

# JUMPER PUNCH

By Peter Cornwall



Neil Kerley was always a big believer a club's guernsey needs to pack a punch.

So when he arrived at the Bay before the 1967 season he made sure it did, Glenelg adopting the famous black guernsey with the gold sash it has worn for the past 54 years.

It's a ripper – striking with a classical look.

In the centenary season the Bays looked the part in saluting their history, in some games donning the distinctive gold jumper with a black V the club had worn in its first grand final win in 1934. As a one-off for the Tigers' 100th birthday, this guernsey had the names of every league player listed on it. The good news is the popular guernsey continues to be worn as a clash jumper after the centenary season, although, understandably, the names don't feature any more.

Glenelg struck gold when its colours were decided on. The black, yellow and red of the year in association, or reserves, footy in 1920 were switched to the Bays' now famous colours on request from the SANFL.

The Seaside's guernsey had been designed by early March 1921 as black, with a gold hoop around the waist and arms. The first league players wore black socks with a gold band and white 'knickers', which were actually long shorts that went to the knee. *The Advertiser* described the uniform as "picturesque, but not so neat as some of the older clubs". When the Bays wore a replica of the original jumper in their 90th anniversary clash against West Adelaide, it looked pretty good, as illustrated by the photo of Todd Grima celebrating a much different result than the first game of 1921.

But again the SANFL meddled. And again it was a good result. The year 1927 was a special year for SA football as it was the 50th anniversary of the formation of the SA Football Association. That body changed its name



Far left: Neil Kerley leads the way with the guernsey he introduced in 1967. The distinctive jumper remains the same to this day - except not a lace-up.

Left: Norm Betson was a powerful ruckman from Essendon who became captain-coach in 1946. He stepped down during the season after failing to notch a win but played on to tally 42 games wearing with distinction the guernsey Glenelg had in its 1934 premiership season.



in 1907 to the SAFL and it changed its name again in 1927 to the South Australian National Football League, the name it retains. Glenelg played its part in making a year of celebration more special, the Tigers displaying their guernsey the 2021 players fell in love with – gold with the black V. *The Guardian* enthused: “The new costume is certainly more conspicuous than the former design.” But *The Advertiser* had revealed it was not Glenelg’s idea to change its original look.

## A NEW FOOTBALL UNIFORM.

*At the last annual meeting of the Football League the secretary (Mr. F. Marlow) suggested that in order to avoid confusion in the colours of the teams Glenelg, who wear yellow and black, should make yellow the dominating colour of their uniforms. One of the Glenelg delegates (Mr. E. Rugless), at the league meeting on Monday night reported that several designs had been received by his committee. They had approved of a yellow guernsey with a black V on the chest and black edgings round the arms. The numbers on the back would be black on a yellow background and black knickers would be worn. Glenelg were given authority to change the design of their uniform.*

Already there was some confusion over gold or yellow and it even found its way into Glenelg’s 1927 Annual Report.

### Club Colours

*Owing to a suggestion from the SA Football League Ltd it was decided to alter the costume of the team. The alteration which makes yellow the predominant colour instead of black is much more distinctive and consequently it is much easier for players to pick out Club mates.*

It seems highly likely Richmond’s colours influenced Glenelg’s in 1921. And there’s little doubt the next guernsey change came about because of the VFL Tigers.

When footy fans grabbed their copy of the afternoon newspaper *The News* on 21 March 1949, they were greeted by a front page photo of Glenelg’s new coach Allan ‘Bull’ Reval wearing “the new type ‘Richmond Tiger’ guernsey which the Bays hope to wear this season ... it is black with gold sash, collar and facings”. Colin Hay reported:

*Glenelg hope to wear a new design – black with gold sash – against South at Glenelg Oval in the opening match of the league football season on April 23. It is the same design as worn by Richmond (Vic.). Glenelg and Richmond are both known as ‘Tigers’. Glenelg’s application for permission to change to the new design will be made at next week’s league meeting. If approval is granted it will be the first change by the Bays for 22 years.*

*Only club colours with which the new guernsey could possibly clash would be Torrens. This could be overcome by Glenelg wearing white knickers. The Bays’ distinctive black-and-gold hoop socks, together with the white pants, would make it almost impossible for an opponent to make a mistake.*

*Glenelg players and coach (‘Bull’ Reval) are delighted at the prospect of the new guernsey.*

Colin Churchett christened the jumper in style by booting 13 goals as the Tigers beat South by 50 points at the Bay. And the jumper – which had the sash continue around the back, in the biggest difference between it and the current jumper – was well liked, particularly by Glenelg fans. *The Mail’s* ‘Snapshots’ column declared:

*Glenelg’s new guernsey design was well received by supporters. It is modelled on that of Richmond ‘Tigers’ in Victoria. Before the match, coach ‘Bull’ Reval told them to live up to the name of ‘Tigers’. They did.*



Left: New coach Allan ‘Bull’ Reval proudly displays Glenelg’s new guernsey for the 1949 season. It was based on VFL club Richmond’s famous design, with the sash continuing around the back.



Right: Geelong recruit Doug Long was new captain-coach in 1962 when Glenelg unveiled the black guernsey with a gold yoke. It lasted five seasons, until the arrival of Neil Kerley as captain-coach.

Reval might have been glad the Tigers’ guernsey had been changed. The SA Football Hall of Famer wouldn’t have had great memories of the predominantly gold guernsey because he was in the Port team beaten in the 1934 grand final. As if the loss wasn’t bad enough for him, the champion ruck-rover was suspended for 10 games on two ‘hacking’ charges. The ban still raised the ire of Reval when he was interviewed for *Pride of the Bay* 64 years after it was imposed. He copped four games for getting tangled with Frank Bergin. “He marked the ball in front of me, so I grabbed him and turned him around by the hip, but I put my foot under him.” Six games was the penalty for a professional trip on ‘Jo Jo’ Hale, who had sold Reval the dummy on the kick-off line in the dying moments of the thriller. Reval, recognised as the first of the modern ruck-rovers, preferred to concede a free rather than let Hale run in for a certain goal. “I was speechless. There was nothing in either one,” Reval said of the bans.

There was nothing wrong with Glenelg’s next guernsey but it didn’t last long – Kerls saw to that. New captain-coach Doug Long in 1962 led out his Tigers side with a black guernsey with gold yoke, collar and number. It lasted five years and two coaches, Long and Len Fitzgerald.

Kerley’s new guernsey – the now familiar black guernsey with gold sash on the front – had a lethal look as it was unveiled in a 100-point massacre of Woodville. No-one has thought of changing this one, although clash guernseys remain worthwhile. The club in 2012 unveiled a modern-looking gold jumper with a Tiger on the front but it didn’t last long. And in the centenary season the Tigers looked spectacular in an Indigenous guernsey which superstar Marlon Motlop helped design. That jumper packs a punch too.