

Glebe District Hockey Club

Life Membership Biography

Martin Howe

Martin Howe Born 4th July 1945 - Died 26th August 2009 aged 64 years,

Elected Life Member of the Glebe District Hockey 1992

Patron of the Glebe District Hockey Club 2008 - 2009

The Glebe District Hockey Club (GDHC) lost one of its great sons when Martin Howe died of lung cancer at Calvary Hospital Kogarah on Wednesday 26 August 2009, aged 64. He had been ill for several months. Martin was the Patron of the Hockey Club, having accepted the position from Ken Wark Snr. stepped down at the 2008 Annual General Meeting.

Martin was the fourth child of Jim Howe a PMG (Telecom) employee and his wife Kathleen (known as Molly) who came to Glebe in 1947 from Barellan, a town 50 kilometres east of Griffith in the Riverina Area. Martin was born at the Barellan District Hospital and the family moved to Glebe when he was around 2 years old.



Jim and Molly had 18 children, one of whom died in infancy; their 12 boys and 5 girls all had their primary education at Saint James' School Glebe. Every Howe boy,

Brian (330 games), Peter (641 games), Gavin (20 games), Martin (712 games), Bobby (83 games), Johnny (121 games), Barry (364 games), Jamie (249 games) Greg (318 games), Adrian (467 games), Alan (124 games), and Vernon (620 games) played hockey for Glebe. In 2014 Vernon Howe is the Glebe Minkey Coach, a position he has filled for many years now.

After leaving school Martin became an electrical trade apprentice and worked in the electrical trade for over 45 years before retiring in 2007 - 2008. He spent most of his working life at Tooth's Kent Brewery on Broadway, until it closed in 1985. He was then employed at the Caltex Oil Refinery at Kurnell, where he worked until his retirement.

The Howe family has been an integral part of the GDHC since 1958, when Martin's elder brothers Brian (deceased), Peter and Gavin joined the Club's junior ranks and played for the Saint Benedict's team in the Eastern Area Junior Competition at Saint Paul's Oval, Sydney University.

Saint Benedict's was Martin's high school. Martin came along to watch his brothers play and had the odd game filling-in during 1958 and in 1959 became a regular member of the team. When, because of a lack of numbers, the Saint Benedict team floundered, Martin joined the Saint James' team. Saint James is the Catholic School in Glebe where Martin completed his primary schooling. Players in Martin's junior teams included: Peter Howe, Bobby Howe, Gavin Howe, John Howe, Greg Dwyer, John Davenport, Alan Baba, Albert Walters, Warren Radford, Harvey Harris, David Eldridge, Vince Dwyer, Vince Spaniel, Frank Dwan, Reg Homer, Ron Melville, Tony Thomas, McGregor, Vic Owen, Brian Whitt, Harry Bell and Neville Gardiner.

In 1961 Martin progressed to the senior ranks and played every season for 38 years until he retired from the Club's "Savage Sevens" at the end of the 1997 season because of a "dicky" knee. Martin played 712 senior games for Glebe and is one of only four players to have reached the 700 senior games mark. Martin ran on for his 700th game at Federal Park, Glebe, the home of many a Glebe match in the years when senior games were played at Glebe every second weekend.

Others to have played over 700 games for the Club are Les Wark 803 games, Harry Wark snr 754 games and Steve Casey with 720 games.

Martin's fellow team members of the 1961 Glebe Fourth Grade side which was defeated in the final 3-1 by Liverpool included Denis Brown, Harry Wark jnr, Richard Payne-Scott, Harry Butler, Jack McParland and Allan Westacott.

Martin was in the Glebe Second Grade side which took out the premiership five years in a row, from 1964 to 1968. In 1969 he was promoted to First Grade and played there for eight years until 1976, enjoying two First Grade



premierships along the way, in 1974 and 1976. He played over 150 first grade games mostly at left-half, or left back.

The 1974 First Grade premiership team comprised, along with Martin, Pat Nilan (captain), Ian Cooke, Greg Corben, Ian Mutton, Phil Downey, Barry Gorringer, Les Wark, Keith Pritchard, Graham Lisk and Royce Jenkins, with Colin Brown in goals. The First Grade side of 1976 was: Pat Nilan (captain), Graham Bell (goal-keeper), Martin Howe, Greg Corben, Ian Cooke, Ian Mutton, Les Wark, Geoff Paterson, Robert Diviney, Kevin Sweeney and Jeff Dearing.

Over the next twenty years Martin worked his way slowly down through the grades, winning many lower grade premierships along the way. He spent many years playing for the Savage Sevens. This team was comprised of a team of mates who enjoyed each others company. Fellow players in the 1997 Seventh Grade side with Martin were Bob Taylor, David Matthews, Vernon Howe, Bevan Ineson, John McDonald, Lex McPhee, Arthur Moir, Peter Mitchell, Geoff Roberts, Oleh Ploskodniak and Adam Farrawell.

