

Are Cleanskins Tarnishing The Industry's Image



Love them or loathe them, the meteoric growth of cleanskins in the domestic market is a sign that all is not well in the Australian wine industry.

In the early 1990s when the industry was at the start of the boom, cleanskins were an almost unheard of phenomenon - other than in a few inventive restaurants who wanted to avoid the cask house-wine syndrome.

Then from a tentative start on retail shelves a few years ago there are now dedicated cleanskin companies, retail stores and websites.

While the easiest conclusion to draw is that cleanskins are the result of an omnipresent wine glut, the problem goes much deeper, exposing wineries whose business plan worked on a simplistic "build it and they will come" mentality.

Clearly their dreams remain unfulfilled. These dangerous lifestyle winemakers are sitting on a shed full of old stock that they need to move so they can pay off their stainless steel crusher, their cute cellar door and backlog of US marketing trips.

There are undeniable short term benefits for wineries in selling cleanskins: creating much needed cash flow, clearing old stock, moving cancelled export orders, making space for vintage, pleasing the bank. But the long term repercussions on wine brand building can be

enormously damaging. A brand is an asset that is developed over many years, built on authenticity, quality, a real story, a real winemaker and a real destination. A brand provides a bond of confidence between consumer and winemaker and is the essential building block of business sustainability.

Established companies are doing their best to promote and encourage brand loyalty during the current tough times. The spend on in-store A&P has gone up, promotional stock allowances have lifted and there has been an unprecedented increase in magazine, billboard and newspaper advertising - a shock to an industry that has relied on free press endorsement.

The problem is that those wineries who take the easy solution by selling unbranded stock are not only killing their own company by dumping their product down to a generic commodity (and consumers are sharp enough to distinguish the name behind the wine from branded corks) - they are also damaging their colleagues.

Training the consumer to buy on price-only is a risky long term strategy, which will inevitably backfire when the industry picks up and winemakers and marketers want to lift margins.

Some argue that the growth of cleanskins is at least leading the customer

back to regionality and away from multi-regional South Eastern Australian blends.

Mark Pendreich from Six J's Cellars, who was one of the first specialist cleanskin stores in Melbourne says the reputation of cleanskins as a mass blend of wine is misguided.

"People still approach cleanskins with region and variety foremost in their mind. Cleanskin customers still want a Coonawarra Cabernet or a Clare Riesling rather than a South-Eastern Australian blend," Mark said.

"What we are seeing on the bulk market is a lot of wine from young vines.

"There is plenty of young vine Shiraz and Cabernet from the South-East of South Australia and Cabernet from Western Australia, while Chardonnay from the Yarra Valley is also easily readily available. But every wine region has cleanskins available," Mark said.

"People can get a regional wine with varietal character for under \$10 a bottle as a cleanskin or they can buy a branded bulk wine that has fruit from all corners of the country,"

Another growing trend is that cleanskins are now made to individual orders straight from the tank, where retailers can tinker with wine styles and develop a house style, unlike early cleanskins that were finished product, leftover from a cancelled export order or due to a new vintage release.

Even bulk Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc is available to retailers who want to make their own NZ savvy cleanskin.

Obviously profit margins on these bulk wines are very slim and their sustainability in the long term is questionable, but retailers are making healthy margins, ranging from the usual 30 per cent mark up at the bottom end to a healthy 100 per cent.

For some retailers selling cleanskins is still hard to swallow. Fine Wine Manager at Adelaide's Edinburgh Cellars, James March, says their decision not to stock cleanskins is a conscience one, but concedes that could change in the future.

"We prefer to support those people who offer labelled wine at an affordable price. Label integrity with cleanskins is a big issue and attributes such as variety, region and alcohol content on a cleanskin label can be questionable. It's true for wine that 'you get what you pay for' but that might not be entirely true for cleanskins," James said.

"We've placed advertisements saying why would you buy cleanskins when we can offer you a labelled wine on special that has a track record and the response to that was very successful."

