

Sunday Mail

1986 Grand Final

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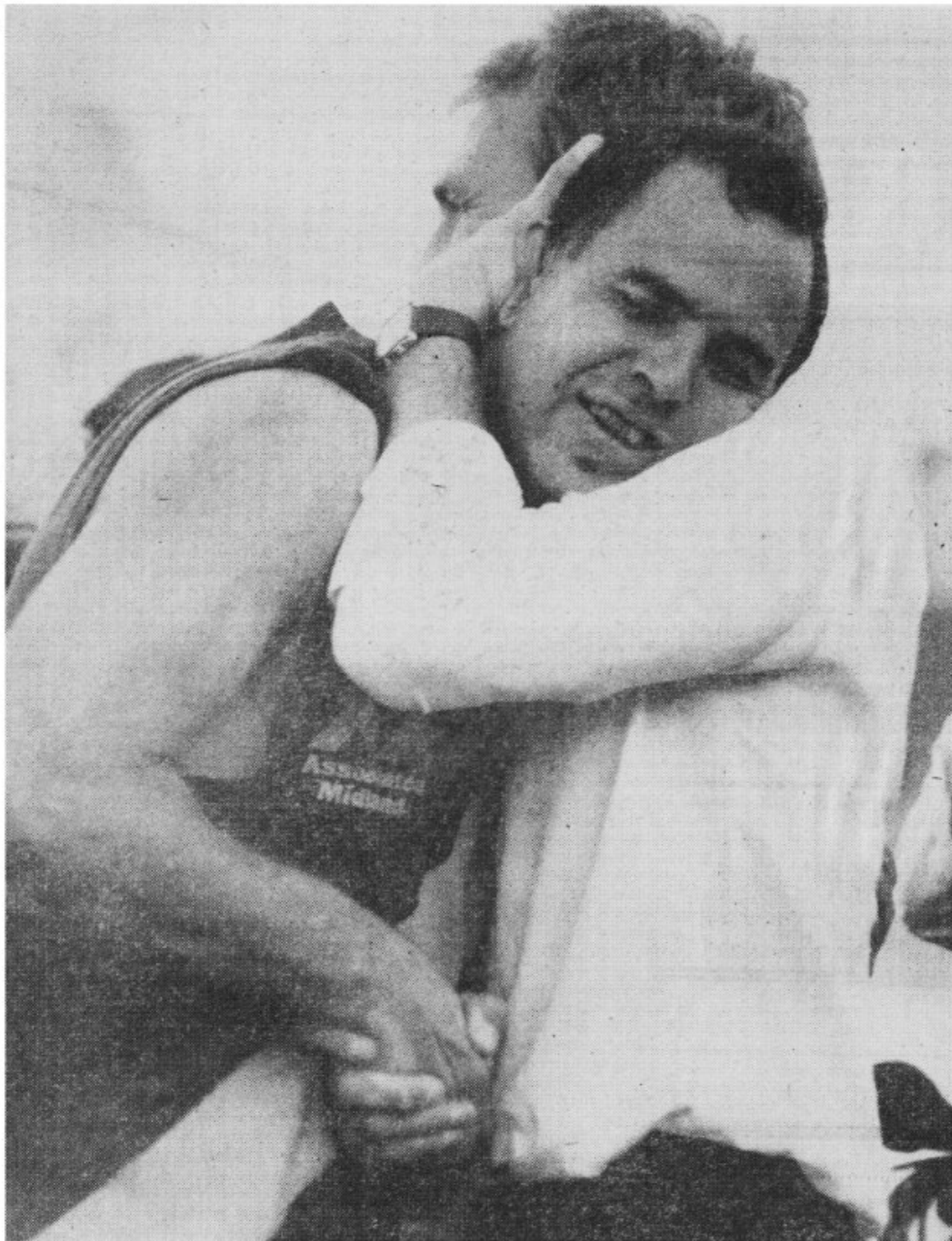
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FINE
Details, P44 Real
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TIGERS AGAIN



Coach Graham Cornes congratulates Peter Carey

By Ashley Porter

Wild scenes of jubilation swept the Bay last night as Glenelg revelled in premiership glory after walloping North Adelaide for the second successive year.

The tenacious Tigers stunned the capacity crowd of 50,538 and a national television audience with their awesome power to cruise to an unexpectedly comfortable victory, 21.9 (135) to 12.15 (87).

It was only Glenelg's fourth premiership success since entering the League in 1921, winning also in 1934, 1973, and last year.

Showdown

The showdown of the season turned into an anti-climax as the hotly fancied Roosters failed to offer a respectable challenge.

An ecstatic Glenelg coach, Graham Cornes, told the army of Glenelg fans he was so proud of his men, and indeed he should.

