

BLUES

IN

TIME

The University of Melbourne Sports Union officially gave birth to the Soccer Club on Wednesday (appropriately) 9 July, 1947. The Club now comprises the University Blues, University Rangers and University Womens' teams. What follows is a brief chronological history of the University Blues during the author's years with the Club. The last three pages include a Historical League Record and Honour Roll.

Harry Gill
July 1997

1981:

Team: Tan, Corsar, Fridell, Gipperich, Attard, Gioskos, Neales, Austen, Webster, Clayworth, Woskoboenko, Campbell.

In the 1970's, there was no promotion and relegation between the State and Provisional Leagues. The VSF changes this ruling in the late 1970's, thus unleashing a flood of quality teams from the Provisional League who rapidly surged up the hierarchy. Witness the names of teams in the extract from Soccer Action which were then the next rung below the Provisional Leagues. This also resulted in the Uni Blues arriving at 1981 after three consecutive years of relegation, in Provisional Division 3. However, 1980 and 1981 saw the team pick up an enormous amount of young talent which would become entrenched within a few years.

The opening match was against Bulleen who are now riding high in the Premier League, and on the old version of what is now the Veneto Sports Complex. A highlight of the season was a 4-0 thrashing of Moe, a rare win in Gippsland. Johnny Gioskos scored a fine hatrick including a trademark free kick. The season also saw the successful implementation of Noel Magee's famed "pivot" defence.

At the end of this season, the VSF tried to kick us into the District (Sunday) Leagues. After some nifty work, we were reinstated into Provisional Division 3, albeit that our ladder position should have put us in Division 2 after the League was restructured.

1982:

Team: Webster, Tan, Corsar, Attard, Gipperich, Neales, Austen, Clayworth, Gill, Huczek, Kinsella.

Three games in, three wins and 13 goals had us looking like a hot prospect. However, a mid season slump dampened the early promise. A lowlight was leading 3-0 against Burnley at half time, then losing 3-4. A highlight was a pulsating late comeback to draw 3-3 with League champion South Dandenong whose travelling hordes led to our biggest ever home crowd of about 250.

The Cup run ended early, but only after losing 9-10 to Berwick in an epic penalty shoot-out, which resulted in some players having to take penalties twice.

Tim Neales capped off a fine season by winning the League's Best and Fairest Award. Tony Clayworth scored a remarkable 25 goals, still a Club record.

The Reserves ran away with the Championship, dropping only one loss and one draw and scoring 120 goals in 26 matches.

1983:

Team: Tan, Attard, Corsar, Scerri, R. Green, Metcalfe, Austen, Pacillo, Lopez, Clayworth, Gill, Huczek, Savage.

We entertained Springvale United at Princes Park in Round 14, after they had won their first 13 games (and went on to win the League comfortably). A brilliant hatrick from Tony Clayworth and a 35 yard drive from Harry Gill stunned the visitors, and we recorded a memorable 4-1 win. Unfortunately, Clayworth and goalkeeper Tan were poached by National League Team Footscray JUST after this game.

A further highlight was the Firsts reaching the Provisional Cup semi-final, only to be outplayed 3-0 by Mordialloc Clarinda.

The Reserves scored 124 goals in 26 games, but still only managed second spot.

As a result of a reshuffle, we were promoted into Division 2 at the end of this season, together with the majority of the upper half of our League.

1984:

Team: Tan, Thompson, Corsar, Gelis, Lopez, Clayworth, Austen, Kinsella, Gipperich, Huczek, Gill.

Tan returned from Footscray to take over coaching and goalkeeping duties. He encountered a remarkable season which started without a win in the first six games, but saw us lose only once in the last 13 games. Remarkable also for being one of the tightest Leagues, which was reflected in the number of draws. A very fine first season for the new coach, finishing 5th in a quality League, only four points from top spot.

A lowlight was the lowlife spectators from Cheltenham who invaded the pitch in Round 6, ten minutes before the end of a fiercely contested nil all draw, causing its abandonment. It also caused Alex Corsar to lose a tooth at the hands of a spectator, and Cheltenham to be expelled from the League.

