

# THE MIGHTY LITTLE COOLANGATTA CLUB

By Lloyd (Buddy) Budd, President 1983-1987



My bowling days began at the ripe old age of 19, when, as the President of Apex, I was invited to play bowls at a Rotary Fun Day in Charleville, Queensland. This got me in! I came to Coolangatta in 1960. By this time the Coolangatta Bowls Club had been established for about 11 years.

From its commencement to the present time, this Club has earned, via its members, a place in history to be admired and envied by bowlers of all persuasions. Some of these achievements included:

1. The No 1 green at Coolangatta was once hailed as the best playing surface on the Gold Coast. Gold Coast boasted as having the best all-round playing greens in Queensland and Queensland being hailed as having the best all-round greens in Australia. While Australia, because of our climatic conditions and numbers of clubs and players, also claimed to have the best all-round greens in the world. So, naturally, Coolangatta Club's No 1 green was said to be the best in the world.
2. The club, at one stage, had so many Australian, State and District players that it could be rated as the World's No 1 Bowling *Strength* Club.
3. Players from the club won 4 State titles in a 12-year period. They were: Ray Lederhose (1975), Fred Lewis (1979), Neil Crichton (1983) and Ian Schuback (1987).
4. Our Club Patron, Bill (Smasher) Stafford, won the Booroodabin Masters Singles, which was, at the time, considered the State title.
5. The club, over the years, has had 27 state players and 4 Australian representative players.

## IAN SCHUBACK BEGAN HIS CAREER AT COOLANGATTA CLUB



Bill Stafford, Ian Schuback and Lloyd (Buddy) Budd

My personal high was the day I had the pleasure, with my old, now passed-on mate, Brickie Williams, of taking the great Ian Schuback for the first time, out on the green. Brickie walked up the green, spread his legs apart and I positioned "Schooie" on the mat, told him to put the little ring on the inside and to send the bowl towards the jack via the passage between Brickie's arched legs to give the right track to the kitty, taking care not to injure any crown jewels on the way.



After our 15 minutes briefing on courtesy etc we set Schuback loose on the greens, much to the sorrow of many with reputations. He still keeps the little ring on the inside. It's one of his secrets.

My greatest personal achievement on the green was to win a spider on a thinly-patronised a wet Sunday afternoon.

## BOWLS HISTORY – COLOURED SHIRTS ON THE GREEN

1985 saw Coolangatta club achieve a world's first. The wonderful spectacle, the "Master of Masters Tournament", organised and presented by Bill (Smasher) Stafford, drew crowds that, at the time, were unheard of in lawn bowls. Being a club in the shadow of the New South Wales border giants, we were funded by chook raffles and Mexican pesos that rolled across our bars in the winter time from our southern tourists. Coolangatta always had a problem finding funds to pay players to cover their expenses, etc. Our sponsors, at the time, were XXXX, TAA and Dewars. To make it worthwhile for sponsors it was necessary to achieve publicity for the tournament. Without TV coverage publicity was difficult to obtain. Colour on the green attracted TV coverage.

So, with the sanction of Smasher and my fellow members, I bit the bullet and bought 3 dozen coloured shirts and had the names and logos of the sponsors sewn on them. We quietly met with the players and, though some of them were a little cautious, they agreed to don the shirts for the tournament. For the first time in the world coloured shirts, with sponsors' names were worn on a bowling green.



**WORLD FIRST 1985 PLAYERS ASSEMBLED ON COOLANGATTA GREEN BEFORE THE MASTER OF MASTERS TOURNAMENT**

Back Row: Geoff Sutcliffe, John Parella, Neil Crichton, Harry Salter  
 Front Row: Ken Williams, Rob Parella, Keith Poole, Bob King, Dennis Dalton, Jim Hope  
 Kneeling: Lloyd (Buddy) Budd, President of Coolangatta Club. Not present for photo: Kev Hewitt

Coolangatta was the first club to have grandstand seating around a bowling green and the stands were filled for the momentous occasion. The greens were surrounded with banners and flags, and even had mats bearing logos.





