

2019 – THE GROWTH CONTINUES

In 2019 The University of Wollongong Rugby Union Club (aka The Mallee Bulls) continued to make headway in its quest to become the premier club of the Illawarra District, both on and off the field. We are the only club that fields teams in all grades of the senior Men's competition in the Illawarra District (Firsts, Seconds and Thirds), a Colts (u/21) team in the Radford Cup competition which encompasses teams from Sydney and a Women's team that plays in the premier division of the Sydney Women's comp.

Our Juniors continue to expand with the addition of two junior girls teams to go with six junior sides that play in the Illawarra Junior competition. The pleasing progression of the playing numbers and the quality of the teams is something of which the club is extremely proud.

THE BOARD.

One of the strengths of the club is a stable administration and this was again certainly the case in 2019. Indeed, the year was an uneventful one with no major incidents to cause sleepless nights, which is always a good sign.

The Board structure established in 2018 was again in operation and most of the key stake holder were still willing and able to take on the responsibilities of running the club which is continuing to grow.

Led by President Bob Wheway the Executive comprised Canio Fierravanti (Rugby Director), Andrew Newhouse (Finance), Glenda Heggen (Secretary) and 'Sproggy' McGuinness (Administration). These hard-working individuals ensured that the club was on a firm footing while dealing with the myriad of tasks required to keep the club functioning.

Also, on the board were Ben North and Lusii Tanevesi, who were elected by the parents to represent the interests of the junior members, the Women's reps were Teleri Jamieson and June Norton while the Men's Club Captains were Lachlan Conyers and Wayne Ngatai.

It was a difficult task to get the Board together due to study, work and playing commitments but generally the club functioned quite smoothly.

LIFE MEMBER

Glenda and Max Heggen are true champions who perform so many tasks that the club would be lost without them, and they do it all with a minimum of fuss. The fact that their connection to the club began in the 1960's is a testament to their dedication to the Mallee Bulls.

During the week Glenda takes care of the banking and other tasks associated with her role as club Secretary while Max is the master of finding great deals on canteen stocks.

Glenda, who works in Sydney, often gets Max to pick her up from the station, so she can attend training to check on the welfare of 'her boys' and give a hand to BHB when he runs his Thursday nights BBQ's. They even manage to find the energy to assist when the Juniors are running events after Wednesday night's training.

On Saturdays when we are at home this dynamic duo arrive before anyone else to assist Bob Nowotny organise the canteen, help set up the ground and then are the last to leave as they make sure that the canteen is left spotless. They are also often back on Sundays just to finish off little jobs that need doing. In between times, Max slaves over the BBQ while Glenda makes sure that all her managerial duties are performed to her own high standards.

It is then down to the Wiso's to have a meal and enjoy the company of the players, who it must be said show a great deal of affection and respect for both stalwarts of the club. No wonder Max and Glenda go home exhausted.

Glenda and Max also opened their home to Matt Perese, one of the Kiwi guys, to help him settle into our club and he did not want to leave as they treated him like a long-lost son and spoilt him rotten. The friendship created is one that will last a long time.

Max was recognised for his contributions as a player and official by being awarded life Membership in the 1990's but he would be the first to admit that Glenda's constant encouragement and support were instrumental in him staying involved.

Glenda renewed her involvement in 2016 when she became the second-grade manager, and she was certainly in her element. Glenda was more than willing to help in anyway and she soon became the Secretary as well as manager for Seconds and Thirds.

It is only fitting that Glenda became the first female to be honoured by being made a Life Member of the UOW rugby Club.

SPONSORS.

Where would any club be without the financial backing of its sponsors? The Mallee Bulls are in the fortunate position of being financed by some wonderful companies and individuals that have consistently put their hands in their pockets to keep the club functioning and funding the great game of rugby. It needs to be recognised that most of the individuals have a long-standing connection with the club as a player or supporter and really do get little back in monetary value but do know that their generosity is appreciated.

A big plus for the club was the decision by the University to pay our costs for ground hire and this was a significant boost to our bottom line and something we had been chasing for many years. It was also a step in the right direction when players received \$100 back from Uni Active as a part of SAF funding.

Leading the way in 2019 as Major Sponsor was **The Wisemans Park, Wollongong City Bowling Club**. This year was the third year we have used the Wiso's as our base for social get together and the relationship that has been developed benefits both parties.

Our Premier Sponsor was **U Physio and Pilates** who looked after the physical wellbeing of all our players from juniors to seniors, which also involved travelling to Sydney venues for the Women's and Colt's teams. Tim Gray and the other physios took a hands-on role and did a fantastic job in making sure everyone's injuries received the best possible care.

Two Board members in President Dr Bob Wheway (**aka Big-Hearted Bob**) and Treasurer Andrew Newhouse (**Total Civil Recyclers**) were also Gold Sponsors and their support was tremendous. Bob's generosity extended to supplying the ingredients for BHB's monthly Barbeques which are now legendary with no player going home hungry after Thursday Training.

Another long-term Gold Sponsor was Paul Martin (**Ledacon**) who contributed cash for the Junior shorts as well as providing work for several of our senior players. Marto's assistance with work for our additional three new Kiwi players certainly got us out of trouble when another company failed to deliver, and he does all this in a very low-key manner.

Our Silver Sponsors have all been long-time supporters of the club and we appreciate their assistance. Charlie Emery (**Soilco**) and Dave (Chief) Petty (**Dave Petty Conveyancing**) were former players, and their continued support has been invaluable; especially when the club has been in dire financial difficulties on occasions. One of our staunchest supporters is Hugh Wingate (**Synergy Dry Cleaning and Laundry Service**) who has been looking after the cleaning of the jumpers continuously for over 25 years and he does it with a smile.

Dion Miller not only spent a large amount of time coaching in the seniors and the juniors he also sponsored a set of jumpers under his company name. (**DMC**). The only problem is trying to get Dion to slow down as he is always travelling at a million miles an hour. Another benefactor is Chris Adams (**Chris Adams Law Group**) who spent Sundays being the u/13 manager as well as sponsoring the juniors.

The Bronze Sponsors included a few former players in Matt Wolfe (**Shellharbour Roofing Service**), Scot Bultitude (**Titan Education**) and Bob Nowotny (**Tunnelling and Mining Consultants Pty Ltd.**) These three guys still have a strong affiliation with the club and are great supporters financially.

We were very lucky to have Barry Christofides (**Snap Printing**) once again on board as they do a lot of the printing work for the club while Mark Hampton (**Crown West Cellars**) again supplied our drinks at a very good price as well as sponsoring the club which he has done for over 10 years. Another sponsor who has been involved for years is **Affective Services** who looked after a couple of the junior teams through the connection with the Newhouse family

A new sponsor this year was Tom Ellicott (**Access Law Group**) which was a great acknowledgement of the club's standing in the rugby community as Tom is a Shamrock through and through but as his son was a player in the juniors, he was more than happy to help us out as well as the Rocks.

We also welcomed **The White Rabbit Café** as Women's jumper sponsor and Shaun McCreedy's companies (**The Coach's Assistant and Ora Emulin**).

Two more 'mature' Mallee Bulls in Ken Wright and Dave Dobinson were active in assisting on Game Day as well as sponsoring a playing jumper just to stay involved.

The great thing about these sponsors is that they always pay their way and are constantly keen to help in any way.

JUNIORS

There was a major changing of the guard in the junior administration when, after too many years to remember, Canio Fierravanti stood down as Chairperson of the Juniors to take up the position of Rugby Chairperson who was responsible for the three sections of the club – Senior Men's and Women's plus the Juniors.

The Juniors were in the fortunate position of being able to call on the expertise of Andrew Newhouse who took on the role and did a tremendous job as he navigated the treacherous waters of Junior Rugby in The Illawarra.

Andrew would be the first to admit that he underwent a steep learning curve, especially as he also undertook the registrar's role, but in the end he survived, and the club went from strength to strength on and off the field.

Much of this success could also be attributed to the hard work of a few dedicated souls in Dion Miller, Ben North and Lusii Tanevesi, who worked tirelessly to attract families to the Mallee Bulls. Early on we were concerned with our numbers, but we were soon well and truly able to meet our commitments in all age groups – u7's, u'8's, u/10's, u12's and u/13's.

One of the major attractions for people to come to the club was Wednesday afternoon training where all the teams came together on Oval 1 to develop their rugby skills. There was an emphasis on improving on an individual and team level with everyone doing their best while at the same time treating with respect each person involved with the club – players, coaches and officials.

The parents also appreciated being able to come along sit the comfort of the Grandstand enjoying a free coffee from the canteen and generally being able to relax knowing their children were being well looked after.

The other highlight at training was the club's monthly barbeques catered for by Lusii, BHB and the canteen brigade who did a magnificent job in ensuring everyone walked away contented with a full belly.

MATCH DAY

The major contributor to Match Day at home was Andrew, who oversaw the smooth ground setting up, ensuring that there was a suitably qualified referee for each game and generally smoothing over any number of things that can go wrong with so many people involved.

CANTEEN

Under the astute leadership of Lusii Tanevesi the canteen on Match Days ran like a well-oiled machine creating a solid financial asset for the club. Many of the parents were more than happy to get involved but the u/13's mums including Lusi Johnson, Sela Kouka, Wai Kopara, Viena Tinao, Ebetoma Kore, Lucy Morris and Mima Wars were the prime movers.

The BBQ's after training were also highlights where all the kids and parents always went home feeling quite contented thanks to BHB and his crew of helpers

PHYSIO

The club was also in the fortunate position of having either a trained Physio in Tim Gray, who was our major sponsor and a parent of two of the players, or a qualified Sports trainer provided by U

Physio to treat any injuries sustained by the players. The fact that we were so well cared for in this area was the envy of many of the other clubs.

TEAMS

U/7's

Squad:

Matthew Placek	Scout Kopara	Noah Allin	Levi Arrandale	Elias Tanevesi
Brianna Waerford	Malia Malafu	Matarina McCreedy	Makenna Phillips	William Gray
Cylus Puha	Ricky Tuala	Taawera Kouka		

Coach: Luke Arrandale

u/8's

Squad:

TeAhurei McCreedy	Asher Flynn	Millie Rossit	Hinemoa Kouka	Jackson Hill
Lachlan Gray	Rihari Ngatai			

Coach: Dean Rossit

U/10's

Coach: Matt Bird

The u/10's had a struggle initially to field a full side but with the withdrawal of the Tech Waratahs team many of their players made the trip across the motorway to link up with the Mallee Bulls. Matt Bird did an outstanding job in getting the guys to meld into a fine attacking unit and all the parents appreciated his efforts. Unfortunately, Matt returned to his home in New Zealand and he was a big loss.

The boys were competitive in all matches and always tried hard especially against the Campbelltown Juggernaut. In the end it was a successful season with some great rugby being played as well as friendships being established.

Unluckily, the boys just missed the semis after losing their last game in a close encounter.

u/10's Points Table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Draw	Lost	-/+	Bonus	Points	Total
1	Camden	14	13	0	1	403	14	52	66
2	Campbelltown	14	10	2	2	232	9	44	53
3	Kiama	14	8	2	4	142	9	36	45
4	Bowral	14	7	0	7	-11	10	28	38
5	University	14	5	1	8	-114	7	22	29
6	Shamrocks	14	3	1	10	-133	6	14	20
7	Vikings	13	1	0	12	-443	1	4	5
8	Tech Waratahs	3	0	0	3	-76	1	0	1

Players	Games	Tries	G	Total	Player	Games	Tries	G	Total
u/10's									
BIRD, Samuel	12	11	7	69	KOLITAGANE, Apenisa	13	10	1	52
FRASER, Samuel	12	4	8	36	WAINE, Axel	6	4	2	24
PARRISH, Darby	4	3	1	17	SKARPONA, Austin	11	2	3	16
PARR, Cale	13	2	0	10	MCMAHON, Jayden	13	1	1	7
Morrison, William	6	1	0	5	WASHBOURNE, Nathan	8	1	0	5
ENNOR, Leon	12	0	0	0	SKARPONA, Nate	11	0	0	0
KEAN, Max	8	0	0	0	MILLER, Hami	8	0	0	0
BOURKE, Robert	7	0	0	0	WOODFORD, Brock	7	0	0	0
HANSEN, Jemison	5	0	0	0	ALLIN, Ethan	3	0	0	0

u/12's

Coach: Dion Miller, Jay Tregonning

Manager: Bryce Coleman

Coaches Miller and Tregonning had a wealth of experience and expertise to impart to the players which resulted in a huge improvement across all the team. The fact that several of the boys were still eligible to play in the younger age group saw the boys play the first game of the season as u/11's but it was decided to move up to the u12's to challenge the boys. This step saw all the players develop over the season as their confidence levels grew.

Dion was also a very handy recruitment officer who managed to attract some particularly good rugby players into the team and the results demonstrated that the team was certainly not out of its depth.

The team made it to the semi-finals where they took on a particularly good Tech Waratahs outfit at Bowral. It was a memorable game as both teams played good attacking rugby. In the end Tech came away as winners but everyone associated with the Mallee Bulls boys were immensely proud of their efforts.

U/12 Points Table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Draw	Lost	-/+	Bonus	Points	Total
1	Camden	14	12	0	2	343	12	48	60
2	Campbelltown/Bowral	14	9	0	5	120	12	36	48
3	Tech Waratahs	13	9	0	4	209	10	36	46
4	University	13	7	0	6	-87	6	28	34
5	Kiama	15	3	0	12	-220	5	12	17
6	Shamrocks	13	1	0	12	-365	3	4	7

Players	Games	Tries	G	Total	Player	Games	Tries	G	Total
u/12's									
MOFFITT, Dusty	6	16	0	80	MILLER, Mikaere	9	5	3	31
TREGONNING, Ashton	11	0	12	24	MORRISON, Cooper	6	4	0	20
KOPARA, Diesel	7	3	0	15	WOODS, Digby	10	2	2	14
FLANAGAN, Hayden	10	2	0	10	COLEMAN, Toby	10	1	0	5
DUGGAN, Daniel	2	1	0	5	NEWHOUSE, Spencer	10	1	0	5
TINAO, Tuareo	6	1	0	5	WHEELER, Archie	1	1	0	5
AZAR, Zavier	7	0	1	2	ACOSTA, Angel	8	0	0	0
EL-HUSSEINI, Jacob	6	0	0	0	FRIZELL, Zion	1	0	0	0
GALE, Ethan	1	0	0	0	PARRISH, Saxon	7	0	0	0

PUHA, Caytes	8	0	0	0	STEWART, Joel	7	0	0	0
SUTTON, Max	9	0	0	0					

u/13's

Coach: Ben North, Steve Simona

Manager: Chris Adams

Most of the team had been together for a few seasons and the skill level and teamwork had improved so that they were a competitive team. A qualification problem emerged as some of the lads who were u/14 had to be granted dispensation to play in the younger age group. This was a drawn-out process which resulted in points being deducted from the team.

In the end we had to win the last game against an Albion Park team that contained a few excellent players from Nowra who happened to be playing their one and only game for the season. In a tight struggle the team pulled out a last-minute effort to score the match winning try thus securing fourth spot.

The task of beating Tech Waratahs was made more difficult as Zeke Kennedy and Jacob Kolitagane were injured just prior to the semis and their loss had an impact on the team's ability to go forward. The game was a hard one with no one giving in but in the final washup we could not match the speed of the opposition and we bowed out. Disappointed by the result but delighted by the effort everyone agreed that we were now a real rugby team.

U/13's Points Table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Draw	Lost	-/+	Bonus	Points	Total
1	Kiama	14	13	1	0	399	12	54	66
2	Camden	14	8	2	4	204	10	36	46
3	Tech Waratahs	14	8	0	6	60	9	32	41
4	University	14	5	2	7	-107	7	24	31
5	Shoalhaven/ Crushers	14	5	0	9	-122	8	20	28
6	Shamrocks/Avondale	14	0	1	13	-434	0	2	2

Players	Games	Tries	G	Total	Player	Games	Tries	G	Total
u/13's									
KOPARA, Lleylan	10	9	0	45	NEWHOUSE, Jack *	4	6	3	36
KENNEDY, Ezekiel	10	6	1	32	PASEKA, Maria	12	5	0	25
HUTCHINSON, Mackayla	11	4	0	20	KOUKA, Mana	7	4	0	20
KOLITAGANE, Jacob	12	3	1	17	MORRIS, Kaleb	12	3	0	15
SPURR, Jaydn *	6	2	1	12	REED, Conrad	12	1	2	9
DWYER, Kynan	10	0	4	8	DI NORO, Gabriela	10	1	1	7
NORTH, Elijah	13	1	1	7	SPURR, Jake	4	1	0	5
BEAVER, Ethan	7	1	0	5	COLEMAN, Toby #	1	1	0	5
TREGONNING, Ashton #	1	1	0	5	SIMONA, Steven	13	0	0	0
DAVIES, Cameron *	6	0	0	0	ADAMS, Cameron *	6	0	0	0
MORRIS, Samuel *	4	0	0	0	MILNE, Meyler	2	0	0	0
PARRISH, Saxon #	1	0	0	0	NEWHOUSE, Spencer #	1	0	0	0
WOODS, Digby #	1	0	0	0	AZAR, Zavier #	1	0	0	0

* granted exemption to play down a year group

played in older age group when team was short of numbers.

