

WOOLLAHRA COLLEAGUES

ANNUAL REPORT

2006



THE WOOLLAHRA COLLEAGUES RUGBY UNION FOOTBALL CLUB

(Established 1933)
Headquarters Woollahra No 2
PO Box 197, Double Bay, 2028

2006 OFFICE BEARERS

PATRON: His Worship the Mayor of Woollahra

PRESIDENT: Richard McGrath

VICE PRESIDENTS:

J. Anderson, Esq.	L.J.F. Barraclough, Esq.
T. Booth, Esq.	M. Caspers, Esq.
J. Corlis, Esq.	R. Harriden, Esq.
J. Hitchen, Esq.	D. Kirkwood, Esq.
H. Lamens, Esq.	C. Messenger, Esq.
A. Murchison, Esq.	J. Noice, Esq.
A. Ross, Esq.	E. Radford, Esq.
C. Vandervord, Esq.	B. Wood, Esq.

CLUB CAPTAIN: Cam Ireland

SECRETARY: Daniel Petrie

TREASURER: Andrew Moses

COMMITTEE:

Lachlan Benson, Nick Cohen, Will Foster, Geraint Hudson, Cameron Ireland, Rodney McDonald, Peter Minucos, Dan Petrie, Mitchell Tourle, Ben Woods, Michael Edwards, Dave Meredith, Rob Dalton.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS:

J. Anderson, L.J.F. Barraclough, T. Booth, R. Caldwell, M. Caspers, M. Clifford, J. Corlis, B. Diggle, I. Edwards, D. Gooch, R. Harriden, J. Herman, J. Hitchen, D. Kirkwood, H. Lamens, R. McGrath, J. Noice, E. Radford, S. Ross, C. Vandervord.

HONORARY AUDITOR: Michael Clifford

2006 Trophy Winners

Club Captain

Cam Ireland

Team Captains

Halligan Cup	Sean Nicholson
Noice Cup	Riley Batchelor
Jeffries Cup	Charlie Winn
Meldrum Cup	Rob Stuart
Barbour Cup	Luke Adams
Sutherland Cup	Richard Byrne
Judd Cup	Timion Rosso
Whiddon Cup	Luke Kenniff
Burke Cup	Cam Ireland
Kentwell Cup	Sam Burton-Taylor

Team Coaches

Halligan Cup	Mike Sommer and Andrew Harrington
Noice Cup	Geoff Travers and Pete Minucos
Jeffries Cup	Rob Rosenberg and Alex Pascoe
Meldrum Cup	James Hendy and Neal Dooly
Barbour Cup	Ben Wood and Peter Minucos
Sutherland Cup	Laurence Campbell-Avenall and Tim Booth
Judd Cup	Rodney McDonald and Alex Pikoulas
Whiddon Cup	Nick Love, Jono Hughes and Paul Howard
Burke Cup	Matt Collett, Jock Whittle and Duncan Whittle
Kentwell Cup	Rob Dalton, Mitchell Tourle and Ben Waters
Club Coach	Rob Dalton

Best & Fairest

Halligan Cup	Sean Nicholson
Noice Cup	Riley Batchelor
Jeffries Cup	Charlie Winn
Meldrum Cup	Charlie Baynes-Reid
Barbour Cup	Richard Buttenshaw
Sutherland Cup	Bradley Stringer
Judd Cup	Pierce Warren
Whiddon Cup	Pete Davies
Burke Cup	Alex Edwards
Kentwell Cup	James Symonds
Club	Sam Burton Taylor

CLUB AWARDS

Colleagues Honour Cap	Pete Minucos
The Pappas & General Award	Dave Meredith
Player's Player	Andrew Brazier
Rookie of the year	Leo Coates and Mark Dunn
Most Improved Player	James Symonds
Leading Try Scorer	Pete Hubert
Leading Point Scorer	Rory O'Driscoll
Oldest and Boldest	Brian Varley
100 games	Ben Garland

Presidents Report 2006

The Woollahra Colleagues enjoyed a successful season in 2006 both on and off the field. Colleagues managed to win the premierships cups in Whiddon, Barbour and our first ever Noice Cup in the 5th Division. Most teams participated in finals campaigns with Burke Cup being defeated marginally in the Grand Final. It was also pleasing to report an increase in the clubs cash position at year end.

The year's football started well with the second running of the Bondi 10's. The tournament expanded to cater for 20 teams and we are looking at a capacity 24 for the 2007 tournament on February 9 and 10. It was our great pleasure to make donations of \$12,000 each to Royal North Shore Burns Unit, Zero to One and Plan. These donations were made at our 6th Long Lunch which was very well attended with over 200 Colleagues but has also become an important event for raising funds for the club.

Tragedy struck in the very first game of the season proper with the death of Angus Ross. This was one of those inexplicable things that happen and our thoughts are with his loved ones as we approach this holiday period.

Our coaching staff, of some 20 plus, did a great job in preparing their respective teams during the season. It is a very difficult job know matter what grade you coach as they all have there particular difficulties from having 100 plus different players through the season to struggling for numbers at 5pm on Friday. One day the players will understand what they put you through which can be frustrating but the flip side is that there are tremendously rewarding moments that you just would not experience if you hadn't been through the trials and tribulations.

Socially we had willing committees for Bondi 10's, Ladies Days, The Long Lunch, the Ball and a convivial drink from time to time. These events are important in many ways to the clubs financial well being and to the social fabric that makes Colleagues what it is.

Sponsorship is an integral part of the clubs finances and success of the club. I ask that all Colleagues support these sponsors where ever possible and the club is always looking to add new sponsors who may benefit from an association with the Blue Giants.

The club is managed by a very capable group who make up the committee. I would like to thank them for there time and effort. It is a pleasure to work with such a great group and I think that their good work is acknowledged in the following reports and in the accounts of this report.

Next season we will be without the services of Dan Petrie who is 'retiring' to Queensland. Peach's love of the Giants was obvious to all and he will be missed. Also stepping down will be Andrew Moses after five years in the Treasurers role. The clubs finances are integral to the Colleagues survival and success and I think that Andrew can be extremely proud of his achievements over these past years from the building of the new club house to the success of the Bondi 10's and every thing in between. It's been a pleasure working with him.

Colleagues are a players club. Colleagues has always been a players club and it is they that will determine its future. Looking forward I see the Colleagues in a great position to build on the 73 years of tradition and success we have behind us. There are great people who give their all to making sure that we look to improve and not be complacent.

I thank all the players, coaches, committee and past players who made 2006 such an enjoyable year and look forward to your involvement in 2007.