"A labelled wine offers the consumer a history, a story, a reputation and a back label with descriptions about what's inside the bottle. Furthermore they can return to it year after year knowing what to expect. It's this brand loyalty that cleanskins can't offer," James said.

Getting Closer to the Right Closure

The Australian Closure Fund's first study recipient has put the seal on a long running debate - does wine need oxygen to age successfully.

Allen Hart, Southcorp's Research & Development Winemaker, released the findings of his study into "the role of oxygen in the ageing of bottled wine" at an intimate presentation for the Wine Press Club of NSW recently.

Hart's paper was based upon a combination of wide ranging trials running since 1997, involving closures of varying permeability and more recently, he also drew on trials conducted in collaboration with the Australian Wine Research Institute on premium red wine sealed with

varying closures and filled to different ullages of air space.

Hart concluded that oxygen was not a vital component for the ongoing evolution and maturation of red wines after bottling.

"It is clear that access to small but measurable amounts of oxygen (eg synthetic closures), will accelerate the evolution and maturation of red wine through oxidative reactions," he said.

"However, red wine will continue to evolve without measurable oxygen ingress via a closure, primarily through what is assumed to be anaerobic reactions.

"Some bottled wine may express 'reductive' characters in such an

anaerobic environment, in contrast to the wine developing oxidised characters in a more aerobic environment.

"However, the rankings indicated that these are not considered commercially unacceptable."

Commenting on Hart's presentation, Stelvin advocate Jeffrey Grosset said that as a true researcher Allen Hart had carefully stated that oxygen is not necessary 'in their experience'.

"However, when this is added to the weight of previous research we can now say with a high degree of confidence, that oxygen is not necessary for ageing bottled wine, red or white," Grosset said.

Deregulated Bottle is Still Half Full

Victoria's deregulated liquor industry has been touted as the death knell of small retailers but for one independent, the bottle is still half full, rather than half empty.

Anthony D'Anna from Boccaccio Cellars agrees the effect on many small independent retailers will be devastating, but he says those businesses prepared for the changes will survive.

"Deregulation will have a huge impact on those businesses that aren't ready but we've been setting up for this over the last five years," Anthony said. Niche marketing, direct marketing, electronic sales, personalised service and specialisation in particular products or markets are some areas where Anthony believes the independent retailer can have an advantage over the big boys.

"Customers crave knowledge and that is something that we can provide that they won't necessarily get from a supermarket," Anthony said.

"You can't lose sight of the fact that people like to walk into a premium bottle shop and browse and learn from the people who work with wine.

"The quality of customer service is as important as the quality of the wine in the bottle and that is where independents can win," Anthony said.

Obviously variety is another area where independents can take the advantage, building a unique selling proposition by hand selecting boutique and lesser known producers, rather than being locked into a



Anthony D'Anna

particular range. Despite this Anthony says there is a lot of work to be done.

"People who sit back and expect customers to walk through the door aren't going to stay afloat but those people who have been smart about working their business will survive," Anthony said.

It's a case of finding other avenues to reach your audience.

"Our weekly email newsletter hits everyone from corporate executives to the mums and dads and that accounts for 15% of our business.

"Our internet website makes up 10%, our national advertising campaign pulls in 40% and the remaining 35% is people walking in the shop."

Of course profit margins are also under threat as competition increases and discounting becomes the norm.

"We try to maintain our margin by value adding - offering a bonus magnum on a case buy - rather than discounting. The chains tend to promote and discount products under \$20 so we'll target something over that price point and value add it to create a point of difference.

"We're also faster on the ground. Being small and independent means that if something gets a good write-up in Tuesday's wine pages, we've got the speed and flexibility to promote it straight away.

"The chains will take weeks to get it ranged and then advertise it and finally sell it."

