

## Let's Stay Together

Contributed by The Jester

So our three new amigos are bound together at Freo until the end of 2010. Let us hope that this turns out a little differently to the last time around.

By which I mean Paul Hasleby, Matthew Pavlich and Leigh Brown - the three draftees who came in together after the 1999 draft who I thought at the time would lay the piling for a power to come in the 2000s. It seemed like such a good idea...the stocky Western Australian ball magnet midfielder with a brilliant footy brain, the solid South Australian who could play at either end, and the hard-as-nails Victorian with a thumping kick and fire in the belly to roam our half forward line.

But somewhere along the line, things didn't quite go according to script. Only Pav has truly become a Fremantle champion with a decade of sterling service, and a towering captain.

Now Jordo, I can hear you from here...Hase was a superstar a few years ago, but injury has cruelled his influence and despite all his positive impact on the Dockers he has never recaptured that star quality. I have been heartened by his interviews this year where he has said that he is diversifying his portfolio both inside and outside the game - for whatever time he has left in the No. 4, we need him to be the midfield's elder statesman and not quite the freckled cheeky chappie of the past.

And as for The Anvil - we should never have let him go. Although Leigh Brown didn't quite have the talent of the other two musketeers, his willingness to be Freo's enforcer when there was nothing to enforce and his team spirit could never be questioned. Had he not become something of a journeyman at North Melbourne, he could have been anything to us...a true utility. It took a while for a worthy replacement to be unearthed in the form of one S. Dodd - though watching Doddy toil diligently at his new negating half back role, I sometimes miss the fire...

So let that be a lesson to Rhys Palmer, Clayton Hinkley and Chris Mayne. I think all three have shown something worth hanging onto for the 2010s (all of it!). It has been belaboured that Gold Coast will have most of Australia's young talent served to them on a platter from 2009 on, and it's certainly not over for Chris Bond yet - where is the young key defender who can replace the void left by Robbie Hadrill's delisting?

But if these three amigos take in 2008 the way they didn't quite do it in 2000, then I can't wait for many years of gutsy hard ball gets and centre clearances from the blonde Western Australian, firing out to the speedy Victorian wingman who lofts the ball inside 50 to the bouffant-haired Western Australian with strong hands and ferocious attack.

If Freo are transitioning, let's get some stout hearted young men to join in with these three and make us that force we dreamed of long ago...