Richard McGrath

Club Captain's Report 2006

It is interesting to look back over 2006 and see what we did differently to 2005, how we improved or where we let ourselves down. I was chastised in jest this year at the Long Lunch for delivering the message that our Club was the best Rugby Club in the world, that we were the most successful and that we were the benchmark for rugby clubs around the globe. Whilst I am a firm believer that all these statements are true, we need to ensure we do not become complacent, we must continue striving for improvement.

On the rugby field this year we won 3 premierships and the Convicts won the Bingham Cup. We narrowly missed out on winning back to back Club Championship's however this only highlights the need for consistency, perseverance and concentration to ensure we don't let those 'winnable' games slip away from us.

We had a great year off the field this year with two fantastic Ladies days getting a massive crowd and also making a little money which is always a bonus. The Ball this year was very well constructed however I am not sure if we will be allowed back at the Swiss Grand again anytime soon. Well done to all those who were involved in organising these events or helped out in some way. Old Colleagues day was also a raging success and we look forward to welcoming you all down again next year.

There have been so many people contribute to the Club over the years and it is extremely enjoyable to see so many Old Boys congregated on the sidelines each week. The numbers seem to be growing, so thank you for your support and keep rallying the troops because I know every player appreciates the support. The Long Lunch was held at the start of the year and was again a great success. I encourage all current players to get along to this event next year as it is truly a great afternoon filled with laughs, reminiscing with the Old Boys and a number of booze invoked auction purchases.

Colleagues played across three different divisions this year, 1st, 5th and 6th. This was something new for us and was a challenge to say the least. The teams playing outside of the regular competition did a fantastic job in getting themselves organised however it was always going to be a strain on the Club committing to so many teams. We feel though we have the right mix for next year.

To the coaches of 2006, congratulations and well done. You have all come a long way in the past 12 months with most of you relatively new to the sideline job as opposed to being in the thick of it. You are an asset to our Club and I hope you can maintain the same levels of enthusiasm for many years to come yet.

Again we saw a number of new faces down at Blue Giant Stadium which was fantastic. I hope you all hang around for a few more years until you are well and truly past you're playing prime, and then hang around a little longer just because you can. There were a number of new colts this year also which was fantastic, being rewarded for their hard work all season with a premiership. It is also very encouraging to see so many of our colts coming through into the grade teams. I hope this is a trend that continues as our nuts and bolts are a breeding ground for our future success.

A Club the size of Colleagues attracts a lot of different personalities, a lot of whom might be well suited to a 'rock star' role on channel V, those who struggle to respond when they are chastised and others who remind me of Basil out of Faulty Towers. Massaging these individual personalities to come up with the well oiled machine of a Rugby Club is a task that is taken on by committee, coaches and fellow Colleagues/players alike; with out each individual we would not be the success that we have been to date.

The Committee at Colleagues has always been extremely active and 2006 was no different. Long debates over simple issues and short debates over the complex ones seems to be a continuing trend but makes for good entertainment over a beer or coffee. Rich McGrath, Andrew Moses and Dan Petrie must be commended for their work this year, thank you for your support. The rest of the committee has been extremely helpful this year, and I thank you also

With Dan (Peach) And Andrew (Mose) stepping back from their roles this year, we welcome some 'new blood' into the fold. I look forward to the input of whoever is elected and am sure given the calibre of those expressing interest to date, we will not be let down.

A Club like Colleagues cannot function with out the ongoing support by a number of loyal sponsors: B Braun, The Four in Hand Hotel, Empire Hotel, , Eastside Home Loans, Fimat, Bresic Whitney, Hill Rogers, Jan Logan, Ryan's Bar, Karabiner Access, and Wentworth Travel. Thank you to all those who contributed time and money, your support is greatly appreciated.

Well done to all Colleagues of 2006, let this year be a further foundation for continued success in 2007.

Cam Ireland
Club Captain, 2006

Secretary's Report 2006

I must start on a somber note, and extend my sincere condolences to the Ross family who lost their son Angus after suffering a heart attack playing in a Halligan Cup match in round one this year. I can honestly say that the Colleagues players who attended to Angus were magnificent and it was awe inspiring to see so many men in blue attending to one of their own when he wasn't in good way.

Season 2006 saw Colleagues enter teams into multiple divisions to cater for larger numbers in recent years although our playing group had become smaller, particularly across division 1. Subscriptions were keenly collected and I thank all coaches and support staff, David Meredith and Mark Owens who were fantastic in processing subs.

In my honest and frank assessment, running teams across multiple divisions was a very tough ask and was more time intensive than working on the entire division one club and the administration of these teams was made very difficult along with registering of many players across multiple divisions.

From an administration perspective, we made some good strides but I must admit to a personal disappointment in not streamlining a number of processes I had set myself the task of doing last year.

The NSW rugby union's database meltdown midway through the season set our registrations back, and along with organising team sheets did present some good lessons in maintaining records and this is an area which we will need to be more diligent in the coming years. With a number of old boys helping out and the next generation of members taking a keener interest in the club, things certainly are moving in the right direction.

The club has been very lucky this year as a number of committee members have stepped up to take on more responsibility. Bar sales have been stronger and under David Gooch's guidance, work, repairs, maintenance and that general extra set of hands has made life a dream.

The Jeffries Cup team made of the Convicts and Noice Cup made up of ex players who also contributed to the division 1 club had a successful if not difficult year in the Division 5 competition where teams forfeited and dropped out of the competition.

The Sydney Convicts won the Bingham Cup and Plate in New York which is a phenomenal achievement and builds on the clubs touring success in Bali and Hong Kong. Tours are very important to the make up of Colleagues as they engender a greater sense camaraderie among all players, new and old.

The club structure, particularly the committee has been excellent this year and the responsibility of taking the club forward in terms of player recruitment, administration, marketing of our event days will continue to see the club prosper.

For those members who are not aware, I have decided to step down from the role of secretary. This decision is one which I have agonised over for a considerable amount of time but after five years on the committee and increased work commitments I feel it is time to hand the reigns over.

Whoever takes over in the role of secretary and will no doubt take the club to a new level of organisation and professionalism.

I would like to thank Richard McGrath for his guidance, support, mentoring, patience and most importantly friendship over the years. The daily phone calls will be the thing I miss most along

with our various and robust debates on historical figures and classic television shows such as the Streets of San Francisco starring Karl Malden and Michael Douglas.

Additionally to Cam Ireland, Rob Dalton (who was absolutely superb in his first year) Nick Love, David Gooch, all committee members, coaches, supporters and to you the players I extend my thanks.

Go you Blue Giants!!

Daniel Petrie
Hon Colleagues Secretary 2006

Club Coach's Report

The 2006 year at Colleagues has been one of many remarkable moments.