QUOTE OF THE MONTH



"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." - Sir Winston Churchill

KEY DATES - WINE SHOWS IN AUSTRALIA

Wine show	Judging Dates	Dinner Date	Awards Date	Exhibitors Tasting
Barossa Wine Show	20-Sep-05 - 21-Sep-05	22-Sep-05	22-Sep-05	23-Sep-05
Perth Royal Wine Show	4-Sep-05 - 8-Sep-05	8-Sep-05	8-Sep-05	9-Sep-05
Great Australian Shiraz Challenge	3-Oct-05 - 4-Oct-05	28-Oct-05	28-Oct-05	
Hyatt National Riesling Challenge	19-Oct-05 - 20-Oct-05	21-Oct-05	21-Oct-05	
Hyatt/Advertiser South Australian Wine of the Year Awards	25-Jul-05 - 26-Jul-05	26-Aug-05	26-Aug-05	TBA
Limestone Coast Wine Show	25-Oct-05 - 26-Oct-05	27-Oct-05	27-Oct-05	28-Oct-05
National Wine Show of Australia	14-Nov-05 - 17-Nov-05	24-Nov-05	24-Nov-05	25-Nov-05
Royal Adelaide Wine Show	26-Sep-05 - 29-Sep-05	7-Oct-05	7-Oct-05	
Royal Hobart International Wine Show	TBA			
Royal Melbourne Wine Show	TBA			
Royal Queensland Wine Show	10-Jul-05 - 14-Jul-05	14-Jul-05	14-Jul-05	15-Jul-05
Rutherglen Wine Show	TBA			
Sydney International Wine Competition	11-Oct-04 - 16-Oct-05	25-Feb-05		
Tasmanian Wine Show	17-Jan-05 - 18-Jan-05	21-Jan-05	21-Jan-05	22-Jan-05



Nice to be back...

I've missed you all, I really have. It's been a while since last we spoke. There is much to tell to bring you up to speed, so ease back into your pile of Christmas takings and I will endeavour to take you from the Melbourne Cup Carnival all the way through to Easter. Makeby Diva will be the easiest winner of the Melbourne Cup to pick that we will ever see. If I had just concentrated, I could have hit the trifecta too but as you are all aware, I am an idiot. The lady in front of me at the TAB window kept saying, Zazzman but did I listen? By the time I had sobered up, it was the museum tasting at The Wharf in Sydney - fabulous day, fabulous wines. The highlight for me was Christian Pol Roger, who had nursed a magnum of Pol Roger Extra Cuvee Reserve 1914 across the world - a superb wine - he spoke about it during lunch. "A most difficult vintage, especially when a horde of unwelcome visitors crossed the river (the invading Germans). We could not find pickers, they were off fighting, so we had to resort to children, women and the elderly and they had to go home early because of the curfew. A very difficult vintage indeed." Samuel Smith and Son was named "Best Supplier of the Year" at the ALIA awards in Sydney. Louisa Rose, Yalumba Winemaker was named "2004 Woman of Wine" at the prestigious International Wine and Spirit Competition in London for her achievements with white wine, particularly

Riesling and Vignier. From the sublime to Wine Australia, to cricket against the Kiwis and the Pakis, then into the really silly season. Christmas parties and rampant sales!

Then off to Robe I went with my beloved for a couple of weeks of absolutely nothing. Cricket, reading, walks, all things low key and enjoyable. I must say if you like lobster, you'll like Robe. They are everywhere and cheap too.

Back at the desk, weather still cool rather than the usual summer fireball. Grape crop looks average in quantity but this extended mild weather, long, slow ripening and gentle rain guarantees quality and flavour. Vintage 2005 is good. Full wrap next issue.

If you're wondering, the horse is still writing invoices from the five star hotel, Lindsay Park, but still refusing to run. Whiskered Rose, I am assured is an above average horse with genuine ability. The feature two year old races have come and gone and I'm still none the wiser. Maybe we have a decent three year old on our hands! At long last, I've had a golf lesson. Many in the know would suggest it's 50 years too late but it's a start and I must say if I could only putt, I would nearly be a golfer.