There were many heroes, including the grand champion, and captain, Peter Carey, and Tony Hall, who won the Jack Oatey Medal after

We've
done
it,
mate

being judged best afield by a special panel.

The match, at times, was fiery, and Glenelg's Chris Duthy and North's Trevor Clisby, were reported during separate incidents.

There were scenes of despair in the North rooms after the match, and grown men openly wept.

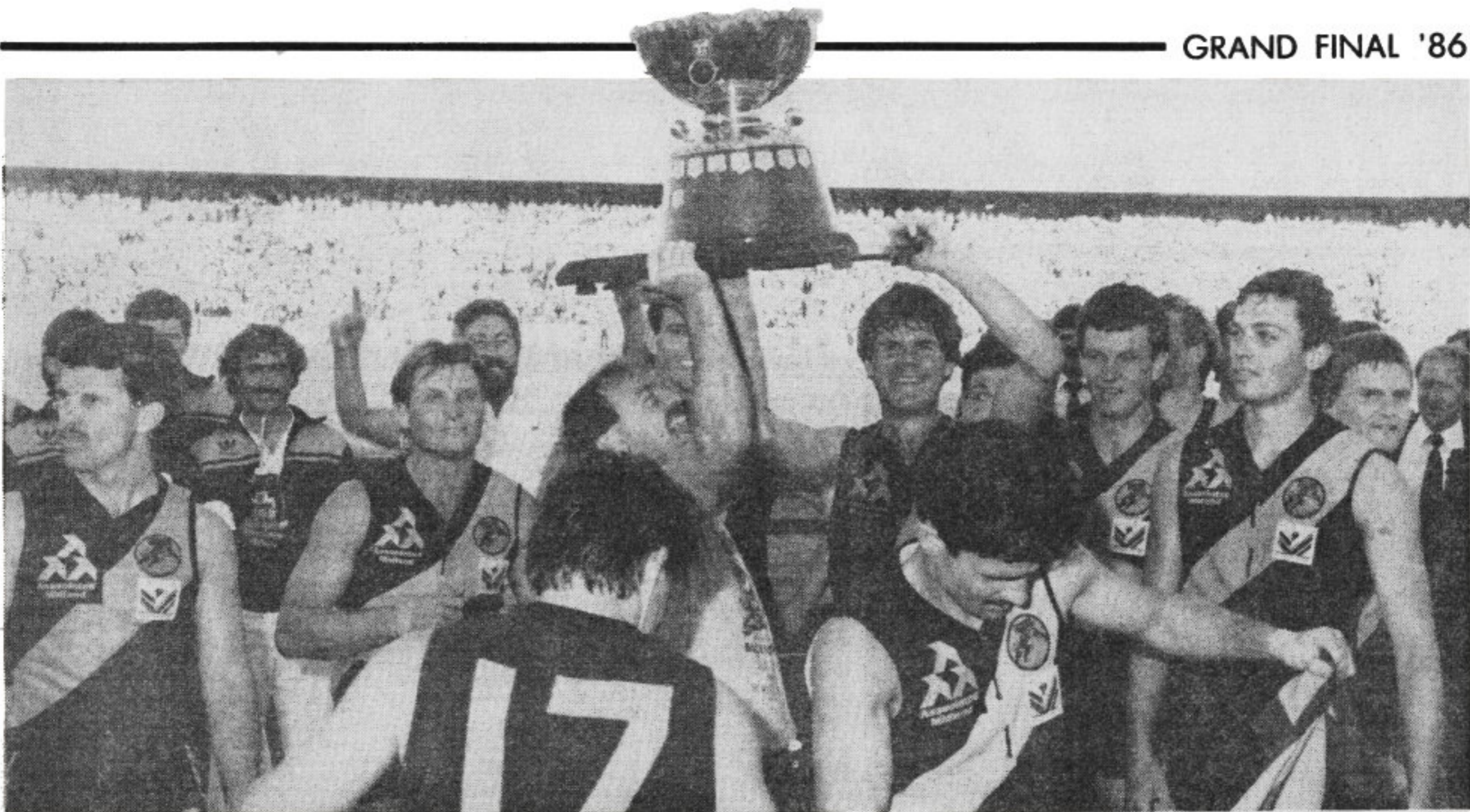
Unlike last year, coach Mike Nunan and his players did not wait on the field while Glenelg did its victory lap.

Nunan later explained: "We were good sportsmen last year, and maybe we need to be bad losers."

• Full coverage, P. 67.

