

# NEWSLETTER



**AUGUST 2025**



BINKS & ASSOCIATES

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## **President's message- David Collins**

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2025.

Firstly, congratulations to Barry Capuano and Jim Demetriou on recently being awarded an Order of Australia (OAM) medal in the Kings Birthday honours. This is an outstanding achievement by Barry and James. They now join EFCPP&OA members, David Shaw, Greg Brown, Barb Cullen, Alan Murphy and Neale Daniher (current Australian of the Year) as awarded OAMs.

Recent EFCPP&OA functions since our April Newsletter include several successful EFC Past Player functions in Queensland, South Australia and West Australia to coincide with EFC matches in those States. The SA function was attended by twelve past players and other guests before the EFC's Gather Round match. All who attended had a great time thanks to the work of Charlie Italia, Mark Harvey and Andrew Underwood.

The WA function, held on the day following the Dockers v EFC match was another outstanding success. Approximately thirty past players and other guests attended, including Roger Merrett who was in WA on holidays at the time. Scott Cummings did a great job as MC as did Essendonians President Mark Basilone as Auctioneer. Special thanks to Mark Harvey, Charlie Italia, Gary O'Donnell, Tony Buhagiar, Matthew Banks and Iain Findlay who all made great contributions to success of the event.

The Queensland function was held in Brisbane and attended by six past players to coincide with the Brisbane V EFC match and it is proposed that a small function will be held in Sydney in early August for the Swans V EFC match.

Our monthly coffee club (EPPOCH) catch ups at Windy Hill on the first Monday morning of each month continue to be enjoyed by all who attend them. Thanks to Graham Leydin for his work in organising each function and also to the recent guest speakers including Iain Findlay, Chris Byrne (EFC Player & Welfare Manager) and Matt Rosa (EFC Talent & Operations Manager).

Special thanks to the EFC for inviting EFC Past Players to a briefing at The Hangar on Friday 4 July. Twenty-seven past players attended the event which was MC'd by Mark Harvey. David Barham (President), Craig Vozzo (CEO), Dean Solomon (EFC Committee), and Matt Rosa (Talent & Operations) each made presentations to the group and spoke about their respective roles at the Club. They also opened the meeting up to questions from those present. Overall, it provided a clear overview of the EFC plan for the future of the Club, their priorities, what they

have in place so far, and where they are heading. It was also another clear demonstration of how highly the Club is now focusing on its rich history and culture and also how very much they are committed to working and involving the EFCPP&OA.

The 2025 Annual Dinner for past players and officials, will again be held at Windy Hill on the Wednesday 24 September. An invitation to attend will be sent to EFCPP&OA past players and officials in early September.

Unfortunately, I have to report that two of our members have passed away since our last Newsletter: Stuart Barclay and Fred Payne RIP. Our condolences to their families.

In recent times, our committee has been working on ways and means of providing support and advice particularly in regard to identifying and assisting with mental issues. I will keep you updated on developments in this regard.

As always, if anyone of our members are in need of assistance or hear of other members who may be in need of assistance, please contact me. All approaches are strictly confidential.

David Collins  
President

## **EPPOCH – Essendon Past Players Officials Coffee Hour**

*Contributed by Graham Leydin, EFCPPOA Committee member*

The EPPOCC (Essendon Past Players Officials Coffee Club) catch ups has continued successfully this year.

This initiative grew out of conversations with former players to Ken Fraser, John Birt and Ian Graham. With the endorsement of the EFCPP&OA committee it provided another opportunity to further promote the EFC to a wider football community.



Coordinated monthly by committee member Graham Leydin, with generous support from Samantha McKelvie (EFC), and Alan Burton (Windy Hill Venue), catch ups are held in the Barry Capuano room,

Each meeting features an EFC identity who outlined their involvement with the Club and interacts with the group through a lively question time.

The catch ups provide a great insight into various aspects of the inner sanctum of the Club as well as the opportunity for members to meet regularly in an informal casual setting.