Unfortunately it started sadly with the loss of Angus Ross, though through such a loss I witnessed much courage from a group of young men.

To quote Eleanor Roosevelt

"Do what you can, with what you have got, at the time".

I believe this pretty much sums up the 2006 year. With this I must congratulate all the players and coaching staff for their passionate efforts throughout the season. I believe coaching is not only about winning games of rugby, but more importantly, through team sport, reaching your full potential as a person. We must realise our full potential then challenge ourselves to move beyond, in doing so motivating those around us to follow suit. Its called leadership, something this proud club is most certainly not lacking.

In my first year in the Subbies scene, what I found was a group of blokes who love playing rugby for rugby's sake! Not for money or fame or even their own egos! Players who would play in any team from 5th grade to 1st grade from week to week and play with the same intensity, no matter the grade. They were just proud to play for a great club with a great spirit.

The spirit of this club was something that impressed me the most! Highlights including the Old Boys luncheon where the history of the club was impressed upon me. I have never experienced losing a game of rugby as a coach and having loyal supporters still come up to you and congratulate you for giving your best.

One of the most positive aspects was seeing the collection of Old Colleagues on the sidelines backing up week after week!

I believe that this spirit and loyalty infiltrated through the club as many players played out of position and with injuries just not to let their team down, nor the club.

There are many positives to take out of a year full of challenges, I challenge any member of the club to be able to count the number of injuries the club experienced this year. That being so, we have to look forward to next year, there are many trophies that have to be won back, the Club Championship heading the list.

I'd like to congratulate all the coaches throughout the club, especially, the premiership winning coaches of Noice, Barbour and Whiddon Cups for their time and effort and welcoming me so warmly to their club.

Special thanks must go to Rich, Cam, Mose & Peachy, for all the work that is done behind the scenes.

I'd just like to finish on this note. Knox have set the standard from team performances to club support. So the challenge has been put out there, it will be interesting to see if we rise to the occasion, and increase our performances both on and off the field.

May I take this chance to thank you all for your great welcome to the club, I truly enjoyed meeting a great bunch of people and becoming a part of such a great club! I wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas and a fantastic 2007 full of great times and many club trophies.

Rob Dalton

Kentwell Cup Report

As per usual the Kentwell Cup side at colleagues, there was a mixture of new faces in the first grade side as well as a number of new faces generally at the club. The early part of the season saw some mixed results, losing a rather uninspiring game to St Patricks away in round one and then a thumping victory over Mosman at home. The following week saw the team venture out to David Phillips Field where the team put in their worst performance of the season losing 31-3 to University of New South Wales.

Those who had been involved with the Colleagues Kentwell side before knew not to read too much into it as a recent history suggests, Colleagues are notoriously slow starters. A tough win against Forrest at home, and a close loss to Drummoyne away got the Giants back on track. This was followed up by a resounding 49-15 victory over Waverley at home which was one of the highlights of the season and it seemed God was shining on blue giant stadium that day.

A win against newcomers Campbelltown, losses to Knox away and Old Ignatians on the bell on Old Colleagues day left a collective foul taste in the team's mouth coming into the week off. It was time for a turn around, time to take this season by the throat and start to build game by game in hope of a finals burst.

There was a meeting of the coaches, and some extra training sessions were called. Following the week off, the Giants came out charging to beat St Patricks in the return fixture at home by 50 points. However a loss to Mosman the next week away reminded everyone that you take nothing for granted in Kentwell cup. The slippery conditions at Rawson park proved trouble for the backs, although provided a field of joy for the forward pack. Unfortunately it was not enough and underneath a burning Mosman clubhouse, a resolute Whales side got home on the bell to win 26-24. This was a real turning point in our season. Although we were putting it together on the field, the points were not showing on the scoreboard. It was time to up the workload and start to get serious for the run home.

In the following weeks Kentwell defeated University of NSW and Forrest away in one of the wettest, muddiest, coldest, and sandiest days of rugby of the season. The following week the Giants played Drummoyne, the undefeated and form team of the competition at our temporary home ground of Waverley oval. Leading the whole game, the Giants ran out of puff and were pipped on the line again to lose 21-26 in a game that was there for the taking and proved that on their day this Kentwell team could match it with anyone.

Away wins against Waverley and Campbelltown were good for our position on the table, however another close loss to Knox at home didn't help the running. Making the semis became a mathematical game. An away win against Old Ignatians on their gala day was crucial. Sure enough Colleagues lifted for the occasion with the forward pack dominating a weak Old Ignatians outfit, 61-24, allowing the Blue Giants to sneak into the semis in 4th place.

Drummoyne were to play Knox in a 1 versus 2 battle and the Giants were to take on Campbelltown. Preparation was good, with minimal injuries and a generally fit prepared unit on the day. A few new moves had been added but the more expansive wider style of rugby which had been introduced prior the Campbelltown game during the rounds had been adapted to well by all involved, with a plan to play position early.

Unfortunately the game ended in a draw and through finishing 3rd on the ladder Campbelltown went through to the knockout semi final against eventual grand finalists, Knox. Looking back on the game, it seems to be a little more execution on the day more than anything. The style of play for the game can be talked about over and over however I believe it needs to be put into practice on the training paddock and game day repeatedly. Winning semi finals is not about

doing anything different, but more about doing what you do best, just 10% better. That's what got you there; just lift the intensity a little.

The season did see some players really develop and improve on their games. Special mention must go to James Symonds at hooker, Sam Burton Taylor who made the shift from 7 to 9, Willy Davies, Mark 'Funky' Foy, Matt Prowse and of course his lovely girlfriend for all her support.

A huge thankyou must go out to the Kentwell Sponsor - B Braun Australia. The continued support from Dave Crawford and the team is absolute gold and does not go unnoticed- thanks DC.

This is my last season coaching the Kentwell Team. It has been a great honour to coach the blue giants in Judd Cup in 2004 and Kentwell Cup in 2005 and 2006. I have learnt a lot working with the other coaches, Justin Crawford, Johnny Irwin, Rob Dalton, Benny Waters and the Burke Coaches of Matt Collet, Jock and Duncan Whittle, thankyou for your perseverance. It has also been great to work with all the players Lion, O, the Arab, Kiddy, Henno, Clydie, Willy Davies, Fat Munson, Simmo, Schuey, JV, Dick Thomas, Prowse the mouse, Hilly and Billy, Piko and Funky to mention a few. Thanks and all the best for Kentwell cup in 2007.