**Junior Women
Squad:**

Tominkia Malafu	Tiana Kore	Zali O'Brien	Nakiah Storer	Charlotte Tregonning
Kelsie Frankham	Aliyah King-Dewit	Ella Kosta	Amellia Curties	Takai Pohatu
Celia Kore	Kasey Hunt	Mackayla Hutchinson	Destiny Murray	Checoby Murray

Coach: Brad O'Brien

Manager: Lusii Tanevesi

The girls comp was played on a Friday night, and it was pleasing to see the standard of play develop over the weeks as the girls certainly gave their all in every game.

The squad was a combination of players from the Wollongong clubs with Tech Waratahs, Vikings and Uni all contributing players and it was exciting to observe the way the girls managed to meld into a great team. The comp was played in two stages with our girls tying with Kiama in the first section but then dominated after that to win the second stage.

It is hoped that the girls will continue to enjoy the game they play in heaven and needs to be a priority for the District to encourage the development of Women's rugby in the district.

WOMEN

The Women's Mallee Bulls started off pre-season with several new recruits who were keen to get on the field. With a killer pre-season winning beach Rugby (beating Campbelltown) and being runners up in Cowra Twilight 10s and winning our trial game (again beating Campbelltown) The renewed passion of our players meant we were all looking forward to having a full team with numbers on the bench!!

One of our major goals for the season was to keep the scores of our opposition below triple digits, even Sydney Uni who are notorious for achieving that result were kept at bay!! With the struggles throughout the year, we came close to defeating our competitors in our division, however injury after injury made it difficult for continuity from our exciting start to the season.

This year's injury toll was the worst for the women with several key players out for most of the season. Our experienced front row suffered heavily with Georgia Laker (knee) Lusii Tanevesi (crushed eye socket) and Jasmin Bruce-Sanchez (broken ankle) out for the season. Another significant loss was of our speedy Vice Captain Bess Platt (knee) known for chasing down players and saving many tries. Our highest toll of injuries at one point was having 8 girls out at the same time.

There was also a few of our OG's graduating Uni and together with Uni holidays many left our shores to travel the world which left fielding a team very challenging at times, major shout out to our amazing Coach Tony Leeder-Smith where on a weekly basis was having to prepare newbies as well as veterans and all those in-between to be able to take on our opposition and play the game skilled and with confidence.

Several our players who were new to the sport were being thrown into the deep end playing different positions in one game as well as current players being placed into new positions. But week in week out those who could play did so with no complaint and as always with a lot of heart making their fellow sisters immensely proud. We also had the opportunity to participate in a few tournaments outside of our regular comp which allowed us to work on our game play in a variety of environments.

During the year, several players were also selected to play for Illawarra which was an awesome achievement for all involved! Those players were Bess Platt June Norton, Teleri Jaimeson, Hannah Dews, Malama Leatigaga, Chantelle Leatigaga, Grace Wright, Brooke Harper, Ruari Von Prott, Koniseti Tinao, Finlay Parker and Sepa Hala.

Another shout out to Brooke Harper who was a part of the New England University Squad playing in the AON 7 series, a National University Women's 7s Series which leads to a direct pathway to the Olympics. Chantelle Leatigaga who trialled and was selected to play for the ACT Brumbies in the Super W 2020 series.

A special mention and congratulations to Skye Hely having her firstborn son and Ashleigh Walter awaiting the arrival of her baby Mallee Bull. It's safe to say there are many eager rugby aunties patiently waiting to meet these bundles of joy.

The positive attitude the women play with is reflected on and off the field, you would never know that the women lost a game as they always walked off the field in high spirits and when at home with the men, would stay after their game having been at the grounds since 9am to clap on, support and cheer on all the other grades. We happily help in the canteen and being referred to by Big Bob

as “his daughters” it warms the heart. The culture and the feel of family and support that we have at this club is amazing and something we all are proud to be a part.

2019 was a year of improvement and growth for the Women’s Mallee Bulls and we are really looking forward to getting back into it and kicking up some dust later in 2020!

Women’s Rugby 2019



Back Row:	Abi Norman	Sepa Hala	Koniseti Tinai	Retalila Temareti	Tini Muigoa
Hannah Dews	Lusii Tanevesi	Chantelle Leatigaga	Grace Wright	Laoise Penton	Stephanie Ball
Tominika Malufuka	Rob Pezzutto (Physio)	Tony Leeder-Smith (coach)			
Front Row:	Brooke Harper	Tapuwa Shambira	Georgie Leayr	Mae Britton	June Norton
Penny Fletcher	Finlay Parker	Georgia Laker	Malama Leatigaga		

Woman’s Awards

Player’s Player
 Coaches Award
 Player with Most Potential
 Leading Try Scorer
 Most Improved
 Rookie of the Year

Winner

Chantelle Leatigaga
June Norton
Brooke Harper
Chantelle Leatigaga
Georgie Leayr
Amy Muir

REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS:

AON 7 National University Women’s 7s Series:

Brooke Harper - The New England University Squad.

ACT Brumbies in the Super W 2020:

Chantelle Leatigaga

Illawarra Representatives:

Seniors:

Bess Platt June Norton, Teleri Jaimeson, Hannah Dews, Malama Leatigaga, Chantelle Leatigaga, Grace Wright, Brooke Harper, Ruari Von Prott, Koniseti Tinao, Finlay Parker and Sepa Hala.

MEN

MATCH DAY

Match Days on Saturdays are the culmination of a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes for quite a few days before players run out to play. We are lucky to have several very capable and dedicated volunteers who ensure that everything runs smoothly at home and away matches.

The managers for the teams are often at training and constantly getting in contact with coaches and players and it is not merely the collecting of dirty jumpers and getting the ref to sign a team sheet any longer. In this role John Heath and Mark Elson in Firsts, Glenda Heggen who did the job in Seconds and Thirds and Canio Fierravanti and Bob Wheway in Colts were ever reliable in ensuring all the needs of the players and coaches were dealt with effectively. Bob was able to sponsor the cost of hiring minibuses to transport teams when they had to travel to Sydney, and he was instrumental in making sure that we always had numbers at the games, and it must be said that the lads did enjoy a good bus trip home.

Ken Wright was called on to assist with managing teams when others were away, and he was as reliable as ever. Ken was also responsible for organising the players gear from O'Neill's, our supplier, and he did this expertly.

Our canteen was the envy of many clubs with the Mallee Bull burger being a favourite of the crowd, especially Wayne Dobson, who looked forward to savouring one each week. Wayne was one of several club stalwarts including Peter Keeble, Steve Nuttall, Rob Pedersen and others who attended all home games setting up camp behind the Southern goalposts. Wayne also took over the club's web site and really ensured that it was up to date and a source of much information for club members.

The success of the canteen was due to the efforts of Bob Nowotny and Maxie Heggen who were tireless in making sure that the canteen was well stocked and worked efficiently. This year saw the canteen take on the new age when we used an EFTPOS machine for the first time and Bob was a happy man.

The Match Day Controllers duties were shared by Dave Dobinson and Sproggy McGuinness and it is fair to say that there was a great deal more pressure this year using the Match Day app to do everything online. It would also be true that the desk was no place for the fainted hearted at times when technology seemed to get the better of Sproggy. In the end they survived.

Paul Kipp's dulcet tones and sharp wit contributed to the match day experience when he took on the announcers job at home games, but one was never sure exactly what was going to be said next. However, it was all done in fun and with good taste.

Abi Norman was responsible for the production of the Program for Home Match Days, and she was persistent in getting information from coaches. She was also the photographer who prowled the sideline taking fantastic action shots which she displayed on the Facebook Page.

The Social Committee comprised Lachlan Conyers who was the Licensee, Bill Hurley, Will Harris, Tom Baker and Rowan Wilson and did a sterling job making sure that there were lots of social events to keep everyone entertained during the season. Abi Norman and Aly Davison played an active role in organising events such as Ladies Day and the Presentation Ball and these two gems ensured that things were well planned and were enjoyed by all with the highlight being a much more toned-down version of Ladies Day, which everyone enjoyed.

Probably the most difficult task on Match Day is getting volunteers to act as Assistant Referees (Linesman) so it was a blessing to have Canio Fierravanti and Christo Crous offer their services in this role, often without being asked.

The score board was the domain of John Pemberton who did a sterling job in dealing with the technology, keeping the scores up to date as well as featuring our sponsors on the big screen.

Tim Gray is heavily involved with the club as a Sponsor, a parent of two junior players and the club's Physio. He certainly earns his pay as he is constantly on the go strapping players and then rushing out to treat injured players on the field. Sometimes the injuries required a bit of love and attention while others needed the calling of an ambulance. This was all in a day's work for Tim. However, in the home game against Shamrocks things became life threatening when the referee in Seconds, Peter Woods, suffered a medical emergency and his heart stopped beating. It was all hands-on deck as Tim rushed onto the field to treat Woodsy. Luckily, Shamrocks had several players and officials who have a surf club background and Peter was in good hands. He was rushed to hospital and after some scary moments he was able to make a full recovery, much to everyone's relief.

COACHES

Coaching any sporting team is always an experience, sometimes an enjoyable one but at other times a living nightmare. I think it would be fair to say that 2019 was a mixture of both for the different coaches involved with the Mallee Bulls.

The season started with Dion Miller and Richard Thompson looking to develop First Grade into a premiership contender while Shaun McCreedy would be the Club Coach, giving him a break from the constant stress that comes with coaching First grade.

However, the best laid plans often go astray, and Dion found himself with family and work responsibilities that meant he was not able, in his own words, "to do the job properly." It was lucky that Shaun was prepared to step into the breach and was also able to draw on the experience of Evan Paota-Smith to assist with training. It was also a real bonus to have Paul Tuala at most training sessions passing on his knowledge of back row play.

The second-grade gig was taken on by Eoin Power and Greg Bourne. Both these guys had stepped into the role in 2018 and worked well together so there was an air of anticipation around at the start of the season. However, things did not go according to plan and the team struggled as there was a distinct lack of experience in the side, and it therefore was a difficult task trying to meld the players into a cohesive unit.

Third grade were fortunate to have Bill Hurley and Will Harris continuing after accepting the coach's role towards the end of the previous season. Will took on the leadership on the field while Bill, who suffered a serious back injury, was the man with the clipboard whose job it was to see that everyone got game time while at the same time ensuring that the team always had a chance of winning games, not an easy thing to do.

Colts lost Joe Aiono before the season started as he took on the Avondale coaching position and he was a huge loss. We were able to get Evan involved with training nights with the colts, but he had other commitments on the weekend. It was a relief when Cameron McCrea offered his services on Match days, and he did a great job in getting the team organised and happy.

REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS:

NSW Country Representatives:

Coaching Staff:

Shaun McCreedy – Coach of Country Firsts.

Players

Seniors:

Tom Baker, Wayne Ngatai,

U/20's:

Opeti Taufahema. Soul Lauvi-Johnson

Illawarra Representatives:

Seniors:

Coaching Staff:

Shaun McCreedy – Head Coach and Colts Coach

Richard Thompson – Seniors coach

Donny Nepia- Assistant Coach

Colts (u/20's):

Evan Poata- Smith – Head Coach

Players

Illawarra

Seniors

Tom Baker, Wayne Ngatai, Casey Rameka, Takunda Chimwaza, Nic Rangiuira, George Rixon.

Colts

Jackson Rice, Soul Lauvi-Johnson, Tolson Kennerley, Opeti Taufahema, TePaki Tiananga, Blake Worthington, Urich Aiono, Cooper Hansen.

u/18's

Cooper Hansen

Personal Milestones

200 Games – Justin Placek

150 Games– Donny Nepia

100 First Grade games -

100 Games – Lachlan Conyers, Wayne Ngatai, Tom Baker

50 Games – Will Lamb, Sam Laurie, Brayden Grehan

THE COMPETITION

First Grade was a ten-team comp again with the five local clubs – Avondale, Shamrocks, Vikings, Tech Waratahs and Uni being joined by Bowral, Camden, Campbelltown, Kiama and Shoalhaven. The top four teams were to take part in the semi-finals.

The Second-Grade comp followed the first grade one so there was a ten team draw and a top four semi-final series.

To be honest the Third-Grade comp ended up being a bit of shambles. What started out as a thirteen-team competition with Vincentia, Wollondilly and Albion Park entering teams, finished up with only ten teams competing in the second round. Campbelltown, Shoalhaven and Kiama withdrew after being unable to get enough bodies on the field and so it was determined that the ten teams would play each other in the second round with only these points counting for the semis.

In order to make things equitable The IDRU decided that there would be a six team semi-final series in this grade.

Club Championship 2019

Club	Firsts	Seconds	Thirds	Total
Bowral	360	216	35	611
Avondale	375	174	30	579
Shamrocks	325	228	21	574
Vikings	300	210	28	538
University	315	102	19	436
Camden	175	156	25	356
Kiama	140	96	0	236
Campbelltown	100	120	0	220
Tech Waratahs	140	39	32	211
Shoalhaven	160	24	0	184
Vincentia	0	0	32	32
Wollondilly	0	0	5	5
Albion Park Crushers	0	0	1	1

The Colts campaigned in the Radford Cup which comprised teams from the Sydney Sub Districts Competition in Mosman and Colleagues, who each fielded two sides, Chatswood, Briars, Burraneer plus our team.

Not all the teams played the same number of games, but it was a great opportunity to give our players game time while building a cohesive team spirit.

FIRST GRADE

The Squad

First Grade Semi Finalists 2019



Back Row:	John Heath (manager)	Donny Nepia	Nick Bennett	Rhys Bourne	Brayden Grehan
	Rowan Wilson	George Rixon	Lachlan Conyers	Jarrold Conyers	Simon Douch
					Tim Gray (Physio)
Front Row:	Angus Dunn	Opeti Taufahema	Wayne Ngatai	Shaun McCreedy (coach)	
	Tom Baker	Casey Rameka	Nick Rangiura	Charlie Curry	Takunda Chimwaza

The 2019 Uni first grade squad had a familiar look about it as the season commenced but with one hugely significant change. To everyone's disbelief and disappointment Paul Tuala was forced into early retirement due to a problem with his heart, which had been present for most of his life unbeknownst to him. The problem was discovered while Paulie was recovering from a knee surgery carried out at the conclusion of 2018. It was serious and could have been life threatening so there were no decisions to be made – Paulie was not allowed to continue to play the game he loves. To his credit he was not lost to the club as he was a constant at training and games as he imparted his rugby knowledge to the younger brigade.

Ryan Witherdin was another player struck down by illness before the season started and he missed the entire season which was a big loss for the club.

Other regular first graders who did not return in 2019 included Lee Verral, Sam Latu and Ben Cheetham and they were sorely missed both on and off the field.

To offset the loss of Paulie and others the team was in the fortunate position to be able to call on the vastly experienced Donny Nepia to show the way in the backs while Wayne Ngatai and Will Wood did the job in the forwards.

Another key addition to the squad was loose forward Ian Leota who came across the ditch just after the season started and he certainly did a magnificent job in providing much needed inspiration and leadership, dominating many games and scooping the pool in the awards at the club's presentation night.

We were also able to attract two young Kiwi guys in Soul Lauvi-Johnson and Matt Perese to add to forward depth. This duo did a great job in making the first-grade team but unfortunately both suffered serious injuries which curtailed their season.

The acquisition of these three players came about due to the generosity of Paul Martin from Ledacon who provided jobs for the guys as part of his sponsorship which has been ongoing for so many years.

The club also welcomed two Frenchman who were on study exchange to the Uni. Damián Labat played in the backs in the first round of the comp before returning home and the club welcomed Matthieu Chapelant into the fold. Matthieu played one game in seconds where he displayed his array of skills that earned him a first-grade berth for the remainder of the season.

The return to the club of some key players who had been unavailable for a couple of seasons was greeted enthusiastically by the coaching staff. Nick Ranguira returned from a couple of seasons playing rugby and enjoying himself in England. After starting in the centres Nick soon found himself playing number Eight as this more physically demanding role assisted him in his other passion which was boxing. Nick managed to combine both of his pastimes by having a couple of bouts in the ring during the season. The other returnee was Justin Placek who donned the boots after being restricted by his Uni studies. When you consider that JP played in the colt's grand final in 1999 you realise just how resilient he is as a player.

This year our front row stocks were quite plentiful, but we never had all of them available at the same time. Casey Rameka lined up again and his form earned him a run in the Country team but unfortunately, he missed some games when he was working in Mudgee. We were also lucky enough

to have Angus Dunn come along to join his mate Lachlan Conyers and he played the first half of the season until he journeyed north in a new job.

It was at this stage that we welcomed young Soul Lauvi-Johnson to First Grade, and he acquitted himself well until struck down by a knee injury. It was then up to Jack Nash and Hemi Wickliffe to fill the breach as they had been restricted in playing earlier in the season due to work commitments.

