

AFL Power Rankings

Contributed by Dolphin

This is the same blog as "Back Again So Soon?" folks but I had some feedback that someone wanted to read the rankings and couldn't find them. That simpleton has caused a title change and nothing else...

Like our good friend guy smiley, I have a job that takes me in to the mining industry. Unlike guy I have been able to avoid the Fly-in Fly-out roster life that makes everyone so happy. I do, however, get to make trips up to the mining areas about once a fortnight to say G'day to the people we have working up there. Who cares? Well no one really but it is relevant in that I get a lot of time on planes and in Airports/Hotels/Dongers etc to play around inside my own head. And that means blogging again even though my first 1 is still wet.

Speaking of wet, Pants nearly made me wet mine today with her brilliant linking of Guru Josh and the AFL footy season (without mentioning Josh Carr no less), so I thought I'd take up the challenge of linking an even more remote topic with the coming season. I think I've come up with one too. Indonesian political culture.

Now the 1 reader I have, I'll call you Jenny, please stay with me here because it does get to footy quickly. Unlike then self-affirming, group hugging, everyone gets a certificate of merit types that seem to run the modern education system, the Indonesian notion of power is that the world contains only a finite amount of it. For someone to gain power, someone else has to lose power.

I'm pretty sure that Kevin07 and the suddenly very Little Johnny would probably subscribe to this view as well. Particularly with young Maxine carrying around a pair of shriveled little bollocks as earrings after her Bennelong win. But in other aspects of our society this goes against many grains as we seek to "share" power and involve, consult and generally play very friendly with each other.

Sport on the other hand (see, we got here in the end Jenny), is where this concept of the very abstract but very real element of power is bang on the money. Sport in power is very finite, once gained you have definitely ripped it off some other poor mug. You've often also sledged him/her about it afterwards, and then filled their once proud "Power" cup with a huge pile of steaming hot Daniel Chick to cry over.

The Yanks understand this better than anyone as I learnt on my recent year there. They have regular "Power Rankings" of the teams in their many comps. These are not the ladders of those comps, instead they are a ranking of the teams that are currently performing the best and are the biggest form teams at that moment in time, on and, importantly, off the park.

So if it's good enough for good writers, I thought one as cod-ordinary as me could do something, I'm going to steal someone else's concept and modify it for my own purposes. So here are the current AFL Power Rankings as seen by this blogger. I rank the teams by their standings at the end of '07 plus anything that has happened since then that gives an indication of what is to come. So drafts, trades, arrests, coaching changes, appearances on "A Current Affair" or "Jerry Springer Adelaide" etc all factor in. Off we go...

- 1. Geelong - finished so strongly and all they lost was a redundant King & 1 of their Ablett's, the lazy one. Hawkins will fill that role better and no one on the team has a reason to get worse this year.

- 2. Collingwood - When you think about it. This is the most heavily subsidized club in the comp. Not cash-wise, but by virtue of the 28 games they'll play in Melbourne this year. Huge savings on flights & accommodation and huge gate receipt benefits. So we'll have to put up with Mick's hatefulness and Josh Fraser's general floppiness well in to the season. I'm about to throw up so let's move on.

- 3. Hawthorn - They still look very promising if Buddy can stay Buddy and avoid becoming anything like Benny. Watch for Luke Hodge to jump in to the real top class of players this year. Drafting Dew is still the funniest joke pulled by a club in AFL history.

- 4. St Kilda - They finished very strongly and have done nothing wrong in the off. Ridding themselves of Butterss and his hairdo and putting more money in to the footy department will help enormously. Unfortunately they're still slow and tend to the odd flaky moment. Good bets for mine though.

- 5. Fremantle - Fresh coaching, important players on the rebound who were all key to the outstanding run the year before. Some new pace in the draft who may even play, plus a hipless vulture added to the list. Plenty to like. Hardness is not Freo's issue anymore, it's controlling that hardness and pushing aside any bad luck and still getting the wins required. Strap yourself in.

- 6. Port Adelaide - They stink. They stink of a pan and associated flashiness to me. The Cornes' kiddies have had the best years they'll ever have and the bunch of dwarves that kicked the goals last year won't do it again. They added no real pieces to remedy the areas that got exposed late.

- 7. West Coast - They've lost 50% of the reason why they sniffed a flag when they did. Now with only Kerr & Cox in the middle who can really play they will slide. They won't slide as much as all AFL supporters hope, but it will happen. The investigation result remains of real interest. Will Giblett survive? How can he? But this is the Teflon Empire so don't expect too much.

- 8. Brisbane - Young, fun and full of run. Johnstone from the D's will be a very handy plus for them. Having him as another option to Black and Power as the delegated distributors for Brown makes them formidable.

- 9. Melbourne - I'm by no means well connected in the AFL circles. But I do know 1 bloke who is. And he loves Dean Bailey. Really loves him. It's almost uncomfortable how much he rates the guy. The D's have shown a capacity to surprise after disappointing in previous years and I think it'll happen again. According to those who know - the kiddies they picked will play and play well. Connelly is in a perfect role for him too and he'll help lift the confidence around the joint.

- 10. Sydney - Older, just as predictable and easier to beat at their own game is how I see them. Standing pat was not the move if they wanted to compete again. I think they've decided to take the foot off the pedal and reload. They'll still be tough though.

- 11. Carlton - An old methodology gets them a fresh start. Cheating got them in the doldrums and it got them out too. At least last year's tanking means I'm going to enjoy watching Judd play for the first time. However, this could come undone quickly if Ratten (as I suspect) is overmatched and Pratt continues to bring Big John back to the fold.

- 12. Adelaide - Same as Sydney but in a much worse place to live. The home ground and floods that would make Moses flinch will keep them competitive, but they should tank this year. But only Melbourne teams have the lack of character to do that.

- 13. Western Bulldogs - Better but not much better. Too lightweight in the spots that matter. A cute team and one that could surprise, but I don't think so.

- 14. North Melbourne - Huge drop from last year I know. Archer isn't there to scare the kiddies in to life threatening feats anymore and what do they have left? Laidley? I don't think anything last year was more of a fluke than him getting this mob up. Thompson's return will help a lot but everything else will fall apart. And please, they fall this far just because they went to a Lionel Ritchie concert and couldn't finish a fight. Your average Lionel Ritchie fan has to be overcome quickly in a bru-haha if you play pro-sports surely!?!?!?

- 15. Essendon - Good on Essendon for appointing a coach who has "not that there's anything wrong with that" written in to his contract. But this is footy and we're not trying to secure any Arts grants here. Lloyd is still trying to convince everyone he can lead...and he can't. This place is headed downhill quicker than Britney Spears career.

- 16. Richmond - Noone deserves to have the corpse of Kevin Sheedy hovering over his final season more than everyone's least favourite tan-for-hire. It's been fun Terry, thanks, Seeya!!

So there it is Jenny. See you next flight.