Martin was a leading light in the Glebe Veterans team for over 16 years from 1980 to 1996. In 1980 he represented NSW in the first ever Australian Veterans' Championship in Perth and played continually for the NSW Veteran's team, every year until 1996.

Martin reluctantly retired at the age of 52, when his knees could no longer stand up to the rigours of competition hockey.

He had a never - say - die attitude to the game, his astute reading of the game; his reliability and his optimistic approach, even in the direst of circumstances have inspired many a team mate.

Martin was a great team player, who always put self aggrandisement and personal glory behind contributing to the common good of the team. In 1968 and 1995 Martin won the W J Taylor Cup, which is awarded annually by the Club to the player, who: "has set the best example by constant play and general demeanour." In 1987 he won the Pat Nilan Trophy which is awarded annually by the Club to the: "most outstanding Club Member for the year".



Martin efforts did not stop with playing the game. He was a contributor to Club affairs throughout his life. In the sixties he helped coach the Club's junior teams. He was Club Captain in 1972 and was a Member of the Club's Management Committee for decades. When his daughters Helen and Colleen started with the Glebe Juniors in 1983 Martin played an active role in coaching and managing junior teams. He took over as Junior Convenor from his brother Jamie in 1986 and was Junior Convenor for six years from 1986 to 1991, before handing over to Jim Oman in 1992.

At the 1992 Annual General Meeting, in recognition of his more than 30 years contribution to Club affairs both on and off the field, Martin was elected the Club's nineteenth Life-Member.

After his playing days were over Martin was a regular at first and second grade fixtures, he rarely missed a game. Martin liked a smoke and a beer while watching the games, and always positioned himself so that his cigarette smoke would not trouble other spectators. At Homebush he regularly sat at the motorway end of the ground, in the western corner. He was frequently joined by, among others, Bob Taylor, Robert "Charlie" Brown, Bevan Ineson, Peter Mitchell, Noel Anderson, Billy Stubbs, Lex McPhee, Geoff Bortfield, Robert Wark and Ken Wark.

This group of Club Elders was affectionately known amongst the players as the "Brains Trust".

In the late 1960's Martin had met a fellow hockey player Margaret Richardson, whom he married at Saint Catherine's Catholic Church Gympie in 1969. Margaret supported Martin through thick and thin, both in life and in Hockey Club affairs. Margaret contributed much to the Glebe Junior and Women's teams. She was an unassuming, charming, low key, but tireless worker. Margaret Howe, like Martin is a Life-Member of the GDHC. Martin and Margaret lived most of their married life in Caringbah, but Martin remained staunchly a Glebe man. He had many friends in the Club, and he much enjoyed the ongoing friendships and relationships he had formed with fellow Club Members from his youth.



Martin and Margaret had two daughters Helen and Colleen, both of whom play hockey for Glebe. Helen has played around 328 senior games for the Glebe Women's teams, which is the highest number of games played for the Club by any woman to date. Helen not only plays the game, but she is active in administration and coaching and well.

Three days before he died Martin was able to attend the marriage of Helen to her long time boyfriend Dean Benfield, a former First Grade goal-keeper. Helen, being the great contributor that she is, ran on and played a game of hockey that evening for the Glebe's First Grade side.

Martin's daughter Colleen spent many years overseas, but in recent months has been back in Sydney, to comfort and support her father during his last months.

In the year 2000 Margaret Howe suffered a massive stroke, which resulted in severe permanent neurological impairment. She has been in hospital care since the event. Martin, Helen and Colleen lovingly supported Margaret in her debilitating post stroke state. Margaret's stroke and her subsequent neurological impairment was a major cross for Martin and his family to bear, but they have done it with charm, good grace and a can-do attitude. Their ability to cope in difficult circumstances is an inspiration to us all.

Martin was a straight-forward chap, what you saw is what you got. He made a difference in this world; he made a substantial difference to the lives of those around him and was a great contributor to the Glebe District Hockey Club affairs for close to 50 years. He was an honest hardworking man, who made a contribution when and where he could. Thank you Martin for your efforts, the world is a better place for your having been here. In accordance with Martin's wishes his ashes were scattered on Jubilee Oval Glebe where he spent much of his childhood and spent many a good time playing with his friends and family in the maroon and white.

Martin was a Catholic and all of us, family and friends, will take comfort in the expectation that Martin is now enjoying his eternal reward in Heaven, which God promises to those of Martin's ilk, who lead a good life here on earth.

Martin's Funeral Service was held on Friday 4th September, at 11.00 am, at Our Lady of Fatima Church, 389 Port Hacking Road Carlingbah.

