

Oxford Australia Word of the Month

August 2008

do a bradbury – ‘be the unlikely winner of a contest’

Australian National Dictionary Centre

Why have I received **Oxford Australia Word of the Month**?

You are receiving this email because you are a valued customer of Oxford University Press.

You can unsubscribe at any time by sending an email to **wordofthemonth.au@oup.com** with ‘Unsubscribe WOTM’ in the subject line.

How do I subscribe?

If you have a colleague or a friend who you think would like to receive Oxford Australia Word of the Month, all they need to do is email **wordofthemonth.au@oup.com** with ‘Subscribe WOTM’ in the subject line.

Where can I learn more about the **Australian National Dictionary Centre**?

Visit: www.anu.edu.au/ANDC

Where can I learn more about **Oxford University Press**?

Visit: www.oup.com.au



• **Word of the Month: The Full Story**

• **Australian Pocket Oxford Dictionary**

Please direct all media enquiries to:

Rachel Ellis
Dictionary, Trade and ELT
Marketing and Product
Coordinator

Phone:
(03) 9934 9176

Email:
rachel.ellis@oup.com



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

do a bradbury

The story behind the Word of the Month

Are the Beijing Olympics likely to produce any new words? Although the verb **to medal** was first recorded in the United States in 1966, it became widespread in international English only with the swimming events at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. During the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Roy Slaven and H.G. Nelson, in their commentary on the gymnastics, gave international prominence to Australian terms such as **battered sav** and **crazy date**. An interesting Olympic-inspired addition to the vocabulary of Australian English arose during the Winter Olympics at Salt Lake City in 2002. Steven Bradbury won a gold medal in the short track speed skating competition when all the other skaters fell. In the following months, the phrase **to do a Bradbury** was widely used to describe someone who came from behind to be the unlikely winner of a contest.

In 2002, the phrase was used exclusively in sporting contexts:

South Rabbitohs and North Queensland Cowboys. Are suddenly firming as serious contenders to do a 'Bradbury' and win the NRL competition should everyone in front of them fall over under salary cap investigations. (Sydney Morning Herald)

Lowndes, 27, and the rest of the field would be forgiven for thinking their only hope of beating Holden's Mark Skaife for the 2002 V8 crown would be to 'do a Bradbury'. (Melbourne Age)

By 2004 there was some evidence that **do a Bradbury** could be used outside a narrow sporting context, as in this example from the *Australian* newspaper, where one firm wins a contract when the

other competing firm falls by the wayside:

Kerry Packer's Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd has 'done a Bradbury'.... PBL has picked up the lease and management rights to the troubled 21,000-seat Superdome complex at Sydney's Homebush for a song, after the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority was prevented from making a higher bid.

For a while it seemed that the phrase **do a Bradbury** might not find a permanent place in Australian English, since its usage diminished greatly after the initial 2002 flourish. Even so, in 2008 we find that it is still being used, although still exclusively in sporting contexts. A recent example occurred with commentary on the possible winner of this year's Brownlow Medal in AFL football:

Brownlow Medal fancy Adam Cooney says someone might 'do a Bradbury' this season and land the AFL's most prized individual award because other contenders fall out of the race. Several AFL stars have already been ruled ineligible for the award after committing reportable offences. It prompted Cooney to suggest the Medal might end up going to the last man standing. (Hobart Mercury)

In April 2008 the *Gold Coast Bulletin* produced a list of items that should be included among the 'Great Australian Rights'. These legally-binding Australian rights included 'the right to a pie at the footy', 'the right to a game of two-up on Anzac Day', and at the end of the list of eighteen such rights, 'the right to do a Bradbury and be proud'. Perhaps **do a Bradbury** will prove to be a stayer in Australian English!

metrosexual
weapon
of mass
destruction
karrack
glycaemic
burka
index
barbecue
stopper
senior
moment
Sudoku
hornbag
dishlicker
witlof
cyberstalking
Naltrexone
pear-
shaped
Bioterrorism
yakitori