

Glebe District Hockey Club

Life Membership Biography

Harry Joseph Wark Jnr

An Anaesthetist, has a sure – fire remedy for injuries on the field:

“Give it a rub – it’ll be alright...”

Harry Joseph Wark Jnr was born on 8th of May 1947 in a maternity hospital in Piper Street Leichhardt, where, in 2012, the Leichhardt Bowling Club now stands. At that time, his parents, Harry Wark Snr and Molly Wark had just commenced what was to become a life-long association with the Glebe District Hockey Club. Harry Wark Snr and his younger brother Ken Wark Snr



operated a successful Carcass Butcher and Meat Wholesale business at 107 Mansfield Street Rozelle where they worked together in the butcher shop for over 30 years. Harry’s Butcher Shop was the place where Club members rang to find out where they were picked for the Saturday game if they could not attend the Wednesday night training session. The team lists were pinned to the wall next to the butcher shop phone. Many Club members would just call into the butcher shop for a chat, find out where they were picked for the following Saturday, have a whine/whinge about the selectors and buy some meat.

Until the age of eight years, Harry lived with his parents in a flat above the shop. Harry attended Primary School just up the hill at St Joseph’s Rozelle, on Victoria Road Rozelle. In 1955 the family moved a matter of weeks before Harry’s younger brother Leslie was born to 12 Sisters Crescent Drummoyne, where his mother Molly still resides to this day

He attended St Joseph’s Rozelle from Kindergarten until he did his Intermediate Certificate at the end of his 3rd Year in the Secondary section (equivalent of Year 9 now) in 1961. Saint Joseph’s Rozelle did not go through to the Leaving Certificate.

Harry furthered his High School education at Christian Brother's High School Lewisham in 1962 and 1963 where he completed his Leaving Certificate. His son's Anthony, Patrick and Michael also attended the same high school. The boy's cousins and Glebe players Peter and Matthew Wark also went to Lewisham.

After leaving school, from 1964-66 Harry completed a Pharmacy Degree at the University of Sydney and in 1966 he did a professional year with the Pharmacy Chain Washington H Soul Pattinson. In 1967 he commenced a Medicine Degree at the University of Sydney.

In 1972 Harry graduated from the Medical Faculty. The following year Harry was employed as a Junior Resident at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Camperdown, Sydney.

From 1974 to 1975 Harry travelled to England where he held the position of Senior House Officer in Cardio Thoracic Surgery and Cardiology at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London. In 1975 Harry was appointed Senior House Officer in Anaesthetics at Middlesex Hospital, Mortimer Street, London.

On his return to Sydney, Harry was employed by the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital as an Anaesthetic Registrar from 1976 to 1977. In 1978 Harry worked as an Anaesthetic Registrar at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children (RAHC). During the same year he passed the final exam of the Faculty of Anaesthetics of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons.

At the end of 1978 Harry returned to London and started work early in 1979 as an Anaesthetic Registrar back at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street and passed the exam of the Faculty of Anaesthetics of the Royal College of Surgeons, London. In 1980 Harry was employed by the Hospital for Sick Children as a Locum Consultant in Anaesthetics.

Upon Harry's return to Sydney he was again employed at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children (now The Children's Hospital Westmead), as a Fellow in Anaesthesia from 1981 to 1982. From 1983 to 1985 Harry worked as a Visiting Medical Officer in Anaesthetics at the Hospital. In 1986 Harry was appointed a Half-Time Staff Specialist in Anaesthetics at The Children's Hospital a position he still holds in 2013. For the remainder of his working week he runs a private anaesthetic practice with lists at various Hospitals. Harry's particular expertise is in administering anaesthesia for paediatric cardiac surgery. He obtained a higher degree in medicine, an MD from the University of Sydney in 1996. His Thesis was related to use and metabolism of the anaesthetic drug Halothane,



which was used to anaesthetize children.

After graduating as a doctor Harry was often on call during the weekends, which restricted the amount of time, he could devote to playing hockey. Getting to training sessions was problematical, but he did so when and where he could.

Harry married Anne Kathryn Fitzpatrick at Saint Mark's Catholic Church Drummoyne in August 1977 and they lived in Belmont Street, Alexandria before leaving for London in late 1978. On returning to Sydney with Mary (1979) and Anthony (1980) at the end of 1980, they rented in Glebe and then Annandale before settling at 12 Alexandra Road, Glebe, a stone's throw from the Arch and Jubilee Oval in December 1983 where they still live. Harry and Anne also welcomed Patrick (1982), Gabrielle (1985), Michael (1986) and Elizabeth (1990), who completed the family of Six. All of Harry's children have played both junior and Senior Hockey for the Glebe District Hockey Club making them the third generation of Wark's to do so. Anne also played Senior Women's Hockey for Glebe in the inaugural year of the women's club in 1978 and she also played in the 1981 season.

Harry shared his Father's love for the game and commenced playing hockey with the Glebe District Hockey Club in 1959 at the age of 12.

A member of the NSW Colts in 1967, he played as a fullback and inside right in the Glebe first grade sides from 1966 to 1970 and from 1977 to 1978. First grade premierships were elusive from 1966 -1970 however Glebe won the Club Championship every season from 1964 to 1968. Glebe was perhaps a little unlucky to lose to St. George in the final in 1966 and was eliminated in the semi-finals in 67 and 68 as a number of strong new clubs started to emerge.