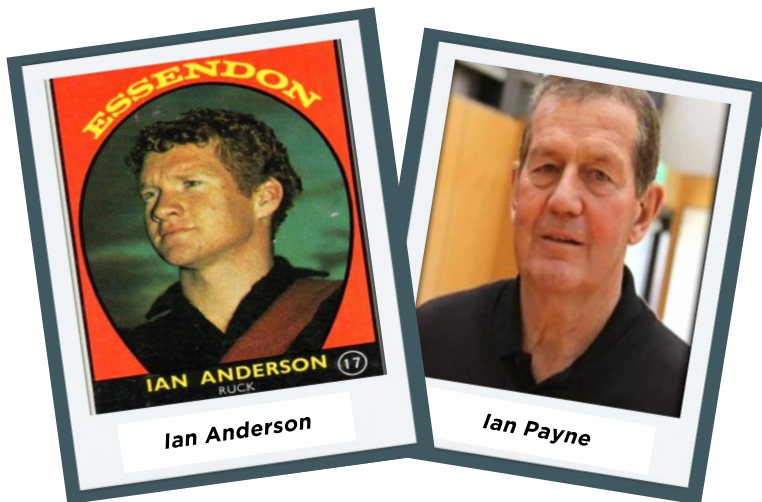
*2025 EPPOCC guests have so far have included:*

- February- Dustin Fletcher
- March- Matt Rosa
- April- David Barham and Tony Howard
- June- Chris Byrne
- July- Iain Findlay

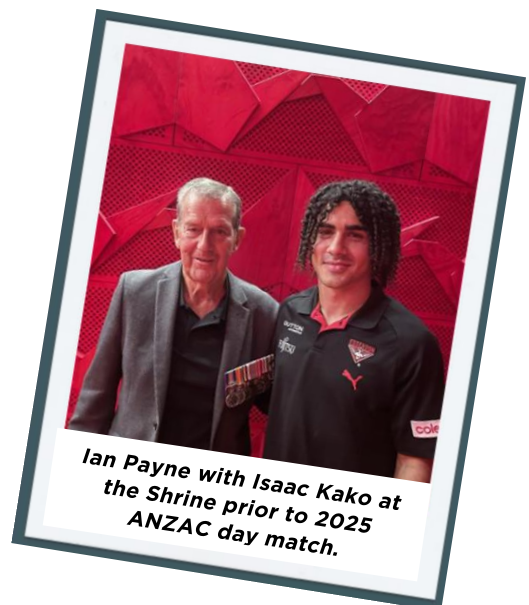


***Hope to see at our Coffee Club catch up in August & September!***

## **ANZAC Day 2025**



It was great to see Essendon's Vietnam Veterans **Ian 'Ginger' Anderson** and **Ian Payne**, participating in the pre-game motorcade.



*Ian Payne with Isaac Kako at the Shrine prior to 2025 ANZAC day match.*

## **Past Player Recognition jumper presentation**

All players who have played one or more senior match for the Club are post-career presented with an EFC Recognition jumper to identify their debut number, years played, games played and playing number/s.

Dylan Clarke and Devon Smith were presented their EFC Recognition jumper at the Club's Chairman's Function at Essendon's Round 14 match v Geelong at MCG on Saturday 14 June.

Devon played a total of 182 AFL games - 63 games for EFC between 2018-2022 wearing guernsey #5 and prior to that he played 119 games for GWS (2012-2017).

Dylan played 24 games for EFC between 2018-2018 and wore guernsey # 37.



**Dylan Clarke & Devon Smith.**



**Devon Smith with Kevin Sheedy.**

# **Barry Capuano awarded**

## **Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)**

*Contributed by Jo-Anne Albert (EFC Life Member & former Board Member)*



The EFCPP&OA is proud to congratulate Barry Capuano on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his outstanding service to Australian Rules football.

Barry's remarkable contribution spans over six decades, during which he has served the game with distinction as a player, captain, coach, administrator, and tireless volunteer.

His dedication, leadership, and passion for the sport have left a lasting legacy on the club and the broader football community.

