

WOOLLAHRA COLLEAGUES

ANNUAL REPORT

2007



**The Woollahra Colleagues
Ruby Union
Football Club**
(Established 1933)
Headquarters Woollahra No 2
PO Box 197, Double Bay, 2028

2007 Office Bearers

PATRON: His Worship the Mayor of Woollahra

PRESIDENT Richard McGrath

VICE PRESIDENTS:

J. Anderson, Esq	M. Caspers, Esq
T. Both, Esq	R. Harriden, Esq
J. Corlis, Esq	D. Kirkwood, Esq
J. Hitchen, Esq	C. Messenger, Esq
H. Lamens, Esq	A. Murchison, Esq
A. Ross, Esq	J. Noice, Esq
C. Vanervord, Esq	E. Radford, Esq
B. Wood, Esq	

CLUB CAPTAIN: Cam Ireland

SECRETARY: David Meredith

TREASURER: Paul Howard

COMMITTEE:

Lachlan Benson, Will Foster, Cameron Ireland, Peter Minucos, Mitchell Tourle, Ben Woods, Rob Dalton.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS:

J. Anderson, 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

2007 Trophy Winners

Club Captain

Cam Ireland

Team Captains

Halligan Cup	James Robertson
Halligan Cup –Convicts	Simon Thompson
Noice Cup	Sam Trafford
Jeffries Cup	Charlie Winn
Barbour Cup	Henry King
Sutherland Cup	Will Macdiarmid
Judd Cup	Peter Davies / Richard Byrne
Whiddon Cup	Richard Hodson / John Clarkson
Burke Cup	Sam Hindmarsh
Kentwell Cup	Tim Mundy / Tim Cohen

Team Coaches

Halligan Cup	Connor Hughes and Andrew Harrington
Halligan Cup – Convicts	Glyn Breeze
Noice Cup	Sam Trafford
Jeffries Cup	David Jordan
Barbour Cup	Ben Wood and Peter Minucos
Sutherland Cup	Laurence Campbell-Avenall and Sean Corbett
Judd Cup	Jon Irwin & Jon Purbrick
Whiddon Cup	Jack Mesley
Burke Cup	Nick Love, Matt Collett, Adam Harley
Kentwell Cup	Rob Dalton, Ben Waters, Jock Whittle
Club Coach	Rob Dalton

Best & Fairest

Halligan Cup	Kim Bourke
Halligan Cup – Convicts	Dean Tapiki
Noice Cup	Sam Trafford
Jeffries Cup	Charlie Winn
Barbour Cup	Andrew McKillop
Sutherland Cup	Charlie Meares
Judd Cup	Jonathan Clydesdale
Whiddon Cup	Martin Kelly
Burke Cup	Alex Edwards
Kentwell Cup	Sam Burton-Taylor
Club	Sam Hindmarsh / Andrew Light

CLUB AWARDS

Colleagues Honour Cap	Cam Ireland / David Meredith
The Pappas & General Award	Llew Griffiths
Player's Player	Tom Johnston
Rookie of the year	Jordan Thompson
Most Improved Player	Nick Wonders / Jono Linn
Leading Try Scorer	Pete Minucos
Leading Point Scorer	Hugh Baggie
Oldest and Boldest	Jonathan Hughes
100 games	Michael Wydeman & Andrew Purchas

Presidents Report 2007

It is with great pleasure that I present the 2007 Woollahra Colleagues Annual Report.

The 2007 had many successes both on and off the field. Unfortunately we were not able to capitalise on great club championship win with the only premiership being in the Halligan Cup. That said all teams acquitted themselves well during the finals campaign. When you work so hard to get all teams into the finals you just have to keep working hard to secure the ultimate prize.

To all coaches and players congratulations on a tremendous season. As a club we were very consistent throughout the year. That is a testament to all of our coaches who each gave of themselves to make sure things happened. It is not an easy job and some times reward expresses itself as relief when things you have been working so hard at pay off.

Colleagues is a players club and it is good to see a new crop of players stepping up to the mark and helping with the organisation of the Ladies days, Balls and various other functions. The rugby is very important and we tread a tightrope of providing a robust social environment and playing a great brand of footy.

Financially the club recorded an increase in cash reserves to \$22,810.24 from \$13,009.39. This is due to our home game trading which has been helped by David Gooch's organisation of the bar. The Bondi 10's and the Long Lunch have become important sources of revenue for the club and the 10's has been very good for the charities that it supports raising \$65,000 to date. Our major revenue base is our generous sponsors and it would be very difficult to run a club of this size with out the help of B Braun Australia, Hill Rogers Financial Services, Scopelending, Ryan's Bar, Karabiner Access, Windowrie Estate, Jan Logan, Bresic Whitney, Kukri, Star Dean-Willcocks and Fimat.

Congratulations to all the club award winners. In particular Cam Ireland and Dave Meredith who won Honour Caps. I should also recognise the men who watch over the cash in Paul Howard and Andrew Moses. At the end of this report are the applications for 100 Games from Andrew Purchase, Jonathon Clydesdale and Michael Wydeman. Well worth the read and well deserved to each.