Scrum coach Evan Paota-Smith worked diligently on our scrummaging technique and was rewarded when a Uni junior in Tolson Kennerley, normally second rower, made his first-grade debut as a prop against Vikings in Rd 15 and did a magnificent job for the remainder of the season.

The first round saw Wayne Ngatai play as a loose forward with the hooking role shared by Rhys Bourne, until injured, Sam Laurie, Ian Leota and Hemi Wickliffe. Wayne returned to his preferred hooking position in the second round for the remainder of the games.

The second-row combination gained some stability in 2019 when Will Wood made himself available after deciding to do an additional course of study. His leadership played a pivotal role in keeping our forwards competitive in the battle to win possession from set play.

Will was joined by Jarrad Conyers, Lachlan's brother, who was working in the area, and he played well above his weight and never backed away from a challenge. Jarrad sustained an injury in Rd 7 against Shamrocks, and we were fortunate to acquire Matt Perese who made his way into the top team, and he performed consistently until a broken arm curtailed his involvement. It was at this stage that Jarrad returned to the fray.

In the back-row Country Rep Takunda Chimwaza was in his usual dynamic form for the first round but was then lost to the team as he returned home to Zimbabwe for family reasons and his loss had an enormous effect on the team. It was at this stage that Ian Leota became our regular Number six and he was a dominant figure in all the games.

Takunda was joined initially by young gun Opeti Taufahema, who was a Uni Junior and captain of the Country Colts team. Unfortunately, Opeti struggled mixing work and rugby and unfortunately work won out and he missed most of the second round.

Another loose forward was Wangchuk Tshoko who started in Seconds at the beginning of the season. His impressive performances soon saw him elevated to Firsts where his speed and effectiveness at the breakdown made him a pest for opposition teams.

Two late arrivals in Talu Seiuli and BJ Ririnui often came off the bench always providing much needed size and aggression when they entered the game.

The backline was blessed as we did not suffer the horrendous injury toll of the previous year. Indeed, most of the backs were skilled guys with at least a couple of seasons experience in Firsts with many guys able to play in different positions. This meant that while the personnel remained static there was a myriad of combinations tried during the season.

Rowan Wilson started the season at half and was impressive with his developing passing ability and his willingness to take on opposition players. Unfortunately, Rowan suffered a serious hamstring injury and missed the last part of the season. It was at this stage that a youngster in Cooper Hansen who was only in Year 11, arrived on the scene. Cooper's ability had been recognised by the rep selectors and he was marked as a player of great potential but there was no rugby available for him

to play in the Illawarra. He had been training with our first-grade squad all season and the coaches had every confidence that his maturity and ability would see him succeed in senior rugby. So, with his mother's permission, Cooper debuted against Shoalhaven and shone, not only playing with great composure but also taking on the goal kicking responsibilities with aplomb for the remainder of the games.

The five eighth role was shared between evergreen Donny Nepia and Country Rep Tom Baker. Both guys were cool under pressure and provided our backs with quality ball and were able to establish good field position. Donny was able to move back to full back when Tom was not injured and his smart kicking game often frustrated opposition teams. This was to be Donny's swan song and he played nearly every game with his leadership being a vital ingredient to the game plan especially when the going was tough.

The centres that played most of the year were Brayden Grehan and Charlie Curry. Brayden is big and deceptively quick, and he often left defenders clutching at thin air while Charlie was Mr. Reliable rarely making an error. His accurate goal kicking also won us a few key games. Charlie also spent a few rounds playing full back and was always safe under pressure while Brayden occasionally found himself playing on the wing.

Others who played in the centre position were George Rixon, Nick Ranguira and Matthieu Chapelant. George started the season in rd. 4 after rehabilitating a knee injury suffered the previous year. It obviously took him a while to regain his confidence, and all was going beautifully until tragedy struck when he reinjured his knee and had to have another operation and missed the rest of the year.

Nick's move from the centres to the forwards opened a spot for Matthieu and his French flair added to our attack.

On the wings we were lucky to have quite a few guys step up to take on the challenge of playing in the top grade, but no individual really staked a claim on the position on a permanent basis.

Lachlan Conyers floated between wing and fullback and enjoyed a solid season and also demonstrated his club spirit by taking on a leadership role in the lower grades when things were becoming grim, and his attitude was commendable.

We started the season with Fijian Manoa Kanace but as he lived in Penrith it all became too hard for him to get to training and he drifted away. Damian Labat stepped up and played consistently but had to return to France while Justin Placek and Brayden Grehan also had stints on the wing.

The club welcomed back Simon Douch and Jamie Mason after serious injuries in 2018. Simon started the season in try scoring form until a back injury early on saw him unable to get back on the field, which was a big loss.

Jamie took the field for the first time in rd. 14 as he took a long time to rehabilitate his shoulder injury and he played solidly in all the remaining games.

A newcomer to the club, Rob Cooper, worked his way through Second grade and earned a promotion to first grade for the second round where he displayed grit and determination and certainly showed he was up to this standard.

The coaches also blooded a few young guys from the colt's team into first grade forward pack. Both Sam Eberle and Jack Kelly showed enough promise to suggest that they could be regular first graders in the future.

As usual there were also several players from the seconds who were always willing to standby and take the field when called upon and their contributions need to be recognised. Different circumstances could see guys take the field for the last few minutes when playing conditions are at their worst or play long periods after an injury to a starting player.

Jackson Rice, until injured, evergreen Steve Elson, Rhys Bourne, Paddy Byrnes, Nick Bennet and Sam Laurie chalked up quite a few games between them as they often stepped into the breach throughout the year.

2019 saw around forty players don the Mallee Bulls jumper in first grade and have input into the team finishing in fourth spot. This was a positive result after a difficult year as we never really had all of our players available at the same time either due to injury or work commitments.

SEASON RESULTS

RD 1: Avondale

Rd 1– 6/4/19	Gerry Cappetta Oval		
First Grade:	University 20	Avondale 17	
Tries:	Jarrad Conyers	Brayden Grehan	
Goals:	Charlie Curry (2)	Penalty Goals:	Charlie Curry (2)

Report by Ron Woods – ‘The Rogue’s Rant’

The Wollongong University Bulls have registered the first upset of the new season with a 20 – 17 first round win over Avondale at Gerry Cappetta Oval. The understrength students were tenacious in defence and despite conceding three tries to two, took the points with centre Charles Curry slotting four goals from four attempts.

The first fifteen minutes of the match was punctuated with handling errors as both sides struggled to find their groove in their first real hit-out for the year. With the Wombats showing plenty of intention to play their usual attacking style of play it was inevitable that they would be the first to score. With Avondale having the better of possession for much of the first quarter of the match it was No.8 Tuu Taanoa that crossed for the first try after twenty minutes on the back of some prolonged pressure on the Uni line.

Avondale squandered several more scoring opportunities as their handling let them down in the face of the Bulls committed defensive structure. Despite their heavy workload in defence the Bulls had the better of the final ten minutes of the half and went to the break with the lead at 10 – 7. Veteran Fullback Donovan Nepia and clever fly-half Tom Baker steered their side around the park launching several attacking raids, eventually cracking the Wombat line in a sweeping play down the right side.

Centre Brayden Grehan scored after a fifty-meter play in which the ball was spread right across the Uni backline. An inside pass back to Grehan from his wingman, saw the try come ten minutes from the break. Charles Curry converted the try for Uni to take the lead 7 – 5, before he added a penalty goal moments before half-time.

The opening minutes of the second term saw the Students camped deep in Wombat territory. Desperately defending their line Avondale conceded a series of penalties which resulted in a team

warning from Referee John Maughan. Ten minutes into the term another penalty against big No.8 Taanoa saw the Country rep sent to the bin leaving the Wombats a man short.

Despite being a man down Avondale continued to throw plenty at the Bulls only to see some poor handling cost them several more scoring opportunities in the face of unrelenting University defence. Shortly after returning to the field Taanoa broke from a scrum twenty out from the Uni line and put Fly-Half Silipa Tuigamala into some space and with a jinking run the evasive No.10 crossed for his sides second try wide on the left. Tuigamala missed his second shot at Goal leaving the score at 10 all after sixty-five minutes of play.

Going into the final fifteen minutes of the match, it was the students who seemed to be wilting under their defensive workload. Minutes after the Tuigamala try Avondale conceded a penalty wide on their left and forty meters out. Curry stepped up and indicated a shot a goal. A beautiful forty-five-meter goal followed lifting the spirits of the students and saw a surge in their effort and within minutes they were back on the attack deep on the right edge. With their undersized forwards competing strongly against their more fancied rivals they drove to the line with three strong phases of forward play resulting in a try to Jarrod Conyers. Curry converted the try from the sideline and the Bulls were out to a ten-point lead at 20 – 10 with less than ten on the clock.

In the final minutes of the match Wombat centre Greg Dunn combined with replacement Mani Tuigamala to score a converted try and raise the home sides hopes of a late victory but the students defence held out for a much-deserved win.

Donovan Nepia's ability to guide the players around him and direct play was never more evident than in today's match. Once again his accurate kicking game repeatedly took pressure of his side and enabled the students to stay in the contest and take full advantage of limited opportunities. Prop Casey Rameka and Back Rowers Wayne Ngatai, Takunda Chimwaza and debutant Opeti Taufahema were outstanding working themselves into the ground. Fly-Half Baker showed all his growing experience, with Charles Curry's excellent goal kicking proving the difference on the scoreboard in the end.

RD 2: Tech Waratahs

Rd 2– 13/4/19	University Oval			
First Grade:	University 41		Tech Waratahs 5	
Tries:	Simon Douch (2)	Tom Baker	Lachlan Conyers	Brayden Grehan
	Wayne Ngatai	Manoa Kanace		
Goals:	Charlie Curry (3)			
B & F Points:	(3) Jarrod Conyers	(2) Rowan Wilson	(1) Wayne Ngatai	

This was an easy 41-5 victory over Tech Waratahs.

RD 3: Bowral

Rd 3 – 27/4/19	Eridge Park			
First Grade:	University 26		Bowral 39	
Tries:	Casey Rameka	Takunda Chimwaza	Wayne Ngatai	Brayden Grehan
Goals:	Donny Nepia (3)			
Players Player:	Takunda Chimwaza			
B & F Points:	(3) Casey Rameka	(2) Takunda Chimwaza	(1) Will Wood	

Report by Ron Woods – 'The Rogue's Rant'

Reigning Premiers Bowral maintained their perfect start to the season with another bonus point 39 – 26 win over University at Eridge Park. The Blacks, playing without Fly-Half Lachlan Huntington, ran in six tries to four on the back of a match defining twenty-point halftime lead. Despite a never say die performance from the understrength students they never really challenged for the lead in an entertaining match played in perfect Southern Highlands weather. A second half resurgence from Uni saw them come within eight of the lead at one stage but Bowral finished strongly to retain their share of the Competition lead.

Both sides went into the match without their key Playmakers. Huntington is sporting a knee brace for an injury which could see him miss several more matches. University was without playmaker Tom Baker with an ankle injury which should see him back for the Bulls next week.

On the back of another very sound defensive effort, the Blacks crossed for four first half tries to take a commanding 27 – 7 halftime lead. The first came in the seventh minute when forward Michael Bach strolled through some flimsy Uni defence close to their line. Minutes later speedster Henry Yuill put on his impression of a forward when he scored off the edge of a maul after several phases of forward play. With Bach's try converted by Fullback Ryan Hutchings-Knight the Blacks led 12 – 0 after twelve minutes.

In form Uni centre Brayden Grehan pulled one back ten minutes later when he sliced through the Bowral defence to score untouched in a twenty-meter run to the line. Fly Half Donovan Nepia converted to get the Bulls back in the match at 12 – 7.

Knight kicked a penalty goal for the hosts before giant wingman Tom Mooney scored the first of his two tries with a powerful twenty meter run down the right touchline. Minutes later a hard-working Michael Bach did the lead up work for stand in Fly-Half Austin Lockington to score a converted try just before the break for a 27 – 7 halftime score-line.

The Bulls clawed their way back into the match after the break on the back of a string of penalties, scoring two tries to get within eight of the lead. Uni put plenty of pressure on the Blacks strong goal line defence which eventually brought dividends. No.8 Wayne Ngatai forced his way over from close range to score followed by a five pointer to the ever-busy Takunda Chimwaza who scored after a wide running effort from ten meters out. Nepia converted Ngatai's try leaving the Bulls still behind by eight at 27 – 19 after sixty minutes.

With Lockington finding his feet at Fly-Half, the Blacks went on with the job in the final twenty minutes running in two more tries to close the Bulls out. Mooney scored his second running off Lockington to touch down under the posts. Knight converted and Bowral were out to 34 – 19 with fifteen left on the clock. With Bowral back in full flight the Blacks were applying all the pressure on the students line and after a sequence of close-range penalties and a well adjudicated extended period of advantage play by Referee Ethan McIntosh, Henry Yuill crossed wide out for his second try. Hard working Uni Prop Casey Rameka was rewarded with a five pointer right on fulltime which with Nepia's conversion brought up the final score.

Bowral built their effort on a strong forward effort led by Todd Pearce and Michael Back, with Clancy Donnan and Jack Parsons also prominent. Austin Lockington filled in admirably for Huntington at Fly-Half with centres Sebastian Sell and Feterika Sage causing the students all sorts of problems all day in both attack and defence. The fact that Mooney and Yuill crossed for two tries each was testimony to the strength of the centre pairing.

The Uni coaching staff can take plenty out of this match as their understrength outfit showed plenty of resilience, with more likely wins to come in the future for their side on this form. Casey Rameka

and Will Wood were strong again in tight with another eye-catching performance from their loose forward trio of Wayne Ngatai, Takunda Chimwaza and youngster Opeti Taufahema. Nepia again showed all his experience to keep his side on the job with Brayden Grehan and halfback Rowen Wilson putting in sound performances.

RD 4: Shoalhaven

RD 4– 4/5/19		UNIVERSITY OVAL			
First Grade:		University	52	Shoalhaven	22
Tries:	Takunda Chimwaza (2)	Rhys Bourne	Opeti Taufahema	Rowan Wilson	
	Simon Douch	Damian Labat			
Goals:	Donny Nepia (7)				

Shoalhaven were going along steadily on the points table when we played at Uni and the Bulls found themselves behind by three points at half time, but we ran away with the game to win convincingly 52-22. Much of the credit for the win could be attributed to the loose forwards who dominated at the break down.

RD 5: Camden

Rd 5– 11/5/19		University Oval			
First Grade:		University	24	Camden	22
Tries:	Casey Rameka	Will Wood	Wayne Ngatai		
Goals:	Charlie Curry (3)	Penalty Goals:		Charlie Curry (1)	
Players Player:	Takunda Chimwaza				
B & F Points:	(3) Takunda Chimwaza	(2) George Rixon	(1) Casey Rameka		

Report by Ron Woods – ‘The Rogue’s Rant’

In a remarkable game of Rugby, the University Bulls came from a half-time deficit of twelve points to hold on for a 24 – 22 win over Camden at University Oval. Camden put together a well-structured and executed first forty minutes, going to the break leading 22 – 10. The second half was a different story with the Rams losing their structure and eventually their composure as the Bulls, brilliantly led by Flanker Takunda Chimwaza, clawed their way back into the match to take the four competition points.

Chimwaza was in everything, scoring a try, and being a constant threat in attack around the rucks. He was very busy and punishing in defence and toiled brilliantly at the breakdown winning several key turnovers. Uni fullback Charles Curry potted four goals from four attempts which ultimately made the difference as the Rams crossed for four tries, one more than the Students but could only manage one goal. Rams Fly-Half Michael Midson had the opportunity to snatch victory with less than a minute to go but his attempt at penalty goal from thirty meters out missed the mark.

The Rams first forty minutes was as good as anything they have produced in their three wins so far this year. In a worrying second term however, they lost all their structure as the dogged Bulls worked their way into the contest and pressured the visitors into error to register the most unlikely win.

Camden flew out of the blocks early gaining early possession and maintaining it for much of the first ten minutes of the match crossing for two tries. The first came to half-back Terry Fanolua who took full advantage of his forwards hard work, dummied his way over out wide on the left after four minutes. From a scrum in their own half on the left the Rams backs swept into action and with Fly-Half Midson prominent, fullback Dane Kelly finished the raid off with a slick try in the right corner for a 10 – 0 lead after ten minutes.

Uni lost winger Damian Labat to the bin for a breach in the lead up to the Kelly try, but it was the Bulls who put on points during the suspension. On the back of some typical University tradesmen like forward play skipper Wil Wood forced his way over to score from close range putting the Students back in the match at 10 – 7 after nineteen minutes.

The last ten minutes of the half was quite frantic, but it was the Rams that added to their score despite spoiling a couple of scoring opportunities along the way. Lock Sean O’Flynn got a rare five pointer after some scrappy play, finding himself in space with very few defenders around him. The Bull’s Charles Curry added a Penalty Goal to his earlier conversion as the Bulls came within five at 15 – 10 as half-time approached. Another sweeping backline play by Camden left speedster Afele Papalii with some work to do but with a strong turn of pace Papalii scored in the corner. Michael Midson converted the try for the Rams to lead 22 – 10 at the interval.

