

## Mark Ella AM

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### ***Australian Former Rugby Union Great & Keynote Speaker***

Mark Ella AM is one of Australia's all time sporting greats. Despite the Australian former rugby union player having a relatively short career (he retired in 1984, aged 25), Bob Dwyer, former Wallabies coach, described him as one of the five most accomplished Australian players he had ever seen.



Post-rugby, Mark has pursued a successful career in sports, entertainment and media. Highly awarded and extremely articulate, he is a popular keynote speaker who, with humility and good humour, shares some of the best stories about the great days of the Wallabies that you'll ever hear.

### ***More about Mark Ella:***

Mark has been described as the detonator which exploded the brilliance of the Australian backs. At critical moments, he would pass the ball in a heartbeat, trapping in defenders and unleashing team-mates into space, before running in support of the ball carrier. He would waste no stride holding the ball but flip it instantly on its way towards the wide open space down the touchline where danger-men like Campese prowled.

Consequently, Mark provided tremendous entertainment to spectators, and his ability to be in the right place at the right time was something out of the spirit world.

Mark achieved the Grand Slam by scoring a try in every test match of the series when the Wallabies toured the UK in 1984. It was a display of his sheer genius. Fans have been left to wonder about the other superhuman feats Mark might have achieved had he'd played on past his 25 caps in a brief but brilliant career stretching from 1980 to 1984.

As you'd expect, Mark's achievements on the field did not go unnoticed. Indeed, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1984, the same year he retired from the game.

In 1997 Mark was inducted into the International Rugby Hall of Fame and in 1987, he was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame. He received a Centenary Medal and an Australian Sports Medal in 2001 and in 2005, he was honoured as one of the inaugural five inductees into the Australian Rugby Union Hall of Fame. In 2013, Ella was inducted into the IRB Hall of Fame. That same year, Australian sports magazine Inside Rugby named Mark, alongside Col Windon, Ken Catchpole and David Campese as the first Invincibles of Australian rugby.



Since concluding a successful career in rugby, Mark has been a director of the Sports and Entertainment Group and has worked with NITV, Australia's free-to-air Indigenous television station. In 2011 he became Executive Producer and Head of NITV Sport, where "highlighting Indigenous sporting achievement has been a driving force behind the ... *Barefoot Sports* [program]."

In 2007 he published his eponymous autobiography, co-written with journalist Bret Harris.

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