2008 is the 75 year of the Colleagues and it is sure to be an exciting one. The playing surface is improving all the time after much work by the council. We hope to have new lights operating by the season start and I should thanks Will Foster on the clubs behalf for all the hard work he has put in over the last 4 years. As usual we have the Bondi 10's to kick us off followed by the Long Lunch. We are also planning lunches based around home games involving the different eras during the season.

Thanks to all who contributed to the Colleagues in 2007 and I wish everyone a safe off season and see you in the New Year – a Giants Year.

Richard McGrath
President

Club Captain's Report 2007

Congratulations to all involved in winning the Club Championship again in 2007. as Meatloaf says, 2 outa 3 aint bad.....A fitting finish to a very successful year.

We managed to get all teams through to the finals at David Phillips field with Judd cup managing a week off with a win at Macquarie Uni the week before. Unfortunately, at the end of the day, we only managed one more team through to a grand final.

Whilst we were not able to secure a grand final win in Kentwell or Judd Cups, we were victorious in the Halligan Cup and a big congratulations must go to those guys who turn up each week for the Halligan competition. It is a big commitment these guys make and the success that they have achieved over the past few years is testament to their hard work and is also the epitome of what Colleagues really stands for, bunch of mates turning up on Saturday to have a game of rug by and a beer afterwards.

2007 was again a great year for new players and it was impressive to see their level of involvement from early on in the season. It was also extremely pleasing to see a large number of guys who are now settled at the club, stick their hand up and chip in where needed.

Our two Ladies Days were again a great success, along with the Ball which everyone seemed to enjoy. The social component of the season was wrapped up with a 'pig on the spit' (kindly donated by Mr Foy) down at the Clubhouse for the Sunday after the Grand Final. What a great day that was, however I am not sure if Tommy Johnstone will ever get rid of the smell of swine from his commodore. I do pity the guy who had the pig head under his ute torneau cover though.....

Our coaches in 2007 did a fantastic job from day one. Whilst some weeks it appeared that we were not going to get teams on the park, with a little rallying, all seemed to work out in the end. A big thankyou to those outsiders (and coaches) who occasionally pulled on the boots in those weeks that we were short. I really hope that you are all back next year and that we are able to incorporate a little more talent amongst the ranks to bolster our skill base.

We introduced a new committee at the end of 2007 and it is great to see the young faces getting involved, a lot of whom have come through the colts ranks. Dave Meredith has done a fantastic job this year in his position as Secretary. I sincerely thank him for his support. Thankyou also to Richard McGrath for his ongoing support.

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

I look forward to 2008 with a renewed enthusiasm with the confidence I have in our committee, coaching staff and exceptional player base.

See you in March.

Cam Ireland
Club Captain, 2007

Secretary's Report 2007

As my first (and only) year as Secretary it was a big change from a few years back when participation was limited to showing up for the odd Halligan game at home, a sausage and few beers and out the door.

It does take alot of effort at the back of house to contribute to keeping a club this large functioning, but at the end of a year, it seems it have all gone by so quickly and being involved in such a successful club is hugely rewarding, not that the missus did agree.

For the first home game both Cam & Richard where away at Weddings, and I really set my self a goal to do whatever was possible to make the first day a success. I got up at a time I will not put on Paper, but there was definitely more dew than I am used to running through in 5th. Cleaned the club, banners out, trip to Campbell to stock the fridge, tackle pads and water out, chairs and ropes.

I had given all I had before the whistle blew for 5th, tripped over boots running onto the field and didn't even think of getting off the bench at halftime. A full day at the club, some time on the BBQ, quiet a few Bundies at the bar to celebrate a solid blue rinse against UNSW, and I was asleep by 8pm and stuffed all the next day. The missus was not real happy about no "her" time for the rest of a Rugby Winter and also advised to relax a little as she could see a heart attack coming at this pace. Tried to get the balance right after that first weekend and know I often threw out the line "can you just do me one small favour" on a Saturday to unsuspecting people to chip in.

Some of the year highlights for me:

- Colleagues registering 341 players for the year and providing 192 games of Rugby for a wide range of players. This is the core of what the club is about to give blokes a game of park rugby on a Saturday.
- 8 Blue rinses for the year – We started off with one against UNSW to get 2007 going and some of the best where against Campbelltown away in Round 16 and Round 11 against Drummoyne at home.
- The Campbelltown Bus trip – Was a great day of rugby winning every game, but the level of heckling was great during games, a bus load of tone deaf rugby players singing, and the beers of bus and back at clubhouse made for a great Saturday.
- Both Ladies Day's going well and level of support to get them organized.
- Players moving up and down the grade to fill in during injury / absence. There are many who played 2-3 games in one day and moved up 3 grade levels to keep the club winning, it was good to see people rewarded for hard work with the opportunity (even fanta-pants)

Rugby is about winning Grand Finals, having a winning season is good but this is a club that wants to hold the trophy at the end of year and have it know by all they are the best. If you won every year they would not be as valuable and am sure with more hunger from losing a few we have the players and coaches to grab some next year.

Thanks to all for the opportunity to be Secretary – I did really enjoy being so involved, special thanks to Cam & Richard for their support.

