

PSSST



BRUCE EVA

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BRUCE EVA IS THE PRODUCER OF 3AW'S SPORTS TODAY

A Better birthday



HAPPY birthday to all the horses reading today's column – August 1, of course, being the standardised date for all southern hemisphere steeds (January 1 for our northern hemisphere friends) to tick off another year. And as you can see from our exclusive picture of former champion Better Loosen Up, the good folk at Living Legends (Oaklands Road, Greenvale) are going the extra furlong to make it a super special day for the array of former thoroughbred stars who now reside at the equine retirement home. Better

Loosen Up turns 25 today, and it is 20 years since his two greatest triumphs – the 1990 Cox Plate in a race-record time followed up by becoming the only Australian horse to win the Japan Cup. Visitors today can share a slice of complementary carrot cake with the likes of BLU, Apache Cat and Might And Power, with the official cake-cutting commencing at 11am. Meanwhile, at Bendigo's horses' birthday-themed meeting today, 1999 Melbourne Cup winner Rogan Josh will make a guest appearance.

Cups, dogs, and other winners

A NEW book launched this week, *The Story of the Melbourne Cup – Australia's Greatest Race* is a significant addition to this nation's sporting literature. Publisher Geoff Slattery has a greyhound by the name of Robert Andrew which last week won at The Meadows and he hopes it can deliver him the dogs' version of the Melbourne Cup next year. Interesting name for a



dishlicker – Robert Andrew – with Slattery explaining it is named after his late father, who passed away 40 years ago, but who was responsible for introducing his son to punting! Slattery is also publisher of the *AFL Record*, and there is a footy connection in the book – White Nose, the 1931 winner of the Cup, was owned by Hugh Patterson McLachlan, the great-grandfather of the league's chief operating officer Gillon McLachlan.

Tickets on Tiger

THIS sports-crazy town still has to negotiate three weeks of footy finals, then a grand final, three marvellous days at Caulfield, followed by a Cox Plate and then the iconic four-day festival at Flemington, but Tuesday marks the 100-day countdown to the Masters at Victoria Golf Club. With Tiger Woods returning to defend the title he won at Kingston Heath last year – and being joined in the field by Sergio Garcia and Camilo Villegas, as well as Geoff Ogilvy – excitement is building. Victoria GC general manager Peter Stackpole told *Pssst* that if he could deliver one message to the thousands of fans desperate to get another dose of Tiger-mania, it would be to stop ringing the golf club! "We've been absolutely inundated with phone calls by people who want tickets, but we can't help them – they have to ring Ticketek," he explained. "We're getting very close to setting up one of those recorded messages or putting on an extra receptionist." Attendance will be capped at 20,000 a day for the four days of the tournament from November 11-14. Despite Tiger's recent efforts at disguise (pictured), we're not too sure he'll be able to sneak into town quietly.



Going where the grass is redder

IT makes the recent surface problems Etihad Stadium has encountered look trivial, but if anyone spots Ian Collins travelling to the red centre in coming days, you know this item has struck a chord with the Docklands boss. A dozen indigenous men have spent the past three months reviving the community oval at Areyonga, a two-hour drive south-west of Alice Springs, in a project inspired by the Northern Territory's Charles Darwin University. What had become a patch of trees and rocks was transformed into a respectable playing field for the locals who play for – and support – the Areyonga Tigers Football Club. The men who volunteered removed the vegetation and rocks, levelled the playing surface, relocated 70 sprinkler heads and installed new goalposts and, in doing so, gained literacy, numeracy and planning skills that have been recognised by CDU's business program. CDU lecturer Brendan Sheridan said the project was a perfect example of combining education and motivation. "Sport is the central hub for most of these communities and that motivation was a driving force behind the whole project," he said. "The dedication these blokes put into this resulted in a great community outcome." Sheridan added he was keen to extend the training into horticulture that could lead to the men irrigating and putting turf on the oval. "That would be a great next step in making this oval the jewel of the community and offering it for future community sporting events." "Collo" would be impressed!

TWEET OF THE WEEK

"Andrew McLeod aka 'Black Crow' baked me a cake, look like me?"



Port Adelaide's Warren Tredrea after he announced his retirement.

Summer's new shine

THE first shot for Australia's summer of tennis will be fired on Tuesday when Paul McNamee makes several major announcements regarding the field for next year's Hopman Cup (January 1-8) in Perth. McNamee, who fell short in April in his bid to become Tennis Australia president, flies back into the country tomorrow after a seven-week stint in Europe, which not only took in Wimbledon but also included some private coaching stints. Next year will be the 23rd edition of the mixed-teams Hopman Cup format, with Australia's only success coming in 1999 with the pairing of Mark Philippoussis and Jelena Dokic.

