

FABULOUS FRED

The Strife and Times of Fred Cook

Paul Amy

Foreword by Sam Newman

Fred Cook began his football career with Footscray in the VFL. But he really made his name in the game after crossing to Port Melbourne in the VFA.

His prodigious goalkicking in the 1970s earned him the nickname 'Fabulous Fred' and fame at a pop-star level. He appeared on TV, on radio and wrote newspaper columns, and he mixed with Melbourne's sporting and entertainment elite.

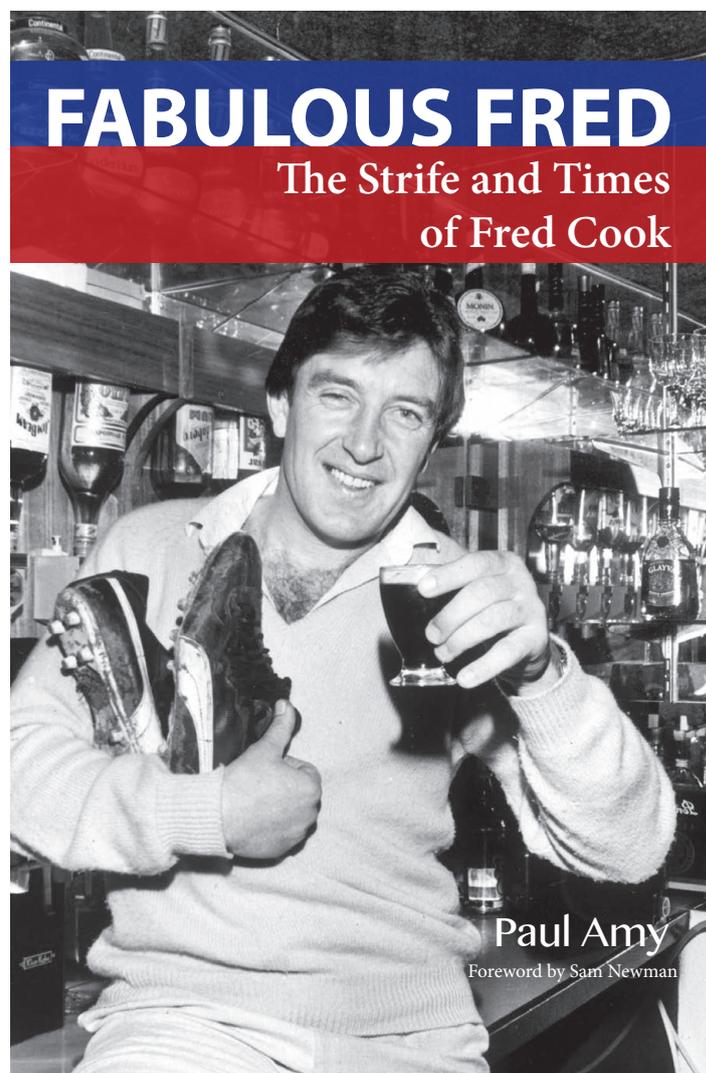
But he fell in with a criminal crowd, formed a drug habit, lost everything and did three spells in prison.

Cook has led a remarkable life, going from hero to zero. He's always wanted to tell his story, which features football, crime and drugs, and the wider issue of sportspeople who struggle with normalcy once their careers have ended.

Fred Cook's name still resonates, thirty years after his career ended. Last year he was nominated for the Australian Football Hall of Fame.

The Author

Paul Amy is a sports journalist at *Leader Newspapers* and *Inside Football*. He spent most of his childhood in Fish Creek, South Gippsland, where his neighbour and former Richmond player John Ryan regaled him with tales about Captain Blood, Jack Dyer. He first watched



football in the outer at Victoria Park, Collingwood, with his father, Bill, and can still remember the sight of big Len Thompson breasting the banner. He was also an avid viewer of VFA matches telecast on Channel 0. Paul is married with three daughters.

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 Tel: 03 9662 2051