All the best for 2008.

David Meredith

Club Coach's Report 2007

The 2007 year for Colleagues saw the Club Championship trophy come home to the rightful owners, especially seeing it was another year of injuries and disruption on the selection front. The coaching staff made a conscious and fantastic effort to get teams organised. Special mention goes to David Meredith for his efforts through out the season, in all my years involved in rugby I have never experienced such smooth running behind the scenes, you certainly made the coaches job a lot easier. To Dick Thomas for all the training seasons you held both at the club and the extra special sessions, your expertise gave all teams that edge that was the difference between winning and losing. Cameron Ireland and Rich McGrath thank you for your support and all the behind the scene work that never gets credit, the club simply wouldn't run without your work, and of course Saturday at Rose Bay wouldn't be the same without Johnny Papas running the water and offering positive encouragement.

Congratulations to all the coaching staff, a great effort getting all teams into the major finals, not an easy feat seeing a lot of teams had to be filled on Saturday mornings as teams were getting warmed up. Ben Waters and Jock Whittle congratulations for making another grand final, especially a Kentwell grand final. The Kentwell team should be very proud of their performance, especially since eight regular members were unavailable for the game, which gave the younger players a chance to step up yet again as they did all season.

Burke had a great season with Nick Love and Matty Collett building a stronger more developed team each week, having the experience and contribution from Adam Harley made not only Burkies stronger but also Kentwell and Whiddos.

Congratulations to Whiddon and Judd grades winning minor premierships but unfortunately unable to go on and win premierships, though the efforts of Jack Mesley coaching Whiddos on his own and playing many games in Sutherland, typifies his attitude and contribution to the club and the players.

To Jon Purbrick and Jon Irwin, congratulations for making the grand final, it was great to see the old fashion training sessions brought back into focus, with the ongoing use of the old tackle bags. Laurie Campbell and Sean Corbett have produced another solid young outfit that keeps on beating teams with much more experience.

It was a season that saw a lot of young players get a great opportunity to play up the grades, players who stood up when called upon, which is a great strength for the club, a club that builds and develops strong victories year in and year out, though unfortunately fell short in the finals race.

It was great to see the benefits of players who have come through the club from the colts especially this year as many played in the Kentwell grand final. Next year is another season and offers plenty of challenges already and a great chance to work towards taking further steps in obtaining premiership trophies.

Rob Dalton

Burke Cup Report

Burke cup welcomed 2 new coaches to the already experienced coaching squad. Nick Love, previously coach of the grand final winning widow's and Adam Harley (Conan) who is a true barbarian of the game. We started the season on a slow note narrowly losing 2 of our first 3 games to heavy waits Drummoyne and arch rivals Knox Old Boys. However this was the start of a remarkable run. After a few early changes and injuries we began to settle with a formidable team that would rival most 1st grade teams in our competition. With the likes of Sam Hindmarsh hitting his straps as our menacing inside centre and captain (in particular one rather large hit on his Knox counter part in the second round which left him seeing stars and leaving the field). A new out centre appeared in the likes of Mike "the foal" Langford, a tall free striding English gent who managed to round straight at and through oppositions, especially from a well constructed move off the back of a line out. Our suicidal half back, Leo Coats "the Hoff", played all but 2 games for us and was a stand out defender for the team and formed great partnership with both our 5/8's Paul Warren Tape and Tommy Johnston who both had a great season however unfortunately Paul lost his way as he kept using his nose to tackle defenders. Andrew Light and Hugh Baggey were two more star performers as new comers but unfortunately played up at Kentwell as the season progressed.

Alex "Jedi" Edwards was our outstanding breakaway and forward knocking down everything in his wake and ended up taking our best and fairest for Burke cup. Stalwart and club captain Cameron Ireland had another great year giving both the players and the coaching staff constant advice and assistance to help get through the season. New comer and mad Welshman Dave Rees, our number 8, showed how tough they breed them in Wales but didn't really hit his straps until the mercury hit below 15.

After a stunning 13 game winning streak, which included a gutsy win against an undefeated Knox in the second round where we tackled our selves to a stand still, and some massive wins against Barker Old boys which conjured up over 70 points in each game, we were defeated in the second last round against Mosman. We entered the finals in second place and injuries in both Burke and Kentwell began to take their toll. Loosing a few of our key players it was always going to be a tough finals. We went down to Knox in the 1st semi 20-15 where we nearly scored on the bell to take victory. The final was against the inform Mosman who were definitely on a roll. It was an old fashioned struggle with both teams playing their hardest but unfortunately it was Mosman who took away the spoils 9-10.

Highlights of the season were

- Coaching another great Burke cup team and having the opportunity to meet a great bunch of blokes.
- Having a stunning 13 game winning streak,
- Making the finals for the 2nd year running
- Finishing the regular season with 15 wins and 3 losses,
- Scoring 596 points and having only 119 scored against us (best defensive record in the competition),
- Simon Gardiner "Boris" our early season no 8 scored 13 try's (clubs leading try scorer)
- Winger come full back Ant Serventi scored 11,
- Tommy Johnston, our 5/8 was the clubs 2nd highest point scorer with 113 pts.

