

ROOSTER REMINISCES

A look back at a memorable match from each round

Round 6

Season 1983 (Saturday 7 May)



John 'Sticks' Phillips (league manager) with Coach Mike Nunan at Glenelg Oval for the Round 5, 1983 clash

Football is an emotional sport. For the players who put their body on the line and come up with the knocks, the breaks, the pain and the battle-worn bodies the final score can bring enhanced emotion. For supporters, whilst not copping the hits physically like their heroes on the field, they ride every bump on their own waves of emotion through every game – and long before players arrive and long after they leave – with many living their life through the ups and downs of their club. But emotion can be a tricky component to unite a team for a critical result. Coaches would say it is one of the hardest angles of their job – getting the players emotionally charged but not draining them with the fuel the same emotion can burn out of a body. In some cases it doesn't take much to get the players emotionally ready for an uphill task and a victory no one expected. Yet in 1983, in Round 6 against reigning premiers Norwood, all it seemed to take was a minute's silence.

The Background

The 1983 season was in full flow when North met Norwood, the 1982 premiers and who were currently sitting 2nd on the ladder, at Prospect Oval. North were also doing well surprising many with good wins against South and Glenelg and sitting just in the five. The match already had a lot at stake however the sad news that former North and State player John 'Sticks' Phillips died in a car accident midweek shocked the North Adelaide Football Club. Not only was he a well-respected and much-loved life member and past player 'Sticks' was the current league manager and the news shattered many current players who had a strong bond with him. How this would affect the team and their performance against the current premiers was the big question to be answered.

The Match

The players, staff and supporters from both clubs rightfully respected the late Phillips for a minute silence before the game commenced... and then the siren blew, the crowd roared, the Rooster boys had determined look in their eyes and the battle commenced.

The match was high scoring from the beginning as both teams were able to score freely in the first quarter. Both clubs scored five goals with four of Norths from the larrikin-yet-effective **Grenville Dietrich**, their full forward who was starting to become a significant goalkicker in the competition. The exquisitely talented **Greg McAdam** was creative around the ground while fellow onballers **David Tiller**, **Tony Antrobus** and centreman/captain **John Riley** were holding up well against their more experienced opposition.

The second quarter saw Norwood break away to provide a 15-point lead at the main break but North's third term fightback found the home side only a point down when the teams broke for the last time.

Despite the tight game it wouldn't have been surprising for SANFL fans and purists to believe that if there was a team to break the game open in the last term it would be Norwood. But it wasn't. Driven by the emotion of the day, by the simple want to win, or the chance to prove to the competition that the club can compete and win against the best, North came out for the last quarter and simply turned on a stunning display of offensive running, exciting skilled ball movement that blitzed their opponents and a defensive group which disallowed any Norwood entry and returned volley with quick rebound. The result turned the one-point deficit into a 47-point victory with a 7.7 to 0.1 quarter.

The statement in the *Sunday Mail* clearly defined the sentiments of the match:

- "North observed a silence in memory of its late State star **John Phillips**... then promptly disposed of reigning premier Norwood."

There was no doubt the star of the day was **Grenville Dietrich**. After his four-goal first term he finished the game with 10 goals to become (and remain) only the second player to kick 10 or more against Norwood (**Ken Farmer** being the other). He took 11 strong marks by outbodying and outplaying any player Norwood placed on him and a personal 10.2 indicated his ability to remain accurate during the course of the game and the media scooped up his performance:

- "Leading the North assault... was burly full-forward **Grenville Dietrich** who... in a faultless display completely bewildered the Norwood defence" – *Sunday Mail*;
- "North played a superb team game, but if the day belonged to any one player, it was **Grenville Dietrich**. His big marking and accurate kicking accounted for almost half his side's score. Dietrich not only kicked 10.2, he worked hard around the forward lines using his strength where it was needed on many occasions" – *The Advertiser*.

Dietrich was enriched with superb delivery from his onballers. **McAdam**, in state selection form, was mystical with his delightful ball use. His 27 touches were pure silk. **Michael Armfield** was a dependable defender rebounding from the half-back line while **Paul Arnold** was an obliging foil for **Dietrich** up forward to kick three goals himself and won respect from *The Advertiser*:

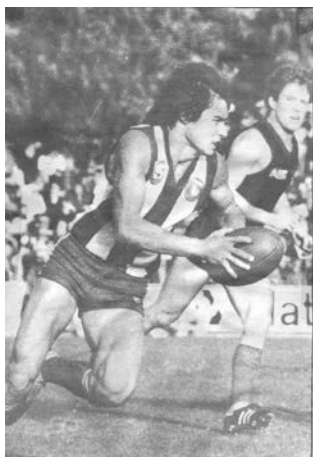
- "Dietrich... had a great colleague in front of him in **Paul Arnold**. Arnold is a perfectly balanced footballer. He kicked 3.2 and had 22 disposals, no mean feat for a centre half-forward."