The end of season competition in Hawaii was apparently a great success.

1985:

Team: Tan, Gelis, Hair, Corsar, Attard, Bunn, Gioskos, Clayworth, Lopez, Gill, Lewis.

A solid start and finish sandwiched a diabolical mid season slump, which saw us threatened by relegation towards late season. At Round 4, we reached our Club record of 10 consecutive unbeaten matches (including the six carried forward from the end of 1984).

A couple of tragic tales from this season. A forty yard chip over goalkeeper Tan (who is difficult to beat) by the hapless Andy Bunn is the most spectacular own goal I have ever seen. Leading Altona 4-2 when they had a man sent off, only to draw 4-4, was another tragedy.

Tom Jovanovski started making his presence felt around the Club late in the season with a hatrick against Monash.

Tony Clayworth capped off a purple patch in his career by winning the League's Best and Fairest Award.

1986:

Team: McCulloch, Kraszlan, Gelis, Corsar, Austen, Gill, Clayworth, Neales, Lavoipierre, Symons, Hunter.

Tim Neales drove the midfield, Clayworth notched another hatrick against South Dandenong, and the rich talent of Eric Lavoipierre came and went, but this was essentially a forgettable season which saw us relegated. Coach Alex Corsar, who had been a Club stalwart and personality for many years, has unfortunately never been seen since.

1987:

Team Veitch, Hair, Guthrie, Tan, Kennedy, Gill, Neales, Austen, Hall, Symons, Brown, Clayworth, Jovanovski.

Marmie Metcalfe had a solid season in his debutante year as coach. Rod Green's promising but injury-plagued career finally ended in another comeback attempt in the first match against Burwood in the Reserves. The pick of the results was a very polished late season 4-2 win at Lalor, with Andy Brown and Tim Neales starring with two goals apiece.

1988:

Team: Veitch, Hair, Guthrie, Kennedy, Tan, Kraszlan, Austen, Gill, Neales, Houston, R. Hall, Symons, Brown, Jovanovski.

The success of this team was based primarily on its uncompromising defence, being goalkeeper Stuart Veitch, defenders Andy Kennedy, Tan Yeng Hock, Ray Hair, Woody Guthrie and (occasionally) John Kraszlan, all of whom polled very well in the Best and Fairest.

The season started with four consecutive wins then came and went in waves. Round 18 saw a 2-1 win against leaders South Dandenong, putting us within one point of them. Even in late August, with four games remaining, we were in fourth position but only one point from the top. A 1-0 defeat at Wantirna (at Elwood Park) put paid to a season which had always held out the prospect of promotion. Despite crashing badly at the end, we still finished only six points from top spot. A League restructure nevertheless saw us promoted back into Division 2 together with the upper half of the League.

The Reserves covered themselves in glory by reaching the Reserves Cup final, albeit losing 4-0 in that match.

1989:

Team: Muldoon, Hair, Guthrie, Tan, Kennedy Gill, Houston, Neales, Gilbert, Symons, Brown, Hunter.

We started well with one loss in the first nine matches but faded significantly thereafter. A highlight was Tim Neales playing at Cranbourne on FA Cup Final Day straight after the birth of his first child, Emma, and laying off the pass to Gill for the only goal of the game (which cost Cranbourne promotion).

We reached the Provisional Cup Semi-Final again, where we came up against the South American skills of Division 1 outfit Prahran. Although we fought back gamely from a 0-3 deficit with goals from Brown and Neales, we were knocked out 2-3.

The post season Soccer/cultural trip to Vietnam was a long time in the planning, but a great success for the 15 who participated. We were the first Australian sporting team to tour post war Vietnam, only months after they re-opened their doors to the West. At least 13 hours of video footage documents this particular Tour of Duty. It included two matches against Vietnamese National League teams. Although the results were not spectacular, playing in front of up to 8000 spectators was. This was our 14 days of fame.

