



the birth of our youngest branch

By former National CEO, Keith Lewis

The Chief Executive Officer of The Lord's Taverners Australia between 1991 and 1996, Keith Lewis, was one of our most dedicated administrators. A talented wicketkeeper batsman in grade cricket, he has a great love of the game and accomplished a tremendous amount during his time in office. Keith played a key role in the running of the Royal Easter Show in Sydney as its General Manager for many years. Here he recalls one of the highlights of his Taverners' leadership – the beginning of our youngest branch, Newcastle, in October 1992:

The inaugural meeting of the Newcastle Branch was held in the attractive Tree House Room at the University of Newcastle and was attended by cricketers, cricket lovers and academics from around the Hunter Region.

The guests of honour included the then National President of the Lord's Taverners Australia, John McCallum and his wonderful wife, Google Withers, and Founding Chairman, John Darling and his wife Sally.

John McCallum entertained the gathering with a delightful talk about The Taverners and their ideals but it was Google who had the last word and brought the house down.

"I just want you all to know," she said, tongue in cheek, "I hate cricket."

And so a new branch, The Lord's Taverners Newcastle, was born ten years after the foundation of The Taverners in Australia.

Professor Saxon White, a Rugby Union Wallaby and former first grade cricketer with the University Club in Sydney, was elected Branch President and Vic Levi, a prominent Newcastle journalist and former grade cricketer was made Chairman.

Both still hold those positions and the Branch is going from strength to strength.

By the time the Newcastle Branch was established \$3million had been raised by Lord's Taverners Australia.

We have given many young people the opportunity to play sport, especially cricket.

More than 50 outstanding young cricketers have received Junior Taverner Awards from State Branches. Some have worn the baggy green cap including Damien Martyn, Michael Bevan, Ricky Ponting, Matthew Nicholson, Lisa Sthalekar and Louise Broadfoot. Many others have played for their State including Craig White, who now plays for England, and Newcastle's own Jamie Heath.

One of the Australian Taverners most impressive projects is the sponsorship of the Indoor Cricket Championship for People with an Intellectual Disability. Teams from all States still compete for the Lord's Taverners' Australia Cup.

In Western Australia, state cricketers practice in The Lord's Taverners Indoor Centre.

Every Branch is autonomous and runs its own programs – all designed to give people a sporting chance.

Editor's note:

Despite a recent illness, Keith still champions the cause of the Lord's Taverners Australia. Every year for the past ten years, he has led a large contingent of Sydney Taverners and friends to compete in the Newcastle Branch's annual Golf Day at the Newcastle Golf Club's beautiful Stockton course.

Below: John Darling, Prince Edward and Keith Lewis during the Prince's visit in 1993.

the taverners helped a dream come true

It was the stuff dreams are made of when young Hunter cricketers Ben Crebert and Jeff Mills visited the Sydney Cricket Ground to see the Australian test team perform in January, 1995.

Not only did the two boys meet their heroes in the Aussie team but they also got to bowl to them and field for them.

And to complete the thrill of a lifetime, the boys performed on the SCG centre before a crowd of 26,000 fans as part of the lunch adjournment promotion.

Crebert, then a 16 year old all rounder from Bolwarra Heights, Maitland, and Mills, a 15 year old wicketkeeper batsman from Toronto, were products of the Hunter Academy of Sport.

They were given their chance to live out their cricket fantasy by the Newcastle Branch of the Lord's Taverners Australia.

The then Taverners' National Chief Executive Officer, Keith Lewis, came up with the idea as part of a program to help young sports people disadvantaged by living in areas distant from major sporting venues.

Keith contacted the Newcastle Branch and Hunter Academy of Sport Executive Officer, Ken Clifford, himself a Taverner, did the rest.

The boys took part in the Australians' practice session and were taken on a tour of the members' area and the scoreboard.

Their visit was the start of a tradition. Many similar "boys from the bush" visits have been arranged by NSW and other Taverners branches since then.



from the branches...

newcastle

TAVERNERS HOSTS FOR PURA CUP THRILLER

Three former Australian test players — Bob "Dutchy" Holland, Rick McCosker and Graham Corling — were among the Taverners and their friends who turned up in force at a reception to welcome the NSW and Western Australian Pura Cup teams to Newcastle for their match in January this year.