Youngster **Andrew Jarman** showed some poise in only his second league game by slotting through three goals as well while **Antrobus** (19 kicks), **Tiller** (18 kicks) and **John Riley** (26 disposals) proved the better of their opposing midfield. Completing a dominant midfield was another young gun, **Matthew Campbell**, who, in his 6th game, was already being short-listed for the Rookie-of-the-year award.

After the match the players signed autographs to young fans before entering a changeroom that would have been filled with mixed emotions. What couldn't be denied was the intoxicating

performance the players displayed for their fallen past player and the club and supporters who witnessed a team that can be a strong force for the 1983 premiership.

Footnote: At the presentation night for the 1983 season it was declared a **John E. (Sticks) Phillips** Perpetual Trophy be presented each season. The first incumbent – 1983 Magarey Medallist **Tony Antrobus**. The John Phillips Memorial Trophy has continued to be a highly respected and honourable award presented to the player awarded Best Club Man.



Two different types of players but important none-the-less. Electrifying Tony Antrobus breaks clear while reliable Craig Stanbridge aborts a Norwood attack in the 1983 game.



Youngster Matthew Campbell tussles with a Norwood opponent during the clash. Star wingman Brenton Phillips watches on.

Stats Fact

- North's 20.15 (135) is North's 3rd highest score against Norwood at Prospect;
- North's 7.7 last quarter is their second highest last quarter against Norwood at Prospect;
- **Grenville Dietrich's** 10 goals is one of four occasions a North player has ever kicked 10 or more against Norwood. **Ken Farmer** holds the other three occasions with the record being 13. Three of these four occurrences were at Prospect.

Round 6 Facts

- North win commenced 11 successive victories in Round 6 ending in 1996;
- **Grenville Dietrich's** 10 goals is the 5th highest for a North player, and in fact Dietrich himself has kicked 12 goals (1984) and 11 goals (1986) in this round. **Ken Farmer** holds the round record with 13 goals in 1934.

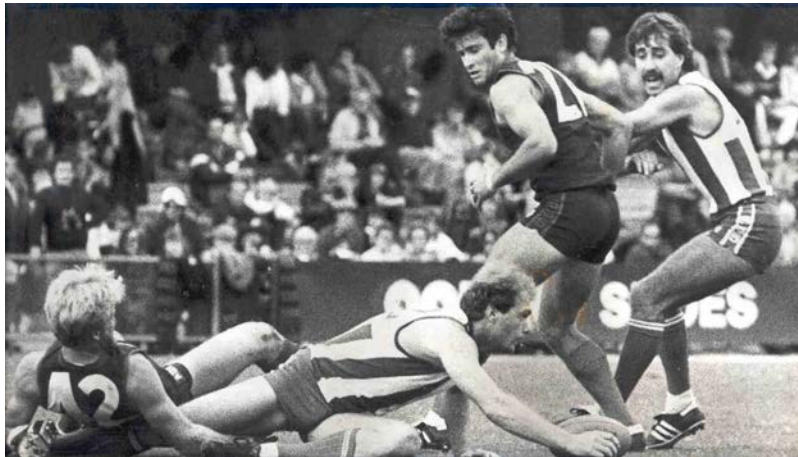
Match Details:

North	5.1	8.3	13.8	20.15	135
Norwood	5.3	10.6	13.9	13.10	88
Ground:	Prospect Oval			Crowd:	7,891

Best Players: Dietrich, McAdam, Armfield, Arnold, Redden, Tiller, Antrobus, J. Riley, Campbell
Scorers: Dietrich 10.2, Arnold 3.2, Jarman 3.0, Antrobus 2.0, McAdam 1.2, J. Riley 1.2, Hay 0.1, Phillips 0.1, Armfield 0.1, Tiller 0.1, rushed 0.3

The Team:

F: Steven Hay, Grenville Dietrich, Greg McAdam
HF: Tony Roach, Paul Arnold, Andrew Jarman
C: Brenton Phillips (50th game), John Riley, Matthew Campbell
HB: Michael Armfield, Craig Stanbridge, Malcolm Ellis
B: Stephen Molloy, Trevor Clisby, Stephen Riley
1R: Michael Redden, David Tiller, Tony Antrobus
Res: Kim Klomp, John Brealey
Coach: Mike Nunan (50th game as coach)



Paul Arnold (ground) and Tony Roach (right) battling against Norwood during the 1983 Round 6 battle.

**David O'Hara
History Committee**