



The return of five key players will allow West to regain balance and penetration.

Norm Knell (ruck), Peter Panegyres and Bill Valli (wing), John Wynne (CHF), Keith Miller (HFF), are expected to be fit.

Dave Dyson (back) and Tony Dragun (kick on leg) joined West's lengthy list of injured after last Saturday's game.

Good news is that Gary Fischer (achilles tendon), yet to play this season, should be available.

Graham Farmer cannot pinpoint the reason why his team has suffered so many injuries, which he puts down to bad luck.

NOTE OF WARNING

In view of all the injuries he claims with justification West Perth has overcome difficulties extremely well, but he sounded a note of warning. He said:

note of warning. He said:

"We are near the top. We can't afford to lose a game and we can't affort to become complacent

Graham Farmer has killed any rumours that he would not be with West Perth next year. He told me last week he had a contract with West Perth for two years with the option of a third year.

Half-way through last season he agreed to accept West's coaching offer for a third year when approached on this score by the club

JOHN WYNNE'S ADAPTABILITY PAID-OFF

There are not many players both accomplished left and right foot kicks around these days, but Johnny Wynne is one such player.

His adaptability to kick either foot enabled him to keep playing and also win a State guernsey.

He told me he has had trouble with his right ankle throughout this season. It's always been sore. It was discovered last week that he has a chipped ankle bone, which will not prevent him playing this week. A badly bruised thigh relegated him to the sidelines.

For the best part of the season he has not been able to drop kick the ball with his right foot. The alternative if he was to continue playing football drop kicking the ball—expected of a centre half-forward—was to give his left foot plenty of work.

Swinging to his left foot was no problem to Wynne except that he was constantly reminded that his right ankle wasn't right for a reason now painfully

ACE DRIVE-INS — Tonight's Programmes on Page 28
THE FOOTBALL BUDGET Page Thirteen

The Football Budget for 19th July 1969 discusses injury impact on West Perth.

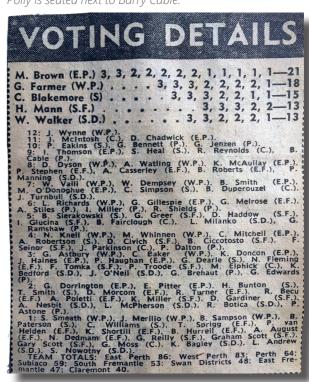
The injury problems had cleared up, leaving him with a full list to choose from, and the side was more settled in many respects than in the previous year. The ruckmen were no longer having to plug key position gaps. The experienced Dyson was now performing well at full-back. Second year player, Greg Astbury, had taken over centre half-back. Whinnen as always was in the pivot. Wynne had laid claim to the title of top centre half-forward in the competition with an outstanding year of football, despite playing the second half of the year with a chipped bone in his right ankle. He had also acquired the reputation of the team's tough man. With Richards continuing to perform at full-forward, and Smeath and Miller on the flanks, the team had a potent and settled attack, as reflected in some of their high scores and big winning margins during the season. The following division was still the best in the League. Valli had been one of the boom recruits of the year, establishing himself as first rover. Dempsey was free to do what he did best, supporting Farmer in the ruck, and they had able supports in Evans and Knell.

Farmer believed he had the ammunition. It was a matter of performance, and especially of attitude. He drummed in the lesson of the year before, telling them that they had wanted victory, but not been prepared to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve it. In the press there was talk of their reputation as 'brittle' in final-round football, and of East Perth being the team to exploit this.

To be continued...



The strain begins to show as the Sandover Medal count reaches its climax. Polly is seated next to Barry Cable.



1969 Sandover Medal count details.



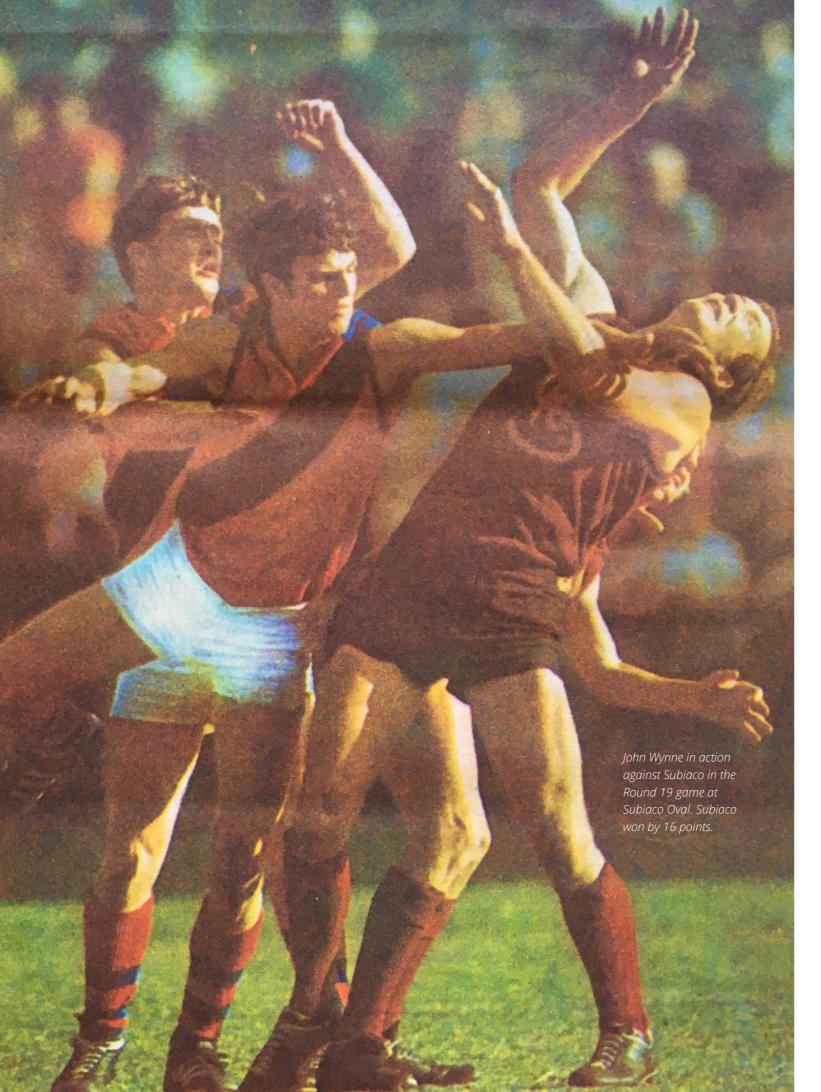
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PAGE 14 PAGE 15



Remember when...

West Perth's bright future was on display at Subiaco?

It was 3rd July 1965, the Victorians were in town to take on Western Australia and Peter, Paul and Mary were singing about the times that were a changin'. It wouldn't be long before times would be a changin' for the Cardinals, too.

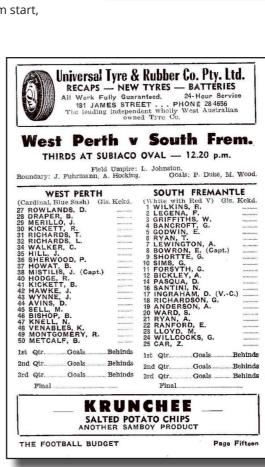
Mel Whinnen and Bill Dempsey took their places in the home team alongside Bob Spargo, who was awarded the Simpson Medal, and Brian France. Leading the ruck for Victoria was Graham Farmer. Western Australia were to win that contest, 10.14 (74) to 8.17 (65) in front of 35,476 spectators.

The spectators who arrived early for interstate game were treated to a display by a good number of future West Perth premiership players. West Perth's thirds played South Fremantle at 12.20pm, featuring Joe Merillo, Laurie Richards, John Hill, Bob Howat, John Wynne, Mick Sell, Norm Knell and Brian Metcalf.

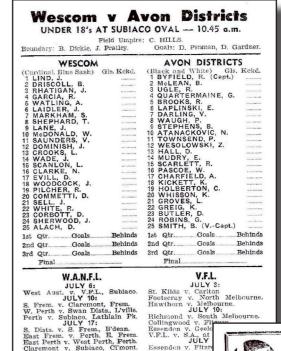
The early game, a 10.45am start, featured a combined

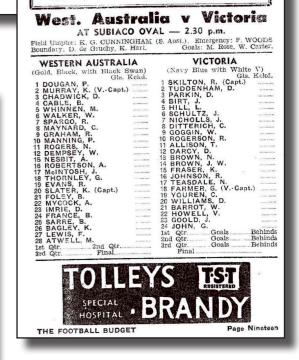
West Perth district team (Wescom) playing Avon Districts. The West Perth side included Alan Watling, Dennis Cometti and Rod White. Also in that team was life member and current property steward, Ray Garcia.

Eight members of the West Perth 1969 premiership side featured in games played on that Saturday in July 1969.



THE FOOTBALL BUDGET





FRESH CLEAN

CASTROL

Out Front at Leading Garages

Team listings from The Football Budget, 3 July 1965

From the Vault ...

Bill Dempsey was one of the cornerstones on which Graham Farmer would build his new team.

When Polly arrived at West Perth, Bill had played nearly 150 games and had established a reputation as one of the finest players in the competition. Bill was awarded the Breckler Medal in 1966, recognition that sat comfortably

with several media awards he was awarded in that year.

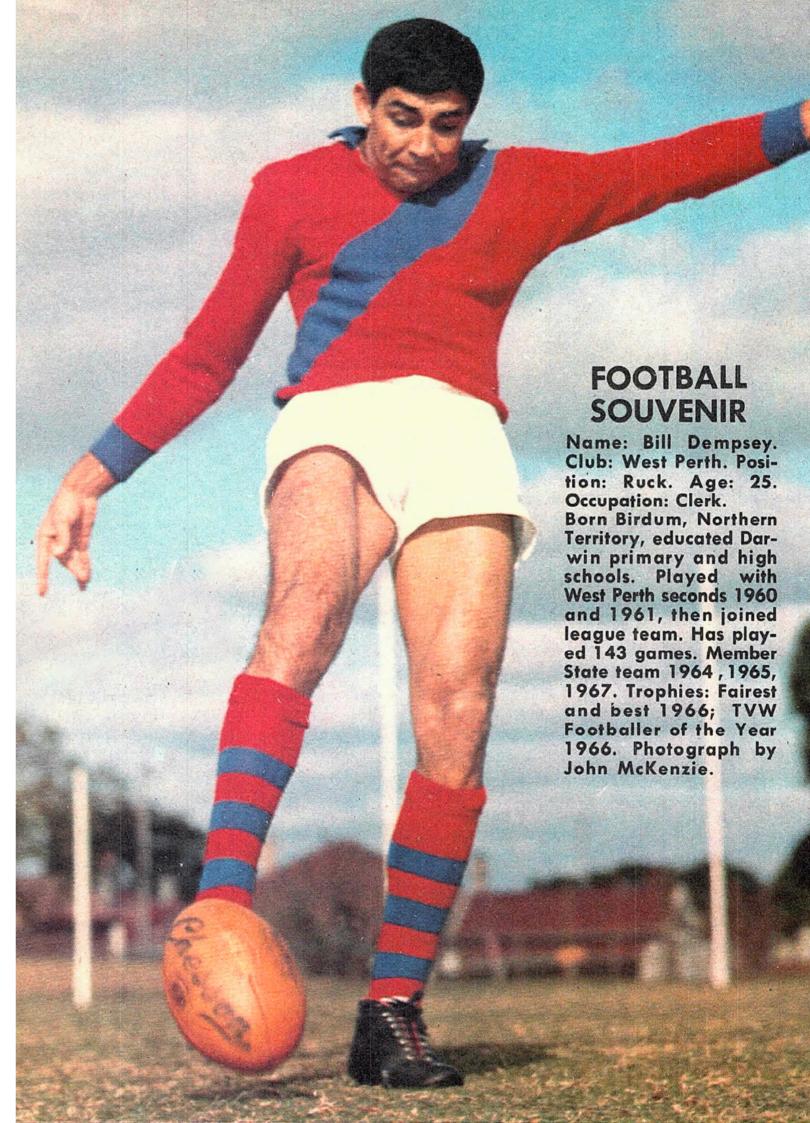
Chief among these was the TVW
Channel 7 Footballer of the Year
award, Bill winning from Perth's Pat
Dalton. Photos of Bill awaiting receipt
of this award were recently discovered
and are featured below.

