

DISTRICT DRIBBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN DISTRICT

HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

September 2007

80 + THREE FROM THREE = NDHA

As current President of NDHA I am compelled to document the historical weekend that NDHA has just celebrated.

I would appreciate if you could take time out, just for a few minutes and absorb the following.

On Friday, 14th September, 2007, NDHA members, players and friends, past and present, joined together to celebrate its 80th Anniversary and the Women's Presentation evening. As a relatively new member I was impressed by the unity shown on that evening. Little did I know from that evening a new surge in strength was being forged. We heard many great stories from the past like Pop McKenzie starting his juniors with an axe handle (we might heed to rethink our player development program) to overseas tours that could only be recounted in M15+ time-zones through to the incredible effort put in by previous committee members on the building of the clubhouse and the current turf after moving from Epping oval.

Saturday morning, 15th September, was bright and set the scene for a memorable junior presentation and 80th Party. I would like to thank the Life members and past players backing up from Friday evening who kept the party rolling. We were also lucky enough to have many past players come from as far as Canberra to join in the festivities. Meanwhile, at 12.30 pm our 6th Grade men's team (known as NorWest Strikers) took the field at Cintra for their Grand Final. After 70 minutes and a 3-3 draw, extra time, golden goal began and I am proud to say Strikers won. One down, two to go!

Saturday evening at 6pm at Homebush Olympic Pitch our 1st Grade men's team were firing up for their Grand Final battle against Moorebank, a team which they have never defeated. A sunblasted weary group of about 50 that had attended the afternoon festivities trekked down to Homebush to support our senior men. We were grateful that no injuries from past legends were repeated from the 75th celebrations and that we were all fit enough make the trek. We arrived with balloons and streamers wearing our new EAT, SLEEP, HOCKEY shirts and joined the already strong Norwest Strikers cheer squad. A very entertaining 70minutes went our way and our senior men's Premier A 1st Grade team had a convincing 3-1 win. Our first win since 1946. Two down, one to go!

Sunday, 16th September, day three of celebrations. Our Women's 1st Grade team were locked in for a 3.45pm Grand Final against UTS Eagles who had been champions for the last two seasons. I was eager to attend as my daughter is in this team. To my surprise and absolute delight, I was joined by a crowd of 50+ members, players and friends of NDHA to help cheer home the women. Many of these supporters were on the equivalent of a "hockey crawl" from Friday & Saturday and had dusted themselves off in anticipation of the big trifecta. The women won 1-0, giving us an incredible 3 wins from 3 Grand Finals on our 80th weekend.

What a wonderful weekend for NDHA. The sweetest part not being the clean sweep but the club spirit that is alive and thriving amongst us that I found very inspiring. Congratulations to all three Premiership teams and to NDHA, no wonder we've survived 80 years!!

A terrific way to finish the 2007 season. 80 years and growing stronger. Please consider being a part of that success into 2008 and beyond. Our AGM will be held shortly and your involvement in the club in any capacity can only help us grow stronger. You can contact myself, Larry Maher, at president@ndhockey.com.au or just check out the website at www.ndhockey.com.au and be a part of this sport and the great club spirit.

Season Placings for our Junior teams:

U11Gold - Semi Finalist - 4th

U11Blue - 7th

U11White - Finalist - 3rd

U13Gold - Runners-up

U13Blue - Semi Finalist - 4th

U13White - Runners-up
U15Metro - 9th
U15Blue - 5th

*Well done to
all players!!*

2008 Registration Day

Mark your calendar for February 9th, 2008.

ND Women's Teams

ND1 – Premiers!
ND2 - Semi Finalist - 4th
ND3 - 5th
ND4 - 6th
U18Women - Preliminary Final - 3rd

Holiday Clinics:

Northern District will be running an Academy Skills Clinics and an H2H – Hooked into Hockey clinic from January 21-24, 2008.

80th Celebrations Jelly Bean Competition:

Congratulations to Belinda Fitton who successfully guessed the closest number in the Jelly Bean competition. There were 749 blue, yellow and red jelly beans! A big thank you to Patrick at Lollies Plus, Oakhill Village, David Road, Castle Hill for putting the jar together for us.

Our Past...

In the last edition of the District Dribble we had Part 1 of the interview with Ellis Rothwell and Barry Rothwell wonderfully conducted by Aimee Fitton and compiled by Belinda Fitton. Thank you to all involved. Here is Part 2:

Wally Rothwell was one of the founding members of the Northern District Hockey Association. The association was started in 1927, and Wally was a life member.

Ellis Rothwell is Wally's son, and was involved in the Northern District Hockey Association during the 1940s, together with his family.

During his hockey career Ellis represented Australia, NSW and Northern District Hockey Association. Ellis officially opened the turf at Pennant Hills in 2003.