This honour is a fitting recognition of Barry's lifelong commitment to the game we all love.

Congratulations, Barry, on this well-deserved accolade

### ***Barry's achievements:***

#### **Essendon Football Club Past Players and Officials Association**



- President, 2011-2021.
- Secretary, 2001-2010.
- Involved with establishment of the Past Player Welfare and Assistance Program, 2015.
- Involved with establishment of the Past Players Foundation Trust, 2004.
- Life Member, 2009

#### **Essendon Football Club**



- Member, Hall of Fame Selection Committee, since 1996.
- General Manager, 1981-1988.
- Player, 1958-1966.
- Member, Match Selection Committee, 1974-1976.
- Life Member, 1975.
- Inductee, Hall of Fame, 2014.
- Named a Legend, 2023.
- Barry Capuano Room, Windy Hill, named in his honour, 2024.

#### **Australian Rules Football – Other**

- Coach, Stawell Football Club, 1978.
- Captain, Eltham Football Club, 1969-1970.
- Captain and Coach, Mitcham Football Club, 1967-1968.

#### **Awards and Recognition include:**

- Australian Sports Medal, 2001



## **James Demetriou awarded Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)**

The Association also congratulates past player James Demetriou on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the King's Birthday Honours. James has been honoured for his service to sport, to education, and to business.

James played 9 games for EFC (1975-1976) and later served on the Clubs's Board in the mid-to-late 1990s.

James was also the founding chair of the Australian Sports Technologies Network (ASTN) and also Sports Without Borders. He was also a City of Coburg Councillor in the early to mid '80s and has held leadership positions in university programs at Swinburne, Monash, and Melbourne University.



### **Calendar of events**

DATE	EVENT
Monday 4 August	EPPOCC – August Coffee Club catch up <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30am Windy Hill Venue</li><li>Charlie Italia – guest speaker</li></ul>
Monday 1 September	EPPOCC – September Coffee Club catch up <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10:30am Windy Hill Venue</li></ul>



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## **One of Essendon's Great Legend's- Jack Clarke**

*Contributed by Barry Capuano OAM, EFC Legend.*



Jack Clarke was one of Essendon's greatest players. He was a great centreman and then rover who joined Essendon from Essendon High school at the age of 14 in 1947. He was Vice-Captain of the U19's at the age of 15 and was runner-up in the Morrish Medal, the Best and Fairest in the competition in 1950. He won the U19 Best and Fairest awards in 1949 and 1950.

Jack was a sporting natural and a very smart football thinker, fearless in his approach to the ball, which unfortunately caused him many severe head knocks and other injuries.

He was Captain of Essendon from 1958 till 1964. He won the club's Best & Fairest awards in 1958 and 1962 and was runner up an incredible 6 times, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959, 1960 and 1963. Jack led the side to the 1962 Premiership and was also an outstanding player in the 1965 flag.

During his playing career Jack polled 116 Brownlow Medal votes and played 263 games, kicking 180 goals.

Jack represented the State in all years from 1953 to 1962 and won All Australian blazers in 1953, 1956 and 1958. He Captained the State team 1959, 1960 and 1962, playing 27 State games during his career.

Jack was appointed as Coach of the EFC in 1968 to 1970, leading the club to Runners-up in 1968, losing to Carlton by 3 points.

Jack was an Architect and developed the W.H Cookson Stand at Windy Hill, which opened in 1963.

Jack's family was certainly a great sporting family, his father Tom playing for the EFC in the 1930's and later as a Committeeman for many years and his brother, Ron, playing games with the Reserves at Essendon in the 1950's and then becoming a world champion athlete in long distance running, as well as carrying the torch to light up the flame for the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne.



Jack was named in the centre in Essendon's team of the century and at number 8 in the Champions of Essendon in 2002. He was inducted as a Legend of the club in 1996 and an inaugural member of the Australian Football Hall of Fame in the same year. He was also awarded Life Membership of the AFL in 1999.

