

Roger Dunn Medal

In season **2014** the Tumby Bay Football Club Committee decided to honour the memory of arguably, the club's greatest ever player Roger Dunn by naming the A Grade Best & Fairest in his honour. The recipient is now be awarded the Roger Dunn Medal.

For the benefit of those that didn't witness or have any knowledge of Roger's tremendous football career, below is a snapshot of his achievements for both the Tumby Bay and Sturt Football Clubs.

For the younger players coming through the grades that might in future years win the Best & Fairest.... hopefully they will gain a greater appreciation and respect for the Roger Dunn Medal.

Career highlights

In **1955** Roger, at the age of fifteen played in Tumby Bay's Eastern Eyre Football Association Premiership win against Ungarra. He booted 5 goals and was named best on ground.

In **1956** Roger moved to Adelaide and commenced playing for Sturt's Senior Colts

From **1957 to 1960** Roger played for Sturt's senior team.

Season **1961** saw the return of Roger to the Tumby Bay Football Club, and he was duly appointed Captain Coach.

In a magnificent season, both personally and from a team perspective Roger wins the Mail Medal as the fairest & most brilliant player in the Eastern Eyre Association and Tumby Bay wins the Premiership against Port Neill. Roger is named best player after kicking five goals.

In **1962** Tumby Bay decided to leave the Eastern Eyre Association and head south to compete in the Port Lincoln Football League. Roger is appointed Captain Coach for a second year and Tumby Bay now donning the Double Blues Guernsey make a bold start to the season in their new league before Roger was sidelined for much of the second half of the year with injury, which ultimately cost him a second Mail Medal. He returned to the side just before seasons end and guided his team to the preliminary final where they unfortunately surrendered a 26-point three quarter time lead in a narrow loss to the Wayback Football Club.

In **1963** Roger returned to Adelaide to recommence his career with the Double Blues of Sturt, who were now coached by the legendary Jack Oatey. On a Thursday afternoon he would fly to Adelaide for training and return home on the Sunday after the game. A ritual he would perform until the end of his league career with the Sturt Football Club.

1965 hailed a new era at Sturt and Roger was a big part of the club's climb up the ladder. He played in Sturt's losing grand final team against Port Adelaide, going down by only 3 points in front of over 50,000 spectators.

In **1966** Roger was probably at the peak of his football prowess and it was no surprise to see him rewarded with selection in the South Australian State Side that competed in the Australian Football Championships in

Hobart. Later that year he became a premiership player in Sturt's annihilation of Port Adelaide. Roger was named high amongst the best players for Sturt.

In **1967** due to injury early in the season, Roger plays only a handful of games for Sturt, before agreeing mid-season to captain/coach Tumby Bay for the remainder of the year.

Roger shocks the football community by winning the **1967** Mail Medal after playing just 6 minor round games.

After Tumby are eliminated from the Port Lincoln premiership race he is invited back to Adelaide by Sturt to play in the **1967** final series and kicks the winning goal just before full time in Sturt's narrow Premiership defeat of Port Adelaide.

In **1968** Roger re-signs as Tumby Bay's captain coach and wins back-to-back Mail Medals....his third in total. He guides his team from fourth position to win the **1968** Port Lincoln Football League Premiership against Lincoln South after a last-minute goal kicked by John Lodge. Roger is influential in the win gathering numerous possessions and being the protector of many of his younger teammates. With the game getting very willing and the Eagles throwing everything at the Double Blues Roger who is banged-up and close to exhaustion is quoted as telling his players at three quarter time.....words to the effect "You guys worry about getting the footy.... leave the other stuff to me".

Roger who earlier in the season qualified for player life membership is once again invited back to Adelaide to participate in the SANFL finals series for Sturt but unfortunately sustains an injury that prevents him playing in the Double Blues third straight premiership win against the Magpies.

From **1969 to 1971** Roger continues to Captain Coach Tumby Bay and Lincoln Districts as well as captaining the Eyre Peninsula team before retirement at the end of the **1971** season.

Just to quickly summarize Roger's career.

For Tumby Bay he played approx 110 games and booted over 200 goals. He is a three-time premiership player for the club (twice as captain/coach) He is a three times Mail Medallist and was named Tumby Bay's Best & Fairest player on five occasions. He captained/coached the side for 7 seasons and was a non-playing coach for a further two years. Roger was captain/coach of the victorious **1968** and **1970** Lincoln Districts Mortlock Shield teams. He represented Eyre Peninsula on 6 occasions (twice as captain) He was named first rover and captain of Tumby Bay's team of the century in 2006 and was awarded life membership of the club in **1978**.

For the Sturt Football Club, he played a total of 139 games and kicked exactly 200 goals. He is a life member of both the Sturt Football Club and the South Australian National Football League. He is a dual premiership player.

Roger was and still is held in great esteem by the Sturt Football Club, its players, officials, and coaches alike, none more so than the late Jack Oatey and I would like to highlight just two events that illustrate this best.

In **1982**, Jack Oatey selected his 'Vintage Team' a team consisting of 21 players he considered to be the finest he had coached in his 21-year reign at Sturt, a reign that yielded no fewer than seven SANFL

premierships. Roger was chosen as the team's first rover..... Incidentally, Roger was flown in from the Adelaide Airport in a helicopter that landed in the middle of Unley Oval to attend the event in which the team was announced in front of its members and supporters.

The second event was in **1971** when Sturt advised officials and sponsors of an end of season \$15,000 Lightning Carnival to be held in Perth that the club would be unable to participate due to a prior commitment. That commitment was in fact an earlier agreement that Oatey and Sturt had with Roger to travel to Tumby Bay for a Gala Day to raise money for Oval Improvements and play against

an invitation side made up of footballers from Tumby, Cummins and Port Lincoln of which Roger would captain. Sturt duly honoured its commitment to the match considering Roger's great service to the Sturt Football Club.

In a lot of ways Roger became a trail blazer for the next generation of players from our club that aspired to play league football and beyond, players such as Brett Higgins, Michael Curtis, Michael Coad, Jason James and more recently Jay Shannon & Luke Partington. I'm sure all would have been inspired by Roger's achievements.