University put on two tries in the first fifteen minutes after the break as they lifted the tempo and with Chimwaza, No. 8 Wayne Ngatai and prop Casey Rameka leading strongly from the front the students rattled Camden as the Rams lost all shape and struggled to stay with the Bulls. Chimwaza scored after two minutes of the half from an attacking lineout and rolling maul from close range. Ngatai added a try from another rolling maul, a play that the Bulls use to great affect scoring many points from the play. Charles Curry’s two conversions now had the students in front at 24 – 22 but still with twenty-five left on the clock.

Camden’s structured efficient attack deserted them in the second half as the Uni forwards took control of the rucks and mauls with Chimwaza pilfering possession on several occasions. Uni dominated play never allowing the Rams any latitude slowly grinding the enthusiasm out of their opponents. Camden Lock James Wolgers added to Camden’s woes when he was adjudged to have made a tackle without using his arms and left for the bin with just over ten left on the clock.

With less than a minute to go a penalty came the Rams way in front of the posts and no more thirty meters out. Michael Midson stepped up to attempt a penalty goal, but his kick went astray and the Students held on for a gutsy well deserved win.

The Rams have now fallen to the top two sides in the comp over their last two outings but showed again that they have what it takes to be more than competitive in this competition. They were well served today in the forwards by Locks James Wolgers, and Sean O’Flynn, with Flanker Jarrod Crick busy. Fly-Half Midson and Halfback Fanolua tried hard, and Fullback Kelly played well in the open but had an unfortunate off day with his goal kicking. The narrow two-point loss and four tries meant that the Rams didn’t go home empty-handed earning two Bonus Points for the match.

Takunda Chimwaza was simply outstanding in every aspect of the game. Wayne Ngatai and Casey Rameka continue to lead from the front inspiring strong performances from Wil Wood and Jarrod Conyers in tight. The experience and leadership of Donovan Nepia playing at Fly-Half today was once again instrumental in Uni’s success, with the return of George Rixon in the centres adding spark to the Uni backline.

RD 6: Vikings

Rd 6– 19/5/19		Vikings Oval	
First Grade:		University 23	Vikings 27
Tries:	Sam Laurie	Brayden Grehan	Ian Leota
Goals:	Charlie Curry (1)	Penalty Goals:	Charlie Curry (2)
Players Player:	Casey Rameka		
B & F Points:	(3) Casey Rameka	(2) Takunda Chimwaza	(1) Nick Rangiuiira

We improved against Vikings at their home ground but were on the wrong end of the scoreboard 23-27 but there was light at the end of the tunnel as we welcomed Ian Leota and Soul Lauvi-Johnson to the club.

RD 7: Shamrocks

Rd 7 – 25/5/19	University Oval		
First Grade:	University	8	Shamrocks 41
Tries:	Jack Kelly		
Penalty Goal:	Charlie Curry (1)		
Players Player:	Charlie Curry		
B & F Points:	(3) Charlie Curry	(2) Opeti Taufahema	(1) Rowan Wilson

Our Round seven derby against Shamrocks exposed our ball winning ability and we were soundly defeated 8-41, which was a bit of a wake-up call.

RD 8: Campbelltown

Rd 8– 1/6/19	Campbelltown Showground			
First Grade:	University	59	Campbelltown	14
Tries:	Will Wood (2)	Brayden Grehan (2)	Ian Leota	Donny Nepia
	Nick Ranguiera	George Rixon	Lachlan Conyers	
Goals:	Charlie Curry (7)		Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Brayden Grehan			
B & F Points:	(3) Wangchuk Tshoko	(2) Wayne Ngatai	(1) Brayden Grehan (1) Ian Leota	

Next up was trip to Campbelltown who had not won a game at this stage of the comp, and it showed as we triumphed by 59-14.

RD 9: Kiama

Rd 9– 15/6/19	University Oval		
First Grade:	University	19	Kiama 13
Tries:	Ian Leota	Will Wood	Damian Labat
Goals:	Charlie Curry (2)		Penalty Goals:
Players Player:	Donny Nepia		
B & F Points:	(3) Ian Leota	(2) Donny Nepia	(1) Wayne Ngatai

Once again, we started slowly in the home game against Kiama to be behind 5-13 at the break but we gained control of the game to hit the front 19-13. It must be said that we then relaxed, and the coaches endured a few very tense moments as we clung on to eventually win but it was far from convincing.

After nine games the points table was divided into two groups with the top six teams with nothing between them followed by the rest. Avondale were the leaders trailed by Shamrocks with Bowral and Vikings right behind, with Uni two points adrift and Camden just starting to lose contact with the other top clubs.

RD 10: Avondale

Rd 10– 22/6/19	University Oval			
First Grade:	University	23	Avondale	28
Tries:	Hemi Wickliffe	Rowan Wilson	Damian Labat	
Goals:	Charlie Curry (1)	Penalty Goals: Charlie Curry (2)		
Players Player:	Hemi Wickliffe			
B & F Points:	(3) Hemi Wickliffe	(2) Nick Rangiuira	(1) Rowan Wilson	

Report by Ron Woods – ‘The Rogue’s Rant’

Avondale have maintained their top ranking in the IDRU Builders Club Premiership with a nail biting 28 – 23 victory over University at Wollongong University Oval. In an eventful torrid match, Avondale were clunky in attack and despite trailing for most of the match came away with a maximum five competition points from the win.

The Bulls employed a clever match plan throughout to dampen the Avondale attack going to an early fifteen-point lead. The students lead from the fifth minute to the sixty-eighth minute when a converted try with less than two minutes to play secured the match and the competition lead for Avondale.

Employing a strong kicking game from Don Nepia and a very compressed fast moving defensive line, the Students hassled the Wombats out of their usual free flowing attacking game while taking full advantage of their limited opportunities to score vital points. Avondale eventually posted four tries for the match but bombed three more such was the defensive pressure the Bulls were able to maintain for most of the match.

A penalty goal by Charles Curry opened the scoring after five minutes and over the next twenty minutes the Students created two scoring opportunities converting both to lead 15 – 0. In the same period Avondale bombed one certain try and missed two other chances with poor handling and the dogged University defensive effort.

University halfback Rowen Wilson had a hand in both early tries with the first coming from a deftly place kick from Wilson for French winger Damian Labat who scored in the corner. Wilson scored the second himself when he broke clear of a ruck from forty meters out scooting away to score without a Wombat defender in sight. Curry converted Wilson’s try for 15 – 0 lead after twenty-five minutes.

Avondale eventually got one of their set piece plays to work when from a scrum close to the Uni line, centre Andre Itula worked a well-executed play with centre partner Nua Alone running at an acute angle to open their scoring with a converted try.

With the frustration caused to the Wombats by the well devised University match plan the Wombats discipline suffered as they conceded a string of penalties. Charles Curry added a penalty goal for Uni to go to the break 18 – 7 in front.

The second half was only two minutes old when a reenergized Avondale scored through fullback Antonio Ale crossing wide on the right with the whole backline handling in a sweeping play. With the try converted by Silipa Tuigamala the Wombats were back within four of the lead at 18 – 14 and taking over the momentum of the match.

Uni’s well played spoiling tactics took effect again and with a string of penalties going the Students way Avondale lost Lock Kearin Jack to the Bin after four consecutive penalties.

One of the features of the match was the poor Lineout work coming from both sides. With Uni one player up a badly executed Lineout close to the Wombat line saw Uni pinch another five pointer. With the ball sailing over the back of the Wombat fed Lineout, the students gained possession and after two phases of play front rower Hemana Wickcliffe barged his way over for a 23 – 14 lead to Uni. With twenty minutes left on the clock the game was still very much in the balance.

The final twenty minutes was a torrid affair with both sides mounting plenty of pressure on their opponents. Avondale winger Jesse Leng looked certain to score when he was set free down the left with only Fullback Nepia to prevent a try. Nepia showed all his years of experience as he herded the winger to the touchline preventing a try.

Not long after front rower Junz Leota barged his way over to score for the Wombats and with Tuigamala's third conversion the match was set for a rousing finish with Uni leading 23 – 21 with about six minutes left to play.

The Wombats turned down two opportunities for penalty goals as the clock ticked down instead preferring to continue attacking the Uni line. From the second penalty they chose to pack a scrum some ten meters out wide on the left. The scrum went to Avondale and with a sweeping backline play including a key incision from fullback Antonio Ale, winger Willy Taanoa crossed in the corner for a try. Tuigamala who polled three points in the IDRU Player of the Year award, converted from the touchline for a perfect record of four from four. Avondale took the lead 28 – 23 with a minute and half left to play.

University's effort was full of merit as they continue to struggle to get their best side on the field due to Injury and unavailability. They were without rep forwards Casey Rameka and Takunda Chimwaza and had usual centre Nick Rangiura playing strongly at No.8. His forward partners, Hooker Wayne Ngatai who scored points in the Player of the Year Award and Lock Will Wood worked tirelessly and were strongly supported by their less experienced teammates. Halfback Wilson, Fly-Half Tom Baker and the ageless Nepia played well throughout.

Avondale were put off their favoured free flowing game by the students, but their undoubted class showed through in the end. Locks Kyle Moody and Kearin Jack were strong with big No.8 Tuu Taanoa and Flanker Michael Malaki prominent. Halfback Andy Duggan continues to impress with his sharp service to his backline with Andre Itula continuing to prove to be more than a handful for opposition players week in week out. Silipa Tuigamala's goal kicking was a feature of the match.

RD 11: Tech Waratahs

Rd 11 – 29/6/19		Saunders Oval		
First Grade:		University 31		Tech Waratahs 21
Tries:	Soul Lavu-Johnson	Wayne Ngatai	Ian Leota	Lachlan Conyers
	Charlie Curry			
Goals:	Charlie Curry (3)	Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:	Ian Leota			
B & F Points:	(3) Ian Leota	(2) Soul Lauvi - Johnson		(1) Rowan Wilson

We were again our own worst enemy in the first half against Tech Waratahs and were behind 19-21 when half time was called. What we put in the oranges must have been good stuff as we denied Tech any points in the second stanza and won the game 31-21 but we were really struggling to put in an eighty-minute effort in any game.

We also suffered a big loss with an injury to Soul Lauvi-Johnson seeing him miss the rest of the season.

RD 12: Bowral

Rd 12 – 6/7/19	Eridge Park		
First Grade:	University 38	Bowral 38	
Tries:	Charles Curry Will Wood	Ian Leota Lachlan Conyers	Rowan Wilson
Goals:	Charles Curry (4) & Tom Baker (1)	Penalty Goals:	Charles Curry (1)

Every club has times in a season when things look very gloomy before the game starts but somehow, they manage to overcome adversity. This was certainly the case when we took on Bowral in Round 12. Due to heavy rain Uni Oval was closed on Saturday morning but the district, in their wisdom, followed the letter of the law and forced us to travel to Bowral. To say we were shorthanded would be an understatement as our second and thirds grades could not field sides at such late notice. Bowral on a Winters' day is no place for a picnic, and we were certainly underdogs. But funny things happen in sport and Uni certainly turned up to play. In a remarkably high scoring game, the boys led 38-26 with fifteen minutes remaining and things were looking rosy. However, as we did against Avondale, we made silly mistakes and let Bowral in for a seven pointer with only three minutes left. Things got very emotional and in overtime Bowral scored a try wide out. The Bowral kicker then missed the difficult conversion much to the delight of the University crowd, but the referee then awarded another kick because there had been verbal abuse to the kicker from the players. The pressure was enormous, but the Bowral kicker was ice cool as he landed the conversion. We were deflated as we knew we were the better team but the three points we earned were better than we could have hoped for before the game began.

RD 13: Shoalhaven

Rd 13 –	Shoalhaven Rugby Park		
First Grade:	University 31	Shoalhaven 22	
Tries:	Hemi Wickliffe	Ian Leota Wangchuk Tshoko	Rob Cooper
Goals:	Charlie Curry (3)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Ian Leota		
B & F Points:	(3) Ian Leota & Cooper Hansen	(2) Rob Cooper	(1) Will Wood

In Round 13 our rugby continued to improve and in the Shoalhaven game we controlled the contest for the entire match recording a winning score of 31-22.

RD 14: Camden

Rd 14 – 20/7/19	Camden Rugby Park		
First Grade:	University 33	Camden 24	
Tries:	Hemi Wickliffe Tolson Kennerley	Will Wood Ian Leota	Charlie Curry
Goals:	Charlie Curry (4)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Ian Leota		
B & F Points:	(3) Ian Leota	(2) Rowan Wilson	(1) Jack Nash (1) Hemi Wickliffe

We returned to our old ways at Camden, and we were well behind at the break by 7-17. Once again, the oranges worked as we stormed home to win 33-24. Charlie Curry's goal kicking again was accurate while the crowd went wild when young gun Tolson Kennerley crossed for his maiden first grade try.

At this stage there were still five teams very much in the semi-final mix. Avondale and Bowral were clearly in the top two spots, but Vikings, Shamrocks and Uni were tightly bunched. We had games against Vikings and Shamrocks ahead and then closed the season with games we should win against Campbelltown and Kiama.

RD 15: Vikings

Rd 15 – 27/7/19		University Oval			
First Grade:		University	32	Vikings	10
Tries:	Ian Leota Jamie Mason	Rowan Wilson	Tom Baker	Matthieu Chapelant	
Goals:	Charlie Curry (2)	Penalty Goals:		Charlie Curry (1)	
Players Player:	Matthieu Chapelant				
B & F Points:	(3) Nick Ranguira	(2) Matthieu Chapelant		(1) Matt Perese (1) Rob Cooper	

We took on Vikings at home and displayed some grit to lead 12-10 at the break and then completely dominated the rest of the game scoring three more tries to win convincingly 32-10. The win put us in a great position to seal a top four place.

RD 16: Shamrocks

Rd 16 – 3/8/19		Ocean Park			
First Grade:		University	13	Shamrocks	47
Tries:	Wayne Ngatai	Jamie Mason			
Goals:		Penalty Goals:		Charlie Curry (1)	
Players Player:	Rob Cooper				
B & F Points:	(3) Charlie Curry	(2) Donny Nepia		(1) Ian Leota	

Report by Ron Woods – ‘The Rogue’s Rant’

Shamrocks moved back into the top four with a resounding 47 – 13 win over a shell-shocked University outfit at Ocean Park. The Rocks blitzed the Students in a twenty-three-minute period from the kick off running in four tries to establish a game defining half-time 26 – 3 lead. A further two tries in the opening ten minutes of the second half and it was game over at 40 – 3.

With Lock Damian Clark leading the charge the Shamrocks forwards completely dominated their opponents from the outset. Their customary strong defence was present again, but it was their superb work at the breakdown and their total scrum domination which paved the way for a scintillating attacking performance from the host side.

The students hardly got their hands on the ball for the first ten minutes of the match with the Rocks scoring twice in the first seven minutes of play. Damian Clark scored the first, breaking clear from thirty meters out and outsprinting everyone to the line to score. Dynamic centre Dale Sullivan continued his impressive form when he burst through just inside the Uni half. The big centre found hardworking Lock Heath Mercer in support who positioned Fullback Ben Stewart for the Rocks second try. With Fly-Half Thomas McDevitt converting the first try the Rocks had raced to 12-point lead.

Charles Curry put over a penalty goal for Uni to get on the board but the Rocks, on the back of a near faultless performance, were quick to put on two more tries. Half-Back Corey Aylett was taking full advantage of his forwards outstanding work at the breakdown giving beautiful service to his outside backs as McDevitt, Sullivan and Fullback Ben Stewart ran at will at the bewildered University defensive line.

The third try came after a break from Stewart who cleverly released a hard running Iszak Lunney down the centre of the field who scored under the posts. Sullivan created the next when he ghosted through the Students defensive line from inside his own half sending wingman Todd McCole away down the right touchline. Both tries were converted by McDevitt as the Rocks took a commanding and well deserved 26 – 3 score-line to the break.

The Rocks went right on with the job after the break taking just four minutes to add to the score-line. Camping in the Uni half from the kick off the Rocks forwards continued their dominance when after several phases close to the Uni line Prop Lachlan King forced his way over for try number five. With another conversion from McDevitt the rocks went to a thirty-point lead at 33 – 3.

Producing another incredibly busy performance throughout the match Flanker Iszak Lunney scored his second try when he toyed with the Uni cover defence down the western touchline. Showing the ball and throwing a couple of dummies he crossed after a forty-meter run leaving several embarrassed Uni defenders in his wake. After a strong conversion from wide out by McDevitt all looked lost for the students at 40 – 3 with fifty minutes of the match gone.

With the match gone the students refused to clock off as several of their more experienced players rallied the side producing a positive closing effort. With forwards Will Wood, Ian Leota and Nick Ranguira leading the effort it was their ever-busy Hooker Wayne Ngatai who burrowed his way over for the students first try.