Also in 1966, Bill Dempsey tied with Bill Walker to win the ABW Channel 2 Footballer of the Year award, and he tied with Barry Cable for the 6PR Footballer of the Year award.









Below is a continuation of the extract from Stephen Hawke's book, "Polly Farmer".

THE ARCHITECT: Part Two

The match would turn out to be "one of the most memorable and talked about final-round games on record. This was because of the sheer ferocity of the first quarter. Hips, shoulders and bonecracking bumps were traded freely in the first term, which was described by many critics as the hardest and best brand of football seen for years." By the time the quarter ended, any question marks hovering over West Perth had well and truly disappeared.

Farmer sprung the tactical surprise by placing his tall defender, Bryan Pleitner, on a wing for the first time. Pleitner was very quick off the mark, and strong overhead. The idea was to provide an extra avenue into attack from the congested centre, but Pleitner was also able to provide additional strength at the centre bounces where most of the heavy action took place. West Perth sprung out of the blocks, having 2.1 (13), all scored by rover Valli, in the first five minutes. Then came the first of the talked about incidents. John Wynne shirt-fronted East Perth rover Hans Verstegen, and left him in the hands of a pair of trainers who propped him against the post in a forward pocket. His place on the ball was taken by Keith Doncon, who had hardly entered the fray when he was flattened by a bone-shattering bump from Farmer. Sheedy, watching from the sidelines, "thought he was dead", and indeed, it was some time before he too was able to stagger up to the forward line to recover. The Royals began chasing the man rather than the ball. Bradley Smith caught up with Pleitner, to make it three men down in the first 15 minutes. Wynne was reported for "unduly rough play" after remonstrating with Smith, but he was also dominant at centre half-forward.







BATTLE OF **TACTICS**

It will be a testing second semi-final highlighted by a battle of tactics between East Perth's non-playing coach Jack Sheedy and West Perth's captain-coach Graham

In my view there is little be-tween either combination. Both coaches have experi-mented with their full-forwards and their half-forward lines this

Farmer suddenly has an embarrasment of riches with all players apart from Panegyres (winger) fit, and therefore it means that West continue to experiment with this important line, one long stabilised by East Perth.

FARMER-BROWN

Farmer, Dempsey, Sampson, Knell are an accomplished ruck battery. Even at 34, Farmer is worth a half dozen ordinary ruck plodders, but his side revolves around him too much as does Subiaco around Bunton.

East Perth revolves around no particular player, while its Brown, Pitter, Haines, Haughan ruck combination all bring that fire and dash to their play, vital to the winning of final round games.

Sandover Medallist Mal Brown, is the key to his side's ruck and game. Having a day out Brown can plunder the best of teams.

The rovers. Here the Cardinals are at an advantage through the accomplished young

Valli, also Nykyforak or Baker.
East's first rover Doncon certainly represents top class football talent, but Doncon won't
explode unless he can hit top
form, a difficult assignment
after having played one game
since the ninth round on May 31,

since the minth round on May 31,

The goal-to-goal lines: Dorrington or Tierney-Dyson;
Thomson-Astbury; ChadwickWhinnen; Smith-Wynne; Matson Richards. It works out
about even, but around the
field the Royals look stronger.

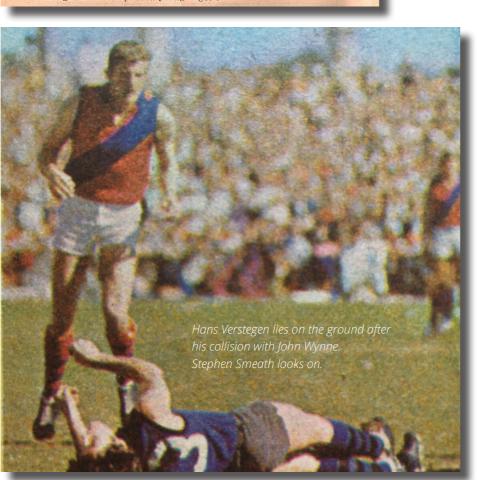
They will be in trouble if
West's pacy half-forwards break
away, but the side's overall
ability to fight out a tight encounter will be the decisive
factor in its favour.

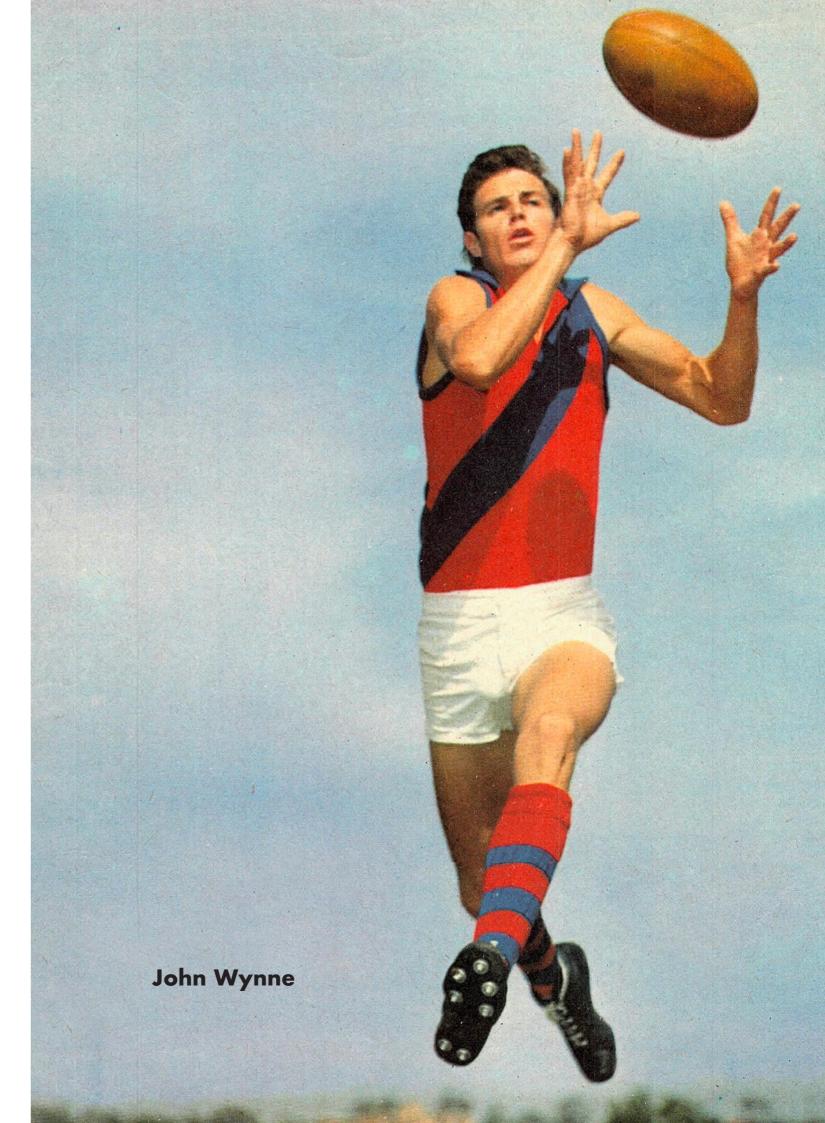
The Royals to meet the Demons

The Royals to meet the Demons in the grand final. -A. D. FERGUSON.

PLAYERS' AUTOGRAPHS

Football's thousands of young fans are reminded that the autographs of Perth players and autographs of Pertin players and the loser of today's second semi-final appear in next Saturday's "Football Budget". Up-to-the-minute statistics and other valuable information to all foot-ball fans will also appear in next Saturday's "Football Bud-get".





does **EHEART** beat true? **HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV** Issue 8, May 2020

West Perth had five goals on the board before the Royals got their first and started to get their minds back on the game, so when the first break came it was six goals to two. The crowd was so excited the roaring hardly abated as the players went to their huddles. It was the football as much as the violence that had them on their feet though. Valli had had 11 kicks already, including three goals, and three passes that had set up the others. Richards had scored two of these and dragged down a couple of his screamers. It had been an electrifying 30 minutes. The rest of the game never reached the same height of drama. It was as if West Perth had squeezed all the passion of a final into that torrid quarter of an hour. The Royals held their ground for the rest of the game without ever looking like they might bridge the gap. West Perth got through to the Grand Final with a very convincing 26-point victory.

All the analysis after the game naturally focussed on the sensational opening and its consequences. "Former umpire Fred Woods said that it was the most vicious opening quarter he had seen." Whereas John Todd felt "the first half of the match was one of the best exhibitions of hard football I have seen for years."

Farmer himself says: "It was a fierce and committed West Perth side whose eye was on the ball - that's what they wanted and they went in hard." This was the general assessment at the time, as Todd's comments show:

"West Perth's approach was fanatical, but the players did not at any stage play the man instead of the ball. However, East Perth, upset by the vigorous play, tended to retaliate and in the process lost concentration."

The Verstegen and Doncon incidents have been remembered ever since, largely because in both cases it was rovers being taken out by big men. In particular the story of the Farmer-Doncon clash is recounted again and again - always prefaced by the comment that it was a fair bump - but often cited as an example of Farmer's ruthlessness and of how he had been

Farmer's Cardinals outsiders for second semi

As was the case last year, Graham Farmer's Cardinals are the outsiders for the second semi-final. Last year Perth were odds-on to beat West Perth in the second semifinal. The Demons won by 27 points.

However, there are no absolute certainties in football and the Cardinals, narrowly beaten three points by the Royals in last year's preliminary final, could cause an upset by taking their revenge today.

Jack Sweet (East Perth 1988-1948 Subjaco cap-

1948, coach 1948, Subiaco captain-coach 1950-1-2). The Royals, who have a few weaknesses in defence. These are offset by a better attack, efficient centre line and creative following

division.

Stan ("Pops") Heal (captain-coach West Perth 1947-1952).
East Perth to win. They must start favourite because of their

overall strength.

Austin Robertson (Subiaco).

East Perth. Stable in defence.

fliexible in attack and rover.

Keith Doncon back and at his

Barry Cable (Perth). East Perth on form to win. Farmer's influence (in his second year) makes West a better side, but East Perth's experience is another factor in their favour.

Perth coach Mal Atwell: East Perth will win because they are more mobile on the ball than West Perth, which relies too much on Graham Farmer to in-

much on Graham Farmer to influence the game. Against a side such as East Perth, I think Farmer will find it difficult to

keep up with the game. I think East Perth are also in front with their big men.

Jack Ensor assistant coach to Mal Atwell: Although West Perth have the ability to bring their small men into the game and get the ball up forward quickly, I think East Perth's overall strength will win the game for them.

game for them.

