

# DT Must-Haves for 2012

## (Defenders)

*With the start of the Nab-cup less than a month away it is high time we started looking at potential candidates for our teams. Regardless of your strategy to combat the utter disaster the bye rounds (11-13) will prove to be a winning team will have a mixture of these stars or as I affectionately dub them 'DT Sluts'.*

### Heath Scotland:

The best defender of 2011 should be at the top of every Dream Team coaches list. With an average just shy of 100 a game (99.8) he is also incredibly durable as he played every game for the Blues and has only missed 7 in the last 6 seasons! Along with his exceptional durability comes an outstanding consistency, in the last 7 seasons his lowest overall average (86.3) came in an injury-marred 2009 season where he missed patches of games. Not to mention he has an added bonus in the form of DPP (Dual-position player).



The only real negative that can be excavated from Heath Scotland's bid to earn a spot in your starting line-up is his age. At 31 (turning 32 in July) Scotland is not getting any younger but he is yet to show any sign of old age creeping into his game with him still taking confident strides out of defense and hitting his targets.

All in all Heath Scotland is an incredibly safe and very reliable option for a starting spot on your 2012 team. After all, who better to start with than the best defender of last year in an improving Carlton side. This alone should see Heath scoring just about if not a little better than his 2011 average. It seems like I have convinced myself on him, looks like yet another shuffle is in order.

### Brendon Goddard:

Coming in at number 2 on my list is also coincidentally the second best defender of 2011. He along with Heath has DPP eligibility which will help you deal with the byes in the middle of the season. Even though he managed to have an outstanding average as a defender (95.9) he would have frustrated many coaches (myself



included) with a lackluster start to the year. Between the rounds of 1-11 Goddard only managed an average of 77.45, hardly befitting a star player that had accrued a season average of 113.4 just the season before.

This poor form early on in the season could be directly attributed to the Saints pathetic start as they only won 3 games in the first 11 rounds. As this form turned around so did Goddard who went on to average 105.72 for the remainder of the season. This basically stands to show that Goddard is the barometer of the St Kilda team and with improvement evident in a number of fringe players, the return of Lenny Hayes who horrifically ended his 2011 season with an ACL injury in round 2 and James Gwilt who managed to injure his ACL too shows that the saints should return to form.

The only real risk that can be seen in Goddard is the aforementioned barometer factor in which he basically tells the story for the Saints on the night. He plays well, the Saints play well, he fails to perform, so do the saints.

Regardless of that negative, Goddard is an out and out jet who puts his body on the line and his heart into every game he plays for the Saints. For this reason alone he should earn a spot in your team whether that is at the beginning of the season or not.

## Brett Deledio:

This decision was a little harder with worthy picks such as Enright, Suckling, Shaw and Birchall all putting their hands up for selection. I must be easily seduced by DPP because yet again this man has got it and is essentially the reason why the guys I mentioned earlier aren't getting a place in this top-3 list. Along with this bonus Deledio boasts the 6th best average of a defender last season at 91.4. Another plus for Lids is consistency which is quite remarkable. 12 of his scores fell in the 90+ zone with a further 9 between the 70-80 region and a stinker in round 3 against the Hawks where he only managed 17 possessions, 1 mark and 1 tackle on his way to 51. Fortunately that score was only a blip on his radar as evidenced by the rest of the season where he did not fall below 74.



The next question you should ask is "is he durable?" the immediate response to this would be 'very'. This trait is clearly evident in his 7 season career where he has only missed 4 games and in the last 4 seasons he has played every single game. That is set and forget material right there.

The only real negative that can be seen for Deledio is that the Tigers are a young side and as such will still face routing from top teams and go missing for large periods of the game which leaves Deledio along with Cotchin and Martin to shoulder most of the workload. He has also been played fairly deep in defense for the last few seasons which really riled up the Tigers faithful who believed that his talents were best used in the middle, word out from Punt Rd is that this is set to change and a prolonged stint in the midfield is in order for Deledio. If this is the case then he is absolutely locked and loaded into the starting line up of Time To Reign.

In summation, Deledio is another safe pick that also has a huge amount of upside. He is consistent, durable and in an improving team where he is earmarked to get more midfield time. What more do you need to be convinced to pick him up?

## Honourable Mentions:

While I have only selected 3 defenders in my list there were a couple of players that were unlucky to make the cut. These players include:

### Andrew Carrazzo:

AVG: 91.9

Games played: 22

+: Equal 3rd-highest average, skilled ball-handler.

-: Is often used as a tagger, Injury Prone.

### Corey Enright:

AVG: 91.9

Games Played: 21

+: Equal 3rd-highest average, Relatively Durable and in a strong team.

-: Is getting on in years (31 in September), very up and down scorer.

### Matt Suckling:

AVG: 90.8

Games Played: 20

+: Only 23 years of age and in an improving Hawthorn team.

-: Very injury prone, can get locked down by a defensive-forward.

Expect to see a Midfielders 'Must-Have' section soon.