Go the Giants
Mitch Tourle

Burke Cup Report

Burke Cup 2006 began the new season with a number of new faces and a few older ones. The first couple of games were tough as the boys found the combinations a bit rusty. First round against Pats was survived by 1 point after the men in black scored on the bell but missed the conversion. Then came a bit of a shock as Mosman took kindly to Blue Giant Stadium and relegated Burke to only their second loss in over 20 games. The team rebounded with a grafting 5-0 won over uni and continued to misfire with an unconvincing 11-3 win at home versus Forest. Drummoyne loomed as the biggest challenge of the year so far but the boys started to find their feet only to relinquish a hard fought lead with a soft try to come away with a 12-12 draw. Up against a struggling Waverley combination, the boys put their first 4 try performance on the board but failed to turn up the following week as Campbelltown belted the Burkies out of the game 20-8. A few looks in the mirror and some outstanding intimidation produced the win of the season as the team walloped the previously unbeaten Knox side 15-0. The score line belied the dominance the Burke cup side showed as the penalty count against was 20-2. Some consistency began to creep in as the old foe of Iggies was summarily dispatched 22-8. The first round was completed and the team was sitting in a respectable 3rd position.

An extended mid season slump failed to materialise as the Burkies strung solid but not outstanding performances together to claim Pats 27-8 and Mosman 21-12 away. Maybe a little bit of over-confidence showed as Burke played 10 mins that being the last 10, of the next game versus Uni, to be denied by a passionate defence 12-10. The roller-coaster season continued as the side was in real danger of missing out on the semi's with a number of tough games coming up. On what can only be described as an ordinary day, the forwards took charge and accounted for a dangerous Forest side 24-10 in a foot of water. Drummoyne was skipped due to the weather and the next game was against Waverley on the sand-pit. The team played like it was opposed training on Thursday night and put 45 points on without conceding any. This form continued into the following week with an outstanding 57-0 win against Drummoyne, again at the sand-pit. This was a home game and it was probably good grace that it was played away from Blue Giants Stadium as the teams only losses in 2006 regular season came while playing at home. An inability to finish saw Campbelltown claw their way back and scrape into a 27-27 draw away.

The re-match with Knox was on the horizon and we were suddenly down a few key players. The Burkies got thumped 34-3, 5 tries to 0 and received the wake-up call required to send them into the semi's knowing they had to play some great footy to win the comp. They completed the regular season with an encouraging 13-0 win against Iggie's, which denied them any chance to get into the semi's, and looked forward to taking on Knox for the second time in the space of two weeks in the major semi. It was encouraging to finish a clear second and the boys knew they had a great shot at the title.

The major semi started poorly as Knox took an intercept and darted under the posts for an early lead. From there on however, the Burkies mounted the pressure and were comfortable going into half-time 10-3 down knowing they had plenty left. A second penalty goal and some punishing forward play drove the boys to the line and they penetrated the struggling defence for a try in the corner. Burke was up 11-10 and looking good. The heads weren't switched on for the restart as within 2 mins, a brilliant solo effort saw one man step 5 players and score to put Knox back in front 17-11. Further ball control and a great pile of pressure saw a second try down the left touchline to go to 17-16. The conversion only just missed and the boys knew if they could put the next points on, they were in the GF. An extended drive and subsequent penalty to Burke gave them a shot to win it with 2 to go but unfortunately it sailed wide. A gallant defeat but some very encouraging signs gave the boys plenty to think about but the next step was to triumph in the preliminary final against a resurgent Mosman side that had won 7 straight.

A good week of training lead into an ordinary Saturday where downpours and gale force winds plagued sides all day. The Burke side took the hard road and played into the wind early and was rewarded with a 7-0 lead after 5 mins. Mosman began to utilise their pace out wide and only some amazing defence kept them out for 33 mins. Unfortunately it couldn't be maintained for 35 as the wall cracked and we went into half-time 7-5 up. 2 driving tries by the pigs in the first 5 minutes put the game in a comfortable position and a further penalty goal gave the Burkies a very solid 20-5 win. Defence was good, combinations and moves were working. It was shaping up to be a great GF.

Come the GF, some hard selection calls were made but the side looked sharp. It was a warm-hot day with the boys needing to take on fluid and conserve a bit of nervous energy. Kick-off came and an early bust nearly resulted in a try but the last pass didn't go to hand. The boys went down 3-0 but were containing and dominating the Knox side as they had planned and went into the break 6-3 following tremendous retention of possession and pressure. Knox came out in the second and stunned the Burke boys with their pace and aggression at the breakdown. Some great leg-drive and clean-out limited the "holding on" penalties against us but Knox showed clear dominance in broken play and phase defence. Sustained pressure and an opportunistic run gave Knox the first try of the game though there were a number of calls that the ball was held-up. The Burkies then piled on the pressure and time after time hurled themselves at the Knox defence which held firm until another last pass slipped from the grasp over the line. With the tanks on empty, Knox looked to have wrapped it up with 5 to go but was disallowed for holding a defender back. One last gasp shot didn't quite come-off as Knox's pilfering ability resulted in another turnover. The Burkies went down 10-6 but left nothing on the pitch and showed they were a real force. Well done to Knox, it took a great side to stop this Burkie side from winning the title.

In summary, a sterling year where we only fell 4 points short of the title. Consistent, yet coach-niggling, appearances from Alex Edwards resulted in him being awarded Burke cup best and fairest. Other standouts included the physical presence of Paul Hart, Simon Gardiner, Bill Cheadle and Jamie Stevenson in the latter part of the season. The late inclusion of Christy Condon to the starting lineup fitted in well with the experienced leader Cam Ireland and the cuddly Shumack who may be off to Newcastle next year. A large number of backs were used this year but the cunning of Gareth Gower and co (TJ, Knighty and Mander) was often a pleasure to watch. The back three was a mixture of guile, pace and talk with Lip, Matty Dwyer, Ollie and Disco proving an outstanding last line of defence. Notables also included Kiwi Bob, Leo "Hoff" Coates and many others that turned out during the year.

Main things to take into next year:

- Destroying their pilfer.
- Building a dominating, rather than just good, scrum.
- Getting our hands on the ball.
- Arriving in numbers at 1st phase contact to get over the advantage line.
- First-up tackles.
- Mid-field penetration and go forward and finally,
- Commitment to training.

Congratulations on a great year. Bring on 2007.

Dunc Whittle, Matt Collett and Jock Whittle

Whiddon Cup Report

The "Horace" Three-peat

At the beginning of the year my co-coaches Jonno Hughes and Paul Howard sat down with new manager Will Foster to plan out the season ahead. After winning the 2005 Horace Whiddon Cup we knew we had to be ahead of the game in 2006 if we were to be as successful. We set three objectives for the new season:

1. Win the minor premierships undefeated.
2. Win the major semi final to progress straight through to the grand final on September 16.
3. Win the Grand Final to give Colleagues its first ever Whiddon Cup "three-peat".