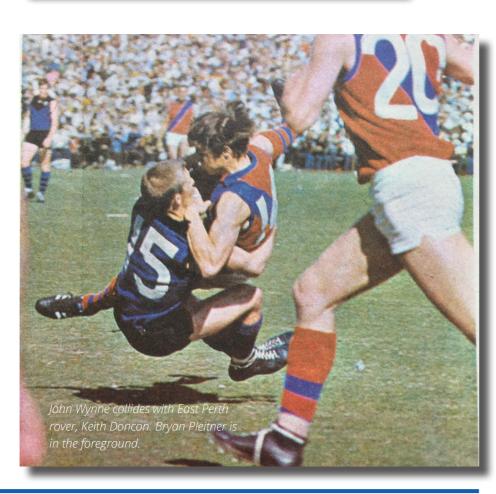
Greg Bennett (Perth): West
Perth with their dash. East Perth
have not got the mobility of
West on the ball, particularly
with their rovers.

Reg Hampson (215 League
games with Subiaco): East
Perth, better balanced side
around the ground and with the
better half-forward line.

Haydn Bunton (Subiaco coach): East Perth, which has too much strength in the ruck, tight defence particularly with Smith and Graham, and overall have the strength to retain possession of the ball. George Moloney (former Gee-

long and Claremont star): I have said all this year that East Perth will be the premiership side. I have not changed my opinion. I feel East Perth is the best side in the competition.

Jim Conway (former Claremont coach): East Perth to win with Mal Brown the key.



changed by his time in Victoria. There is a photograph of the incident. It does not show the moment of impact, but in its own way it does emphasise more than anything the important element of the day - the fanaticism for the ball. Doncon is prone, face down. Farmer must have gone to ground too, he is captured also horizontal, lying across the top of Doncon, but oblivious to the man underneath him as he scrabbles after the ball at the right of the picture. When asked about it he responds:

"It was a good fair bump. But it was bad luck, because it probably put an end to Doncon's career. That was the tragedy of it ... It was rare for me to bump rovers, and that was probably the worst part about it, because Doncon was a lot smaller than I am. But there was no thought other than to bump him."

Given the message he had been drumming into his players, and with the ball at issue early in the game, in one sense Farmer had little choice but to set the example by continuing flat out as the clash loomed. However, there are two ways to bump a player: in one he can be bumped off the ball, in the other, nothing is held back.

One is left with the sense that it is the incident in his career that he regrets, when he refers to it in another conversation and says: "He was really too small to be bumped." When asked if he would have gone softer if he had his time over again, he replies:

"You'd probably have to think twice about whether you'd effect the bump ... The whole basis of people like me was to get the ball in the rough and tough and give it to the smaller player and let him run free so he didn't get hurt. To me, you weren't there to beat the small players, you were there to beat the people you were up against."

Dempsey talks of how one of the messages he drummed into his own big men over and over again was that they must always protect the small players of the side, by getting the ball for them, by positioning themselves



Brad Smith grabs Mel Whinnen by the scruff of the neck in the second semi-final. Derek Chadwick is just behind Smith with mal Brown yet to arrive at the scene.



Players contest for the ball. (L-R) Mal Brown, Bill Dempsey, Graham Farmer, Eddie Pitter and Barry McAuliffe.

properly and by delivering the ball to them correctly. The bump on Doncon was legitimate, perhaps in the context of the game it was even necessary. But it was against Farmer's personal code of how football should be played, by himself and others.

To be continued



PAGE 23 PAGE 22



Fortune favoured the brave and bold

How fortune favours the brave and the bold was aptly demonstrated by Graham Farmer and his team in the first quarter of a fiery opening to the second semi-

"Great stuff, the best I've seen since leaving Victoria 10 years ago," exclaimed Marty McDonnell from his seat in the Press box.

Press box.

With vivid memories of a tentative West Perth of recent years, the Cardinals of 1969 second semi-final vintage were a transformed combination.

Mr. Graham ("Astute") Farmer, who in the best interests of his club didn't place his side, had the critics goggling (some had their mouths open) by making his big defender Byran Pleitner a winger. The move was designed to combat the East Perth ruck.

Pleitner (ex. Footscray) 6ft 2in

The move was designed to combat the East Perth ruck.

Pleitner (ex - Footscray), 6ft. 2in., 14st., opposed winger Mark O'Donoghue (5ft. 8in., 10st. 10lb.) Pleitner threw his weight around with a gay abandon until he was eventually flattened by big Bradley Smith. However, the game had hardly commenced when rover Hans Verstegen (E.P.) contacted John Wynne (W.P.). Hans went down as though hit by a bus. Wynne and Pleitner had set the pattern. West wanted that ball. They used their weight, hitting hard and often, capturing it and keeping it by keeping in front.

Rover Keith Doncon met fairly by Farmer, was K.O.'d. The Royals, caught completely off-balance and not being fairies, fell for the old four card trick. They set out to square the account with West, which concentrated on playing the ball; 13 free kicks to seven. Goals flowed, zipped-off the boots of Valli (first, third, sixth), Smeath (second), Richards (fourth, fifth).

Verstegen (out cold early) came back in the game. He hoisted his side's first goal after 14 minutes of play in the first term. Although East fought back valiantly it never recovered from West's provocative, hip and shoulder first term blitz.

East Perth players too often were behind their men in the race to the ball. This allowed West to dictate the style of play. While the ruck duels were not clear cut, West won in all key positions allied with the skilful handling by Farmer of his side.

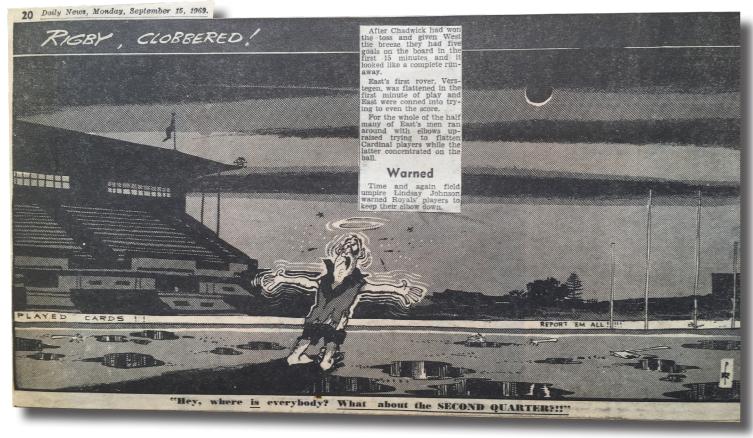
Eat and Enjoy Samboy

ON 6IX FOOTBALL POST MORTEM

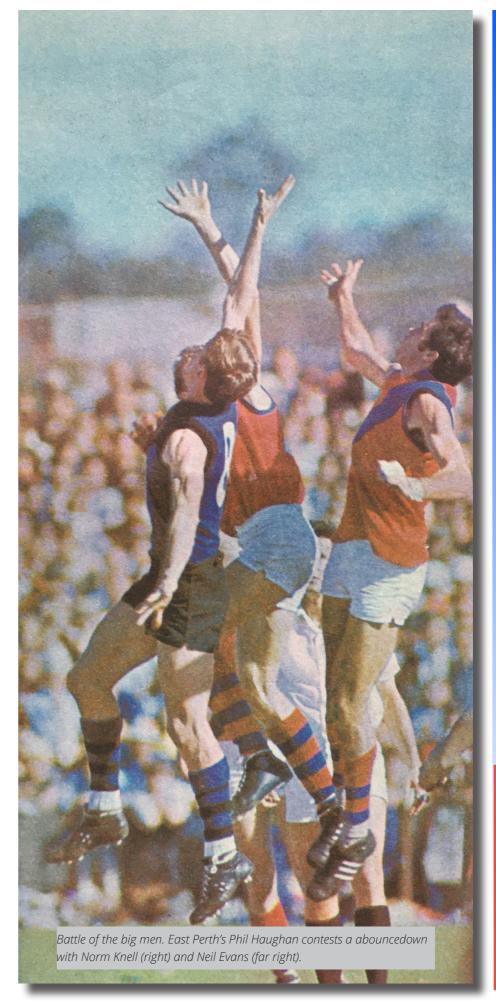
THE FOOTBALL BUDGET

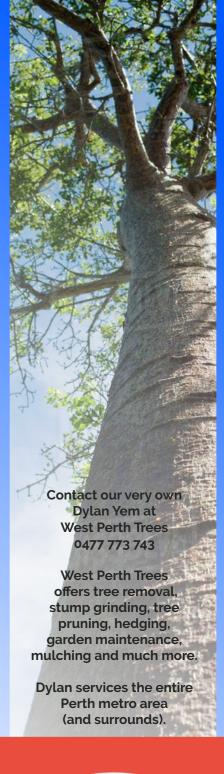
Page Seven

The Football Budget, 20th September 1969



HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV Issue 8, May 2020







does #HEART beat true?

HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV

From the Vault

Two members of West Perth's 1969 premiership winning team were referred to as "The Flying Cardies". An article authored by J.J. Carter appeared in an unknown publication profiling Keith Miller and Greg Astbury, reproduced below.

The Flying Cardies

A few years ago it was the "Flying Tigers". Now it's the Cardinals who have taken to the air by taking a leaf out of the Tigers' book and flying two of their players from Wickepin to Perth each Saturday. At the controls of the aircraft is West Perth supporter Barry Draffin, a school teacher of Doubleview. Saturday mornings sees him taking a plane from Jandakot to bring Greg Astbury and Keith Miller to Perth.

Farmers Astbury and Miller are following the air trails blazed by Allen Mycock and Brian Fairclough, who were the first regular flying footballers in Australia. They were later joined by Tiger teammates Ian Brayshaw and Des Leo. It paid off in 1964 when the Tigers took out the flag. A few seasons later, the Gooding twins, Graham and Malcolm, too, were flown from the country each week to play for Claremont.

The pick-up point for the Flying Cardinals alternates between the Astbury and Miller farms which are between Wickepin and Narrogin and are about 14 miles apart. In good conditions the flight to Perth takes about 50 minutes but in bad weather up to 90 minutes. A few weeks ago, on the return trip, they were forced to land at Narrogin instead of the Astbury farm because of low cloud and rain that cut visibility. On this occasion they were able to get a lift back to the farm with their families as their old team, Wickepin, was playing at Narrogin that day.

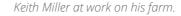
When they land at Jandakot, Draffin's job is still incomplete for the players have to be driven to the ground where they are due to play. Astbury and Miller spend the night in town, Astbury with his in-laws at Darlington and Miller in a suburban hotel. The next day they attend training at Leederville Oval, after which it's off into the wide blue yonder once more for another week of work on the farm.





Pilot Barry Draffin and Greg's wife, Heidi Astbury, Greg and Keith.







Keith and Greg preparing for a game.

Greg Astbury takes a break.

PAGE 26 PAGE 27



Remember when ...

spectators camped out all night before the grand final?

A record crowd assembled for the 1969 premiership decider. Numbers swelled through the night ahead of gates opening just before 9am.