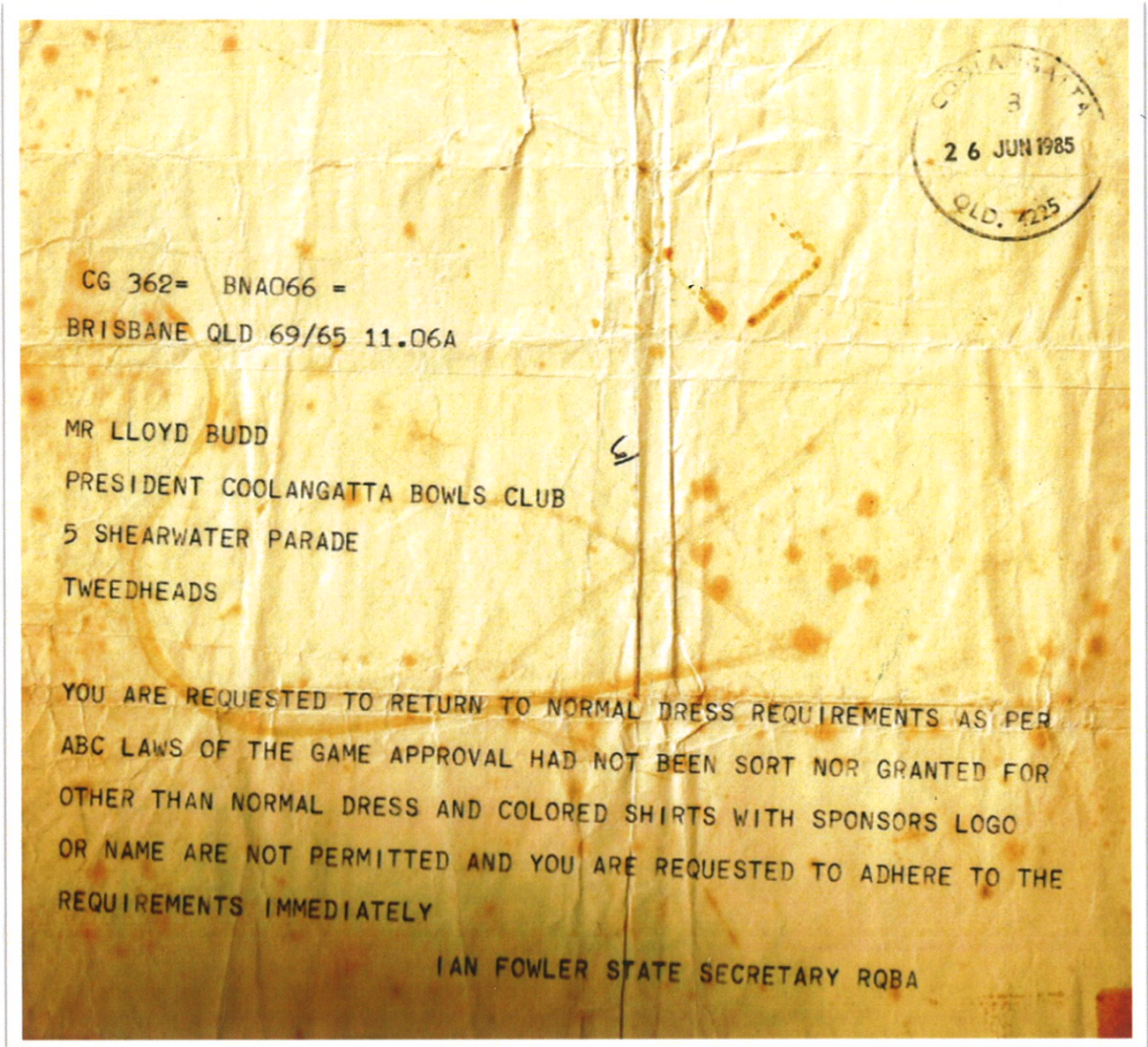
Section of crowd on that momentous day

We arranged for the players, wearing THOSE shirts, to assemble in the club house, and they ran out on to the green as the song "Stand Up and Fight" was played over the PA system. Smasher introduced the players: Keith Pool and Barry Salter both wearing pink, Neil Crichton and Ken Williams both wearing yellow, Ron Dennis and Jim Hope both wearing turquoise, Bob Williams and Geoff Sutcliffe both wearing red, Dennis Dalton and Kev Hewitt both wearing navy and Rob and John Parella both wearing black.

TV cameras appeared and the sponsors gained the reward they deserved.

The next day we received a telegram from the RQBA ordering me, as Club President, to get the colour off the greens.





Copy of telegram received on second day of Tournament

Bob King was the only one to revert to white attire. I would like to add that Don Peebles was invited to play originally, and, at the last minute had to decline for health reasons. His spot was filled by the great North Queensland player, Kev Hewitt, who happened to be staying at my home at the time. This is the reason Kev's face does not appear in the photographs taken before the start of play.

