



## **CONNEL BYRNE**

### **Class of 1971**

Connell Byrne is a teacher, coach and past 1st grade NRL player, who graduated from Sydney Tech High School in 1971. A contemporary of Stephen Edge, who is elsewhere on these Walls. Connell was a hooker in both Rugby Union and Rugby League, whose career mirrored that of Edge, also a hooker, and who found himself following Edge into the grades of St George Rugby League Club at the same time.

Connell played 168 games for St George throughout the grades and won three premierships. (in Under 23's in 1974, 2nd grade in 1976 and 1st grade in 1977) and was a part of the 1st grade squad who were runners-Up in 1975. Whilst at high school, he won Regional honours in Rugby Union, where he was the captain of the first xv, at a time when he was playing representative League and Union outside school.

After securing a Diploma in Teaching at Sydney Teachers College, Connell went on to California State University in the USA, where he captained the 1st XV Rugby side and where he gained a Master of Arts (Honours). During this time his publication of Sports Science papers was prolific (10 published papers), and he worked for over four years as a lecturer at Sydney University as well as nine years at UNSW.

Among Connell's other skills, he was both the founding President of the NSW Secondary Schools Soccer Association and the NSW CHS Soccer Convener, as well as coach of the Australian Schools Soccer team which played Queensland before the Australia New York Cosmos exhibition game at the Sydney Sports Ground in front of over 25,000 spectators.

Connell holds high level coaching certificates in a myriad of sports (Rugby Union - IRB level 3, Soccer - level 3 and Squash), and is presently the coach of Southern Districts 2nd grade Shute Shield Rugby Union team. He was also President of Southern Districts Junior Rugby Club and Vice-President of Coaching Australian Schools Soccer Federation.