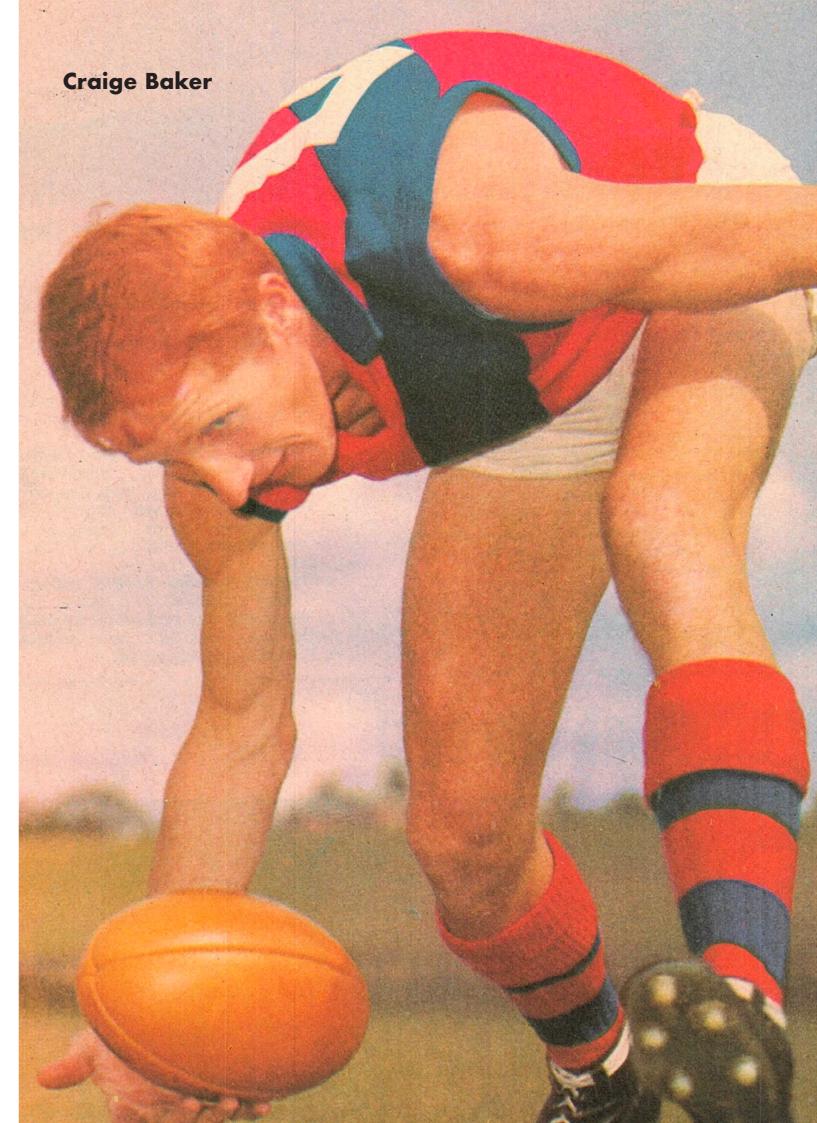
Here's how the Weekend West saw crowd numbers and spectator entry into Subiaco Oval.







Weekend News September 27, 1969



does **EHEART** beat true? **HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV** Issue 8, May 2020

Below is a continuation of the extract from Stephen Hawke's book, "Polly Farmer".

THE ARCHITECT: Part Three

It was thought that in the preliminary final a shell-shocked East Perth would succumb to Perth, which had beaten the Royals six times in succession in final-round football. But Sheedy reshuffled the side and it came out fighting for a 46-point win, setting the scene for a return bout with the Cardinals.

Once again Farmer had his team training on the off weekend to keep them sharp, and he put on a barbecue for players and their families at his home. West Perth was doing everything it could think of to ensure that the season ended on the right note. The most inspired touch came from Les Day, who came up with the idea of flying Bill Dempsey's mother down from Darwin to watch him play. She had never been to Perth. Dempsey convinced her that there was not enough time to catch a bus, and that she would just have to overcome her fear of flying. She was adopted into the West Perth camp as the build-up came to a head. Also down from Darwin was Jack Larcombe, as the Cardinals' faithful gathered in expectation.

On the Thursday night there was a players' tea at the Clubrooms. It was the final gathering of the team before they assembled at Subiaco on the Saturday. "The speech that he gave that night," recalls Dempsey, shaking his head:

"I'll never forget it. It was just so inspirational for me to listen to the bastard. He had a way with speaking to people, without raising his voice and thumping the table ... He just stood there and gave this speech, and you wished it was Saturday and you were running out on the ground. He just said all the right things."



Bill Dempsey relaxing on Grand Final eve by playing cards with his mother, who was flown from Darwin by West Perth to see her son play for the first time.

There was more of the same in the rooms before the game, but the last words of his pre-match address were his own football philosophy distilled to a single statement: "I want you to want the ball more than anything else on this earth today."

In its own way the first quarter of the game was almost as sensational as the second semi-final. West Perth had 18 scoring shots to East's four. But for the fact that this bombardment produced 6.12 (48) rather than the other way round, the game could have been all over. Richards took a series of sensational high marks, but wobbled three punts through for points. As he lined up for his fourth shot, Farmer glided up from behind and told him to try a drop kick. He switched his grip on the ball, and sent the ball spinning right through the middle. Farmer

patrolled just forward of the centre, and each time Matson kicked out after a Cardinals behind, he seemed to intercept and pump the ball forward again. Whenever the Royals tried to go forward the man in the way was Dempsey, who pulled in mark after mark.

When the second quarter got underway, East Perth needed to hit back to stay in the game, but there was more of the same, except West Perth started to kick straight. Ten minutes in it had four more goals on the board, and a lead in excess of 50 points. East Perth was rattled, and once again playing the man instead of the ball, to no avail.

In the third quarter the game turned into a total rout. As a contest it was pathetic; as an exhibition

HILL MICHALCZYK EVANS HAUGHAN DYSON WEST PERTH RESERVES NYKYFORAK MERILLO SAMPSON K. SMITH of methodical, powerful, precise team football, it was ranked by one commentator as "football as it had never before been played." Dempsey continued to reign supreme in the air in defence, surpassed only by the spectacular Richards at full-forward. Watling and Whinnen dominated the centreline, feeding Smeath and

Miller on the flanks. These two were switching sides all the time, running rings around their marksmen. Smeath in particular was sensational, bagging six goals for the game. For the quarter, the score line was 8.5 (53) to a single behind, to give West Perth a 16-goal lead.

Grand Final line-ups predicted by The West Australian newspaper Saturday edition.



PAGE 33 PAGE 32

In the last quarter the Cardinals took their foot off the accelerator, allowing the Royals to score six goals to three. Even then the West Perth tally of 21.21 (147) was the highest Grand Final score ever, and the winning margin only five points short of the record. So comfortable was Farmer that he took himself off the ground 10 minutes from the end of the game to give Brian Sampson a run.

It was an astounding triumph. For the first time in his career he was the man who stood on the dais and received the premiership trophy, not only as the captain, but as the coach and the undisputed architect.

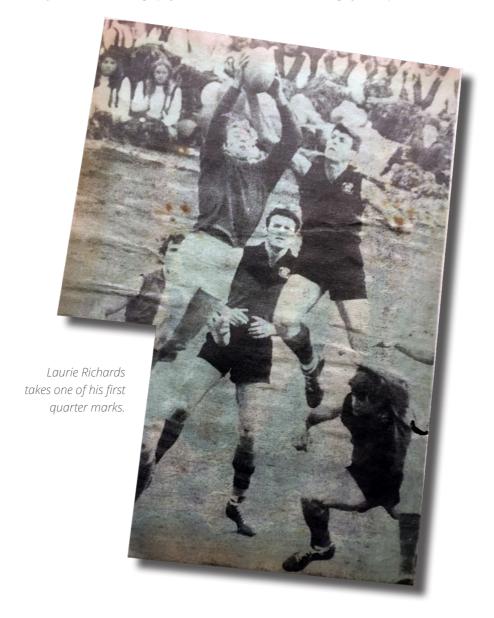
He was, as always, quiet and modest in victory. The pundits though were generous in their praise. The combination of the controlled power of the second semi-final, and the overwhelming football perfection of the Grand Final saw West Perth's display ranked as the best team performance seen in Western Australia, with some suggesting they would be a worthy rival for the Richmond team that took the VFL premiership on the same day.

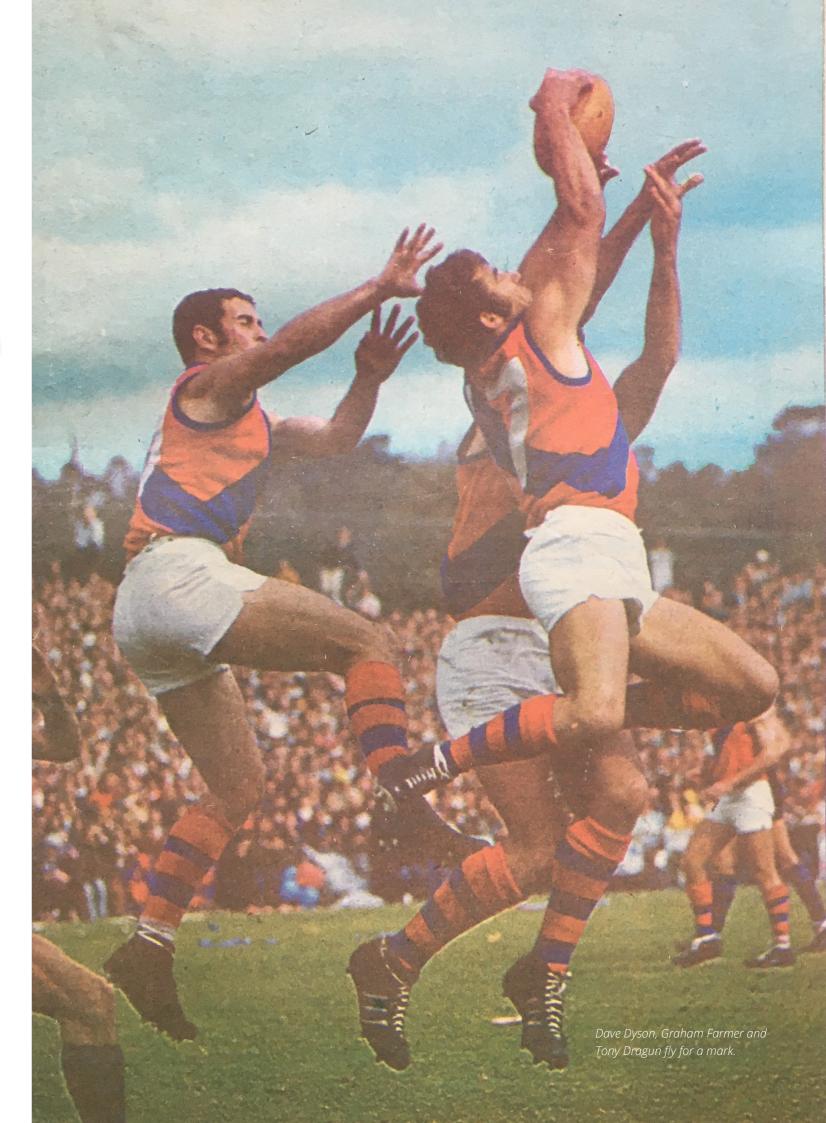
Farmer visited the East Perth rooms to commiserate. The side still contained two players, in Chadwick and Graham, who had been teammates of his, and there were many familiar faces and old friends in the ranks of their officials and supporters. It was the Royals' fourth losing Grand Final in a row, all to sides led by former East Perth men. For his own players he was fulsome with his praise, and told them: "One day you will realise when you look back what a wonderful thing you have been part of."