The media had a field day. Lawn bowls, for the first time ever, appeared on the front page of a large Brisbane newspaper and vibrations went all around the globe. When I was asked what would happen when "Dad's Army" arrived from HQ on the second day, I suggested, "There could be blood in the streets of Coolangatta." The media had a feast.



## Master bowlers paint the greens:

By STAN BATTEN

The grand old game of bowls will never be the same following the recent "Master of Masters" tournament at Coolangatta on the Gold Coast.

A major break from tradition that rocked the bowls world to its foundations. Australia's best players took to the greens in brightly colored shirts emblazoned with the logos of the tournament sponsors... TAA, Dewar's Scotch, and Queensland's famous Rex beer.

Traditionalists amongst the spectators were aghast at the breakaway from the traditional creams, but most of the crowd, especially the younger generation — were all in favor.

The 12 competitors in the Master of Masters turned up the first day wearing every color of the rainbow.

Keith Poole, of West Caloundra in Queensland, who has represented Australia more times than any other player, chose a pastel pink shirt; Victorian champion, Denis Dalton, in bright blue; Geoff Sutcliffe, another Victorian, was in flame red; and Queensland's flamboyant Parrella brothers, Rob and John, quickly earned the nickname "The Mafia" in matching black shirts.

The 12 bowlers wore colored shirts with the sponsors' logos just big enough to stand out in newspaper photos and television news clips. And if that wasn't enough, the conventional white bowling mats were used by yellow ones bearing the

24 — Australian POST, August 8, 1985

# Any color but white



★ WINNER Denis Dalton (V) in foreground in dark blue, sends one down, while Jim Howard (light blue) and Keith Poole (pink) watch.

famous red of Castlemaine brewery. It seemed that just about everything at Coolangatta Bowls Club was decorated in red and yellow, from the greenside bunting to the rink markers — even the official scorecards.

On the second day of the tournament, after a hasty conference with the Australian Bowls Council, the Royal Queensland Bowls Association told the Coolangatta Club it faced disciplinary action if there wasn't an immediate return to all-whites.

"No way," said Coolangatta president, Mr Lloyd Budd. "We owe it to our sponsors to give them something for their money. Take any action you like."

Mr Budd outlined the position to the 12 bowlers and explained that they could be in trouble with the sport's hierarchy if they defied tradition.

Over drinks in the club bar that

night there was talk of a breakaway professional bowling "circus" in the same vein as World Series Cricket, while one of the players jokingly suggested they might be welcomed with open arms in South Africa.

Came the third and final day of the tournament and several thousand spectators anxiously waited for the players to emerge from the locker room to see if they had stuck to the colored shirts despite the threat from the R.Q.B.A. and the A.B.C.

There was tremendous applause when all but one of the 12 — Bob King of Bomaderry in New South Wales — strolled out in their blues, yellows, reds and blacks.

King said he "didn't want to talk too much about it" and added: "It was simply my decision." But some of the other players, including eventual winner Denis Dalton, had plenty to say.

Dalton commented: "It has been long overdue. Provided it is utilised in the right way it is great for the game."

Rob Parrella, the man who turned bowls into a spectator sport with his incredible "body magic" style of play and his thumping drives whenever he is in trouble, added: "I'm always in strife for speaking up, but this is the best thing that could happen. It's great."

And popular Ron Dennis, an Australia Games silver medalist, described the colored bowls as "an absolute necessity in this sort of tournament. It must remain in the future."

This remains to be seen. Whatever happens, the 1985 Coolangatta Master of Masters will be remembered as the most controversial tournament in Australian bowling history. ●



★ Lloyd Budd... "We owe it to our sponsors"

Article printed in Australian Post magazine

As a result the Club was suspended from holding a Registered Event for one year. The rest is history.

It is interesting to note that the then GCDDB President, Norm Cunico, was seated in the grandstands on this historic day wearing a XXXX cap and a prominent XXXX logo protruding from his left breast blazer pocket. Incidentally, he was later elevated to the position of State President.

As can be seen from the following article the RQBA approved the wearing of colours and logos on the green five years later:



# RQBA ruling adds color to the game

FIVE years after Coolangatta Bowls Club was banned from using color in its Master singles event, the council of the Royal Queensland Bowls Association has approved the use of color on Queensland greens.

The 32 district delegates voted to allow bowlers in Queensland to wear colored attire, on guidelines as laid down by the Australian Bowls Council.

