

ROOSTER REMINISCES

A look back at a memorable match from each round

Round 4

Season 2006 (Friday 21 April)



Don Lindner or Nick Gill? One of the 18 marks 'Emu' took against Sturt in an extraordinary spectacle of high marking

North Adelaide certainly have their great heroes of yesteryear with such names as **Ken Farmer**, **Barrie Robran**, **Don Lindner**, **Ian McKay**... champions of the club, the competition and all deservedly Hall of Fame icons. So it would be fair to think that when a player produces a performance that has media and supporters reference them in the same sentence as one or more of those icons he must have played one hell of a match. And in 2006 the charismatic, quirky, frustrating yet absolutely entertaining and gifted **Nick Gill** played a game for the ages.

Background

Coming into Round 4 of the 2006 season North were continuing their good form from last year with great wins against the Eagles and South. Sturt had not won a game, and both were entering the Friday night contest after a bye the previous weekend. Lanky centre half-forward **Nick Gill**, in his second season, was playing great football (and it would be seen at the Magarey Medal count he collected votes in both games North had already played). He was already a fan favourite and his competitive nature and freakish skills and durability were an advantage for coach **Andrew Jarman's** flamboyant and attacking team. While he continually became a scoring option hitting the scoreboard regularly it was not surprising his contribution was 6.9. North were red-hot favourites in taking out the Friday night contest against the double blues. And while the team did win, and win well, **Nick Gill** will be the talk of the town for the following week. Or was it **Don Lindner** Mk II we saw that night...

The Match

The scene for the game could not be any more desirable: Friday evening at the lovely Adelaide Oval on a magical clear night. And the game commenced with a positive scoring attitude with direct football and quick movement evident by both clubs in a balanced first term. An accurate Sturt led North at the first break despite North having more scoring shots but the second term would become the talking point.

Kicking to the southern end the second quarter can be described in two words: **Nick Gill**. If ever there was a quarter where a single player effectively dominated, controlled and dismantled an opponent in 30 minutes it was this match, this quarter, and this player. In an incredible and blitzing exhibition Gill was simply awesome and unstoppable kicking six goals and handing out another – all in the first 16 minutes of the term. Most of these were from a result of high, contested marking with many taken in positions that no one should dare attempt to grab from. The crowd was mesmerised by his performance – as were his opponents – who had no ability to curtail Gilly’s period of sheer brilliance. Whilst he was continually taking breath-taking marks it was also his accuracy – something rarely mentioned when talking about Gilly – that placed the icing on the cake in his solo accomplishment. Ironically he kicked six of the nine goals (straight) in the term yet surprisingly still failed to reach the 10-goal record despite North’s dominance – partly due to no goals kicked after the 22-minute mark of the term. However the quarter broke the match open to have the Roosters leading by 37-points at the main break.

North continued the onslaught after the break as other contributors played their hand in dismantling any counter-attack Sturt tried to ascertain. This was clear in the third quarter as goals continued to stream with another nine goals kicked to leave the Roosters with 22 goals at the last break. North “only” kicked five goals in the last term but still came away from the game having kicked 27 goals and a superb 92-point smashing.

While the club would have been impressed with a great number of player’s efforts in the match they still remained in the shadow of **Nick Gill’s** parade – one that was referenced to the great **Don Lindner** both in the dominating factor he possessed and moreso the various style of marks which he concocted and formed into artwork: the “higher than Joe Cocker” grabs, aggressive pack-splitting crashes, spectacular and risky, and the type of marks that, had you not witnessed yourself, you would simply believe the story-teller is simply trying to fool you. And not to forget the relentlessness of the marking as time and time again throughout the game he popped up to pluck another grab and set his team alight. At the end of the night **Nick Gill** had taken 18 marks, collected 23 kicks, dished out one handball, laid four tackles and finished with 9.3. In Fantasy Score terms would accumulated 193 points. The goal-feast was the highest individual goalkicking effort for a Rooster since **Daniel Hargraves** 13 goals in Round 20, 2001.

The Advertiser was in awe of the performance when they reported the game the following day:

- “Amazing **Nick Gill** inspired North... to fully open the throttle for one quarter and blast shell-shocked Sturt off Adelaide Oval, setting up a 92-point win last night. The lanky, high-flying half-forward almost single-handedly tore apart Sturt’s defence in the second term when the rocket-charged Roosters kicked nine goals without a miss to just one point at the 22-minute mark. That devastating turbo blast belted the Blues into almost total submission in a scintillating brand of fast, open running football that is bringing the fans back to the SANFL;”
- “North was simply sensational and Gill a joy to watch as he dominated the packs with his ample 193 cm, 91 kg frame to take repeated contested marks in genuine aerial contests. He grabbed everything that came within reach – including two juggling one-handers for the night – to please the football purists and remind Rooster fans of **Don Lindner**” – all from T.A.