1990:

Team: Tan, Jovanovski, Guthrie, Kennedy, Gill, Neales, Gilbert, Symons, Cullum, Clayworth, Brown, Papoulias, Munoz, Cameron, Yamaoka.

A baptism of fire for Clayworth's coaching career, with five consecutive losses. He then changed our system to a longer ball style and we clamboured gradually up the ladder. We were still in trouble right until the end, with five teams apparently to be relegated to accommodate another League re-shuffle. Defeating Ascot St. Markes 3-1 and Kew 5-1 in the last two matches ensured that we finished outside the danger zone. The victory against highflying Ascot was one of the best ever team performances by the Club, with Clayworth (2 goals) and Woody Guthrie particularly dominant.

1991:

Team: Tan, Guthrie, Kennedy, Austen, Gill, Neales, Pires, Hall, Gilbert, Clayworth, Cullum.

The season started very well with three wins and a draw, including wins against Lalor and Brandon Park, who ultimately finished first and third. However, it again faded badly from us.

Round 2 was a 7-0 win against Brintons, including a hatrick from Andy Brown. Round 11, 1st June, 1991, was a Club record 9-2 thrashing of Wantirna, including four goals from Clayworth. A topsy turvy season in many respects, it also included a 7-0 loss against Hoppers Crossing.

The season ended with one of the most forgettable games of soccer I can remember, a 5-0 defeat in late September Ballarat, in freezing, windy conditions which brought on an almost horizontal hail storm.

1992:

Team: Soanes, Guthrie, Kennedy, O'Sullivan, Gipperich, Gill, Gilbert, Symons, Hall, Dimitropoulos, Clayworth, Brown, Munoz.

We tried our luck with a new ground at Point Cook, but the result was not positive. This League had clearly become too good for us. We went the last 15 matches without a win, only taking 2 points in that time. It was clearly a time for rebuilding, with half the team too slow and the other half inexperienced. We were relegated to Division 3. A positive was the high proportion of goals coming from dead-ball situations, thanks to Chris Gilbert's genius in this domain.

1993:

Team: Kraszlan, Kennedy, Gill, Gilbert, C. Metcalfe, B. Hall, Clayworth, Symons, Ryan, McRobert, Van Den Berg.

We returned to our familiar home ground at Princes Park. A solid start to the season saw us leading the ladder after 11 rounds, but this was followed by one point from the next eight matches (including a spell of six games where we scored only one goal) which resulted in our mid table finish.

The undoubted highlight was the first ever Blues -v- Rangers derby, which we won 3-1 with goals from Chris Metcalfe, Clayworth and Mick Symons.

1994:

Team: Soanes, Clayworth, Cameron, Gurr, McRobert, Gill, Symons, Gilbert, Rooney, Brown, Marques, Ryan, Hair.

Another new home ground, this time on the billiard table surface of Ridley and MacAllister Ovals at the north end of Royal Park. A very disappointing season which did not deliver what it should have in a much weaker League after our relegation. Highlights included defender-turned-striker, Ray Hair, notching a hatrick in a 7-1 win over West Preston, and a fighting comeback to defeat North Caulfield 5-3, including an early sign of bigger things to come from 2-goal Miguel Marques.

1995:

Team: Soanes, Cameron, McRobert, O'Sullivan, Gill, Pisarek, Neales, Farris, Marques, Brown, Ryan.

We finally moved to our new and permanent ground on Princes Park. A mid season surge saw us challenging the leading 3, but an insipid 2-1 home defeat to Templestowe in Round 16 marked the end of any real challenge for promotion. Coach Andy Kennedy nevertheless saw us chalk up our best League position in recent history, fourth.

Round 8 saw a memorable 3-0 drubbing of the Rangers, with two more goals from Marques and one from Gill, and Chris Farris dominating in the midfield. Round 14 against Riversdale saw four goals in a dramatic last 20 minute comeback for a 5-3 win, with rare goals from Dave McRobert, Chris Archibald and Ross Cameron, plus regular scorers Andy Brown and Mark Pisarek. The penultimate round saw a hard earned and entertaining 3-3 draw with powerful runaway champions, Endeavour United. Another feature was the consistently brilliant late season goalkeeping efforts of Dave Soanes, earning him five consecutive best on ground performances.

