

ANDREW DONALD

I played my first game for the Blacks (in the Juniors) in 1979 against Melbourne High School Old Boys at Melbourne High School. The frenetic contest for my services resulted in me being the last man allocated that year. Obviously, the hardest decisions are often left to the last. Such was his disappointment, the Blues Chairman left the allocation meeting straight away or perhaps he was just hungry and wanted to get home to his chops and three veg.

Although my memory has faded with the mists of time, I'm sure that that day (against MHSOB) I played at Centre Half Forward and booted a lazy 6. I can't really remember, but I must have rested on my laurels - for the following week, my name did not appear on the team list.

The following year, I played for the Blacks Reserves in Round 1 against Marcellin Old Collegians. I started on the David Dench and my match preparation was two Four'n'Twenties. Rick Frazer, who was later to coach the Blacks Reserves and become a good friend of mine, played his first senior game at full forward for Marcellin. He booted 12 goals. Between us 12 sausage rolls and 2 dog's eyes.

I think it was that year (or perhaps it was 1981) that we played De La in Round 18 at the University. I always remember that, as we were doing our preliminaries after half-time, Ken Toose, the Captain of the Blacks Reserves and a lovely man, urged us "if you don't know someone introduce yourself". 19 blokes introduced themselves to me.

In (I think) 1988, I returned to the Blacks. My career continued to be plagued by a lack of ability. Although, one day I had a day out against Therry at Therry and, at half time, I was easily the best man on the ground. Rick (who was coaching by then) gave me the only rap I ever received. Unfortunately, I wasn't there to hear it as I was in the queue at the kiosk getting a hot dog and a coke. I faded in the second half.

At the Blacks AGM at the end of the '89 season, I somehow volunteered to become Secretary. My abilities as a football administrator matched my abilities as a footballer. We collapsed through the grades.

One day at Elsternwick Park (when we were in C Grade), we were involved in a double header - 4 Senior Clubs. We played the early game on Elsternwick Park and the magoos out the back at 2.00 pm. I time kept the Seniors, did the Seniors team sheet at half-time, field umpired the magoos, did the Reserves team sheet at half time and after the match (with not a soul around and still in my whites) removed and carried in the padding for the goal posts (which are quite heavy in the aggregate). This was the pattern of my tenure as Secretary. I thought this can't go on.

I was club secretary for four years: 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993. By the end of the 1993 Season, I had had enough. I never got the smell of footballs and other footy paraphernalia out of my car. In each of those years, we played well over 100 players for 66 spots. Such

was the turnover, we had more than 150 on the list in each season. The registration road to EP was so well worn, that the motor got there on automatic pilot.

In 2005, I returned to the Blacks Committee if for no other reason than for moral support constituted by the grey hair. As there is nothing I don't know about the running of an amateur football club, I thought I might be useful. Since 2006, I have represented the Blacks on the Board and I help out in other ways – such as at the Tribunal and selling a few raffle tickets at our Lunches. I remain on the Blacks' Committee.

I believe strongly and, as Secretary, sought to instill a belief in the following: The University was established in 1853. The fact that football was first played at the University in 1859 reflects the importance within the University of combining the virtues of higher learning with the virtues of team sport and physical activity. This long established view is no less relevant today that in 1859 or in 1908 when the Football Club was admitted to the League or in 1920 when it was re-admitted into the Amateurs. It follows that the true purpose of University football is to inculcate into young men and women the values that come with team sport - the relationship of effort to reward, the importance of skill and physical fitness, the relationship of a healthy body to a healthy mind, the ability to work in combination, the benefits of friendship and association, to name a few – bringing in later life benefit to the wider community by way of excellence and leadership in chosen fields and vocations and in recreational and sporting pursuits. This paramount purpose applies equally to the Blacks and the Blues.