ANTROBUS QUILTS

NORTH Adelaide Magarey Medallist Tony Antrobus last night quit the club and may join Perth, not Essendon, in the expanded VFL competition next season. "I have definitely played my last game for North," a disappointed Antrobus said after the Roosters' grand final humiliation. "Win or lose, I had already decided I'd leave the club. Perth appeals to me and they've been in regular contact. I'm told there is a chance I can get out of the three-year contract I signed last year to play with Essendon in 1987."

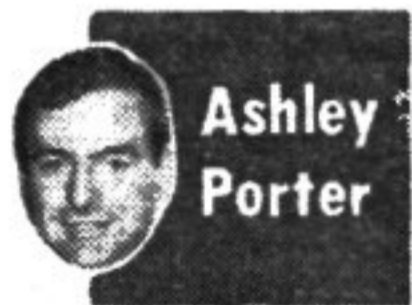


GRAND FINAL '86

Sport

TIGERS RUN WILD

... and North a disgrace, says sorry Nunan



Ashley Porter

A distressed North Adelaide coach Mike Nunan described his team's performance as "disgraceful", but accepted the blame for yesterday's 48-point grand final loss to a magnificent Glenelg.

"I take full responsibility for the awful performance which should be unacceptable to the football public of SA," he said.

"Players win grand finals because of their actions, but I think the coach has to accept the blame for a loss because he designs the side; he now has to look at himself."

Nunan could not explain why his players performed so poorly - their worst effort for the season apart from the Foster's Cup loss to Hawthorn.

He told them after the game behind closed doors that losers run away, but winners come back.

Glenelg's comeback this season is unrivalled. No other premiership side has lost 10 games during the season.

And, for coach Graham Cornes and his players, success was indeed sweet after so many during the year had doubted it would even make the finals.

Cornes told Lawrie McCauley the triumph was "a lot better than last year."

"It's a great feeling" he said.

"Particularly as we went into this one as the underdogs.

"People had written us off, saying we couldn't win without Stephen Kernahan and Tony McGuinness.

"But the lads worked hard this year and proved not everybody is an expert.

"Going in as the underdog helped keep our players' feet on the ground.

"Everything went well - it really is a great feeling."

Tiger captain, Pete Carey also said it was "absolutely fantastic" to beat the favorites.

"Not many people gave us a chance of winning, but that only makes us feel better about getting up to win.

"We had to work a lot harder this year.

"We've had an up and down season but when the going got tough (yesterday), we hung in there."



FOOTBALL PARK					
	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts
GLENELG..	7-2	12-4	17-5	21-9	135
NORTH..	3-2	6-7	9-11	12-15	87

BEST - Glenelg: Carey, Hall, Maynard, Symonds, Hodgeman, Kruse, Marshall, Henwood. **North:** Robertson, Hart, Sanders, Parsons.

SCORERS - Glenelg: Hall 6.1, Maynard 3.2, Symonds 3.0, Seebohm 2.2, Copping 2.1, Marshall 2.1, Hodgeman 1.0, Kidney 1.0, A. Stringer 1.0, Garton 0.1, rushed 0.1. **North:** Poynton 3.2, Hart 3.1, Robertson 2.1, Parsons 2.0, Antrobus 1.1, Bennett 1.0, D.Jarman 0.4, Dietrich 0.1, A. Jarman 0.1, Sanders 0.1, Arnold 0.1, rushed 0.2.

REPORTED: C. Duthy (Glenelg) for striking M. Campbell (North) during second term; T. Clisby (North) for striking A. Hall (Glenelg) during first term.

UMPIRES: John Hylton, Rick Kinnear.

ATTENDANCE - 50,538.

Back to back... Chris McDermott shoulders a jubilant Tony Symonds after the siren

THE DAY THE BAYS COULD DO NO WRONG

By **ASHLEY PORTER**

Those tenacious Tigers once again charged through the gates to grand final glory after mauling a pathetic North Adelaide by 48 points at Football Park yesterday.

The 50,538 fans who paid to see a fierce showdown for the flag should get half their money refunded because only one team played the brand of football expected of a finals side.

North humiliated itself on national television, and turned the promised match of the season into one of the greatest anti-climaxes for years.

But the jubilant Glenelg fans quite rightly revelled in every fantastic moment as their beloved heroes showed what premiership football was all about.

While North rarely got its act together because of a shameful lack of discipline, Glenelg simply went about with grand splendor doing the job asked by coach Graham Cornes.

The only sparkle left in the one-sided match after half time was from the tinsel left by the 230 cheer girls who provided magnificent half time entertainment.

But Glenelg, superb Glenelg, looked a winner even before the opening bounce.

As the Tigers remained calm and collected while "Advance Australia Fair" was sung, a number of Roosters looked jittery as they walked around like headless chooks.