The season challenge was definitely coaching a formidable attacking, sometimes docile, back three consisting of Ant Serventi, Matt Dwyer, Rob Deacon and Dan "Disco" Quinn.

Special thanks go to our manager Will Foster, special appearances from Andrew Blades, Dick Harry and Luke Rickertson and masseuse Artie Sanchez.

Yours in Colleagues Rugby Mathew Collett

2007 Whiddon Cup Report

End of winning streak – losers' streak!

Regular Season Results

Played	Won	Lost	For	Against	Bonus Points
18	16	2	491	129	12

An undefeated home record secured the 2007 Whiddon Cup side the top spot at the end of the regular season. However a 4th consecutive Whiddon Cup wasn't to be had. Despite an impressive record of losing only two games all season, both by less than a try, Colleagues lost its grip on "Horace". A semi final defeat against St. Patrick's saw us take on Mossman in the preliminary final at David Phillips Field. In a game which our forwards dominated, and every player gave his all, two carbon copy breakout tries from their own 22 and an interception try saw Mosman edge us out by two points for a place in the Grand Final. This game ended what had been a successful and a hugely enjoyable season.

Coached by the tireless Jack Mesley, the Colleagues Whiddon Cup team of 07 at times could field a team that had all played first grade at some point of the season. Saturday's teams were constantly changing as players were called up through the grades and it is a testament to Jack and the players who came up and filled the spots that the team finished as "Minor Premiers" with games in hand.

The 2007 saw some new faces as well as the departure of some old ones. Michael Kelly played his last game in a Colleagues shirt for a while as he moves up to the Northern Territory in 2008. "Kells" was one of the Whiddon players of the season, running hard lines from the centres in attack and bone crunchingly solid in defence. His chip that hugged the touch line in the game against Pats for John Reynaldo to score in the corner was one of the highlights of the season.

Another player who has left the club and returned home to the UK was Paul Hart, who's opening try against Iggies at home set the scene for one of the most satisfying wins of the season, drubbing them 34 – 0. Harty took a crash ball from a short line out and performed a Moses like parting of the defence to score untouched. This was one of the three times we held a team to nil in the season, the other times being at home against Campbelltown and also Drummoyne as part of a historic "Blue Rinse" over the Dirty Reds.

A player who first played for Colleagues in the 2007 was Ant Serventi, whose debut may well be remembered by everyone except himself. The blood had not yet returned to his alcohol stream and he has absolutely no recollection of the game. Ant's rugby league background often showed through, especially when caught behind his own try line and he ran the ball dead. However Ant was not however the only one guilty of running the ball dead. Angus Cooper finished a lovely break from 5/8 only to forget that you need to touch the ball down to score a try.

In fact failing to score tries when there was no-one to beat was something of a trend, James Symons playing in the first round game away at Mosman can testify to this. Jack Mesley was up in Brisbane and was being given a play by play commentary of the last few moments of the game.

"{colleagues are} two points down and it's the last play of the game. Symmo's in a gap, no one to beat and he's.....oh f**k he's dropped it."

Final score Mossman 16 Colleagues 12

Despite players constantly being called up through the grades at the last minute the Whiddon Cup team formed a pretty tight bond. Nothing highlights this more than in the last few minutes of the first round game away at Pats. Mitch Tourle has spotted some indiscretion at the bottom of a ruck and so incensed that this is happening to one of his own players he lashes out at the presumed offender. The punch is a beaut, it has the recipient laid out on the deck not knowing what hit him. The victim of such a punch – Dirty Owens. Mitch is still insisting he thought it was one of the opposition.

Jack's hard work and persistence at some aspects of coaching saw the result he was looking for in the second round game at Campbelltown away, a try from a "Beaconsfield". Jack was also extra pleased as during the move Rich Hodson was lined up by the Campbelltown inside centre and pole-axed. Jack was often seen to use unconventional coaching techniques to obtain the best from his players, one Thursday night saw Jack split the squad in two for a skills based competition. The losing side, led by Tom Johnston was then made run a 400 – Nude.

A big thanks to Jack Mesley for all his efforts in organising and coaching the Whiddon Cup squad for 2007. Without his efforts we would not have been as successful as we were. Thanks to the whole squad for the effort they put in through the season, making training and giving it all.

To next year and bringing Horace home.

Richard Hodson

Judd Cup Report

Great season was had by The Juddies of 2007. The season was hard fought and the team played consistent football week in week out. Never more than 1 (or maybe 2) tries in a week – very consistent! This brought the crowds down to Colleagues in droves as they loved watching the running rugby dominated by the tight 5, as much as our wingers enjoyed watching the game from the sideline as well.

Not only were the games expansive and played with aggression, but they were also played with passion from numbers 1-15. The team was consistently arriving a health 10mins before the Whistle blew for a full hit out and catch up the night before. (note – Ben Baker actually arrived more often after kick off, than before)

The fast paced, high scoring and running rugby left the spectators and coaches breathless, and more often than not the team was even more breathless.

The consistent game play and great coaches saw Juddies win the minor premiership in 2007.

