

GO THE TIGERS

Show 'Em what Queanbeyan's made of!

1802022

Queanbeyan out to overcome Sydney's AFL edge

By Andrew Johnston

■ AUSSIE RULES

NEAFL grand final

■ **Who:** Queanbeyan Tigers v Sydney Swans

■ **Where:** Manuka Oval

■ **When:** Sunday, 2.15pm

WHILE Queanbeyan will take on the Sydney Swans on Sunday afternoon for NEAFL premiership glory, the Tigers' more telling battle may be won or lost before a ball is kicked.

In the lead-up to this weekend's clash, Queanbeyan's young squad must first convince itself the Swans can be beaten.

That in itself is a daunting ask. The Swans have comfortably prevailed in each of the two club's previous meetings this season, including a 55-point victory two weeks ago in the major semi-final.

A host of Tigers will also be experiencing their first exposure to the glaring spotlight of a first-grade grand final.

By contrast, Sydney will field no less than 12 listed players, many of whom have already proven their pedigree at AFL level.

"A lot of players, especially the younger guys can overthink big games and make things more difficult for themselves than it has to be," Queanbeyan star and former Essendon player Jarrod Atkinson says. "It's something that comes with experience, not having to battle

against yourself mentally before you even go out and play.

"Once you get to that stage you become a better footballer and you can really compete in those big games. That's something our younger players will get better at.

"This weekend is still a learning experience for our team but at the same time we've definitely got the ability to get over the line with the players we have now."

The only player in Queanbeyan's line-up with AFL experience, Atkinson is looming as Queanbeyan's X-Factor against a star-studded Sydney outfit.

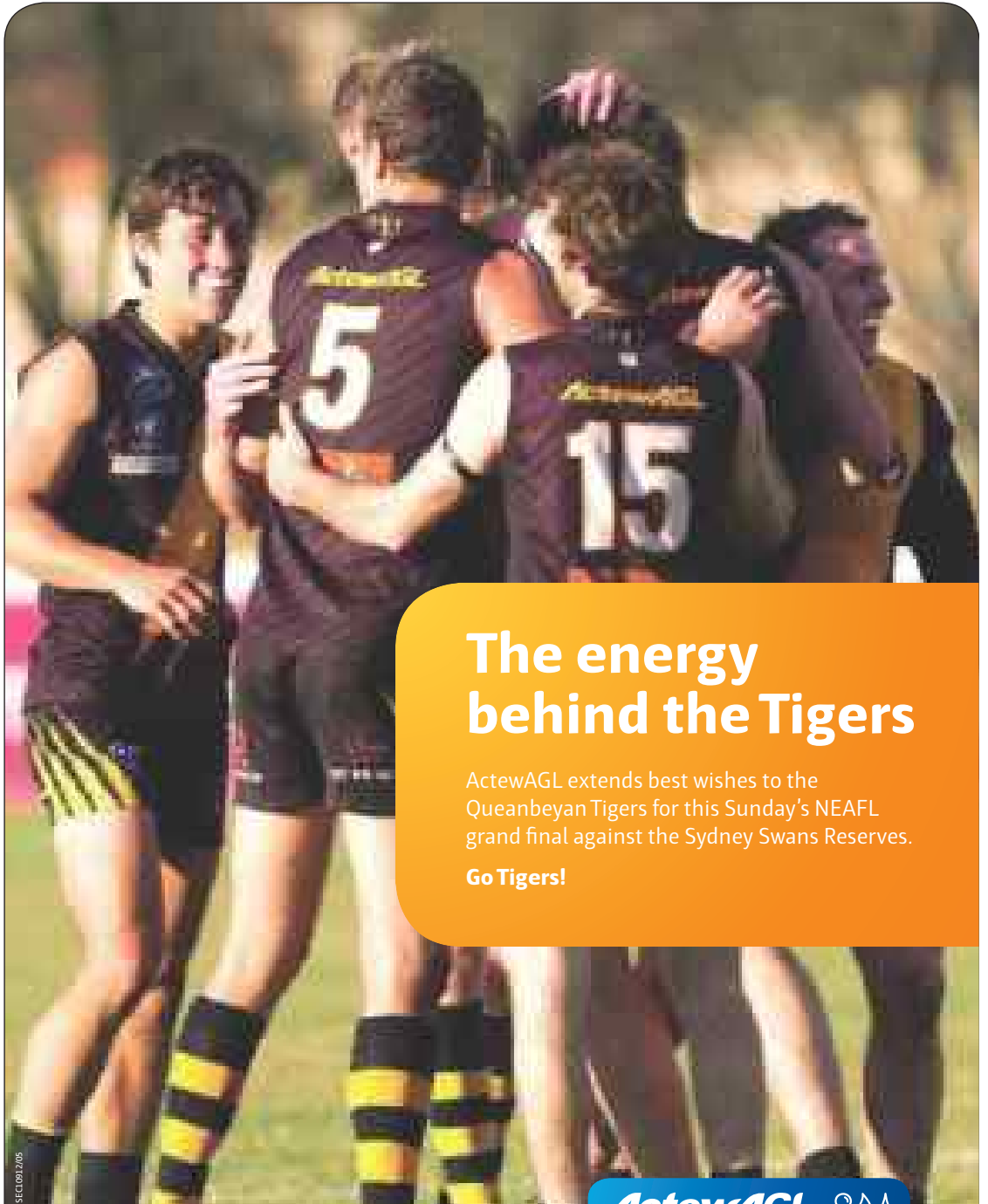
But while the Tigers may be lacking the big game experience of their more seasoned opponents, Atkinson said Queanbeyan's playing roster was more than up to the task of matching the Swans man-on-man.

"You don't need to be on an AFL list to get the best out of yourself and to be a dangerous player," He said. "Most of our blokes are pretty good one-on-one who can match it with the Sydney players.

"For us it's just about our preparation as a team. The Swans obviously do all the basics well which is something we can struggle with sometimes but if we can stick to everything we've been doing during the year we shouldn't have any problem getting over the line."

> Queanbeyan star Jarrod Atkinson is confident the Tigers can defeat the Sydney Swans in this weekend's NEAFL grand final.

Photo: Ben Southall photography



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The Queanbeyan Age



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2012 GRAND FINALS

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The energy behind the Tigers

ActewAGL extends best wishes to the Queanbeyan Tigers for this Sunday's NEAFL grand final against the Sydney Swans Reserves.

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