



## **2022 President's Report**

The club entered 2022 full of excitement, with a huge calendar of events and a long season of rugby planned, and I am very pleased to be writing this report following an extremely successful year both on and off the field.

It would be remiss of me to not begin this report by commenting on our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary weekend. What a fantastic opportunity it was for previous and current members to get together to celebrate all things Goulburn Rugby.

Goulburn Rugby Union had another extremely successful year financially, continuing to improve our position and to grow our savings for future projects and initiatives, as well as being able to support the growth of Rugby Union in our region.

I would like to thank all of our existing and new sponsors, who contributed enormously to our success in 2022. This was not limited to support of our teams but also to the support of wonderful events such as the Luke McCue Memorial Day and of course our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary events. Our club is extremely lucky to have a wide pool of businesses who are willing to contribute to our success.

### **Projects**

In 2022 we finalized installation of goal posts on our 2<sup>nd</sup> field, completing this enormous project. A special thanks to Pearson Engineering who fabricated these posts, and to David Anable who led installation. The field has been fittingly named the Klem Oval after a family who have contributed to our club over countless decades.

It was officially opened as part of a huge day in March, in which a great invitational game was played on the field before trial matches for our senior grades. The day culminated in a gala ball at the Veolia Arena, which was a wonderful evening for members, supporters and guests.

### **Events**

In our 150<sup>th</sup> year it was fitting that we packed our calendar full of events. Beginning with the Klem Oval opening, this was flowed with the inaugural Luke McCue Memorial Cup. Luke was a wonderful young man and a talented rugby player, who was unfortunately lost in a tragic car accident in 2020.

The event brought together the Goulburn & Crookwell Rugby Clubs, as well as countless other rugby players and fans from around the region. In an incredibly inclusive format, senior men and women combined with golden oldies and younger players to play games of tens rugby. A feature game was held between Crookwell & Goulburn, with the Crookwell Dogs taking this out in 2022. Another feature was the establishment of the Goulburn Rugby Club Players fund, with gate takings, auction and raffle proceeds kicking off a foundation for this fund.

It was a brilliant concept and will now be continued in coming years as a Memorial Rugby Day in which we remember and honour all of those young people lost within both clubs. The Goulburn v Crookwell game will continue as part of the day, and will continue to be known as the Luke McCue Memorial Cup.

## **Fizzy Reds**

Unfortunately, due to a number of factors, including one of Goulburn's wettest years on record, we were late in getting Fizzy Reds underway this year. The wet weather didn't dampen the enthusiasm however, and a very successful season was had with numbers growth in nearly all age groups.

A special thanks to Robbie Cosgrove who took on the role of Fizzy Reds coordinator as we began the season, and also to the countless coaches, volunteers, referees and committee members who help make this competition happen.

One of our key goals for 2023 is to again grow the player numbers, and we look forward to getting the competition underway earlier than this year to ensure a great season.

## **Senior Men**

Our senior male playing base continues to be very healthy, with many training sessions with attendance of around 30 players.

Unfortunately we lost Ben Pearson as 1<sup>st</sup> grade coach early in the year, following a lengthy pre-season. He put in considerable work to the foundations of the season which should be recognized. Mik Webber and myself took on a joint co-coaching role for the remainder of the season, and I'd like to thank Mik for his incredible passion and expertise.

David Anable was the coach of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for our 2022 season, while also helping Mik and myself substantially with advice, training session design and on-field tactics. In my eleven years in senior rugby I do not think I have worked with or known someone as dedicated to player development as 'Jack' who has done an enormous job from the Under 18s level through to 1<sup>st</sup> grade as well as coaching at a representative level on numerous occasions. I believe David is looking to have a well earned year off in 2023, and his expertise will be missed.

There was competition for positions right through both grades, with some tough calls having to be made for 1<sup>st</sup> grade positions and then even for the second-grade bench some weeks!

1<sup>st</sup> Grade finished Minor Premiers after the longest season played in over five years, however knew they had a significant competition leading into finals from Royals & Tuggeranong. Unfortunately in a very tight final against Tuggeranong they went down 18-10 in a game that could've swung either way until the last few minutes.

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade finished in sixth place in a very competitive division. On numerous times they faced former John I Dent players, and they showed incredible resilience. The core of this team will play plenty of 1<sup>st</sup> grade for years to come, with the club in very safe hands.

## **Senior Women**

Our senior women took a hit on player numbers coming into the 2022 pre-season, so chose to enter into the ACT Women's 10s this year.

The core of the team is incredibly classy, and they showed this all season long, entering finals with only one loss which occurred on a weekend where many key players were away. Our women were comprehensive in the grand final, defeating ADFA 38 – 0 in a game that was never in any doubt. What a fantastic achievement, and a credit to this young group.

The skill of a number of our players was on show in representative game in 2022, as you will see in our rep honours list.

### **Rep Honours**

- Ashley Mewburn, Jordan Brooker – ACT Kestrals
- Ashley Mewburn, Elly Hazelton, Jordan Brooker, Krystal Blackwell – ACT Brumbies Country
- Alec Palmer, Adam Lachlan, Jackson Reardon Jordan Wilcox, Will Mooney – ACT Brumbies Country
- Toby Klem – U16 ACT Brumbies
- Abram Kara, Alec Palmer, Adam Lachlan, Alec Palmer, Ben Todkill, Brad Clements, Corbie Yeo, Jackson Reardon, Jordan Wilcox, Oscar Cunningham, Will Mooney – Monaro Rugby
- Ashley Mewburn, Chloe Waddell, Elly Hazelton, Hope Cohen, Jordan Brooker, Krystal Blackwell – Monaro Rugby

Once again I wish to thank our sponsors, committee and members for their support of the club throughout 2022.

The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Weekend was an excellent opportunity for us to come together to share memories and tall tales. On a personal note it was great to meet a number of past presidents, club legends, members and contributors throughout the weekend. On the day we also took the opportunity to honour three in particular; John Osmond, Terry Tilden and Valentine Riley. Three of the hills at Rugby Park now proudly display these names, who have been integral to Goulburn Rugby's success.

A final thanks to those who pulled together the Gala Ball as part of this weekend. It was an extremely high class event, which impressed not only our members but also the general community of Goulburn. It was an exceptional way to cap off the 2022 year.

In 2023 we look to continue to build on our success on and off the field. The committee is full of energy but we are always looking to take on new members, and if you are not able to do this please consider supporting the club however you can.