While in one story Nick was mentioned in the same sentence as the mercurial **Don Lindner**, another linked him to another North Legend:

- “...the 2005 Magarey Medal runner-up was terrorising the Double Blues in the air and during the second quarter, Gill was simply unstoppable. In a performance rarely seen at any level, Gill pulled in eight contested marks and booted six of his nine goals within a period of about eight minutes. His second-term effort prompted at least one North fan to brand it the best individual display since legendary **Barrie Robran** graced Prospect. And it also left *The Advertiser’s* football scribes no choice in selecting the Player of the Week Award for Round 4.

While it is understandable that “Emu” received all the plaudits it would be remiss to not highlight the team’s overall unity and consummate precision football with a fine exhibition of Aussie Rules

footy and a focus on positive, compelling and skill-based football. This was highlighted by 12 players notching their name in the goalkickers list.

Not surprisingly Gill collected the three Magarey Medal votes with the two fastest North players in the team – **Matty Campbell** and **Leigh Ryswyk** – collecting two and one votes respectively. **“Flash” Campbell** zipped like a mad hare around the ground to be a constant nuisance for Sturt, collecting 28 touches and kicking two goals, while wingman **“Leroy” Ryswyk** had 26 kicks, 12 marks, six handballs and bobbed in for two goals himself. Unheralded player **Shaun Gatto** was conspicuous while tough-as nails midfielders **Darryl Wintle** (26 disposals) and **Dean Howard** (27) set the tone and forced the pressure with the tough grunt in the packs.



“Tubs” Wintle dishes out one of his 12 handballs against Sturt. Matthew Krieg looks on

Overall a collection of 360 disposals and a final score of 27.12 indicates a great night out for any team. And for **Nick Gill** – and the supporters who were there as witnesses – it was a match that will remain remembered for decades to come.

Stats Fact

North’s 27.16 (178) is:

- Their 12th highest score of all time (in over 2200 games);
- Their 2nd highest score against Sturt (behind 27.18 in 1990) and the highest against Sturt at Adelaide Oval;
- Their 3rd highest score kicked at Adelaide Oval;
- The 264-point match aggregate is the equal 4th highest in North-Sturt clashes and their highest at Adelaide Oval;

Miscellaneous

- North’s 92-point victory is their 7th biggest winning margin at Adelaide Oval and the 2nd biggest against Sturt at Adelaide Oval;
- Nick Gill’s 9.3 is the best individual performance against Sturt at Adelaide Oval. Yep even **Ken Farmer** didn’t do better!

Round 4 Stat Facts

- North’s 27.16 (178) is their highest score for the round;
- North’s 92-point winning margin is equal second (behind 110 points in 1897);
- The match aggregate of 264 is their 4th highest;
- Nick Gill’s 9.3 is equal 2nd behind Ken Farmer (11.4 in 1938) and Grenville Dietrich (11.2 in 1986).

Match Details:

North	4.4	13.4	22.8	27.16	178
Sturt	5.0	7.3	10.4	13.8	86
Ground:	Adelaide Oval (night)			Crowd: 4,019	

Best Players: Gill, Ryswyk, M. Campbell, Gatto, Wintle, Howard, Schubert, B. White, Krieg
Scorers: Gill 9.3, Weatherley 3.1, M. Campbell 2.2, Ryswyk 2.1, Hargraves 2.1, Younie 2.0, Wintle 2.0, Bamford 1.1, Howard 1.1, Koops 1.0, Kaesler 1.0, Krieg 1.0, Cox 0.2, rushed 0.4

The Team:

F: Tate Kaesler, Daniel Hargraves, Nick Gill
HF: Matthew Krieg, Owen Weatherley, Matthew Campbell
C: Scott Bamford, Darryl Wintle, Leigh Ryswyk
HB: Luke Ivens, Simon Cox, Steven Koops
B: Daniel Ebert, Shane Schubert, Michael Haseldine
1R: Brett O'Hara, Heath Younie, Brett White
Res: Daniel Wakelin, Simon Gatto



Instrumental players in North's thrashing of Sturt – Matt Campbell, Leigh Ryswyk and Shaun Gatto (in their 2006 studio shots)

**David O'Hara
History Committee**