The trend was set. North fumbled time and again, despite leading one goal to nothing for the first 13 minutes.

And North could do no right . . .

But that was where its feeble run ended. The Tigers simply kept on doing the hard things which makes a champion side . . . running, backing-up, chasing, smothering and shepherding.

Their attack on the ball, sometimes the man, was relentless. North played as if it was intimidated, and sadly, had too many players who wilted and couldn't cope with the pressure.

There was nothing fancy about Glenelg. Its execution of passes was a delight to watch, and at all times, remained a disciplined unit.

North, in contrast, left too many opponents by themselves. Its forwards did not check or chase often enough, enabling the likes of Max Kruse, Ross Gibbs, Wayne Stringer and Mark Donovan, to feed their hungry teammates who charged towards goal.

In fact, five of Glenelg's seven goals in its tremendous first quarter resulted from either poor judgment, loose checking or a lack of application by North.

Glenelg never wasted an opportunity, was near faultless, and the match developed into a contest between a team of men - the emphasis on team - against the second 18s from Prospect High School.

Complete breakdown

But despite the 48-point margin, and the one-sidedness, the scoreboard showed Glenelg had only three more scoring shots.



● **HERO HALL:** Jack Oatey medal winner as best-on-ground, Glenelg's Tony Hall, soars for the mark over North giant Mike Parsons

This was due to a complete breakdown in confidence and application by North. Too many players either kicked "around corners" or charged unopposed, but could not convert.

Throughout the match North had no direction. Too often it kicked "blindly", and the devouring Tigers fed off those bad passes as if they were attacking lame hens.

Glenelg hit hard, very hard, but while some North fans might be upset about some incidents or tackles, that's what finals footy is about.

There was no room for gentlemen, and North found out the hard way it had a few players who faded from the hard contests after receiving a few thumps and bumps.

North coach Mike Nunan tried almost every move in the book, but there was no way he could have stopped the Tigers' charge.

He "dragged" full forward Grenville Dietrich minutes before half time, and he never returned. Moves came even in the first term when the defence was shuffled - again no joys.

And perhaps the saddest sight was watching Andrew Jarman limp back on to the ground to replace Roger Carlaw who was bulldozed by Stephen Copping in the last quarter.

Jarman went to the bench after half time with sore buttocks, a legacy from the first term, and his ineffectiveness was a big blow.

Out of form

While North had many players hopelessly out of form - Matthew Campbell, Darren Jarman, Dietrich, to mention a few - Glenelg had more stars than Hollywood.

Centre half-forward Tony Hall won the Jack Oatey Medal as best player afield judged by a panel, but the giant champ Peter Carey was best in my opinion.

Hall was magnificent in kicking six goals and giving every defender a headache, but it was "Super" who got the Tigers roaring.

He was largely responsible for Glenelg's supremacy moving out of the centre with his finely calculated taps.

But he did much more than win the centre bounce battles. He was a tower of strength around the ground with his powerful marks from the depths of the packs, and brought so many of his teammates into the play.

If it wasn't for Carey, North could have easily taken a few marks deep in its forward lines early in the game. Goals could have resulted, North could have

gained confidence, it could have set a trend.

But, of course, "could have" wasn't good enough.

There were pre-match fitness doubts surrounding Kym Hodgeman, but the little master was a trump card as he consistently guided his side into the forward lines with some creative passages of play.

The list of champions continues . . . both wingmen Tony Symonds and David Kernahan, David Marshall at half-forward, Peter Maynard on the ball and a resilient defence headed by Kruse and Chris Duthy.

Follower Chris McDermott received some heavy knocks, and without being startling, still had some effect when he was on-off on the field.

North had few who gave valuable contributions. Follower David Robertson was fearless and never gave up.

He provided plenty of run, worked the ball to teammates, but so often his efforts were wasted. He must surely be the most frustrated player today.

Rover Darel Hart also tried valiantly, as did David Sanders who was switched from a wing to replace Jarman at centre.

Michael Poynton and Peter Bennett had their moments of good play in the forward lines, while Mike Parsons was the best of North's big men.

The Roosters proved themselves the best team during the minor round by winning the minor premiership, but sadly for them, yesterday they produced their worst effort for the year.

Unfortunately, their dreadful performance took something away from the Tigers because they did not win a grand contest.

Deserved honor

Full marks to Glenelg, it deserved the honor and glory which goes with a flag. It had 20 professionals with a common objective . . . winning. Not one player let the club down and at all times their application was commendable.

Coach Graham Cornes told the crowd: "I'm proud of them". And so too is every football lover who respects a side which can perform a task, meet a great challenge, when it really counts.

