

**SPORTING LIFE**  
**MARK HAWTHORNE**



# Snap! Capturing game's greatest

SOME of the greats gathered at the MCG yesterday for the launch of *Our Great Game. The photographic history of Australian Football*.

Triple Brownlow medallist **Bob Skilton** was there, sitting next to Fitzroy's 333-game legend **Kevin Murray**. Richmond full-forward **Michael Roach** was in the crowd, along with Carlton's **Mark Maclure**. On stage **Sam Newman** and **Kevin Bartlett** held court, joined by **Allan Jeans** and **Tony Jewell**.

"This is a fantastic book of what this great game is about," effused Newman. "Sometimes we speak ill of the game, and most of the time it's theatre, but this is a great book and ... will be almost mandatory for anyone that's ever been to the game around Australia."

All were on hand to celebrate the unsung heroes who have recorded Australia's game for over a century—the photographers. To that end, publisher **Geoff Slattery** dedicated the book to "those who capture the moment".

Images of great marks, great players, and great coaches abound in the book's 300 pages. But when you get any group of old players together, all they want to talk about are the great fights.

A picture of the half-time brawl between Essendon and Richmond in 1974 — "the bloodbath at Windy Hill" — dominated discussion.

"It was alleged that Richmond's **Mal Brown** grabbed Essendon's **Graeme 'Jerker' Jenkin** by the balls," recalled Bartlett when quizzed about the fight.

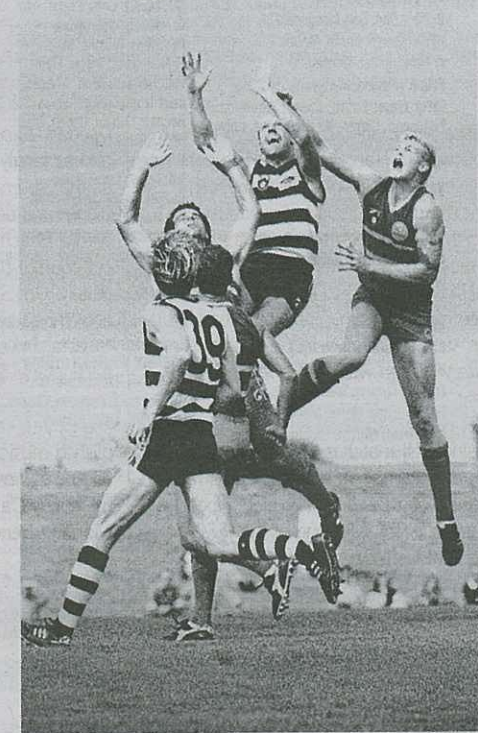
"Then **John Cassin** came off the bench and jumped on the back of Mal, and then he started throwing punches. That's where it should have ended, but unfortunately the Essendon players got involved, because Mal Brown was whacking John Cassin, while hanging on to Graeme 'Jerker' Jenkin's balls at the same time."

According to Bartlett, the fight should have stopped there. "But then Richmond's players got incensed, and had a crack at the Essendon players, who were having a crack at Mal Brown, who was still punching John Cassin, while holding Graeme 'Jerker' Jenkins by the balls. Then the Essendon committee got involved ..."

Bartlett's record of events sounded a lot like the nursery rhyme *There was an old lady who swallowed a fly*. By the time the fight was in full flight, "Richmond fans were punching Essendon fans, who were punching Richmond's committee, who were punching Essendon's committee, who were whacking



**TOP: The Windy Hill brawl in 1974.**  
**LEFT: Gary Ablett flies for a mark in a practice match at Skinner Reserve in the early 1990s.**  
**BELOW: Alan Richardson tries to make sense of Tom Hafey's training program at Punt Road in the 1960s.**  
**BOTTOM: A tearful John Coleman after being suspended in 1951.**



**BELOW: Alan Richardson tries to make sense of Tom Hafey's training program at Punt Road in the 1960s.**  
**BOTTOM: A tearful John Coleman after being suspended in 1951.**

PICTURES COURTESY: SLATTERY MEDIA GROUP



Richmond players, who were whacking Essendon players, who were whacking Mal Brown, who still had Graeme 'Jerker' Jenkin by the balls," said KB. "That was the reason it all began."

In the picture Tigers team manager **Graeme Richmond** can be seen shaping up for a punch, while wearing his suit and tie. Bartlett, who was acting captain for the day, is nowhere to be seen.

"I had a terrific view of it all from the stand at Windy Hill," Bartlett said. "I would have gone out and whacked a few myself, but the trainer had put out 20 drinks and 20 oranges in the rooms and someone had to eat and drink them."



Other pictures that captured the imagination of the audience included one of the great **John Coleman** leaving the VFL tribunal at Harrison House in 1951. The Essendon forward was suspended for four games for striking Carlton's **Harry Caspar**, and would miss the

1951 grand final as a result. In the picture, his hand is on the shoulder of club committeeman **Ted Waterford**.

Another image shows **Tom Hafey** and a puzzled **Alan 'Bull' Richardson**, father of **Matthew Richardson**, looking over a blackboard ahead of Richmond training.

A rare jewel was unearthed for the cover shot, an unpublished photo of **Gary Ablett** soaring for a mark with Footscray's **Scott Wynd**. The team at Slattery Media have been trying to unearth the picture's history and believe it's from a practice match at Skinner Reserve in Sunshine in the early 1990s. The photographer remains a mystery.