And finally two key things, Pullen, our General Manager of Sales, has attained the half way in lifes hall of fame (50) and Auld, Director of Sales and Marketing, will achieve this same milestone on Saturday May 28. He doesn't want a fuss so I suggest you send presents, money and flowers. Direct it to me and I shall pass them on!

I am delighted to inform you all that the Samuel Smith website is up and running and can be accessed at www.samsmith.com

It is functional and very easy to use and contains absolutely everything about this magnificent company that you want to know but maybe were afraid to ask. Please visit whenever you wish.

Good selling to us all, happy New Year, happy Easter, happy Barossa Vintage Festival. I'll be back in autumn with football, the ashes and REDS.

Regards, Pete Sawrey

BIT ON THE SIDE

A police officer pulls over a speeding car. The officer says, "I clocked you at 80 miles an hour, sir." The driver says, "Gee, officer, I had it on cruise control set at 60, perhaps your radar gun needs recalibrating."

Not looking up from her knitting the wife says, "Now don't start that silly talk dear, you know we don't have cruise control."

As the officer writes out the ticket, the driver looks over at his wife and growls, "Can't you keep your mouth shut for once?"

The wife smiles demurely and says, "You should be thankful your radar detector went off when it did."

As the officer makes out a second ticket for the illegal radar detector, the driver glowers at his wife and says through clenched teeth, "Damn it woman, I said keep it shut!"

The officer frowns and says, "I notice you're not wearing a seat belt, sir. That's a \$75 fine."

The driver says, "Yeah, well, you see officer, when you pulled me over, I took it off to take my wallet out of my back pocket."

The wife says, "Now dear, you know you never wear a seat belt when you're driving."

As the officer writes the third ticket, the driver turns to his wife and barks, "WILL YOU PLEASE SHUT UP."

The officer looks over to the woman and asks, "Does your husband always talk to you like this ma'am?"

"Only when he's been drinking officer."



Winestate Chardonnay of the Year Goes to . . .

Vasse Felix has maintained their Best from the West reputation, taking out Winestate Magazine's prestigious Chardonnay of the Year Award for their 2002 Heytesbury Chardonnay.

The Heytesbury label represents the best quality Chardonnay for the vintage and only the most outstanding fruit and premium barrels are used to maintain the standard.

Winemaking techniques such as whole bunch pressing, barrel fermentation, malolactic fermentation and lees stirring are used to gain an array of flavours and complexity.

The award winning 2002 Heytesbury Chardonnay has sold out but Vasse Felix winemaker, David Dowden says the 2003 is now available and is an excellent follow-up.

"The fruit spectrum on the 2003 is slightly more forward with tropical and white peach aromas, and the palate offers more upfront sweetness and power," David said.

A major change for the 2003 was the increased use of wild fermentation from 40% to 60%.

Vasse Felix Winemakers
David Dowden & Clive Otto

"This contributed to the increased mouth-feel and texture, especially on the middle palate and by combining a higher use of solids, we've gained more flinty and savoury complexity for the 2003," David said.

The quantity of the 2003 vintage is down 30 per cent compared to 2002, so expectations are that the 03 Heytesbury Chardonnay (which is bottled under Stelvin for the first time) will sell out quickly.



Yalumba's Viognier Queen Gets Her Crown



Yalumba's Louisa Rose has cemented herself as the 'Apricot Colone' of Viognier producers by winning London's International Wine & Spirit Challenge Women in Wine Award.

The award commends the achievements of those members of the international wine and spirit community who make an outstanding contribution to the industry - particularly for those who have shown exceptional dedication, drive and skill.

IWSC representative, Maryan Hook said, "Louisa demonstrated a quiet confidence, which only comes with depth of knowledge. She continues to pass on her knowledge to others, humbly paying tribute to those who taught her. She is a true professional and it was these qualities that made her stand out amongst the judging panel and to be awarded this trophy," Maryan said.

Louisa accepted her award in London and was quick to point out that the success of Viognier at Yalumba has been a team effort.