Vote of thanks

THANKS to all the readers who provided feedback on last Sunday's item regarding federal elections falling in the footy season, and the memorable moments that had occurred (like the 1974 Windy Hill brawl between Essendon and Richmond) on those election days. Special mention to Edward Cohen, who went even further back into history and emailed *Pssst* to point out that in 1946, the election was scheduled for grand final day – a date that wouldn't even be contemplated by politicians in this day and age! However, 64 years ago, Collingwood and Essendon played a draw in the second semi-final on September 14, meaning the replay was played a week later and the people went to the polls on preliminary final day rather than on the big one.

The Sheedy side

EXACTLY why Kevin Sheedy got stuck into Mick Malthouse and his Magpies last month remains a mystery, but as Dwayne Russell recently pointed out on 3AW, the two veteran mentors will be locked together on 635 games coached (equal second on the all-time list behind Jock McHale's 714) after round 22. Malthouse will obviously move into outright second in Collingwood's first final, but further investigation reveals – incredibly – that the match will also break another tie between the pair. They currently share equal second for finals coached – both having overseen 43 September clashes in their storied careers. "Sheeds" just shades his rival in the win-loss ratio in the games that really count, boasting a 23-20 finals coaching record (including four premierships), while Magpie Mick (and Eagle and Bulldog) is exactly 50 per cent – 21 wins, 21 losses and a draw (two flags). Ironically, Sheedy's overall tally of 635 will stay that way until he guides West Sydney into battle for the first time in the opening round of 2012 – the very same round that Malthouse's tally will stall, given Nathan Buckley will be coaching the Magpies for the first time.



separated at birth



Shane Russell writes: "Whilst I'm certain the guy on the right is Professor Klump (*The Nutty Professor*), I'm not so sure if the guy on the left is actually Clive Lloyd or Eddie Murphy disguised as Clive Lloyd!"

Send your ideas to sundaysport@theage.com.au



PSSST EXTRA

NUMBERS UP

14 indigenous AFL footballers have played 200 or more senior games, with the Magpies' Leon Davis the latest to join the ranks yesterday.

4 sleeps until new A-League franchise Melbourne Heart kicks off in the season-opener against Central Coast at AAMI Park.

10 minutes may be wiped from footy matches, with the AFL considering reducing each quarter by 2.5 minutes.

5 double-centuries in the bag for the little master, Sachin Tendulkar, with his latest performance (203) for India in the second Test against Sri Lanka.

WHAT THEY SHOULD DO ...

Send your contribution to: sundaysport@theage.com.au



WHAT THEY SHOULD DO ... to dramatically improve the accuracy of football (soccer) refereeing decisions and the watchability of the games in the major tournaments and leagues is install a fifth official in the stands for the following:
Offside adjudications. TV broadcasters are already providing vision of these decisions, complete with lines to determine exactly who is onside and offside.
Goals. Employ goal-mouth technology to

determine whether the ball has crossed the line.
Simulation (penalty areas). Refer any remotely unclear fouls in the penalty area to the fifth official. Again, most of the time, TV broadcasters have the angles covered.
Simulation (general play). When fouled, any player who stays down for more than 20 seconds is clearly horribly maimed and must leave the field on a stretcher. This will soon reduce the number of auditions

for "most dramatic death" and subsequent "most miraculous recovery" that plague many games.

Accuracy is especially critical in football where a single goal can decide the match. Adopting these measures would seem to be a no-brainer given the billions of dollars floating around in football-land.

JULIAN LLOYD, Clifton Hill

WHAT THEY SHOULD DO ... is direct the telecasters of AFL not to show replays if that results in loss of vision of live play. This occurs regularly and is most annoying. I appreciate a second look at incidents, but the live action is paramount. The primary rule for telecasts should be that, if there is a chance of live action being missed by showing a replay, scrap or delay the replay.

JIM FULLER, Heathmont

TRIVIA

1. Lions coach Michael Voss has nominated which AFL club as the next "superpower"?
2. Last week, boxing copped a serve over the Green-Briggs fight. This week it was formula one. What was the issue?
3. Ferdinand Alonso's F1 win extended Spain's sporting purple patch. Name three other Spanish conquests in the past month.
4. Boxer Manny Pacquiao has taken his seat as a Philippines congressman by quoting famed sports announcer Michael Buffer in his first House speech. What was the line?
5. Which teams played off in the A-League final in March and who won?

Answers: 1. Melbourne; 2. Ferrari was fined \$100,000 for bringing the sport into disrepute by ordering Felipe Massa to let Fernando Alonso win the German Grand Prix; 3. Rafael Nadal won Wimbledon; Spain won the World Cup and Alberto Contador won the Tour de France; 4. "Let's get ready to rumble!"; 5. Sydney FC and Melbourne.

ANSWERS