

Briars Senior Rugby 2017

Chairman's Report

David Lannan



This year we set about building the club for a return to First Division and to prepare for the Briars Centenary in 2018. There were lots of exciting things happening with the recruitment of a new coaching team, the formation of a Rugby Restoration Board, the opening of the new Ted Stockdale Pavilion, and a pre- season tour to Orange.

We made many giant steps forward on the playing field with improved strategies, better behaviour and increased commitment to training but unfortunately without the results on the scoreboards. However, we have built the foundations for a strong year in 2018 and we will reap the rewards of all our work this year.



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Getting ready for the 2017 season

The planning for season 2017 started soon after the end of the 2016 season. With the resignation of Damien Johnson from the Head Coach role, an opportunity arose to bring in a new coaching team and continue building the club towards a goal of First Division. The Rugby Committee and Briars Board agreed to form two groups of volunteers to focus on the long-term success of Briars Rugby by forming the Rugby Restoration Board to bring in change; and the Rugby Management Committee to oversee the ongoing management of the club.

The Rugby Restoration Board (RRB) was chaired by Brett Howle, Briars Club President, and included a mix of Old Boys and current players in Chris Walker, John Slender, Kerry Constanti, Andrew Hogg (Snr), Aaron Boyter, Ash Simpson and David Lannan.

The Rugby Management Committee (RMC) consisted of the committee volunteers elected at the Briars Rugby AGM. This included David Lannan (Chairman), Rebecca Burton (Secretary), Andrew Hogg (Snr) (Treasurer), Alex Gonano (Registrar), Kerry Constanti (Gear Marshall), Jules Boyter (Junior Rugby), Aaron Boyter (Board Representative) and general volunteers Dante Finlay Melville (Schools Recruitment), Luke Sinai, Lachlan Cameron, David McDougal, Andrew Hogg (Jnr), David Lewis, Greg Black, and James Black.

Recruitment of new coach - Lachlan White

The RRB's initial focus was on the recruitment of a new coach. With a number of applications and a tough interview process, Briars Rugby welcomed Old Boy and 2006 Grand Final winning prop, Lachlan White, to the Head Coach position.

Lachlan has advanced his coaching expertise since those playing days, now the Director of Rugby at Trinity College and NSW Schools Head Coach. Lachlan also brought a star second grade coach in David Munnoch, also a Trinity coach and links to the club through his son Adrian.



Cronulla Beach Fives

Early January saw a new pre-season event hit the shores of Cronulla with the Beach 5s. As it was still the off-season for most players, Briars pulled together a mix of players looking for an early run hosted by NSW Waratahs.

We had a bus trip down King Georges Rd to North Cronulla Beach where an inflatable field had been set up just above the tide line. With eight men's teams and eight women's teams from across Sydney competing the goal was to survive the sand and win a game or two! The boys played well winning one game and losing two— unfortunately to the Grand Finalists, although giving them both a run for their money! Briars Rugby Facebook page live streamed the event.

Pre-season 2017

Briars Rugby commenced preseason training in February 2017. With the new coaching staff for 1s & 2s, we also welcomed our 3s coaches, Old Boys, Tim Entwisle & Scott McGill.

Our off-season recruitment efforts were as successful as in previous years, with a good number of new players coming to the club. Briars lost players from 2016 mostly through retirement or injury, plus the Merrylands players had headed back to their club after a 12-month suspension. Briars offset these losses by recruiting a number of new players. A strong recruitment drive in the U21s age group saw us field some excellent players in Year 12 from local schools with a big thanks to Andrew Hogg (Jnr). We were looking good for a Colts team in 2017!

Orange trip and pre-season games

The preseason plans included a trip to Orange to play the Emus and trial games against Drummoyne & Harlequins at Drummoyne; UNSW, Lane Cove &

Merrylands for a rare trial at Rothwell; and St Ives for the traditional Walker Cup: plus, the Subbies Sevens' event. Unfortunately, due to horrific wet weather through March in Sydney our trial days at Drummoyne, Rothwell & the Sevens tournament were washed out meaning we only got two trial games in.

The 2017 season

About Division 4

In 2017, Briars Rugby remained in NSW Suburban Rugby Division 4. Our competition in Division 4 is diverse and drawn from across Sydney: Blacktown,

Canterbury and Rouse Hill in the western suburbs, Macquarie University in the north, Harlequins and Sydney Irish in Sydney's east and a new introduction in

2017 of old rival Oatley in the southern suburbs.