Before we talk about the Grand Final, I wanted to make mention of the coaches, the season would not have been such fun and a success without the help of our coaching staff, which included Jonathon Purbrick and Jonny Irwin.

Purbs as those who know him well enough (that now includes everyone at TG Milner on Grand Final day who had the privilege to enjoy mankind for its raw beauty) was dedicated to providing the team with Wallaby like training sessions which were meticulously planned. Some innovative examples included:

- The circle of death
- Laps of the oval
- Scrums

Purbs better half Jon Irwin, was the backs the coach and became Mr Dependable towards the second half of the season. He was always at training teaching the team the coveted 'drop goal' move. Unfortunately we didn't get to use it in a game situation, but Jonny Irwin swears it will work given some more practice in 2008

Unfortunately we failed at the last hurdle in the Grand Final and lost to Mosman 10 to 3. It was a tough match, and hard fought. Mosman managed to play the whole game with 16 players without the referee noticing... that was until after the Whistle blew, he noticed he was wearing a Mosman Whales Jersey, socks and custom made underpants.

On a more serious note, the team was made up of a great bunch of players and a great bunch of coaches. We all enjoyed the footy and have learnt what we need to do next year in order to reclaim Judd cup from those boys at Mosman.

Thanks for the year boys; I loved every minute of it

Pete Davies

Sutherland Cup Report

In my second year as coach for this side, promised more than the past year. We had coming into side a combination of new players to the club and colts making the transition to the main stage; add a few silverbacks (this increased the average age to 23) and the stage had been set for a solid year.

The season started a bit slow winning 2 of our first 5 games and 3 of the teams played would join us at the end of year for the finals. From here on out we strung 9 games back to back to set things up for September.

We had a number of highlights during this run of wins, and I will pick on 3 as I think this sums up how 5th grade performed this year. The first was a very tough win against old rival Iggies. Having had the game in the bag leading 10 nil at half time, We went to sleep only to Iggies go ahead 12-10 win under a minute to go. Led by the a club stalwart Clydie newly promoted to number 8, picked up of the base of a scrum inside our 22 drew and passed creating an overlap for the backs to score a excellent team try in the corner to win the game and saw much celebration. Belief in from side was cemented and thing only got better from here.

The next game to comment on was the Mosman game 2 weeks later. Developed during training and instilled in the players was control and recycling of the ball. From the kick off we received the ball and did not give it up for 8 minutes. The Mosman coach came down asked when his team would get the ball. This show great control from the forwards and backs not to hand over the ball this lead to the only try of the game, which was won in the end 5-3. The side displayed the skills that you would normally only expect to see in higher grades. And, as was deserved by many in the side, when injury struck up the grades, players where able to step up to the mark and be significant contributor to the other sides.

And last game was against Knox Old Boys who lead the season form the start. KOB came to colleagues in round 12 undefeated. In the changing room before kick-off no one wanted to have a loss against them. In what was the toughest game of year including finals, we held on to win this one 12-10. Not one player had anything left in the tank and the boys deserved the glory for the win. This was the smartest rugby played by the side all year, and had the side fired up of the remainder of the season.

The side was led very well this year by newcomer to the club Will Macdiarmid, and to him the team owe a lot for their success. A good year were had by all team and a few standouts included the Kelly brothers John and Mike, Brad Sherringham for the old guys, Llew Griffith's (who nearly played all grades 5th to 2nds in one day), Charlie Mears best and fairest, Tim Martian, Dylan Williams and David Meredith who able tried to hold up both side of the scrum at the same time. I could name everyone and probably should have but am running out of time to write this.

My thanks to Sean Corbett in assisting me this year and Mike Boyd in training and drills for the side when needed. I must also thank all my fellow coaches for their assistance and advice during the year. I look forward to 2008 and many more great deeds to witnessed at the Blue Giant Stadium

Laurence Campbell - Coach

2007 was a year of expectation for the 5th Grade side, accentuated by frequent reassurances stemming from a passionate coach, Laurence Campbell. It was a team that witnessed the coming of age of a number of ex - Colts players looking to ply their trade against the greying lads of Sutherland Cup, fighting side by side with some of our own arthritic men.

The on-field success of the team fluctuated throughout the season, at times looking classy and skilful reaching an early pinnacle against traditional foes, Mosman. Of course, when there are 'ups' there are 'downs' and the mighty Sutho side had their share. A series of lacklustre but passionate appearances against highly beatable sides held the team back, keeping us from the glory of the minor premiership, however our youth and exuberance ensured we won the games we needed and provided the team with a crack at direct entry into the Grand Final.

And so along came Knox Old Boys, a team with which the Colleagues side had developed a healthy spirit of competitiveness throughout the season, borne through a number of fierce and close encounters. The game was fought with a desire and determination typical of a Colleagues side, played against a considerably bigger team with no doubt a wealth of experience to draw from. The game was played to the final whistle, with both clubs aware of what was at stake; alas, by the final stoppage it was over by mere points.

