



September 2023

Dear FOWRF Member

**RE: FRIENDS OF WARRINGAH RUGBY FOUNDATION – 2023 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER**

I am writing to you to update you on the progress of the Friends of Warringah Rugby Foundation (“FOWRF”) for the 2023 year.

Before I do this, I would like to thank you for your membership of the FOWRF. Your membership of the FOWRF is highly valued and your annual financial contribution helps contribute to the ongoing success of the Rats.

There were some mixed results across the Club in 2023 with Grade struggling and Colts minor premiers in all three grades and winning the Colts Club Championship. Congratulations to all those involved in Colts in 2023. Despite these mixed results, it seems like the Rats are in a good position to continue to be a force in the Shute Shield.

**Friends of Warringah Rugby Foundation Limited**

As you are aware, the FOWRF was reformed in mid-2010. As of October 2023, we have over 50 contributors (the names of each of the FOWRF contributors can be found on the FOWRF website – [www.friendsofwarringah.com](http://www.friendsofwarringah.com)). As a reminder:

- The assets of the FOWRF are kept separate from those of the WRC;
- The decision as to the expenditure of the contributions is made independently by the FOWRF Committee and,
- All FOWRF members are welcome to review the financial records, attend any Committee meetings or provide any input or suggestions for future projects or fundraising activities.

The Friends of Warringah Rugby Foundation Limited ACN 119 353 650 (the “Foundation”) is established as a fundraising partner of the Australian Sports Foundation (“ASF”).

The Foundation is registered with and conducted under the charter of the ASF. The ASF was established by the Australian Government to raise funds through public and corporate donations for the development of sport in Australia. The ASF’s listing in the Income Tax Assessment Act (1977) means donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Registration with the ASF allows donations to the ASF in support of the Foundation to attract tax deduction.

**What has your FOWRF membership contributed in 2023?**

The major expenditure for 2023 has been as follows:

- Funded the Rats History Documentary which premiered to rave reviews at the Warriewood Cinema in March 2023;
- Contributed to the cost of rugby/personal development for the First Grade Coach and Captain to visit the Melbourne Storm training;
- Contributed to the upgrade and maintenance of the Rats gym;



- Made a significant contribution to the Rats Rising Program;
- Funded the reintroduction of the newsletter “Rats Tales”; and
- Financial assistance to relocate some of the interstate and overseas players.

It is our continued intention to prioritise our projects in accordance with what we see as providing the most benefit to WRC across the spectrum from Schools to Juniors to Colts to Grade. We will be happy to receive your suggestions for consideration.

### **Rats History Documentary**

The FOWRF was proud to fund the production of the 90 minute Rats History Documentary. The filming first started in 2017 and was finally completed in late 2022. The premiere was held at Warriewood Cinema in March 2023 with just under 300 attending.

The FOWRF hopes the documentary correctly reflects the evolution of the Club and provides an important record of some of the key people involved over the first 50 years of the Club.



### **2023 FOWRF Player of the Year**

The 2023 FOWRF Player of the Year winner was shared by First Grade players, Wes Thomas and Andrew Davies. The FOWRF members voted for 12 different individual players which illustrates the wide range of opinions.



A comment from a FOWRF member on each was as follows:

**Wes Thomas:**

“My vote is for Wes Thomas from first grade. Every time he puts on the Rats jersey he gives it everything he’s got and he’s everywhere on the field. Although first grade have had a tough season, Wes always turns up and shines above the rest.”

**Andrew Davies:**

“I would like to nominate Andrew Davies as he is to me a classic example of a dedicated Rat. This season he has played every minute of every game which is not bad for a second rower. He is always there to support and assist both on and off the field.”

Wes and Andrew have both had tremendous seasons and will share the \$1,000 to be spent on work/educational/rugby expenses. Previous winners include:

- 2022 Rory O’Connor
- 2021 No winner due to COVID
- 2020 Ben Marr and Sam Ward
- 2019 Harley Attwater
- 2018 Seb Wileman and Dave Feltscheer
- 2017 Josh Holmes and Jack Tomkins
- 2016 Seb Wileman and Rob Kelly
- 2015 Wayne Borsak

Congratulations to Wes and Andrew on a fantastic 2023 and we look forward to seeing them both at Rat Park again next year!!!

**The Annual FOWRF/WRC Lunch**

The annual FOWRF/WRC Lunch was held in July at the Manly Pacific with over 220 attendees. We were fortunate enough to have World Cup winning coach, Rod Macqueen, and



Captain John Eales together with former Wallaby assistant/current Reds coach Jim McKay. It was a great day. Thank you to everyone who attended.



A very special thank you to both Charles Baynie and Jack Nettleton who both came off the bench to MC the lunch...it was appreciated and they did a great job.



### **Friends of Gordon**

In June 2023, the FOWRF hosted the Friends of Gordon (“FOGs”) at Rat Park. It was a great afternoon and was highlighted by the granting of Life Membership to Rats legend (and Gordon), Grant “Grunter” Andrews.



### 2023 Golf Day

The 2023 “Bill Simpson Presidents Cup” golf day will be held at Long Reef in November 2023. Last years event was a terrific day, despite some inclement weather, and over 80 golfers enjoyed the day followed by lunch at the club.

We have heard current champions Jake and Tom Kauffmann, Tom Martin and Scott Bradley are keen to defend their title and have, secretly, practicing hard!!!





### **FOWRF Box at Rat Park**

As you are probably aware, the FOWRF have a corporate box at Rat Park which you are able to utilise. It is envisaged that this will continue for season 2024. The FOWRF box proven to be very popular with FOWRF members and their guests.

### **New Members**

Season 2024 is another important year for the Rats as the Club looks to continue to build on the recent successes. It would be great if we could continue to expand the FOWRF membership further. If you are aware of any friends, other Rats supporters or colleagues that might be interested in joining the FOWRF, please let us know or have them contact one of the FOWRF committee.

### **Contacts**

If you have questions about this newsletter or the operation of the FOWRF, please do not hesitate to contact any of the FOWRF Directors:

Stephen Crawford  
Stephen Doyle

John Heffernan  
Brendan Paddison

Paul Schober  
Bob Buckingham

Keep an eye on the FOWRF website for news and updates: [www.friendsofwarringah.com](http://www.friendsofwarringah.com). Look forward to seeing you at Rat Park in 2024!!!

Yours sincerely

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