Season launch

The season was launched with a social event at the Concord Bowling Club, with a large contingent of new players coming along to get to know everyone. A number



of games occurred throughout the evening raising funds for future social activities throughout the season.

Season results

Unfortunately, our teams didn't make any Finals games in 2017, for the first time in a long time. 1st Grade finished the year in 6th position on 23 points (4W, 10L, 7BP), 2nd Grade finished the year in 6th position on 30 points (5W, 9L, 10BP) and 3rd Grade finished in 6th position on 21 points (4W, 10L, 5BP). Our Colts team didn't get off the ground either, playing 2 games but numbers were not strong and filtered those players into the senior grades.

Presentation Night

The season ended with our Presentation Night in the Ted Stockdale lounge at Briars Sports, celebrating the efforts of the players in 2017 and thanking the volunteers for their efforts to make 2017 a great year of Rugby.

Social events

Briars Rugby held a number of social events with seven home games at Rothwell.

Ladies Day

Ladies Day raised funds for the Breast Cancer Network and First Grade wore pink socks in support of the cause. This coincided with the opening of the Ted

Stockdale Pavilion at Rothwell Park attracting an attendance of 1918 people as announced by our regular game day announcer and DJ Anthony Deep.

Old Boys

Briars didn't have a specific Old Boys Day in 2017, but on five of our seven games we invited players of earlier eras who had played in grand finals back to Rothwell to pay tribute to these former players of the club.

Back to Briars Day

Back to Briars Day was held as our last home game which focused on the family side of the club. It brought our new Junior Rugby players down for the day, who ran out onto the ground with First Grade and enjoyed the jumping castle.

Rugby Lunch

Briars Rugby also hosted a Rugby Lunch at Briars Sports, packing out the place with 150 attendees. Some excellent speakers were in attendance with the MC duties being provided by Fab Fenton and an interview with Australia's oldest living Wallaby, Eric Tweedle. Fundraising from the event went towards Briars Rugby.

McLean Medal—Ash Simpson

A big congratulations to Ash Simpson who was awarded the McLean Medal at the NSW Suburban Rugby Awards. A true reflection of his effort as a player, 1st Grade Captain and Club Captain in 2017.

Thank you to our volunteers and supporters

Throughout the season the canteen was staffed by the Lannan & Constanti families who were continually praised for the quality of the food and friendliness of the service. We appreciate your help very much. Players were also involved each week in the setup and pull down of the equipment to ensure that the ground was picture perfect for all games on the day.

A final big thankyou to all players, coaches, physios, wives, girlfriends, family, Old Boys, fans and Briars Sports for their ongoing support of Briars Rugby in 2017.

With the celebration of 100 years of Briars in 2018, we look forward to another amazing year of rugby.

Briars First Grade Team 2017

Standing (left - right):

Stacey Howcroft, Grant Isles, Aaron Boyter, Alex Gonano, Adrian Fiatorone, Andrew Hogg, Tim Gorman.

Kneeling (left to right):

Will Wan, Michael Ly, Dave Pavihi, Ash Simpson, Doug Paish, Praveen Shanmugalingam, Matt Syron



Briars First Grade Team 2017

Standing (left to right):

James Lu, Peter Ananin, Andrew Kuo, James Shehadie, Jake Kamire, Nathan Taru, Miles Cheetham, Jordan Woodward, Adam Woolaston

Sitting (left to right):

Tom Entwisle, Mark Nelson, James Ashton- Maxwell (captain), David Munnoch (coach), Michael Taberner, Manuel Oramas, Nick Alvaro



Briars Third Grade Team 2017

Standing (left to right):

Scott McGill (coach), Apenisa Matairavula, Nick Alvaro, Tony Elias, Greg Black, Joseph Elias, Ra Tawhiti, Derek Henderson, Reuben Sinai, Mitch Warner, Michael Gallagher, David Fatseas, John Klumpp, Robert Hamilton, Jake Kamire, Tim Entwisle (coach)

Sitting (left to right):

Luke Sinai (on ground), Dante Finlay-Melville, David Meiklejohn, Ben Edwards (capt), David Lannan, Jack Klumpp, Manuel Oramas, Kim Taulani