Sitting here reflecting in a very fragile state 3 days after a 16-8 victory in the grand final against St Patricks, we've managed to meet most of our objectives – our only blemish being the narrow loss of two games mid season.

Including the finals series the Whiddos class of 2006 recorded 18 wins and 2 losses, scoring 454 points (22.7 per game) points and only conceding 111 (5.55 points per game).

Much of our success this year can be attributed to the inspirational leadership of our captain Luke Kenniff. Luke led from the front and a good serving of old school back row fire and brimstone! Luke taught the younger squad members a thing or two about playing at 110% for the full game – not bad for a bloke running around at the ripe old age of 35. Vice captain Andrew Brazier controlled proceedings brilliantly from no.10, manufacturing many wins during tight games and controlling our attack and field position to perfection.

Welcome sites on the field this year were my two co-coaches, Jono Hughes and Paul Howard. Hughes had dabbled on and off with 5ths last season, but stepped up to become player/coach and was as good as any winger in the club by the end of the year (also at age 35). Howie continued the player/coach approach by returning to the field after a serious back injury in 2004 and showed he had lost none of his hard nosed driving play in the tight (or susceptibility to further injury!!). It was a joy to coach with you both again. Seeing you back on the field was fantastic as it enabled me to live vicariously through your efforts and confirm why I'll never don the boots again!!

As is usual with third grade team we used literally hundreds of players again this season, only really settling on our finals squad in early August. With fourth grade unluckily missing out on the finals our squad grew even further which I believe helped us win "Horace" again.

The commitment by the 28 man squad in the 4 week run into and during the finals series was fantastic. This was epitomized by the 6 guys who did not get to take the field in the grand final, including Lachie Roach (a member of the 2005 winning team), Jamie Payne, Rich Hodson, Adam MacFarlane, Stuart Hughes (injured) and Paul Nash. These guys trained as hard as anyone else and kept pressure on the starting side showing true Colleagues spirit.

In addition to Messrs Kenniff, Brazier, Howard and Hughes, we were blessed with some very experienced players in our squad, including former Waratah Geoff Mutton, kiwi Paul "Keg" McLaren, Dean Saunders, Lachlan Benson, Ollie Temperton, Mitch Tourle, Mick Edwards, Nick Cohen, Nick Redpath, Ben Waters, Bernie O'Keefe and Tim "Stalker" Berryman. Together with up and coming Colleagues youngsters and new players Andrew Watt, Stuart Hughes, Jono Linn, James McCourt, Pete Davies (best and fairest for the season), Rick Hall and the club's top point scorer Rory O'Driscoll, the Blue Giants are in great hands next season. Particularly

pleasing was the fact that a number of our squad have filtered through our colts ranks and are already making their mark in senior grades.

On behalf of Jono Hughes, Paul Howard and myself, many thanks must go to club coach Rob Dalton (for providing invaluable feedback to us, particularly on match day), Will Foster for managing us like a well oiled machine, Jack Mesley for his support and coaching input during the finals, Richard McGrath and committee, tireless supporters like John Noice and Tim Booth who backed us every week, and most importantly the players for keeping "Horace" at Colleagues for a record third year in a row - it was a really fun and enjoyable year.

Cheers,
Nick Love, Jonno Hughes and Paul Howard

Judd Cup Report

"Potential doesn't win you football games"

Unfortunately Judd cup couldn't live up to our undeniable potential in 2006, failing to make the finals despite having the 2nd best for and against in the competition. In the 8 matches we lost 5 were by 7 points or less and drew one game.

Player turnover was a major factor in our lack of success this season, with over 80 players used at differing stages of the season; it proved a difficult task to build combinations coming into the finals; having said that we shouldn't have been in a position of needing to beat Pats and Iggies to make the finals.

Enough of the negatives – there were a number of positives to come out of the year including:

- Dave Meredith's willingness to move up to the front row when the prop cupboard was bare. This decision showed some great leadership by Dave, and as he continues to learn the craft he will be an asset to the club in a number of grades.
- New players such as Piers Warren, Ben Edwards and Rich Hodson should be mainstays of the club for a number of years
- The continued improvement of players like Dave Baird, Paul Nash, Rob Hounder, Tony Hennessy, Andrew Watt and Scott Simpson was pleasing
- The discovery of the coaching talents of Piko, I hope he continues on with his coaching, his no nonsense approach is exactly what we needed. Certainly his wife will be happy if he coaches as opposed to playing.

Finally I'd like to thank the club for the opportunity to coach Judd cup the last 2 seasons, as many of you know Alison and I will be heading back to Bega in 2007, it has been a very steep learning curve for me and an experience I enjoyed thoroughly.

4th grade this year was a season of much promise but at the end we were left short counting the loss of those games where we "should of – could of", but didn't and finished missing out on the Finals.

The game that stands out as where Juddies should have been playing all year was the 38 to 5 away win against Knox. We had the benefit of 1 or 2 higher grade players coming back from injury, but it felt like the game that all the parts come together and the team is better than 15 guys having a run at midday on a Saturday. We executed a game plan; we dictated terms for 2 halves and had the confidence to run through and over the other team.

The 2 games that stand out as "should of - could of" was the loss to Knox on Ladies Day at home 5 to 7, when we had everything to play for against a team out of Finals contention and we got stuck in an arm wrestle and lost to a more determined side.

The Drummoyne game played at Waverly oval was another low point, we lost 7 to 16 and it was a game you walk off the field and just shake your head to try and understand why.

On the positive our defense was great for majority of the year and 3 games out we had only given up 82 points, of the games we lost there was 5 games where we lost by a combined total of 16 points.

Juddies had a lot of player come through the team, but it remained a positive side that had potential on any given game, Bega' and Pikko did a great job through the year and the quality of coaching was 1st class and it was a shame with Bega' leaving the club we could not send him out with a Bang.

Sutherland Cup Report

With a keen group of players, the Sutherland cup side was looking to the end of the season with the knowledge that all good things come in September, and with that goal firmly in mind we set about the season with vigor and commitment.

Some sixty odd players contributed to the side, and though I can't name them all, they all played an integral part in how the season panned out. With 13 wins and 5 losses we finished 3rd on the table missing out on 2nd by 1 point.

The style of play was dominated by our back line early in the season which saw them run riot posting some very large scores against opposing teams. Whereas the forwards came into their own during the second half of the year, whilst dominating the line-outs and set pieces.