Despite objection from various districts, the motion was approved by a large majority.

However, during the debate, it was asked whether they were discussing colored shirts or shirts with color.

The ABC guidelines do not specify how the color is to be used, just that the shirts must be approved by the ABC for national events and the relevant state or district authorities for events under their control.

This means that clubs may apply for the use of full color shirts, providing

they are tastefully designed.

★ ★ ★  
UNDER ABC guidelines the design may also include up to four logos or badges with two not to exceed 50 sq cm and the other two not to exceed 10 sq cm in area.

Again the ABC has left it up to the relevant authority to authorise the use of logos, the only restriction again being that they exercise good taste.

This is not to say that every bowler will be forced to walk out on to the green in multi-colored shirts, nor has the decision opened the gates for what some may call Pyjama Bowls.

However, with sound judgement and control, the use of color in bowls should provide the sport with a much needed lift.

★ ★ ★  
DUE to the winding up of the Queensland Junior Bowls Club, all members, friends and interested

## BOWLS with PETER TURNBULL

bowlers are invited to the Wavell Heights Bowls Club on December 16 for a final fling.

The QJBC will cease to exist as of January 1 as the Queensland Licensing Commission has given permission for juniors to join the senior clubs direct.

The luncheon will cost \$3 a head and is being organised by Merv Spada. With more than 500 juniors having passed through the club on their way to the senior ranks, Spada felt that it was too big an organisation to wind up with six blokes sitting around a table.

Anyone interested in attending the luncheon should contact Spada on (07) 266 8823.

★ ★ ★  
THE Queensland selectors have announced a squad of 32, not 20, for a final trial on February 16-17.

From these games the selectors will choose the

16-man team for the series against New South Wales in Coffs Harbour on March 19-21.

The selectors will ally have 34 names to choose through when Rob Parrella and Trevor Morris are added to the list.

Parrella and Morris will be in England for world indoor singles pairs when the last trial is held but will still be available for state selection.

★ ★  
TWO teams of 16 have been announced for the February trials. The teams are:

S Coomber (Kingscliff), Dobbins (Coolangatta), K Bold (Palm Beach), S Ansell (Hamilton), K Kerkow (Coolangatta), S Glasson (Cairns), Cook (Mackay), K I (Caloundra), A Matt (Salisbury), K Weaver (Been Meer), B Cornish (Been Meer), K Williams (South Tweed Heads), D Peoples (Salisbury), G Kath (South Tweed Heads), Wegert (Belmont Service), Pritchard (Caloundra), J (Jindalee), G Hoath (Dunbar), G F (Coolangatta), M Winterstone, M Spring (South Tweed Heads), Kretschmann (Pittsworth), Steinhardt (Cabarita), M (Sunnybank), P Johnson (Sunnyside), S Papalexion (Tweed Heads), I Yelavich (Dimbulloo), Koorey (Broadbeach), W (Mourai), C Hayes (Imbri), Colefax (Kingscliff).

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR BOWLERS

Coolangatta club won almost everything it was possible to win, without ever having to pay, or buy in, players to bolster their chances, and I say this with admiration for the members. The Club was the envy of many clubs that could afford to pay and buy gifted bowlers who, I must say, deserved their rewards for their dedication and prowess as players.

## TWEED HEADS BOWLS CLUB

The original club was called the Tweed Heads-Coolangatta Bowls Club and was located under the shadow of Point Danger. Queenslanders broke away and formed the Coolangatta Bowls Club and established their greens on the present site. The first day's play of the new club took place on New Year's Day in 1949. The Tweed club later moved to a more central position and became, possibly, the largest bowls club in the Southern Hemisphere with help from a few hundred bandits and the tourist overflow from the fabulous Gold Coast.

I would like to add, at this time, my memories of the Tweed Heads Bowls Club. The committee of Coolangatta Bowls Club was given an opportunity to freehold the land on which the Club stands for around \$300,000. This amount was only a dream for Coolangatta. With the sanction of our members, we approached our cashed-up neighbour and parent club, Tweed Heads, for finance to allow us to take up this offer. Tweed agreed to put up a few days' takings and our club would be ours. Oops! One snag! The Tweed board wanted a controlling presence over Coolangatta Club for their investment. Needless to say, the Coolangatta members declined Tweed's offer. The government offer to freehold was not, sadly, taken up. We had to let this wonderful opportunity slip by. Coolangatta precinct would now be worth, probably 20 million dollars. "Hindsight" is a word that comes to mind. With the change in laws in Queensland allowing poker machines in clubs, together with the leasing of the dining area to excellent caterers, Coolangatta Club has been able to grow and keep its head well above water.