This statement has rung especially true over the years for Bill Dempsey, who had considered returning home to Darwin after the disappointment of the previous year. He was the unanimous choice as the recipient of the Simpson Medal, which his delighted mother insisted on calling the 'Simpson Desert Medal', despite



Paul Rigby's cartoon echoes messaging out of Perth Oval in Grand Final week courtesy of Mal Brown. A tough physical Grand Final contest was highly anticipated.





does **EHEART** beat true?

HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV Issue 8, May 2020

his best attempts to correct her. With Farmer, he shared the limelight in the post-match celebrations, which in his case involved being "pissed for a week". Among the West Perth players who were lucky enough to play in more than one premiership, 1969 has always been the sweetest. For Dempsey the day has always remained the highlight of his career. The medal, and the presence of his mother, were personal touches, the fact that he had waited nine years for it meant that he savoured it, and "what made it even more beautiful was that we beat East Perth."

"After the game I was just sitting down, stuffed, having a beer, and I was just watching Pol. And you could see in him that he felt real bloody good ... He wasn't skiting or anything like that - he never got carried away with it. But you could tell, he was enormously proud." At the celebrations at Leederville the next day, Dempsey recalls through his haze: "All I can remember of him is just seeing his big tall head with a big smile on his face and shaking people's hands ... Oh, he was in his glory, too, you know."

Upcoming Events

Due to COVID-19, only two Club events are currently planned this year.

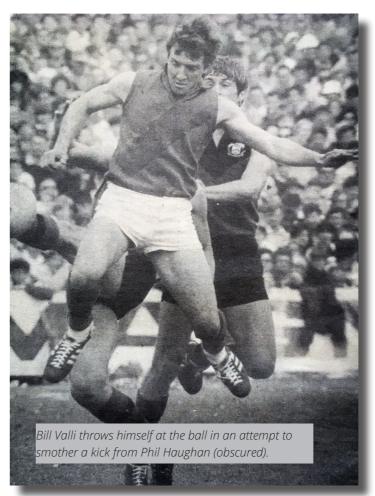
Dominish Medal and Awards Dinner Friday 2nd October, 2020

Breckler Medal and Awards Dinner Saturday 3rd October, 2020

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











PAGE 36 PAGE 37

TO THE VICTOR THE SPOILS



The Independent, September 28, 1969—Page 59

1969 GRAND FINAL TEAM LINE-UP



Ruck

Graham Farmer, Bill Dempsey, Bill Valli

Reserves

John Nykyforak, Brian Sampson

GRAND FINAL MATCH SUMMARY

	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Total
West Perth	6.12	10.14	18.19	21.21	147
East Perth	2.2	4.5	4.6	10.14	74

GOALS West Perth

Laurie Richards (7), Stephen Smeath (6), Keith Miller (2), John Wynne (2), Craige Baker (1), Bill Valli (1), Norm Knell (1), Alan Watling (1)

East Perth

Grant Dorrington (4), Gary Bygraves (3), Phil Tierney (1), Brad Smith (1), Hans Verstegen (1)

BEST PLAYERS

West Perth

Bill Dempsey, Norm Knell, Mel Whinnen, Alan Watling, Graham Farmer, Laurie Richards

East Perth

Gary Bygraves, Gary Gillespie, Mal Brown, Bob Graham, Jim Haines

UMPIRE

Ray Montgomery

FREE KICKS

West Perth (35), East Perth (33)

ATTENDANCE – 51,385 (Record)



Bill Dempsey was awarded the Simpson Medal

PAGE 39

does **EHEART** beat true?

HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV

Team Photo

1969 premiership team



Middle row: Vaughan Veryard, Dave Dyson, John Hill, Barry McAuliffe, Ray Margaria, Laurie Richards, Keith Miller,

Graeme Endersby, Tony Dragun

Front row: Bill Valli, Craige Baker, Alan Watling, Mel Whinnen, Graham Farmer, Bill Dempsey, John Nykyforak,

Stephen Smeath, Peter Panegyres

What the Papers Said ...

WEST PERTH 21.21

EAST PERTH 10.14

GRAND FINAL DEBACLE

It was a sheer, ruthless, cold blooded massacre at Subiaco Oval yesterday when West Perth decapitated and dissected East Perth in the grand final, winning by the colossal margin of 73 points. It was the Cardinals' first premiership victory for nine years and a fitting reward for captain-coach Graham Farmer, one of the greatest players to don a football guernsey.

West Perth had many stars and the best of their galaxy were lion-hearted Bill Denpsey, supreme aerialist Laurie Richards, Stephen Smeath and veteran Mel Whinnen.

Richards delighted the record crowd of about 50,000 with magnificent high mark in g a n d his performance, coupled with Smeath's was a big factor.

Richards kicked seven goals and the speedy Smeath six.
East Perth, though absolutely demoralised, went down trying and kicked six goals in the last quarter but the grawe had already been dug for them.

Graham Farmer won the toss and kicked to the grandstand end. There was no real wind advantage because it was blowing across the ground.

One minor shock was the omission of Grant Dorrington from the 18 and Mark O'Donoghue's inclusion in the side.

O'Donoghue has been nursing a shoulder injury and East Perth should never have played him. He did not tast long and left the field in the second quarter. He has had a wavy bad run in final round football over the years.

West Perth were dynamic across the centre line where dwonderful Wis, Whinnen and Watling, worried their wonderful Wis, Whinnen and Watling, worried their wonder full with coond quarter. West Pert Pert Pere was no real wind and overwhelming lead of 53 points but East Perth captain to the scan with captain point the start pert was no real wind and vertant per was

Issue 8, May 2020



in an attempt to mark over West Perth's Norm Knell at Subiaco Oval yesterday, Whittle's teammate Mark O'Donoghue waits for the crumbs.

LINCK'S SERVICES-PHONE 74,2342 A/H 931,216

Back row: Murray Leeder, Russell Carroll, Rodney Croxford, John Wynne, Brian Sampson, John Renowden, Norm Knell,

Bryan Pleitner, Greg Astbury

PAGE 40

PAGE 41

Weather fine; moderate south-easterly breeze.

SCORERS—WEST PERTH: Richards 7.4: Smeath 6.5; Miller 2.1; Wynne 2.0: Baker 1.3: Valli, Knell 1.2; Watling 1.0; Whinnen 0.2; Pleitner 0.1; 1 point forced. EAST PERTH: Dorrington 4.2; Bygrawes 3.6; Tierney 1.1: Smith, Verstegen 1.0: Thomson 0.2: Brown. Michalczyk 0.1; 1 point forced. REPLACEMENTS—WEST PERTH: J. Nykyforak for B. Pleitner and B. Sampson for G. Farmer in final quarter. EAST PERTH: G. Dorrington for M. O'Donoghue (sprained ankle) In second quarter; E. Pitter for D. Whittle in third quarter.

UMPIRE: R. Montgomery. At Subiaco Oval. West Perth won toss and kicked to western end. FREE-KICKS—West Perth: 12. 11, 10, 2—35; East Perth: 8, 12, 6, 7—33.

BEST ON GROUND

WEST PERTH: 1—BILL DEMPSEY: Gave a superb performance in the ruck and when resting in defence. Marked brilliantly, handled the ball skilfully and kicked over long distances. 2—NORM KNELL: Worked tremendously hard in the ruck where he played consistently well for four quarters. Used his marking ability to advantage and was efective when resting in a forward pocket. 3—MEL WHINNEN: Was in control at centre throughout where he played with typical efficiency. Controlled the ball well on the ground and worked in well with his teammates. 4—ALAN WATLING: Was in brilliant form on a wing, particularly in the first half. Used speed and clever ground play to drive the team forward. Marked soundly. 5—GRAHAM FARMER: Made a solid and sustained contribution to the ruck and around the ground. Was prominent at the hit-outs and as usual positioned himself cleverly to take the best advantage of the situation. 6—LAURIE RICHARDS: Kicked seven goals at full-forward where he gave one of the best sustained exhibitions of high marking seen in a grand final.

EAST PERTH: 1—GARRY BYGRAVES: Battled hard as a rover

EAST PERTH: 1—GARRY BYGRAVES: Battled hard as a rover throughout even though he played to a beaten ruck. Kicked three goals. 2—GARY GILLESPIE: Showed typical determination on the centreline where he fought hard throughout to send the side forward. 3—MAL BROWN: Had more kicks and marks than any other East Perth player. Spoiled his game by indiscriminate kicking. 4—BOB GRAHAM: Played solidly in a back pocket where he was under constant pressure. S.—BRADLEY SMITH: Started the game strongly but faded out of the play in the second half. Had to work extremely hard in the ruck and when resting in an effort to enliven the side. 6—JIM HAINES: Was a hardworking defender, who was constantly under pressure.

TEAM RANKINGS

GEOFF CHRISTIAN—WEST PERTH: W. Dempsey 1: N. Knell M. Whinnen 3: A. Watling 4: G. Farmer 5: L. Richards 6. AST PERTH: G. Bygraves 1: G. Gillesple 2: M. Brown 3: R. Saham 4: B. Smith 5: J. Haines 6. Ken CASELLAS—WEST PERTH: W. Dempsey 1: S. Smeath 2: Knell 3: A. Watling 4: M. Whinnen 5: G. Farmer 6. EAST (RTH: G. Gillesple 1: M. Brown 2: R. Graham 3: G. Bygraves 4: Smith 5: J. Haines 6. JOHN TODD—WEST PERTH: W. Dempsey 1: M. Whinnen 2: Smith 5: J. Haines 6. JOHN TODD—WEST PERTH: W. Dempsey 1: M. Whinnen 2: Smith 3: A. Watling 4: L. Richards 5: G. Farmer 6. EAST (RTH: M. Brown 1: G. Bygraves 2: R. Graham 3: B. Smith 4: Gillespie 5: D. Chadwick 6.

WEEKEND NEWS

J3 points the difference GARDS THRASH ROYALS

JUST REWARD FOR DEMPSEY

What a wonderful game Bill Dempsey played yesterday for West Perth, to win the Simpson Medal!

Perth, to win the Simpson Medal!

West showed great foresight in flying his mother down from Darwin. Mrs. Dempsey was the proudest person at the game.

Dempsey is renowned for his marking and yesterday he excelled himself.

He was the unanimous choice of field umpire Ray Montgomery and the two lindependent judges for the medal.

Little behind Dempsey

Simpson Medal!

was Stephen Smeath. He was kicked and kicked and kicked and kicked and kicked and kicked and store for the side.

All credit then to smeath for the way he smeath for the way he smeath for the back into form. His pace, touch, and demoralised the Royals' defence.

Graham Farmer's tri-

Royals' defence.

Graham Farmer's triumph yesterday makes it
difficult to believe that
West will let him go to
Geelong if the call comes
as is freely predicted over

east.
He has proved a great
He has proved a great
leader, starting at the grass
roots and insisting on a
tremendous amount of
hard work on the track
and in circuit training to
get top fitness in his

players.
East Perth were shocked to their foundations by the debacle. Whereas last week every move succeeded, yesterday nothing came off.

It was surprising to see the centre line that played so well against Perth al-

tered.
Derek Chadwick is essentially a winger and Gary Gillespie played so well last week that he could have been given a tilt at Mel Whinnen in the

centre.

As it was, the game was virtually over before Chadwick left the barren spot at half-forward flank and went to the centre.