5th grade played a very open style of football which was encouraged. We wanted to see players take a leading role in the way a game unfolded and developed. What we did not want to see was a lot of kicking from general play and then only from our 22. This led to some out-standing passages of play in one game 22 phases were strung together with a try in the corner the end result.

One of the most pleasing games to watch this year was the game against Forest at Forest played in pouring rain and mud. The control displayed by the side this day was simply outstanding. I don't think we dropped a ball all day and put together terrific phase play to come out winners 15-0. With this game as a foundation things looked good for the rest of the season.

The last 2 rounds of the season saw us play 2 of the top four sides. First up saw us take on Knox Old Boys, who we had beaten in the first round, 34-10. This however proved to be a much tougher game. This one saw much defense and proved to be a real semi-finals type of game. The boys showed good composure and commitment to come away winners 6-5.

Next saw us take on minor premiers Old Ignatians who had beaten us 26-0 in the first round at home. This is one of those games where you could not fault the players resolve, but we where fairly beaten by a much better side on the day with the result of 22-0. As we have found out you cannot give a team like this one any opportunities at all.

This saw go to the semi well prepared to do battle with Knox in sudden death. Again a dower game was fought out with us have several chances in the second half only to be denied by the ref. With the temperature rising and time running out Knox saw themselves in a position to put the only score of the day on the board. Unfortunately time was against us and we went down 3-0. I think we were the better side on the day but such is football.

So thanks again to all the boys for the effort put in this year and I know I will see many of you again when we play touch in the off season. It shows how well the team bonded when most will be in the comp over summer.

Many thanks to a club man through and through Tim Booth for run the forwards this year and his single cameo in one game. I am sure that the boys learnt a lot from him. I would also like to thank the committee for all the hard work that they have put in this year to enable us to have the great season that we did.

Finally Congratulations to Noice, Barbour and Widdon for their grand final wins
Till next year and a bigger and better season

Yours in rugby
Laurence Campbell

Barbour Cup Report

Sit down, relax, get a beer
Coach Nukes & Coach Woodsie are here
We've a story to tell
It spans heaven and hell
And to your eye it may bring a tear

The 06 campaign rolled around
And new players did need to be found
So the target was normal
- The college informals
They're always our good hunting ground

With the new blood ready to arrive
We believed that our season would thrive
Our forwards looked gritty
Our back line so pretty
We were keeping the dream alive

Now defending a premierships tough
But winning one wasn't enough
Take a look at our roster
Not a cent it will cost ya'
We knew that we had the right stuff

It all begins with our captain
The mercurial fly half Luke Adams
While his ball skills are plenty
He makes one tackle in twenty
He's better at drilling the madams

Returning as well in 06
Were boys with a bagful of tricks
In their fourth years as Colts
Couso and Puss have no faults
And by Woodsie they always get picked

With our trusty St Andrews contingent
The fashion guidelines are not stringent
The style of the day
Is Reserve and Tar-gét
But on the plus side they rarely get injured

There's Mearsey and Monty and Shue
And Wonders and Baxter and Hubes
Those last 3 are gay
Held hands at Cold Play
And Raptor's bicurious too

This year we left Wesley for Pauls
And it turned out to be the right call
"The Snake" Gator was first
Beattie's hair cut the worst
We jager bombed galore at the Sauls

At the break down Nalasko was great
And the service from Shannos top rate
But for service with a smile
Kingo wins by a mile
Just ask TG, his really "good mate"

Alex Low is a Grand Final Hero
Compared to Butts though, he still is a zero
Butt's is a pleasure to coach
Many points he does poach
He's the footballing Robert DeNiro

Then there's the mighty Alex Walker
at 65 kegs he's our enforcer
Much punishment does he cop
He loves the pick and drop
At the breakdown a genuine ball hawk-er

And who could forget our twins
Without them we would have less wins
Chris' skills in the lineout
Micks chatter from wide out
Micky gets right under Pete's skin!

Through the year we pick up some new blood
This year though it was almost a flood
Kev, Macca and Rooster
a real late season Booster
in the GF Rooster was a stud

We can't end without mentioning Jords
He puts defences to the sword
All he does is score tries
pays out Micky D about his eyes
He may be the second coming of the lord

To win in 05 was a great feat
But it's always better when you repeat
But we played through the fear
The best season we've had all year **
06 Colleagues Colts... what a treat

** actual quote from Luke Adams during the trophy ceremony on GF day

Jeffries Cup Report - Colleagues Convicts

2006 was a momentous year for the Sydney Convicts. The first year we have entered two teams in the Sydney Suburban Rugby competition in the Halligan and Jeffrey Cups and planned to travel to New York to compete in the 3rd biannual Mark Bingham Cup.

Despite having won the Halligan Cup undefeated in 2005 the Convicts knew that playing in the first grade of the 5th division – the Jeffrey Cup – would be a significant step up. Playing at 3 pm for 80 minutes against Clubs for whom this was their top team was going to be a challenge for

the Convicts with players with a wide range of playing experiences. We recognized that playing at this level was going to provide us with the perfect preparation for competing in the Bingham Cup and next step for many players who had improved considerably over the last 2 season.

The first game of season against Oakland was perhaps the highlight of our domestic season. The Convicts Halligan team won its first competition game against Roseville which provided enormous inspiration to the Jeffrey team. Our game against Oakland was hard fought but the Convicts ended up winners scoring 3 tries to 1 and winning 17-5. We suddenly knew that despite the movement up the grades we were very competitive. This was the first weekend the Convicts had fielded two teams let alone winning both games. Most other gay clubs in the world have taken many years to win their first game against regular rugby teams let alone two in the same weekend.

The Convicts Jeffrey team played 3 games before leaving for New York. With 3 clubs dropping out of the 5th division competition there were only 5 clubs left. This meant there were numerous byes and weekends off. The closest game we played prior to heading to New York was against our Noice Cup brothers. The game was fought with the intensity that normally accompanies intra club matches. The Noice boys game up eventual winners, winning 12-6. This game unfortunately marked the last game of the season for our star fullback Matt Vagulans who ended up having a 5 hour operation to repair significant damage to his left knee.

Congratulations to the Noice boys for premiership winning season. They are a great bunch guys who constantly supported us throughout the season. In fact for the 4 weeks we were in New York these guys backed up and played in the Jeffrey competition, playing two games each Saturday. An outstanding effort, for which all the Convicts are extremely grateful.

