

OXFORD AUSTRALIA
**WORD
OF THE
MONTH**

November 2011

Mad Monday

– noun: a sporting team's day of celebrations at the end of its playing season, characterised by drinking, dressing up, pranks, etc.

Forthcoming edition of the Australian National Dictionary

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The story behind the Word of the Month

After the major AFL and NRL grand finals on 1 and 2 October 2011, there were various reports of the celebrations of the winning teams, and the attempts at celebrations by the losing teams. In its coverage of the AFL aftermath, the Melbourne Herald-Sun reported:

Geelong players have courted controversy by dressing up as Ricky Nixon and the 'St Kilda Schoolgirl' in their **Mad Monday** premiership celebrations. Matthew Scarlett has always been the clown prince at Geelong's celebrations and raised the bar again with a Hannibal Lecter costume, in which he was wheeled out of a disabled taxi in a trolley by teammate Corey Enright. Jimmy Bartel was dressed as 'St Kilda Schoolgirl' Kim Duthie and walked across the road hand-in-hand with Mitch Duncan who arrived as Ricky Nixon in his famous underwear. ... Stevie Johnson showed up as rabid Collingwood supporter Joffa, Cameron Ling arrived as Ronald McDonald, Mathew Stokes as a chicken and Shannon Burns bleached his hair to be Duff Man. Joel Selwood and Steven Motlop co-ordinated their costumes and both arrived as Gumby while James Podsiadley was Fred Flintstone and Darren Milburn donned a Beetlejuice costume. ...

Meanwhile, Collingwood players also got into the **Mad Monday** spirit, arriving at the Rising Sun Hotel in Richmond in a variety of get-ups. A team bus dropped the players off with Alan Didak arriving dressed as Where's Wally while Scott Pendlebury was also sporting a Duffman costume. The standout was 2010 draft pick Daniel Farmer, who arrived dressed as a taco.

In Sydney, the rugby celebrations were surprisingly subdued for some players. The Sydney Morning Herald reported:

There wouldn't have been many Manly players who woke up yesterday morning—if they had slept at all—planning to finish **Mad Monday** celebrations the way Brent Kite wanted. 'We'll all catch up at an undisclosed location then I'll get back home and tuck the kids into bed', Kite said.

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The term that is of great interest in these accounts is **Mad Monday**. While the grand finalists receive the greatest publicity for their **Mad Monday** celebrations, other teams in the competition have already held their celebrations on the Monday after the match in which they ended the home-and-away games without making the finals, or on the Monday after they were eliminated from the finals. In 2011 the Canberra Raiders were so disappointed with their year's performance that they abandoned **Mad Monday**:

The Canberra Raiders have abandoned their traditional **Mad Monday** celebrations in response to the club's horror season. Gone is the themed party of 12 months ago and replaced by a more sombre end-of-season drink to match the mood of a team which has won the least amount of games in the club's history since 1982. (Canberra Times)

Thus **Mad Monday** has become a term to describe a day of usually alcohol-fuelled celebrations to mark the end of a team's playing year, often marked by themed dressing-up.

How long has the term **Mad Monday** been in existence? The earliest uses we have been able to find of the term are in newspapers from 1996, and they refer to both Aussie Rules and Rugby League. The Sydney Daily Telegraph reported:

Playing with confidence and determination, the Dragons got better and better as the match wore on while Norths' minds appeared to become fixed on where to begin their **Mad Monday** celebrations.

The same newspaper reported on the end of the Sydney Swans' season:

The Sydney Swans' quest to avenge Saturday's grand final loss and win the 1997 flag begins in earnest today when the match committee meets to cut the club list. The Swans' players will wind down with **Mad Monday** celebrations after their 19.17 (131) to 13.10 (88) loss to North Melbourne in front of 93,102 fans at the MCG.

Mad Monday is one of the latest examples of the kinds of terms that sport has contributed to the Australian lexicon.