Onwards we moved to Pat's, to have one last dash at the final. We had heard rumours and speculation as to the make up of the Strathfield based side but we swept those thoughts away and focussed on the task at hand, there was no doubt that belief in our ability existed amongst us; we felt this was ours for the taking. At half time we could taste the victory ale, our youth and speed seemed to be too much for their size and age, but yet it would end with us thinking, had we ourselves had one too many beers throughout the season?

It was a tremendous year for the 5th Grade side with both successes and failures, friendships were developed, and memories were created, we certainly do enjoy our footy. Above all, I think the spirit exhibited by the men throughout the season is breathing proof that the renowned culture of the club is alive and well in the newer members, and is assured for years to come, onwards to '08.

Will MacDiarmid
Captain Sutherland

Noice Cup Report

After the usual fun at the Bondi Tens and a few trials matches getting sunburnt, the competition opened with 8 teams competing for the Noice Cup. A first up win is always a good thing and we did it at home and in style, winning 74-0. Champagne (well a few VBs at the Club House) and all would be ok for our season ... apparently.

Well, a couple of loses quickly brought us back to reality. In one of these early loses two props and a number 10 succumbed to serious injuries and were out for a number of weeks. Despite these setbacks and with some good training sessions, we got back into a winning way. The forwards in particular started to perform really well with our Captain, Charlie Winn, leading from the front. Angus Donald was finding some good focus and form as was Greg Holmes. Our game strategy was settling well and a couple of wins on the trot and we were established in the top half of the ladder.

At the half way stage of the season we were getting used to the seemingly endless trips to play at Rouse Hill, Oak Hill and Norwest, all located about 1.5 hours to the north west of the CBD (and we thought it was a suburban competition ... such is life in Division 5)! Anyway, to break that routine the heavens opened up. Weeks of no games due to the heavy rain and scheduled byes gave us plenty of scope to focus on the social aspects of a suburban rugby club.

Back into rugby and we could see the path to the finals. A couple of solid wins on the up side and a few too many narrow loses on the down side (we lost 25 % of our games by 3 points or less). With the last game of the scheduled competition it was a do or die situation to make the finals. Again, it was a narrow loss to a drop goal which lead on to the social aspects of the season.

While not making the finals (5th), it was a solid performance winning 9 out of 18 games and drawing 1. We provided good competition throughout the season and pushed the eventual winners of the competition right to the wire in the home game.

There were many outstanding performances with new players to the side, in particular, making a mark. The likes of Charles Gregory "I played Aussie Rules you know" and Kevin Perry "Oh Canada" spring to mind. As expected, the established players provided the necessary skill for us to perform at the level the competition required. While established doesn't necessarily mean old (yeah, right), Andrew 'Fuzz' Purchas put in some notable performances during the season – he scored two tries in the corner (not bad for a second rower)!

Many thanks to all our supporters and volunteers - running the water bottles (Steve Evans and Ed in particular), the physio (Sabrina Cascio from Darlinghurst Physio) and doing the paper work (Team Manager Ewan Samway but also a few others who assisted) – everything that is involved in running a team. Very big thanks to Rich McGrath and David Meredith for their unstinting support throughout the season.

Last but not least a big thank you to Dave Jordan the coach, who put in many hours above and beyond what is required. Dave has decided that work commitments mean he can not join us next year – all the best Dave with your new role.

Charlie Winn

Halligan Cup Report

The season started with Connor Hughes entering his first season of coaching along side Andrew Harrington. In the first half of the season we had enough players to field two Halligan sides. We retained the bulk of these players through the free flowing, running rugby and mateship that remained a constant throughout the season. Its a testament to the players love of the game that the numbers turning up at training rarely dropped during the course of the season and also that the effort and willingness to learn were always apparent even with the coaches left field coaching methods - rugby polo anyone?

For the record we won the Halligan Cup with 12 wins from 12 and a total of 357 points for and 50 against. Despite the teams impressive record not all our victories were as facile as the for and against total would suggest, we ground out some tight games against Mosman, Briars and Newport on the road.

James Roberstson in his first season as captain proved an able leader both on and off the pitch. Kim Bourke was awarded the Best and Fairest player due to his selflessness and commitment to the team.

The "Hooligan" team were proud to bring home the silverware for the Club and look forward to defending the Halligan cup in '08

Connor Hughes

Colleagues Convicts – Halligan Cup Report

After such a big year in 2006, where we won the Bingham Cup and Plate comps at the Gay Rugby World titles in New York, the Convicts pre season recruitment drive proved fruitful with 15 new players joining the club. Of these, 5 were experienced players who joined our Noice team and remaining 10 joined the Halligan team to learn the basics of what the running game was all about.

With little to no experience these players needed a crash course in everything to do with rugby. From catching and passing, running and tackling, rucking and mauling, to line outs and scrumming and drinking and socialising. All essential parts of the rugby experience.

The boys took to the training with much enthusiasm and a little bit of trepidation. Getting used to running full tilt at another guy running full tilt straight at you and trying to work out what to do when you both hit is not a natural thing to do. Arms, legs heads and shoulders need to be in just the right positions otherwise injuries occur and the body takes a battering. Truth be told the body takes a battering anyway but this was also what the guys were to learn – how to take a hit and give a hit, wake up sore the next day and be keen as mustard to get back to training and do it all over again.