The New York Bingham Cup was the high point in the Convicts short history. The third Bingham Cup saw 30 teams from around the world compete for the equivalent of the Gay World Cup. The Convicts touring party was 60 strong, including 41 players, 3 coaches, 2 physios, 2 managers and an assortment of partners and supporters., making it the second largest contingent in the competition. The Australian Consulate welcomed the Convicts contingent to the Big Apple by hosting a cocktail party – with many Consulate staff being very appreciative of the show provided the boys – which any rugby would be proud.

The Bingham Cup was split into three competitions, - the Cup, the Bowl and the Plate. The Convicts competed in the Cup and Plate. As you have read in the Convicts Halligan Report, the Convicts won the inaugural Mark Bingham Plate competition. The significance of this achievement should not go unrecognized. For many of these players this was their first year playing rugby and for many others it was many years since they had played any physical team sport. Whereas all other teams competing in the Plate competition had 25 competitors – these boys survived and were victorious with only 16 men who played 6 games over 3 days. A remarkable effort. Special tribute should be made to Breezy, Simon Thompson, Sam Minter and Geoff Horn, all of whom were inspirational in their leadership and dedication to the team.

The Convict Cup team was recognized as one of the favourites of the competition given their strong showing at the 04 Bingham Cup in London and being the first gay team in the world to win a premiership in a regular competition in 2005. The Convicts won their pool games relatively easily beating Bingham 04 runners up – Manchester 23- 0, the LA Rebellion 34-0 and Seattle Quake 36 – 0. The coaching staff of Rob Rosenberg and Alex Pascoe did an outstanding job of ensuring the team was in the best possible condition and form to survive three very torrid days of rugby in 30 degree heat.

The Gotham Knights, the host of the Bingham Cup was one of the surprise teams of tournament, only losing one of it pool games narrowly to reigning cup holders San Francisco

Fog. The Convicts meet them in the first quarter final and despite having the first points scored against it won the game with relative ease 17-5.

The last day of the competition saw the Convicts meet the Washington Renegades whom were beaten 20-0 and then progress to the final against the arch rival and existing Cup holder San Francisco Fog. There was no love lost between these two teams. In fact there was little love between Fog and any other team in competition. This is saying something in a gay rugby tournament. The final was a very torrid affair. The Fog is renowned for its blanket defence. However our forward domination, pace out wide and electric inside backs were just far too strong and victory belonged to the Convicts – 16-10, with Colleagues' Liam Brosnan being the only try scorer of the match and the player of the tournament for the Convicts. Victory was sweet, with the Convicts being only the second team to win Bingham. The celebration was long and hard with most Convicts not finding themselves back in Sydney for at least another fortnight.

With the excitement of our Bingham Cup campaign over it was time to return to finish the Jeffrey season. To say that to back up was difficult would be an understatement. We had numerous Cup players either retire, travel overseas or conveniently become injured. Despite this there was a commitment bunch of guys who were determined to see the season out and maintain the pride the Sydney Convicts and Colleagues. In addition many of the Halligan Cup players backed up week after week. Despite only limited success in the remaining 8 weeks of the competition we only just missed out of the final 4 by 3 points. This was an amazing achievement given that we were away for 4 weeks and the jump in the grades from Halligan Cup last year.

All in all a very successful season for the Sydney Convicts. Special mention needs to go to the outstanding job done by the coaches Rob Rosenberg, Alex Pascoe and captain/come-coach Charlie Winn. Without these three guys there is no way the same success would have been achieved. Mention should be made of the most improved player of the year – Greg Holmes, best forward – Charlie Winn, best back Tommy Bourne, highest point scorer – Dean Tapiki, Best and Fairest Gorgon Cooper, Players' Player – a three way tie between, Tommy Bourne, Stu Marks and Charlie Winn. Special mention also needs to go to the team managers Ewan Samway and Hamish Cook.

On behalf of all of the Sydney Convicts I would also like to express our continued gratitude to everybody at Colleagues who have made us feel so welcome and have provide the opportunity for Sydney Convicts to play rugby in such a fabulous club. The generosity you have shown us is well known around the world and is a model that many other gay clubs can only dream about being part of. In particular we would like to thank Rich McGrath, Dan Petrie, Cam Ireland, Andrew Moses, Peter Minocus, Mike Sommer, Andrew Harrington and all the guys in the Noice Cup team and the Colleagues Halligan team.

Noice Cup Report

2006 was the first year that Colleagues entered a side in the Noice Cup. This cup was named after a distinguished Colleague, C. S. Noice, who was killed in a tragic accident in 1981. Given the huge contribution made by the Noice family to the Colleagues Club, it was essential that we win the Noice Cup in the first year that we contested for it.

Colleagues' Noice Cup team won 11 of its 12 matches, scoring 296 points to 81 against. They were minor premiers.

The team consisted of the following players: (front row) M. Wydeham, L. Griffiths, S. Pearson and A. Cruickshank, (2nd row) J. Scharrer, R. Rush, P. Finlay and R. Atkin, (back row) C. Schliebs, N. Wonders, R. Bachelor and M. Durrant, (halves) T. Stuart- Harris, J. Stokes, B. Teplicanec and L. Almond, (centres) J. Kelly, J. Stanford and D. Webster, (wings) D. Peterson, N. Wells, M. Lanham and A. Johnston, (fullbacks) N. Minato and C. Kernaghan. Most of these players played in several positions during the year and, given that we had extra players, all players happily accepted playing less than a full game in order to give the reserves a run. This was important for the harmony of the team. The team was ably captained by Chris Schliebs (although Shem Pearson always had a lot to say).

This was a team that enjoyed playing its rugby and drinking its beer. Dedication to training was outstanding -- on many an evening I had to make a run for the car park with the words "Come on Tra, can't we do just one more 400?" ringing in my ears.

In the last three matches of the season we played arch-rivals Roseville who were the only team to have beaten us in the year. (This occurred when our main team was playing in the Jeffery Cup in place of the Convicts who were participating in the Bingham Cup in New York.)

We won the last round of the season 10 -- 5 to win the minor premiership and the preliminary final 17 -- 0 but neither win was convincing. We analysed the reasons for our poor showing, developed some tactics to counter Roseville's tactics and practised them.

The grand final went exactly to plan. We scored a good try in the opening minutes through our backs and then were forced to defend grimly for a long period in our own 25 against their rolling maul, holding them up over the line. The tactics we had devised to counter Roseville worked well. By the end of the half, we had worked our way back into their 25 and they had begun conceding penalties, one of which we kicked. We went to half-time up 8 -- 0 after a tough 35 minutes.

The very successful Canterbury Crusaders coach, Robbie Deans, says that the aim of a rugby coach is to make himself redundant. That is, if the coach has done his job well, the players will know what to do without the coach telling them. At half-time in the grand final, the players knew exactly what they had to do in the second half -- in particular, if they scored first in the second half they would rack up a good tally. It was one of those moments when the coach remains silent.