Within two minutes of their first five pointer the students produced what was close to the try of the match when they took the ball sixty meters through some eight sets of hands for winger Jamie Mason to cross wide on the left.

As the Bulls mounted another strong raid on the Shamrocks line Rocks Fly-Half Thomas McDevitt posted an exclamation mark on the match. With the students attacking the Rocks line McDevitt took a sweet intercept and raced eighty meters up-field to score the final try of the match. With the try converted by Ben Stewart the Rocks had completed a remarkable victory lifting them into fourth spot on the ladder.

University are struggling with a heavy injury toll and were without some of their key players today but can take some solace from today's match with the way they put in a committed effort right through to the final whistle against a red-hot Shamrocks outfit. It was not their day today but with the effort shown they can be expected to figure prominently once again in the rundown to the finals. Strong performances came from forwards Will Wood, Wayne Ngatai, Jarod Conyers, Ian Leota and Nick Ranguira. In the backs they were well served by Tom Baker, Charles Curry and Don Nepia.

In an extraordinary performance from Shamrocks the side was well served by players right across the field. Up front Lachlan King, Jesse Roche and veteran hooker Chris Smith led from the front all day. Their backrowers were simply superb with Damian Clark taking maximum points in the IDRU Player of the Year Award, with his Lock partner Heath Mercer outstanding. The amazing Iszak Lunney once again played well above his weight with another relentless performance. Halfback Corey Aylett took full advantage of the time and space afforded him by his forwards to release a scintillating attacking performance from his backline, with McDevitt, Sullivan and Stewart standouts in particular. On their performance today Shamrocks are going to make an impact on the coming weeks leading to what will be an enthralling final series for 2019.

RD 17: Campbelltown

Rd 17 – 17/8/19	University Oval			
First Grade:	University 56		Campbelltown 12	
Tries:	Brayden Grehan (2) Talu Seiuli	Matthieu Chapelant (2) Ririnui Blythe	Justin Placek	Tom Baker
Goals:	Cooper Hansen (4)	Penalty Goals:	Cooper Hansen (2)	
Players Player:	Matthieu Chapelant			
B & F Points:	(3) Matthieu Chapelant	(2) Talu Seiuli	(1) Will Wood	

We recorded an easy 56 -12 victory over Campbelltown and so we found ourselves tied in equal fourth spot with Vikings, just two points adrift of Shamrocks. This meant that we needed to win our last game against Kiama with a bonus point to have any chance of playing in the semis. Vikings were to play Bowral away, but they were in the box seat as their for and against percentage was much higher than ours.

RD 18: Kiama

Rd 18 – 24/8/19	Kiama Showground			
First Grade:	University 45		Kiama 12	
Tries:	Ian Leota (2) Bailey Lamb	Nick Ranguira Wangchuk Tshoko	Jamie Mason	Rob Cooper
Goals:	Cooper Hansen (5)	Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:	Matthieu Chapelant			
B & F Points:	(3) Will Wood	(2) Matthieu Chapelant	(1) Talu Seiuli	

The game against Kiama was always under control and things looked promising when we secured our bonus point with our fourth try early in the second half. However, we were getting scores from Bowral and were worried as Vikings were leading late in the game and had also scored four tries. It looked ominous as time was running out until Bowral was awarded a penalty try right on full time to win the game. You could have heard the shouts from Kiama all the way in Bowral as we had managed to secure the fourth spot. The first stage of the Mission accomplished.

First Grade Points Table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	-/+	Bonus	Points	Total
1	Avondale	18	14	3	1	483	17	58	75
2	Bowral	18	14	3	1	202	14	58	72
3	Shamrocks	18	13	5	0	365	13	52	65
4	UOW	18	12	5	1	152	13	50	63
5	Vikings	18	11	6	1	171	14	46	60
6	Camden	18	6	12	0	-44	11	24	35
7	Shoalhaven	18	6	12	0	-261	8	24	32
8	Kiama	18	5	13	0	-272	8	20	28
9	Tech Waratahs	18	5	13	0	-346	8	20	28
10	Campbelltown	18	2	16	0	-350	12	8	20

First Grade Point Scorers 2019

Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F	Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F
<i>First Grade</i>											
CURRY, Charles	130	3	41	11	7	LEOTA, Ian	50	10	0	0	13
GREHAN, Brayden	40	8	0	0	0	WOOD, William	30	6	0	0	7
HANSEN, Cooper	26	0	10	2	3	NGATAI, Wayne	25	5	0	0	4
CONYERS, Lachlan	20	4	0	0	0	CHIMWAZA, Takunda	20	4	0	0	0
WILSON, Rowan	20	4	0	0	10	BAKER, Tom	17	3	1	0	0
NEPIA, Donovan	16	2	3	0	4	WICKLIFFE, Hemana	15	3	0	0	4
CHAPELANT, Matthieu	15	3	0	0	7	LABAT, Damien	15	3	0	0	0
MASON, Jamie	15	3	0	0	0	KANACE, Manoa	10	2	0	0	0
RANGUIIRA, Nik	10	2	0	0	7	TSHOKO, Wangchuk	10	2	0	0	3
DOUCH, Simon	10	2	0	0	0	COOPER, Robert	10	2	0	0	3
RAMEKA, Casey	5	1	0	0	7	PLACEK, Justin	5	1	0	0	0
RIRINUI, Blythe	5	1	0	0	0	RIXON, George	5	1	0	0	2
LAURIE, Sam	5	1	0	0	0	SEIULI, Talu	5	1	0	0	3
Lauvi-johnson, Soul	5	1	0	0	2	BENNET, Nicholas	5	1	0	0	0
LAMB, Bailey	5	1	0	0	0	KENNERLEY, Tolson	5	1	0	0	0
KELLY, Jack	5	1	0	0	0	BOURNE, Rhys	5	1	0	0	0
CONYERS, Jarrad	5	1	0	0	3	DUNN, Angus	5	1	0	0	0
PERESE Matt	0	0	0	0	1						

SECOND GRADE

Second Grade 2019



Back Row:	Eoin Power (coach)	Nathan Illy	Conor Miller	Will Siegert	Hamish Cole
	Tolson Kennerley	Carter Lovell	Jackson Rice	Damien Labat	Rhys Handcock
	Josh Worth	Isitolo Mau	Craig Matereke	Todd Wilson	Michael Shambira
Front Row:	Jono Lally	Sam Laurie	Simon Bayley	Wangchuk Tshoko	Rob Cooper
	Lachlan Fowke	Pat Byrnes	Will Lamb	Andrew Johnson	Glenda Heggen (manager)

The squad

Eoin and Greg had a difficult situation to contend with in coaching second grade this year as there was a steady flow of players moving up to first grade and players coming into the team from the lower grades. This had the effect of making it difficult to bond together into a cohesive unit which had an impact on training and in games.

To illustrate this point, Seconds played 16 games with 38 players involved in three or more games. Of these players only six had game totals that reached double figures. No wonder the coaches were pulling their hair out towards the end of the season.

Leadership was also a major problem as there were very few experienced guys able to take things under control in games and at training. It did fall to Sam Laurie who, while young, displayed maturity in a difficult situation. Things improved slightly when old stagers Steve Elson and Matthias Wann were on the field and thankfully Lachlan Conyers stepped up near the end of the season and really did an outstanding job trying to steady the ship.

The makeup of the front row was reasonably consistent throughout the year with Josh Worth, who joined the club from Vikings and proved to be a good clubman, and Paddy Brynes being on deck for the early games. Others to take on the prop role were Sam Laurie and Steve Elson who started in Thirds but being the clubman that he is answered the call to pack down in Seconds. Of course, others such as Jack Nash, Angus Dunn and Soul Lavu-Johnson filtered in at various times when not required for duty in First Grade.

The hooking responsibilities were shared between Rhys Bourne, Dan Grainger, Sam Laurie and Ross Alston, but no one really played a lot of games due to injuries, work commitments or higher duties.

Nathan Illy was the mainstay in the second row playing in most games while Tod Wilson was his partner in the early games until he underwent an eye operation and only returned for the final game. Tolson Kennerley and Nick Bennet then packed down together until Tolson moved to first grade prop and Nick journeyed overseas. Young Kiwi Matthew Perese also played a few games in the second row until he was promoted into the top grade while Isi Mau occasionally played in the tight when injuries required.

In the loose forwards there were numerous combinations tried during the season but again no one really took ownership of the role.

A huge loss at Number 8 was Rhys Handcock, a key player for many years, whose work meant he couldn't train and so unfortunately, he missed most of the season. Lachlan Fawke and Nick Bennet occupied the role early on and then Opeti Taufahema came back from Firsts and played out of position as he was really an openside flanker.

Towards the middle of the year two big guys in Talu Seiuli and BJ Ririnui, mainly a number 8, arrived on the scene and their contribution in the loose forward role were responsible for a lot of go forward being provided. Both guys also played a lot of minutes in the top grade as they were of first grade standard but needed to improve their fitness levels by playing as many minutes as possible. The standout performer in the first six rounds was breakaway Wangchuk Tshoko who was in devastating form. In fact, he was so good he forced the selectors into picking him in the top grade where he stayed for the rest of the season.

Wangchuk proved very difficult to replace with Isi Mau, Jack Kelly, Nick Bennet, Talu Seiuli, Michael Martin and Rhys Bourne all taking on the role. These guys never gave up, but all were around 21y.o. and mostly new to senior rugby so a lack of experience again raised its head.

The half back position was filled by Jackson Rice until he suffered a serious injury which saw him replaced by Andrew Johnson who was also forced out the game by an injury. This meant that Jett Hutton, when he completed his commitments with the Colts team, was rushed in to finish the season in this key position.

The job of steering the team around the park as five eighth was cursed as a total of seven players had a shot at it but no one played more than four games in the position. No wonder that the team's attack was stilted. Jonathon Lally had first crack and things looked promising but he went missing due to a move to the centres and unavailability and so it fell to Carter Lovell, Lachlan Conyers and Justin Stanford to do the assignment. In a plus for the club Harry Ottley decided to return to rugby and did a good job for a few games and then Connor Miller took on the challenge to finish the season and really stepped up. This lack of consistency and experience in this key position was a telling factor in many games.

The positional merry-go-round was in full swing as regards the centre pairings where never at any stage did the same two players combine in any match. The mainstays in the centres were Connor Miller, Jono Lally, Brad Reed, and later Mathias Wann, who did provide some stability and leadership. Others who also occupied the position were Michael Shambira, Damian Labat and Dan Ward who all played just a couple of games.

A couple of young colts in Jack Thurtell and Charlie Greer won selection in the centres after finishing the Colts competition and they were like rays of sunshine in a bleak season. Both ran hard and showed that they were players capable of playing up the grades in the years to come.

The full back spot did have consistency with Rob Cooper and later Lachlan Conyers taking on the custodian's duties for most of the games. Rob also played several games on the wing, and he developed into a very solid performer who was elevated into the first-grade wing position and was there for the end of season games. Lachlan also played a lot of first grade and his leadership was a plus for the team.

On the wings Craig Matereke started the season strongly but then suffered a dislocated kneecap and was lost for the year. Will Lamb also missed a lot of the games as he ventured overseas, and his enthusiasm was missed, and Michael Shambira is another winger who did not finish the season. A real plus was the form of Neth Makaafi, the quiet achiever, who performed so well in thirds that his efforts were rewarded by gaining his spot in seconds.

Rowan Fahey and Steve Simona were two guys who returned to rugby after a lengthy hiatus and were on hand to help in Seconds when called upon especially during the dreaded holiday period. One of the positives to emerge from what was a difficult year was the fact that several Colts players made their way into Seconds, and all performed with confidence and enthusiasm. Ross Alston, Sam Eberle, Simon Bayley, Jett Hutton, Isi Mau, Jack Thurtell, Nick Bennet, Will Siegert, Charlie Greer and others are the future of our club.

The Season

RD 1: Avondale

Rd 1– 6/4/19	Gerry Cappetta Oval		
Second Grade:	University	12	Avondale 38
Tries:	Wangchuk Tshoko	Craig Matereke	
Goals:	Jackson Rice (1)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Sam Laurie		
B & F Points:	(3) Wangchuk Tshoko	(2) Connor Miller	(1) Craig Matereke

The opening game, which was during the holidays, saw a makeshift team take the field and the boys started positively against the big Avondale side. A tight first half, that was followed by a tenacious first twenty minutes of the second half, saw us trailing by 12-19. However, we fell away after that to lose 12 -38 but were not disgraced.

RD 2: Tech Waratahs

Rd 2– 13/4/19	University Oval		
Second Grade:	University	22	Tech Waratahs 0
Tries:	Sam Laurie	Isitolo Mau	Craig Matereke Connor Miller
Goals:	Jackson Rice (1)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Sam Laurie		

The Tech game saw a more settled team and the 22-0 win was an indication of the sides ability.

RD 3: Bowral

Rd 3– 27/4/19	Eridge Park		
Second Grade:	University	0	Bowral 39
Players Player:	Wangchuk Tshoko		
B & F Points:	(3) Wangchuk Tshoko	(2)	(1)

The trip to Bowral which was marred by a serious knee injury to Craig Matereke. This could not be blamed for the 0-39 score line as we were blown off the park by a particularly good Bowral team.

RD 4: Shoalhaven

Rd 4– 4/5/19	University Oval			
Second Grade:	University 51		Shoalhaven 0	
Tries:	Sam Laurie (2)	Wangchuk Tshoko (2)	Will Lamb (2)	Damian Labat
	Lachlan Conyers	Michael Shambira		
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers (2)		Jackson Rice (1)	
Players Player:	Sam Laurie			
B & F Points:	(3) Sam Laurie	(2) Will Lamb	(1) Jonathon Lally	

At home against Shoalhaven the shoe was on the other foot as we totally dominated proceedings to win convincingly 51-0.

RD 5: Camden

Rd 5 – 11/5/19	University Oval		
Second Grade:	University 7		Camden 22
Tries:	Lachlan Conyers		
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Dan Grainger		

The Camden game was a real struggle as the first half failed to produce any points for either team. However, early in the second half Camden scored three tries and we could not get into the game being beaten 7-22.

RD 6: Vikings

Rd 6 –19/5/19	Vikings Oval		
Second Grade:	University 5		Vikings 40
Tries:	Will Lamb		
Players Player:	Steve Elson		
B & F Points:	(3) Wangchuk Tshoko	(2) Steve Elson	(1) Andrew Johnson

We travelled to Vikings and started positively enough but then were overwhelmed losing 5-40. In the end it was a bit of a rugby lesson, and we were finding that there was a distinct gap between the top five sides and the rest.

RD 7: Shamrocks (No game – DRAW)

Rd 7– 25/5/19	University Oval	
Second Grade:	University	Shamrocks
	Match Abandoned in first half due to referee injury	

Rugby is only a game, as was borne out in the match against Shamrocks when Peter Woods, the ref, suffered a life-threatening medical emergency during the game. Thankfully, Peter was resuscitated and made a complete recovery, but the match was abandoned, and the result recorded as a draw.

RD 8: Campbelltown

Rd 8 – 1/6/19		Campbelltown Showground			
Second Grade:		University	7	Campbelltown	47
Tries:	Soul Lauvi-Johnson				
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers		Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:	Soul Lauvi-Johnson				
B & F Points:	(3) Soul Lauvi-Johnson	(2) Rhys Bourne	(1) Lachlan Conyers		

We played Campbelltown at their ground and as their first grade were really struggling, we may have thought it would be the same in Seconds. Did we get a shock? The big Harlequins forwards dominated, and we were down 0-26 at the break. It did not get any better in the second half, but we did manage a try at least to lose 7-47.

RD 9: Kiama

Rd 9 – 15.6.19		University Oval			
Second Grade:		University	22	Kiama	14
Tries:	Isi Mau	Jack Thurtell	Neth Makaffi		
Goals:	Jackson Rice (1), Andrew Johnson (1)		Penalty Goals: Andrew Johnson		
Players Player:	Jack Thurtell				
B & F Points:	(3) Jack Thurtell	(2) Rhys Bourne	(1) Rob Cooper		

Kiama were struggling In Seconds so at least we were confident of an improved performance and with the addition of some lads from the colts we were a stronger squad. It was to prove no cake walk and we had to fight all the way but won 22-14.

RD 10: Avondale

Rd 10–22.6.19		Gerry Cappetta Oval			
Second Grade:		University	24	Avondale	26
Tries:	Rhys Bourne	Talu Seiuli	Jack Kelly	Lachlan Conyers	
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers		Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:	Opeti Taufahema				
B & F Points:	(3) Opeti Taufahema	(2) Jack Kelly	(1) Harry Ottley		

We started the second round by taking on Avondale at home. They were in the top part of the table, but we were not intimidated by their position. We found ourselves behind 10-26 after ten minutes of the second stanza but we really threw everything into the game. This resulted in the boys getting to 24-26 as the bell sounded. We scored four tries but could only convert one of them, so it was a frustrating loss although we did secure two bonus points.

