

● AFL 2011 Grand Final: Saturday, check guide for time, Network Ten
 ● NRL 2011 Grand Final: Sunday, check guide for time, Nine Network

Footy feast

Fire up the barbie for the football finals - the blokes are ready for kick-off!



“How can you not get caught up in AFL footy fever?”

Footy finals fever is sweeping the country, and you'd be hard-pressed to find anyone more excited than actor Shane Jacobson and *The Sunday Roast* panellist and former rugby league star Mark Geyer. Whether it's AFL or NRL, Shane (left) and Mark (right) kick the footy around. They tell TV WEEK why this time of year is sacred for them – and what's on the menu for grand final day on their home turf.

Do you love a bit of footy finals fever?

Shane: Yes, I do. You better believe it!
Mark: I love it more than anything. It's the best time of year – even the air smells different! There's always a bit of heat, and you can expect it on the footy field, too.

Are you a footy tragic?

S: There's nothing tragic about footy!
M: I love all sports. This is a big month for NRL, AFL, rugby union and cricket. Obviously, being an ex-league player, league is first and foremost for me.

Which team do you support?

S: Western Bulldogs. They haven't gone as well as we wanted, but I still love them.
M: Penrith are my team. I played off and on there for 15 years. I still live in the area, so it has a special appeal to me. I retired in 2000 and I'm wearing the last playing jersey I wore – rather tightly!

Do you get caught up in the finals even if your team isn't on the field?

S: I think most people do. Being a Melburnian, there's a vibe in town that is hard to avoid and hard to not want to be a part of. The analogy I give is: I don't barrack for a racehorse, but I love the



Melbourne Cup! How can you not get caught up in AFL footy fever?

M: Oh, yeah. I adopt another team. This year I adopted the Warriors. I like the way they play and they've never won a comp. I like their new coach.

Do you host a grand final party?

S: I usually do, but this year the grand final may come second in our household, because we've got a baby due almost right on the siren. Nine months ago I already kicked a goal, so we're having a “premmie ship” of our own!

M: Every year we do. I usually have commitments at the game early, and then I rush home for a barbecue with 30 to 40 guests. It's BYO, but we supply the food and entertainment. I like to see a bit of friendly rivalry, too – if they don't have it, they don't come. You've got to come willing to cop it and give it.

What sort of food do you like to see at a footy party?

S: Thanks to Jenny Craig (Shane is a Jenny Craig spokesperson), I'd have some healthy foods. But I think on grand final day anyone is allowed to eat a pie! Jenny Craig has good pies, but I'll be honest, on grand final day I think you're supposed to have a Four'N Twenty Pie.

M: You can't go past a staple diet of sausage rolls, pies, a few chicken nuggets for the kids and have the barbecue pumping for the adults. Mini hot dogs – you name it – whatever you see at the football, we replicate at home. Then at 8pm you do the pizza run.

What's your footy beverage of choice?

S: A beer – or champagne, if my baby is born!

M: I usually go from a glass of champagne to start the day off, to



a couple of Tooheys New, then vodka, lemon, lime and bitters.

Do you have a favourite footy finals memory?

S: I was at the grand final one year and Muhammad Ali went past in a motorcade. I was with my brother, and we didn't recover from the shock of having him drive past until half-time. We were literally overwhelmed!

M: There have been lots. In 2004, I had a bit to do with the Cowboys, [who] upset the Bulldogs at ANZ Stadium. Penrith played Canberra in 1991, which went into 20 minutes extra time – that was probably the best final I ever played.



Antipasto pizza

Makes 4

- 4 x 15cm-diameter pita pockets
- ¼ cup pizza sauce
- ¼ cup freshly grated parmesan
- 75g shaved hot salami, coarsely chopped
- 100g drained char-grilled eggplant, coarsely chopped
- 4 (100g) marinated artichoke hearts, quartered
- 100g roasted or char-grilled red capsicum, thinly sliced

- ¼ cup pitted kalamata olives, chopped
- 100g mozzarella cheese, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup baby basil leaves

- 1 Preheat oven to 220°C. Grease two baking trays.
- 2 Place pita on trays, spread with pizza sauce. Sprinkle with parmesan, then top with salami, eggplant, artichoke, capsicum and olives. Arrange mozzarella slices on top, then bake for 10-12 minutes or until bases are crisp. Add basil on top.



Sticky chicken wings with lemon and maple syrup

Serves 6

- 1kg chicken wings
- Juice of 3 lemons, skins reserved
- 5 bay leaves
- ½ cup (80ml) olive oil
- ¼ cup (60ml) maple syrup

1 Preheat oven to 200°C. Place chicken wings in a baking pan in a single layer. Pour lemon juice on top. Cut reserved skins into quarters and add to pan with bay leaves. Drizzle olive oil and maple syrup on top. Season well with salt and pepper.

2 Bake for 25 minutes, then turn and bake for 35 minutes more, till cooked. Serve at room temperature.



Mini hot dogs with cheese

Makes 12

- 12 cocktail frankfurts
- Packet of 12 oven-bake dinner rolls
- 1 cup grated tasty cheese
- American-style mustard
- Tomato sauce

1 Place cocktail frankfurts in a saucepan, cover with cold water and place over medium heat until they are hot. Do not overcook or frankfurts will split.

2 Heat the bread rolls according to packet directions. Make a cut along the top of each warm roll and fill with grated tasty cheese and cooked frankfurts. Top with mustard and tomato sauce and serve straightaway.