The players proceeded to do exactly what they had to do, scoring a very good ensemble try soon after the kickoff and then adding three others all of which John Kelly converted from the sideline. All 22 players took the field. They did not let the pressure off Roseville and kept them scoreless, winning the match 36 -- 0.

I had asked the players to play their best rugby and they had delivered. This was the best rugby they played all year.

John Noice then presented us with the C. S. Noice Cup. Mission accomplished.

Thanks to the Convicts for supporting us at the grand final, running our water and buying us some cold beer. Special thanks to Mark Lanham for acting as timekeeper in the grand final and to Michael Kelly and James Stanford for acting as our runners when they were unable to play due to injury.

Thanks also to co-coaches Pete Minucos and Ben Woods and to Whiddon coach, Nick Love, who taught us more about short lineouts in five minutes than we've learnt in 10 years.

Meldrum Cup Report

First up I would like to thank the fellow members of the Meldrum Cup management team, James Hendy and Geraint "G" Hudson for all their work during the season and the steady flows of emails throughout the season. G's wise head was sought on many occasions throughout the season and James brought structure and discipline to our training sessions.

Secondly a special mention to the following players who were suffered career ending injuries whilst playing for the blue giants;

Al Thompson – prolapsed disc in his back
Steve Kann - fractured skull.

In the spirit of club rugby the guys trained occasionally but went out together religiously. The bond of the team was unique and something I will cherish. The squad was an eclectic mix of guys from first time rugby players from Perth to old war heads from the USA.

A 15-11 defeat by Sydney University was the only blemish from first round of matches. The highlight of the first round of matches was the 14-9 victory over Killara West Pymble, which ended their 18 game unbeaten home run.

Despite the ever growing injury list and lack of training due to the adverse weather conditions, the boys managed to lose only once in the second run of games, again to Sydney University. The highlight of the second round being the overturning of a fourteen point deficit away to Manly Lifesavers, which was made even sweeter that night when we took the honours in the post match boat race.

So at the end of the round robin, Sydney University finished up minor premiers, with Colleagues finishing second. This meant a major semi final against Sydney University at UNSW. Despite an excellent performance, the team came up short 22-14. It was back to UNSW for the preliminary final against Bronte Surf Lifesaving Club a week later on an unusually hot day. The team simply did not show up and Bronte won the contest 63-21, who went on to win the grand final the following week.

It was a disappointing end to a season that promised a lot, however, the Meldrum Cup players can be proud of the positive brand of rugby they played and the number of friends they made on and off the paddock.

Special thanks must go to:

- Colleagues' management (especially Rich, Peach and Cam), the success of the club both on and off the field is testament to the hard work you guys do. Many thanks for helping me during the season.
- The Meldrum cup WAGS for their fantastic support, home and away.
- The coach drivers on our away trips.
- Ben Garland for ensuring that the team were the best dressed in the competition.

Regards

Neal Dooly
Meldrum Cup Manager, 2006

Halligan Cup Report

By our own previously high standards this was a disappointing year. Despite the number of registered players WCRUFC had in 2006, we regularly struggled to field a side. Whilst we did not forfeit or cancel any matches, we were reduced to less than 15 men on several occasions. The macro problem of club numbers was exacerbated by a much higher than usual injury toll. Many key players were unavailable due to injury for significant portions of the season, and this unavailability was crucial in our inability to be competitive, even with 15 or more players available.

The loss of Gus Ross in the first game of the year was a significant event of our season. As stated in email traffic after the event, the actions of those Colleagues players present, particularly Andrew Harrington and Bruce Gall brought great credit upon themselves and Colleagues as a club. A number of Halligan Cup players and Coaching Staff attended Gus's funeral.

The first quarter of the season we were quite competitive, and at one stage led the competition. As the season wore on the aforementioned injuries and players work and personal commitments meant that we were unable to field our best side week in week out and this resulted in a number of narrow losses.

A lack of fitness and in some cases match practice contributed to this as well. Many players did not train regularly and it was obvious that most of those who did were not doing additional fitness work during the week. This meant that against quality opposition (such as Iggies) we were unable to match them physically. A shortage of forwards was an issue for Halligan as well. We only contested scrums in two matches during the year and even then for only part of the game.

It should be noted that from the outset I advised the players, on multiple occasions to ensure they had private health cover in the event they were injured.

Through all this, the biggest positive was the attitude of those who did play.

Almost without exception players put themselves on the line when out on the park and there was no loss which involved a capitulation. It was pleasing to see a nucleus of players from the 2005 squad return and these players formed the core of the side and helped foster esprit de corps. The same players did however express frustration at the constant 'chop and change' nature of the draw and the inability to get a full side on the park at times. Although it was pleasing that a number of players that started in Halligan played up the grades as the years progressed the players expressed dissatisfaction with the way that demotions from fifth grade were handled. Because of this a number of players later refused to play for 5ths when asked.

Towards the end of the season we became so short of players that we formed a joint side with the Convicts. As in 2005 this worked well, with both clubs benefiting from the arrangement. Credit should be given to both Rob Rosenberg and Andrew Purchas for their organisational skills and 'can-do' attitude.

Whilst I understand the reasons for the club fielding the number of grades it did in 2006 it should be noted that without a substantial infusion of players in 2007 it is my opinion that a similar level of commitment to lower divisions will result in the Halligan Cup side suffering viability problems in 2007.

Apart from the effect this has on the players, it means that for Andrew Harrington and me the workload trying to arrange games and organise players is excessive. Quite often both of us

would spend most of Thursday on the phone and email attempting to get things organised for the weekend.

This leads me to the other aspect that generated significant workload and that was the unworkability of the Halligan Cup draw. Many clubs committed to the competition then simply did not play, or refused to travel. I believe that Colleagues should submit to Subbies a proposal for a 'two-tier' draw. A guaranteed draw for those clubs who can field week in week out, and a 'casual' pool of other clubs who can organize games with other part-time Halligan teams or one of the tier one clubs who has a bye. The current system is unworkable unless you are unemployed and can devote substantial amounts of time to organising games each week.

Finally, Andrew Harrington and Sean Nicholson led and organized the side in an exemplarily fashion, particularly in my absence in the middle part of the season. Both men are an asset to Colleagues and Sean in particular will be missed next year as he is being moved to Perth with his employment.

We all enjoyed our season this year; team spirit was good with a number of social functions being held both at sponsors pubs as well as each others residences. 2007 will be a better year though if the issues raised above can be addressed.

Sincerely

Mike Sommer
Coach