RD 11: Tech Waratahs

Rd 11–29/6/19		Saunders Oval			
Second Grade:		University	29	Tech Waratahs	5
Tries:	Casey Rameka	Harry Ottley	Brad Reed	Rob Cooper	
Goals:	Brad Reed (3)		Penalty Goals: Brad Reed (1)		
Players Player:	Steve Elson				
B & F Points:	(3) Steve Elson	(2) Brad Reed	(1) Talu Seiuli		

Our good form followed into the match against Tech where we triumphed 29-5 and things were on the improve.

RD 12: Bowral

Rd 12 – 6/7/19	Eridge Park
Forfeit by University	
Second Grade:	University 0 Bowral 28

The weather God turned against us as the rain saw Uni Oval being closed at late notice. As a result, we were forced to Forfeit the Bowral game as there was no way we could get our players to the ground on time. It was disappointing to lose the points in such a manner.

RD 13: Shoalhaven

Rd 13 – 13/7/19	Shoalhaven Rugby Park
Second Grade:	University 31 Shoalhaven 17
Tries:	Matthieu Chapelant (2) Jett Hatton Neth Makaffi Lyle Smith
Goals:	Brad Reed (2) Justin Stanbrook (1)
Players Player:	Matthieu Chapelant

Shoalhaven were the next opposition, and we maintained our solid performance with a very sound 31-17 victory, with the star being our French import Matthieu Chapelant.

RD 14: Camden

Rd 14 – 20/7/19	Camden Rugby Park
Second Grade:	University 27 Camden 29
Tries:	Matthias Wann (2) Talu Seiuli Blythe Ririnui
Goals:	Matthias Wann (1) Penalty Goals: Ed McClymont (2)
Players Player:	Talu Seiuli
B & F Points:	Talu Seiuli (2) Blythe Ririnui (1) Rhys Bourne

Camden was to be another war of attrition as the first half saw the two teams fight tooth and nail to get on top. The score was 5-10 at the break but Camden got away and led 8-22 early in the second thirty-five minutes. However, we were not to go down without a fight and crossed for three more tries to just get beaten 27-29 and earn two bonus points.

RD 15: Vikings

Rd 15 – 27/7/19	University Oval
Second Grade:	University 13 Vikings 10
Tries:	Jack Thurtell Brad Reed
Goals:	Penalty Goals: Brad Reed (1)
Players Player:	Lachlan Conyers
B & F Points:	(3) Talu Seiuli (2) Isi Mau (1) Lachlan Conyers

Probably the highlight of the campaign was the game against Vikings who were in the top three of the ladder. Again, we called on the services of a few Colts players while Lachlan Conyers played a blinder. It was close at half time with the good guys in front 8-5 but then we were behind by two points with time running out when Jack Thurtell scored the match winner. The boys demonstrated at last that they could match it with the top sides.

RD 16: Shamrocks

Rd 16 – 3/8/19	Ocean Park			
Second Grade:	University	7	Shamrocks	33
Tries:	Blythe Ririnui			
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers		Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Ross Alston			
B & F Points:	(3) Ross Alston	(2) Sam Eberle	(1) Jack Thurtell	

Shamrocks, who were an excellent side and ended up being premiers, beat us easily 7-33 which was no surprise. It was disappointing to be beaten this easily as we had put in some improved performances over the last few weeks.

RD 17: Campbelltown

Rd 17– 17/8/19	University Oval			
Second Grade:	University	21	Campbelltown	39
Tries:	Simon Bayley	Jonathon Lally	Lachlan Conyers	
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers (3)		Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Lachlan Conyers			
B & F Points:	(3) Lachlan Conyers	(2) Ross Alston	(1) Neth Makaffi	

Against Campbelltown we led 21-15 at the break but then fell away dramatically to not score a point in the second half and be defeated 21-39.

RD 18: Kiama

Rd 18 – 24/8/19	Kiama Showground			
Second Grade:	University	14	Kiama	33
Tries:	Matthias Wann	Neth Makaffi		
Goals:	Lachlan Conyers (2)		Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Ed McClymont			
B & F Points:	(3) Isi Mau	(2) Ed McClymont	(1) Rhys Bourne	

The low light of the whole season was the last game against Kiama who were a very average second grade side. We fielded a reasonable team, but thirds had played on Friday night, so we were short on the bench, and we never looked likely to win the game. After an extremely poor performance, we trudged off losing 14-33 and there were few guys who came off with their heads held high.

To sum up the season we were competitive in most games except when we played the top three sides and we showed glimpses of good form at different stages, but the end of the year couldn't come quickly enough for most of the players and the coaches.

Second Grade Points Table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	-/+	Bonus	Points	Total
1	Shamrocks	18	16	1	1	394	9	66	75
2	Bowral	18	15	3	0	389	11	60	71
3	Vikings	18	14	4	0	333	13	56	69
4	Avondale	18	11	7	0	323	13	44	58
5	Camden	18	10	8	0	108	12	40	52
6	Campbelltown	18	7	11	0	-93	12	28	40
7	UOW	18	6	11	1	-128	8	26	34
8	Kiama	18	7	11	0	-253	4	28	32
9	Wollongong Tech	18	2	16	0	-519	5	8	13
10	Shoalhaven	18	1	17	0	-554	4	4	8

Second Grade Point Scorers 2019

Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F	Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F
<i>Second Grade</i>											
CONYERS, Lachlan	44	4	12	0	3	REED, Bradley	26	2	5	2	3
TSHOKO, Wangchuk	20	4	0	0	9	WANN, Matthias	17	3	1	0	0
MAKAAFI, Neth	15	3	0	0	3	LAMB, William	15	3	0	0	2
LABAT, Damien	10	2	0	0	0	MATEREKE, Craig	10	2	0	0	2
LAURIE, Sam	10	2	0	0	5	THURTELL, Jack	10	2	0	0	4
CHAPELANT, Matthieu	10	2	0	0	1	RICE, Jackson	8	0	4	0	0
MILLER, Connor	5	1	0	0	2	TAUFAHEMA, Opeti	5	1	0	0	3
BAYLEY, Simon	5	1	0	0	0	SMITH, Lyle	5	1	0	0	0
BENNET, Nicholas	5	1	0	0	0	SEIULI, Talu	5	1	0	0	8
RIRINUI, Blythe	5	1	0	0	2	BOURNE, Rhys	5	1	0	0	5
COOPER, Robert	5	1	0	0	1	OTTLEY, Harry	5	1	0	0	4
KELLY, Jack	5	1	0	0	2	MCCLYMONT, Ed	5	0	1	1	2
MAU, Isitolo	5	1	0	0	5	HANCOCK, Rhys	5	1	0	0	0
LAUVI-JOHNSON, Soul	5	1	0	0	3	HATTON, Jett	5	1	0	0	0
JOHNSON, Andrew	5	0	1	1	1	LALLY, Jonathon	5	1	0	0	1
RAMEKA, Casey	5	1	0	0	0	ALSTON, Ross	0	0	0	0	5
EBERLE, Sam	0	0	0	0	2						

THIRD GRADE

Third Grade 2019



Back Row:	Tai Tuala	Isaac Clark	Neth Makaafi	Dave Shepherd	Greg Bourne
Blake Guthrie	Joe Stanford	Rowan Fahey	Carter Lovell	Brad Reed	Jake Loiterton
Christo Crous					
Front Row:	Sam Bowen (RIP)	Michael Carr	Matthias Wann	Rob Mardus	Will Harris (Capt/Coach)
Bill Hurley (Coach)	Shaun Dutailis	Dan Webb	Luke Johnson	Andrew Johnson	(manager)

The Squad

There was a distinct blend of the old and the new in the makeup of the squad of players who donned the boots to contest the third grade comp this year. Shaun Dutailis Steve Elson, Dave Shepherd Greg Bourne, Matthias Wann, Steve Simona, Rob Mardus, Rohan Fahey Christo Crous and Mitch Bell had between them chalked up over a thousand games of rugby over their distinguished careers. Match that with the youth and enthusiasm of Colts players Hugh Britton, Ross Alston, Jack Scott, Dexter Anderson, Tolson Kennerley and Will Siegert, who played games after the Colts competition was completed, and you have an interesting mix of guys all aiming to achieve a first for the club – winning a third-grade premiership under the UOW banner.

The two coaches, Will ‘Wombat’ Harris and Bill Hurley, had worked their social connections on Thursday nights at the Cabbage Tree Hotel to attract quite a few talented players to give third grade a try. Aaron Shrub, Blake Guthrie, Luke Johnson, Dan Webb, Dave Campbell, Jake Loiterton, Neth Makaafi, Joe Stanford and Jed Buchanan were mainly from country areas, and all were quite high standard players.

The season began with some very distinguished players in Christo Crous and Dave Shepherd occupying the prop positions and this was to be the situation until the last few games when injuries took their toll. Steve Simona was a welcome addition to the front row and his vast experience added to the depth of the team, especially when some of the other guys needed a bit of a rest. Others to step up included Josh Worth, Tom Doyle and Will Siegert and their youthful enthusiasm combined with willingness to learn also added to the squad.

The hooker's role was a bit of a lottery with a few guys including Jack Della, Rhys Bourne and Ross Alston taking on the job at various stages.

In the second row some consistency was provided by Isaac Clark who played in the majority of games, but his partner was a problem as the side certainly lacked any size which meant that guys who actually were loose forwards stepped up to play out of position. Billy Exton, until injured, Joe Stanford, Jed Buchanan, Jake Loiterton, Jack Pople, Dave Campbell and Michael Martin all were in this boat and played well above their weight division in the tight play. Others in Jack Scott, Tolson Kennerley, Nathan Illy and Lachlan Fawke also spent some time in this position when not playing in other grades and Jakob Walters ventured into the forwards from the wing when given the opportunity.

One of the strengths of the squad was in the loose forward department where we were fortunate to have a multitude of quality players. The standout performer was Ed McClymont who displayed his versatility by playing hooker, openside flanker and even centre and he was in scintillating form. At the same time, Ed also managed to kick some pressure goals and was rewarded with numerous awards on presentation night.

Joe Stanford, Jed Buchanan, Jake Loiterton, Jack Pople, Alex Law, Dave Campbell and Michael Martin all were key performers no matter whether they were playing in tight or in a loose role and it was difficult for the coaches to always give players sufficient game time to display their skills.

It was also a plus to have Mitch Bell back on the field when he was not officiating at weddings as a celebrant, and it must be said that he would have had a real impact if he had been available for more games.

Will Harris not only did a very commendable job on the coaching front, but he also played a key on field role as halfback. Will controlled the game effectively but also displayed his awareness of giving others game time, often being replaced at halftime. Fortunately, the team was able to call on the services of the very experienced Shaun Dutailis to take over this key position and though not as quick on his feet as in his youth he was still quick between the ears.

In the five eight position Aaron Shrubbs was Mr Reliable as he played eleven games always providing excellent possession for the outside backs enabling them to do most of the try scoring, as it should be. When Aaron was not available Brad Reed stepped into the position and he also did a good job in this pivotal role until he was called into Second grade. Brad displayed his versatility by also playing in the centres, on the wing and at fullback and he was the leading point scorer in the team with fifty-three points.

Much of the team's attack was generated through the centre pairing of Luke Johnson and the wily campaigner Matthias Wann. Both guys employed a hard-running style with stout defence, and they developed into a deadly combination. Unfortunately, Matthias moved up to seconds late in the season and Sam Williams stepped into the position and acquitted himself well.

Blake Guthrie proved himself to be a particularly good custodian in the fullback spot with his pace and straight running being a feature of the games he played. Blake showed enough ability to suggest he could play up the grades and did have a couple of games as a replacement in Firsts and Seconds. The club was lucky to have an abundance of players eager to grace the field and this created problems for the coaches who tried to give everyone at least some game time. This was particularly evident on the wings.

Dan Webb, Hamish Coupland who suffered a serious shoulder injury, and Sam Williams were capable players anywhere in the backline and did play a few games on the wing while two seasoned veterans in Rowan Fahey, back after a few years away from the game, and Rob Mardus showed great poise under pressure.

At the other end of the age spectrum Jack O'Neill and Dexter Anderson made the transition from Colts to Thirds with confidence and were always keen to get on the field.

One of the truly devastating events occurred in September when young Sam Bowen was tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident. Sam had only played one game when he decided to return home to Cowra and his loss really was felt by the whole club but in particular many of the guys in Thirds who were Sam's friends off the field as well.

The Season

RD 1: Avondale

Rd 1 – 6/4 /19		Gerry Cappetta Oval			
Third Grade:		University	19	Avondale	26
Tries:	Luke Johnson	Blake Guthrie	Dave Campbell		
Goals:	Blake Guthrie	Sam Williams			
Players Player:	Luke Johnson				
B & F Points:	(3) Luke Johnson	(2) Blake Guthrie		(1) Joe Stanford	

Coaches Harris and Hurley had plenty of troops for the first hit out against Avondale and the team performed quite well. Avondale got out to a lead of 7-26 early in the second half but the boys bounced back to make the final score 19-26 in an encouraging start to the new season.

RD 2: Tech Waratahs

Rd 2 – 13/4/19		University Oval			
Third Grade:		University	38	Tech Waratahs	5
Tries:	Issak Clark	Michael Martin	Matthias Wann	Brad Reed	
	Blake Guthrie	Rob Mardus			
Goals:	Brad Reed (4)		Penalty Goals:		
B & F Points:	(3) Blake Guthrie	(2) Luke Johnson		(1) Ed McClymont	

The game against Tech saw a full house on deck with 23 players on the team sheet. This made it hard to give everyone game time, but the coaches did a good job. The score line was 38-5 and the coaches were confident of more success to follow.

RD 3: Bowral

Rd 3 – 27/4/19		Eridge Park			
Third Grade:		University	17	Bowral	25
Tries:	Matthias Wann (2)	Rob Mardus			
Goals:	Brad Reed (1)	Penalty Goals:			

Next was the trip to Bowral who were one of the more experienced teams in the comp and we performed creditably being just behind 10-12 at the break. The second half was also close, but Bowral had too many old heads in their team and held on to win 17-25.

RD 4: Shoalhaven

Rd 4 – 4/5/19		University Oval			
Third Grade:		University	45	Shoalhaven	20
Tries:	Brad Reed (3)	Michael Martin	Ed McClymont	Luke Johnson	
	Jack Loiterton				
Goals:	Brad Reed (5)		Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:	Mitch Bell				
B & F Points:	(3) Michael Martin	(2) Joe Stanford		(1) Brad Reed	

In round 4 we took on Shoalhaven at home and again the bench was full, and the boys were all keen to get on the field and show off their skills. It was close in the first half but then lack of reserves and fitness took their toll on Shoalhaven and we ran out easy winners 45-20 with Brad Reed notching a hat trick of tries and kicking five conversions.

RD 5: Camden

Rd 5 – 11/5/19		Camden Rugby Park			
Third Grade:		University	0	Camden	17
Players Player:	Ed McClymont				
B & F Points:	(3) Ed McClymont	(2) Isaac Clark		(1) Will Harris	

We then took on Camden and in a dour first half neither team could gain the ascendancy and it ended up being nil all at the break. However, Camden came out firing and scored two early tries and as hard as we tried, we could not get across the line. The game was finished as Camden crossed for a converted try to win 0-17. It was a frustrating time for the team as we certainly had played well enough to at least gain a bonus point.

RD 6: Bowral

Rd 6 – 18/5/19		Gerry Cappetta Oval			
Third Grade:		University	12	Bowral	21
Tries:	Michael Martin	Matthias Wann			
Goals:	Brad Reed		Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:					
B & F Points:	(3) Ed McClymont	(2) Mitch Bell		(1) Michael Martin	

One of the vagaries of the draw then saw us play Bowral again but this time at Avondale while the rest of the club played Vikings at their home ground. Strange but true. Again, it was a tight battle with two tries seeing us in front by twelve points. Bowral were then able to get some possession and at the break it was two tries apiece with Bowral leading 12-14. The second half was a close affair with both teams playing attractive running rugby. In the end Bowral managed another converted try to take the game 12-21 but it was a solid effort by the Thirsty Thirds.

RD 7: Wollondilly

Rd 7 – 25/5/19		University Oval			
Third Grade:		University	18	Wollondilly	12
Tries:	Blake Guthrie	Jed Buchanan			
Goals:	Ed McClymont		Penalty Goals:	Brad Reed (2)	
Players Player:	Matthias Wann				
B & F Points:	(3) Matthias Wann	(2) Jake Loiterton		(1) Christo Crous	

Wollondilly came to Uni, but they were struggling for numbers while again we had a cast of thousands wanting a game which resulted in a disjointed performance by the team. In a close game it was twelve all early in the second half with the game evenly balanced. However, our numbers advantage worked in our favour and two penalty goals by Brad Reed saw us victorious 18-12.

RD 8: Campbelltown

Rd 8 – 1/6/19	Campbelltown Showground	
Forfeit by Campbelltown		
Third Grade:	University 28	Campbelltown 0

RD 9: Albion Park Crushers

Rd 9 – 15/6/19	University Oval	
Forfeit by Albion Park		
Third Grade:	University 28	Albion Park 0

It was at this stage of the comp that things were falling apart with Campbelltown and Albion Park both forfeiting games to us. It was obvious that changes were needed as Campbelltown, Kiama and Shoalhaven all withdrew from the comp.