● **Pictures by Ray Titus, Kevin Bull, Dennis Rogers and David Hele**



● **BIG MEN TUMBLE:** North spearhead Grenville Dietrich flattens heroic Bay ruckman Peter Carey in the goalsquare

ALL-ATTACK CORNES

HITS JACKPOT



Glenelg coach, Graham Cornes, celebrates with his players

The tactics of Glenelg coach Graham Cornes — to attack rather than worry about defence — were obvious.

And they were never more so than when Scott Salisbury, who was tipped to shadow Tony Antrobus, lined up on the interchange and Ross Gibbs started in the back pocket.

Cornes' tactics were different from those he used against Woodville in the preliminary final, and in playing the attacking Gibbs he showed the whole emphasis was on going forward.

The North danger players most critics thought might be tagged were Andrew and Darren Jarman, Matthew Campbell and Tony Antrobus. All were beaten by their counterparts, not because those Tigers played defensive roles but because they attacked.

Glenelg's tackling was so fierce and disciplined the North stars could not get into the game.

The Bays showed a ruthless determination to stop the Roosters from getting to the ball first and when the North players did get the ball they were always under pressure.

North had nothing up forward.

Full-back Chris Duthy annihilated Grenville Dietrich before he was taken off and Peter Bennett did not give a yelp against the relentless pressure applied by centre half-back Max Kruse.

Before the game it was thought the North ruck Mike Parsons and Mike Redden would hold the key to the game.

They were thrashed by Peter Carey.



Jim Deane

Mike the ruing Rooster

After Carey's finals performances this year and the great service he has given Glenelg over 16 seasons, he will go down in the annals of football history as one of SA's best ruckmen.

Tony Symonds, Peter Maynard, David Marshall, David Kernahan and Kym Hodgeman played the types of games expected of the Jarman brothers, Campbell, Antrobus, Robertson and Co.

But the big individual success — although it was a phenomenal team success — came with Tony Hall's complete domination of the centre half-forward.

North coach, Mike Nunan, took Trevor Clisby off Hall early, and put on him one of SA's renowned checkers in John Riley.

But if anything the move backfired because Hall became more prominent as the game progressed.

Symonds' and Maynard's devastating first half set Glenelg on its way and Peter Carey dominated around the ground.

He has played the game so effectively and for so long that he has an incredible ability to read the game. By placing himself a kick behind play, he broke up many North attacks.

Cornes won the tactical manoeuvres hands down. He placed Wayne Henwood on North's dangerous ruckmen in the back pocket and Henwood hustled them out of the game.

You had to pay tribute to Cornes' handling of the team.

Although Gibbs was playing outstanding football in the back pocket, he took him off after an undisciplined act just before half-time, but replaced him afterwards.

This was typical of the discipline Cornes has maintained in the Glenelg side since taking over.



Mike Nunan: the face says it all ...

David Kernahan epitomised Glenelg's attitude to the game when he successfully chased and tackled some of the fastest footballers in the game in Antrobus, Campbell and Robertson and some of his smotherers were a coach's dream.

The changes Mike Nunan made were brought about by desperation.

Who would have thought Matthew Campbell would be taken off the ground?

— with PETER CORNWALL

NO BAD BREAK FOR STRINGER



For the pain: Wayne Stringer enjoys a celebratory drink

GLENELG defender Wayne Stringer refused to let a broken right hand stop him taking part in the Bays' 21.9 to 12.15 premiership win against North Adelaide yesterday.

Stringer, 31, broke his hand last week in the preliminary final against Woodville, and had originally been ruled out of the grand final.

But his courage and determination was typical of Glenelg's fighting spirit.

Rover Kym Hodgeman also overcame injury problems and forward Stephen Copping spent two days in hospital before the big match for treatment to relieve agonising back pain.

"I broke my hand in the first 10 minutes of the game against Woodville," Stringer said.

"Mentally, I had a big build-up just waiting to see if I'd make the side.

"When I did make it, I had to build myself up again for the grand final.

"But it was worth it — it was unbelievable, even better than last year."

● Footnote: Stringer added his right hand was his usual drinking hand — but he expected he still could cope with a few celebratory drinks even if it meant his whole body ended up as numb as the injury.

HAWTHORN SCRAPES IN

PERTH: VFL premier, Hawthorn, displayed all its reserves of stamina and pride to win the Clash of the Premiers against WA side Subiaco yesterday.

In the tradition of recent matches between WA and VFL teams in Perth, less than one goal separated the two teams at the final siren.

Hawthorn snatched a thrilling two-point victory, 18-11 (119) to 17-15 (117), despite trailing at every change.

There was almost an even more dramatic finish when umpires Peter Cameron

(Vic) and Mike Ball (WA) failed to hear the siren.

