

THE SPORTS COLUMNIST IN THE KNOW |

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CRAIG HUTCHISON



Easy-sell knee surgery

A COUNTRY footballer has undergone revolutionary knee treatment that has turned heads within AFL ranks.

Sean Harrap from the Shepparton Bears Football Club has undertaken stem-cell treatment on his knee that has dramatically improved his recovery.

Harrap injured his knee in late 2010 and was so desperate to return to the footy field that he was prepared to try anything.

He had previously been unable to combat the constant inflammation around his knee, so turned to the radical new treatment.

To put it simply, the procedure involves extracting healthy cells from a healthy tendon, before multiplying them in a laboratory and injecting them back into the damaged tendon.

"I was made a bit of a guinea pig for the procedure so if anyone else out there has had the trouble, I

highly recommend it," Harrap said. "It's obviously worked for me at this stage.

"At the end of the season I'll go back and have another scan, more for the radiology guys to see where I'm at and what the knee is doing and it's probably good for them as well just to see where the knee is at."

When asked about the legalities of the stem-cell procedure, an Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority spokesperson said:

"Generally speaking, stem cells are considered 'normal' cells by the World Anti-Doping Agency with the potential to enhance athletic performance.

"As such stem-cell treatment is prohibited under section M3.2 of WADA's Prohibited List.

"If the use of a stem cell treatment is medically justified, then an athlete can apply for a Therapeutic Use Exemption to request the use of such a prohibited method."

Still running?

A RACEHORSE has been named after radio figure John "Dr Turf" Rothfield.

The horse, aptly named Doctor Turf, had its first run in Ballarat during the week.

Starting at long odds of \$41, the horse wasn't expected to deliver much, and it certainly didn't fail to live up to expectations, finishing a distant last.

Such was the poor run from Doctor Turf, that racecaller Terry Bailey didn't even call it crossing the finishing line.

"The reason I didn't call it home was because it was such a despicable effort that I didn't want to have anything associated with it, to be honest with you," Bailey said. "He's going to make a very good showjumper."

Cloke's ear-hole

FORMER AFL player Cameron Cloke is sporting an Evander Holyfield-like hole in his ear after a head clash in local footy.

Cloke, who played 58 games for Collingwood, Carlton and Port Adelaide, injured his head while playing for Bundoora in the Northern Football League.

"It was your standard on-ball incident. He was leading up from the forward line as a defender was coming in from the side and they both clashed and both had eyes on the footy. There was no malice or anything in it," Bundoora player manager Darryl Richards said.

"Both of them went down... the poor opponent got a broken cheekbone out of it and Cam was knocked out and lost a bit of his ear.

"We rested him the next week as he had concussion. He's just got a little dint in his ear, basically that he'll have for the rest of his life."

Plough for Tuck

FORMER Richmond and Western Bulldogs coach Terry Wallace says Travis Tuck will get a second chance at GWS.

Tuck was delisted by Hawthorn after recording three positive drug tests last year and has played in the VFL this season for Werribee.

Wallace says Tuck should be rewarded for his outstanding VFL form.

"What (Tuck) has done in the VFL, and his age, more fits in to where Greater Western Sydney is going," Wallace said. "It fits beautifully with their planning.

"So I would think that they would be much more likely to get Travis and I think it is a good news story that he has worked his way through."

Flag favourite

IT was the end of an era last month for the Narre Warren Football Club, with Brett Evans playing his last game.

Evans, who lined up for Richmond between 1997 and 2000, played in a remarkable five flags at Narre Warren.

His first was as an 18-year-old in 1992, before returning to the club after his professional career to play in the 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010 flags.

Craig Hutchison is chief executive of Crocmedia. Additional reporting: Julian Bayard.



Night riders

THERE' have to be easier ways to put surfing in the spotlight.

Mark Mathews and Richie "Vas" Vaculik put up floodlights to surf the dangerous waves of "Ours", a notorious surf spot just outside the entrance of Botany Bay.

The results can be seen the aptly named movie *Fighting Fear*, as the boys take on the shark-infested waters where waves crash on a shallow rock ledge, no more than 10m in front of sheer cliff face.

Fighting Fear is in cinemas in November. Go to www.facebook.com/fightingfear for a preview.



Take a lick at Cloke

MAGPIE star forward Travis Cloke has been immortalised on a stamp.

Cloke's stamp is part of the 12th annual AFL Premiership Players' Club stamp set released this week following Collingwood's 2010 triumph.

Cloke features 11 years after his father David, who



played 219 games for Richmond and a 114 for the Magpies, appeared on the inaugural set of stamps.

Boak to GWS?

THE future of Port Adelaide's Travis Boak remains in the air.

The midfielder is out of contract at the end of 2012 after signing a contract extension in July last year, but this column believes that GWS is making a play for the 23-year-old — even pushing for Boak to be traded to the club during this year's trade period.

Lauren gets her way

GARY Ablett expects his partner, Lauren Phillips, to spend more time on the Gold Coast now they have bought a \$2 million dream home right beside the Nerang River.

Ablett takes possession of the house in mid-October and can't wait to move into the four-bedroom mansion that boasts a tennis court and swimming pool.

It will be a far cry from his digs this season where he

lived at the home of teammate Zac Smith, along with his brother Nathan Ablett and another teammate, Joe Day.

"My girl has been bugging me for a year to get something, so I have got her off my case now, and she can start entertaining," Ablett said. "I've loved living with the boys this year, but it was hard for her because she felt as if she was in the way when she was up here."