The IDRU decided that only competition points scored in the second round would count and that there would be a six team semi-final series as not all teams would play an equal number of games.

RD 10: Avondale

Rd 10 – 22/6/19	University Oval	
Third Grade:	University 7	Avondale 17
Tries:	Brad Reed	
Goals:	Brad Reed	Penalty Goals:
Players Player:	Ross Alston	
B & F Points:	(3) Ross Alston	(2) Rowan Fahey (1) Matthias Wann

After a four-week break, we played Avondale at our home ground, and we performed well in the early part of the game to be equal with the Wombats at seven all at the break. A penalty saw Avondale out by three points after ten minutes and that remained the score until they crossed for a converted try right on full time.

RD 11: Tech Waratahs

Rd 11 – 29/6/19	Saunders Oval	
Third Grade:	University 17	Tech Waratahs 12
Tries:	Dan Webb	Dave Shepherd Shaun Dutailis
Goals:	Ed McClymont	Penalty Goals:
Players Player:	Aaron Shrubb	
B & F Points:	(3) Aaron Shrubb	(2) Dave Shepherd (1) Josh Ali Vale

Tech at Saunders Oval is never easy especially in the holidays as our numbers were a little down on previous games. Tech were improving with some experienced players donning their boots and we found ourselves behind 5-12 at half time. A converted try by evergreen prop Dave Shepherd got us onto even terms and another golden oldie in Shaun Dutailis scrambled over the match winning try. It was great to see the 'veterans' displaying all their skills and cunning to some of the younger brigade.

RD 12: Bowral

Rd 12 – 6/7/19 Eridge Park			
Forfeit by University			
Third Grade:	University 0		Bowral 28

The less said about the forfeit to Bowral the better as it left a sour taste in the mouth as we certainly were denied the chance to play them at our ground on the date set aside for the wet weather game. It seems Bowral had their players enjoying a weekend ski trip on that date and the IDRU backed them up. Disappointing!

RD 13: Vincentia

Rd 13 – 13/7/19 Vincentia			
Third Grade:	University 15		Vincentia 32
Tries:	Rob Mardus	Luke Johnson	Michael Martin
Goals:	Penalty Goals:		
Players Player:	Josh Vale		
B & F Points:	(3) Josh Vale	(2) Sam Eberle	(1) Sam Williams

A visit to Vincentia during Uni Break is always interesting but we were able to assemble quite a good side for the trip. The match started in an unusual manner with the ref succumbing to a bout of vertigo before the game even started and Sproggy McGuinness reluctantly agreeing to ref in his jeans and shoes. The Van Gogh's were a very good side, but the Thirsty Thirds stuck to their task and the game developed into a willing struggle. In the long run Vincentia proved to be too good winning 15-32 but everyone, including the ref, enjoyed the game.

Rd 14: Camden

Rd 14 – 20/7 /19 Camden Rugby Park			
Third Grade:	University 17		Camden 27
Tries:	Blake Guthrie	Connor Miller	
Goals:	Ed McClymont (2)	Penalty Goals:	Ed McClymont (1)
Players Player:	Ed McClymont		
B & F Points:	(3) Ed McClymont	(2) Jack Pople	(1) Connor Miller

Camden was a solid third grade combination, but we put an experienced team on the Paddock. Intermingled with the old heads was a mix of colts and youngsters back from holidays. We were impressive in the early part of the game skipping out to a 17-5 lead half way through the second half. It was then that a few old legs started to feel the strain and Camden came back in the game and hit the front 22-17 with two minutes remaining. Things got worse as we allowed them another try right on full time. It was a disappointing end to what promised so much.

RD 15: Vikings

Rd 15 – 27/7/19 University Oval			
Third Grade:	University 15		Vikings 17
Tries:	Aaron Shrubbs	Andrew Johnson	
Goals:	Ed McClymont (1)	Penalty Goals:	Ed McClymont (1)
Players Player:	Ed McClymont		
B & F Points:	(3) Ed McClymont	(2) Matthias Wann	(1) Ross Alston

The clash with Vikings was an entertaining affair as we put together a very solid first half performance to lead 12-5. Early in the second half Vikings managed to get across for a try to make the score twelve apiece and then it was an arm wrestle to see who would end up on top. Ed McClymont coolly kicked a penalty goal, and all looked rosy but unfortunately, we relaxed a tad and were punished as Vikings scored the winning try with time almost gone. Vikings ended up being the Premiers so all in all it was a great performance by the team.

RD 16: Shamrocks

Rd 16 – 3/8/19		Ocean Park	
Third Grade:	University	22	Shamrocks
Tries:	Mitch Bell	Aaron Shrubbs	Jonathon Lally
Goals:	Andrew Johnson (2)	Penalty Goals: Andrew Johnson (1)	
Players Player:	Jonathon Lally		
B & F Points:	(3) Jonathon Lally	(2) Will Harris	(1) Mitch Bell

Shamrocks and Uni were evenly placed on the table when they clashed at Ocean Park and the result certainly showcased the closeness of the two teams. The Bulls got away to a great start and after scoring two converted tries lead by 14-0 at half time. Shamrocks came out firing after the break and we found ourselves behind 14-19 early on. Mitch Bell then stood up and scored a try to make the score 19 all with ten minutes remaining. It was then that the rugby Gods smiled on us as we were awarded a controversial penalty right on full time. Andrew Johnson withstood the pressure to put the kick over and we walked off happy to finally win a close game.

RD 17: Wollondilly

Rd 17 – 17/8/19		University Oval	
Third Grade:	University	24	Wollondilly
Tries:	Jack Della	Matthias Wann	Joe Stanford Dexter Anderson
Goals:	Sam Williams (2)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Will Harris		
B & F Points:	(3) Joe Stanford	(2) Will Harris	(1) Jack Della

The final two games of the season were against Wollondilly and Albion Park Crushers who were the two bottom teams. The Wollondilly game was a tense clash with the result being in doubt until the final minute when the score line was 19-17 Joe Stanford scored a great try to ensure the win 24 – 17.

RD 18: Albion Park Crushers

Rd 18 – 23/8/19		Albion Park Showground	
Third Grade:	University	31	Southern Crushers
Tries:	Will Harris	Isaac Clark	Sam Williams Brad Reed
	Jett Hatton		
Goals:	Lachlan Wilkinson (3)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Will Harris		
B & F Points:	(3) Will Harris	(2) Isaac Clark	(1) Lachlan Wilkinson

The clash with the Crushers was held on a Friday night and a lot of players turned out for the final game of the year. In a high scoring match the Bulls dominated throughout scoring five tries in a 31-0 victory. It must be said that Coach Harris had a blinder which was obvious when he surfaced the next day at Kiama to watch the other grades.

The final standings make for some interesting reading when you consider that only second round points were counted. This certainly favoured some clubs, notably Tech Waratahs who were one of

the weaker teams early on as is shown by their points differential of -105. However, with an influx of players they had a tremendous second round ending up playing in the semis.

Although we missed the semis, we were certainly a competitive side (which is borne out by a points differential of -5) but in reality the lack of bonus points and the fact that we only played 16 games cost us in the end.

Third Grade Points Table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	-/+	Bonus	Total*
1	Bowral	16	12	4	0	225	8	35
2	Vincentia	17	13	4	0	368	13	32
3	Wollongong Tech	16	8	8	0	-105	11	32
4	Avondale	17	13	4	0	271	11	30
5	Vikings	17	12	5	0	129	5	28
6	Camden	16	10	6	0	123	7	25
7	Shamrocks	17	7	10	0	-10	8	21
8	UOW	16	7	9	0	-5	6	19
9	Wollondilly	17	4	13	0	-164	5	5
10	Albion Park Crushers	15	0	15	0	-621	1	1

** Only points scored in Round 2 of the competition counted in this column.*

Third Grade Point Scorers 2019

Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F	Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F
<i>Third Grade</i>											
REED, Bradley	48	4	11	2	1	MCCLYMONT, Ed	26	1	6	3	13
GUTHRIE, Blake	22	4	1	0	6	JOHNSON, Luke	20	4	0	0	5
WANN, Matthias	20	4	0	0	5	MARDUS, Robbie	15	3	0	0	0
DALLA, Jack	10	2	0	0	1	MARTIN, Michael	10	2	0	0	4
STANFORD, Joe	10	2	0	0	6	DUTAILLIS, Shaun	10	2	0	0	0
WEBB, Daniel	7	1	1	0	0	JOHNSON, Andrew	7	0	2	1	0
WILLIAMS, Sam	6	0	3	0	0	HARRIS, William	5	1	0	0	8
LALLY, Jonathon	5	1	0	0	3	SHEPHERD, David	5	1	0	0	0
SHRUBB, Aaron	5	1	0	0	3	MILLER, Connor	5	1	0	0	0
LOITERTON, Jake	5	1	0	0	2	BELL, Mitchell	5	1	0	0	3
BUCHANAN, Jed	5	1	0	0	0	CAMPBELL, David	5	1	0	0	0
CLARK, Isaac	5	1	0	0	4	ALSTON, Ross	0	0	0	0	4
ALI VALE, Josh	0	0	0	0	4	FAHEY, Rowan	0	0	0	0	2
EBERLE, Sam	0	0	0	0	2	POPLE, Jack	0	0	0	0	2
CROUS, Christo	0	0	0	0	1	WILKINSON, Ross	0	0	0	0	1

COLTS (U/21)



Back Row:	Luca Fierravanti	Sam Erble	Tanner Marjoram	Chris Jackson	Tom Parker
Nic Mulligan	Hamish Cole	Tolson Kennerley	Jack Scott	Pat Duggan	Simon Bayley
Riley Mitchell	Jack Thurtell	Ross Alston	Will Siegert	Charlie Blyde	
Front Row:	Hugh Britton	Charlie Greer	Callum Rath	Dexter Anderson	Jack O'Neill
Cameron McCrea (coach)	Nick Bennet	Jett Hutton	Seb DiNoro	Riley Joyce	

The Squad

In all about thirty players ran out for the Colts in their shortened eight game competition with the majority appearing in at least five matches. This displayed a terrific degree of commitment from the lads and ensured that we were competitive in all the games.

The squad could be broken up into four groups

- *Uni juniors backing up from 2018:*

Tolson Kennerley, Luca Fierravanti and Manu Mau

- *Uni students returning from 2018:*

Nick Bennet, Hamish Cole, Jett Hutton, Hughie Britton and Simon Bayley

- *Uni juniors stepping up to Colts for the first time:*

Sebastian DiNoro, Rory Green, and Jack Scott

- *Uni students in their rookie season for the club:*

Will Siegert, Ross Alston, Tom Parker, Sam Erble, Nick Mulligan, Riley Mitchell, Tanner Marjoram, Charlie Blyde, Jack O'Neill, Pat Duggan, Cameron McEvoy, Jack Thurtell, Christian Jackson, Callum Rath, Dexter Anderson, Charlie Greer, Lachlan Williamson Ricardo Rodrigues and Riley Joyce.

The forward pack was able to function effectively with front rowers Tolson Kennerley, Will Siegert and Tom Parker while the hooking position was held by Ross Alston and Seb DiNoro.

The second row was a combination of Jack Scott, Sam Erble, Luca Fierravanti, Manu Mau and Rory Green and these lads were very willing to get stuck into the tight play.

The team was in the fortunate position of having some talented players in the back row. Leading the way were Nick Bennet and Hamish Cole while Nick Mulligan, Riley Mitchell and Tanner Marjoram also performed well in securing the ball at the breakdown.

Two experienced players from 2018 in Jett Hutton and Hughie Britton combined in the halves with Charlie Blyde also taking on the half back's role during games.

The outside backs were a versatile lot with most players able to play either on the wing or in the centres. The problem was that there was not a great deal of cohesion, and we lacked the ability to convert pressure into points. Jack Thurtell and Charlie Greer were a constant threat to the opposition, and they received support from Pat Duggan, Cameron McEvoy, Christian Jackson, Callum Rath, Riley Joyce, Lachlan Williamson and Dexter Anderson.

Several players made their way into the senior teams when the Colts games were completed, and all acquitted themselves well.

One youngster who stood out was Tolson Kennerley who made the transition from the second row to prop with grit and determination and a lot of coaching from Evan Paota-Smith and won his position in the first-grade team.

Others who showed promise in the top grades were Sam Erble who was in the first-grade squad for some games while Jack Thurtell, Charlie Greer, Jett Hutton, Tanner Marjoram, Wil Siegert and Simon Bayley played in Seconds. All these guys displayed enough talent to suggest that they will be pushing for first grade selection in the future.

THE SEASON

RD 1: Burraneer

Rd 1 – 6/4 /19		John Dwyer Field			
Colts:		University	22	Burraneer	19
Tries:	Tolson Kennerley	Nick Bennet	Simon Bayley	Ross Alston	
Goals:	Hugh Britton	Penalty Goals:			
Players Player:	Ross Alston				
B & F Points:	(3) Nick Bennet	(2) Tolson Kennerley	(1) Ross Alston		

The season got off to a positive start as 19 players fronted up to Burraneer for the first game. The first half performance was a little disjointed as combinations were a work in progress and were behind on the scoreboard 17-19. The remainder of the match was tense and exciting as neither team could gain the ascendancy but finally The Bulls managed their fourth try and were winners 22-19.

RD 2: Briars

Rd 2 – 13/4/19		Rothwell Park			
Colts:		University	12	Briars	15
Tries:	Ross Alston	Nick Bennet			
Goals:	Hugh Britton	Penalty Goals:			
Players Player:	Ross Alston				
B & F Points:	(3) Tolson Kennerley	(2) Jett Hutton	(1) Pat Duggan		

The game against Briars was another extremely competitive contest with scores being close all game. Uni hit the front 7-5 after twenty minutes but let in a try right on half time which saw the lead evaporate. Early in the second half Nick Bennet used his experience to get his name on the score sheet and the game was all tied up at 12-12. A penalty Goal to Briars gave them a three-point advantage and for the last twenty minutes we fought hard but could not get the points needed for the win.

RD 4: Mosman II

Rd 4 – 4/5/19	Rawson Park		
Colts:	University 14		Mosman II 22
Tries:	Tolson Kennerley	Lachlan Wilkinson	
Goals:	Hugh Britton	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Lachlan Wilkinson		
B & F Points:	(3) Lachlan Wilkinson	(2) Hamish Cole	(1) Ross Alston

The trip to Mosman to take on their second team was made difficult due to a lack of numbers as only sixteen players were available. The Mosman boys were able to cross for three tries, two of which were converted while they also kicked a penalty. On the other hand, we notched two ‘meat pies’. Both tries were converted by Hugh Britton, but we were not able to maintain pressure on the opposition especially as we tired near the end of the match. The score line of 14-22 was an indication of the effort put in by all of players with standout performer being Lachlan Wilkinson who was everywhere in attack and defence.

RD 5: Colleagues II

Rd 5 – 11/5/19	University Oval		
Colts:	University 24		Colleagues II 34
Tries:	Sam Eberle (2)	Ross Alston	Manu Mau
Goals:	Hugh Britton (2)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Sam Eberle		
B & F Points:	(3) Sam Eberle	(2) Hamish Cole	(1) Manu Mau

Our next opponent was Colleagues II who did not let the trip down to Wollongong affect them as they began the game strongly getting out to a 12-29 lead at the break. Inspired by our forwards Ross Alston, Sam Eberle and Hamish Cole we improved our defence and managed another two tries to be behind 24-34 at the end of the match.

RD 6: Mosman III

Rd 6 – 18/5/19	University Oval		
Colts:	University 24		Mosman III 7
Tries:	Ross Alston	Hugh Britton	Nick Mulligan Nick Bennet
Goals:	Hugh Britton (2)	Penalty Goals:	
Players Player:	Simon Bayley		
B & F Points:	(3) Ross Alston	(2) Dexter Anderson	(1) Charlie Blyde

Mosman III provided some stiff opposition in the opening half of the game and proved difficult to score against with a solitary try being the only reward for a lot of hard work on our part. However, we stuck to the task and with numerous players on the bench we eventually took control of the game and recorded three more tries to win convincingly 24-7. Once again Ross Alston was prominent and was well supported by Simon Bayley, Dexter Anderson and Hugh Britton.

RD 7: Chatswood

Rd 7 – /25/5/19	University Oval		
Colts:	University 7		Chatswood 35
Tries:	Tom Parker		
Goals:	Hugh Britton	Penalty Goals	
Players Player:	Nick Mulligan		
B & F Points:	(3) Nick Mulligan	(2) Simon Bayley	(1) Jack Thurtell

The Sydney clubs did not seem to be fazed by travelling as was demonstrated by Chatswood who stormed to a 0-21 lead early in the game. We made numerous replacements but could not stem the tide and were well beaten 7-35 with prop Tom Parker notching a sole try late in the game.

