



**SEA EAGLES PUT  
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Collingwood's Dale Thomas celebrates the Magpies' nail-biting victory in last night's preliminary final against Hawthorn at the MCG

Picture: MICHAEL KLEIN

# GREAT ESCAPE

WITH tears in his eyes, coach Mick Malthouse celebrated one of his greatest triumphs as Collingwood scored a dramatic three-point win in last night's AFL preliminary final at the MCG.

The defending premier qualified for next weekend's grand final in dramatic circumstances with a stunning victory against Hawthorn.

Trailing by 17 points at three-quarter time, Collingwood kicked five goals to two

in the final term to win 10.8 (68) to 9.11 (65).

Chris Dawes and Travis Cloke kicked three goals each for Collingwood while big man Lance Franklin booted three for the Hawks.

Magpies wingman Dale Thomas produced a stunning tackle on Hawthorn small forward Cyril Rioli in the middle of the ground in the final minute of the match to stop any chance of a late Hawks' goal.

But Collingwood, which

will play Geelong or West Coast in the decider, faces injury concerns over ruckman Darren Jolly and key defender Ben Reid who were hampered by leg injuries.

Malthouse, who is stepping down at the end of the season, showed great emotion in the coach's box as his side fought on against the odds to rescue victory from an almost impossible position in front of 87,112 roaring fans.

The Hawks kicked 4.7 (31)

to Collingwood's 3.5 (23) in a tense first half.

The Magpies were relying heavily on back pocket Leon Davis who helped limit the damage with 19 possessions and nine rebound-50s out of defence in the first half.

Early goals in the third term to Brent Guerra and Sam Mitchell gave the Hawks a 21-point advantage but the Pies fought back with goals to Dawes and Cloke.

Rioli dribbled through a

goal at the 20-minute mark to help the Hawks go into three-quarter time 17 points up.

The Magpies fought back with goals to Dawes, Davis and Dane Swan and then Cloke scored his third goal at the 19-minute mark to put Collingwood back in front.

But with four minutes left, Franklin dribbled a goal through from the boundary line as Hawthorn reclaimed the lead, only for Luke Ball's goal to have the final say.

| MAGPIES  | 68               |
|--|------------------|
| HAWKS  | 65               |
| <b>COLLINGWOOD</b>   | <b>10.8 (68)</b> |
| 2.3  | 3.5              |
| 5.6  | 7.11             |
| 9.11   | 9.11             |
| <b>HAWTHORN</b>  | <b>9.11 (65)</b> |
| 2.4  | 4.7              |
| 7.11   | 7.11             |
| 9.11   | 9.11             |
| Goals: <b>COLLINGWOOD:</b> C Dawes 3 T Cloke 3 D Swan L Ball L Davis. <b>HAWTHORN:</b> L Franklin 3 B Guerra C Rioli J Lewis L Hodge P Puopolo S Mitchell. |                  |
| Best: <b>COLLINGWOOD:</b> D Swan S Pendlebury T Cloke C Tarrant C Dawes L Ball. <b>HAWTHORN:</b> C Rioli S Mitchell J Lewis L Hodge S Burgoyne B Sewell.   |                  |
| Umpires: Shaun Ryan, Simon Meredith, Scott Jeffery, Brett Rosebury.  |                  |
| Official Crowd: 87,112 at MCG.   |                  |

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