West Perth are 1969 premiers

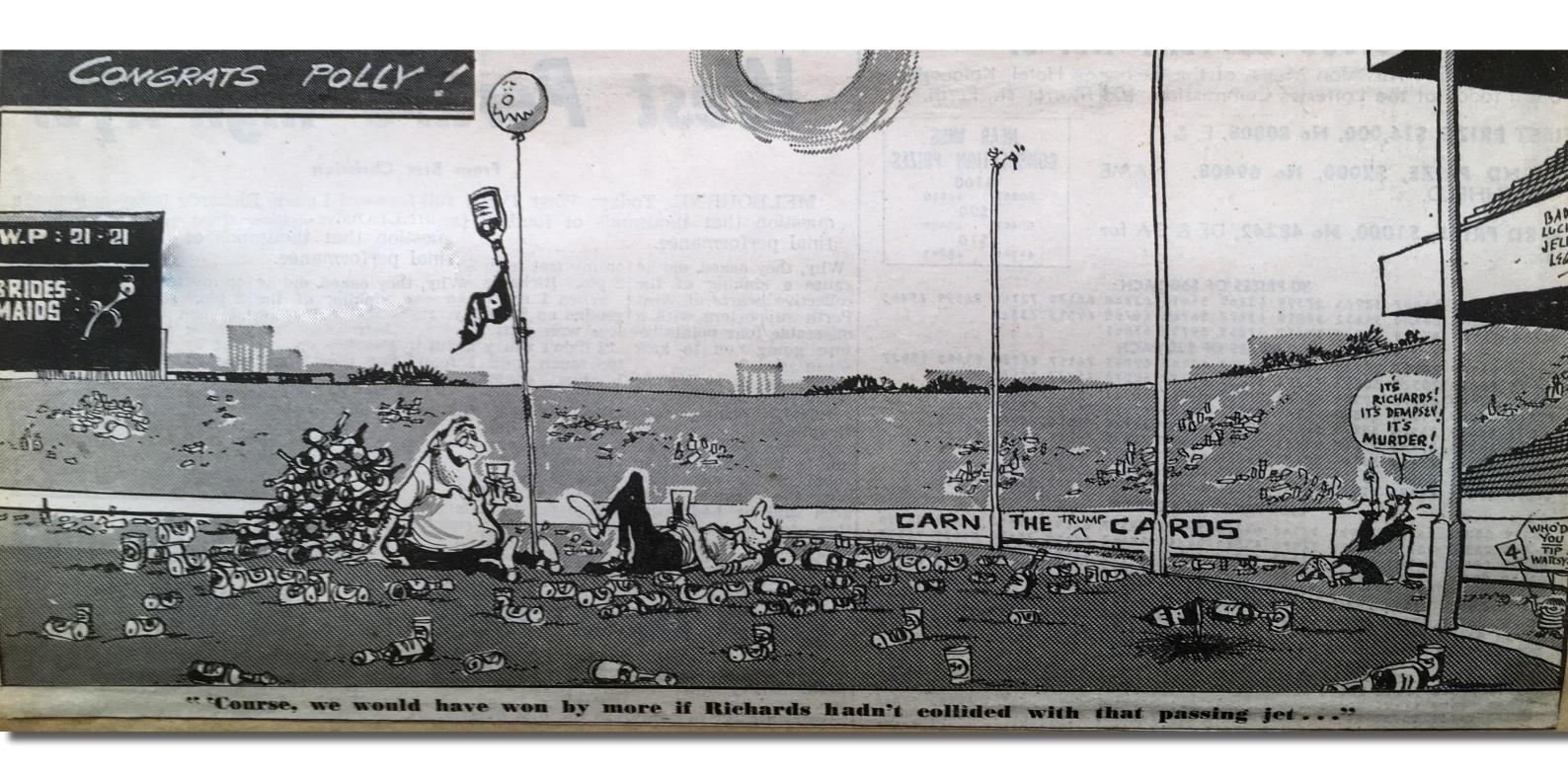
WEST PERTH 6.12 10.14 18.19 21.21 EAST PERTH 2.2 4.5 4.6 10.14

SUPERB PACY WEST

BY COLIN WILKINSON

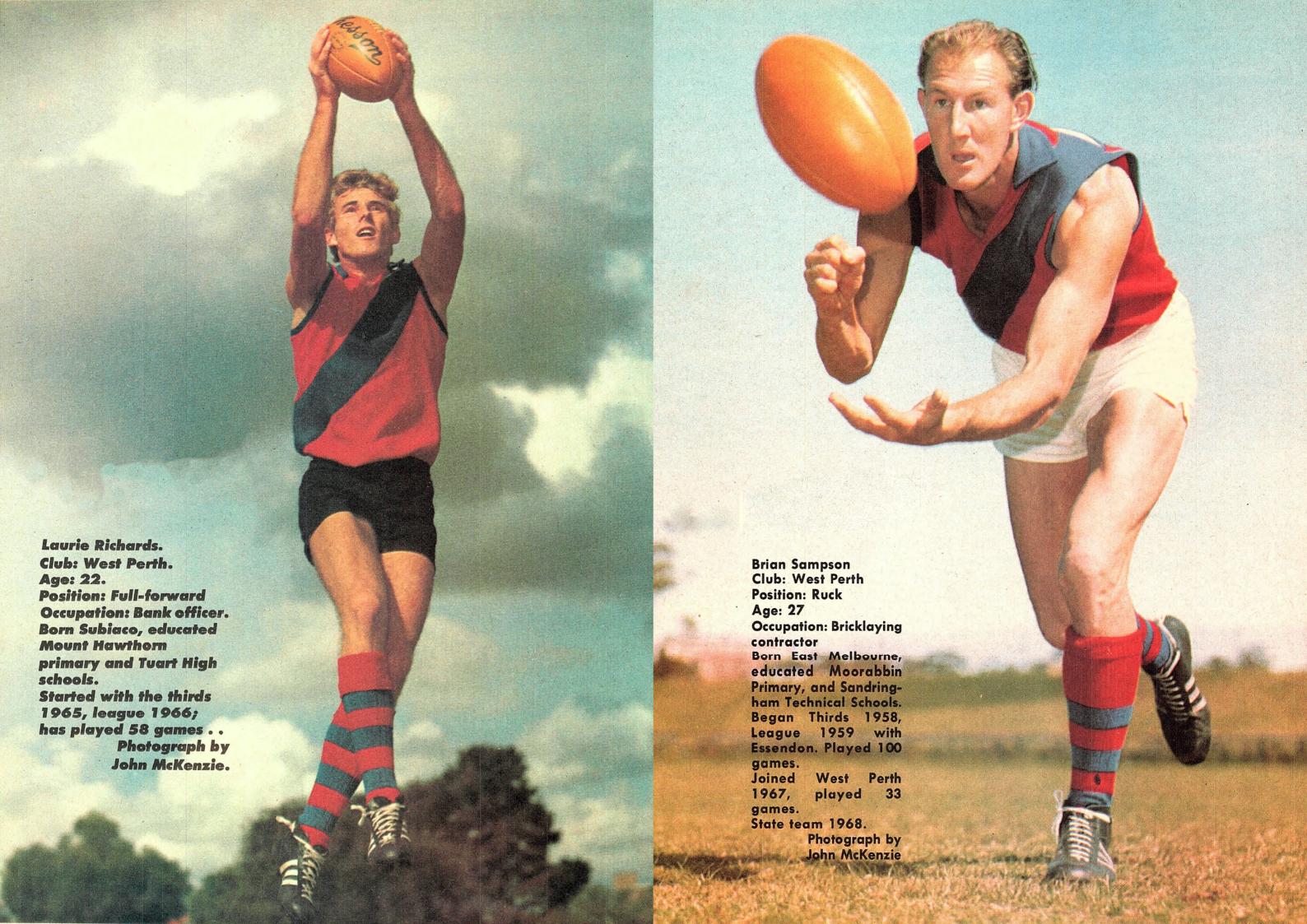






We'll leave the final word to Paul Rigby ...

PAGE 44 PAGE 45



Heading West Bryan Pleitner

A product of Kyabram in country Victoria, Bryan Pleitner played 28 games for Footscray, debuting in 1965 before transferring to Hawthorn in 1968 where he played one game. In 1969, Bryan headed west, representing West Perth for the first time on 7th June in a comprehensive win over Swan Districts and going on to be an instrumental force on the Club's premiership win later that season. Bryan played 63 games for the Club before retiring in 1972.

You debuted for Footscray as 19 year old in 1965. Can you tell us about your journey from Kyabram to the Bulldogs, and what you recall of your first game for them?

In 1964 I was the youngest player chosen to represent the Goulburn Valley in country Victoria to play Essendon so a few VFL clubs became interested. Former Footscray player Charlie Stewart was my coach in 1963 and 1964 so he pushed me towards Footscray. I joined the Victoria Police Force at the end of 1964 and signed with Footscray. Some of my teammates who followed me to the VFL were state players Dick Clay (Richmond), Ross Dillon (Melbourne) and later of course Gary Lyon and Shane Fitzsimmons to Melbourne. Shane is a Breckler Medallist at West Perth. Ross Dillon went on to play with John Wynne at Norwood. There were a number of others to follow. Kyabram has been able to produce a lot of top sports people. My first and only game of 1965 was the second game of the season. It was against Fitzroy and I was 20th man. I got a run with five minutes left to play and got one kick... a stunning debut! I struggled for the rest of the year but got to play in a reserves final against Geelong with Collingwood in the main game. Playing that game in front of 100,000 people with that noise was unbelievable for a country boy.

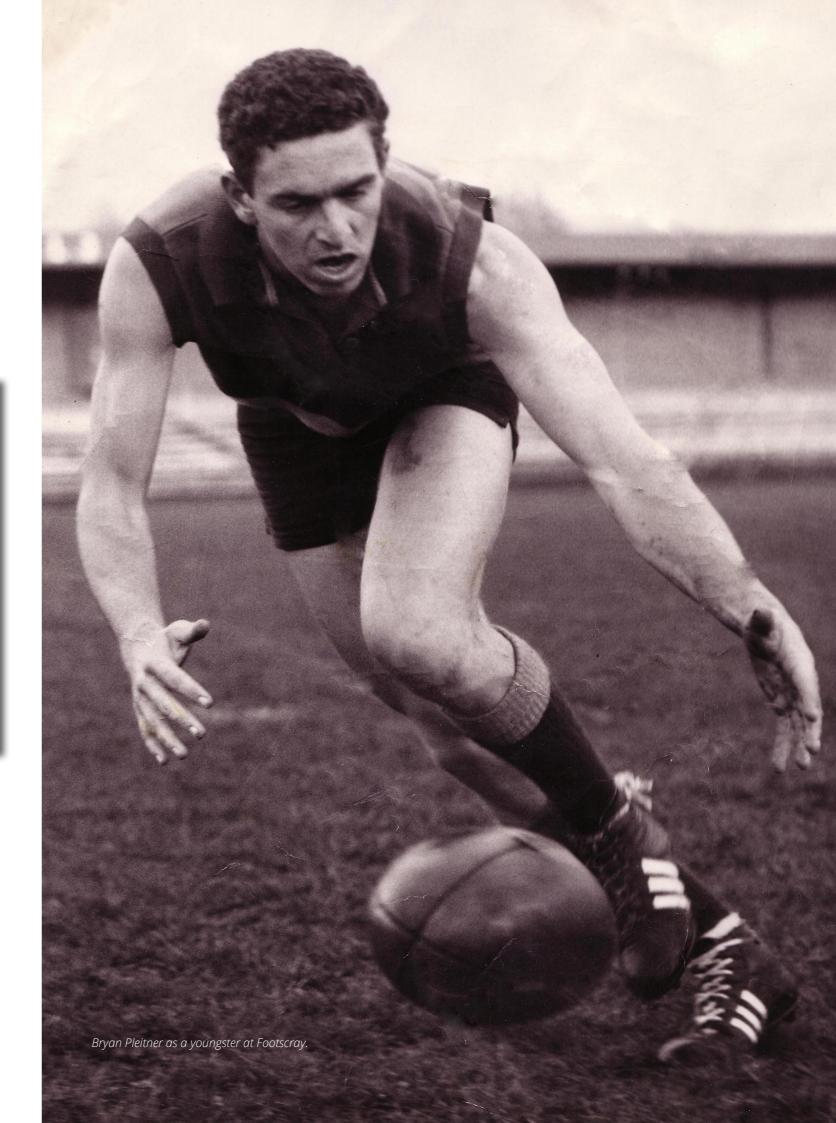


Bryan (second from right) gets involved in a fracas during a game against Geelong at Kardinia Park.

