

Andrew French

Hall of Fame 2013



Born in Sydney in 1972 Andrew's family moved to Killcare when he was two years old. He first played football at the age of eight with the Umina club before graduating to representative level, initially with the Central Coast U11 and U12 teams in 1983 and 1984.

The family then moved to Goulburn where Andrew's father was involved in the relocation of the NSW Police Academy. Andrew continued to play representative football while in Goulburn and was selected in the 1985 NSW U13 Country team. In 1986 he travelled from Goulburn to Campbelltown to play in the Sydney Youth League.

The following year the French family returned to the Central Coast where, in his busiest season to date, Andrew played club football with Umina, represented with the Coasties and then won selection in the NSW U14 team which took out that year's National Championships. In 1988 he travelled to Sydney to play in the Sydney Croatia U15 team and was again selected in the NSW State team which retained its national title.

The highlight of Andrew's representative career came in 1989 when he was selected in the Australian Joeys (U17) team where he played alongside future Socceroos including Mark Schwarzer, Tony Popovic, Stan Lazaridis and Zelco Kalac in the 1989 Junior World Cup in Scotland.

Between 1988 and 1990 he played professionally in First Grade with Sydney Croatia in the National Soccer League (NSL) competition helping the club win the State Championships in 1988 and 1989.

By 1991 Andrew had set up his own business on the Central Coast and took the tough decision to step back from professional football to concentrate on his business. His final season of representative football was with the Central Coast Coasties in 1991. The following season, still aged just 20, he returned to Umina where he was to play in that club's first grade team for the next 20 years, more than any other player in the history of the local First Division/Premier League competition.

During his period with Umina he was a major factor in the club winning six league championships and four premierships from seven grand final appearances.

Despite playing the majority of his career as a midfielder or defender Andrew was sent off just once in his entire career, and has never been suspended. He is also a three-time winner (1993, 1999 and 2000) of the prestigious Central Coast First Grade Player of the Year award. Only one other player (Derek Caisley) has achieved this honour.

Andrew stepped down from First Grade following Umina's success in the 2011 Grand Final to spend more time with his family, wife Peta, sons Oliver (9) and Noah (7) and one-year old daughter Lara, but has resisted the temptation to hang up his boots, and has just finished his 21st straight season in Premier League with the Umina Reserve Grade team. He also has plans to resume a junior coaching role with Umina.

In his honour in 2012, the Central Coast Football Association struck the ANDREW FRENCH MEDAL to be presented to the best player of the Men's Premier League Grand Final. A perpetual Award which recognises the outstanding contribution by one of the Central Coast's most talented, durable and highly-respected footballers. He was deservedly inducted into the Hall of Fame 2013.