

“What’s in a name?”

Juliet:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
by any other name would smell as sweet."

So said Juliet in William Shakespeare’s “Romeo and Juliet” on finding out Romeo was “on the other team”, a Collingwood member to Juliet’s “Carlton” or any other AFL team with tradition, long term hatreds, prejudices and long memories.

She wanted to forget the name and all the angst that came with it. It didn’t do her much good, she and her bloke were doomed. At least we hear of football couples who manage to stay alive with such conflicts in our sports mad nation.

Naming is the key. We all get one at birth, some change through marriage or migration or pure will, like my daughter, whose surname is now an Anime’ Bird. It was her statement on her 18th birthday, and she lives by it well. She decided to choose her own identity.

My sister Denise, when proof reading my Almanac report for the book two weeks ago, asked me not to call the stadium currently known as “Etihad” , “Etihad” but instead “Docklands” . She said that it locates it without using the current advertising name. (She is so our mother!) So within the description of where and when, I wrote Etihad, it’s the proper official current name. But in my piece, I listened to my baby sister.

How come the MCG has stayed the MCG, it isn’t the McDonalds Stadium or the Fosters Stadium or AFL Stadium, it’s the MCG. It’s the G. Grand Finals become the Fosters Grand Final or the Toyota Grand Final; advertising names the event, not the ground.

Denise and I decided it was a worthy subject for the Almanacker community. My sister, who if anyone needs her in the future is a good thorough researcher, went straight to Wikipedia. Trained as a library technician, she knows where to look for what. She even searched to see if the topic has ever been covered on the Almanac site. It hasn’t.

So I’ll give you an outline courtesy of Wiki and we’ll go from there:

Docklands has been the Colonial Stadium, Telstra Dome and now Etihad. Denise called it Phone Dome but now usually Dogsland after her beloved Western Bulldogs. Or the Dome, which cuts out all advertising. But we all know where we mean when we say the Docklands Stadium. Like the “G”. We just know. (Well, Melbournians know).

Football Park in Adelaide is called AAMI Stadium, but Sydney Cricket Ground is the SCG. No mucking about with our cricket homelands.

Subiaco Oval is Patersons Stadium from last year, but it’s a new oval.

The Gabba is, you guessed it, Brisbane Cricket Ground, and Adelaide Oval is just that. No fancy shmancy stuff.

Now for Kardinia Park. I've always know it as Kardinia, but it was renamed Shell Stadium in 1999-2001, then Baytec Stadium only in 2002 pre-season, and Skilled Stadium (2002-2011). It is now Simonds Stadium. How do those Catters out there like that?

Carrara Stadium is the Metricon Stadium. Our home of Tassie Test Cricket, Bellerive Oval, this year has become Blundstone Arena (or as Denise likes to call it "Blunnie" Arena), Manuka in Canberra is still that but Marrara Stadium in Darwin has been TIO Stadium since 2006.

So if we weren't tied to the advertising dollar for these stadiums, what would we call them? What are our pet names, our pet hates of our particular stadiums?

At the MCG on Saturday night, I still have a hard time not thinking of our recent Grand Final desolation, and it is the Misery Cricket Ground for me, or the Missed (opportunity) Cricket Ground, or the Miserable (Weather) Cricket Ground. We get rained on pretty much every time we go there. St.Kilda face Hawthorn at the G on Saturday night, and it may well be wet and miserable again. Both the weather and the game. One can always hope, but we are so Etihaders and not MCG'ers at St.Kilda that it's a shock every time we play there. Hello, we were almost run over by Melbourne last weekend.

I only managed to spell Etihad correctly last year, because I used it so much to write about St.Kilda. I still think of it as the Dome, our Home. I miss Moorabbin, it was called Moorabbin. How simple were those times? Before that we were at Waverly Park. It's still called Waverly Park. And before that it was Junction Oval.

Back in the day, Princes Park was that and not Visy. Glenferrie Oval was that, Punt Road Oval, Victoria Park. Western Oval, gotta love the Doggies, is STILL Western Oval but their club changed from Footscray to Western Bulldogs. *[From Denise ... it's now called Whitten Oval, so that page on Wikipedia is wrong ! (although if you click on the link it takes you to Whitten Oval)]* We all know whose ground Windy Hill was.

When I was young(er) ovals were locations, now they are advertisements of who puts money in. And in the modern game, that's just part of life.

But what if the Almanackers got naming rights? It's over to the cyber world and what you can come up with. Perhaps one day we'll get naming rights for something? Dream big.....

Yvette Wroby

(with research assistance and ideas of Denise Hilton).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Australian_Football_League_grounds