"Our winemaking is a culmination of the work of many people - everyone should be proud and take their share of the award. From the vineyard, winemaking and cellar crews, to the marketing and sales teams who get the wines to the customers. Nothing is a one man or one woman show here," Louisa said.

While Viognier has been receiving considerable media attention in recent years, Louisa believes the variety will live up to its big expectations.

"I think it's more than hype. There is a growing market for wines around the world. I think Viognier has become and will continue to be a valid white wine option for our customers when they chose a wine for any occasion," Louisa said.

Louisa is also known for her skills with another great aromatic variety - Riesling, but choosing one over the other would be splitting hairs. "I grew up drinking young and old Riesling and have always loved it. Viognier on the other hand is a variety that I had never heard of before I came to Yalumba, nor had many others at the time. The path we have taken at Yalumba from the early 1990s has really been one of discovery and of defining a style and variety - and this makes it very exciting," Louisa said.

In 1980, Yalumba planted 1.2 hectares of Viognier in the Barossa - Australia's first commercial plantings. Over ten years the vines were given time to form regular cropping patterns giving Yalumba winemakers the luxury of a 'breaking-in' period to experiment with the variety.

Yalumba has the largest mature Viognier resource and the oldest commercial vines in the Southern Hemisphere, with 28 hectares of its own vineyards and access to another 120 hectares from private growers. In Australia there is approximately 550 hectares of Viognier with only half of this planted in the last two years.

Yalumba accounts for 70 per cent of Australia's Viognier exports.



Celebrate the Blend at the Vintage Festival

The 2005 Barossa Vintage Festival will celebrate the blend - the wine, the food and the community for a hectic week from Easter Monday March 28.

The 56 year old showcase of the best that the Barossa has to offer, will involve nearly every winery, food producer and accommodation house as well as 200 volunteers.

Both Yalumba Wine Company and Peter Lehmann Wines are heavily involved in the Festival and with vintage in full swing accompanied by beautiful autumn weather, there isn't a better time to visit the Barossa. Yalumba will be hosting their Harvest Market on Tuesday and Wednesday March 29 and 30, including cooking school seminars run by Martin Boetz from Longrain. His blend of Thai and Southern Chinese cuisine will be perfectly matched with Yalumba's premium wines. Seats for the

cooking schools always sell out, so be quick and contact Melanie Routledge on (08) 8561 3200 or email mroutledge@yalumba.com to book your seat. Tickets \$85 per person.

Peter Lehmann Wines will be open for the early birds from 8:30am to 10:30am for breakfast from Monday March 28 to Friday April 1, with food by Vintners Bar & Grill. Lehmanns will also be hosting the Slow Country Lunch Along the Para on Saturday April 2 (again with Vintners) while Brunch with the Black Queen will provide a great opportunity to wind down after a week of Festival celebrations from 10:30am on Sunday April 3. Bookings are essential for the lunch and brunch, and are recommended to secure a breakfast spot. Phone Peter Lehmann Wines on (08) 8563 2100 or email cellar.door@peterlehmannwines.com

A Seafood Affair



Yalumba and Michael Angelakis seafood - is there a better match? With a glass of Pewsey Vale in one hand and a crayfish tail in the other, Yalumba, seafood extraordinaire Michael Angelakis and Channel Nine SA have for the last 20 years joined forces to stage the annual 'Seafood Affair', which has raised more than \$630,000 for charity.

At the inaugural event in 1985 the lunch raised \$6,000 but strengthening support has seen that figure reach last year's record of \$87,000 with determination to go one better in 2005, for the Affair's 21st birthday on Sunday 20 November.

More than 80 sponsors and individuals support the event with proceeds going to Arthritis SA, Childhood Cancer, Foundation Daw Park, Huntington's Disease, Mary Potter Hospice, Phoenix Society and Save the Children SA.

In its twenty year history, the event has developed a strong following with groups from the original 1985 lunch still attending. Since then one table has been passed down a generation while the waiting list continues to grow. How does the saying go? Charity starts with a fishbone?