The main thing we focused on is the principle that rugby is a simple game that people tend to overcomplicate. Retain and recycle possession, defend like your life depended on it, back up your mates and take advantage of the gaps when they arrive and you're well on the road to victory.

Trial games saw our new head coach run the Convicts as a squad so it was not until our first game, against defending champions Kings, that we could actually work out if we had a Halligan player for every position. Turns out we were a fullback short of a line up and despite several changes to fill the gap they spotted our weakness and bombed us all day. This resulted in hard earned meters gained by our new forwards being lost to missed opportunities at the back. Despite some resolute defence by all new players Kings went on to win the opening round with late try and a dubious refereeing decision (Fuzz) 17-0.

The opening game proved two things. The new guys could muscle up with the best of them and we needed to fix our back line shortages if we were to be a force during the season.

Although highly anticipated the next round against Petersham was washed out, so game two was against Briars away. This time with a fullback present we had a full team and the aggression of the new forwards started to pay off. Despite being down in size and experience, we dominated possession and were quickly camped in the opposition half. It wasn't long before our dancing fly half Dean had enough room for his kick-chase and the opening try resulted.

More of the same in the second half saw us continue to threaten, however the lack of an experienced front row hurt us, as we had to go uncontested, and the short arm penalties resulted. This was the only time they could gain yards on us and despite holding them out on our line for a good ten minutes they eventually went over. At 5 all it could have gone either way but the boys rallied. Some strong runs from Laf saw the gaps start to appear and with Dean using his 1-2 step to advantage he was through and over for his second try. A late penalty saw us draw clear and run out winners 13-5. It was to be the first win of the season and a proud moment not only for the team but especially the new guys. They had brought respect to their team and heard the club song sung loudly for the first time.

A return to Camperdown saw the field now fit to play on and the postponed match against Petersham was next. Petersham came out strong and used their experienced forwards to fringe us at the rucks. They made good ground and before we knew it they were over for the first try 5-0. A few stern instructions from the captain at half back and the boys were back into it. They plugged the gaps and stopped the flow and were soon on the counter attack. With the forwards now going forward, the backs had room to move and started to slice them up. Tries to our flyer Frenchman Christian and the B-Train Brian resulted and we had taken the lead 12-5. Petersham hit back in the second half and despite some strong online defence, our inexperienced showed and they were able to dive over close to the line to move within 2 points at 12-10. Again the boys rallied and we were back on the attack. Some strong running from our No.8 Aron saw him knocking off players like nine pins and good backing up saw us take advantage with Alex was over in the corner for the match sealer. Convicts won their second game 17-10.

Mosman was next away and a string of injuries meant we could only just field a full side. Players were filling in anywhere they could and we knew we were in for a tough one. Mosman were slow but strong and played the game as tight as they could. The boys muscled up but the lack of experience in key positions told and we went down 10-5. The boys knew this was one that got away and it left a bitter aftertaste in the mouth. The highlight was the break from our own line by new winger Matt the yank and the try to big Stuie Fenton that resulted. It was almost worth the price of parking.

Keen to hit back and with a dearth of opposition teams we were back at Camperdown for a rematch with Petersham. With Dancing Dean now back from injury we had our full line up back and were keen to take advantage. Once again our forwards lead the way and with a strong backline we were able to take full advantage. Tries to Dean and B-Train Brian resulted and by the time Laf crossed in the second half we had ran in a comfortable victory 19-8.

Confident from our good win we next headed to Campbelltown to take on UNSW. The only problem was we had lost all of our experienced loose forwards and we were handed a lesson in ball retention. Large tracks of loose sand across the field didn't help our ability to defend on the run but with UNSW dominating the breakdown and with a weight of possession against us we were no match for them going down 33-5.

Another round called off due to ground closure and we were next at home to Kings Old Boys. The rematch saw us with some forwards back and we were well in the match despite their superior strength and experience. We went to the break 5-3 down but had lifted from the prior games performance. Despite some good attack we couldn't get the phase play happening and points were hard to come by. Another try to Kings in the second half and at 10-3 we needed something special. A break from Laf and we were into space but with the tackle from the full back came a last ditch forward pass and the try went begging. Exhausted at the effort to fight back and after falling just short we dropped our defence and they ran in a late try to go out winners 15-3. It was the second time we had played a close game with Kings and lost 3 tries to nil and we would make sure it would not happen again.

Another rematch, this time to Briars, and they were keen to make up for their previous defeat. They threw an even bigger side at us but once we settled into our game plan we again began to dominate field position. Lead as always in the forwards by our Players Player swash buckling Spencer Blake, the pack were back and through some solid defence and great fringe play we found ourselves camped in the opposition half. Tries to Dancing Dean Tapiki and outside centre Adrian resulted and we went to the break 12-0 up. Briars came out firing and after some sustained pressure ran in their first try 12-5. But, as was to be the measure of the side this season, the boys rallied and a late try to flying fullback Tom saw us run out winners 19-5.