Subiaco was on the attack and kicked a point after the siren.

A goal would have given it victory, and controversy would have raged.

	1st	2nd	3rd	Final	Pts
HAW	3-3	7-5	13-9	18-11	119
SUB	5-1	11-4	13-11	17-15	117

GOALS — Hawthorn: Russo, Dunstall, Curran 4, Brereton, Greene 2, Buckenara, Jencke 1. Subiaco: Sells 4, Keene 3, Dreman, MacNish 2, Lee, Carpenter, Scott, Georgiades, Langdon, Willett 1. BEST: Hawthorn: Russo, Eade, Dunstall, Curran, Greene, Loveridge. Subiaco: Lamb, Lee, Zanotti, Taylor, O'Loughlin, MacNish.

Glenelg wins and will remember

By Chief Football Writer **GEOFF KINGSTON**

They said it couldn't be done. Glenelg, weakened by injury, was the overwhelming underdog against North Adelaide in league football's grand final. Its journey to Football Park was a hopeless mission.

But strengthened by bravery, the players scorned the opposition to build a wonderful monument — a memorial that will stand forever on the tableau of the Glenelg Football Club.

Its staggering 48-point demolition of North, which had been planning for six years for this failure, was a wonderful reward. And in victory Glenelg had little compassion for its victim.

The ill-feeling runs deep. On Saturday night at Glenelg — even in the full blown joy of success — they were unwilling to forgive North coach Mike Nunan for "fingering" Glenelg rover Greg Bennett during a 1975 tribunal hearing. Dabbling in another player was then judged unforgivable. Apparently it still is — at least at Glenelg. Nunan was playing for Sturt at the time.

Then there is the Stringer connection. Alan and Wayne quit North when Nunan arrived at Prospect and the anguish triggered by that move is always on the boil.

But the clincher — as far as Glenelg was concerned — happened while Glenelg was savoring the delirious joy of victory. Defying tradition Nunan led his team from the stadium. It was an act that angered many at Glenelg. And the players will remember the snub when they meet again.

But on Saturday it was as if the Glenelg players' motto was "Do unto others as they have done unto you ... only do it first."

Had the North players sneaked a look at the chalk board in the Glenelg rooms before the game they might have got a clue about what was to come. Scrawled in big letters were the words "fierce — aggression — control." And around the word "control" was a solid ring of chalk. Hit and hurt but don't lose control ... that was the message and the players reacted superbly.

It is doubtful whether a Glenelg side has ever been so destructive; more brutally efficient and it had many North players running scared as early as midway through the first quarter.

Even usually good, tough competitors in the North side seemed intimidated and without their strength the capitulation was sudden and staggering.

And the player to inflict the first hint of trouble for North was Glenelg captain Peter Carey. He was the most sparkling gemstone in Glenelg's treasure trove of talent.

The man is quite remarkable. His strength, his grace, his speed and his ability to beat swifter and jumpier opponents week in and week out, year in and year out, is awesome. And he did it all again on Saturday in a performance which ranks with some of his greatest.

Then there was follower Peter Maynard and centre half-forward Tony Hall. Together they pushed the timid North side right over the brink.

Maynard, free of any defensive constraints, sparked an epidemic of optimism.

His confidence and skill together with the explosive talents of Hall transported the Glenelg fans on a tour of the bright lights of excitement.

Hall, entrusted once again with the difficult role of centre half-forward, embarrassed Trevor Clisby, forcing his shift to the obscurity of the back pocket. And he continued to fire Glenelg when John Riley was shifted to quell him.

And rover Kym Hodgeman, struggling with the pain of a groin and thigh injury, but buoyed by pride, shoved North further behind. He shouldn't have been allowed to play as well as he did. Against two of the best — Darel Hart and Tony Antrobus — he should have been struggling. But his indomitable spirit and greed for a premiership ensured he won his private battle.

On the wings Tony Symonds and David Kernahan were like a couple of left hooks right on the button. While they were defending or attacking the faces on the North bench grew still and watchful.

It was like an emergency was happening nearby — just out of reach; and they could do nothing about it.

Cementing all the individual skills together was a mix of courage and aggression that softened a few resolves in the North side.

And the tackling. It was relentless, quick and at times suicidal. Glenelg centreman Alan Stringer embodied that commitment. He chased and tackled as if the North players were running down the street with everything he owned.

So also did Chris Duthy and Max Kruse in the key defensive roles. But no-one wanted victory more than defender Wayne Stringer. He played with three pain-killing injections in a broken right hand ... and triumphed.

For North Adelaide the smell of shame will linger long in the nostrils.