Jack Clarke was an outstanding footballer for Essendon and following his football career went on to be a great veteran athlete. He would have fitted in well with the football today due to his great skills at all levels.

Jack passed away in 2001 from cancer, which was a huge shock to all who knew him, as he maintained a great fitness level all of his life.

## **2025 EFC jumper presentations**

Several players have made their EFC debut during the 2025 season. Each player was presented with their EFC debut guernsey by a past player:

### **Round 9 v Sydney, Saturday 10 May**



**Michael Hurley presented debut jumper to Lewis Hayes.**



**Chris Heffernan presented debut jumper to Archer Day-Wicks.**

### **Round 13 v Carlton, Sunday 8 June**



**Darren Bewick presented debut guernsey to Luamon**



**Luamon Lual with his family and Darren Bewick**

**Round 14 v Geelong, Saturday 14 June**



**Ted Richards presented Archer May his debut guernsey**



**Dustin Fletcher presented debut guernsey to Oskar Smartt**



**Sean Wellman presented Lachlan Blakiston his debut guernsey**

**Round 15 v Fremantle, Thursday 19**



**Gary O'Donnell presented debut guernsey to Vigo Visterini**

**Round 19 v GWS, Thursday 17 July**



**Joe Misiti presented debut guernsev to Liam McMahon**



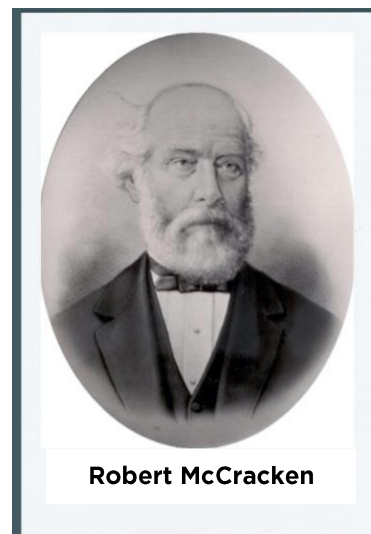
## **Essendon's first family: the McCrackens**

*Contributed by Carolynn Larsen (EFC Historian and EFCPPOA member)*

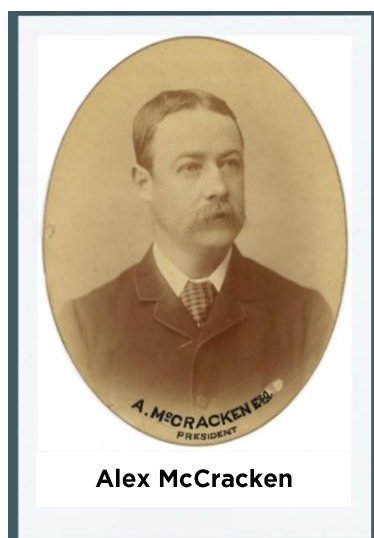
Essendon is very much a "McCracken" club: it was formed at Robert McCracken's home "Ailsa" in 1872, he was the first president, his son, John, kicked Essendon's first goal in the Club's first official game in 1873, and the team was captained by John's cousin, Coiler McCracken.

But the greatest contribution was made by Robert's younger son, Alex. A summary of his achievements demonstrates this:

- Player, 1878 -1880
- Secretary, 1872 - 1887
- Essendon's delegate to the newly-formed VFA
- President, 1887 - 1903
- Patron, 1903 - 1908
- Essendon's first life member
- Inaugural member of Essendon's Hall of Fame, later Legend
- Inaugural VFL President, 1897- 915
- VFL/AFL life member, 1905
- founder and/or president of many local sporting clubs



Alex married Mary Peck, daughter of John Murray Peck who was co-founder of Cobb & Co. and a foundation member and vice-president of the Football Club.