Captain-coaching Footscray in your time at the Club was Ted Whitten. What do you recall of Ted as a player, and as a coach?

I got on very well with EJ. In my mind he vies with Polly as the best ever, he could play anywhere and as a coach was a very good speaker. As a young player there was not much help to improve yourself, you were just expected to naturally develop as you played and trained. My other coach at Footscray was Charlie Sutton who did put extra time in with me to help me improve.

You played just the one game in 1965 but solidified your position in 1966 playing 15 games. In 1968 you played four of the first five games of the season before being traded to Hawthorn. What were some of the factors behind that move?



HEARTBEAT | PART III OF IV Issue 8, May 2020

'The boys have had to

I had a big pre-season in 1966, training all summer under a running coach. I also did a gym course so was super fit and I had a good year in the ruck and at centre half back and full back. In the first game in 1968 against North Melbourne, I was on the half back flank and was voted as best for Footscray, 23 disposals and picked up two Brownlow votes. I was dropped to the bench for the next three games with no explanation.

My last game was in the reserves against St Kilda at Moorabbin. It was a wet day, the ground was a mess, I was having a bad day and was accused of not trying. After some heated discussions I was called before the committee which lead to the end of my time at Footscray. As I worked with two Hawthorn players at the time, I was enticed to Glenferrie Oval (a wonderful mud heap!).

You debuted for Hawthorn in July 1968, your last senior game prior to taking the field for West Perth in June 1969. Can you walk us through the chain of events that took you from Glenferrie to Leederville?

Hawthorn was a shock... I thought I was pretty fit but the first few weeks nearly killed me. I learned all about hard training and tough physical contact during training. My only game came when the state players were away. I still joke Peter Hudson was dropped to the state side so I could get a game. John Kennedy was a tough coach but he was honest. He advised me I was backup centre half back/ full back and would have to wait for injuries or somebody to lose form to get a chance as he was building a side for a long successful period. So the writing was on the wall. I had long periods in the reserves so had time to re-think my career. Hawthorn is a wonderful Club, still keeps in touch with me and some years ago presented me with a numbered tie. At the end of the 1968 season I met a former West Perth player by chance, Ike Whittaker (Ike played 50 games

between 1954 and 1957), whom I informed I would like to move to Perth. He apparently contacted the Club and I received an invite and a plane ticket to come over for discussions on my future. My intent was to come for one season to see Perth and then return home. I never left.

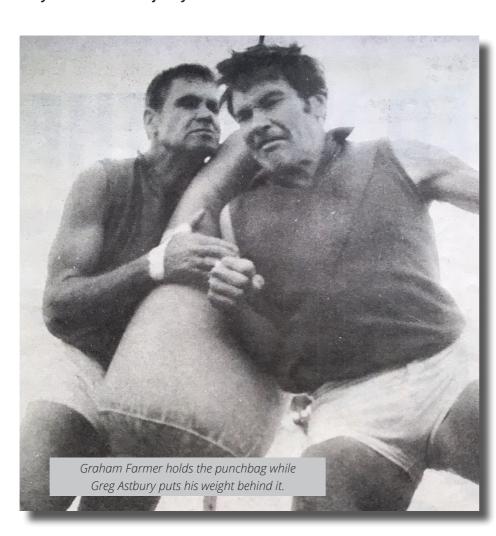
West Perth had had a successful 1968 season but disappointingly lost both the second semi and preliminary finals. Were you approached to come to the Club to fulfil a particular purpose, a need identified in those 1968 finals losses?

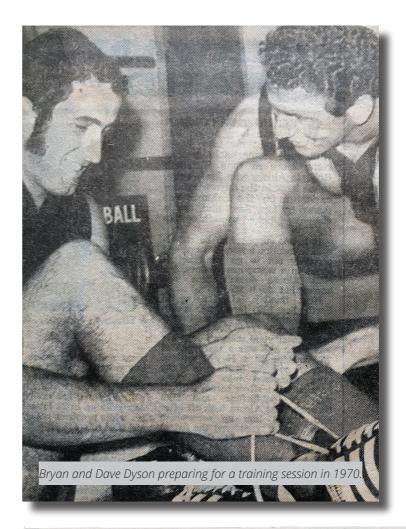
Polly was after big bodied mobile players to strengthen the list. Hence the recruitment of myself, Neil Evans of Essendon, Bruce Smith from Sandringham and John Renowden from Geelong West, each of us over six foot two.

Polly Farmer was your captain-coach when you arrived at West Perth. What are your recollections of Polly as

player, captain and coach? Had you played against Polly in your days at Footscray?

I played three games against Geelong, two off a half back flank, the other off the bench so I occupied the bench and had a front row seat watching Polly and John Schultz have a mammoth battle. Polly's all-round skill at that time for a big man was unbelievable. Polly as a playing coach could use his handball skills to bring players who were down into the game. He was a great reader of the game but he never raised his voice. If you made a mistake you knew about it in no uncertain manner. A clear message in your ear, "You useless b-----, don't do that again!". Polly introduced circuit training to West Perth players but also the use of the punching bag to get the team use to applying physical contact. Bill Dempsey, David Dyson and I seemed to fall for the job of holding the bag as the players ran in and hit it as hard as





By CYRIL CASELLAS

A hefty, man-sized punchbag has been getting a battering Leederville Oval.

It may be a little late now...but for the benefit of East Parth East Perth players, officials and supporters this has been a standard piece in for of equipment Cardinals camp the

past couple of months.

Not that Farmer's footballers throwing punches at the sturdy cylinder of tough leather on training nights. Just their bodies.

The punchbag made for the West Perth club as part of charges over recent weeks.

punchbag hangs ever. from the 'gallows' designed 'It won't be so tough for high marking practice next week, he said. 'I will at the boundary edge. While one player holds the bag steady, his teammates

Another 'toughener' has final. been the exercise where and, in turn, the end man that every player works at runs a 'zig-zag gauntlet' by it three times a week.

bumping solidly into every

What made Farmer come and they with the punchbag coming to the club on? 'I realised that every odd days of the week player must be given the apart from normal training portunity to tone his

'We started off with the hip and shoulder exercise in the middle of the ind but it became bit bruising so I thought a change with the punchbag was needed.

Farmer said he had to think of ideas constantly regarding strengthening his players. He said: 'You must always try to bring into training what happens

This week has not been a let-off for the Cardinals the toughening-up following their tough programme Farmer has set match victory last Saturday. Farmer has worked them as hard as

> concentrate on sharpening them up.'
> A heavy programme of

line up and run in at top gym work has been pace, thudding their hips another factor in West and shoulders into the Perth's physical strength

'We have our own gym players line up in two at Leederville,' said rows opposite each other Farmer. 'I have demanded possible. One night somebody hit it perfectly and almost knocked Demo over. As Bill recovered Polly urged "come on Bill". Demo responded "if you're so smart Farmer, you come and hold the bag." Polly calmly and direct to the point said "Bill, I am the coach!".

East Perth finished top of the ladder, ten points clear, at the end of the 1969 season. One of the most memorable WAFL games ever played is that season's second semi-final, in which you played a significant role. Can you share with us your memories of how that game unfolded, including the role you were asked by Polly to perform?

I had a late start to 1969 due to residential qualification and was injured and missed a few games. I played just six games before the finals, and the last game I played was in the reserves so I did not expect to figure in the finals. I was surprised when I was named in the 20 to play. A bigger surprise was to come. As we prepared to run onto the ground Polly asked if I knew where I was playing, and I said "yes, half back flank". He said, 'no, you are on the wing". Still in a state of surprise Polly came to me just before the first bounce with the instruction of "run in hard and fast as you can, I will get the ball to you, don't stop for anyone just run over them". That set the tone for the game.

Then Polly knocked out Keith Doncon fairly and John Wynne knocked over Hans Verstegen. I think another major factor was confusion in the East Perth camp for the first ten minutes as to who should play on me. By the time they worked out I was on the wing the game was gone. I did not have a great game but Polly's shock move proved a telling factor. A point of interest everybody seems to remember is the East Perth players who went down but big Brad Smith also cleaned me up in no uncertain manner. As I lay on the ground my good Victorian mate Neil Evans ran past with some encouraging words, "get up you weak prick, you are a Victorian!"... it's nice to know your team mates have your back!

PAGE 51 PAGE 50

It seems the tactics employed in that second semi-final set the Club up for the grand final win two weeks later. What are your memories of the 1969 grand final?

East Perth appeared shell shocked in the grand final and expected more rough stuff. Once again Polly outwitted them. His instructions to me before the game were "all I want you to do is keep up physical pressure while the rest of us play football". My strongest memories of the game are Laurie Richards' high marking exhibition, the best I have seen. Stephen Smeath was at his best running, bouncing and kicking goals, and Bill Dempsey's control of the game with his marking ability... he just seemed to always be in the right place and East Perth just kept picking him out.

Another flag came your way in 1971, again over East Perth. It was also Polly's final game for the Club. What are your memories of that game?

I almost missed the finals in 1971. A few weeks before the finals, Polly and I clashed over my standard of training and I walked out on him, informing him as to where he could go. The next morning, Polly was on the phone to organise a lunch meeting to sort things out.

The result was I played in another premiership side and the bonus was Polly paid for lunch! The memory that has stuck in my mind was at the end of the game Polly being carried off and the crowd invading the ground. I did not realise at the time how much I would miss Polly as a coach. He was a psychologist who knew how to read each player, and he knew how to get the best from them. He was a great influence on my game.

The season of 1970 was a very good year for me, I played every game and gathered ten Sandover Medal votes. Due to injuries and illness to players, I was dubbed Polly's spare parts man. I played full back, centre half back, half back flank and centre half forward, returning to the wing as players became available. Polly convinced me that I could fill any role he required.

You played your final game in 1972. What were the factors behind your decision to retire?

I missed a number of games late in 1972 due to illness. When I fronted at the first training night for 1973, I met the new coach (Dennis Jones) and went to my locker only to be told not to use the locker. I was told I was not on the senior list, that I was only a reserves player and so had to change out the back. As I had not pulled on a boot yet this did not go down too well, a few words were exchanged and my great time at West Perth went downhill from there. I applied for a clearance to Perth but was knocked back as I was apparently a required player! I joined Midland in the Sunday League and won their best and fairest award for 1974, in an undefeated premiership team.