Did it learn nothing from its defeat by Glenelg in last year's grand final? Did it not understand that rules are bent in grand finals; that things happen in that last game of the year which are cruel, which are sometimes outside the laws, but things which must all be handled and conquered.

Sure, there were a few North players who did okay. But that is compensation for only a handful of mums and dads.

For the bulk of the North players, the administration and the fans the day was a tedious and painful waste of time.

Certainly there was danger, but there was also glory if North had wanted it. But its unmitigated surrender was inexcusable. Its deception as a serious premiership threat was complete. And rather than base their happiness on a premiership it seemed three square meals a day, saying prayers, being courteous and doing some exercise was more important to many North players.

Rover Darel Hart battled almost singlehandedly against impossible odds. But he never flinched. Follower David Robertson, while refusing to play defence against Maynard, nevertheless was prepared to take risks. Michael Poynton near goals did well for the few chances that fell near him and John Riley and Paul Arnold left the stadium with some dignity.

For Glenelg; well it did what most people believed was impossible. Held together with needle and thread it stitched up its second premiership in a row. Now it is hungry for a third.



THAT GRAND FINAL FEELING ... Rover Kym Hodgeman pumps his arms after booting a goal and taking his team one step closer to victory. *Picture: STUART HANNAHAN*

GLENELG	7.2	12.4	17.5	21.9	(135)
NORTH ADELAIDE	3.2	6.7	9.11	12.15	(87)

GOALS — Glenelg: Hall 6, Symonds 3, Maynard 3, Marshall 2, Copping 2, Seeborn 2, Hodgeman, Kidney, A. Stringer. **North Adelaide:** Hart 3, Poynton 3, Robertson 2, Parsons 2, Antrobus, Bennett.

BEST — Glenelg: Carey, Maynard, Hall, Symonds, Kernahan, A. Stringer, Hodgeman, McDermott, Kruse. **North Adelaide:** Hart, Robertson, J. Riley, Poynton, Arnold.

THREE BEST ON GROUND: P. Carey (G), 3; P. Maynard (G), 2; T. Hall (G), 1.

TISER TALLY

GLENELG						NORTH					
Player	Kicks	Mks	H'ball	H.O.	Pts.	Player	Kicks	Mks	H'ball	H.O.	Pts.
Corey	18	6	4	28	9	Antrobus	9	1	2	3	6
Copping	4	4	2	1	4	Arnold	5	5	1	1	3
Donovan	9	5	4	1	6	Bennett	8	1	1	5	4
Duthy	8	8	3	3	6	Campbell	7	3	5	1	5
Gorton	5	3	5	9	5	Carlaw	1	1	1	1	1
Gibbs	8	3	1	5	5	Clisby	3	1	4	1	1
Hall	13	10	12	2	8	Dietrich	3	2	2	1	1
Henwood	11	4	2	2	7	Hart	19	2	8	8	7
Hodgeman	10	4	9	7	7	Jarman, A.	7	1	4	4	4
Kernahan	16	4	14	8	8	Jarman, D.	12	2	4	4	3
Kidney	3	1	2	3	3	Klomp	5	3	9	5	3
Kruse	13	3	4	7	7	Parsons	11	6	2	6	6
Marshall	11	5	6	7	7	Poynton	9	3	1	3	5
Maynard	27	10	10	8	8	Redden	5	2	3	3	21
McDermott	12	3	11	7	7	Riley J.	9	3	10	4	6
Salisbury	1	1	4	1	1	Riley S.	9	4	4	4	6
Seeborn	4	4	4	1	7	Robertson	9	4	4	11	4
Stringer, A.	14	4	10	1	7	Sanders	10	1	12	2	5
Stringer, W.	8	1	2	2	3	Tiller	9	1	2	2	5
Symonds	13	7	11	8	8	Wildy	7	2	2	2	4
Totals	208	90	120	43		Totals	156	45	98	34	

(Merit points by Geoff Kingston)

North's big occasion nightmare

Mike Nunan, one suspects, has been worried for a long time that some of his North Adelaide players would "choke" in the grand final.

Publicly, Nunan blamed himself for North's 43-point defeat: "The players win grand finals but the coach has to accept the responsibility of a loss," he said.

But towards the end of what must have been a traumatic 10-minute Press conference, Nunan admitted that some of his players may not have the mental toughness to cope with the pressures of a grand final.

"I have to ask whether I have the best team that's capable of playing in these sort of games," he said. "For the second year in a row some of our players have not performed on the big day."

In effect, Nunan was saying that having what is probably the league's most physically talented collection of players counts for nothing if the mental attitude isn't exactly right.

Many critics have questioned North's ability to win the big games, but most were satisfied that its players had learnt from last year's defeat and would not "choke" again. They were wrong.

