

# ON THE



# BALL

ON THE BALL 26<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

FEBRUARY 2014

If you keep a copy of "On The Ball" you may discover that this (including supplements) is the 26<sup>th</sup> copy so I hope that I have been able to keep you up with the whereabouts of fellow players and various items of our history and as I have so often mentioned, you are part of the history of Fitzroy. Your name is recorded somewhere. It may be the AFL, a Weekly Football Record, an Annual Report, etc. Your name is there.

The origin of "On the Ball"- We can thank Paul O'Brien FFC 1966-69 (.47 games) Paul was a great addition to our Committee together with his mate Max Cole but people move on and Paul and his wife Glenys run a ranch (just a little one) at Barwon Downs near Colac. Barbara and I visited them on the 28<sup>th</sup> December. Paul states it is a half-hour drive from Colac. Paul unfortunately has had severe achilles tendon trouble for a number of years. His mate John Newnham FFC 1964-71 (116 games) who lives not far away has similar problems. I didn't realize it but it is apparently a major problem for athletes.

AFL Players Association- An article in the Herald-Sun newspaper states former League footballers who have played at least one senior game and suffering financial hardships related to their playing careers will be protected under an initiative by the Association. The Association already have an assistance scheme whereby members of that Association have a \$5000.00 hardship fund and a health insurance excess reimbursement scheme where members can claim up to \$500.00 for out of pocket expenses. This only applies to expenses incurred through your health insurer. I mis-understood this completely when I made a claim after being some thousands out-of pocket for my surgeon after my most recent hip replacement as my health fund BUPA met all hospital expenses making me ineligible. I am still trying to adjust my mind to this. If you are making a claim, let me know as in the past, all claims have to go through our Association.

Brisbane- What is happening up there? Like myself, many of you would have been surprised by the dismissal of Michael Voss as Coach as we considered the team had given us a pretty good year. We sincerely hope that Justin Leppitsch can continue from where he left off. Good news from Brisbane is that the old side on lion will return in 2015. Will be welcomed by supporters. AFL rules prevent earlier return

Vale! Ray Slocum- The passing of Ray brought together a re-union of Fitzroy players and supporters and it must have been very pleasing for Sandra and the Slocum families to see so many in attendance. Ray played 137 games for Fitzroy from 1957-65 and later coached the Reserves for four seasons. Awarded Life Membership in 1966 and in 2001 was a nominee for Team of Our Century. Born in 1936 he was recruited to Fitzroy from Preston YCW. After a couple of years in the U/19's he made his senior debut in Round 11 of 1957 against South Melbourne. His first senior coach was Bill Stephen and in 1958, Len Smith who introduced the flick pass until it was outlawed and his policy of keeping the ball moving, started the Fitzroy style of play- on football we all remember.

An email survey conducted by Sam Lord of the Brisbane Lions of over 300 past players from Fitzroy, Brisbane Bears and Lions, resulted in 64 responses. Results showed that 60% supported Brisbane Lions, 75% rarely caught up with former teammates, attendances at AFL matches varied- none, 1-2, 3-4, 5-9 and 10. 76% attended Lions re-union style events in past five years and would likely attend again. 85% favoured the casual style event at the footy. 60% are members of our Association, 27% did not know our Association existed. 95% believed in the importance of a Past Players' and Officials' Association. 75% believed Brisbane do enough to acknowledge past players. There are many other details from the survey and they will be disseminated in coming months.

Annual Subscriptions- Bob Beattie surprised me last year when he said that he would like to pay his fees online. When I sorted that out, it was quite simple.

The red Card has again appeared. Our list is being pruned. Postage has or is going up. We haven't heard from you for three years. Have you lost interest? Given us up? Some may have changed address and not notified us. We lose members this way and one is too many.

Web-site- Roy Ferguson is still suffering frustration as he tries to get things on our web-site as he has to rely on other people. He hasn't the knowledge at this stage to get things running and is looking for assistance. Roy has recently moved from Cranbourne to Rowville so is much closer to the action. He is especially keen to ensure he has as many current email addresses as possible and as we are working closely with Sam Lord at the Melbourne office of the Lions, we should eventually get everything under control.

Vale! George Coates- Many people devoted much of their life to football and none more so than George Coates to Fitzroy. Firstly as a player from 1947 to 1954, playing 128 games, granted Life Membership, a member of Committee and Chairman of Selectors. Inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2002, a nominee for Our Team of The Century, awarded the AFL Jack Titus Medal for services to football and capped it all off combining with Arthur Wilson and establishing the Fitzroy Historical Society.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING- Is to be held at the Fitzroy-Victoria Bowling Club on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March commencing 11am. We need numbers to meet quorum requirements and an additional reason is the need to notify members of our new Constitution. This follows changes made by the office of Corporate Affairs bringing in the Incorporated Associations Reform Act. Sounds like a mouthful but simple enough. Eats and drinks follow the meeting and it is a chance to catch up with former team-mates, Make the effort.

FITZROY - When researching a few items for this circular I rely on- The First One Hundred Years- Fitzroy 1883-1983- Roar of The Lions 1893-1986- For the Love of the Jumper and Fitzroy by Jim Main. Each book contains much valuable information but unfortunately the first three are out of print and the last by Jim Main is still available. Items in this book include one name that will live forever at Fitzroy (Haydn Bunton) who passed away on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1955 as the result of a car accident in South Australia. Apart from his wonderful history it includes details of the initial refusal of the League to allow his transfer from Albury to Fitzroy. The book contains full details of Fitzroy teams from 1897 to 1996 plus many accompanying photographs and other details. Still available. Cost \$30.00. It is a heavy book. Costly to post so hopefully other arrangements can be made. Make a great birthday, Christmas present, etc.

Vale! Greg Meese- The Meese name occupies a significant place in the history of Fitzroy and Harry Meese will never be forgotten. We lost a very valuable member with the passing of his son Greg who was a ruckman in the Thirds in his early days but an eyesight problem stopped any further participation. His interest in law led to him qualifying as a Barrister and he played a major part in the "Mediation provisions" which are so important in everyday law now, We have always been proud of our Constitution when compared with others. He played an important part in re-writing this and including the mediation provisions which thankfully we have never had to use..

Annual Re-unions in 2014- Courtesy of Brisbane. Round 9, Lions V North Melbourne 4-40pm. Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May, Etihad Stadium. Round 15, Lions V North Melbourne, 7-40pm, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June, Gabba. Functions booked at Etihad Stadium cost Brisbane in excess of \$80.00. per person. Players who book and don't turn up prove costly. We have long suggested a small up-front fee to counteract this.

Donors- Perusal of the Income and Expenditure section of the Annual Report shows the donations we have received from members this financial year. Their generosity is greatly appreciated and has enabled us over the past two years to donate \$7500.00 towards the Fitzroy Museum at Etihad Stadium (which is utterly magnificent) and also \$2500.00 to member support after a serious illness.