

THE RED CARD

Sat September 11, 1993

Grand Final SPECIAL FEATURE

Warrnambool District Hockey Association

The card is proud to present a supplement to the mens grand final. The writer of this preview is Nick Smart, a member of the Mariner Veterans Hockey Club. We regret that there is no womens' or juniors' preview in this supplement, but this feature has been brought to us to bring to you. Enjoy a colourful preview to the Warrnambool and District Hockey Association Open Mens' Grand Final, being contested by Technique Hockey Club and the Deakin University 'Phantoms' Hockey Club.

by Nick Smart. On Saturday September 11th I'm predicting Technique will finally win it's first Open Mens Premiership at their fourth attempt. Three times in the past they have made the Grand Final, only to finish runner-up. A mixture of injury and unavailability of key players combined with some dubious umpiring in 1990 has conspired to keep Technique out of September celebrations. Not so this year however. For the first time in my memory Technique will field it's strongest in a grand final, with every player being available today. On the other hand, rumours are rife that Deakin will be weakened by the absence of two players, both full backs. One will be on a ski trip, the other cattle mustering in the outback. I can't see Deakin overcoming these deficiencies to stop a Technique line-up brimming with confidence. Their forward set-up consisting of Mark Gladman, Marcus Shirrefs, Stewart 'Hair Gel' McLean, Damian White and Andy 'Muscles' Miles, is the equal of any in the competition. Miles, who was unheard of a year ago, is obviously benefitting from an intensive weight training program over summer.

Deakin however, have not been short of goalscorers in recent weeks, though I believe they rely too heavily on Garrath 'Ginger Meggs' Cann to either score or set up goals. Ginger has been in inspiring form of late, and some credit must go to Fiona Duncan for resurrecting a career that looked to be lost to beer swilling and watching the idiot box of a Saturday arvo.

The Technique half-backs will be capably led by Erol Chakir. Along with Greg Pickett, he'll have his work cut out repelling the Deakin forward attacks while keeping an eye on his team-mate Kirk 'Douglas' O'Dwyer. O'Dwyer like his AFL footballer namesake, is a red head just waiting to explode. If O'Dwyer blows a gasket the game could turn ugly. Fortunately for Deakin they have a capable half-back line led by Paul 'Swooper' Dillon. What 'Swooper' lacks in skill, he definately makes up for in style and appearance. Is this the best dressed man in Warrnambool hockey? Rarely will he step on to the field with a hair out of place, an eyebrow unplucked, or a crease to be found anywhere in his uniform. If there was a prize for fashions on the hockey field, this man would be 'numero uno'.

Which brings us to the full-backs, and it is here that Deakin may be able to exploit Technique's one glaring weakness. Relatively inexperienced, and both lacking a bit of pace, Paul 'Big Mac' Grayson and Jason 'Dutchy' Holland may falter if put under extreme pressure by Garrath Cann, the ginger bread man. If young Jason Holland can play well and ensure his more robust team-mate Grayson keeps cool under pressure, Technique are as good as home.

If Deakin are to pose a serious threat to Technique, then the rampaging Dutchman, Andrew Van Baaren (Roo) will have to throw his full 110kg weight into the fray. With able assistance from Nick 'Sticky' Van Zelst and Greg 'Carnage' Carne, Deakin may be just capable of an upset. Like Greg Carne's driving however, Deakin can be very erratic, and it is for this reason, I'm selecting Technique to break their September hoo-doo and take out the Premiership.

The Verdict: Technique to win 4-3 in extra-time.

Time: Gates open at 1pm at Jurassic Park Hockey Fields.

Crowd: Still plenty of seats available. Crowd expected to be in excess of 100, so get in early to get a good seat.

Player profiles

THE RED CARD

TECHNIQUE H.C. Vs
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY H.C.

TECHNIQUE

Richard Burrows (GK) - Playing in the hardest position on the field. Will struggle if it goes to flicks.

Paul Grayson - Solid, rather than dynamic full back. Needs to keep a cool head.

Jason Holland - The quiet achiever in the team. Rarely stands out, but not often beaten.

Kirk O'Dwyer - Fiery young redhead, who may blow his top if it gets close.

Erol Chakir - Father figure of the team. Needs to direct traffic on the half-back and backlines if Technique are to win.

Greg Pickett - No one wants this Premiership more than 'Picky'. Will wear his opponent like a latex condom if it means winning.

Andy Miles - Unobtrusive forward who drifts in and out of the game.

Stewart McLean - Valuable forward player who can create opportunities for goals.

Mark Gladman - Leading goalscorer of the two teams contesting the Grand Final. Technique will struggle if Deakin can keep 'Gladdy' goalless.

Marcus Shirrefs - Like Miles, can be a goalsneak. Must lift for the Grand Final.

Damian White - Aggressive, tenacious winger. Can be dangerous around goals. Could be under an injury cloud?

Kyme O'Flaherty - Valuable interchange player. Can play in any forward position.

Terri Burke - What she lacks in size, she makes up with determination.

DEAKIN

Paul McKenzie (GK) - Playing well at the right end of the year. May struggle to Tech's multi-pronged attack.

James Clifton - One of Deakin's characters who sticks to a task when given one. Valuable halfback.

Anthony Goldsmith - The king of eccentricism. Known to team mates as 'Guru' but will need to apply himself at fullback and play a disciplined game.

Nick Van Zelst - A real find for Deakin this year. Has impressed with his desire to get the ball and take on opponents.

Paul Dillon - Reliable, if sometimes erratic centre-half. Tends to spit the dummy if Deakin are down.

Marc Shrapnel - Gillette is a real battler in the midfield for Deakin. Must watch his mouth.

Andrew Van Baaren - Can score a goal or two if not watched closely. Fortunately for Technique, he's a gentle giant. If things get nasty, that may change.

Damien Clark - Inspirational and fast. Will run his opponent around all day.

Greg Carne - Good utility player who can play as a forward or back. Not overly blessed with pace.

Garreth Cann - Deakin's trump card. A renowned big game player and finals specialist. In form and in love - could be hard to stop. Must score goals or Deakin loses.

James Lamb - Antique hockey player from the 70's. Won't retire until Deakin wins a flag.

Fiona Duncan - Largely responsible for G. Cann's resurgence as a player.