This is an interview with Ellis Rothwell and his son Barry Rothwell.

Please refer to the last newsletter for the first part of the interview.

What did you do when you weren't playing hockey, what was your job?

Ellis – well I worked for Berger's Paint for 47 years.

Barry – He was an industrial sales manager for Berger's paint. In the early years he was a sales representative, then he graduated through the company to management.

What do you consider your greatest achievement in life?

Ellis – Bringing up my two sons, to give 100% to their life and to enjoy it.

Do you have any regrets?

Ellis – Yes, that we didn't have more kids

Barry – Hang about, you've got great-grand kids to make up for it. You have 10 great-grand kids.

What will you always remember about hockey?

Ellis – The friendships that you make, and how you had to be fit.

Barry – The wild experiences while you were touring in New-Zealand?

Ellis – We used to spend the weekend in the country promoting hockey. When we were out at Orange, playing hockey, we had to spend time to throw rocks off the field before we started playing the hockey game.

What was your best game of hockey that you had played?

Ellis – There was a Test in New Zealand, which we lost.

Barry – must have been harsh?

Aimee – It was a good game though?

Ellis – Yes.

In your early years of playing hockey, who was your inspiration?

Ellis – to be the best full back in Australia.

Aimee – And you got there?

Ellis – No.

Son – Well if you didn't you got very close to it

Aimee – Playing for Australia, you must have been very close to it

Was there anyone in particular who inspired you?

Ellis – My father. He was a dedicated man and I can't express enough what he did for me.

Barry – He was a wonderful man, he was totally unselfish with his own time. Totally committed to doing everything he could for hockey and his family. He also founded the Northern District Hockey Association.

Barry – Wally was made a life member of the ND hockey club, and he was an Olympic grade umpire.

In your opinion, what are some of the most important skills that a hockey player needs to know?

Ellis – needs to be fit and needs to have knowledge of the game.

Son – you always used to stress that stick and ball co-ordination was very important.

Ellis - yes

What are some of the biggest changes that you have seen in the game of hockey?

Ellis – The rules and the equipment. The sticks are different so much more advanced, and the rules.

Aimee – did you have turf?

Barry – No never, always played on grass.

Aimee – you opened the turf at Pennant Hills didn't you?

Ellis – Yes

Barry – That was a highlight.

Ellis - Yes

Aimee – What was your involvement in the club at that time?

Ellis – I was the oldest living member.

Barry – He was very proud of that.

What is the funniest story that you remember in your hockey career?

Ellis - Laughs

Son – I don't think he can answer that question.

Aimee – did anything happen in New Zealand?

What is some advice that you could give to parents with children who are involved in hockey?

Ellis – I don't know.

Barry – I think I can help you here, just to encourage and support, to play hard and fair.

Ellis – keep very fit and the goal keeper well protected.

What did the goalie used to wear?

Ellis – Just goalie pads.

Aimee – Nothing else? What happened if the ball hit any other part of the body?

Barry – You got hurt. They only had big pads (bigger than cricket pads) and gloves.

Ellis – And they also had a stick.

What did the ball used to be made of?

Barry - Hockey balls are now lighter. I think we used to play with a cricket ball, with a white leather casing.

Ellis – Yes that is right.

What is some advice you could give to a coach?

Ellis – You have to know the rules and be very fit. You should also have patience.

Barry – Treat everyone individually too, you can't put square pegs in round holes.

Is there anything else that you would like to say?

Ellis – I am very interested in seeing the enthusiasm which you have showed today.

Barry – Thank you for your time, dad has really enjoyed the interview.

Thank you to Aimee and Belinda for a great interview!

Our Present and Future....

The Osborne family have been associated with the Club for nearly 30 years in various roles.....

Mark

I started playing hockey in Year 11, because a cousin gave me a hockey stick, and started playing it for school sport. I found myself just good enough (or lack of choice!!) to make the school State knockout team, but mainly saw it as an afternoon off school.

I still don't know how I came to be playing for Northern District in 1979, but it was possibly due to Alex Scott. I played in fifth grade with Merv Goodrich, who was Australian Manager at the time, and he showed me lots. At the time, we were training at Nth Epping, which was too much of a hike for someone without transport, so I stayed in 5th grade. Julie used to umpire for us when she could.

My last season for ND as a player was in 1985. We had moved out past Mt Druitt, but that didn't deter Doug Roberts..."Mark, I want you to be 5th grade captain" "But Doug, I'm working Saturday mornings, and driving all over Sydney to play with a bare 7 players isn't fun." "What if I guarantee you a full team?".....Sucker eh! The full team never eventuated.