## The James calamity

AT 11am today **LeBron James** will unveil just where he intends to play basketball next season, a decision that will be broadcast live on ESPN. Cleveland fans are in mourning, the US sports world has been holding its collective breath and, such is the interest, questions about LeBron have made it all the way to the White House.

At a media briefing, White House spokesman **Robert Gibbs** was asked — seriously, we think — whether **Barack Obama** risked upsetting voters in Cleveland by saying he wished James would sign with his beloved Chicago Bulls. Here's some of the transcript.

"Where does the president think LeBron James should play his basketball?" asked a Cleveland-based journo. "We were talking about this earlier today," replied Gibbs. "With the president?"

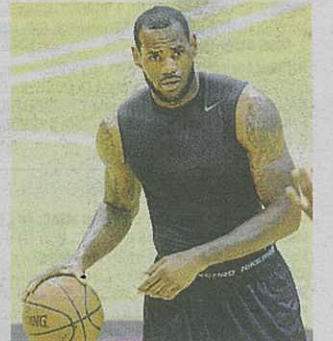
"Indeed. After the news of Miami's apparent acquiring of **Chris Bosh**. I think the president still believes that he would look quite good in a Bulls uniform. I hope that does not lead to NBA tampering charges."

"Are you worried, in all seriousness, are you worried that might annoy people in Cleveland?"

"Do I think the people of Cleveland have a strong desire to see a largely home-town guy and a home-state guy play in Cleveland? Absolutely. I think the people of Ohio and the rest of the country would respect that the president is going to root for the team he's always rooted for. I'm not going to sit up here and tell you that we're hoping that Ohio State and Florida play for the national championship every year in all four major sports in order to garner the greatest number of endangered purple-state electoral votes prior to 2012."

"People in Cleveland did take it as the president rooting against them, and they never catch a break. This might actually really bother people." "Again, I'm sure it will. If the team you rooted for, if the star left that team to go to anywhere, I'm sure it would bother people."

And these are the people who run the world ...



**LeBron James' future is serious business in the US.** PICTURE: AP

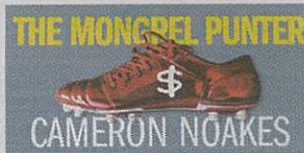
Got a tip? Contact: [mhawthorne@theage.com.au](mailto:mhawthorne@theage.com.au)

## Read all about it: journalists reveal they're (on the) sauce

**A**LARM bells are ringing at AFL House after it was sensationally revealed that not only players and coaches are medicating themselves to get through game day, but football journalists are also using legal uppers and downers to cope with the rigours of the sport, particularly at night.

After discovering excerpts from a football journalist's diary, *Mongrel Punter* has learnt that media types are treading on dietary eggshells with an unhealthy cycle of caffeine and wine.

The diary revealed: **Journalists drink multiple cups of coffee or tea on a game day.**



**Journalists drink wine or various other alcoholic beverages after a game to help them relax.**

**Journalists drink wine or various other alcoholic beverages during a game, particularly at home watching games on the telly ... or at the pub.**

**Journalists eat takeaway pizza or other fried/junk food, including fried scallops and the dangerous potato cake, often before a Friday night game or sometimes**

during the day of a game or randomly through the week.

**At least one journalist has admitted to a dim-sim abuse problem.**

**Journalists often wash this potent cocktail of wine/caffeine/pizza down with anti-acid such as Gaviscon or Quickeze.**

**DIARY EXCERPTS:**

**FRIDAY, 6.15AM:** Game day ... feeling groggy. In need of caffeine fix. Daughter woke early. Wife is cranky. Feeling vague. Feeling gassy. Forgot to clean my teeth. Too many soporifics last night. Teeth still red from wine. Got to cut back. That cleanskin shiraz is no bloody good. Why did I get that? Because it was six bucks.

Get papers from doorstep. Shit, did I really tip Port again? Need caffeine. Think about an instant. No. Check coffee pot — damn. Have to make fresh pot. Waiting. Read paper. Gleason on top of the tipping. He's tipped Freo again. Ha, I can take him ... just need upsets ... need coffee. When is this pot going to bloody boil?

**6.35AM:** Administer first caffeine hit. Feel better already. Head is clear. Tip eight is on this weekend. Always take both sides of Friday night game for better jackpot. Port can't win, though. No point thinking about Port. What has happened to Chad Cornes? Stop thinking about Port. Port

is the new Freo. Need another caffeine fix. Shower, dress, can't find any black socks. Why am I always out of black socks? Will wear yesterday's — they don't smell too bad.

**7.40AM:** Catch tram, read paper. Love how sport is inside the business. People think I'm reading Malcolm Maiden while I'm checking out the teams. Drink take-away coffee. First heart palpitations. Any money to make on Richmond? Stop thinking about Richmond. Wonder what Malcolm Maiden thinks? Wonder if his nickname is Iron. Stop thinking about Malcolm Maiden. Mental note: need more black socks. Got heartburn already.

**7.15PM:** Fish and chips for tea. First glass of red for day. Have to cut back. Antacid isn't working. Push on. Need another red. Game starts soon. Have Collingwood covered: 40-49 points pays \$7.50. Port by 1-2 points pays \$67. Stop thinking about Port. Maybe a fiver. **11.25PM:** Wife in bed. Fox Sports News, start thinking about Dutch. Bloody Dutch. Crack open another bottle. Can't sleep. Watch a western. Fall asleep on couch. AusKick tomorrow morning then big game. Hawthorn can't win without Mitchell. Stop thinking about Hawthorn. Sleep ... must sleep ...