You remained involved in football, including taking on the position of chairman of selectors at Perth Football Club during their halcyon years of the mid-1970s? What made that group of players so good, and why was Ken Armstrong such a good coach?

I had three years at Perth including the premiership of 1977. At that time Perth had a great list of players, the number one player being Rob Wiley. Ken, like Polly, knew his players very well and was a great motivator who rarely raised his voice but still managed to get his message across. He introduced time trials in pre-season and concentrated on skills, especially kicking skills. Perth were unlucky to lose the 1978 grand final, a close game that could have gone either way.

How do you keep yourself busy these days? Do you still follow the Club's fortunes?

I try to get to one or two Club luncheons each season and I attend a couple of games with my son and grandson. We enjoy being invited by Steve Trewella and Geoff Valentine into the rooms for the pre-match address. I stay in touch with most of my old teammates through the Cardies Coffee Club. Back in March 2007 David Dyson and I starting meeting weekly for coffee... that was the start of the Club. A few weeks later Terry Stokesbury joined us and the Coffee Club took off from there.

West Perth's Bryan Pleitner real trier

West Perth hasn't done much to rave about recently but fine examples have been set by old hands such as Mel Whinnen and Peter Steward.

You can bet with assurance on both these players. Their average output is far above that of nearly every man in the side. But they don't get nearly

But they don't get nearly enough support from their teammates. A notable exception is Bryan Pleitner, the handyman of the side.

There aren't many places that he hasn't filled since he came here from Victoria. He suddenly became a winger in the triumphant 1969 side, and right now he's a hard trier in the ruck.

Pleitner (41 games with West
Perth, 30 with Footscray and
one with Hawthorn) recalls that
with Footscray he played
mainly as a ruck-rover in support of the formidable John
Schultz.

West Perth could do with a few more ball-getters like the strongly-built Pleitner, who returned to West Perth's League side on July 24 after breaking a finger on June 12.







Heading West Barry McAuliffe

Barry McAuliffe represented West Perth for six seasons between 1968 and 1973. Born and raised in Melbourne, Barry first played senior football for North Melbourne before heading west where he was a reliable defender, typically off a half back flank. Barry was listed among the Cardinals' best in the 1971 grand final.

You debuted at senior level for North Melbourne in 1962 aged 18. Can you tell us about your journey to League football in Melbourne and recollections of your debut game?

Football really started for me in 1961 as a 17 year old attending University High School in Melbourne. The school had a reputation for producing many VFL players including such greats as John Coleman (Essendon) and Allan Aylett (North Melbourne). In addition to the school team, I played senior football with the school's amateur football Club, University High School Old Boys, winning the B grade premiership that year. Physically I had no problems playing against more mature bodies. I was approached by North Melbourne with an offer to help fund my final year of high school in 1962 if I would sign with the Club. This was a no brainer to financially assist my parents, so I signed. My first game was against Richmond and I lined up on Roger Dean, a future Richmond premiership captain. Before the ball was bounced he announced he was going to knock my f----g head off. Richmond went on to win the game but I managed to keep my head intact.

You had a number of auspicious teammates at Arden Street, including a future teammate at West Perth, Peter Steward, and Allen Aylett, who was later president of the Victorian Football League. What do you recall of the football prowess of these gentlemen from your time as a teammate of theirs?

North Melbourne through the early 60s had a number of outstanding players such as Allan Aylett (captain), Noel



Barry McAuliffe training in his North Melbourne jumper shortly after arriving at Leederville.

Teasdale (1965 Brownlow Medallist) and Laurie Dwyer (Brownlow Medal runner up) to name a few. Aylett, a product of my old school, was an extremely intelligent and clever footballer and a respected dentist who set a great example to younger players such as to what can be achieved both on and off the field. My future West Perth team mate, Peter Steward and I joined North the same year in 1962 and after a promising start Peter's career was affected by a serious knee injury in 1963 causing him to miss the next two years which meant we did not play many games together. His dedication to rehabilitation and return to football was inspiring and he was rewarded with All Australian honours later in his career. Unfortunately in my time North Melbourne never achieved much success and most seasons finished in 7th-8th place in the 12 team competition. I was part of a notable win in 1965 however, in a night series (The Golden Fleece Cup). This was held each September among teams finishing the season proper between 5th and 12th place on the ladder. We beat Carlton in the final.

You played your last game for North in 1966 and made your way to Perth. What was behind your decision to leave Melbourne and why did you settle on West Perth as your Club?

By 1966, I had accumulated just over 40 games playing as a defender despite missing many games with hamstring issues. I was also engaged to a WA girl and we decided to make Perth our home in 1967. North had appointed a new coach for 1967, former player Keith McKenzie. I advised him of my plans and he suggested I pursue my football elsewhere as he was planning to rebuild the Club's playing list.

So I joined Kyneton Football Club in the Bendigo Football League for 1967, winning their best and fairest. At season end, I headed for Perth and arrived in time to see the 1967 preliminary final between East Perth and South Fremantle. I was impressed with the standard of play although it was not as physical as VFL. A job transfer from Melbourne to Perth with



my employer, BP had been organised with an indication that a country representative position was in the offering.

I therefore had not made any definite plans on my football future. Fortunately the appointment did not eventuate, so I began the process of speaking to a number of clubs including Subiaco, coached by my former coach at North Melbourne, Allan Killigrew. The fact that Polly Farmer had been appointed coach at West Perth was enough for me to settle on West Perth. In retrospect it was one of the wisest decisions I could have made.

Your arrival at West Perth coincided with Graham Farmer's appointment as coach. Can you share some of your memories of Polly as a coach, captain and player?

Already one of the greats in VFL/ WAFL, Polly's transition from player to captain/coach/player was seamless. He was certainly the best coach I played under. His coaching was measured with a straightforward game plan of moving the ball quickly by hand or foot. On the field he had this innate ability to maintain his own high standards but motivate the team to do their best. This was never better evidenced than by his start to the 1969 grand final where he physically intimidated East Perth and set the example for the team.

Polly introduced a fitness regime to ensure the players were fit, physically and mentally, for football. What do you recall of Polly's pre-season and winter training routines?

The professional approach to training that Polly brought with him from Geelong was something new. Weight training was introduced, to be done on off days, and running programs under the guidance of Bill de Gruchy, a former Australian sprint champion, saw us spend many long afternoons on the outer banks of Leederville Oval. A lot of one on one physical contact work was also a priority which was further helped by introducing a punching bag. Polly did not tolerate players who didn't train to the level he

PAGE 58

does #HEART beat true?

expected and was not averse to giving them a dressing down in front of the entire playing group. His influence also extended to mentoring several players on their futures outside of football.

West Perth won 18 games in 1968, finishing second on the ladder, a game behind Perth. You were injured in the second semi-final and so had no part to play in the preliminary final, which was lost to East Perth by three points. Do you ever feel that for the Club, 1968 is the premiership that got away?

Perth were a mature and disciplined side and the reigning premiers, so we would have needed to be at our best to beat them. We had won our first 11 games but faltered slightly thereafter and suffered some injuries late in the season. The benefits of the training programs mentioned earlier were not fully materialised until the following season.

It was a different story in 1969. What are some of your memories of that season, especially the second semifinal and grand final day?

The start to the 1969 season was similar to the previous season with us winning the first 10 games but losing five and drawing two to finish the season. However our training had been upped many weeks before the finals to prepare us for a tough finals program. We were ready to take on East Perth in the second semi-final and ground out a fine win. We were quietly confident entering the grand final two weeks later after the hard work we'd undertaken on the track. It was a windy day and my most vivid memory was running onto Subiaco in front of over 50,000 people and all I could smell were onions cooking on the many hamburger stalls around the ground. Not a great way to settle the nerves! The team started brilliantly with Laurie Richards marking everything up forward and Stephen Smeath kicking goals. The game could have been over by half time if we had kicked straight. We continued to dominate the rest of the game with our leaders Farmer, Dempsey and Whinnen showing the way to our best team performance



Barry jumps into a pack to mark during the 1969 second semi-final. From left are Bill Dempsey, East Perth rover Keith Doncon, East Perth forwards Phil Tierney and Ian Thomson, East Perth ruckman Jim Haines and Graham Farmer.

of the year. Polly's selfless act of removing himself and Craige Baker during the last quarter to give Brian Sampson and John Nykyforak a run in a grand final was a testament to his leadership.

You played in another flag in 1971, also against East Perth in what proved to be Polly's last game. What do you recall of that day?

After scraping to make the grand final against East Perth we were quietly confident heading into the game. We were a significantly different side to 1969 with new players Peter Steward, Phil Smith, Leon O'Dwyer, Steve Arnott (all VFL experience), Bob Howat and exciting youngster Shane

Sheridan. There were also some positional changes, including moving Dave Dyson moving to the forward line. We built a handy first quarter lead and maintained control of the match to the end. The final siren saw an outpouring of emotion for not only the victory but also because we had farewelled Polly with a win in his last game. And my wife reminded me of just how personally significant the wins in 1969 and 1971 were. Both our son and daughter were born nine months after these victories, in June of 1970 and 1972 respectively, so it is always a great story to share with friends.

Your playing days at West Perth ended in 1973. What were the reasons behind your decision to retire?

West Perth appointed Dennis Jones as coach in 1973 and his coaching philosophy was to regenerate sides. At a meeting of senior players he made clear that this would be his objective and unfortunately I was dropped from the seniors midway through the season although I considered my form had been reasonable. Despite performing well in the reserves and the League team having injuries to players that played in the same position, I was not recalled. Being in my 30th year and increased work load at Ford Motor Company, I made the decision to retire.

What do you do with your time these days?

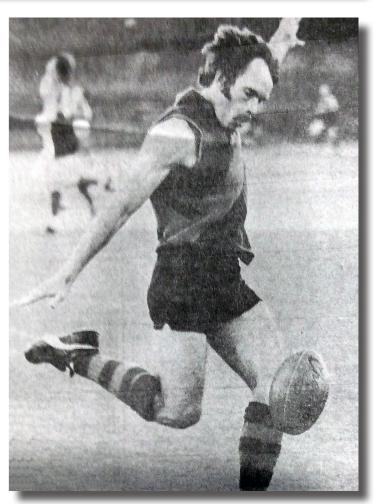
I started playing golf in my early 40s and joined WA Golf Club in Yokine where I still play twice a week and thoroughly enjoy the social and exercise benefits. A fellow member is Neil Garland, now the oldest living West Perth premiership player and still playing golf well into his 90s.

Do you still keep abreast of the Club's fortunes?

Weekends are taken up with golf which prevents me from seeing many West Perth games however, as a regular at the fortnightly Cardies Coffee Club I am aware of the recent financial difficulties facing West Perth. Personnel from the Club have been generous with their time in updating the Coffee Club on measures to overcome this situation. As many in the Coffee Club attend games there is always plenty of talk on the on-field performance of the current team and players. There were many highlights in my time at West Perth, not the least of which was the exceptional friendships made within the playing group which still remain today.



Issue 8, May 2020



Barry McAuliffe in action.

PAGE 60

Acknowledgements

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

Barry McAuliffe Dave Dyson Sean Cowan Bryan Pleitner Steve Trewhella Stephen Hawke



Our sincere
thanks to
Stephen Hawke
for permitting
reproduction of
"The Architect"
for this edition
of HeartBeat.

Steve is
currently
working on a
new project, a
biography on
Club legend
Bill Dempsey.
It is anticipated
this will be
available for
purchase
in 2021.



HEARTBEAT PART IVCelebrating the 1990s