The McCracken and Peck families have left their mark on Essendon and Strathmore:

- Essendon High School and Essendon's first golf club (now Riverside) were built on McCracken land
- four of their homes still exist: Alex's "North Park" (now owned by St Columban's Mission Society); Coiler's, "Earlsbrae" (now Lowther Hall); Robert's, "Ailsa" (now owned by the Church of Scientology); John Murray Peck's, "Lebanon" (the oldest house in Strathmore)
- local streets: Ardmillan Rd, McCracken St, Hedderick St, Ailsa St, Mascoma St and Peck St

Tradition says Essendon's iconic red and black colours come from the McCracken coat-of-arms, but that has not been verified.

Alex's enormous contribution is honoured by the Football Club in the McCracken Medal which is voted for by the players and awarded to the player who best represents Essendon's values.

**TELL US YOUR NEWS ...** We welcome news, articles and photographs from all our members. If you have experiences, insights and/or photos that you think may be of interest to other EFCPP&OA members, please feel free to send them to [admin@efcppoa.com.au](mailto:admin@efcppoa.com.au) so if appropriate, we can include them in future newsletters editions.

## **Obituary**

### **Vale Stuart Barclay 1949-2025**

Stuart played in Essendon's 1968 Reserves premiership side then made his senior debut in 1969 and played 39 senior games for Essendon between 1969-1973.

Stuart was a rangy right footer who began in the back pocket then played on the half back line. In the back pocket he often picked up the resting opposition ruckman. Although lightly built he was quick, had a good spring and was a good mark.

Post-Essendon, Stuart played and coached in Tasmania and Queensland including representing Tasmania in state football from 1974-1977 and Queensland in 1978 & 1980.

Condolences to the Barclay family.

RIP Stuart.



### **Vale Fred Payne 1927-2025**

Fred lived a great life and passed away at the age of 98.

A courageous follower and half-forward from Ardmona, Fred played 42 matches for EFC between 1949-1953. Payne featured in a winning 1950 reserves Grand Final after playing 10 senior games throughout the season.



Post Essendon, he played for Hawthorn Seconds, Kyneton, returned to play for the Essendon Seconds, then Sunbury, and Murchison, before finishing his career back at Ardmona.

Condolences to the Payne family.



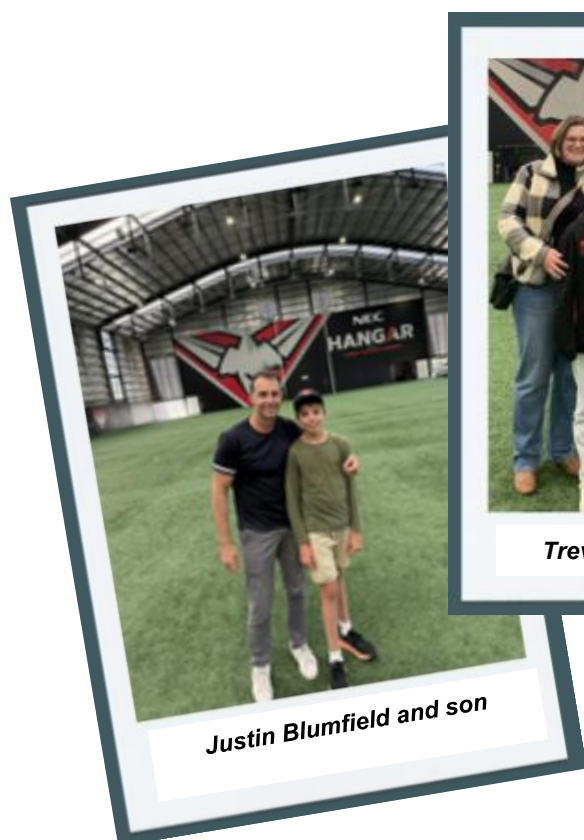
## **Milestones and achievements**

The following members will achieve significant age milestones between the 1 August – 30 November 2025:

- Allan Stoneham (70- 20 August)
- Terry Ryan (70- 17 August)
- Graeme Dowlan (80- 18 August).
- Graeme Langsworth (80- 30 August).
- Bruce Walmsley (80- 31 August)
- Graeme Jenkin (80- 5 September).
- Tim Williams (50- 22 September)
- Carolynn Larsen (80- 23 September)
- Ricky Dyson (40- 28 September)
- Tony Buhagiar (70- 3 October).
- Matthew Firman (40- 20 October)
- Cory Klaaysen (60- 6 November)
- Geoff Pryor (80- 21 November)

## **Past Player visits to the Hangar**

Several past players have visited the Hangar over the past few months:





## Interstate Past Player functions and initiatives

The Association in conjunction with the Club are getting great traction creating engagement and connection for EFC past players around Australia.

