

ASHES TRIUMPH &

Terrorism took 15 innocent lives, the sport world was rocked by loss and retirement while a pop star finally put a ring on it

BONDI BEACH SHOOTING/RISE IN ANTISEMITISM

The December 14 mass shooting at Bondi Beach as the Jewish community celebrated Chanukah was a horrific culmination of a growing tide of anti-Semitism in Australia.

Fifteen people were shot dead and dozens more wounded by two gunmen, a father and son from south-west Sydney.

In the immediate aftermath, many in the Jewish community were angry at the Federal Government for failing to heed warnings or do enough to stamp out the scourge of anti-Semitism.

Progress had been slow on the recommendations from the special envoy to combat anti-Semitism, Jillian Segal, who handed her report to the Government in July.

The year had started with an arson attack on a childcare centre in Maroubra, and continued with continuing acts of vandalism plus the high-profile viral video of a pair of NSW Health workers bragging about refusing to treat Israeli patients.

ASIO boss Mike Burgess and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in August announced intelligence agencies had proof that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps was behind at least two arson attacks, one on a Melbourne synagogue and another on a Sydney kosher deli.

The Government ejected Iran's ambassador and listed the IRGC as a terrorist organisation in response.

ASHES LIVES UP TO HYPE

It was one of the most highly anticipated Ashes series ever and Perth lived up to the incredible hype as it hosted the opener at a packed-out Optus Stadium.

More than 100,000 people witnessed a history-making contest as Australia drew



first blood against the old enemy.

For the first time since 1890, an Ashes Test was over inside just two days — watched on by a sold-out crowd.

But the action was more than worth the missed days as 19 wickets fell on the first day and Australian pace sensation Mitchell Starc claimed 10 English scalps across the match.

And no one will ever forget makeshift opener Travis Head's incredible feat of batting, hitting the second-fastest Ashes century inside a session to leave the Poms in disbelief and the Barmy Army silenced.

ADAM HUNTER DIES

West Coast icon John Worsfold handed Adam Hunter the ultimate accolade at the 2006 premiership player's funeral in February, saying the gifted utility loved the game more than anyone he had ever met.

"He didn't want to retire through injury, even after being told that he was putting the rest of his life at risk with a bad shoulder, if he played any more footy," Worsfold said. "He was prepared to cop that. He would've lived the rest of his life with one arm if he could've squeezed a few more years out at West Coast, but unfortunately we couldn't allow that."

Hunter, 43, was found unresponsive by police in the Bunbury suburb of Withers on February 5, with a coronial inquiry revealing



meth-induced heart failure as the cause of death.

He was posthumously diagnosed with chronic traumatic encephalopathy after his brain was donated to the Australian Sports Brain Bank for research.

Hunter played 151 games for the Eagles between 2000 and 2009, before a chronic shoulder injury forced his retirement, and will be best remembered for his match-winning goal after the famous Daniel Chick smother in the last quarter of the 2006 grand final.

E-SCOOTER INQUIRY

The dangers of e-rideables became a key focus in May when Perth father Thanh Phan was fatally hit by an e-scooter in the Perth CBD.

Once a popular method of getting around the metro area, hireable scooters were immediately pulled from use from multiple local government areas and a parliamentary inquiry was

established. The scope of the inquiry was eventually expanded to include e-bikes and e-dirt-bikes after a 59-year-old woman was fatally hit by an electric motorbike in a park in Perth's north in July.

Handing down its findings in December, the committee made 33 recommendations including tougher penalties for those modifying e-scooters and retailers helping to modify them.

The findings prompted the Cook Government to ban those under-16, for whom it was already illegal to use an e-rideable, from riding and keeping them at school.

BURSWOOD RACETRACK FURORE

The photos of Roger Cook and Rita Saffioti sitting in the front seat of a V8 Supercar as they promised to build a street circuit in Burswood were ammunition



for mounting anger over the \$217 million price-tag and environmental and noise concerns.

The Town of Victoria Park led the charge, complaining that residents were not consulted before the project was locked in.

Federal Labor MP Patrick Gorman also spoke out against the plan and the process.

The Cook Government claims the March victory gave it a mandate to deliver the project, and has re-branded the project from Burswood entertainment precinct to Perth Park, pointing to cultural features including an amphitheatre.

But the Government copped criticism for only releasing a six-page summary of the business case for it.

The amphitheatre has been scaled back from 20,000 seats to 12,000 and the project is yet to be assessed by Infrastructure WA, while negotiations over land handed over to Crown Perth in 2013 under a "use it or lose it" clause have fuelled Opposition claims the budget could blow out.

Construction is due to start in early next year.

BARNABY JOYCE JOINS ONE NATION

After a 20-year career with the Nationals, Barnaby Joyce ditched the party that made him deputy prime minister (twice) and turned to one-time nemesis One Nation.

The parting of ways became referred to as the dance of 1000 Akubras for its drawn-out nature towards the end of the parliamentary year.

The Member for New England first announced he wouldn't run in that seat again, then quit the party weeks later while insisting he was still considering his options.

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson wooed him with wagyu steak cooked on her parliamentary office sandwich press and less than a fortnight later, the deal was done.

Mr Joyce intends to lead One Nation's NSW Senate ticket at the election due in 2028.

His defection came amid much hand-wringing from the conservative end of the Coalition about a string of polls showing the Liberals and Nationals were bleeding votes to One Nation.

BASIL ZEMPILAS BECOMES LIBERAL LEADER

The Liberals increased their numbers in the Legislative Assembly, but it wasn't enough to