Any psychologist will tell you that mental toughness — one of the components of which is the ability to perform well under pressure — is something that must be learnt. It is not an innate trait.

Now Nunan must assess where he is taking North.

The Jarman brothers — Andrew and Darren — Matthew Campbell and Grenville Dietrich are too talented not to persevere with, despite their poor performances on Saturday.

The question is how to get the best out of them on the big occasion. That's something Nunan will be thinking long and hard about during the next few months as he tries to come to terms with the "indescribable hurt" he is feeling at the moment.

ANDREW BOTH at the grand final

North's reluctance to check Glenelg follower Peter Maynard was one of the main reasons for its defeat.

During the first half Maynard repeatedly lurked on his own without an opponent within 30 metres. He kicked three goals and had a hand in a couple of others as Glenelg streaked to a 33-point half-time lead.

Maynard's opponent, presumably, was David Robertson, not that you could be sure because Robertson was rarely anywhere near him.

It wasn't until the third quarter that North started to pay attention to Maynard.

However, by then it was too late. Glenelg had already stolen a match-winning break.

Glenelg's team contained only three players who were not part of last year's premiership team.

They are Max Kruse, Kym Hodgeman and Mark Donovan, who replaced Stephen Kernahan, Tony McGuinness and Michael Murphy.

North made six changes from last year and appeared to have a stronger line-up this time, not that it made any difference.

Grenville Dietrich, Darren Jarman, Trevor Clisby, Michael Poynton, Roger Carlaw and Kim Klomp came in, replacing Michael Armfield, John Brealey, Stephen Hay, Trevor Hill, Brenton Phillips and Paul Zootjens.

Ern Kolosche, SA's leading football statistician, is retiring. Kolosche, 80, announced yesterday that he would end his close association with football as soon as he updated his records to include this season.

Kolosche has a record of every match played in the SA National Football League since its inception in 1907. He said this year was the first time the premier team (Glenelg) had lost 10 matches, and that the bottom team (West Torrens) had beaten the top four teams.

Forget medals — it's premierships that count

Today the 1978 Magarey Medal and three club best-and-fairests — two with Glenelg and one with North Melbourne — have paled into insignificance for Kym Hodgeman.

After 267 league games, 13 seasons and five losing grand finals for Glenelg, Hodgeman has played in a premiership side.

Seventeen of his team-mates — "all those kids, well I call them kids," — knew the premiership feeling from last year, and they let him know about it. Five minutes before Hodgeman ran out on to Football Park on Saturday, he and his team watched a video of last year's closing moments.

Hodgeman buried his head in his lap and had tears in his eyes.

"I want to feel like that," he said to himself. Two-and-a-half hours later, he felt like that.

He sat out the last quarter on the bench, because his match-fitness gave way, although he thought he could go on, but coach Graham Cornes wanted to give Scott Salisbury a run.

For the first 15 minutes there, he drank water. Then when it was almost sewn up, Hodgeman thirsted for champagne. He had to wait for the siren.

He grabbed the premiership cup. It was too heavy for a 30-year-old rover. He made do with the premiership pennant. At the end of the lap of honor, he sat down "physically and mentally exhausted".

It was "Glenelg's finest hour," and the realisation of a promise Hodgeman made to himself nine years ago. He would play in a winning Glenelg grand final one day, even if he might go to the VFL in the interim.

Losing grand finals in 1972 (under 17), 1973 (under 19), 1974, 1975 and 1977 for the league team seemed an unfair return for a club that had given him so much.

When Hodgeman came back to Glenelg this year, his new and old team-mates tried to make him feel as though he had been there last year. But it wasn't the same.

Now he says, he is a part of a legend. "Last year's was another premiership side. But whatever Glenelg does after this, we will always be remembered as the first Glenelg team to win back-to-back."

Hodgeman had to keep a secret to get there, though. His groin injury had nagged him all year to the point that he didn't expect to be chosen for the preliminary final against Woodville.

Last Tuesday at training, racehorse trainer John Hawkes tipped him the wink that he knew a horse physiotherapist who knew about these things. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights, Hodgeman went to him.

"I kept it pretty quiet. Only John, Pat the physio and myself knew about it. I didn't want individual ambition to interfere with the team, especially after the club had shown confidence in me the previous week," but he dearly wanted to play.

Hodgeman doesn't know how much good was done, but the treatment took the tension out of his legs, and gave him the confidence to play out a full game.

Those legs will be back next year, because "already we have a theme — three in a row is the way to go".

Individual awards are fine, says Hodgeman. "But I would give up the Magarey Medal and those best-and-fairests to have this feeling again."

Lance Campbell