The sand groper also has some special supporters in the form of Roy Watson and Trevor Bidstrup who played for Western Australia in the 1950s.

Roy Watson, who kept wickets for WA, is now the Treasurer of the Newcastle Businessmen's Club and recently toured Canada for the World Golden Oldies cricket carnival with a Newcastle Taverners' team.

A former WA team mate, Ron Gaunt, also intended coming to the reception but was held up by a bowls engagement on the NSW Central Coast.

Another former Sheffield Shield player, John Mackay, who played with Queensland between 1959 and 1967, was also among the guests at the reception which was held at Newcastle Sports Ground — the venue for the Pura Cup Game.

More than 16,000 people watched the game which was the first interstate fixture held in Newcastle for five years.

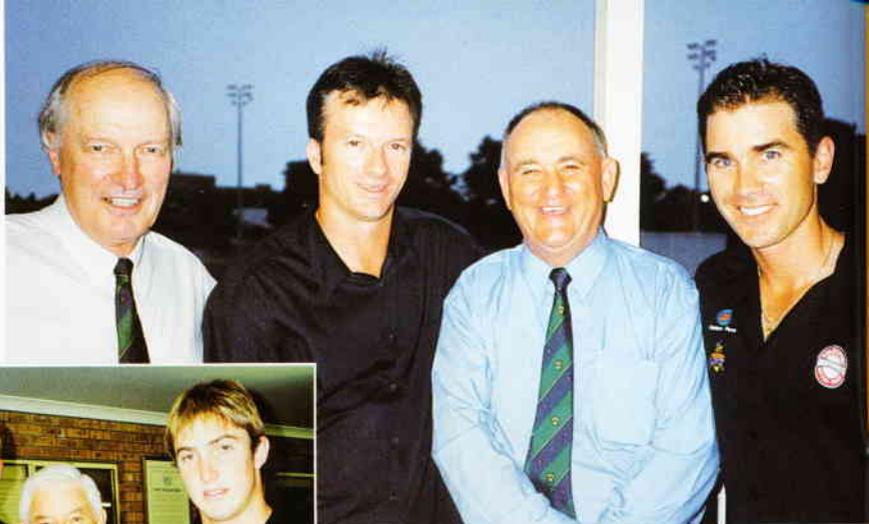
They could not have asked for a more exciting match with NSW winning by two runs in the last over of the four-day game.

The many stars in this thriller included Mark Waugh, Michael Clark and Shaun Marsh with the bat and Simon Katich, a former sand groper, with the ball.

Among the other guests at the reception were the team managers and coaches for the teams, David Sincock and Steve "Stumper" Rixon (NSW) and Ron Bowe and Mike Veletta (WA), the President of the Newcastle District Cricket Association, Ken Clifford, the Association Secretary, Dennis Broad and the Chairman of the Hunter Academy of Sport, Warren Evans.

Ken, Dennis and Warren are all on the Newcastle Taverners' Branch Committee.

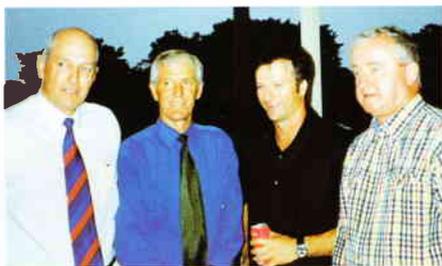
A highlight of the evening was an interview conducted by NBN TV's Sporting Editor, Mike Rabbitt, of the two captains, Steve Waugh and Justin Langer.



Newcastle Taverners' President, Professor Saxon White, and Chairman, Vic Levi, at the reception with Steve Waugh and Justin Langer.



Former Shield keeper Roy Watson with two members of the current W.A. team.



Rick McCosker, Bob Holland and Graham Corling get together with Steve Waugh.



The winning medicos, (l to r) Merv McCallum, Geoff Tyler, Chris Levi and Neil Porter.



Former Australian test stars, Rick McCosker and Bob Holland, with Junior Taverners, Chris Rendina and Julianne Campbell, at the golf day.



