



News Articles -Visiting Personalities



ARL DEVELOPMENT: Promoting rugby league

Dapto flying flag for Dragons



WITH a current enrolment of over 700 children, Dapto Public is an example of a busy school that reflects the values of its community and encourages every child to participate in many different activities.

The school has taken part in all programs offered by ARL/Dragons Development, with its under-9s rugby league team, coached by teacher Mr Marcus Arnold, achieving district representation at the 2006 NSWRL All Schools Carnival!

The ARL/Dragons Development team finished a three-week Joey League Skills program at Dapto Public School not long ago – a clinic held for students from years 5 and 6, totalling 180 students and involving many of the basic fundamentals of rugby league.

The ARL/Dragons Development people are

committed to assisting youth in making healthy lifestyle choices, with the clinic also including a Healthy Lifestyle presentation, which provided messages from Dragons NRL players about the importance of good nutrition and being active.

In support of the program and the St George Illawarra Dragons' assault on the 2006 Finals Series, the day ended with a Dragons flag-raising ceremony

by Dapto Public School captains Kasey, Tori, Brendan and Daniel – all of whom had participated in the clinic.

The Dragons' flag flew high above the school throughout the final weeks of the NRL competition.

The ARL/Dragons Development team and the St George Illawarra Dragons thank Dapto Public School for their ongoing support of its programs and its team.



VISIT www.arldevelopment.com.au NOW

Dimonds are forever

Glory days: Dapto's first rugby league international, Bob Dimond (left), with his brother Peter, who also played for Australia against Great Britain and France. Picture: SYLVIA LIBE

MIKE GANDON

AT the tender age of 18, Bob Dimond was the baby of the 1948-49 Kangaroo touring team to Great Britain and France to face the world's biggest and best rugby league sides of that time.

In the process he became Dapto RLFC's first international, a special source of celebration in the Canaries' centenary this year. Dapto will formally celebrate 100 years of rugby league with a gala dinner at Dapto Leagues Club on Friday, August 31.

Bob Dimond is the elder brother of Peter Dimond, who represented Australia in 10 Tests between 1958 and 1966 and was a member of the great 1963-64 Kangaroo touring team to Great Britain and France.

Bob and Peter remain the only brothers to represent Australia while they were teenagers. Both played in the centres or on the wing.

Bob, a quietly spoken man with a wry sense of humour, now lives on the Gold Coast.

Dapto have had seven rugby league internationals in Bob Dimond, Peter Dimond, Ted Goodwin, Steve Morris, Paul McGregor, Craig Fitzgibbon, and Dean Young.

Bob is proud to have been Dapto's first international. "The 1948-49 Kangaroos was the first tour after the war," Bob said.

"It was a big thing. We played all over the north of England.

"We went by ship and came home by ship. I think the whole tour was about seven months.

"It was terrific. "I was the baby and I didn't mix that much with the other fellows. Generally after a match they'd all go to the pub and have a drink. "I didn't drink. I still don't drink."

Bob and Peter have strong views on how the game has

changed since Bob played for Australia.

"Well, hookers were hookers in those days. They had to win the ball out of the scrum," Bob said. "And generally one man tackled on one. Today it's four tacklers on one."

There was no such thing as interchange or substitutes. Bob was proud when Peter was selected to play for Australia. "I came down one year and coached Dapto and Peter and I played together. That was the only time. There's nine years difference between us," he said.

Both Bob and Peter played for

Peter said he and Bob were proud to represent Australia after rising through the ranks at Dapto.

"We were both a bit quick and both of us were very good tacklers," Peter said.

Peter agrees that Bob was an inspiration for him and helped him tremendously as a young player.

"He kept helping me rectify things I was doing wrong, explaining the game to me, tackling techniques and palming techniques, that sort of thing," he said.

Peter said Bob got a real thrill out of seeing his younger brother play for Australia.

To be Dapto's first two rugby league internationals was a particular source of pride for the Dimond brothers, especially as the Canaries went on to become a powerhouse in Illawarra rugby league at both senior and junior levels, producing many champion and accomplished footballers.

"You must remember in those days, Port Kembla rugby league's numbers were controlled by the steelworks, we here in Dapto were controlled by the coalmines," Peter said.

"So that gave us employment for players and it gave us strong players. In England in those days their rugby league players were very big people and they were all coalminers.

