

# Eric Todhunter 1923-1997

Life Member CCSA 1968



Eric Todhunter was born in Sydney Crown Street Hospital 1923 and lived in Auburn. Moved to Ettalong in 1961 and immediately set about to find a team or club, which his sons could play soccer. He had previously coached one of his sons aged 12 at Granville. He had promised his boys that there would be competition soccer when they moved to Ettalong. Unfortunately the cupboard was bare. Do you think that would stop Eric. He set up a team with help of equally interested Ettalong residents (Joe Fish, Don Tait and Rene Groothuizen) by arranging a kick around at Ettalong Oval. With the encouraging numbers, social games were organised through 1961. because of his contacts in Sydney, he requested permission to join the Ku-ring-gai Association to start 1962. He attended Ku-Ring-Gai meetings as well. It only lasted part of the season as the opposition were reluctant to travel the distance to play

Ettalong at their home ground. He was President of Ettalong from the beginning 1961 until 1964.

At the same time, the NSW Amateur Body was keen to establish another Association on the Central Coast. The previous Association which was formed 1953 was established primarily for senior players and fell apart in the late 1950s. Bill Brackenbury, the Secretary of NSW Amateur body sent a letter of request to his friend from the Canterbury Club, Frank Nobbs who was working in Gosford as Manager of the Waltons store. Nobbs was asked to organise interested people on the Coast to set up a junior association. Nobbs contacted other ex Canterbury mates living on the Central Coast, namely Don Tait (Ettalong) and Ray Harrison (the Entrance). Nobbs asked them to come to a meeting and bring along any other interested persons. The meeting was held outside the Central Coast Leagues Club on the garden wall. Don Tait brought along Eric Todhunter to the meeting and Ray Harrison brought along Terry Farrell. Frank Nobbs was appointed to oversee the formation and to provide guidance to the new management committee. The rest is history with all men making inroads into the local Central Coast community by visiting known soccer people who had the same ambition to set up a junior local competition. The main players in the inaugural meeting on 16 January 1963 and the first AGM held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1963 were Ray Harrison from The Entrance, Russ Pollock from Gosford, Eric Todhunter from Ettalong, with representatives from other clubs being Eddie Jobson from Brisbania, Terry Farrell of East Gosford and George Hollingsworth from Budgewoi.

Eric took on the role of Secretary/Treasurer with Frank Nobbs as President. The new committee adopted the Constitution of the Canterbury Association in the first instance. It was a hard slog to set up everything but Eric was the heart of the Association and he did the miles to make sure his dream, along with all others, was realised.

In the next 12 years until 1974, Eric was the workhorse which kept the ball rolling. He was President for seven years 1963-1972, Senior Vice President, Treasurer, Delegate on the NSW Amateur Football Board and the Hunter Valley Branch, sat on the Management committee, Fixtures committee and Senior competition committee. He was awarded Life Membership of the CCSA in 1968.

Although Eric came from a Rugby League (Balmain) background, he set about to learn the game by reading as many books as he could find. Due to his age (38) when he moved his family to Ettalong, he put his heart and sole into establishing the game without being a player. He involved himself in administration, coaching and refereeing.

Suitable words cannot be found to thank and recognise the sacrifices Eric made, along with his family (wife June and children) for the good of the game on the Central Coast.

Eric passed away in 1997.

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