This year we have had functions in Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and we are looking to hold a function in Sydney in the coming weeks.

Thank you to the Essendon Football Club and Maddy Lancaster for making match tickets available for our past players at interstate EFC matches.

### **SA past players function – Round 2**

Our second Past Players function for the South Australian past players members and their families, was held on 12 April, coinciding with the AFL's Gather round carnival in South Australia. The function was held at a 2KW in Adelaide.

Several SA past players attended including Gavin Wanganeen , Greg Anderson, Jay Nash, Henry Slattery ,Keiren Sporn, Andrew Underwood, Tony Antrobus, David Grenvold , Craig Barbery, and Geoff Blethyn.

As well as some VIC past players that were over there in SA for Gather Round including Paul Salmon, Ted Richards, Jason Johnson, Adam Ramanauskas, Mark Harvey, Terry Daniher, Mark Bolton, Andrew Welsh

Charlie Italia and Iain Findlay from EFCPP&OA were also in attendance.

After the function, the group walked to Adelaide Stadium to watch the Bombers beat Melbourne.



**Gavin Wanganeen and Mark Harvey**



**Geoff Blethyn and wife**



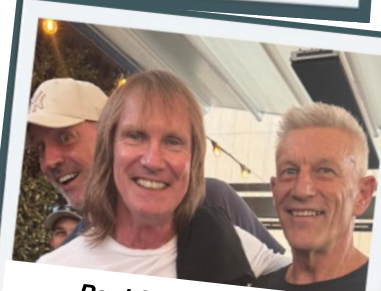
**Mark Bolton and Andrew Underwood**



**Jay Nash and Henry Slattery**



**Terry Daniher and David Grenvold**



**Paul Salmon, Greg Anderson and Kieran Sporn**



## QLD past players function – Round 12



L-R: Mark Bolton, Mark Harvey, Robert Amos, Dean Solomon, Peter Somerville, Roger Merrett, Tristan Cartledge & Michael Werner.

## WA past players function – Round 15

The WA Past players function was held on Friday 20 June 2025 and was organised by Mark Harvey, Gary O'Donnell and MC Scott Cummings.



*Back row- Kyle Hardingham, Ben Howlett, David Myers, Brendan Lee, Barry Young, Travis Colyer, Dustin Fletcher, Graham Moss, Iain Findlay, Michael Prior, Matthew Banks, Todd Ridley, Scott Cummings, Roger Merrett, Mike Richardson.*  
*Front row – Gary O'Donnell, Mark Harvey, Bill Duckworth, Ben Doolan, Russell Ellen.*