"Their forwards were unbelievable. They caught us a lot. We had no idea of their strength game that they were playing and they were knocking us around something terrible.

"We just had to improve our style and copying from them; we did."

The 1963-64 Kangaroos is generally agreed to be the start of the turning point when Australia began to break even with and eventually overtake Great Britain as the dominant rugby league

region. It still took a few more series but the seeds were sown on that tour.

"You've got to remember the backline that we had. The other thing about that backline was, there wasn't a greedy player among them," Peter explained.

“

Everybody played teamwork and backed each other

"Everybody played teamwork and backed each other up, talked to each other about what they were going to do - there was someone in your pocket all the time and the defence in all of that side.

"Don't forget about the forwards. We had a wonderful pack of forwards.

"As it turned out we were stronger than England and we were able to withstand their onslaught and come back with ours. We were then better than them.

"When I say better, we learnt their passing skills.

"That's what we the public want to see today. Look at South Sydney and the way they play. We, the public, want to look at skills."

Peter has always had forthright views on how rugby league should be played and he has played views on how the game is played today.

"We don't want to see this gridiron football that was brought into our game, slow the whole technique of the game down," Peter said.

Instead of throw to the corner we kick to the corner, so we've got the same thing as gridiron. "When we see a good side

throwing the ball around ... especially with the good sides it's the halfback and five-eighth combination ... it's not run from dummy-half. You run three steps and you've buggered up your backline because the opposition go straight up on you.

"You pass it bang, bang, and all of a sudden you've got your centres running; it's a different game.

"We're spoiling that because of greedy playing. And they say we've got to run the first three or four passes down the middle - all of a sudden your five tackles are gone."

Peter would like to see today's centres playing next to each other more often, working on slick passing movements and combinations, instead of being solely on the left or right side of the field.

"Today we see too much long, lobbing passes, which gives the opposition in defence more chance to run up onto you," he said.

"If we had them closer together and the ball going quicker, quicker, quicker, we've taken the opposition defence out of play. All of a sudden we're running man-for-man outside centre.

"Also in doing this the backline are able to talk to each other ... and are alert to see what's going on."

Even though their father, Robert Henry "Paddy" Dimond, a proud Irish farmer with a penchant for potatoes and cabbages, never saw them play, and their mother Florence only saw Bob play once, their close-knit children were keen on sport.

The Dimond sisters Eileen, Annie and Kathleen are hockey players and fast runners.

With Dapto celebrating 100 years of rugby league, Bob and Peter Dimond have etched their places in the history of the club and the code in the Illawarra.



Muscling up: Peter Dimond trains for a Country-City match in 1968.

Western Suburbs in Sydney in what was then the equivalent of the NRL.

The brothers were fast - Bob finished third in the Sydney rugby league 100 metres sprint - and renowned for their defence.

www.illawarramercury.com.au

Having a ball with Hawks

HAVING criss-crossed the country and travelled to New Zealand in recent weeks the Wollongong Hawks yesterday enjoyed home court with some of their youngest and most vocal fans.

The Hawks visited Dapto Public School to tip-off the first School Hoops Session for 2013.

This year the Hawks will dribble, shoot and pass with more than 8000 kids from more than 120 schools in one of the club's flagship community programs. And while the kids had a ball yesterday, Hawks players also enjoyed time out ahead of a crucial clash against Melbourne Tigers at WIN Entertainment Centre on Friday night.

■ MORE BASKETBALL COVERAGE PAGE 52



Balancing act: Hawks players Adris Deleon, left, and Tyson Demos, enjoy their time with Dapto Public School year 4 students Grace Darby and Logan Bellar.

Picture: ORLANDO CHIODO



SWANNIES RULE THE ROOST AT DAPTO PS

Swans stars Adam Goodes and Michael O'Loughlin were the kings of the kids yesterday when they took the Australian Football League message to Dapto Public School as part of Sydney's community camp. The pair held a question-and-answer session before signing autographs. Swans players visited more than 50 schools in the region yesterday spreading the Aussie Rules gospel. Sydney will finish their four-day Illawarra camp with a final training run at the University of Wollongong this morning. **STORY P58**

Picture: ADAM McLEAN

☐ SYDNEY ON A GOODES THING - SEE PAGE 58

4.2.05