The second and third grades sides enjoyed great success and Harry was a prominent member of the both the first and second teams. In the 1969 Annual Report Glebe 1st Grade captain Vic Westacott remarked that Harry Wark: Left back was the find of the season, Harry played many devastating matches & his hitting power was a big feature in many penetrating movements. In 1977 the Glebe 1st grade regained the Premiership Pennant, team captain Patrick Nilan noted in his annual team report that Harry was a steady and consistent performer throughout the season. The 1977 season was a golden year for the Glebe Club with seven teams making their respective Grand - finals.

In the 1978 Grand – Final Glebe were leading UNSW 2 – 1 but unfortunately lost 4 – 2 to the eventual winners. In the 1978 Annual report First Grade Captain Pat Nilan again noted that Harry gave a good all round performance during the season in both defence and attack.

A combination of night games on turf at far flung fields and wanting to more often watch Patrick and Michael play (Anthony had gone overseas by this stage) were the two main factors in his decision to put away the shin pads. Recurring hamstring muscle tears also had a bearing on this decision. At the end of the 2003 season Harry played his last game for the club registering 639 games with 150 of those games being played in first grade. Harry was aged 56 at the time.

In 1989 Harry Wark began his long-standing association with the Glebe Juniors coaching the Under 11 team with Peter Howe. The team included Harry's three eldest children in Mary, Anthony and Patrick. This was the first U/11 team in many years to reach the semi-finals in the Sydney Central area competition unfortunately they finished 4th out of seven teams and were beaten by Moorebank – Liverpool in the semi-final. In 1997 Harry coached a very good U/13 Glebe Strikers team, which finished second after the round matches but unfortunately lost the Major Semi-final to Sutherland and then the Final to Moorebank – Liverpool. Harry's coaching philosophy and dedication can best be summoned up in his U/13 Strikers report in 1997. Harry went on to say "To assist young people along life's winding road through the medium of junior sport is the responsibility of the adults of my generation. Coaching the Under 13 Strikers gave me the opportunity to make my contribution. One is never too old to stop learning, and the Under 13 Strikers have certainly taught me a lot this season."

Harry again took on the responsibility of coaching the U/13 Strikers in the 1998 junior season. The team had an excellent season winning the 1998 Northern District Carnival and the Lithgow Carnival beating the local Zig Zag team in the final. The Strikers made the Sydney Central Area Grand-Final but was beaten by Sutherland. Interestingly four players from this 1998 team in Michael Wark, Mark Paterson, Matthew Wark and Andrew Cheong would go on to win Premierships in Glebe's first grade side in 2005, 2006 & 2008.

If you were lucky enough to have been a Glebe Junior at the time you will remember Harry's catch cries, which will long live in the memory of the junior's that had the pleasure of either being trained or coached by Harry, some of these include;



- If you don't like it, Jump the fence (referring to the fence around Jubilee Oval, Glebe) and buzz off.
- Hard as you like!
- Stick forward, body back, defend the legs.
- Give the early ball
- If you played as good as you talked, you'd be in the Australian Team.

The end of Harry's warm up session always finished with a sprint with the ball on the end of your stick from the Blackwattle Bay end of Jubilee Oval to the Clubhouse end. Harry always had the wager that if anyone beat him, he would shout him or her a can of coke. He only had to shout one or two cokes during his time as a junior coach.

By the time he had finished coaching junior teams in 2004 he had coached U/11 teams in 1991, 92, 95, 99, 2000, 2001, Under 13 teams in 1994, 1997, 1998, 2002 (Assistant Coach) and an Under 15 team in 2004 a coaching record which spanned 15 years. But during this time Harry also conducted the warm-up section of the junior training from 1989 till 2007 when he handed the position on.

Harry's dedication to the Club also extended to trying to find the club a suitable site in which to access a Synthetic Hockey Surface. Harry's involvement with the Synthetic turf proposal began in 1988 as noted by then President Robert Wark in the Annual General Report. Over the years possible sites included Federal Park Annandale, Wentworth Park, Lambert Park, Harold Park, Glebe High School, Rozelle Bay Shunting Yards and Leichhardt Oval Number 2. After 17-years of involvement with the Club's efforts to acquire a site on which to build a synthetic grass hockey field, Harry retired from the Synthetic Turf Committee on 11th December 2003, after notifying, as best he could, all Hockey Club Members and Supporters, of the result of the Hockey Club's legal proceedings against the Harness Club.

On his resignation from the Club's Synthetic Turf Committee after the Court Case with the NSW Harness Racing Club was completed Harry wrote in the 2004 Annual Report:

"It was a privilege and a pleasure to be associated with the people on the Club's Synthetic Turf Committee and I retire knowing that there were always many Club members with outstanding talents available to me. I thank the Club's membership past and present, for giving me the opportunity to serve them, which I have always attempted to do to the best of my ability. The

support the Committee received from the ordinary Club Membership was always resolute and reassuring.”

Harry is a straightforward chap, what you see is what you get. He has been one of Glebe's great contributors over a period spanning nearly 50 years. His dedication knows no bounds and sees it his duty to assist the club in whatever way possible. From all of us here at The Glebe District Hockey Club we thank you for your contribution.