1996:

Team: Soanes, Cameron, McRobert, O'Sullivan, Kennedy, Clayworth, Neales, Gilbert, Seviour, Gill, Gossan, Marques, Brown, Flynn.

We secured, then quickly lost, a top quality coach in Bobby McGuinness. This threw us into disarray, and the season never recovered. It included a shocking run of defeats (including three in a row which yielded no goals and conceded 17), and saw us finish marginally last on goal difference. A standout game during the regular season was a spirited comeback for a 3-3 draw at Keilor, inspired by great games from Marques and Gilbert.

We were required to play off against the last-placed teams in the other two Division 3 Leagues for the one spot avoiding relegation. This otherwise lamentable season was then concluded with one of the best wins the Club has had in a 2-0 final playoff match against a surprisingly powerful North Caulfield. This was a great team performance, capped off by goals from Marques and Neales. The significance of the match was in avoiding the drop to obscurity in the Amateur Sunday Leagues, and ought to be the springboard for a Uni Blues recovery.

Other season highlights were Clayworths' 100th Club goal off a pass from Gill in an early season cup match at Mill Park, and Gill's own long-awaited 100th in the first playoff against Upfield at the other end of the season.

A Personal Note:

The Uni Blues have not won any honours, at least in recent years. This remains a burning ambition of mine. However, it is a Club with proud traditions. Sporting Clubs often enjoy a strong sense of camaraderie. We have always outstripped others in sharing the joy of victory, the pain of loss, the companionship that extends well beyond the game, the entertainment and the philosophy. We are a self-run Club, in a short community. As the Club enters a watershed period, with numerous older players retiring and younger ones taking over, may the tradition continue.

Thanks to all the team mates, coaches, late night philosophers at Naughton's, indefatigable golfers, weary card players, tourists to Vietnam, Corowa and the eight Intervarsities, girlfriends and wives for making the Club a family and a home for the last 17 years. And especially to two great friends and sources of inspiration, Tony Clayworth and Andy Kennedy.

Harry

LEAGUE RECORD

| Year | League | Position/ No. of Teams | Record (W D L F A Pts) | Coach |
|------|--------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1981 | Prov 3 | 7/12 | 8 4 10 32 35 20 | Noel Magee |
| 1982 | Prov 3 | 5/14 | 12 6 8 54 39 30 | Noel Magee |
| 1983 | Prov 3 | 8/14 | 9 4 13 48 58 22 | Noel Magee |
| 1984 | Prov 2 | 5/13 | 9 10 5 34 35 28 | Tan Yeng Hock |
| 1985 | Prov 2 | 9/13 | 8 7 9 34 42 23 | Tan Yeng Hock |
| 1986 | Prov 2 | 13/13 | 2 8 14 27 56 12 | Alex Corsar |
| 1987 | Prov 3 | 6/14 | 12 4 10 45 43 28 | Marmie Metcalfe, Chris Scerri, Clint Gipperich* |
| 1988 | Prov 3 | 6/14 | 13 4 9 43 35 30 | Marmie Metcalfe |
| 1989 | Prov 2 | 8/14 | 7 8 11 33 41 22 | Marmie Metcalfe |
| 1990 | Prov 2 | 11/16 | 8 6 16 39 50 22 | Tony Clayworth, Tan Yeng Hock* |
| 1991 | Prov 2 | 10/13 | 5 5 14 36 57 15 | Tan Yeng Hock |
| 1992 | Prov 2 | 14/14 | 3 4 19 21 52 10 | Tony Clayworth, Tan Yeng Hock* |
| 1993 | Prov 3 | 8/14 | 9 5 12 38 54 23 | Tony Clayworth |
| 1994 | Prov 3 | 7/11 | 7 3 10 44 46 17 | Dave McRobert |
| 1995 | Prov 3 | 4/12 | 9 6 7 43 47 33 | Andy Kennedy |
| 1996 | Prov 3 | 12/12 | 4 4 14 28 61 16 | Greg Flynn, Bobby McGuinness* |