We moved back to the area late 1993, but I never played again except for social comps, having broken my shoulder in goals a couple of years before. Sarah and Lizzie however, took to hockey as if they'd been born with sticks in their hands, and I soon found myself umpiring their games through juniors and then women's and reps. I got my State C badge in 2002, and have been umpiring for the club since, as well as co-ordinating the women's umpiring this year. Although umpiring for up to 6 associations per year, I have always made Northern District my first priority.

Julie

My first association with Northern District was in 1983 when Mark was playing in 5th grade men's with Merv Goodrich. The team never had enough players so whenever I went to watch him play I ended up umpiring. A quirky role reversal to today which sees Mark umpiring and me playing.

We moved out of the area in 1985 and didn't return until November 1993. In 1994 we renewed our association with Northern District. By this time, 7 year old Sarah already had 2 seasons of hockey behind her and was showing her amazing potential as a defender. It wasn't until 1998 that I took on the role of coaching. My first team an U11B team played all their games on grass. I faced the problem many coaches face, who would be the goal keeper. Part way through the season I asked Lizzie to play in goals not knowing that this would be the beginning of a successful career as a goal keeper. My coaching career was short lived and I spent my time as mums taxi for several years, not knowing that all the training my children were exposed to at Northern District and in their many representative teams was going to be the foundation of my own coaching career.

During this time I continued to play in several women's teams for Northern District and Hornsby RSL (when we had insufficient players to make a team). As the number of women increased the number of teams increased and the club developed a need for more coaches. I started coaching again in 2005, this time a 4th grade women's team. 2006 saw ND4 reach the major semi final before being eliminated in torrential rain, and I was honoured with the coach of the year award.

In 2007 I continued to coach and occasionally play on the field for ND4, as well as playing in goals for ND3, and took on the added role of coaching the U11Blue team. I was invited to join the committee and have been involved in the organisation of the 80th anniversary weekend.

I am excited about the future plans and development of Northern District.

Sarah

For as long as I can remember I have been around hockey fields. I feel almost as though I fell into the sport, but have always had a deep passion for it. Although my first few years of hockey are a blur for me, I was never happier than when I was playing in the junior mixed teams through U11's up to U15's. Over my years in junior hockey I had the opportunity to try out for many representative teams including North Shore, Sydney and even an U14's state side.

Being in so many different teams each year, all with their own carnivals, meant a lot of travelling for my parents but they never faltered in their support. Many times I thought that they were more excited just watching me play, than I was to be playing. But rain, wind or shine, they were always there and always cheering.

At the age of 12 I played for the first time in a Northern District Women's team. Although it was just another team to me at the time, I was sad when I realised that all girls hockey was my future. The friendships made when playing with almost the same team year in year out were amazing and the thought of losing them almost pushed me to my limit. As an emotional teenager I almost considered giving up the sport I had grown up playing over one little detail.

Thankfully, I got over it and have consistently played in at least two teams ever since I grew up out of juniors. Although I have been able to keep myself busy by umpiring here and there, usually travelling with my dad who would be umpiring with me or another game at the same location.

(Mark 1 year Sarah played ND U15, ND Women's, SWHL ML3, Sydney U15, Nth Shore U14, NSWJHA U14 State school sport, State knockout, and NSWCHS for Sydney North.)

Nowadays I play in two separate women's competitions, I'm umpiring in both of those competitions as well as helping out with the development of our junior umpires and helping out in the private school competitions on a Saturday morning. On occasion I have been able to help my mum with her coaching with the more practical application of skills and I have even thought of coaching one of the women's teams next year.

Lizzie

You've heard the saying "She's been doing it ever since she could walk..." well I think I was about 18 months old in that photo at Penno Park, so it wasn't much of an exaggeration.

I was 5 when I started playing Minkey for Northern District, and did that for 3 years. When I started in U11B, Mum was coaching, and because she didn't want to ask the other kids to do it, she stuck me in goals, which is where I mostly stayed. I say mostly because in Year 4 I actually got into the Sydney North PSSA team on the field, and in year 5 and 6 I was the State PSSA goalie.

I spent a lot of time in the B Pool teams, because in your first year in an age group, you are competing against someone who is a year older. I remember Dad would take Sarah somewhere, and Mum had me somewhere else. Being in a B Pool team really doesn't mean anything, because I was selected for the Sydney U13-1 Boys team when girls were still allowed to be in them. I also had the chance to play with Sarah in an U12 rep team for 1 year.

Since leaving juniors, I've played for the Northern District women; playing centre half for ND3 this season, and relieving in goals for 1st Grade.

Whilst I learned a lot from Mum and Dad, I got my field skills from watching Sarah, and my advanced goalkeeping skills from Greg Smith, the ND Vets goalie. I have helped Mum this year in coaching her U11 team, concentrating on the goalie coaching.

Thank you to the Osborne's for an insight into another of Northern District's families.

Short Corner:

What part of a hockey field smells nicest?

The scenter spot!

SEE YOU IN 2008!