

NOEL MURPHY: Guru Bob kicks another goal

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SOUND advice is hard to come by at the best of times, especially in the fickle and fractured world of sport.

But for more than 20 years, a solitary muse has offered his pearls of wisdom to a select, appreciative air-waves audience, occasionally venturing also into print or other media.

Guru Bob, alter-ego of singer-comic Greg Champion, and a long-time regular on ABC Radio's Coodabeen Champions, has gone against the grain of populist pap.

His mysterious Japanese ninja, ancient Texas, Hindu, Roman and Eastern philosophies have provided a light where otherwise might be darkness. And mirth where elsewhere might be madness.

Now, once again, Guru Bob has put quill to parchment to impart his thoughts to the sporting masses _ and anyone else in need of sage counsel.

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He draws on the sayings of Sheik Yabuti, Roman bookmaker Hector Trifector, African Ongo Bongo Chief Wahuhu, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gifted Animal Prophet Abdul the Market Mule, among others.

The collective aphorisms, epigrams, dictums and truisms are profound.

Says Guru Bob: ``It is painted in graffiti on the Wailing Wall of Jerusalem (with a picture of a handbag). Some people are destined never to experience contentment, satisfaction and fulfilment. For these people, God has created the Geelong Football Club."

And obtusely, or perhaps prophetically: ``During question time at the temple, I asked: `Supreme Master, does Geelong miss Gary Ablett? He answered: `Guru Bob, is it the sharp metal edges of the carrot grater, or is it the holes, that actually grate the carrot?"

Guru Bob's grasp of football's higher aspirations is discreet but revealing: ``When two men go up for the mark, only one can find true happiness."

His sense of place in the cosmos is precise: ``Just remember, when Collingwood loses to Hawthorn, a billion people in China don't care."

His sense of fair play squares with the greater good: ``Remember the pronouncement of Snow White upon leaving Dopey behind on the days of the elves' picnic in the forest: `I did it in the interests of team balance'."

His sense of mathematics is deep: ``If you're at peace 95 per cent of the time, don't worry about the other 17 per cent."

And his sense of Plugger is telling too: ``The Grand Old Duke of York; He had 10,000 men; He put them all on Tony Lockett; And he still kicked 10."

Guru Bob doesn't gloss over the bleeding obvious, either. Sometimes it needs to be stated for less enlightened beings:

``A champion team will always beat a team of champions . . . unless, the team of champions is very, very good."

And even more obviously: ``You can take the boy out of Port Adelaide but only in the back of a divvy van."

_ The Collected Wisdom of Guru Bob: New wise profundities as well as the old stuff, by Greg Champion, Penguin, \$16.95

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