5th/6th Playoff: Burraneer

Playoff– 15/6/19 University Oval			
Colts:	University 0		Burraneer 34
Players Player:	Dexter Anderson		
B & F Points:	(3) Dexter Anderson	(2) Riley Mitchell	(1) Will Siegert

Our last game in the comp was a play off for 5th and 6th position where we took on Burraneer at Uni Oval. We were down on players somewhat, but we had no excuses as we given a bit of a rugby lesson in losing 0-34. Rugby is a funny game as we had a close victory over the Burraneer boys in the first game. It was a disappointing way to finish the season, but a lot of good friendships had been formed within the team and quite a few guys stayed around to play games in the seniors which was one of the main reasons why we had formed the team in the first place.

Colts Points table 2019

Pos	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	-/+	Bonus	Points	Total
1	Chatswood	7	7	0	0	296	7	28	35
2	Briars	7	5	2	0	1	2	20	22
3	Colleagues II	5	4	1	0	94	4	16	20
4	Colleagues III	6	3	3	0	-72	2	12	14
5	Mosman II	6	3	3	0	-62	1	12	13
6	UOW	7	2	5	0	-46	4	8	12
7	Burraneer	6	0	6	0	-104	3	0	3
8	Mosman III	4	0	4	0	-107	1	0	1

Colts Point Scorers 2019

Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F	Player	Total	Tries	G	PG	B&F
Colts											
ALSTON, Ross	25	5	0	0	5	BRITTON, Hugh	18	0	9	0	0
BENNET, Nicholas	15	3	0	0	3	BAYLEY, Simon	10	2	0	0	2
EBERLE, Sam	10	2	0	0	3	KENNERLEY, Tolson	10	2	0	0	5
MAU, Manu	5	1	0	0	1	HATTON, Jett	5	1	0	0	2
PARKER, Thomas	5	1	0	0	0	WILKINSON, Lachlan	5	1	0	0	3
MULLIGAN, Nicholas	5	1	0	0	3	JOYCE, Riley	2	0	1	0	0
COLE, Hamish	0	0	0	0	4	ANDERSON, Dexter	0	0	0	0	5
DUGGAN, Pat	0	0	0	0	1	MITCHELL, Riley	0	0	0	0	2
BLYDE, Charlie	0	0	0	0	1	SIEGERT, Will	0	0	0	0	1

END OF SEASON GAMES

First Grade:

Minor Semi-Final

Our reward for finishing in fourth place was a Sunday game played at Ocean Park against Shamrocks, who had been our nemesis this season.

FIRST GRADE SQUAD - Minor Semi

(1) Jack Nash	(2) Wayne Ngatai	(3) Hemi Wickliffe
(4) Will Wood		(5) Jarrad Conyers
(6) Ian Leota	(8) Nick Rangiura	(7) Talu Seiuli
(9) Cooper Hansen		(10) Tom Baker
(12) Matthieu Chapelant		(13) Brayden Grehan
(11) Jamie Mason	(15) Donny Nepia	(14) Rob Cooper
(16) Casey Rameka	(17) Charlie Curry	(18) Tolson Kennerley
(19) Sam Eberle	(20) Wangchuk Tshoko	(21) Rowan Wilson
(22) BJ Ririnui		(23) Justin Placek

Minor Semi 1/9/19		Ocean Park	
First Grade:		University 28	Shamrocks 36
Tries:	Jack Nash	Rob Cooper	Nick Rangiura Brayden Grehan
Goals:	Cooper Hansen (4)	Penalty Goals:	

In a Minor Semi Final of two halves, Shamrocks have kept their late season charge coming with a 36 – 28 victory over University at Ocean Park. In a strong clinical first half performance the Rocks went to the break with a 26 – 0 lead as the Bulls struggled to make any impression on the committed Rocks. The second half was a different story with the Bulls coming out after the break full of running putting on twenty-eight points but fell agonizingly short as their season came to an end.

The majority of the first stanza was played within sixty meters of the University line. With the Rocks energetic forwards dominating at the breakdown the Students produced too many uncharacteristic errors for them to be able to compete with the Rocks on the scoreboard.

After ten minutes of typical intense semi-final football, Shamrocks centre Dale Sullivan put his centre partner Tristram Storm away with a well-timed pass forty meters out from the Uni line. Storm charged up-field before positioning Fullback Ben Stewart for a clear run to score. Shortly after the Rocks were in again when winger Liam Vulk took advantage of a well worked overlap to score down the right side. Stewart converted and the Rocks led 12 – 5 after eighteen minutes.

Shamrocks continued to dominate play and field position but were dealt a major injury blow at the twenty-eight-minute mark. Star Flanker Iszak Lunney went down with apparent serious knee injury and was assisted from the field taking no further part in the match.

Despite the loss of Lunney noticeably taking some of the spark out of the Rocks effort, the tries continued to come on the back of some disappointing and clumsy University play. Hard working Rocks captain Damian Clark broke through but was caught just short of the student's line and from the next play Flanker Brodie Scott crossed for their third try, converted this time by Fly-Half Thomas McDevitt with the Rocks now leading 19 – 0.

A minute from the half-time break University managed to regroup taking play into the Shamrocks quarter but another handling error proved very costly. Rocks centre Sullivan swooped on a dropped

Uni ball kicking the ball clear of the Shamrocks quarter and the race was on with nobody at the back for Uni. Winger Vulk got to the ball first and kicked again sending the ball into the Uni quarter. He clearly won the footrace to the ball and with a very complimentary bounce from the Gilbert, regathered and scored under the posts. The try was converted by McDevitt to put on seven very critical points as the sides went to interval with the Rocks up 26 – 0.

The University coaching staff made some changes at the break with Charles Curry coming into the match in the centres and Casey Rameka being added to the front row. Both these players added much needed vigour to the Students effort and the match took on a decidedly different look after the rest break.

Two minutes into the half, Fly-Half Tom Baker broke through twenty out from the Rocks line and put winger Robert Cooper over for the first Uni try. Exciting young University Half-Back prospect Cooper Hanson converted the try and Uni were on the board but still with plenty to do.

A much improved more aggressive effort from the Students began to raise the hopes of the large group of University supporters present. Big centre Brayden Grehan, who was locked in an absorbing battle with his Rocks counterparts, broke free forty meters out and powered his way to the line to score the Students second try in six minutes. Hanson converted and the Rocks lead had been reduced to twelve points at 26 – 14.

Within minutes however another Uni error led to another Shamrocks try. McDevitt pounced on a loose pass just inside the Uni quarter and cleared away to score under the posts. With his own conversion kick successful the Rocks were again nineteen in front at 33 – 14 at the fifty-minute mark leaving the students with the need to score at least three more times to keep their Premiership quest alive.

Uni responded three minutes later with No.8 Nick Rangiura powering over the line from close range for a converted try and a score line of 33 – 21. Rangiura and Flanker Ian Leota reacted strongly to some good play up front from Rameka and veteran Jack Nash as things were looking promising for the students with twenty-five minutes still left to play.

The next fifteen minutes of play was typical intensive semi-final football with both sides throwing everything into their effort. Shamrocks got into the Uni in goal twice in this period but in the face of a much-improved Uni defensive effort were unable to complete their plays to put on any more tries. With less than ten minutes to play McDevitt added a penalty goal to put the Rocks out to a fifteen-point lead which would prove to be an insurmountable lead for the gallant Students to overcome.

Veteran Prop Jack Nash raised the Uni hopes when he lumbered over for a five pointer from fifteen out within the last five minutes of play. Hanson converted the try to narrow the gap to eight, but it all proved too little too late to keep the Students season alive.

However, there was to be no miracle and that was as close as we got, and we did come off the field with some pride as the crowd appreciated the fact that we certainly did not throw in the towel.

Uni's poor start was costly but the efforts of Flanker Leota, No.8 Nick Rangiura and replacement prop Rameka to get them back into the match was outstanding. Young Half-Back Hanson had an eye-catching game and must be rated as one of the IDRUs best goal kickers. Fly-Half Tom Baker was at his probing best especially in the second half with centres Grehan and Curry also strong contributors. Fullback Don Nepia in his last match for the club tried valiantly throughout to guide his side out of trouble in a typical intelligent effort once again.

In a fitting tribute to a club legend the boys gathered around Donny at the completion of the game and our Kiwi guys performed an emotion charged Haka in tribute to Donny as this was his last game of Rugby. The players were disappointed not to be able to send him off as a winner, but he certainly was recognised as one of the true gentlemen of the game who has delivered a lot to the Mallee Bulls, on and off the field.

It was then off to start the end of season fun and frivolities, the only problem being that they started a bit earlier than we had hoped.

Senior Awards 2019

Awards:		Donated by:	Winner:
President's Award	Jack Huxley Shield	Glenn McGuinness	Lusii Tanevesi
Award for Leadership	Sam Davey Shield	Paul Webb Canio Fierravanti	Tom Baker
Trainer of the Year		Paul Dunai	Neth Makaafi
Coaches Award		Wayne Dobson	Wayne Ngatai
Colts Best and Fairest			Ross Alston Tolson Kennerley Dexter Anderson
Colts 'Players Player'			Ross Alston
Third Grade Best and Fairest	Nick Theodore Shield	Peter Keeble	Ed McClymont
Third Grade 'Players Player'			Ed McClymont
Second Grade Best and Fairest		Noel Yates	Wangchuk Tshoko
Second Grade 'Players Player'			Lachlan Conyers
First Grade Best and Fairest		Dave Rae	Ian Leota
First Grade 'Players Player'			Ian Leota
Players 'Player of the Year'	Phillip "Doris" McInerney Shield	Dave Bateman Tom Wren Rob Pedersen	Matthieu Chapelant
Rookie of the Year		Duarte Do Rego	Ian Leota
Player with the Most Potential	Dave Reading Shield	Dave Bateman Tom Wren Rob Pedersen	Cooper Hansen
Leading Try Scorer			Ian Leota – 9 tries
Leading Points Scorer		Dave Bateman Tom Wren Rob Pedersen	Charles Curry - 114 points
Club Person of the Year		Keith Hales	Kenny Wright
'Iron Man' Award Played in all rounds.			

Games Played 2019

Player	1sts	2nds	3rds	u/20	Total	Player	1sts	2nds	3rds	u/20	Total
ALSTON, Ross	0	3	2	7	12	HANCOCK, Rhys	0	5	0	0	5
ANDERSON, Dexter	0	1	3	8	12	HANSEN, Cooper	5	0	0	0	5
APOLO, Reece	0	0	0	0	0	HARRIS, William	0	2	13	0	15
BAKER, Tom	12	0	0	0	12	HATTON, Jett	0	6	0	4	10
BAYLEY, Simon	0	5	0	6	11	ILLY, Nathan	3	11	4	0	18
BELL, Mitch	0	1	5	0	6	JACKSON, Christian	0	0	0	8	8
BENNET, Nicholas	1	9	1	4	15	JOHNSON, Andrew	1	5	2	0	8
BLYDE, Charlie	0	0	0	5	5	JOHNSON, Luke	0	0	14	0	14
BOURNE, Greg	0	1	4	0	5	JOYCE, Riley	0	0	0	4	4
BOURNE, Rhys	9	9	2	0	20	KANACE, Manoa	4	2	0	0	6
BOWEN, Samuel	0	0	1	0	1	KELLY, Jack	5	2	0	0	7
BRITTON, Hugh	0	0	4	8	12	KENNERLEY, Tolson	5	7	2	6	20
BUCHANAN, Jed	0	0	8	0	8	LABAT, Damien	7	2	0	0	9
BYRNES, Patrick	2	11	5	0	18	LALLY, Jonathon	0	7	3	0	10
CAMPBELL, David	0	0	8	0	8	LAMB, Bailey	2	0	0	0	2
CARR, Michael	0	0	2	0	2	LAMB, William	0	7	1	0	8
CHAPELANT, Matthieu	6	1	0	0	7	LAURIE, Sam	8	10	2	0	20
CHIMWAZA, Takunda	8	0	0	0	8	LAUVI-JOHNSON, Soul	5	1	0	0	6
CLARK, Isaac	0	2	10	0	12	LAW, Alex	0	0	7	0	7
COLE, Hamish	0	2	0	7	9	LEOTA, Ian	14	1	0	0	15
CONNORS, Patrick	0	1	0	0	1	LOITERTON, Jake	0	0	8	0	8
CONYERS, Jarrad	14	2	0	0	16	LOVELL, Carter	1	2	1	0	4
CONYERS, Lachlan	16	9	2	0	27	MAKAAFI, Neth	1	9	7	0	17
COOPER, Robert	12	10	0	0	22	MALCOLM EBERLE	0	0	0	0	0
COUPLAND, Hamish	0	0	4	0	4	MARDUS, Robert	0	0	11	0	11
CROUS, Christo	0	1	10	0	11	MARJORAM, Tanner	0	0	2	7	9
CURRY, Charles	17	0	0	0	17	MARTIN, Michael	0	4	6	0	10
DALLA, Jack	0	0	5	0	5	MASON, Jamie	6	0	1	0	7
DI NORO, Sebastian	0	0	0	6	6	MATEREKE, Craig	0	3	0	0	3
DOUCH, Simon	4	0	0	0	4	MAU, Isitolo	0	9	0	0	9
DOYLE, Thomas	0	0	4	0	4	MAU, Manu	0	0	0	2	2
DUGGAN, Patrick	0	0	0	6	6	MCCLYMONT, Ed	0	2	11	0	13
DUNN, Angus	7	1	0	0	8	MCEVOY, Cameron	0	0	0	6	6
DUTAILLIS, Shaun	0	1	12	0	13	MILLER, Connor	0	11	3	0	14
EBERLE, Sam	2	2	1	7	12	MITCHELL, Riley	0	0	1	7	8
ELSON, Steven	3	8	3	0	14	MULLIGAN, Nicholas	0	1	0	6	7
EXTON, William	0	0	3	0	3	NASH, Jack	8	2	0	0	10
FAHEY, Rowan	0	4	10	0	14	NEPIA, Donovan	18	0	0	0	18
FIERRAVANTI, Luca	0	0	0	6	6	NGATAI, Wayne	18	0	0	0	18
FOWKE, Lachlan	0	6	7	0	13	O'NEILL, Jack	0	0	4	6	10
GODFREY, Jack	0	0	0	1	1	OTTLEY, Harry	0	5	3	0	8
GRANGER, Daniel	0	5	0	0	5	PARKER, Thomas	0	0	1	5	6
GREEN, Rory	0	0	0	2	2	PERESE, Matthew	11	2	0	0	13
GREER, Charlie	0	2	0	6	8	PLACEK, Justin	5	0	1	0	6
GREHAN, Brayden	16	2	0	0	18	POPLE, Jack	0	0	5	0	5
GUTHRIE, Blake	1	2	11	0	14	RAMEKA, Casey	12	1	0	0	13

Player	1sts	2nds	3rds	u/20	Total	Player	1sts	2nds	3rds	u/20	Total
RANGUIIRA, Nicholas	16	0	0	0	16	THURTELL, Jack	0	5	0	5	10
RATH, Callam	0	0	0	7	7	TSHOKO, Wangchuk	18	7	0	0	25
REED, Bradley	0	5	9	0	14	TUALA, Tai	0	0	3	0	3
REYNOLDS, Sam	0	0	3	0	3	TUCKEY, Tyran	0	0	1	0	1
RICE, Jackson	8	7	1	0	16	VALE, Joshua	0	0	1	0	1
RIRINUI, Blythe	4	1	0	0	5	WALTERS, Jakob	0	0	4	0	4
RIXON, George	8	0	0	0	8	WANN, Matthias	0	6	10	0	16
RODRIGUES, Ricardo	0	0	0	1	1	WARD, Daniel	0	1	0	0	1
SCOTT, Jack	0	0	9	8	17	WATSON, Noah	0	0	0	0	0
SEIULI, Talu	9	5	0	0	14	WEBB, Daniel	0	0	9	0	9
SHAMBIRA, Michael	0	6	0	0	6	WICKLIFFE, Hemana	12	0	0	0	12
SHEPHERD, David	0	2	9	0	11	WILES, Rohan	0	0	0	0	0
SHRUBB, Aaron	0	1	11	0	12	WILKINSON, Craig	0	0	1	0	1
SIEGERT, Will	0	4	4	5	13	WILKINSON, Lachlan	0	0	1	2	3
SIMONA, Steven	0	4	8	0	12	WILLIAMS, Sam	0	0	10	0	10
SMITH, Lyle	0	2	0	0	2	WILSON, Rowan	12	0	0	0	12
SMITH, Rhys	0	0	0	0	0	WILSON, Todd	0	8	1	0	9
SPEARS, Ethan	0	0	0	0	0	WITHERDIN, Ryan	0	0	0	0	0
STANBROOK, Justin	0	2	0	0	2	WOOD, William	18	0	0	0	18
STANFORD, Joe	0	0	6	0	6	WORTH, Joshua	1	14	4	0	19
TANKS, Lee	0	0	2	0	2						
TAUFAHEMA, Opeti	9	5	1	0	15						