The secret to cooking Octopus so it doesn't turn to rubber
By Michael Angelakis

Ingredients: Octopus, Lemon juice, Course black pepper, Olive oil, Oregano, Salt

Preparation:

Place the octopus on a clean stone or marble slab, pick it up and throw it back again. Hard! Repeat the procedure until the octopus has softened.

This is the method used by the fishermen, but it is carried out on the rocks by the sea and the octopus is then washed in the sea water. The "bashing" of the octopus is done to tenderize it, however, the use of a meat mallet is quite effective also.

Wash the octopus well and prepare the marinade.

In a container (not aluminium), beat the lemon juice and olive oil in the proportion of two parts lemon juice to one part olive oil, add the oregano, pepper and salt to taste. Place the octopus in the marinade and refrigerate overnight.

Cooking:

Remove the octopus and keep the marinade. Either of the following two methods may be used on the barbeque:

1) If using a hot plate, leave the octopus whole, barbeque and baste with a brush using the reserved marinade. When cooked, cut into serving portions and serve hot.

OR

2) The Octopus can be cut into pieces, threaded on skewers and placed over hot coals. Baste regularly while cooking.

On cooking, the octopus will change colour, becoming dark red on the outside and milky white inside. It will also become quite dry, thus the importance of the marinade and frequent basting.

CRICKET

Eleventh Hour for Cricket if Australia Beats World XI

With the Australian cricket team running out of worthy competitors, a World XI team will play three one day matches in October at Melbourne's Telstra Dome and a six day test starting October 14 at the SCG.

The star studded World XI will be picked by a selection panel lead by Sunil Gavaskar and will include Michael Atherton, Sir Richard Hadlee, Jonty Rhodes, Aravinda de Silva and Clive Lloyd, with the two teams playing for US\$2.6 million in payments and prize money.

In response to his selection as Chairman, Gavaskar told the Courier-Mail, "I look forward to Australia's arse being kicked. It gives an Englishman a chance to be in a team that beats Australia. I would pick the best team rather than the best players because you really want to get 11 players who will be able to combine together."

Australia have not lost a home Test series since 1992-93 or an ODI tournament since 2001-02 and if a World XI can't do it in October, then Ponting's team will certainly be remembered as one of the greatest sides in cricketing history. It seems that no team can be compared to 'The Invincibles' but surely an Australian win would challenge the status quo.

ASHES 2005 SCHEDULE

1st Test: 21-25 July at Lord's

2nd Test: 4-8 August at Edgbaston

3rd Test: 11-15 August at Old Trafford

England Winning? It's just not cricket

With England's recent cricketing prowess, for the first time in years the Ashes series starting on July 21 looks like it could be a real challenge, with predictions that some tests could even reach a fifth day.

While there is concern in the English camp that fitness levels are not up to scratch to play five days straight, Pommy caterers are the ones with the real worries.

Second in charge of deep frying, Bob Smith, who is filling in for his boss who suffered a work place injury when he couldn't find the tongs, says he is worried they won't have enough hot chips to feed the masses.

With Michael Vaughan's team pushing to play a fifth day, we might have to resort to sourcing Irish potatoes, and we all know what happened last time we tried to do that," Bob said.

Also concerned is John Smith, leader of the English cheer squad - The Barry Army.

"We're known for our lager drinking capabilities but pushing our benders from four to five days is asking for permanent liver damage," John said.

"And if the rumours are true that there might not be any chips on the fifth day and we are forced to drink on an empty stomach - well there could be fatalities, or even worse - streaking," John warned.

English captain Michael Vaughan declined to comment on the prospects of a test against Australia reaching a fifth day. Instead he issued a statement which mentioned that the English weather would most likely prevent five days of play anyway.

Who to keep an eye on

The Poms

Michael Vaughan (Captain)

On the last Ashes tour Vaughan's performance was England's only highpoint, hitting 633 runs at an average of 63.30. Should perform well on home soil.

Andrew Flintoff

Undoubtedly England's best all-rounder since Ian Botham, with his contribution of 603 runs and 24 wickets as part of England's summer winning streak.

