



Southern Football Netball League

Hall of Fame



ROBERT SPAULDING

SOUTH EAST SUBURBAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

- 500 Senior games with Murrumbeena Football Club
- Murrumbeena Football Club Premiership Player 1974, 1979, 1986
- Murrumbeena Football Club Premiership Coach 1986
 - Murrumbeena Football Club Life Member
- Murrumbeena Football Club Committee Member for 40 years (including President, Vice President, Treasurer & Secretary)
 - South East Suburban Football League Life Member
 - Southern Football Netball League Life Member

Robert Spaulding runs his football club like a family. He's been at the Murrumbeena Football Club since he was 12-years-old.

In over 25 seasons Spaulding's notched 500 games with the club, playing his first senior match at age 16.

Living in the local area, the closest club was at Murrumbeena Park on Kangaroo Road. Spaulding played for the Lions from '65 to '95 including three premierships – captain-coach in one of them.

Through his experience with community football, Spaulding says it's certainly changed since playing. "It's faster, not by leg speed, but by team's skill." Spaulding also noted that the press continues to evolve.

"The body shape will change... powerful legs over tall and thin – you need to break through packs," said Spaulding. He believes that in local footy, with 12 or more people around the ball only the stronger bodies will thrive.

Adding to his playing career is 40 years of committee service, 12 serving as President. In his long tenure, Spaulding has built and helped create a very close, unified club.

Every player knows exactly what to expect when playing for Murrumbeena. Common among teams is a player handbook, but the club takes it a step further adding detailed information to make sure everyone is well versed.

"The number one goal is to have a happy club," Spaulding said. "To do that you've got to have success, starting with a good structure, culture and values."

Spaulding is committed to the club instilling ownership to the playing group. "Teach them to be leaders and they'll take a bit more pride," Spaulding explained. "Maybe they'll be the next administrators."

A strong believer in youth, Spaulding says to build the culture while developing the juniors program.

"We're after just five kids a year coming through," he said. "In four years if only half play seniors we're heading in the right direction."

Understanding the increasing need to entertain the spectators, Spaulding has Auskick grid games at halftime. Allowing club sponsors to award medallions to the kids is great for business. Irish football and even hurling exhibitions amuse the crowd; the club even has an Oktoberfest function.

"Football is 12 months a year, it's nonstop, every spare minute you have," Spaulding laughed.

His board each put around 30-hours a week into the club. "I believe (the) committee should be at training... our culture is if the boys are out there working, we should be too," he said.

With 50 years contribution to the Beena, Spaulding has been there for half of the club's existence. Past player, coach and administrator – he is well deserving of his Hall of Fame induction.

"We're developing as we go along, continually raising the standard. With good helpers and good people around, mate we'll get there. But nothing happens without planning," Spaulding said.

By James Raknes