

John Platten

John Platten, more commonly and affectionately known as 'The Rat' (born March 17, 1963 in South Australia) is an ex aussie rules footballer. With his unruly tangle of curls he was a distinctive figure on the field with tremendous tenacity and the ability to accumulate possessions week after week.

Platten began (and ended) his career with the Central District Bulldogs in the SANFL competition. A junior with Centrals, he commenced in the junior ranks in 1979 and made his league debut in 1981. Platten immediately made an impact with Centrals, becoming a full State Representative in 1982 and continued to be a regular in the State Team throughout his career. Platten's greatest achievement at Centrals was his 1984 Magarey Medal triumph as the league's best and fairest along with two club best and fairest awards.

Platten was recruited to the Hawthorn Football Club for the 1986 season. He went on to play for the Hawks between 1986 and 1997, playing 258 games and kicking 228 goals. He was a gutsy rover who won a Brownlow Medal in 1987, tying with Tony Lockett. He won All-Australian selection in 1985 (with Centrals), 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1992 (with Hawthorn), as well as playing in the Hawks' premiership sides in 1986, 1988, 1989, and 1991.

In 1998, Platten retired from the Hawthorn Football Club, and made a dramatic return to Central District along with Gilbert McAdam, another of the Bulldog's all-time greats. Platten kicked the match winning goal of his comeback match against Glenelg at Elizabeth Oval, however injury plagued his long-awaited comeback and he retired from football all together after sustaining a knee injury in mid-season. His return to Elizabeth Oval wasn't the success it was hoped for, but was a joyous event for long-time Centrals fans regardless. Platten has been a notable attendee at Centrals recent premiership successes, an achievement he was unfortunately never to enjoy with his boyhood club.

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Platten now coaches country football in South Australia. He played 113 games for Central Districts in the SANFL and was their best and fairest in 1984 and 1985 while being their leading goalkicker in 1981 and 1985.

He will most be remembered for being an integral part in what is commonly called the team of the '80s. Alongside other greats of the era at Hawthorn, such as Brereton, Dipper and Dunstall, they were a feared team and the benchmark side in what was one of the most exciting decades of football. When people speak of the '80s, 'the rat' is foremost in their minds.

In 2003, Platten was inducted into the Australian Football Hall of Fame.



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