

And a happy Almanac Grand Final to you and yours

Grand Final Day found the happy union of new Almanac friends and my footy family gathered at my house for a BBQ and the game. Just like the players, I had my own routines and preparations. Shifting furniture, cleaning, cooking, cutting, mixing, preparing. The teams had their preparation too, locked away in that Grand Final frenzy. Did they sleep well? Do they feel ready? What do they listen to with those plugs in their ears?

Are they eating pasta or lasagne or bowls and bowls of cereal? At the Almanac Grand Final luncheon fiesta, we heard from Patrick Dangerfield's mum that he liked lasagne before a game and good sense made him favour his girlfriend's lasagne over his mothers. Last year Tom Hawkins mum Jenny said he liked pasta too. John Harms always manages to get that little extra information at these wonderful functions. Friday was my third. Lots of meeting people, putting faces to articles, names to the website, listening to people telling stories, from umpires to ex-players, eating, meeting, and for me, photographing. I met John M who was one of the first people three years ago who chatted with Rina and I and made my first Almanac function memorable. Now I feel a veteran.

I invited John M and he bought his wife Margie to my BBQ the next day, and Peter B and his wife Mary from W.A. were already my guests, along with Uncle Bob and my Cousin Garry. Stephanie H was also a guest, all dressed up in her Saints gear. We contemplated Goddard future and were no clearer. We await the news, not confident. I BBQ'd while Garry and Stephanie watched Patrick Dangerfield win the Grand Final Race. I sms'd another Almanac mate Bob U. We're all family now. Not sure what happened to Amanda, and Rina could only join us for lunch, work commitments meant she watched most at home. So this combination of Almanac and my usual footy family made a day of it, we ate and ate and drank and drank and watched the best Grand Final we've witnessed for years, unfold. There's no pain when your team isn't playing, but there's a saying, no pain, go gain.

The Hawks and Swans kept us glued to that telly the whole match, through the national anthem to the final presentations and song. It was riveting TV, a grand finale to remember as the day was full of family and friends who came together to marvel at this unbelievable game of ours.

This match was full of energy and fight from the first bounce. Hawks ran away with the first quarter, looking way too dominant. Bob notices the umpires were letting things go. Buddy made the first inaccurate kick at goal, and sign of the afternoon to come. They attacked more, but missed more. Chelsea, the familiar face of Dockland goal umpiring, was the talk of the Channel 7 boys who never fail to dwell. They informed us the other goal umpire was Luke Walker, and speculated that his nickname was "Sky". The rain held off and the predictions were wrong, though the wind seemed to favour the scoring of most goals down one end of the ground.

Hawks dominated the first quarter, the Swans the second, the Hawks the third, and the fourth quarter saw the score see-saw and no one would predict that the Swans would steal it with minutes to go. Inaccuracy bought the Hawks to their knees, and allowed the Swans to take the Cup and all the glory that goes with it. Our group were gripped with the excitement, the uncertainty. Only John's wife Margie barracked for the Hawks, so it was a miserable ending for her. But a chance comment from her got us remembering why we looked familiar to each other, she taught at Preshil where my eldest attended high school. The world is ever so small.

Well sated, footballled out, we all went back to our normal lives and await season 2013. Bring it on.

Hawthorn 4.5.29 4.6.30 9.10.64 11.15.81
Sydney Swans 1.4.10 7.4.46 10.5.65 14.7.91 14.7.91
Goals: Hawthorn Franklin 3, Hale 2, Gunston 2, Breust 2, Smith, Ellis, Roughead, Sewell, Suckling
Sydney Swans: Kennedy 2, Malceski 2, Jack 2, McVeigh 2, Morton 2, Roberts-Thomson, Reid, Hannebery, Goodes.

Our Votes: 3 The company and the Almanac world, 2, the food, 1 the game.

Yvette Wroby,
30th September 2012