I, as Coolangatta President, was invited to Tweed Heads Club, given a courtesy membership during my term and was handed a cheque for around \$35,000 as a gift to help our club. This was an unconditional gift from our parent club. This was greatly appreciated by the Coolangatta members. I also remember receiving gifts of furniture and other items that Tweed thought we could use when their club was being upgraded. I even remember crawling under the stage in their great hall, scouring through old Christmas decorations to give our club a lift at the festive time. They were very generous to us.

#### FUN AND GAMES

A \$1,000 wager on a private round of bowls at Coolangatta was a fact, and many a game was played for \$100 or \$50. A band of "red-blooded" Australians frequented Coolangatta Club. I think that, at one time, we had some 20-odd bookies as members or visitors and many a bowls bag had its own phone attached. I remember hearing often the words, "Don't take any more for the favourite." Quite often visitors would venture to Coolangatta to pit their skills against the well-trying locals only to leave with a galoshe on one foot and a sandshoe on the other. Peter is a well-known name from around Newmarket.

#### MORE GREAT BOWLERS

The great young bowler, Kelvin Kerkow, was nurtured by the great players of our club. He was affectionately known as "Spike".

I would also like to name a few players who are or were members of Coolangatta club. Some were State and/or Australian representatives. There are many more names that appear on the Honour Boards in the clubhouse for your perusal.

I will start with the man who wrote the book on bowls, Albert Newton, Bob Purcell, Len Ricketts, Jim Adams, Herb Hattersley, Alan Winchester, Aub Martin, Stan Willis, Noel Ogden, Arthur Cattell, Stew Shannon, George Makin, Lou Murray, Ray Lederhose, Bob Purcell, Fred Lewis, Greg Halpin, Neil Crichton, Ian Schuback, Robbie Dobbins, Kelvin Kerkow, Allan Collier, Gil Steinhardt, Phil Doyle, Helen Bosisto, Lorraine Murray, Charlie Hayes, Bill Stafford.

I must not omit one name that is current at Coolangatta, a name that, in days gone by, could not be left off any invitation list, because, I believe that he was the best player in the world at one time. That person is our good friend, **Rob Parella**. Now, in his retirement, Rob belongs to Coolangatta club. He has given of himself to nurture and help players – old or new – to enjoy the game. Rob is the one player of all that I can think of that is connected to the words "Lawn Bowls". I have witnessed crowds come to their feet with some of his unbelievable shots and magic. I don't think anyone ever threw a shoe at him!

#### CLUB STALWART



One member who, I feel, needs mention, not only for his bowling ability, but for his long support of the club by way of his assistance as Honorary Surveyor, Selector, Committee Chairman, Coach and Chook Raffle Seller. *Neil Crichton*, thanks. I am sure most clubs have members like Neil who give their all.

#### CLUB HAS GONE FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

There are many that have done much for this “Biggest Little Club”. Some are gone where “old bowlers” go. Some are still here and some are new. On behalf of the “Shane Warnes” and “Glen McGraths” of our club as well as the great club members like Ray Meehan, Tony Woodbury and Viv O’Dea I would like to invite all to visit Coolangatta club and stand with your back to the bar, looking up at the Club’s Achievement Board and you will see why this club could be hailed as the strongest Lawn Bowls Club that ever was?

#### LADY BOWLERS – A WONDERFUL ADDITION TO OUR ROUND ROBIN MASTERS TOURNAMENT

Coolangatta was the first club to honour lady bowlers when Master Lady Bowlers were invited to compete on equal terms in a Round Robin Masters Tournament. Some very high profile scalps were taken by the ladies on that occasion. Some of the outstanding ladies who have graced the greens at Coolangatta include Mary Ormsby from South Australia, Dot Roach from Newcastle and Pat Smith from Murwillumbah – just a few names that come to mind. I once had the pleasure of playing with the sparkling-eyed Mary Ormsby who was 7 times South Australian Singles Champion. What a gal!

#### RED SCHEME

As the President I was very fortunate to obtain a grant from the government under the RED scheme. This grant provided the labour and the club provided the materials with which we revamped and extended our club house, which, by the way, is made up of ex-army huts from World War II.



