



# *Southern Football Netball League*

## *Hall of Fame*



## BRUCE HILL

### SOUTHERN FOOTBALL NETBALL LEAGUE

- Played 301 Games with East Malvern Football Club
- Division 2 South East Suburban Football League Best & Fairest Winner 1969
- East Malvern Football Club Premiership Captain 1969
- South East Suburban Football League Interleague representative 1970-72
- East Malvern Football Club Best & Fairest x 7 1967-72 & 1979
- East Malvern Football Club Secretary 1969-72, 1975-84
- East Malvern Football Club Life Member 1972
- South East Suburban Football League Life Member 1981
- South Yarra Football Club Secretary 2006-10
- South Yarra Football Club President 2004-05, 2011-15
- South Yarra Football Club Life Member 2007
- Southern Football Netball League Volunteer of the Year 2008

You would be hard pressed to find a man who has contributed more to local football than Bruce Hill.

For nearly 50 years, Hill has experienced the highs and lows as a player, administrator and volunteer and has given invaluable service to two SESFL/SFNL clubs. In the process, he has amassed a list of honours, awards and achievements the length of Flemington straight.

His playing career alone is extraordinary, having featured in over 750 senior matches across various competitions in a career that continued until his mid '60s.

In his prime, Hill was a tall centreman with pace to burn. He debuted with East Malvern in 1967, playing 301 games for the club and winning seven Best and Fairest awards along the way, including an incredible six in a row between 1967 and 1972.

He was also acting captain of East Malvern's 1969 premiership team and claimed the SESFL Division Two Best and Fairest in the same year. Hill also represented the SESFL at Interleague level between 1970 and 1972.

When East Malvern disbanded due to financial difficulties after the 1984 season, Hill became a bit of football nomad, playing with several clubs outside the SESFL/SFNL between 1985 and 1994.

In 1995 he went down to T.H. King Oval where South Yarra were playing at the time to ask if he could play one final game with them on the same ground he that he made his debut with East Malvern.

"And I'm still there 20 years later!" Hill said with a laugh.

He eventually played 145 matches for the Yarras' reserves and thirds sides, and even captained the magoos at the ripe old age of 50.

But despite his impressive list of playing achievements, it's Hill's mountain of off-field work that is most noteworthy.

He was secretary of East Malvern from 1969 until the club folded, during which time it had grown from one senior team to having two senior and eight junior sides.

And it was the demise of his beloved club that spurred him on to devote almost his entire life to community football.

"I learnt after East Malvern folded that I didn't ever want to be involved in anything like that again so I guess it's just a matter of trying to keep things going," Hill said.

"I know what it's like for just myself personally not to have a club where you've played 300 games and won seven Best and Fairests to go back to with a few bragging rights because the club doesn't exist anymore."

It comes as no surprise then that Hill was instrumental in reforming South Yarra after their recess in 2006.

Hill has also been actively involved in the SESFL and SFNL since 1969 as ladder secretary, statistician and historian, and was a former Division Two scribe for the SFNL Record for more than a decade during the 1990s and 2000s.

He is currently serving a second stint as Yarras president (his seventh year in the role) and there are no signs of slowing down for this self-confessed "footy nut".

***By Will Hunter***