

SIMON ABUBAKAR

11 March 1961 - 29 September 2006

Simon Abubakar as the West Region Member on the Brisbane Junior Rugby Union Inc (BJRU) Management Committee was a major contributor in the genesis of the Brisbane Junior Rugby Union Inc Under 12 Skills Development Program, which began in 2005. In that same year he was also a selector for the Central Region teams and Assistant Coach of the Under 12 West Navy Team.

Simon's passion for all things rugby was started in 1999 after deciding that his son Eli should become involved with a team sport and rugby union was to be it. A spectator at his son's 1st season, in 2000 he decided to become involved, being elected Vice President of Kenmore Centenary Rugby Union Club and also assistant coach of the Under 7 Reds, his beloved son's team, which he continued to coach for the next 6 years.

Rugby became Simon's passion, but coaching rugby was his real passion. From his first tentative steps in 2000 Simon set about learning all he could about coaching, becoming a level 2 coach in 2005. He was coach of several Brisbane teams for the Queensland Junior Rugby Union State Championship, in addition to his involvement in several U12 Skill Development teams. Not content with this he was also assistant coach for 2 seasons with the Queensland University Rugby Club senior teams.

In 2001 Simon was elected as President of Kenmore. During his time as President he was instrumental in the growth of the club, almost doubling its numbers. He oversaw the agreement between Kenmore and Queensland University to set up a pathway for the clubs older players. When Kenmore's numbers grew to 500, Simon realized there was room for another club in the western suburbs and went about investigating (along with long standing committee member Nick Black) possible areas where a satellite club of Kenmore could be established. Forest Lake was decided upon as a growing area, which in years to come, would be able to support it's own club. In 2004 "The Lakes Rugby Club" was born.



After 3 years Simon stepped down as President of Kenmore and in November 2004 was elected to the BJRU Management Committee. As the West Region Representative, none could doubt his representation of that Region and the council he readily offered.

Simon again launched himself into all things pertaining to the running of the BJRU; becoming involved with the State Championships as a selector & coach; integral member of the judiciary; not to forget his contribution to the raising of the Under 12 Skills Development Program. He willingly used his skills as a solicitor to provide legal advice to the BJRU on such things as Competition Rules, judiciary matters and as a major contributor in compiling the BJRU Strategic Plan in 2006.

Whilst still the BJRU West Region Representative, in September 2006, at the age of 45 years, Simon sadly passed away, after a short battle with cancer. He is sadly missed by not only his wife Maire and son Eli, but also the members of the Brisbane Rugby community.

Simon was an honourable, gentle man, with a great sense of humour, always smiling, and who made an impression on all that met him. His contribution to Junior Rugby can best be summed up by an excerpt from a letter written to Simon by one of his "boys" from the Kenmore Under 13 Reds:

"Thank you for being such a committed coach to our team. Thank you for teaching us well. I'm not only thanking you for teaching our team, I am thanking you for teaching me to play rugby. When I first started rugby with you I was a chattering annoying boy who hardly knew how to play rugby at all but after you taught me and sorted me out I was a chattering, annoying rugby player who could play real rugby".

It is with this sentiment and in honour of Simon's contribution to junior rugby that the Brisbane Junior Rugby Union has officially renamed the carnival as the Simon Abubakar U12 Skills Development Carnival, with the winning team at the end of the carnival to be presented with the U12 Simon Abubakar Memorial Shield.



"We will remember him"