Matthew Hoggard

Hoggard can be a match-winner if there is a bit of swing but he needs to work on his consistency when conditions aren't in his favour.

The Convicts

Ricky Ponting (Captain)

After going a year without making triple figures as Captain, Ponting got the monkey off his back by making a double century against Pakistan in Sydney. He'll be looking to maintain Australia's twenty year dominance over the Poms.

Glenn McGrath

'Ooh - Ah' Glenn McGrath's line and length is going to play havoc with slow English feet. 'Pigeon' should feel right at home in what might be his last Ashes tour, God forbid.

Jason Gillespie

Gaining biblical strength from his mullet, 'Dizzy' is certain to tear through the English attack like a Gemini wagon down Hindley Street.

SOCCER

FA Cup sends Rooney home

Wayne Rooney "the boy wonder" continues to grace the back pages of the English tabloid press. Rooney, who joined FA Cup holders Manchester United from Everton last August for £27m, scored two quality goals against Middlesbrough in the fourth round of the FA Cup to set up an enthralling match with his old Merseyside club. The fifth round encounter lived up to all expectations but was unfortunately marred by a hostile reception from tens of thousands of Everton fans.

Even before kick-off Rooney sent panic through the United camp when he was involved in a heated exchange with a spectator. The hostility continued into the game with Rooney's every touch being met with a deafening chorus of jeers from the crowd. But thanks to a Cristiano Ronaldo cross Quinton Fortune was able to pacify the Everton fans with a straightforward header at the 23-minute mark. After 57 minutes they were silenced by a Paul Scholes free kick that took a deflection, with goalkeeping veteran Nigel Martyn unable to do much more than push the ball in the direction of Ronaldo, who made no mistake. Final score Manchester United 2, Everton 0.

Rooney had a number of chances to rub salt into Everton's wounds but thanks to a couple of fantastic saves by Martyn the English striker's desperate search for a goal never came to fruition.

Tensions ran high post match too with some violent clashes between rival fans. The end result was injuries to five police officers and 33 arrests. Pitch invasions and missile throwing have tarnished the image of English football with a number of incidents being reported from the fifth round matches. Burnley's tie with Blackburn was marred by violence when Burnley keeper Jean-Louis Valois was hit by objects and three supporters managed to invade the pitch, with one allegedly threatening Rovers midfielder Robbie Savage and then resisting arrest.

The clubs involved with the weekends hostilities insist they will inflict lifetime bans on the culprits involved but there seems to be a constant stream of so called 'fans' who are ready to replace the fallen and take up the fight in the name of degrading the game.



Yalumba Footy Tipping Competition - Enrol today!



Ready for the first bounce are Yalumba team mates (L-R) Leon Dornford, Kate Blackwell, Wayne Butcher, Julie Starick, Bob Smart and Shannon Rice.

Join Immediately!

You better believe it! AFL footy starts on Thursday 24 March (before Easter) at the Gabba in Brisbane - the Brisbane Lions versus St Kilda, kicking off at 7.40pm. ANYONE can join the competition, even rugby league, union, soccer and hockey devotees. As a general rule, the less you know about AFL football - the teams, the players, the positions and the rules - the better qualified you are to select winners.

All of the rules of the competition including cut off times, all the rounds and helpful hints are posted on <http://footy.yalumba.com.au>.

It's as easy as, "put it through the middle pluggger." Pick your winning teams and relax.

A winning team earns ONE point. If you pick eight winning teams in a round, earn EIGHT points and a flavoursome prize. The person with the most points for the 2005 season wins lots of flavour and a bit of travel and if you finish in the top 22 players, you will win a large flavoursome prize and be inducted into the YALUMBA TEAM OF 2005.

Contact Yalumba's Director of Football, Kate Blackwell on (08) 85 613 342, facsimile (08) 85 613 393, email footy@yalumba.com.au

Entry details are up and posted on the website. Think of a password and enrol today.....NOW !!!! Good luck.

