Trial Match, 1973

Hawthorn puts 16 on ball

Hawthorn	1.7	6.11	8.15	9.21	(75)
Glenelg	1.1	2.8	4.10	9.11	(65)

By GORDON SCHWARTZ

Hawthorn football coach John Kennedy used 16 players on the ball in the first quarter against Glenelg at Glenelg Oval yesterday.

At the opening bounce Hawthorn had four men in the 50-yard square, flanked on each defensive leg by six others and backed by two defenders.

It did not have a player ahead of centre.

Confusion and indecision were evident early, especially among Glenelg players who were unsure of their opponents or their positions.

As Glenelg attacked, the shackles of conformity — the normal six lines of three — were mere memories as Hawthorn suddenly had 18 players between half-back and full back.

Then, as the Hawks burst from defence like a rugby movement with a chain of as many as 10 handpasses, the position changed.

In a flash they had 16 players between half-forward and the goalfront, with two defensive "nit-keepers" hovering around centre.

Kennedy, always receptive to innovation, said after the match that the tactic had been tried only once at practice.

"We considered it a success today," he added. "It will give us food for thought.

"Irrespective of what happened in the first quarter, we decided beforehand to revert to the orthodox in the second term.

"This is a move that could be used effectively at times in VFL matches."

Glenelg coach Neil Kerley was impressed by the ruse.

"This is what trial games are for," he said. "I warned my players that Kennedy would probably come up with something unusual around the 50-yard square, but I wasn't quite prepared for this oddity.

"At least it made our lads think. Mentally it was a good exercise. Whether it was a success, I wouldn't like to say."

At the end of a gruelling match in wind and rain Hawthorn's margin was only 10 points, but at no stage did Glenelg look like winning.

Glenelg can derive some satisfaction from the performance as its rucks were thrashed, it played without full forward Fred Phillis, and lost centre half-back Wayne Phillis and former Perth rover Greg Bennett early with injuries.

Five goals in the last quarter gave the Glenelg score a respectable air after the unchecked Darrell Moss created havoc all over the field.

For most of the day last-line Hawthorn defenders Kevin Heath and David Parkin smashed promising attacks by clearing with dash and faultless judgment.

Rovers Peter Crimmins and Leigh Matthews were the livewires in the Hawks' four-goal winning burst just before half-time.

Hawthorn ruckman Don Scott's highly competitive spirit was a lesson to young Tiger Cubs Peter Carey and Rob Tardif.

Goalkickers — Hawthorn — Crimmins, L. Matthews, 2; Meagher, Bevan, K. Matthews, Hendrie, Grummisch. Glenelg — Moss, Voigt, 2; Sandland, Wickens, Marker, Osborn, Adams.

Best — Hawthorn — Crimmins, Parkin, Heath, Knights, Grummisch, L. Matthews. Glenelg — Voigt, Moss, Marker, Crabb, Hamilton, Millard.

Hawthorn wingman Peter Welsh is pushed by Glenelg opponent Peter Millard while preparing to kick at Glenelg Oval yesterday. The ball trickled off Welsh's boot.