



Southern Football Netball League

Hall of Fame



PETER MARTIN

SOUTHERN FOOTBALL NETBALL LEAGUE

- On-field involvement as an ESCFA/SESFL/SFNL player and umpire for over 43 years
 - Umpired over 750 matches 1979-Present
- Umpires' Association President, Secretary and Treasurer – 14 years
 - East Kew Football Club Player 1971-78

Umpiring can often be a thankless task. Very rarely are the whistle-blowers commended by punters and players when the correct decision is made, but there is no shortage of yobbos over the fence to air their grievances in a vitriolic manner when a mistake occurs 10m out from the opposition's goal.

Peter Martin has seen it all and heard just about every sledge in the book during his 36 years as a senior umpire and throughout the decades he's become one of the most popular umpires in local footy.

Martin's playing career with East Kew in the ESCFA was cut short after a life-threatening car accident in 1978 and he picked up the whistle the following year. He has since officiated well in excess of 750 matches of ESCFA/SESFL/SFNL football.

He has also provided invaluable service to the Umpires Association in an off-field capacity, serving 14 years as President, Secretary and Treasurer.

But it's Martin's on-field persona that has seen him earn universal admiration and respect from the entire SFNL community. He has never shied away from admitting his mistakes and he enjoys the constant communication with players, which he says is one of the things that keeps him going.

"(The main reason I) continue to umpire is the camaraderie and banter that exists between the umps and between umpires and players," the popular officiator said.

He is also a ripping bloke off the ground too. A colourful and charismatic story-teller, Martin has built up a treasure-trove of cracking yarns throughout his umpiring career which he is only too happy to share. Like the time he marked out the centre circle at Balwyn with a 5kg bag of sugar after the rain had washed the paint away.

"And then 80,000 European wasps had arrived!" Martin chuckled.

He will also laugh recounting some of the wittiest and funniest sledges he has received over the years, almost of which are unprintable.

Martin's passion and drive for umpiring shows no signs of abating and you can expect to see him continue in orange for a while yet.

"I have the best seat in the ground for the greatest game on earth," Martin said.

"I live for footy, I love my footy, I've been around a very, very long time, I've seen it all and I hope I'm around for a lot longer."

By Will Hunter