* Coached part season only

RECORD AGAINST INDIVIDUAL TEAMS (Pre-1997)

| Team | Played | Won | Drawn | Lost | For | Against | Best Result | Worst Result |
|---------------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-----|---------|----------------|-----------------|
| Monash | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 14 | 17 | 4-1 | 1-6 |
| Ringwood | 12 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 28 | 21 | 4-2 | 2-4 |
| Elwood (formerly Port) | 16 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 25 | 29 | 3-0 | 0-4 |
| Melb Uni Rangers | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 3-0 | 0-3 |
| Keilor | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 12 | 18 | 4-2 | 2-6 |
| Ashburton | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 11 | 1-0 | 0-5 |
| Newborough/Yallourn | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 2-0 | 0-6 |

HONOUR ROLL FIRSTS

| Year | Best & Fairest | Runner Up | Top Scorer |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1980 | Tim Neales | John Gioskos | |
| 1981 | Tim Neales | John Gioskos | Ian Campbell 8 |
| 1982 | Steve Austen | | Tony Clayworth 25 |
| 1983 | Alex Corsar | Rod Green | Tony Clayworth 10 |
| 1984 | John Thompson | Alex Corsar | Harry Gill 9 |
| 1985 | Tony Clayworth | Stacey Gelis | Richard Lewis 7 |
| 1986 | Tony Clayworth | Tim Neales | Tony Clayworth 9 |
| 1987 | Tim Neales | Ray Hair | Tim Neales 11 |
| 1988 | Andy Kennedy | Stuart Veitch | Tom Jovanovski, Andy Brown 9 |
| 1989 | Tan Yeng Hock | Chris Gilbert | Andy Brown 12 |
| 1990 | Tony Clayworth | Tan Yeng Hock | Tony Clayworth 7 |
| 1991 | Tony Clayworth | Steve Austen | Tony Clayworth 6 |
| 1992 | Kevin O'Sullivan Chris Gilbert | | Chris Gilbert 7 |
| 1993 | Maurice Ryan | Dave McRobert | Maurice Ryan, Chris Gilbert 9 |
| 1994 | Andy Brown | Harry Gill | Andy Brown 12 |
| 1995 | Dave McRobert | Harry Gill | Andy Brown 13 |
| 1996 | Miguel Marques | Tim Neales | Miguel Marques 12 |

HONOUR ROLL RESERVES

| Year | Best & Fairest | Runner Up | Top Scorer |
|-------------|---------------------------|------------------|---|
| 1980 | | | |
| 1981 | Mick Pacillo | Marmie Metcalfe | Ian Campbell, Tony Clayworth, Tan Yeng Hock 7 |
| 1982 | Mick Pacillo | | Fred Woskoboenko 15 |
| 1983 | John Thompson | George Huczek | Fred Woskoboenko 19 |
| 1984 | | | Dario Nandapi 13 |
| 1985 | Marmie Metcalfe | Mick Symons | Dario Nandapi 12 |
| 1986 | Alex Duran | Marmie Metcalfe | George Huczek, Tom Jovanovski 9 |
| 1987 | Arthur Papoulias | | Tom Jovanovski 21 |
| 1988 | Ross Cameron | George Huczek | |
| 1989 | Tony Clayworth | Arthur Papoulias | |
| 1990 | Marmie Metcalfe | Harry Gill | |
| 1991 | Casey Yamaoka | Kevin O'Sullivan | George Huczek 7 |
| 1992 | Ross Cameron | Colin | Gilbert Siu 6 |
| 1993 | Theo Tsichrintzis | Marmie Metcalfe | Sam Kouroupidis 6 |
| 1994 | Kevin O'Sullivan | Jason Stokes | Miguel Marques 5 |
| 1995 | Chris Archibald | Michael Cosmano | Michael Cosmano 22 |
| 1996 | Peter O'Byrne | Steve Austen | Michael Cosmano 8 |