

ROOSTER REMINISCES

A look back at a memorable match from each round

Round 17

Season 1946 (Saturday 7 September)



A candid shot on youngster Ian McKay taken in 1946 – his debut year

Kicking 10 goals or more in a quarter of footy is always a wonderful experience to witness for the supporters and club and enjoyment for the players but when commences from a match position of despair to a rousing victory it can't be any better. In 1946 in the team's last match of the season recently inducted NAFC Hall of Fame great Ian McKay – in his debut season – was prominent in one such victory. North failed to make the finals, but what a way to end the season!

The Background

After sneaking into the finals the previous year North were a middle-of the road team but planning for the future by providing opportunities to some talented youngsters which, in hindsight, resulted in becoming part of the powerful Ken Farmer-led premierships team three years later. But North's 1946 was a tough season. Despite the experienced **Jeff Pash** and **Alan Burton** providing guidance the team was quite inexperienced as evident with 17 players entering in North's league ranks by the time the last game came around. Emerging talents such as **Jack Beeching**, **Darcy Cox**, **Lyle Griffin**, **Frank Bolton**, **Stan Hancock** and **Ian McKay** all tasted league football for the first time and commenced wonderful careers. But as youngsters it was a season of development under coach **Jack Smith**. With two rounds to go North were 7th with four wins and 11 losses. A victory against fellow struggling team South Adelaide in Round 16 gave some comfort to the players with the final match of the season against finals-bound West Adelaide at Adelaide Oval with only pride at stake. And for most of the match this was the only thing keeping them in the contest.

The Match

From the opening bounce it was a tight tussle with neither team able to get any space in their forward lines nor the scoreboard. In fact it took eight-minutes to pass before the first goal of the match was registered. North dominated the air and both half-back lines seemed to be able to deny any penetration from the opposing forwards. It wasn't until the third term when West finally found the scoring gap they were after with a 4.5 to 1.4 quarter to give them a comfortable 26-

point margin at the last break. With victory seemingly gone it took an adjustment in the team line-up and some brilliance to be the inspiration needed for a final quarter revival.

Ian McKay, who had been dominant at centre-half back with great intercept marking and clearing kicks was injured with a sore leg and was moved to full forward. **Jeff Pash**, originally winning at centre but beaten during the third term, was moved to half-forward. Immediately McKay's moved proved effective as he kicked two (of his three final-quarter) goals to put life back into the contest. After **Morrie Arbon** goaled second-gamer (and first for the season) **Laurence Veal**, who was playing an admirable match, kicked two goals and suddenly a victory was in sight. North's ruck finally broke the shackles and dominated the quarter as the goal-avalanche continued as **Colin Aamodt** slotted two himself to have North not only hitting the lead but storming ahead. Before West could kick their first goal for the term North had kicked a bewildering and accurate 10.1 and were five-goals ahead. The final margin, ironically, was a 26-point margin – the same margin North trailed at three-quarter time.

The Advertiser was eloquently clear the more-fancied West's mindset may not have been in the game but nothing could question North's commitment and final quarter:

- “(West's) attitude, unconscious and unavoidable as it might have been, brought its downfall. North Adelaide played moderately well in the first three quarters – well enough to remain within 26 points of West Adelaide at the last change. Nobody thought North Adelaide had much chance of winning, or even extending the leader, and West Adelaide players probably were of the same mind. It was consequently with almost a patronising air that they saw North Adelaide surge forward in the last quarter. A couple of goals from McKay... caused only a ripple of interest, but when North Adelaide, showing unsuspected speed and cohesion and astonishing accuracy in kicking for goal, confidently bounced forward from centre to goal with unbroken regularity;”
- “The transformation of North Adelaide from just another team to one which would have been more than a handful for any of the major round sides, was the work of genius. In the great last quarter North Adelaide's power points were **(Jack) Beeching** and **(Lionel) Pedersen** at half-back, **(Darcy) Cox** at centre, Pash at half-forward left and McKay at full forward.”

The Mail also picked up the final term heroics:

- “North turned on a meteoric last-quarter burst against West Adelaide at Adelaide Oval to run out easy winners. A match-winning move for North was the placing of Ian McKay, State centre half-back, at full forward for the last term... In the final quarter McKay got two goals almost immediately. Even with his ‘dicky’ leg, he made some remarkable leaps for the ball;”
- “West were bewildered. Pash's effective football at half-forward, Aamodt's pace and powerful kicking in a forward pocket and McKay's great marking and kicking gave North an attack of class.”

One player to stand out was 21 year-old **Laurence Veal**:

- “L. Veale (sic.), who played his first league game this season with North, showed out at Adelaide Oval. Cool, nippy and with a good foot pass, he roved and rested in a forward pocket. Veale (sic.), who comes from Port Pirie, got two goals in succession when North made their brilliant last-term run, one of them from a smart left-foot snap;”

It was a dramatic high-class victory and many of the younger players showed glimpses of what North fans would enjoy in seasons to come. Who knows, every victory, including one when the season was over and the game looked lost with a quarter to go, may have had a hand in the premiership three seasons later...

Stats Fact

- North's 26-point deficit from three-quarter time is their:
 - 5th largest comeback for victory in any match. The biggest comeback from the last break is 39-points against West Torrens in 1976;
 - greatest comeback in any game at Adelaide Oval;

- greatest comeback in any game against West Adelaide;
- North 10.1 is one of three times North have kicked 10 goals or more in the 4th quarter at Adelaide Oval against any team. It is also one of two occasions they have done this against West at any ground;
- North's 18.9 (117) is their 4th highest score against West at Adelaide Oval (in 72 contests);

Round 17 Stats Fact

- North's 10.1 is the second of two occasions North have kicked 10 goals or more in the 4th quarter in this round. The other was in 1936 against Glenelg.

Match Details:

North	2.3	7.4	8.8	18.9	117
West	2.3	8.5	12.10	13.13	
Ground:	Adelaide Oval			Crowd:	6,337

Best Players: McKay, Pedersen, J. Pash, Veal, Edwards, Beeching, O'Leary, Aamodt

Scorers: Veal 4.2, McKay 4.2, Aamodt 4.0, Arbon 3.1, Pedersen 1.2, Edwards 1.1, Heylen 1.0, Hoskins 0.1

The Team:

F: Laurence Veal, Lionel Pedersen, Lloyd Heylen
 HF: Bryan Edwards, Ray Hoskins, Darcy Cox
 C: Stanley Hancock, Jeff Pash, George Donisthorpe
 HB: Donald Priest, Ian McKay, Max Thomas
 B: Jack Beeching, Fred Bolton, Alan Burton
 1R: Frank O'Leary, Colin Aamodt, Maurice Arbon
 Res: Garth Martin, Malcolm Bradshaw



Frank Bolton, Darcy Cox and Jeff Pash were all part of the team that defeated West in Round 17, 1946

David O'Hara
History Committee