With the season half over, winter in full swing and ski season upon us, it became hard to find clubs with Halligan sides still competing and as a result we were back to Concord again to take on Briars for the third time this year. This time as part of a special old boys club day in which we played a Barbarians side which was captained by their 50 year old President at half back. Despite his age he had lost none of his cunning and competitiveness and was at us like a dog on a bone. With super coach Breezy away on leave and Captain ST (me) flying out to Japan later that day I handed the reigns over to Dean as Captain and took over as Coach. With the help of English import Ben at halfback it was to be a repeat of last week efforts but this time with no lapses in defence. The forwards again dominated and the backs finished off and the boys gave me an undefeated record as Coach running in three well deserved tries and taking it out 19-0.

The following week saw us in a rematch with Kings and determined to not let another opportunity slip. The boys arrived with steely focus and found a Kings side that were too cocky for their own good. With two wins against us already they were expecting an easy third but they got the shock of their lives when we dominated from the kick off and ran in two first half tries to go to the break 12-0 up. The second saw our domination continue and another try to Adrian Betts took us out to 19-0. Kings threw everything at us and crossed for their lone try but we wanted this one too badly and another try to Matt V saw us run out convincing winner 26-5. We had shown that we could take on and beat the best and were now in the middle of a winning streak that would last the rest of the season.

A week off, for the wet weather round, saw us once again take on Briars this time at home. After the big win over Kings the boys were pumped and their confidence was sky high. They played like men possessed and every ball seemed to go to hand. Briars were once again no match but this time the backs and forwards both clicked in attack and the tries flowed like bourbons from the bar. By the time the ref mercifully blew the full time whistle, the boys had run in 6 tries to 1 and with 5 converted we had scored our highest win of the season winning 40-7.

Beecroft was the next to challenge and it was a long drive to Thornleigh for our 12th game of the season. We had now won four in a row and despite last minute changes and an unknown opposition we were determined to keep the run going. Beecroft however had other ideas and, after absorbing our early attack, they mounted their own from their goal line. With fast running forwards they ran it wide and with an inexperienced backline we found ourselves down early 5-0. Another try followed and we were down 12-0. The boys sorted out their defence and started to lift in attack. From an attacking scrum in the opposition quarter, big Aron took the ball from No. 8 and ran straight at the line. Taking 3 guys with him he barged over to bring us back 12-7 at the break. The second half once again saw Aron with another rampaging run from the scrum, this time from half way, and another try resulted. We had hit the lead 14-12. Beecroft seemed stunned to be behind and threw everything at us. Some sloppy defence saw them go over to regain the lead 17-14 but we weren't finished yet. We had come back too well to let our winning streak slip and the boys once again rallied. A penalty in their quarter and a chance to tie the match but we wanted a win and took the quick tap and threw it wide. Some strong phase play and good ball retention saw us move play to both sides of the field and eventually the B-Train went over and we regained the lead 21-17. Five minutes to go and Beecroft weren't done yet. With home crowd support they once again threw everything at us. Stuck in our own half and well into extra time we defended with everything we had left. When a turn over saw us regain possession we threw it wide and when the ball crossed the sideline the ref blew his whistle and we had won a great game 21-17.

The win and our 5 match streak saw us move to outright second on the table and, with only Colleagues Halligan above us, the club had already wrapped up the title for another year. There was just one thing left for us to achieve. There was only one team that we had still not beaten and with the last official match of the season we had our chance. Mosman at home. The boys were fired up and came out strong. This time with a more experience back line we were able to take advantage of our forwards play and Mosman's slower backs, to run in two first half tries to Bulldog Chris Helms and the flying Sam Chesterman. 10-0 at the break. Mosman came back and crossed for a try 10-5. But the boys were not about to let this one slip and another charging run from big Aron saw him over for a 15-5 lead. A late try to Mosman, who never gave up, saw the final score 15-10 and the Convicts finish the season having beaten (at least once) every team they played.











From a bunch of beginners, the Colleagues Convicts Halligan side had fought hard all season to grow into a formidable team that was well respected by all who faced her. From shaky beginners to finish the year with 6 wins in a row and number 2 on the table was a very satisfying felling for all involved. Especially when the only team above us was the Colleagues side and we knew the trophy was once again coming home to where it belonged.

Thanks as always to super coach Breezy who moulded the team, gave us passion and steel and somehow came up with a run on side each week. Special praise to the Supreme Team Manager Jeppo for services above and beyond the call of duty. For anyone who has tried to get a game, a field and a ref each week for a Halligan team will attest, it is a long and thankless task. The site of Jeppo driving up with his Halligan bus full of players he picked up along the way was a welcome site for Coach and Captain alike.

Special mention also to Hustler Dave and the experienced players within the team, who gave of their time each week to help out the new guys, gave them direction on an off the field and showed them what rugby is all about – mateship in battle. Without their commitment and support we would not have had the successful season we did.

Simon Thompson
Colleagues-Convicts Captain
Halligan Cup 2007

**:: CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP TALLY // Division 1
Championship Points**

» CLUB	Pts
 Woollahra Colleagues	974
 Knox Old Boys	915
 Mosman	813
 Drummoyne	809
 Campbelltown	667
 St Patrick's	486
 Forest	482
 UNSW	406
 Old Ignatians	317
 Barker Old Boys	243