

Renaye Iserief

Hall of Fame 2013



Renaye Iserief is the highest decorated women's football player from the Central Coast. She has brought fame to her parent Budgewoi Club, to her Central Coast region, to her football State of Northern NSW and, of course, to her Country. From the time when she knocked the ball around with her brothers, Ross and Mark, at a local park, and the time when she was told at 13 in 1976, that she was too young to play in the first Central Coast organised women's competition. She was turned away by Lionel Sneyd, who became her regular coach at all levels (club, region and State). The next year (1977), she was allowed to play. The rest is history, her career blossomed from there. The women's game has blossomed with her and is one of the fastest growing sports today. She was one of the pioneers of the game on the Central Coast and Australia.

Renaye was born in Newcastle in 1963. The family moved to Budgewoi when Renaye was only one. She was always a good athlete ever since her schools days. She excelled in practically all sports she participated in. We are fortunate that she chose soccer to conquer. She was first encouraged to think about serious soccer by leading referee Tim Davies when the whistler employed her to manage his sports store at Budgewoi on the Central Coast. Davies suggested to her she should seriously turn her attention to soccer, and together with the support of her parents, Gerry and

Elaine, and the infectious encouragement from "Mrs Soccer" Irene Sneyd and Irene's husband and the team coach, Lionel, Renaye had the ideal springboard to build her path to the top.

She (14) started her career in the Budgewoi Women's team of 1977. The team were League Champions (Minor Premiers) and lost their Grand Final. The seed had been sown. What a record she has paved in the local league - the CCWSA All Aged 1st grade: 14 seasons spanning 1977-1994, 12 League Championships, 7 Premierships, 1 Joint Premiership and 3 Runners up in the Grand Final. Her domestic playing was not always been on the Central Coast. In 1984 the Budgewoi team played in Sydney and from 1991 the team played in Macquarie (Newcastle) and won the competition. Renaye and several other players then joined the Macquarie State League team in the Sydney competition (1992,1993). She returned to Budgewoi in 1994 to win the local competition, back on home soil. The team went their own way in 1995 and Budgewoi failed to have any Women's teams again until 1999. An end of a dynamic era, centred around Irene and Lionel Sneyd, and Renaye.

From her first year (1977), she stamped her authority over rival defences and at the ripe old age of 14, she was crowned queen of the turf, by winning the coveted CCWSA Player of the Year award. She would take the award another 3 times in 1977, 1979 and 1989. So dominant, as she was, it would not be unusual for her to score more than 75% of the goals scored by the team over the season.

She made her first appearance at the age of 15 in a representative women's team for the CCWSA in 1978 NNSW State Titles. Her participation in the Titles were from 1978 to 1990. Along with this involvement she was also a member of the NNSW State side to play in the National Titles held at different locations around the Australia. The NNSW were runners up three times 1980 (Adelaide), 1982 (Brisbane) and 1987 (Alice Springs), and in 1990 joint winners with NSW (Sydney).

The Central Coast Women's Soccer Association presented Renaye with a Special Achievement Award when she was first named in the Australian Squad in 1980 which was presented to her by the then captain of the Australian Socceroos, Tony Henderson. This award was followed in 1983 by the Australia Day Medal by Gosford City Council for achievements in sport and contribution to women's soccer. Awards from the Australian Women's Soccer Association Certificate of Outstanding Performance in 1988 for 10 years of Representative Football with NNSW and again in 1990 an Achievement Award for 13 National Championships with NNSW.

Her first international debut for the "Soccershe's" now known as the "Matildas" came in Hawaii in 1982. This was followed by a trip to Noumea for the Oceania Championships in 1983. The following year (1984) there were two overseas ventures. A big international event in Zian City in the Peoples Republic of China was followed by a Women's World Championships in Taiwan. In 1988 she suffered ankle problems and had to resign from the National team. Although injured, she supported the creation of a team from the Central Coast in the NSW Women's State League. The team lasted only 2 years but it was a seed sown. It would be another 10 years before it was ventured again.

All in all, Renaye made 30 appearances in the green and gold, finding the back of the net 15 times.

She was recognised in 1986 as one of the best women's soccer players ever to play for Australia.

In 1987 she topped the leading goalscorer chart for all Australian women's players at International level and in the same year, received a Sports Australia Award for the most outstanding sporting achievement within Australia. That award was followed by an Australia Day Medal for achievement in sport (1989) and in 2000 an Australian Sports medal for achievement in sport.. In 2009 she was selected in the 125th Anniversary NNSW Select team.

After finishing up with Budgewoi in 1994 she had a short spell before taking up some coaching positions in the Women's NNSW Intensive Training Centre (ITC) in Newcastle. In 1997-2002, she was involved as coach/player of the NNSWITC teams playing in the Womens NSW State League Division 1. From 2003-2011 she has been involved with Lambton Jaffas (2003), New Lambton (2004-2006) and Merewether (2007-2009, 2011)

Renaye has had a full life in football. No one can deny her history and the achievements. She has reached the heights where most others only dream. She has represented the Central Coast, to her credit, for most of her career and has put the region, as well as her parent club, Budgewoi, on the map. She was deservedly inducted into the Hall of Fame 2013.