Leading the Sydney contingent (l to r) Jock Cordner, Keith Lewis, John Garrigan and Gordon Boyd.

TOWN TOASTS JUNIOR TAVERNERS

Junior Taverners, Chris Rendina and Julianne Campbell, were the guests of honour at the Newcastle Branch's annual Golf Day dinner on January 19.

Chris, a highly talented young off spin bowler and batsman who represented NSW Country Under 17s and Newcastle Under 18s and 19s, plays for the Charlestown Club in the District competition.

Good judges say he could follow in the footsteps of another talented Charlestown off-spinner and all rounder, Michael Hill, who played for NSW and is the current President of the Newcastle Knights Rugby League Club.

Julianne is a fine batter who also bowls medium pace and has represented NSW in Under 17s.

She travels to Sydney each week to play club cricket with Bankstown.

The duo follow in the footsteps of some outstanding Newcastle Junior Taverners who include Jamie Heath, who played for NSW, Sarah Andrews, an Australian representative, Gary Geise (NSW Country) and Mark Faraday (NSW Under 19s and Under 17s).

The golf day, at the beautiful Newcastle Club, was another outstanding success with a field of around 100.

A team of Newcastle doctors, Geoff Tyler, Chris Levi, Neil Porter and Merv McCallum, took out the main net prize in the Ambrose competition. Once again, former Taverners' National Chief Executive, Keith Lewis, led a team of Sydney players who again included long time Taverners, former NSW President, Jock Cordner, and Gordon Boyd.

Tremendous sponsorship support was again received from Brian and Fay McGuigan (McGuigan Wines), Bruce Tyrrell (Tyrrells Wines), Garry Dowling (Dowling Real Estate), Mark Davidson and Alan Northey (Tamburlaine Wines), Peter and Wendy Smith and the Club's Professional, Jason Laws.

The President's "Most Significant Person Award" went this year to Ken Clifford.

GOLDEN OLDIES ON TOUR

A team representing the Newcastle Taverners Branch took part in the World Golden Oldies Festival in Vancouver last July.

Led by former Australian leg spinner, Bob Holland, and managed by Branch Chairman, Vic Levi, the team played in three 40 over matches, losing two and tying the third.

In the first match, the side went down to a strong Florida team made up mainly of expatriate West Indies and Indian players.

The side fared much better in the next game losing to the Cuckfield Cricket Club from England by only 20 runs.

The final match was an extraordinary tie against a local Vancouver side who scored 18 off the last over to save the match.

This was the team's second Golden Oldies overseas tour. Two years ago they played in the same Festival at Rotorua.

The side last year won the Australian Masters Games cricket gold medal.

Next year, they will compete in the World Golden Oldies again — this time on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.

For R and R after the Vancouver matches, most of the team and their wives sailed to Alaska in the luxury P and O Ocean Princess before flying home.

When they got back, the team saddled up again to play a side from the NSW Branch at Mandalong and they lost narrowly again. The Sydney team included NSW Chairman, Richard Horne.

This match has now become an annual event and Newcastle will be looking to hit back next year. The Branch hopes eventually to start an inter-branch version of the Pura Cup.

NEW FACES ON NEWCASTLE COMMITTEE

Former district players and long time workers for cricket in the Hunter Region, Neil McDonald and Ian Gorton, are the two new faces on the Newcastle Taverners' Branch Committee.

Neil these days is Cricket NSW's representative in the Hunter area and Ian is Vice-President of the Newcastle District Cricket Association.

Re-elected unopposed at the annual meeting were President, Professor Saxon White, Chairman, Vic Levi and Secretary-Treasurer, Kevin McDonald.

Also returned to the committee unopposed were Bob Holland, Ken Clifford (the President of the NDCA), Warren Evans (the Chairman of the Hunter Academy of Sport), Dennis Broad (Secretary of the NDCA) and Mr John Price MLA (the State Member for Maitland).



Players and their wives enjoy the famous Butchart Gardens in Victoria BC on their rest day.



Above: The team in Vancouver. Below: The team at Mandalong.



HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER:

If you want to become a member of the Lord's Taverners and you live in the Hunter Region, contact Mr Kevin McDonald on 4955 9313 or Mr Vic Levi on 4946 8859.