

16 February

## IVANHOE'S UNISEX TRAINING SESSION A WINNER



The IAFC Mens and Womens Teams train together for the first time. Pic: Phil Skeggs

For the first time in Ivanhoe football club's long history, a pre-season training session involving male and female players was held at Ivanhoe Park on February 15. And judging by the positive feedback from those involved, it will be happening a lot more this season. About 55 players, including a dozen women and a handful of under 19s, were put through a series of skills drills and games under the direction of senior coach Leigh Cole, under 19s coach Ross Henshaw, reserves coach Peter Rawley and women's team assistant coach Leighton Pearce. The session ended with a barbecue on a beautiful mild summer night. The women also met their new team patron, former Ivanhoe Junior Football Club president Jan Wright, who is keen to see the inaugural women's team flourish for generations to come. Club secretary Peter Marshall said Ivanhoe will be fielding a team in the VAFA women's lightning

premiership on April 1-2. For more information about Ivanhoe's women's team, contact Peter Marshall on 0417203601 or email [iafcsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:iafcsecretary@gmail.com)



Pic: Phil Skeggs



Pic: Phil Skeggs



Pic: Phil Skeggs

30 January

## VALE RON TUCKER: OUR WISE OLD OWL

By Phil Skeggs



Life Member Ron Tucker with the chefs apron on during a club luncheon in May 2015. Pic: Phil Skeggs

It's fair to say that Ron Tucker lived up to the Ivanhoe Cricket Club's motto of "Not for self but for club". Ron had the rare distinction of being a life member of both the Ivanhoe cricket and football clubs. He was in the class of '59 at Northcote High and one of many alumni to join Ivanhoe during the 1960s and 70s. Ron played football and cricket as a young bloke at Northcote. His nickname as a ruckman-forward was "Autumn Leaf" because he had a habit of falling over. But Ron enjoyed much greater success as a cricketer, having played in premierships teams in Northcote's lower grades during the 1960s. His clubmates included Test legends Bill Lawry and Rodney Hogg.

At Ivanhoe, he played 125 games between 1974 and 1989 – 67 in the First XI. He joined the club as a paceman and became captain-coach in the 1977-78 season. According to the Ivanhoe Cricket Club's centenary book *One Hundred Years*, Ron topped the club's First XI bowling averages in 1974-75 (26 at 13.19) and in 1975-76 (21 at 15.86). He topped the Second XI's bowling averages in 1978-79 (22 at 12.55) when he was the twos captain. He was still motoring in the 1985-86 season, winning the Fourth XI's bowling averages (13 at 11). His best figures were 8 for 42 against Coburg in First XI in 1974-75 season. He also got 7 for 31 against Ormond in the Second XI in 1976-77. In total, Ron took 190 wickets between 1974-75 and 1987-88 seasons. This included 110 wickets for the First XI at an average of 18.55. Ron's influence also helped bring top players to Ivanhoe CC from Northcote, including Ryder medallist Andrew Wildsmith, who was a five-time club champion for Ivanhoe.

As an accountant by profession, Ron was a highly proficient cricket club treasurer from 1985-86 season to 1990-91. This included when Ivanhoe won the First XI East Group premiership and VSDCA championship in 1988-89 season. He was much respected by cricket club presidents for his sage advice on financial matters as well as being a straight shooter on broader issues. He was also an ever-so-meticulous scorer when Ivanhoe won their next senior premiership and championship in the 1998-99 season. Anyone who has ever done cricket scoring knows it takes great concentration to make sure the scorebooks tally. And back then, Ron had the added difficulty of a loud mob of thirsty Ivanhoe supporters (myself included) standing directly behind him at the bar. He was also highly regarded in the Heidelberg District Cricket Association as a club delegate and as a tribunal member for Diamond Valley Football League for many years.

Ron's wise counsel was greatly valued by Rob Pearce during his presidency at Ivanhoe Amateur Football Club. Ron had a tough job as treasurer from 2001-04 and his battles with then VAFA treasurer Noel Rundle were legendary. The bottom line was that he helped keep Ivanhoe football club afloat at a time when district clubs were out of favour at VAFA headquarters. It gave Ron enormous pride to watch his son Chris rise through the ranks of the Ivanhoe football club, starting as a premiership under 19s player in 1987. Chris eventually became club captain, club president (2006-09), life member, and a Team of the Century member. Even after Chris passed the baton as president, Ron stayed involved by helping out with meals after training on Thursday nights, and also catering for Black & Whites luncheons with his lovely wife Sue, who is also a footy club life member.



Ron Tucker (centre) with Dave Reilly and Matt Ebbage at the last home game at Ivanhoe Park in April 2016. Pic: Phil Skeggs

He was the inaugural winner of the Black & Whites' "Harry" award in 2007 in recognition of his great contribution to the football club. Ron was still coming along to home games even when his eyesight was shot as a result of illness in recent years. Very few families have given so much to Ivanhoe football club – on and off the field – and for that our wise old owl Ron Tucker deserves eternal thanks.

After lengthy battles with cancers and melanomas, Ron died peacefully at the Olivia Newton-John Centre in Heidelberg on Friday January 27. He was aged 75. Ron is survived by wife Sue, sons Chris and Paul and daughter Carolyn, and 11 grandchildren. A funeral will be held at Heidelberg Golf Club next Monday (February 6), time to be confirmed.