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An end to tanking? AFL dump priority pick

The AFL will dump the current priority draft pick system and replace it with a new modified version, making it much harder for clubs to secure extra or priority selections through tanking for picks.

After so many years denying the existence of tanking this development by the AFL hierarchy is surely an admission that tanking did exist and that clubs were rorting the system for top player selections. Under the outgoing system, a club which earned 16 premierships points or less in a season was granted an extra draft selection before the second round of the national draft.

If a club earned 16 points or

less in two consecutive years they were awarded a further selection before the first round draft. The new regulation in effect this year, has a complicated formula which will be used to determine a club's eligibility for a pre-draft pick taking into account premiership points, percentage, finals appearances and injury rates over several seasons. Future priority picks will rest ultimately at the discretion of the AFL Commission.

Some of the AFL's star players have come into the AFL as early pick priority selections, including three club captains - Carlton's Chris Judd, St Kilda's Nick Riewoldt, Hawthorn's Luke Hodge. Then there's Bulldog's Brown-

low medallist Adam Cooney and midfielder Ryan Griffen, Luke Ball and Dale Thomas at Collingwood and Marc Murphy at the Blues.

AFL football operations manager Adrian Anderson said the rule changes are aimed at eradicating any suspicion that clubs sometimes tanked late in seasons for extra draft picks. Although the League can weave any spin about this as they like - the fact remains, tanking did take place and the change of rule is an admission that it did.

Anderson also said the league was moving closer to having an uncompromised national draft. The AFL has already taken steps by changing the father-son system:



AFL General Manager of Football Operations Adrian Anderson.

what was a virtual free pick outside the draft for clubs, they now have to bid draft sequence positions for the sons of former players.

OPTUS fails to gag Demetriou

Optus has lost a Federal Court case in which it tried to stop AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou criticising its new mobile television recording service.

The telecommunications company applied to the Federal Court in Sydney for an urgent injunction to stop Mr Demetriou from repeating his criticisms of Optus' TV mail service, which lets users record matches to watch on their computers and smart-phones on a short two minute delay.

Justice Richard Edmonds

dismissed the application and ordered Optus to pay the AFL's legal costs. The judge said Mr Demetriou's recent comments - that suggested the behaviour of Optus was akin to stealing - were not misleading or deceptive, because they were his opinions and did not purport to be a statement of fact.

Mr Demetriou said the decision was a victory for free speech and pressed the point that the league should be able to protect its current commercial agreement with Telstra.

NAB Cup latest

Gold Coast and Geelong played last night. The Sydney Swans play the Kangaroos this afternoon while it's the Hawks vs the GWS Giants in Launceston Tasmania.

Other games today include West Coast entertaining Port Power in Mandurah, Essendon and the Saints clash in Wangaratta with the Magpies up against the Demons at Etihad Stadium this evening.

Alice Springs will see the Crows battle the Brisbane Lions in the other night game. Sunday evening the Western Bulldogs take on the Carlton Blues at Etihad stadium and in Perth, the Freo Dockers tackle Richmond.

Meanwhile, the Northern Territory Licensing Commission has banned the sale of takeaway cask and fortified wines this weekend, to fit in with the Adelaide Crows and Brisbane Lions clash at Traeger Park tonight because authorities fear the influx of spectators for an AFL game will stretch police and hospital resources if alcohol consumption was left unchecked. More than 4,000 spectators are expected at the game and only mid-strength and light beers will be sold at the ground with bars in the outer area of the ground closing ten minutes into the last quarter.

A Spartan Glendi



Hawthorn Spartans having fun at the Neos Kosmos photo-booth last weekend.

The Greek-Australian Aussie Rules Football team - the Hawthorn Spartans - mingled with Americans, Asians, Germans, New Zealanders, Australians, English and many thousands of Greeks at the Antipodes Festival's Glendi street celebrations last weekend.

More than 30 players attended the Spartans' display stall and provided a great ad-

vertisement for Australian Rules Football by explaining the game to international tourists and facilitating giveaways to people of all ages - Caps, stickers, showbags and mini-footballs proved to be a huge success with the highlight being the handball target which attracted a multitude of kids and adults testing their footy handball skills. Even the Federal Op-

position Leader, Tony Abbott complete with media entourage got into a handball session, lending his support to the Hawthorn Spartans.

Club spokesman George Demetriou assisted by Con Terzoglou and Andrew Tumbakis was pleased with the club's first venture into the Glendi. The AFL's National Multicultural Manager, Ali Fahour provided the re-

source material while Steve O'Donahue the NAB Auskick Manager contributed the footys. Phiv Demetriou the AFL's Victorian Development Manager co-ordinated the effort with the *Neos Kosmos*' promotion providing the Club and it's major sponsors, M2K Communications, the Bank of Cyprus Australia and Southern Ocean Seafoods, great exposure.

Around the grounds

Geelong premiership defender Josh Hunt and Sydney's Adam Goodes have both accepted bans from the AFL tribunal with Hunt serving a two match penalty for a sling tackle that was deemed to be rough conduct in last week's pre-season game against Sydney.

Sydney co-captain Adam Goodes also accepted a one-match ban for rough conduct against Geelong's Taylor Hunt after Goodes lunged in feet first with his studs showing, a-la-soccer style tackle catching Hunt as he secured the ball.

Collingwood forward An-

drew Krakouer will miss the entire AFL season after it was determined that he needs a knee reconstruction. Krakouer's injury-shortened VFL appearance last Saturday came two weeks after he was given leave from the club to deal with personal issues. Collingwood's injury list also includes Brent Maccaffer (knee), Alan Didak (adductor), Harry O'Brien (hand), Ben Reid (shoulder) and Ben Johnson (hamstring).

Unlucky again, Lions forward Jonathan Brown has suffered his third facial injury in a year.