Revamped Clubhouse

#### CLUB WITHIN A CLUB

Not long after Coolangatta Club was formed, a few fun-loving well-healed red-blooded Aussies who liked an ale on a hot day and a wager on any day banded together. At first, they played golf, meeting at a local hotel in Coolangatta’s main street. The meeting place eventually became Coolangatta Bowls Club,



adopting the name of the Coolangatta All Sports Club and adding bowls to their activities. Their social activities included days at the races, fishing trips to the reef and, on many a wet day, in pitting their skills at Euchre in the clubhouse.

This club became popular and their membership was limited to 40. This internal club and the Coolangatta Bowls Club had many dual members, including dual presidents at the same time, namely Noel Halpin, John Young and Lloyd (Buddy) Budd. The All Sports Club hosted visiting clubs from Sydney City Tatts and Gold Coast All Sports.

They held big event days at the club, such as St Patrick's Day.



All Sports members (the "Micks") gathered to celebrate St Patrick's Day 1968

Back Row: Alf Spencer, Colin Young (Brumby), Vince Trevaglia, Tom Hare (Brer Rabbit), Frank Mitchell (The Fronz), Brian Ahrens, Bill Halpin

Middle Row: Buddy, Tony Thomas (The Captain), Rex Jermanus (Nigger) in coloured shirt, Phil Moore, Bill Bransden (Winky), Gerald Conaghan (Geraldo), Cliff Burns (CR), Tom Baine (The Brain), ?, Joe Hally (VW Thief), Noel Halpin

Front Row (kneeling): Ron Bartholomew (Bart) (sitting): Fred Johnson





Celebrating St Patrick's day - the orange and the green



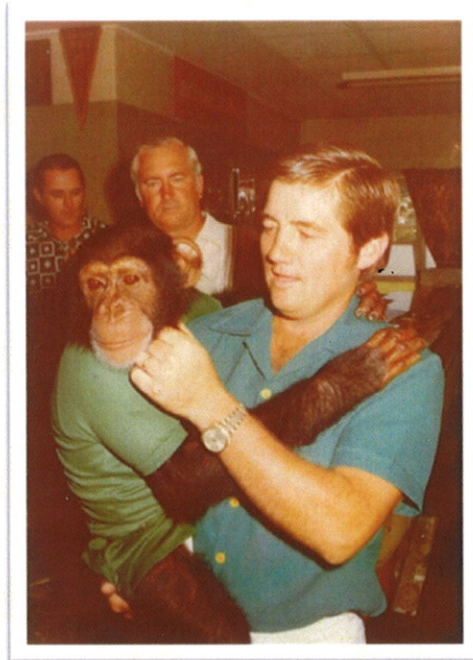
St Patrick's Day 1971

Standing: Max Croaker, Allan Singh (Rajah), Hugh Mitchell (Mr Huggie), Lance Williams (Brickie), Pete Maunsell, ?, Phil Moore, ?, Reg Akhurst (Mumbles), Tom Baine (The Brain), Ben Shambrook, Lou Forsyth, Joe Halley (VW Thief), Gerald Conaghan (Geraldo), Keith Salmon (Soc), Max ? of Tugun, ? Conaghan, Rev Fr Bradley, ArthurThompson (Flash), Bill Williams, Aub Martin (Mullet), Lloyd Holdway, Reg Gregor

Seated: Bill Stafford (Smasher), Viv O'Dea, Rex Jermanus, Bill McLennan, Frank Mitchell (The Fronz), Brian Ahrens, Alf Spencer, Lawry Quinlan, Bill Halpin, Colin Young (The Brumby)

Front: Jimmy Bourke, Buddy





Buddy with Brutus from Natureland Zoo



St Patrick's Day 1972

Standing: Bill Brandsen (Winkie), Fred Dwyer, Rex Jemanus, ?, Harry Moore holding Brutus from Natureland Zoo, Tony Thomas, Viv O'Dea, Bill Halpin, Fr Hoad, Buddy, Max Croather, Jack Bentley, Greg Halpin (Sparkles)

Front: ?





Leprechaun Buddy with Brutus added colour to St Patrick's Day

The support of the Coolangatta All Sports Club has been one of the major factors in keeping Coolangatta Bowls Club vibrant. They still meet and play at the Club today, after 50 years.

#### A GREAT HONOUR

In 1988 (after serving 4 years as President of the Club) I was honoured by being presented with a Life Membership. I am grateful to all the members who helped me during my period as President and believe that this honour is theirs as well as mine. Thank you all.



