

MEDIA ADVISORY
Friday May 22, 2009

Australian Football Hall of Fame inductees to unveil display at National Sports Museum TODAY

Following last night's 2009 Australian Football Hall of Fame (AFHOF) event, two new inductees - **Ken Hands and Ross Oakley** - will visit the hall of fame's home at the MCG's National Sports Museum **today, Friday May 22 at 11.00am** to unveil a display in their honour.

Each will unveil their individual name plaques in the permanent AFHOF exhibition at the museum. Launched last year, the gallery is a shrine to the legends and inductees of the hall of fame, allowing sports fans to pay homage to the greats of our national game.

Media are invited to attend and interview the inductees about their inclusion in the Australian Football Hall of Fame, and view/photograph objects related to their careers, including Ken Hands' premiership medallion from the 1945 "Bloodbath" grand final and a letter from the late Dr Donald Cordner to Ross Oakley, written in 1996 and showing support for services Oakley had rendered for football and society.

The Australian Football Hall of Fame gallery also features an outstanding array of material from the Legends of the game - including Alex Jesaulenko, Ron Barassi, Kevin Bartlett, Leigh Matthews, Ted Whitten, Roy Cazaly, Peter Hudson, Norm Smith, Ian Stewart and many more - and pays due reverence to those who have contributed to the history of Australia's favourite game.

WHAT:	2009 Australian Football Hall of Fame inductees visit the hall of fame and unveil their plaques in the permanent gallery.
WHO:	Ken Hands , hall of fame inductee Ross Oakley , hall of fame inductee Gerardine Kerlin , general manager, National Sports Museum
WHEN:	Friday May 22 at 11.00am
WHERE:	National Sports Museum, Melbourne Cricket Ground (enter via Gate 3)

The Australian Football Hall of Fame was established by the AFL in 1996 to recognise those who have made a significant contribution to the game since its inception in 1858.

Eight of football's best were last night inducted into the Hall of Fame - Mark Bickley, Peter Carey, Ken Hands, Chris Langford, Guy McKenna, Bill Morris, Ross Oakley (administrator) and Paul Salmon.

The National Sports Museum opened in March 2008 at the MCG and is Australia's first fully dedicated sports museum. Entry to the Australian Football Hall of Fame is included in general admission charges.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Katrina Hall
Publicity consultant
National Sports Museum
0421 153 046

Shane Brown
Communications manager
Melbourne Cricket Club
0418 353 431

ABOUT THE INDUCTEES

Ross Oakley (Administrator)

There have been few men in the history of the game who have endured the peaks and troughs of League football, yet emerged so successfully, as Ross Oakley.

As a player with St Kilda in the 1960s, he endured knee injuries that sidelined him from consecutive Grand Finals, including, in 1966, the Saints' only premiership. A speedy wingman, he was forced from the playing stage at age 24 with just 62 games to his credit.

Yet Oakley was not lost to the game. Having built a successful business career, he returned to football in 1986 to become the chief executive of the Victorian Football League. A product of Wesley College, Oakley oversaw the most tumultuous period in the modern game; in some senses, he ushered in the modern game itself, steering the birth of the truly national league we know today.

A man of conviction, Oakley fought public opinion to promote 1989 plans to merge Footscray and Fitzroy, a plan which ultimately failed but brought into sharp focus the penniless state of the competition. Seven years later – his final season as CEO – the Lions merged with Brisbane. Oakley's time at the helm heralded the game's expansion into a truly national competition, with West Coast, Brisbane (both 1987), Adelaide (91) and Fremantle (95) all joining at the elite level.

Ken Hands

The 1945 Grand Final is remembered, not fondly, as 'The Bloodbath'. And first-year Blues' player Ken Hands found himself in the middle of it.

Unceremoniously decked just before half-time and carried from the ground, Hands returned after the long break to kick three goals in a famous Carlton victory. It cemented a reputation for courage that he only built on during his 211 games.

Having been stolen from under Geelong's nose, the North Geelong under 18s star had made an immediate impact for the Blues earlier that year, figuring in the best players in his first three games. A boy amongst men, he filled centre half-forward with distinction, combining skills and balance with undoubted toughness during a splendid post-war career.

Hands played in two premierships for the Blues and led the club 99 times. He claimed a best and fairest in 1953 and later coached the club for six seasons, including the 1962 Grand Final. Twice he captained Victoria, proof of a leadership that was clearly evident from his early days at Princes Park. A legitimate legend of the Navy Blues, Hands is a member of the Team of the Century.