# **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1965 Essendon Premiership**

*Contributed by Michael Kearney, co-author of Coleys Champs book.*

## **1962 Grand Final**

**Essendon** 2.7 5.10 10.18 14.21 (105)

**St Kilda** 1.6 4.8 5.11 9.16 (70)

**GOAL KICKERS**- Fordham 7, Sampson 2, Gosper 2, Fraser, Birt, Mitchell

**BEST PLAYERS**- Team Effort

## **Significant highlights from the 1965 Premiership**

- The win was especially significant as it represented only the third time in VFL history that a team had won the flag after finishing fourth on the home and away ladder.
- The Bombers went into that Grand Final as the underdog with its opponent, St. Kilda, the tipsters' favourite due to being on top at the end of the home and away season. The Saints were also the sentimental favourites as they were pursuing their first VFL premiership.
- Another significant news story from the Grand Final was the goal scoring performance of Essendon star forward Ted Fordham who booted a then VFL Grand Final equalling record 7 goals.
- The undersized Saint's ruckman Alan Morrow sustained a match-ending ankle injury by quarter time. His departure from the game was significant as it left the young blond 'bombshell' Carl Ditterich to compete against Don McKenzie and Brian Sampson. This was too big a task in the end.
- The power and 'fire' of Essendon's strong men of the time in Ian 'Bluey' Shelton and Alec 'Kookaburra' Epis could not be underestimated on the 'big day' despite both players returning to the senior side after several weeks sidelined with injury. Shelton, as well as shoulder injury, had also lost sight in an eye due to a farm accident during that year. However, he was so important to the confidence of the team and Coach John Coleman loved his toughness.
- The loss of Half Forward John Somerville due to the much-publicised Duncan Wright incident from the preceding Preliminary Final could have 'stepped' the Bombers into an unlosable state of mind.

## 1965 team



**Back Row:** Jack Clarke, Graeme Johnston, Barry Davis, John Somerville, Don McKenzie, Geoff Pryor, Brian Sampson, Bruce Waite, Charlie Payne, Ted Fordham, Greg Brown, Russell Blew, Geoff Gosper.  
**Front Row:** John Birt, Kevin Egan, David Shaw, Ian Shelton, Greg Sewell (Ass. Coach), John Coleman (Coach), Ken Fraser, Elec Epis, Darryl Gerlach, Hugh Mitchell.

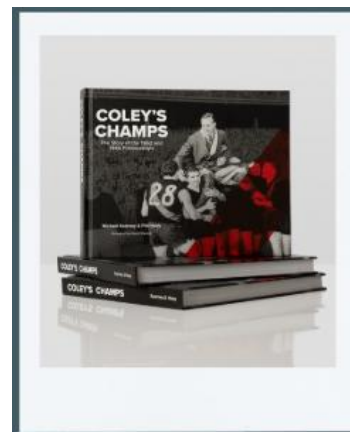
## 1965 Grand Final Quiz

*Quiz contributed by Michael Kearney*

- Q1 - On Grand Final Day why were some Guernsey numbers changed (6) for players at Essendon?
- Q2 Who won the Brownlow medal in that year? (1965)
- Q3 Name the Essendon players from the Grand Final went onto coach at VFL/AFL level?
- Q4 How many St. Kilda players from that game went onto coach at VFL/AFL level?
- Q5 Who captained Ess after Ken Fraser?
- Q6 Name the former Ess President and member of the AFL Commission who played in the 1965 Premiership?
- Q7 Name the St Kilda player who kicked 5 goals in a subsequent Grand Final for his side?
- Q8 Who from the 2 Grand Finalist of 1965 won the Morrish medal for the league best and fairest in the under 19's.
- Q9 Who was the assistant coach to John Coleman in 1965 who later become the club's President

**Answers on next page**

**Exclusive EFCPP&OA  
member offer-  
Coleys Champs book**



In commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1965 premiership, Coley's Champs authors Michael Kearney & Phil Hoey, are offering EFCPP&OA members an exclusive discount on the Coley's Champs book!

For a limited time only, EFCPP&OA members can purchase a copy of Coleys Champs for only \$39.99!

Members must enter **ESS65** in the coupon code field during the checkout process to receive the special price.

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- Answers to Trivia Questions 1965 GF:**
1. The then VFL demanded the changes due to illegal publication by some members of the public of footy guernsey numbers.
  2. Ian Stewart
  3. John Birt, Jack Clarke + Barry Davis
  4. Ian Stewart, Darrel Baldock + Carl Ditterich
  5. Don McKenzie
  6. David Shaw
  7. Kevin 'Cowboy' Neale
  8. Kevin Egan
  9. Greg Sewell

**FUNDRAISING ASSISTANCE** - As you are aware, the EFCPPOA and Dick Reynolds Club run a number of funding raising efforts each year and the Special Effort raffle. If you are able to donate potential prizes for any of these efforts in 2025, please email us [admin@efcpboa.com.au](mailto:admin@efcpboa.com.au)